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Defining And Displaying Gallo: Language And Ideology In Upper Brittany, France

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DEFINING AND DISPLAYING GALLO:
LANGUAGE AND IDEOLOGY IN UPPER BRITTANY, FRANCE

by

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DEDICATION

For my parents, and in memory of my grandparents

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This dissertation has been deeply marked by encounters with many insightful and generous people. As a result, it is permeated with many voices, and I would like to use my own to thank some of them here. Tout d’abord, je tiens à remercier tous ceux qui m’ont si bien accueillie en Haute-Bretagne, une première fois en 2006-2007 et à nouveau lors de mon travail de terrain en 2013-2014. Pour l’hébergement chaleureux ; pour les repas partagés ; pour les rondes dansées côte à côte ; pour les moments d’amitié et de rire—merci ! D’innombrables fois, un mot généreux m’a fait me sentir comme parmi mes miens, et les souvenirs de ces échanges me resteront toujours précieux.

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And with that, I will close, as do many Upper Breton storytellers: *Vla le bout!*

ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines discourse practices in and about Gallo, a marginalized Romance language of Upper Brittany, France. Specifically, it explores how various Gallo social actors (advocates, performers, teachers and students) defined, labeled and displayed Gallo, as they constructed it as a language capable of participating in modernity, producing local authority, and forging links with loved people and places.

Gallo was popularly imagined as part of a rural past and dismissed as a “deformation” of French, unlike the Breton language, which stood as a salient emblem of Brittany’s cultural distinctiveness. This dissertation elucidates the ideological and everyday consequences of using this ostensibly “traditional” language in “modern” times. Using interactional and ethnographic data collected during twelve months of fieldwork, I investigate how Gallo was represented in multiple contexts: celebratory festivals, association meetings, artistic performances, language classrooms, everyday conversations, and ethnographic interviews. I argue that strategies of Gallo representation involved not just explicit statements about the language but also bids by speakers to assign themselves, as well as interlocutors and/or publics, to participant roles and stances. By occupying these positions, participants jointly articulated language and speakerhood.

First, I examine how Gallo was defined as a “language” rather than as deformed French, in promotional materials and performances, and I illustrate how these genres positioned a participant role of *Gallo recognizer* as desirable and achievable. Second, I explore the implications of *patois* and *gallo* as language labels. While Gallo advocates

often preferred *gallo*, I elucidate how even *patois* allowed speakers to draw useful social distinctions and to meaningfully connect disparate people and places. Thirdly, I discuss how dictionaries, a prominent part of Gallo advocate culture, served as icons of Gallo's existence and "weight," indexes of modernity, and triggers for the performance of local expertise. Finally, I show how performers on stage constructed audience members as competent evaluators of Gallo. In sum, this dissertation illustrates that language is both social object and social action. When individuals and institutions propose a representation of a language, they also propose associated participant roles, stances, and figures of speakerhood, which are open to creative recontextualization through interaction and artistic performance.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

“Y’a une dizaine d’anées, aloure le galo ça taet l’absence de qhulture cai! Si tu etaes gallésant t’és un pôvre [bobet]. ‘Et qu’est-ce que tu fais, ça va t’aporter cai, enfin?’ Et après, cant t’âs eû justement un petit de téâtr qhi ét venu, t’as le monde, on ouait ... Mine de rien, vaer un petit de cai escrit de temp z’en temp du galo, même si c’ét su un bouquin qhi traîne su la stand, ça fet runjer le monde. Enfin, ça les poûsse à dire ‘Bon il y a quand même du monde qui soient intéressés à ça.’ C’ét q’i y a de la qhulture par derre cai. C’ét pàs qe les trois bobias qi voulaent rester à fére de l’humour paysan su le coup-là.”

“Ten years back, well Gallo was the absence of culture, you know! If you were a Gallo speaker you’re a poor [idiot]. ‘And what are you doing, what will that ever do for you, really?’ And then once you have a bit of theater that comes by, you have people, you hear... Without even realizing it, to see a little something written down, from time to time in Gallo, even if it’s in a book, just left out at the stand, that makes people think. Well, it pushes them to say ‘Well okay, so there are people who are interested in this,’ and that means there’s some culture behind it, you know. It’s not just three numbskulls who wanted to keep on doing peasant humor in that case.”¹

These words were uttered by Alain,² a singer and member of an association dedicated to the promotion of Gallo, a nationally and regionally marginalized Romance language of Brittany, France. It was a mild June evening, near the end of my fieldwork year in Brittany. I was talking with Alain and his fellow association members, Mili, Beriac and Laurent, around a table in the back courtyard of Laurent’s farm, a short drive from the capital of Rennes. The farmhouse behind us looked to be well over a century old; its trim was brightly painted in contemporary colors. As we talked, night fell, but a lively discussion continued.

When Alain made the above claim, Mili had just mentioned successfully starting conversations in Gallo with people at the market where she sold her eggs. Beriac had

¹ All translations from Gallo or French to English are my own, unless otherwise credited.

² This name and the others in this chapter are pseudonyms.

added that, after years of joking with his former colleagues that they should start learning Gallo (“well, not really joking, but...”), one colleague had finally appeared to take the suggestion seriously. Following these comments, which suggested an increased public appreciation for Gallo, Alain elaborated on what he felt to be encouraging developments regarding the language. While a decade before, Gallo was locally perceived to be “*cde qhulture*” [a lack of culture]—and here Alain voiced a condescending, incredulous speaker with exaggerated pitch contours and lengthening, “*Et qu'est-ce que tu fais, ça va t'aporter cai, enfin?*” [‘And what are you doing, what will that ever do for you, really’]—the increased prominence of theater in Gallo, as well as books printed in Gallo and displayed on festival stands, had led to increased local recognition for the language. Alain’s three other interlocutors made numerous murmurs of agreement throughout his comment.

Alain’s portrayal of Gallo’s social status, as marginal but gradually improving, speaks to a tension between two important facts of Gallo representation. The first was that Gallo was locally indexical of a disappearing rural past. Gallo advocates like Alain and his colleagues recognized Gallo’s deep connection to rurality—it was not a coincidence that Laurent, a Gallo storyteller, owned and worked the farm where we were sitting, or that Mili had just invoked farmers’ markets as an important site of cultural exchange. However, these association members lamented the ways in which Gallo became linked to the bawdy, scatological “peasant humor” of certain circulating Gallo genres. Such implications underlie Alain’s final observation that the numerous local festivals and theater events in Gallo were proving to local residents that Gallo promoters were “*pâs qe les trois bobias qi voulaent rester à faire de l'humour paysan*” [not just

three numbskulls who wanted to keep on doing peasant humor]. Both the invocation of peasants and the image of stasis (“keep[ing] on” doing the same old thing) recalls Gallo’s prevalent, if contested, image of irrelevance to modern life.

A second fact was that larger French society equated “culture” with urban sophistication, an assumption to which Alain and his colleagues were not wholly immune. Alain’s discussion rests on an implicit belief that “peasant humor” was a lack of “culture,” and that if Gallo did have culture, it was in part because of its presence in theater and on books at festival stands. As such, the majority of Gallo advocates at the time of my fieldwork sought in their artistic and promotional endeavors to position Gallo as a language that one could use in a variety of genres, to discuss the present as well as past and serious things as well as lighthearted. Given this tension, these advocates worried about how to promote Gallo as a valued source of regional identity. How could a language linked to a local agricultural past become relevant in a late-modern society that prized youth and sophistication? Importantly, they hoped not only to facilitate Gallo’s cultural recognition, but to ensure it was recognized in particular ways that were friendly to language rights rhetoric, such as the equation of language and “culture.”

Gallo artists, advocates, students and teachers, then, faced a variety of representational and practical choices, as they brought together Gallo’s important connection with a local rural past and the desire to afford Gallo meaning in the present. In an environment largely dominated by French and the co-present, Celtic regional language of Breton, to what degree did active participators in Gallo culture insist on Gallo’s status as a separate language-object from French? How did they choose to name that object: *gallo*, as Alain does here, or *patois*, the term preferred by the majority of local residents?

What material forms of semiosis (including books on stands) did they use to invoke the variety, and how did they propose a range of evaluative stances toward the variety and its embedded ways of knowing? Finally, what implications did these choices have for how the variety was imagined with respect to time, place and personhood, and for the symbolic and everyday roles it played in contemporary Upper Brittany?

1.1 Problematic and approach

In this dissertation, I examine discourse practices in and about Gallo, in order to explore the ideological and everyday consequences of using an ostensibly “traditional” and “local” language in “modern” and “globalizing” times. Using data collected during twelve months of fieldwork (July 2013 to June 2014) in traditionally Gallo-speaking Upper Brittany, I investigate the representational strategies involved in, and the sociocultural consequences of, everyday meaning-making practices in Gallo. I consider representations and practices in several different contexts: celebratory festivals, association meetings, artistic performances, classrooms, everyday conversations and interviews. I describe how Gallo social actors of various positionalities (advocates, performers, teachers and students) negotiated among the language ideologies glimpsed above—modernity and the past, or value and lack of worth—as they offered images of twenty-first-century Gallo speakerhood.

In selecting these settings and contexts, I aim to jointly examine Gallo’s metalinguistic representation and its contextualization in moments of social interaction. This dual focus—the varied symbolic practices enacted through the Gallo language in situated moments of daily life as well as on stage and in promotional texts—complements existing survey-based studies on Gallo transmission and local language attitudes,

investigating how explicit metapragmatic ideologies are discursively instantiated or contested through everyday symbolic action. Such an approach entails seeing language as both social object and social action, with the two intrinsically intertwined. In so doing, I align with recent work in practice theory and structuration theory (e.g., Bourdieu 1991; Bucholtz 1999; de Certeau 1984; Eckert & McConnell-Ginet 1992; Giddens 1984; Heller 2007; Ortner 1984), as I focus on how situated moves of self- and other- positioning propagate and/or locally challenge larger-scale ideologies (e.g., Agha 2005; Bucholtz & Hall 2005; Chun 2007; Jaffe 1999, 2009a; Silverstein 1996; Wortham 2003).

In French institutional discourses at the turn of the twenty-first century, regional languages like Gallo are perhaps more readily represented as objects of symbolic value than they are accorded full visibility as everyday practices. Regional languages are an important part of French cultural heritage, evidenced by their recent recognition in the French constitution as *patrimoine*, or cultural heritage (Article 75-1, ratified in 2008). Yet Article 2 of that constitution still states that “la langue de la République est le français,” and France’s judicial councils have declared unconstitutional (in 1999 and 2015, respectively) both the European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages (CETS 148) and a proposed constitutional amendment allowing for its ratification (proposed Article 53-3). France’s Constitutional Council arrived at the 1999 decision, in part, because the charter’s provisions “seem to recognize a right to use a language other than French not only in ‘private life’ but also in ‘public life’” (*Décision No. 99-412 DC, Conseil constitutionnel*).³

³ “...tendent à reconnaître un droit à pratiquer une langue autre que le français non seulement dans la ‘vie privée’ mais également dans la ‘vie publique’” (*Décision No. 99-412 DC, Conseil constitutionnel*).

It is true that many of France's regional languages have been formally recognized in education. Nonetheless, regional languages' designation as *patrimoine* implicitly defines them as objects or artifacts, rather than practices suited for public life. Of course, they are both at once, but such moves, inscribed as they are in dominant linguistic markets, risk relegating regional language practices to a traditional past and local places, sidestepping their potential to enter everyday life in dynamic and creative ways. Similarly, while Gallo's designation as "severely endangered" (UNESCO) can help direct public attention toward the variety, an increasing body of research on the ideologies of language endangerment (e.g. Hornberger 1998, Hill 2002, Errington 2003, May 2005, and all contributors to Duchêne & Heller 2007) have problematized these discourses. Such designations often rely upon ideologies that reify languages as static possessions, objects of intrinsic cultural value separated from contexts of everyday use (Hill 2002). While these ideologies can and do operate for Gallo, being deeply implicated in many individuals' experiences of the language, they are (a) enmeshed with other ways of experiencing Gallo, and (b) communicated and contested in large part through situated practice, symbolically and interactionally. In formulating the research questions this dissertation investigates, I have sought to forego reifying Gallo as an organism that "survives" or "dies" (although my participants at times did talk about it that way); instead, I examine the processes at work when differing perspectives on Gallo representation collide in policy and in creative practice.

Even among the languages of France, Gallo's situation is marked, because it is often considered to be of peripheral importance not only nationally but also within Brittany. Officially, Gallo and the co-present regional language of Breton have nominal

parity; following the 2004 adoption of a new language policy by the Regional Council of Brittany, both are jointly called *les langues de Bretagne*. However, the Celtic language of Breton has been widely recognized as “the” regional language of Brittany (Hornsby & Nolan 2011; Le Coadic 1998; McDonald 1989), while Gallo’s presence is elided. A Celtic language quite typologically divergent from French, Breton has been commodified in the linguistic market of Brittany, serving to brand corporations and schools. It is used to position the region as fashionably multilingual and modern, even as certain scholars (e.g., Hornsby 2008) caution that this symbolic usage does not translate into increased usage in informal public contexts.⁴ In contrast, Gallo is often seen as an uneducated deformation of French because of its linguistic similarities to the variety considered the national standard.

1.2 Research questions and argumentation

The four main questions addressed by my analysis chapters (Chapters 5 through 8) all concern Gallo representation, and how that representation is instantiated, nuanced and/or challenged in particular moments of interaction and performance. In Chapter 5, I query Gallo’s definition as a language object. Particularly, I address (a) how Gallo social actors constructed their own history with respect to an understanding of Gallo as a separate entity from French, and (b) how promotional texts and plays one might encounter at festivals invited their publics to take up particular stances toward recognizing that object. I ask, *how did Gallo advocates use participant role modeling to facilitate cultural recognition of Gallo as a language-object?* I argue that participant

⁴ For an example of this kind of promotional text, see a booklet published by the Conseil général of Finistère: Conseil Général Finistère Penn-ar-Bed (2012), *Le bilinguisme pour les petits: Un grand atout pour la vie / An divyezhegezh evit ar re vihan: un elfenn a-bouez en o buhez [Bilingualism for little ones: A great benefit in life]*.

roles of “Gallo non-recognizer” and “Gallo recognizer,” embedded both in narratives of recognition and promotional texts, and entailed by a specific set of stances toward the variety, offer Gallo artists and activists a way to make Gallo recognition seem both desirable and compelling. They modeled these participant roles, shown to be viable and inhabitable through the narratives of recognition, as being knowledgeable (both *that* Gallo is a language and, ideally if less essentially, *how* to use it) and positive-affect-laden. I show that these Gallo-defining discourse genres seem structured to invite participants who may have minimal representational knowledge of Gallo to also become recognizers of the language through the active encountering of these texts.

In Chapter 6, I investigate the ideological ramifications of everyday choices between two language labels commonly used to denote the language-object demarcated in Chapter 5: *gallo*, the label preferred (in the majority of cases) by those engaged in Gallo advocacy, education and performance, and *patois*, which remained the term used most widely in Upper Brittany, despite Gallo institutions’ arguing for the label *gallo*. I ask, *how could continued use of the label ‘patois’ alongside the label ‘gallo’ provide possibilities for the community, despite the presence of popular discourses that might seem to suggest only the label ‘gallo’ should be used?* I examine written texts, performances, and interactional moments where the two terms were used contrastively, showing that those uses can be divided into two “monist” approaches favoring *gallo* over *patois* (either based on referentialist notions of accuracy or on ideologies of social consequence) and two “pluralist” approaches admitting of the use of *patois* alongside *gallo*, either as pure synonyms (for the purpose of maximizing representation in terms of numbers of self-declared speakers) or as an indexical shorthand for two different ways of

relating to Gallo. Ultimately, I argue that the two pluralist approaches provide an alternative way of understanding Gallo's social value, where the commonly cited late capitalist value systems of "pride" and "profit" (Heller & Duchêne 2012) are most frequently understood as only applying to Breton. I call this ideology one of "personal connection."

In Chapter 7, I discuss how Gallo was visually represented at language festivals and on stage. While some Gallo performers indexed Gallo through use of old-fashioned rural clothing on stage (suspenders, checkered shirts, kerchiefs or wide-brimmed hats), Gallo dictionaries were also given prominent symbolic display at festivals, including being incorporated into artistic performances. I ask, *what ideological role(s) did Gallo dictionaries play in the celebratory context of language festivals? Particularly, what semiotic links to language did they have beyond serving as mere representations of a language's range of referential values?* I argue that in these celebratory spaces, what dictionaries iconized (Gallo's existence, Gallo's "weight") and what they indexed (modernity, through writing culture, but also localness) enabled them to function as a site for the production of a local authenticity, which was celebrated in the present rather than relegated to the past.

Finally, in Chapter 8, I turn to a brief examination of some of the ways in which, in artistic performance, Gallo and its users were brought into juxtaposition with the national language of French and Parisians who were figured as French-speaking. I use the theoretical lens of the carnivalesque (Bakhtin 1965[1984]) to explore the temporary reversals of hierarchical value catalyzed by the contrastive staging of pragmatically competent Gallo users and pragmatically ignorant French users in humorous

performance. I ask, *when users of Gallo had long been branded as ignorant and rustic, could the carnivalesque, and the inversions it entails, help Gallo performers construct themselves—and their communities—as subversively knowledgeable?* I argue that, while such performances reinforced a diametrical opposition between French and Gallo that would not resonate with all residents of Upper Brittany, many of whose usage patterns situate the two codes along a continuum, they nonetheless invited the viewing public to assume the position of “competent Gallo evaluator.” As such, they revealed to an audience who may have thought that Gallo had “no grammar” that it did have rules and that the haughty French-speaking characters flagrantly broke them. This knowledge of Gallo’s rule-governedness, and audience members’ recognition of their own perhaps latent ability to discern it, may last beyond the temporary hierarchy reversal occasioned by the carnivalesque.

In answering the above four questions, I afford particular attention to three contexts where the celebratory, the symbolic and the interactional intermingle: Gallo promotional texts and advocacy, Gallo artistic performances and, to a lesser extent, Gallo classrooms. I will argue that a common outcome of negotiations of Gallo representation in these spaces was not to deny Gallo’s importance as a language indexical of localness and the past, but rather to show that that this local grounding could also be a source of present-day authority and belonging.

1.3 Contributions

I envision each of these four chapters as having a contribution to how scholars of language and ideology characterize the links between linguistic representation and social practice. As I trace how Gallo was defined as a language object in narrative, on stage, and

in written texts (Chapter 5), rather than treating the existence of Gallo as a social fact not open to interrogation, my first contribution regards how language reification itself can be an emergent process. I show that variety enregisterment (Agha 2005), while a societal process taking place at historical timescales, might be facilitated at the micro- interactional and ontogenetic timescales (Wortham 2003). In particular, I show that cultural recognition does not happen through a nebulous process of diffusion of information, but rather, through bids that encourage interlocutors and spectators to adopt particular roles and stances with respect to the variety. As Alain's comment at the opening of this chapter suggests, Gallo's value was shaped not merely by how it was used but rather by a variety of heteroglossic (Bakhtin 1981) voices that discursively positioned Gallo. On the one hand, Gallo advocates like Alain often voiced others' critical stances toward the variety, the better to disalign from such perspectives through their own, pro-Gallo stances: “*Et qu'est-ce que tu fais, ça va t'apporter cai, enfin?*” [‘What are you doing, what will that ever do for you, really?’]. On the other hand, they often modeled a certain type of self-talk, through which they imagined how other people, currently dismissive of Gallo, might *become* Gallo recognizers: “*Bon il y a quand même du monde qui soit intéressé à ça*” [‘Well okay, so there are people who are interested in this’]. I will argue that promotional and theatrical texts, as well as personal experience narratives, were often structured in ways that encouraged others to ask themselves questions about Gallo, its language status, and its worth.

In investigating labeling practices and their ideological underpinnings (Chapter 6), I show that languages can have various sources of value. In this, I follow a long tradition of research from Trudgill (1972), to Woolard (2005[2008]), to Heller and

Duchêne (2012), but I bring this investigation into dialogue with the issue of variety naming, a representational politics of its own (Lanehart 2015; Paugh 2012; Schieffelin & Doucet 1994). I show how, in part through stances indexed by labels, the same language variety can be positioned in multiple ways with respect to time and place (past and/or present; local and/or translocal) as well as to different patterns of affective and epistemological engagement. I illustrate that pluralist labeling approaches drawing on an ideology of “personal connection” allowed people to draw on both the past and present as necessary, with the two not necessarily being incompatible and both being valued. While these uses were perhaps not powerful enough to dismantle other discourses of Gallo as exclusively aligned with the past, they show what was possible, at least locally and contingently.

I also contribute to understandings of language planning projects by showing that minority language dictionaries have meanings that extend beyond the referential (Chapter 7). First, as material objects, dictionaries can become iconized indexes of a variety’s existence, richness, and complementarity with modern life. Second, as components of cultural activities, they can have the performative effect of producing, encouraging, and/or legitimating speakerhood. While dictionaries are typically understood as homogenizing tools of linguistic erasure, I show that when they are embedded in cultural routines that value local ways of knowing, they can also function to encourage recognition of linguistic diversity.

Finally, I show the irreducible role that audience members have in framing representational events, not only in ratifying (or not) the claims that are proposed, but also in allowing those claims to be made in the first place. Such a preoccupation underlies

most of the analyses but is most fully expressed in Chapter 8. I show that the very construction of a particular theater performance as carnivalesque relies upon the audience's assuming a role of knowledgeable judge of the linguistic and pragmatic competencies, or lack thereof, depicted onstage. Without the audience there to be cajoled by gaze and gesture into alignment against the figure of a standard French speaker speaking poor Gallo, that figure could not be subjected to carnivalesque reversal. It is audience laughter that contextualizes certain forms of Gallo as humorously illegitimate and others as artful. This illustrates an important, more general point about the representation of languages in art, advocacy and education: no ideology, no matter how dominant, is situated entirely above the realm of practice and interaction.

In the conclusion to this dissertation, I look across the chapters that precede it and argue that the ideology of personal connection, presented in Chapter 6, allows users of the term *gallo*, who assume the role of Gallo recognizer as discussed in Chapter 5, to emphasize their affection for (and to construct as authentic) Gallo users who use the term *patois* and who may not be Gallo recognizers. This ideological frame allows Gallo recognizers to also acknowledge sociohistorical rupture and the often very different circumstances of their own lives compared to the lives of *patois*-speaking loved ones. This recognition of difference makes the ideology of personal connection different from essentialized constructions of authenticity in acts of nostalgia, such as those in literature (e.g., as critiqued in Williams 1973). Under an ideology of personal connection, social difference between *patois* and *gallo* users is often highlighted and acknowledged rather than erased, although affective connection is preserved. In elucidating this ideology and the roles of recognizer and non-recognizer that it brings into (partial) dialogue, I

contribute to understandings of minority language ideologies that are familial and local rather than ethnolinguistic in nature.

1.4 Organization of the dissertation

The next two chapters introduce the study's theoretical and cultural background, through which I have filtered the questions presented above. Chapter 2 provides an overview on the relevant literature, organized along three interrelated themes: (a) language as practice and performance; (b) language ideologies and the politics of representation; and (c) language and France. Chapter 3 situates Gallo itself, the particular linguistic and cultural construct about which these questions were raised. I first discuss Gallo as a language object, taking a traditional structuralist approach to its geography, self-reported speakers, sound structure, morphosyntax, lexicon, pragmatics and orthographical debates. I then discuss Gallo's cultural significance, in terms of its embeddedness in Breton social history and demographics, its status in relation to the Breton language, its situation in place and time, and contemporary spheres of Gallo activity.

Chapter 4 describes my research methods. I start with a discussion of how I situated myself as a non-Gallo and non-French person, never trying to erase my outsider status, but trying to listen, learn and make connections. I continue by presenting an overview of my sites of data collection, my selection of participants within these sites, and my methods of data collection and analysis. Chapters 5 through 8 constitute the core of analysis of how Gallo was interactionally defined and performatively displayed across these various sites. As presented above, Chapter 5 concerns the discursive negotiation of Gallo as a language object; Chapter 6 concerns the ideological ramifications of the labels

used to denote that object; Chapter 7 examines Gallo dictionaries as multifaceted iconized indexes of Gallo; and Chapter 8 presents some of the ways in which the hierarchical relationship between Gallo and French, and Gallo users and French users, was probed, inverted and (temporarily) reimaged on stage.

The concluding chapter, Chapter 9, brings together the ideology of personal connection (Chapter 6) with the role of Gallo recognizer (Chapter 5), and it further discusses some implications and limitations of the preceding analyses. It offers some remarks on Gallo as language object and social practice, and on the multiple ways Gallo is configured with respect to times, places and persons as it is defined and displayed in various contexts. Is Gallo a language only for old people and days past—or (not necessarily in contrast) is it a way people of today have for bestowing value on older people and older times despite sociohistorical rupture? Is this language a sign of ignorance and, as Alain said about popular perceptions at the top of this chapter, a “lack of culture,” or can Gallo serve instead, like the dictionaries that purport to contain it, as a basis for locally authoritative ways of knowing and being? These are some of the questions this dissertation will explore.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter provides an overview on the relevant literature that has grounded my approach to Gallo representation and practice in Upper Brittany. It is organized along three interrelated themes: (a) language as practice and performance, with a consequent attention to indexicality, stance, identity and participant roles; (b) language ideologies and the politics of representation; and (c) language and France. While I have separated these theoretical strands in what follows, they should be understood as deeply interconnected; in turn, they establish that what I call “Gallo representation” and “Gallo practice” are inextricably enmeshed as well.

In addition to the theoretical and empirical work reviewed below, individual analysis chapters will review literature of more immediate topical relevance to those chapters. Accordingly, Chapter 5 will include a review of variety enregisterment (Agha 2005) and a more in-depth discussion of participant roles than that afforded here. Chapter 6 will discuss the representational choices involved in language labeling, as well as ideologies of “pride” and “profit” (Heller & Duchêne 2012), which have been understood as ways of bestowing value upon languages in late capitalism. Chapter 7 will open with a discussion of dictionaries, particularly as they have been understood in relation to modernist ideologies of reference and standardization, and Chapter 8 will present an overview of the carnivalesque (Bakhtin 1965[1984]), as well as of the ideological construction of center and periphery, which are the principle dimensions that are inverted

in the carnivalesque performances discussed. Such concepts will be brought in here as relevant but discussed in greater detail at the start of the relevant chapters.

2.1 Language as practice and performance

2.1.1 *Practice*

In its focus on language representation and use in a variety of settings, from interaction to entextualized artistic performances to written discourse, this project aligns with work in linguistic anthropology that understands language as social practice (e.g., Bourdieu 1991; Giddens 1984; de Certeau 1984; Ortner 1984; Eckert & McConnell-Ginet 1992; Hanks 1996; Bucholtz 1999; Heller 2007). Recalling Geertz's description of language as "symbolic action" (1973:10), such a perspective sees humans as social actors embedded in political and symbolic contexts. As Hanks (1996) explains, "however else one chooses to define 'practice,' it is the point at which three things converge: the law of system, the quick of activity, and the reflective gaze of value" (11). A view of language as practice thus sees formal systems, social action, and their representational ideologies to be intrinsically interwoven—mutually reinforcing, but also continuously introducing new points of tension.

A focus on language as practice directs attention not only to what language "means" but what it "does," as well on, in Ortner (1984)'s terms, "the doer of all that doing: agent, actor, person, self, individual, subject" (Ortner 1984: 144). When conceptualizing the relationship between individuals and the institutions in which they are intersectionally embedded, one important consideration involves the degree to which individual social actors are understood as being able to affect change. Different theorists have accorded to individual actors different amounts of agency, or the power—even if at

least partly unintentional—to bring about change in the world (Ahearn 2001). While Bourdieu’s work on the structuring role played by the French national education system (with Passeron, 1977 and 1979) is valuable for directing attention to how institutions often re-inscribe linguistic and socioeconomic inequality on the bodies of those within them, the approach taken in this dissertation is more strongly informed by the work of de Certeau (1984) and Giddens (1984; see also Heller 2007), who allow more room for agentic resistance. As such, while I attend to Gallo’s representation in official discourses, I recognize that these are not uniform, and I do not assume that French (or Breton) governmental institutions fully determine the possibilities afforded to Gallo speakers. Rather, a structuration perspective understands particular acts of language as constituting possible sites of (partial) agency, within institutional structures that enable and constrain action while still remaining permeable to influence from those acts. Following practice theory, an understanding of the situatedness of Gallo teachers, for example, would involve not only their position in the ideological matrix of the national French education system and in the climate of regional language advocacy, but also how those structural positions are reinforced or contested in moment-to-moment negotiations with students about the social meaning of Gallo.

2.1.2 Performance

A view of language as practice also entails understanding it as “performance,” thus countering a key distinction in modern linguistic theory between “competence,” as linguists’ true object of study, and “performance,” as a mere artifact of competence (Chomsky 1965). Chomsky’s distinction, a reconceptualization of Saussure’s distinction between *langue* and *parole*, was challenged early by scholars such as Hymes (1972), who

recognized that performance was inseparable from competence and proposed the concept of “communicative competence.”

A performance perspective considers linguistic forms not as defining, or distinctive, features of a language but instead as stylistic “resources” available alongside other semiotic features for speakers to employ in patterned, socially meaningful ways. During performances, performers draw on such stylistic resources to “voice” (Bakhtin 1981, Hill 1995) personas. The notion of voicing was originally articulated by Bakhtin as part of his theoretical work on the novel—authors positioned their characters in culturally meaningful categories by having them speak in certain “voices,” creating a heteroglossic, interrelated constellation of subjects through their prose—but over the past few decades, scholars such as Agha (2005), Bauman and Briggs (1990), Chun (2009), Hill (1995), and Silverstein (2005), among others, have applied this literary theory to diverse arenas of symbolic practice, including verbal performance.

Adopting this view, Bauman (2004) takes performance to be a mode of speech that “rests on an assumption of responsibility to an audience for a display of communicative virtuosity” (9). The central importance of performance to an understanding how performances become entrenched in social life has perhaps been most strongly advocated through the work of Bauman and Briggs. In their seminal review, Bauman and Briggs (1990) argue that one advantage of focusing on poetics and performance is that “performances move the use of heterogeneous stylistic resources, context-sensitive meanings, and conflicting ideologies into a reflexive arena where they can be examined critically” (60). This reflexivity makes performance a productive site for researcher to explore the intertextual links and gaps which arise when different

interpretive frames, such as what Gallo signifies with respect to place and time, encounter one another. Importantly, it also affords performers themselves a space in which they can engage in ideological commentary as social action.

As recognized by Bauman, performance is a highly entextualized mode of speech and thus “bounded off to a degree from its discursive surround (its co-text), internally cohesive (tied together by various formal devices), and coherent (semantically intelligible)” (4). In effect, Bauman says, entextualized discourse is treated “as an object...extractable from its context of production” (4). This extraction process renders the text more prone to circulation in space and time, and to re-insertion in new contexts. It also brings to the forefront a concern with genre, or “a constellation of systematically related, co-occurrent formal features and structures that serves as a conventionalized orienting framework for the production and reception of discourse” (3). Hanks (1996) ties the notion of genre to Bourdieu’s idea of habitus, claiming that genres are neither “rigid formal types” nor “formless, purely momentary conjectures” but instead, “schemes for practice” inscribed on the body (246). Importantly, the orienting framework of genre includes not only expectations for vocabulary or text structure, but also expectations for modes of consumption, conventional participant roles, and relationships of alignment. Such concepts are discussed in the following subsection.

While genres have traditionally been discussed in terms of formal features, then, Hanks (1996) brings attention to the useful insight that what most readily encourages observers to decide something is “a performance” is not any intrinsic evaluation of artfulness or virtuosity, but rather a particular change in footing (Goffman 1981) between the speaker and his or her discourse. This makes performance “a mode of action, not a

kind of text” (Hanks 1996: 190). Similarly, a “breakthrough into performance” (Hymes 1975) is not something an observer can identify by counting the distribution of particular forms (although these can be a consequence of such a breakthrough), but by understanding it as “an indexical reframing of the utterance relevant to its immediate context” (Hanks 1996:191). While most of the texts identified as performances in this dissertation are keyed by the formal arrangement of participants assembled for an explicit artful purpose (e.g., performers on stage, audience sitting facing the performers), moments of other interactional and interview discourse can also be interpreted according to a performance framework.

2.1.3 Indexicality, stance, identity and participant roles

Through practice and performance, social actors presuppose and create connections between linguistic forms and social meanings. Explorations of this semiotic process by linguistic anthropologists have drawn on the writings of philosopher of language Charles Peirce, who defined indexes as having an “existential relation” (Duranti 1997) between a sign and its meaning, and so distinct from signs that seemed purely arbitrary (he calls these *symbols*) and others that more directly resemble some aspects of their referent (*icons*). The role that indexes play in social meaning, as they “point to” associative chains of meaning, has been much explored in sociolinguistics and linguistic anthropology (a partial list: Ochs 1992; Silverstein 1976, 2003; Eckert 2008; Hanks 1996; Johnstone, Andrus & Danielson 2006). The qualities that have been identified as being “pointed to” through linguistic forms include social categories, such as gender, age, or ethnicity, but also relationships such as power differentials or intimacy as well as stances such as alignment with or against institutions (Eckert 1989) or laid-back

detachment (Kiesling 2009). Metapragmatic regimes often naturalize one type of indexed meaning for another (Silverstein 2003).

While indexical links potentially produce broadly circulating language ideologies (discussed below), indexical processes necessarily occur in specific moments of interaction as social actors take stances, orienting to objects, persons and concepts against which are contextualized the forms used in discourse. Du Bois (2007) defines stance as follows:

a public act by a social actor, achieved dialogically through overt communicative means (language, gesture, and other symbolic forms), through which social actors simultaneously evaluate objects, position subjects (themselves and others), and align with other subjects, with respect to any salient dimension of the sociocultural field. (163)

Stances may be affective and/or epistemic, evaluative and/or alignment-related. While stance may seem most intuitive at an immediate emergent level (interlocutors taking up stances of alignment or disalignment with respect to each other as they discuss a particular matter, or a speaker expressing positive or negative affect, or certainty or uncertainty, toward that matter), they enter into identity-based, macrosocial and ideological negotiations as well. For example, while moment-to-moment classroom interactions (and the participant roles and stances embedded therein) shape how students and teachers define their social roles as language learners and users, larger-scale processes such as historical philosophies of education also enter into these definitions (Wortham 2006).

Stance is thus intrinsically involved in positionality, as “the taking up of particular kinds of stances is habitually and conventionally associated with particular subject positions (social roles and identities; notions of personhood) and interpersonal and social

relationships (including relations of power)” (Jaffe 2009a:4). Identity in particular, defined as “the social positioning of the self and other” (Bucholtz & Hall 2005:586), has been of great interest to some scholars, even if identity as a theoretical construct has been problematized in sociolinguistics and linguistic anthropology. As prefigured by Foucault’s (1979) discussion of the subject as produced and Bakhtin’s (1981) notion of voicing, recent approaches understand identity as social practice, emerging through processes and tactics of intersubjectivity (Bucholtz and Hall 2004, 2005), rather than an intrinsic quality of individuals. Agha (2007b) has provided a further critique of many scholars’ discussion of identity as a static attribute of individuals: such approaches tend to privilege discrete moments of discursive categorization, whether by speaker or by researcher, rather than tracing how chains of indexical assessments (Silverstein 2003, 2011; Agha 2007a) accrue and are challenged over the course of multiple and overlapping speech events. In addition, identity configurations are negotiated among participants (Goodwin & Goodwin 2004) and emergent across scales of time, from momentary stances to centuries-long social movements (Wortham 2006). As successive negotiations occur, language tokens get circulated—and often recontextualized in the process, as indexical meaning both regiments and shifts.

Finally, through performance, on stage and in everyday life, participants inhabit subject positions that are often called participant roles (e.g., Goffman 1981; Hanks 1996; Irvine 1996). Irvine (1996) contests the way participant roles were seen in “the classic linguistic model of the communicative act” (131), which she glosses as “the isolated sentence tossed (like a football) by an anonymous Speaker, whose qualifications for play are specified only as “competence,” to an even more anonymous Hearer who supposedly

catches it” (131). The most-discussed approach to nuancing participant roles is Goffman’s (1981) analysis of production formats, which breaks the canonical role of Speaker into roles like author, animator and principal, and the role of Hearer into ratified participant or overhearer, among others. The centrality of the roles played by participants of various sorts to the communicative endeavor has been explored by C. Goodwin (e.g., 1986) and M. H. Goodwin (e.g., 2006).

Goffman’s conceptual vocabulary uses many terms from the repertoire of theater (role, stage...); perhaps appropriately, much of the discussion of participant roles in this dissertation concerns staged performances. Gallo cultural festivals—which give pride of place to Gallo theater and storytelling—are an important site for the articulation of Gallo culture. As Pagliai (2000) notes, performed identities emerge through interaction between performer and public, so performance can illuminate the complexity of identification processes, as ideologies and practices both inform each other and diverge from one moment to the next—a central interest of practice theory. Jaffe (2009a) sees performance as an important site for stance display: “Stance is implied/presupposed in performance, and performances also coimplicate audience(s); thus stance is at work in the discursive positioning of performers to audiences and audiences to other audiences” (12). This dissertation thus explores how artistic performance serves as a way of modeling particular stances and roles. Through verbal interaction with the audience, as well as nominating them as participants through gesture and gaze (Briggs 1988; Goodwin & Goodwin 2004), performers positioned their publics as people with the authority to evaluate Gallo forms. In this way, as Jaffe (2009a) has said, “audiences—and ‘publics’—can be imagined and idealized in performance” (12). While of course such acts of

positioning are subject to contestation or refusal, examples will show that in many cases, audience members ratified their being positioned as local Gallo experts, supplying vocabulary items upon demand or correcting a character's language use under their breaths.

2.2 Language ideologies and the politics of representation

2.2.1 *What is a language?*

As argued above, language is a system of practices. However, it is also a discursive object: "an everyday, social fact called 'language'" (Agha 2007:218). As Cornips, Jaspers and de Rooij (2015) have recently noted, attention to how languages are named and defined

...appears to be caught, on the one hand, between the growing awareness among (socio)linguists and linguistic anthropologists that the concept of *a* language as an identifiable object is highly problematic, and, on the other hand, the importance that language names have for speakers as they navigate their social, cultural and political worlds. (45; italics in the original)

Scholars have increasingly identified and problematized modernist epistemological regimes under which languages are demarcated and objectified (e.g. Hanks 1996; Heller & Duchêne 2007; Irvine & Gal 2000). However, part of the social action to which speech is put is the *discursive creation* of the same "bounded system" (Minks 2010) whose independent existence is challenged by the scholars cited above. As Cornips, Jaspers and de Rooij (2015) explain, "[w]hile languages may not exist, this has obviously not prevented their existence in the minds of speakers, and their consequent impact on linguistic practices. Languages may be fictions for us, but they are realities for others" (46). In the course of creating these "realities," language ideologies often position languages as objects that can be referred to or possessed, learned or lost, endangered or

defended. For many speakers, including the Gallo advocates whose voices feature in this dissertation, the identification of languages as objects allows them to do meaningful social action. Hanks (1996) points out that an understanding of language's being defined by actors "as objects with certain horizons of value, meaning, and history" (13) is, ironically, part of what distinguishes a practice approach from formalism. Whereas formalist approaches "posit a sheer division between language and the world of objects... in a practice approach, the values attached to language by native speakers are themselves social facts" (14).

Language as object and language as practice can be brought into dialogue with an appreciation of how these "socio-historical formations" (Agha 2007:218) accrue meaning and power over vast historical timescales, and yet are permeable to destabilization in small, everyday moments (de Certeau 1984). Sense-making social actors recognize languages as distinct objects, as they participate in institutional and ideological structures, across a series of micro-interactions over time. However, as they are engaging in that process of recognition and representation in those moments, they are also using language—which introduces the potential for local destabilization.

2.2.2 Language ideologies and political economies

Hanks (1996) calls "the social valuation of objects of reference (whether these be things like newspapers and tables or concepts or indeed language itself)" (14) the "ideological dimension" of communicative practices. In her 1989 article on language and political economy, Irvine defines language ideologies as "the cultural (or sub-cultural) system of ideas about social and linguistic relationships, together with their loading of moral and political interests" (255). Departing from traditional Saussurian understandings

that separate linguistic sign from social world, Irvine adopts a view of language as implicated in social conditions rather than merely a tool for discussing them. Silverstein (e.g. 1979) has drawn our attention to the important role that linguistic form, in particular, plays in ideological valuation; Hanks (1996) continues this association of linguistic form with social consequence when he asserts that language as practice exists at the intersection of form, action, and the “reflective gaze of value” (11). If we wish to understand how the choice to draw from a Gallo repertoire becomes involved in meaning-making processes, therefore, it is important to investigate not only social stratification or formal language systems, but acts of language use in a variety of contexts, as well as the ideologies that inform such acts even when divergent from them.

Scholars of language ideologies understand these “representations, whether implicit or explicit, that construe the intersection of language and human beings in a social world” (Woolard 1998:3), to mediate, although not to fully determine, the habitual, (partially) shared ways a social group has of linking particular linguistic features—whether subtle phonological distinctions, or code choice between different varieties—with particular categories of personhood. These habits are inculcated as speakers confront discourse at a variety of scales, from widely circulated, explicit language policy statements, to the implicit presuppositions invoked during a conversation or artistic performance. The fact that individuals pursue different social trajectories across their lifespan, and approach issues from different positionalities, renders any belief fragmentary, unequally distributed through a population, and potentially in conflict with other circulating views (Gal 1978). Ideologies about any particular linguistic code are also defined contrastively in relation to other codes, in a web of social meaning. The

specific case of doubly marginalized languages, such as Gallo, have been explored in recent years in Francophone Canada. Varieties like *chiac* are often stigmatized, not only in respect to the global standard of European French, but a national standard of Canadian (in practice, often equated with *québécois*) French—and, of course, English (e.g., Heller 2003, McLaughlin 2010).

Woolard (1998) refers to the “problem of alternate sitings of ideology,” claiming that “ideology is variously discovered in linguistic practice itself; in explicit talk about language, that is, metalinguistic or metapragmatic *discourse*; and in the regimentation of language use through more implicit metapragmatics” (9). While language can be regimented through official laws and policies, it is also subject to on-the-ground retransformations (Heller 2007; Jaffe 2009b). Although institutionally sanctioned discourse is part of how individuals negotiate language ideologies, much ideological work gets done through, in de Certeau’s (1984) titular phrasing, “the practice of everyday life”—including giving speeches and writing newspaper articles, but also in everyday conversation and artistic performance. Accordingly, this dissertation analyzes everyday discourse practices taking place in one area of France for the ideologies circulated, but also contested by, speakers in situated moments of social interaction.

Particular foci of language ideologies include the questions of source of authority and locus of value. According to Woolard (2005[2008]), indexicality is of central importance to understanding the value placed on minority regional languages. Whereas national languages like Spanish or French derive their authority from an ideology of anonymity, a “view from nowhere” (4) that aspires to strip away traces of origin, regional languages derive their authority precisely from their indexical connotations. She calls this

a logic of “authenticity,” within which “a speech variety must be perceived as deeply rooted in social and geographic territory in order to have value. For many European languages, these roots are in the mountain redoubts of peasant folk purity” (2). Woolard sees this bifurcation as a “constraining logic” ultimately limiting to both dominant and minority languages (25). However, the multiple forms of semiosis (iconicity and indexicality as well as reference) can sometimes provide sites for the contestation of hegemonic attributions of value. Bender’s (2002) discussion of literacy practices involving the Cherokee syllabary reveals that indexicality is deeply intertwined with the creation of minority language personhood; her participants used the syllabary not only symbolically (as a tool for language comprehension) but also iconically and indexically, as a material sign of speakerhood. Bender argues that such multivalency opens up a space for minority language literacy education to challenge predominant modernist models of education as concerned with “the decontextualizable, the abstract, the global, the universal, and the exchange-value over the use-value of knowledge and skills” (113).

As reflected in these studies, scholars have increasingly considered time and personhood as jointly articulated with respect to place (Briggs 1988; Modan 2007). A recent focus on *chronotopic* processes (Bakhtin 1981; Silverstein 2005; Agha 2007b) articulates subjectivity as semiotically grounded in both time and place simultaneously. While this dissertation lacks the in-depth archival work necessary to explore the emergence and circulation of chronotopes over historical timescales, it borrows from such perspectives the insight that time and place are often co-articulated, and that Gallo users situating themselves with respect to one are often positioning themselves with respect to the other as well, either intentionally or because of circulating stereotypes in

late modernity that link localness with the past (Bauman & Briggs 2003; Woolard 2005 [2008]).

Late-modernity often articulates a particular understanding of time and place—a “view from nowhere” as Woolard (2005[2008]), following Nagel, has said. Bauman and Briggs (2003) have illustrated how modernist language ideologies continue to structure not only language policies but also broader social policies involved in the creation of certain modes of subjecthood, which are then endowed with differential levels of access to public institutions. They argue that “Western domination did not rely solely on military might... but on the promulgation of certain crucial epistemological and ideological orientations as well” (3) and that a “cosmopolitan leap from historically and socially specific provincialities to a supposedly universal schema” (3) was undertaken through a celebration of tradition that entailed a sudden break with a presumed premodern past, relegating those who did not speak national languages to categories of premodern subjecthood that were seen as impure, uncivil and threatening to the wellbeing of the nationalist project. Ong (1996) further explores such processes of “cultural citizenship,” or “a process of self-making and being-made in relation to nation-states and transnational processes” (737), as a series of encounters between individuals and the pre-existing interpretive frames offered by civil societies which offer (or withhold) access to key institutions according to how citizenship is semiotically produced. Such considerations lead us to re-examine what is meant, in late modernity, when “citizens” and “speakers” are defined and enumerated.

2.2.3 *What is a speaker?*

At one level, a “speaker” is understood to be a person who is currently engaged in producing verbal forms, “the one who is currently speaking.” As Goffman (1981) and Bakhtin (1981) and the scholars adapting their models to interactional sociolinguistics have shown, however, this apparently simple definition is rife with multiplicity. The person voicing an utterance may not be taking up a stance of ownership toward it, and any utterance may be laden with multiple voices and echoes. The term “speaker” runs into even more complexities and ideological shadings when one considers how it is used in projects of minority language representation and enumeration (Hill 2002). In such settings, an examination of language ideologies involves asking: who gets labeled as a speaker, by whom, and for what purposes?

In many cases, what is invoked by “speaker” is an ideological orientation toward nativeness. Doerr (2009) claims that the concept of “native speaker” has prevailed “despite [its] theoretical shortcomings” (1), both in scholarship and in popular discourses. The native speaker is an ideal person is often imagined as one with “a complete and possibly innate competence in the language (Pennycook 1994:175). Such an understanding entails thinking about both languages and speech communities as bounded and fixed (Doerr 2009, Jaffe 2007). Analogously to how some varieties are popularly termed “languages” and others “dialects” of those languages (see Chapter 3), the division of a social group into “native speakers” and “non-native speakers” (or “speakers” and “non-speakers”) ignores understandings of intersecting repertoires and bivalent forms, as well as discursive regimes that might regiment, officially or implicitly, who gets to

display what kinds of competence across a variety of settings, not all of which are equally valued by those who count speakers.

In minority language settings, “speakers” are often essentialized and enumerated, for many of these languages are inscribed within late-modern nation-states that naturalize statistics and quantitative polling as a transparent view of social organization (Urla 1993; Briggs 2007). Because of their usually formalized protocols and distance from the contexts in which many minority languages are usually embedded, some surveys risk underrepresenting the number of people who might in other contexts define themselves as users of the language, as well as people who understand the language but have opted out of producing it for a variety of reasons. This was the case for Gallo, where the few large-scale surveys that have been done arrive at widely differing numbers of speakers. For example, using 1999 data from France’s national statistics bureau, INSEE (*Institut national de la statistique et des études économiques*), Le Boëtté (2003) estimates 28,300 speakers for Gallo. In contrast, others (e.g. Blanchet & Le Coq 2008; Bretagne Culture Diversité / TMO Régions 2014) accord Gallo roughly as many speakers as have been estimated for Breton: somewhat over 200,000.

My history with Gallo users (see Chapter 3) allowed me, anecdotally, to trace a shift in how Gallo advocates viewed surveys. During my earlier visits, in 2006-2007 and in 2012, many advocates and enthusiasts were suspicious of large-scale language surveys that sought to enumerate the number of Gallo speakers. They voiced concerns that the Regional Council of Brittany and other institutions might use survey results to justify reducing funding for Gallo-language activism, to the profit of Breton-language revitalization. However, during my main phase of fieldwork (2013-2014), Gallo

advocates frequently cited the 2014 survey's findings, which were much larger than the INSEE findings; they sent out reports through emailing lists and press releases. For members of marginalized communities, then, engaging in such representational politics can be seen as a form of strategic essentialism (Spivak 1988) for the purposes of funding and/or visibility.

Another critical issue in the representation of minority language speakerhood is the role accorded to the “new speaker,” contrasted to that of the native speaker (Jaffe 2015). This emerging term is in some ways analogous to “language learner,” “heritage speaker” or “semi-speaker” (Dorian 1997). But while the notion of “semi-speaker” portended impending language death, “the figure of the ‘new speaker’ is an inherently more hopeful reading: he or she evokes an upward movement away from language shift and loss rather than an inevitable downward slope” (Jaffe 2015:23). It can englobe a variety of positionalities, from those who are starting language classes but who have a great deal of passive competence, to people newly arrived on the scene altogether, along with a whole range of motivations for assuming the new speaker mantle.

Finally, as the preceding discussion suggests, individuals are discursively positioned by other people as native/new/semi-speakers (or not) at least as frequently as they lay explicit claims to such positions themselves. The assignation of speakerhood is a deeply interactional process. As Jaffe (2009b) says about the attributions of stance that minority language teachers model for their students, “bilingual identity emerges... not so much as a narrowly defined set of language practices, but as a *stance* of positive engagement in social and communicative practice involving more than one language” (143, italics in original).

2.2.4 Approaches to language revitalization

Reflexive studies of language ideologies have particularly critiqued the rhetoric that often surrounds “endangered” languages, including Gallo, which UNESCO has termed “seriously endangered.” Scholars engaged in this critical reflection (e.g. Duchêne & Heller 2007; Errington 2003; Hill 2002; Hornberger 1998; May 2005; Moore 2006) have highlighted modernist discourses which reify languages as static possessions, objects whose assumed value marginalizes them from everyday contexts of use. As Heller and Duchêne say in the introduction to their edited volume *Discourses of Endangerment*, “for any of this [discourse about languages as endangered] to make sense, minimally, languages have to be understood as things we can count, and as bounded (if internally variable) spaces independent in some way of other forms of social practice” (2007:3). In the same volume, Jaffe (2007) calls these tropes “essentializing discourses,” which she claims “casts the content of both languages and communities as fixed and unproblematic” (61)—which, again, runs counter to an understanding of language as social practice.

Such an approach entails rethinking how linguists and anthropologists may be reifying certain understandings of language in our own practices of transcription and other forms of representation. Pointing out that on the global stage, the most vocal proponents of lesser spoken languages are often academics and policymakers, not everyday users of the language and/or self-identified members of the ethnic or cultural group with which the language is affiliated, Hill (2002) urges linguists and policymakers to consider whether community members find their rhetoric “empowering and encouraging, unintelligible and alienating, or something in between” (119). Hill presents

the ramifications of several “unfortunate entailments” (120) of expert rhetoric, including: (a) that rhetorics of *universal ownership* often remind marginalized groups of how the same institutions now claiming their language as a universal human inheritance also once “claimed” (stole) their community’s material and symbolic resources; (b) that *hyperbolic valorization* positions languages as worthy of museum-like appreciation by elites rather than for daily use; and (c) that statistical *enumeration* relies on the same modernist notions of mapping and census-making that helped colonial powers justify their territorial control (see also Urla 1993).

The famous Reversing Language Shift scale developed by Fishman (1991) partakes in some of these implications. Those who adopt the scale argue that language shift can only be reversed if the minority language in question has reached a certain level of institutional presence. As Reynolds (2009) points out, however, Fishman’s model “problematically relies on a functionalist rendering of the world into social spheres” (223)—such as those promulgated in the modern period (Bauman & Briggs 2003)—and tends to blame shifted populations in a paternalistic manner, rather than recognizing that language shift may be a creative response to dire circumstances. Models such as Fishman’s also elide the fact that language practices are always partial and more complex than can be treated by researchers who describe “the Gallo movement” in a totalizing way, without recognizing the positionality of different individuals within Gallo revitalization efforts (see Feliciano-Santos 2011 for different positionalities related to Taíno activism). Likewise, Kulick (1992) reminds us that macrosocial forces such as education and modernization are not sufficient explanations for language shift; rather,

such forces are always recontextualized by the interpretive frameworks adhered to by speakers.

Continuing the critical reexamination of endangered language rhetoric, Woolard (1999) problematizes the notion that forms used in codeswitching must ‘belong’ to one language or another rather than being bivalent to both, and Minks (2010) employs data from Miskitu children’s multilingual speech across different social contexts to argue that language is “not... a bounded system, but... a diverse pool of communicative resources that socialize children into multiple modes of voicing and acting” (495). Mühlhäusler (2006) is skeptical of the very notion that the heteroglossic practices he observed in Papua New Guinea can be enumerated as languages, despite taxonomists’ desire to read hundreds of discrete languages into the landscape. Heller and Duchêne (2007) acerbically concur: “We aren’t sure there are 6000 languages in the world; we aren’t even sure how you can count languages. We are curious about what it means to say a language ‘dies’ or ‘disappears’: what happened to change?” (3). All of these approaches chip away at any understanding of languages which would see them essentially as static objects that are perceived by all onlookers to have the same nature and boundaries, and which could be fully characterized by any one definition.

The Corsican sociolinguist Jean-Baptiste Marcellesi’s concept of *polynomie* offers a possible means of reconciling (or at least keeping joint sight of) these two views of language. *Polynomie* construes languages as having some degree of unity (allowing them to be identified as such) but still open to pluralism. Marcellesi defines a polynomic language as “a language with an abstract unity, which users recognize in multiple modes of existence, all of which are equally tolerated and are not distinguished hierarchically or

by functional specialization” (Marcellesi 1989:170; translation Jaffe 2007:65).⁵ Such an approach recognizes that individuals engage in linguistic practice from a variety of positions, with a variety of goals. According to Jaffe (2007) it is this pluralist approach that has, since about the turn of the twenty-first century, dominated some sectors of Corsican language advocacy. *Polynomie* recognizes formal pluralism as well: “there is no assumption that individuals or groups will or should be linguistically consistent. Rather, they are seen as drawing selectively on a repertoire of forms” (Jaffe 2007:71). It also allows for the insight that not everyone must have a “full” or “native-like” repertoire to engage in meaningful social practice.

A polynomic approach provides a useful cautionary note to applications of assessments like Fishman’s Reversing Language Shift scale to languages like Gallo. Hornsby and Nolan (2011) use the scale to paint quite a grim picture of Gallo: “it can... be cautiously argued that the Gallo movement merits the success rate of 2 out of 10 due to the very difficult circumstances under which it has carried out its activities” (320). However, if users of Gallo do not construe competence or speakerhood the same way language planners do, Gallo may remain meaningful as a resource for identity construction in Upper Brittany even in the absence of large-scale revitalization. Estimates of numbers of remaining “speakers” elide such distinctions and may deny representation to some individuals who nonetheless consider Gallo forms to be valued parts of their repertoires. Under a polynomic perspective, says Jaffe (2007), “a defense of variability could shift the focus away from the survival of named linguistic codes towards the

⁵ “...une langue à l’unité abstraite, à laquelle les utilisateurs reconnaissent plusieurs modalités d’existence, toutes également tolérées sans qu’il y ait entre elles hiérarchisation ou spécialisation de fonction” (Marcellesi 1989:170, quoted in Jaffe 2007:65).

preservation of individual and collective access to the fullest possible repertoire of language practices” (71). However, as explored above in 2.2.1, many individuals remain invested in the idea of languages as fixed and named codes; no one ideology will englobe every possible way of valuing language and the constitutive role it plays in social life.

2.3 Language in France

This chapter concludes with a brief overview of language ideologies and linguistic inquiries at the national scale of France. The long and important history of linguistic and cultural advocacy in Brittany, in particular, will be discussed in Chapter 3, where I situate Gallo as a linguistic and cultural construct.

2.3.1 A brief history of language policies in France

France has long espoused what Schiffman (2002) calls “the most centrist of centrist language policies in the world” (89); Ager (1999) considers the control of language to be “the longest-lasting objective of the French state” (18). Traditionally, scholars have recognized the Edict of Villers-Cotterêts (1539), which dictated that French be used in courts, as the first language policy of the French state. Recent work (Achard 1980, Ager 1999, Cohen 2003) has argued that the Edict was not created with explicit and lasting policy in mind; Cohen calls it an “invented memory, fashioned in the sixteenth century [...] and raised up as the central explanatory framework for the history of French in the seventeenth century in order to inscribe the French language within absolutist political theory” (19). However it was originally intended, its later historical contextualizations figure it as an early example of French linguistic hegemonization.

In 1635, the French Academy (*l'Académie française*) was founded to “work with all possible care and diligence to give our language certain rules and to render it pure,

eloquent and capable of dealing with the arts and science” (Article XXIV).⁶ As this mission statement implies, the 17th century witnessed the growth of a “belief in the universality of standard French, in its innate clarity, precision, logic and elegance, and in its superiority over any other language and certainly over any regional form of French or any regional language” (Ager 1999: 23). The hierarchical valorization of standard French over the other *langues d’oïl* became explicit in the 18th century. The 1765 *Encyclopédie*, the chief ideological product of the French Enlightenment, defines the word *Patois* as follows: “Corrupted language such as is spoken in all the provinces: each one has its patois; therefore, we have the Bourguignon patois, the Norman patois, the Champenois patois, the Gascon patois, the Provençal patois, etc. One only speaks language in the capital” (quoted in Simoni-Aurembou 2003:138).⁷ This definition prefigures a place-based ideology still extant today, which sees regional languages like Gallo as tightly bound to particular places. While the entry also links French, or “language,” to a particular place—“the capital”—Revolutionary and post-Revolutionary discourses on language would soon universalize the purview of French, while continuing to localize other varieties.

By the Revolutionary period, then, “French ha[d] long been considered, by grammarians and politicians, the symbol of national order and, as such, the only properly ordered language of France: French is *la langue*, and everything else *patois* and disorder” (McDonald 1989:127). Because French had been essentialized as the language of reason,

⁶ “...travailler avec tout le soin et la diligence possible à donner des règles certaines à notre langue et à la rendre pure, éloquente et capable de traiter les arts et les sciences” (Article XXIV).

⁷ “*Langage corrompu tel qu’il se parle dans toutes les provinces: chacune d’elle a son patois; ainsi nous avons le patois bourguignon, le patois normand, le patois champenois, le patois gascon, le patois provençal, etc. On ne parle la langue que dans la capitale*” (quoted in Simoni-Aurembou 2003:138).

a central aim of revolutionaries following the Revolution of 1789 was the so-called democratization of the state through explicit language policy. Linguistic hegemony became seen as a necessary precondition for republican orthodoxy (Ager 1999). The 1794 Barrère Report illustrates such a perspective:

The finest language in Europe, which first freely consecrated the Rights of Man and Citizen, [...] has the duty of transmitting to the world the most sublime thoughts of liberty [...] Federalism and superstition speak Breton; emigration and hatred for the Republic speak German; counter-revolution speaks Italian, and fanaticism speaks Basque. Let us destroy these instruments of damage and error. (de Certeau et al. 1975:291-9; quoted in Ager 1999:28)

The principal means through which these “instruments of damage and error” were to be destroyed was through education in standard French. The 1794 Abbé Grégoire Report, subtitled *Sur la nécessité et les moyens d’anéantir les patois et d’universaliser l’usage de la langue française* [On the need and ways to annihilate *patois* and universalize the usage of French], found that only three million of the new Republic’s 25 million inhabitants habitually spoke French. Decrees were soon put into effect to enforce the use of French in education, as well as to “ensure that the population would not be ‘abused’ through the use of regional languages” (Ager 1999:28).

This belief that *l’éducation nationale*, using *la langue française*, was the vehicle by which French citizens were created, continued throughout the 19th and much of the 20th centuries. It is in this context that we must read Bourdieu’s work on the French national education system (e.g. 1979), and the way in which this system inscribed inequality on the bodies of its students. Achard (1980) draws attention to how, by treating arbitrary rules “as if they had always been part of the language” (179), “the cult of correct spelling” (178) functioned to ensure linguistic hegemony in education throughout the 20th century. He also recalls a pre-World War II tradition requiring schoolchildren “to know

the names of all the 88 departments, prefectures, sub-prefectures and chief district towns” and wonders whether “the object was simply to turn out lots of postmen, or to make people forget the names of the old regions” (180-181). Achard’s speculation, as well as the practice he is speculating about, reveals the close connection between ideologies of language and place in France. Alongside these schoolroom practices, Ager (1999) claims that other 19th- and 20th-century developments such as military conscription, new means of transportation, formal written tests for all government *fonctionnaires*, and the practice of relocating civil servants across the country, all helped lead to a situation in which “the regional languages lived in slow decline, gradually losing economic power and status, losing touch with their cultural past, and only surviving as the language of the home and local industry” (31).

Starting in 1951, when the Loi Deixonne allowed Basque, Breton, Catalan, and Occitan to be taught in schools, regional varieties became more integrated into national French policies. However, Ager (1999) claims that many of the ostensibly permissive language policies “in no sense represented active support for language maintenance” (31); it was not until 1982-3, for example, that the ministry included provisions for teacher training (Ager 1999); furthermore, these provisions have since been elided for Gallo. A 1998 report, prepared by Bernard Poignant, mayor of a town in historically Breton-speaking Lower Brittany, is “fairly scathing” (38) in its evaluation of the actual state of regional language instruction at the end of the twentieth century. For example, among the 12 million children enrolled in French public schools in 1996-1997, only 335,000 were receiving regional language instruction; at many schools, such courses did not exist. Poignant relied in part upon a rhetoric of cultural heritage to argue for the

importance of regional language education; he claimed that, if France protects its monuments and art, it should also protect its “patrimoine linguistique et [...] diversité culturelle.” However, Poignant also insisted that “toute culture est vivante” [all culture is alive] and that regional language teaching should include “contemporary [literary] creation, by men and women of today, whether they express themselves in French, in their regional language or in both” (24).⁸ This tension between language as cultural heritage and language as tool for social action is one this dissertation will explore.

2.3.2 Recent language debates in France

The last decade of the twentieth century saw two major policy debates over language in France: the 1994 passage of the Loi Toubon, and the 1999 signing (but not ratification) of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages. At the time of my fieldwork, in 2013-2014, the European Charter again rose to the forefront of language and policy debates, as the French parliament considered a proposed amendment to the French constitution that would have finally enabled ratification. These debates have continuing relevance to language ideologies in France today, as they reveal, on a national scale, the tensions between language and various ideologies of place, time, and personhood.

The Loi Toubon, approved by the French Parliament in 1994, made the use of French obligatory in government publications, the workplace, commercial contracts, advertisements, audio-visual broadcasts, government-financed schools, and public meetings. In many of these domains, the law permits other languages to be used

⁸ “...la création contemporaine, par les hommes et les femmes d’aujourd’hui, qu’ils s’expriment en langue française, en leur langue régionale ou dans les deux” (Poignant 1998:24).

alongside French, and there are a few exceptions, such as international schools or contracts made overseas. Despite such concessions, the law is resolute in its declaration that French is *the* language of public life in France; its preamble proclaims that “Established by virtue of the Constitution as the language of the French Republic, the French language is a key element in the personality and the heritage of France. French is the language of instruction, work, trade and public services”.⁹ Like discourses about regional languages, the mention of *patrimoine* links French to cultural heritage, but unlike those other discourses, French here is clearly seen as a force for action in public life as well.

In Ager’s (1999) discussion, politicians’ reactions to the proposed Toubon law illustrated two clusters of ideologies: that French is both “a fundamental component of French identity” and “an underlying value and resource of humankind” (11). The Loi Toubon is popularly understood to be aimed at a perceived intrusion of English, not regional languages, into public life, but Ager argues that its nationalist vision of France marginalizes the regional languages. Noting that, because of France’s post-war geographic shape, “the two words ‘France’ and ‘Hexagon’ are commonly used in French as though they were synonyms” (42), Ager defines a “myth of the Hexagon” involving such components as the following:

France has always existed in her present shape; France forms a natural unit, predestined to form one social group and one political nation; [...] the sovereignty of the people, individually and not through membership of any group, class or category; the idea of fraternity, or the expression of a general will to act together. (43)

⁹ “Langue de la République en vertu de la Constitution, la langue française est un élément fondamental de la personnalité et du patrimoine de la France. Elle est la langue de l’enseignement, du travail, des échanges et des services publics.”

Blommaert and Verschueren (1998) contrast this territorial French nationalism with alternative ethnic models, exemplified for instance by German nationalism. Through the invocation of the myth of the Hexagon, speakers can imagine a shared national identity (cf. Anderson 1991), which erases regional or other demographic differences to the profit of an ostensibly shared linguistic heritage. The iconic location of regional languages on the periphery of this Hexagon (or external to it, as is the case for Corsican, Jaffe 1999) metonymically speaks to their peripheral nature in the national myth alluded to by the Toubon law.

A recent language policy debate that has more explicitly touched on the status of regional varieties is that provoked by the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (CETS 148, 1992). This charter promises support for languages that are “traditionally used within a given territory of a State by nationals of that State who form a group numerically smaller than the rest of the State's population.” The charter applies neither to official national languages nor to “the languages of migrants,” and it further precludes “dialects of the official language(s) of the State.” Acknowledging that “the right to use a regional or minority language in private and public life is an inalienable right,” the charter asks signing members to commit to measures protecting the public role played by those languages in domains such as education, law, administration and public services, the media, cultural activities and facilities, and economic and social life. Provisions are included for external oversight to ensure that ratifying countries actively comply with the charter’s stipulations.

As of 15 March 2016, 33 countries have signed the charter, including France (7 May 1999). However, France is one of eight countries whose governments have not

ratified the charter, greatly limiting the degree to which regional language speakers and policymakers can draw upon it for justification. Following France's signing of the charter, its Constitutional Council ruled (in Decision n° 99-412 DC, 15 June 1999) that the charter was unconstitutional. The official English version of the decision reads as follows:

These provisions of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, in that they confer specific rights on 'groups' of speakers of regional or minority languages within 'territories' in which these languages are used, undermine the constitutional principles of the indivisibility of the Republic, equality before the law and the unicity of the French people. [...] These provisions are also contrary to the first paragraph of Article 2 of the Constitution in that they seem to recognise a right to use a language other than French not only in 'private life' but also in 'public life.' (paragraphs 10-11)

This decision offers evidence that France's hegemonic linguistic policies still hold sway, and that certain voices in government are deeply suspicious of the role of regional languages in public life. Among the set of amendments made to the French Constitution in 2008, Article 75-1 claims that "les langues régionales appartiennent au patrimoine de la France" [the regional languages belong to the cultural heritage of France]. However, the Constitutional Council declared in 2011 that this statement did not guarantee any particular constitutional right or freedom.

Current president François Hollande promised to ratify the charter as part of his campaign platform, but such actions have not yet materialized. In January 2014, the French National Assembly (*Assemblée nationale*), the lower of the two houses of the French Parliament, voted in favor of a constitutional amendment permitting the ratification of the European Charter. The proposed amendment, consisting of "a single article inserting in the Constitution an article 53-3 authorizing the ratification of the European Charter of Regional and Minority Languages adopted in Strasbourg on

November 5, 1992, and signed by France on May 7, 1999” (*Conseil d’Etat*, N° 390.268, 31 July 2015),¹⁰ was submitted June 24, 2015. However, on July 31, 2015, the Council of State (*Conseil d’Etat*), the legal advisor of the executive branch, gave the amendment a disfavorable opinion, claiming that it would introduce into the Constitution “an internal contradiction generating judiciary insecurity” (*Conseil d’Etat*, N° 390.268, 31 July 2015).¹¹ Following this verdict, the Senate (*Sénat*) rejected the proposed amendment on October 27, 2015. This pathway to ratification seems closed for the moment.

Despite such recent nods to regional languages as potentially valuable (if in name only), most academic and public discourses about regional languages in France at the start of the 21st century are not encouraging. Héran (1993) interviewed nearly 10,000 people and found that, while 16% reported that their parents had usually spoken to them in a language other than French, only 5% habitually spoke a language other than French to their own children. Ager (1999) calls this “massive inter-generational language loss in one generation” (36); Héran himself concludes that there are no monolingual speakers of regional languages alive today in France. Héran’s study is but one in a long tradition of academic and public discourses of regional language loss in France; however, it is not the only possible conclusion which can be drawn. Blanchet (1994) points out that Héran’s methodology (use of a large-scale survey) likely led him to underrepresent the actual amount of regional language speakers. This focus on methodology—what large-scale

¹⁰ “...comporte un article unique insérant dans la Constitution un article 53-3 autorisant la ratification de la Charte européenne des langues régionales et minoritaires adoptée à Strasbourg le 5 novembre 1992 et signée par la France le 7 mai 1999” (*Conseil d’Etat*, N° 390.268, 31 July 2015).

¹¹ “...une contradiction interne génératrice d’insécurité juridique” (*Conseil d’Etat*, N° 390.268, 31 July 2015).

surveys can tell us, and what they cannot—leads us next to consider the ways in which the social nature of language has been studied in France.

2.3.3 *Studying language and society in France*

Many important twentieth-century social theorists have come from France, including Foucault, Bourdieu, de Certeau, Derrida, and Barthes, among others. The insights into language and social life that such thinkers provided have undergirded much of the understanding of language as social practice and performance, as discussed in 2.1.

The French discipline that has studied the ramification of policies such as those outlined in 2.4.2 is variously called *la sociologie du langage* (Cohen 1956, Achard 1993) or *la politique linguistique* (Achard 1980, Calvet 1996). Gadet (2003) admits that “fieldwork is not, generally speaking, one of the strong points of the French social sciences” (26). In her 2001 review of the current state of anthropological work in France, Rogers claims that linguistic anthropology “does not exist [in France] as such” (485) and therefore excludes it from consideration. (Linguistic anthropological studies have been done in France, often by North Americans; e.g., Jaffe 1999, Koven 2007, and Tetreault 2010.) *La sociolinguistique* is a recognized field of study in France, although Gadet (2003) reports that “sociolinguistics occupies only a modest place in the teaching of language science in France” (20). Pooley (2000) and Jones (2011) report that it was not until the 1970s that most French linguists saw the study of regional varieties as objects worthy of analytical—rather than purely dialectological, i.e. descriptive—study. Jones (2011) suggests that Labov’s co-variationist approach, in particular, has been little studied in France because of the country’s strong normative linguistic tradition (see Section 2.4.2). As Gadet (2003) explains, “In France [...] political, ideological, and

theoretical reasons for ignoring heterogeneity [...] prevail, and it is perhaps understandable that the variationist approach should have remained in the shadow of more dominant trends” (25). Gadet (2003) nonetheless proclaims the existence of an independent, although diffuse, French variationist tradition, focused on three areas of interest: (1) regional differences; (2) the spoken/written distinction (interestingly, this does not seem to mark the American field of sociolinguistics to as great an extent); and (3) language change.

Finally, there is a tradition of critical sociolinguistics or *une sociolinguistique du conflit* [a sociolinguistics of conflict] (Boyer 1991) in France, which aligns with a political-economic perspective that sees language relations as conflictual power relationships between the dominant and the oppressed (see also Lafont 1993; Marcellesi, Bulot & Blanchet 2003). A related approach, *une (socio)linguistique de la complexité* [a (socio)linguistics of complexity], has been proposed by Philippe Blanchet, who has been centrally involved in much of sociolinguistic research on Gallo to date. Blanchet (2003), following Edgar Morin, identifies three principles of *une pensée complexe* [complex thought]: dialogism, recursivity, and a “hologrammic” principle that “affirms that the all... is in the part, which is in the all” (53).¹² This approach “[tries] to envisage the complexity of human phenomena in the majority of their dimensions, notably qualitative, while remaining open-minded. One of its essential consequences is the rejection of a mechanistic, binary or dichotomous way of thinking” (53).¹³ Under this perspective, the sociolinguist has an obligation to reflect critically on three types of ethical relationships:

¹² “... affirme que le tout... est dans la partie qui est dans le tout” (53).

¹³ “...[tente] d’envisager la complexité des phénomènes humains dans la plupart de leurs dimensions, notamment qualitative, tout en restant une pensée ouverte. L’une des conséquences essentielles en est le refus d’un raisonnement mécaniste, binaire ou dichotomique” (53).

between the researcher and his or her research project, the researcher and his or her participants, and “the researcher, as man [sic.] and citizen, and the society/societies among which he carries out a scientific activity and on which he necessarily exerts action” (Blanchet 2012:102). These French approaches all place the politics of linguistic representation, and their stakes for language users, at the center of (socio)linguistic study. While my own study takes a more micro-interactional approach to the study of language, power and representation, it is important to keep in mind these larger cultural embeddings.

In the spirit of such an endeavor—jointly attending to macrosocial power relations and the researcher’s own role as political and cultural agent—I turn to the next two chapters. Chapter 3 situates Gallo as a language object and a form of cultural engagement; Chapter 4 presents my research methods, including how I constructed my own subjectivity in the field and my positionality with respect to the users of Gallo with whom I worked.

CHAPTER 3

GALLO AS LINGUISTIC AND CULTURAL CONSTRUCT

As a regional language, the social object of Gallo is inscribed in multiple political and cultural entities. At its broadest scale of relevance, it is identified as being within the nation of France, where official institutions orient overwhelmingly to standard French. At the same time, it is specifically located within the region of Brittany, which may be perceived as multilingual but largely insofar as the regional language of Breton is recognized alongside French. Gallo is also often situated within the specific region of *Haute-Bretagne* [Upper Brittany], or *le pays gallo* [Gallo country], and in this sense, recognized as a regional language alongside Breton. Finally, at its most local scale, Gallo is embedded within everyday contexts of cultural activities that are the focus on this dissertation.

In this chapter, I situate Gallo within these various entities, first by discussing Gallo as a language object (Section 3.1) and then in terms of its cultural significance (Section 3.2). In the first move, Gallo emerges as a language object in a traditional structuralist sense; I locate it geographically on France's Armorican peninsula (3.1.1); I report estimates for number of speakers (3.1.2); I describe how it is often classified in relation to the typologically similar languages of northern France, including French (3.1.3); I provide some benchmarks for its grammatical structure, again with reference to French (3.1.4); and I explore some of the debates over its orthography (3.1.5). In this chapter's second half, I describe Gallo in terms of the place it occupies in cultural

systems and symbolic imaginings within Brittany’s history. First, I situate it within a regional social history that centers on agriculture and rurality, as well as linguistic and cultural revindication (Section 3.2.1). Then, in Section 3.2.2, I present some ramifications of the fact this regional linguistic and cultural revindication is most often *not* primarily imagined with respect to Gallo, but rather in regards to the more celebrated and commodified regional language of Breton. I briefly overview the history of Breton activism in Brittany, how Gallo has been comparatively marginalized, but also how the presence of Breton in Brittany has helped Gallo users achieve certain rights less readily available for other people who use *langues d’oïl*. In Section 3.2.3, I situate Gallo with respect to ideologies of place and time, showing that in many discourses, it is associated with a disappearing rural past. Symbolically, Gallo performances often draw on these elements, as I will show through a brief discussion of how old-fashioned rural clothing has become indexical of Gallo for many people. I also mention some language attitude surveys that have been done for Gallo, showing that although perspectives associating Gallo with the past are dominant, they are not unanimous. Finally, in Section 3.2.3, I present an overview of some of the contemporary spheres of Gallo social practice in Upper Brittany today—in preparation of my more detailed discussion of these spaces in my methods chapter (Chapter 4).

3.1 Gallo as a language object

3.1.1 Gallo geography

Most books on Gallo quickly follow a discussion of *what* Gallo is (see Section 3.1.3) with a statement about *where* it is spoken—particularly, where within Brittany. They usually describe Gallo as being spoken on the eastern half of the Armorican

Peninsula in western France. This peninsula is surrounded by the sea, with the English Channel to the north, the Bay of Biscay to the south, and the peninsula pointing out toward the Atlantic. In most cases, such as Auffray's (2012) grammar, Gallo is described with reference to four specific *départements* (or administrative districts), all of which were once located within the former boundaries of Brittany:

Gallo is the *oïl* language (like Norman, Picard, Walloon, Poitevin, French...) traditionally spoken in Upper Brittany, which is to say in the eastern Côtes-d'Armor, eastern Morbihan, all of Ille-et-Vilaine and all of the Loire-Atlantique, in fact the entire eastern half of historic Brittany. [...] Its boundary is clear in its current western part, otherwise known as the part that Gallo shares with Breton (it goes from Plouha to Muzillac, passing near Châtelaudren, Mûr-de-Bretagne, Guéhenno...) (Auffray 2012:7).¹⁴

Auffray's (2012) grammar also represents this territory with the map in Figure 3.1, shown on the next page. As this map indicates, Gallo is spoken throughout the *départements* of Ille-et-Vilaine and Loire-Atlantique, and in the eastern halves of Côtes-d'Armor and Morbihan. (The numbers 35, 44, 22 and 56, respectively, following the *département* names and corresponding to *département* postal codes, are an oft-used shorthand to identify *départements*.) While all four of these *départements* were part of historic Brittany, along with the Breton-speaking *département* of Finistère (26), Loire-Atlantique (44) was removed from this region in 1982 under the Mitterrand government's policy of decentralization.

In the map in the following figure, Figure 3.2, the light blue *département* is Loire-Atlantique, no longer officially part of Brittany; the four *départements* in dark blue

¹⁴ "Le gallo est la langue d'oïl (comme le normand, le picard, le wallon, le poitevin, le français...) traditionnellement parlée en Haute-Bretagne, c'est-à-dire dans les Côtes-d'Armor orientales, le Morbihan oriental, toute l'Ille-et-Vilaine et toute la Loire-Atlantique, en fait toute la moitié est de la Bretagne historique [...] sa limite est nette dans sa partie occidentale actuelle, autrement dit celle que le gallo partage avec le breton (elle va de Plouha à Muzillac en passant près de Châtelaudren, Mûr-de-Bretagne, Guéhenno...)." (Auffray 2012:7)

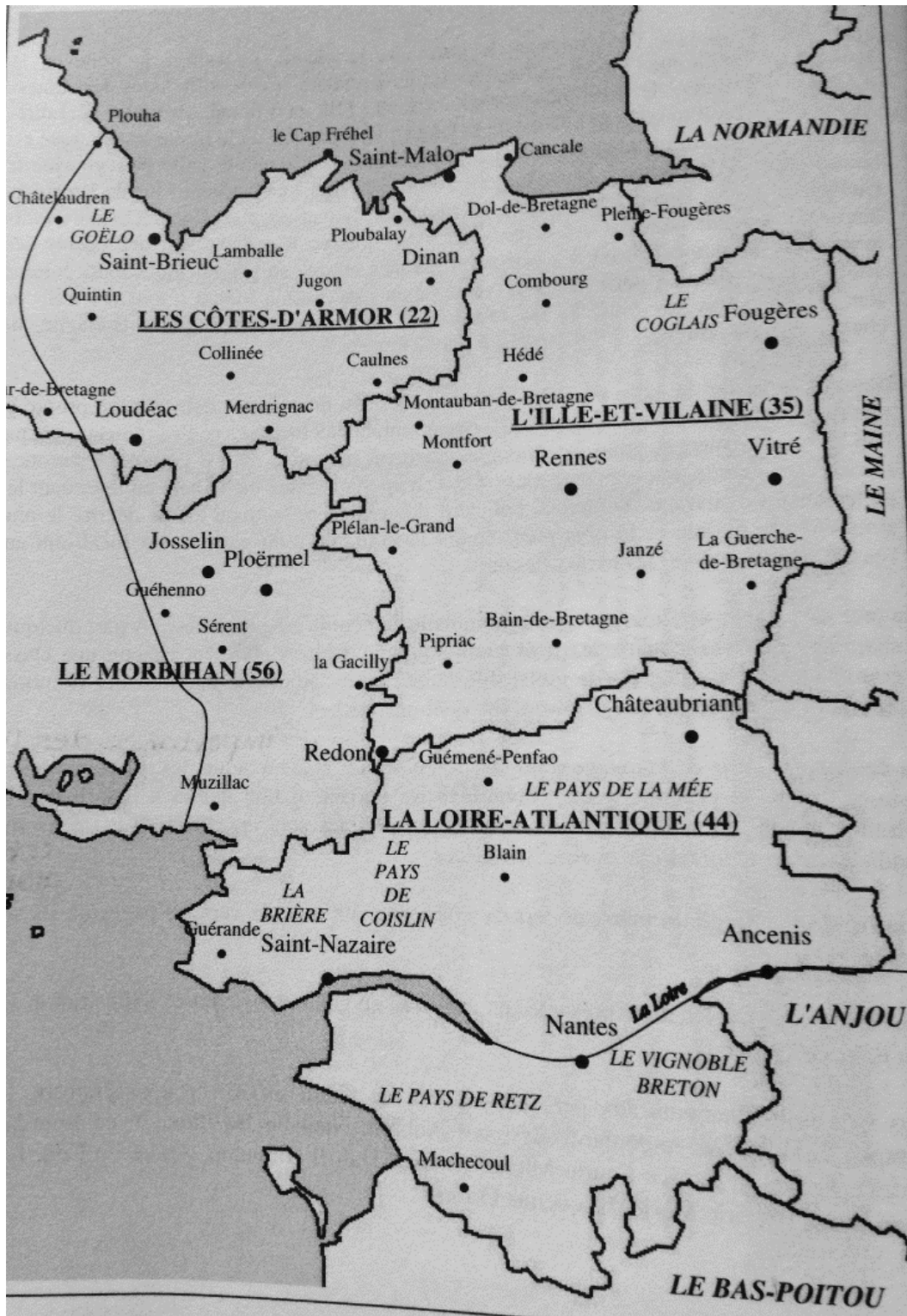


Figure 3.1 “La Haute-Bretagne” (Auffray 2012:8)

constitute modern-day administrative Brittany. The French capital, Paris, is included as a point of reference.

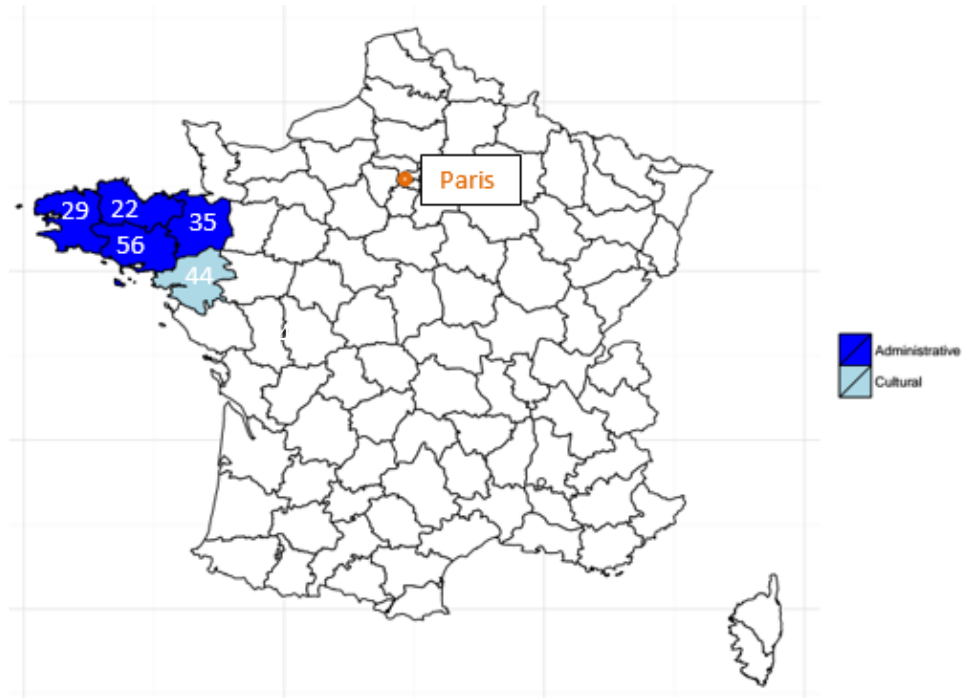


Figure 3.2 The region of Brittany, administrative and cultural

The redefinition of Brittany—from a historical/cultural entity to an administrative one, with a concomitant redrawing of the region’s boundaries—has had implications both for overall regional identity and for Gallo in particular. At more general symbolic levels, the historical regional capital of Nantes in Loire-Atlantique, where the Dukes of Brittany once had their seat of power, is now no longer located in the administrative region of Brittany. It has been replaced by the modern-day capital of Rennes (35). In 2014, when the national government proposed redrawing regional borders, rallies were held in Nantes in favor of reunifying the *département* of Loire-Atlantique with historical Brittany, and at

least one Gallo advocacy group sent members to march in favor of reunification.¹⁵ A 2014 survey of the region (Bretagne Culture Diversité / TMO Régions) revealed that 58 percent of the more than 1000 individuals polled were favorable to reunification. When eventual governmental plans for regional redistribution were announced, however, they left the region of Brittany unchanged.

With Gallo-speaking Loire-Atlantique now no longer part of the administrative region of Brittany, as it is now located in the region of Pays de la Loire, where Gallo has no official status (Hornsby & Nolan 2011), Gallo in Loire-Atlantique remains officially unrecognized as an important part of a region's *patrimoine* or cultural heritage. While some local groups organize Gallo-centric events in Loire-Atlantique, and some Gallo advocacy groups have satellite initiatives such as Gallo classes there, the relative lack of access to regional financial and moral support for minority languages has meant that Gallo is less visible in the *département*'s public space. Accordingly, in my dissertation I have concentrated chiefly on Gallo advocacy spheres within the administrative region of Brittany, leaving the state of affairs in Loire-Atlantique to future researchers.

While the eastern border of *le pays gallo*, then, is political as much as linguistic, the Gallo-speaking area's westward border is exclusively based on a linguistic isogloss; no political division splits Gallo-speaking Upper Brittany from Breton-speaking Lower Brittany. Because the isogloss corresponds to no official border, the exact towns given as a point of reference for the linguistic boundary vary across different texts. Auffray

¹⁵ According to organizers, at least 10,000 people attended, among them several prominent regional politicians; the Regional Council of Brittany again expressed its support for reunification. The 'Bonnets Rouges' movement against the *écotaxe* was also represented. (*Le Monde*, 19.04.2014, http://www.lemonde.fr/politique/article/2014/04/19/plusieurs-milliers-de-personnes-defilent-a-nantes-pour-la-reunification-de-la-bretagne_4404342_823448.html).

(2012), the source of Figure 3.1 above, consulted Gilliéron and Edmont's (1902-1907) *Atlas Linguistique de la France* when compiling his grammar; his stated language boundary is thus likely derived from the dialectological record. Other writers choose different landmarks: Pelhate (2011) situates the southern border at Vannes, a prominent city to the west of Auffray's chosen marker of Muzillac; Hornsby and Nolan (2011) equate the border with a line from Saint-Brieuc in the north to the mouth of the river Vilaine in the south—both of these being significantly farther to the east than Auffray's landmarks.

In the map in Figure 3.1 above, only the eastern part of the peninsula is featured, as for centuries, what was spoken in the western part was not Gallo, or any *langue d'oïl*, but the Celtic language of Breton. There have been Celtic-speaking peoples on the Armorican peninsula since the fifth century BCE; however, the language those inhabitants spoke was neither Breton nor any direct precursor, but rather Gaulish (Chevalier 2008). Gaulish would remain in use through the end of the Roman Empire but would gradually be replaced by Latin. The language identifiable as Breton first arrived in Brittany in the fifth and sixth centuries CE, as the result of large-scale migrations of Celts across the English Channel from Wales, Devon and Cornwall (Chevalier 2008). The area they encountered had already been largely romanized, but over the next few centuries, the peninsula once again became Celtic-speaking. Those who have sought to reconstruct Breton's historic purview through place-names have estimated that, at its apogee in the ninth century, Breton was spoken to the west of a line from Mont-Saint-Michel in the north to the mouth of the Loire River in the south (Ternes 1992, summarizing findings by Loth 1907). That is, Breton was presumably once spoken as far east as the hinterlands of

Rennes. However, Breton rapidly retreated between the tenth and the thirteenth centuries, with Gallo replacing it, and continued to retreat slowly thereafter (Walter 1994). The boundary has remained fairly stable since the 16th century, at which time it could be drawn roughly between Saint-Brieuc and Saint-Nazaire (Chevalier 2008). Figure 3.3, below, represents Walter’s (1994) presentation of the changing nature of the Gallo-Breton language border from the ninth through twentieth centuries:

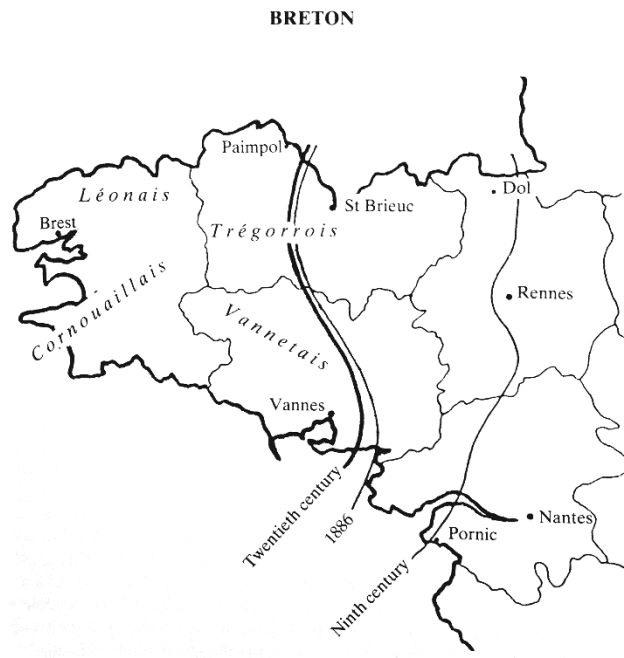


Figure 3.3 The shifting Gallo-Breton border (from Walter 1994:91 ‘Breton’)

The labels across the Breton-speaking areas in Figure 3.3 denote the four dialects into which descriptive linguists generally divide Breton. Three of these (Kerneveg/*cornouaillais*, Leoneg/*léonard* and Tregerieg/*trégorrois*) are largely mutually intelligible;¹⁶ the fourth (Gwenedeg/*vannetais*), spoken near Vannes, is phonologically, syntactically and lexically distinct. This figure illustrates how the Breton-Gallo boundary

¹⁶ Neo-Breton, a standardized dialect used in education, is most similar to *léonard*, the variety spoken in northern Finistère (Adkins & Davis 2012).

has moved westward over the centuries, to its current rough position along a line curving first west, then east, between Plouha (southeast of Paimpol) in the north and the hinterland of Vannes in the south. Given this relative stability since the early modern period, Gallo and Breton, and later French, have been in a language contact situation for quite some time. The numerous loan words in both Gallo and Breton attest to the centuries of exchange on either side of the border. Locally, the two geographic, cultural and linguistic entities defined by the border are known as *Basse-Bretagne* (Lower Brittany) to the west, and *Haute-Bretagne* (Upper Brittany) to the east. These designations lack formal administrative recognition but were common designations in Gallo advocate circles.

Like all boundaries, *la frontière linguistique* between Breton and Gallo is sustained as much through discourse as through geography (Diaz, in progress). Partially, this is because seeing the boundary as an opposition between Breton and Gallo obscures the predominant presence of French throughout the peninsula. Le Coadic (1998), who interviewed respondents from one “entirely Breton-speaking canton” near the border and another “entirely Gallo canton” reminds us that “speaking of ‘entirely Breton-speaking’ or ‘entirely Gallo’ cantons is only a linguistic shortcut that doesn’t reflect the reality, in the sense that, everywhere today, the French language is largely dominant, Breton and Gallo slipping into the interstitial spaces which are left to them” (26).¹⁷ The existence of an isogloss on maps of the region does not mean that someone who crosses that

¹⁷ “... parler de canton ‘intégralement bretonnant’ ou ‘intégralement gallo’ n’est ce qu’une commodité de langage qui ne reflète pas la réalité, dans la mesure où, partout aujourd’hui, la langue française est largement dominante, le breton et le gallo se glissant dans les espaces interstitiels qui leur sont laissés” (Le Coadic 1998:26).

imaginary line suddenly finds herself in a transformed linguistic landscape, since French is the dominant language of everyday life throughout contemporary Brittany.

However, the line does provide a shorthand for certain cultural distinctions, which Le Coadic (1998) qualifies as an “ethnic” dimension separating Upper and Lower Bretons, even those who lived—as did his Upper and Lower Breton participants—within about 30 kilometers of each other. Certain Gallo writers and comedians tend to evoke the boundary, and the “ethnic” dimension thereof, to humorous effect. Daniel Giraudon, who writes weekly columns in both Breton and Gallo in the widely circulating newspaper *Ouest-France*, opens his folk dictionary *Gallo et galloïsmes* with an anecdote about ‘the real Bretons’ who lived on the other side of the boundary, in the same area where Le Coadic did his research:

Born in Binic after the last war, during my childhood and adolescence I heard what was called ‘the patois’ or rather the ‘patoué’ as we/people said [...] People opposed it to ‘Breton,’ which they considered a real language, used a few kilometers away, in the Trégor-Goëlo, and farther away in Finistère. In the same way, for us, ‘the real Bretons’ were over there, in the western part of Brittany [...] our ignorance of the Celtic idiom made of us ‘sots-Bretons’. (5-6)¹⁸

The reference to *des sots-Bretons* is a pun on *des Haut-Bretons*, or “inhabitants of Upper Brittany.” *Sot* in French means ‘stupid,’ and the phrases “inhabitants of Upper Brittany” and “stupid Bretons” could be pronounced identically if one used a liaison, unacceptable before *haut* in Standard French. The feeling of inferiority to which Giraudon humorously refers will be discussed in more detail in Section 3.2.2; at this juncture, what matters is the observation that relatively small distances can assume large ideological significance

¹⁸ “ Né à Binic après la dernière guerre, j’ai entendu parler pendant mon enfance et mon adolescence ce qu’on appelait le ‘patois’ ou plutôt le ‘patoué’ [...] On l’opposait au ‘breton’ que l’on considérait comme une vraie langue, en usage à quelques kilomètres de là, dans le Trégor-Goëlo, et plus loin encore dans le Finistère. De même, pour nous, ‘les vrais Bretons’ étaient là-bas, dans la partie ouest de la Bretagne [...] Notre ignorance de l’idiome celtique faisait de nous des ‘sots-Bretons.’ ” (Giraudon 2012:5-6)

when the Breton-Gallo language boundary is evoked in discourse. On the other hand, some see the boundary between Gallo and Breton as permeable to exchanges and dialogue. My participants often voiced the opinion, occasionally attributed to actor and radio host Matao Rollo and also appearing in Pelhate (2011), that one should speak not of *une frontière* but *un talus*—a low wall, often covered with shrubs, like those that traditionally demarcate rural property in Brittany—because *un talus* is “facile d’enjamber pour passer d’une langue à l’autre”—“easy to step over to pass from one language to the other” (Pelhate 2011:7). Figure 3.4 shows what are likely to be two such *talus* from a distance.



Figure 3.4 “Talus” in Upper Brittany (personal photograph, 2007)

3.1.2 Gallo speakers

As discussed in Chapter 2, the ideological construct of “speaker” is often invoked in arguments over minority languages. In this section, I do not accept the term

uncritically, but I acknowledge that it is locally an important figure in discussions of Gallo as a language object.

Current counts of Gallo speakers vary widely, from 23,800 to over 200,000 (Angoujard 2010), out of a total population of 4,587,327 in 2013 for the four *départements* of administrative Brittany plus that of Loire-Atlantique (INSEE 2016). A 1999 study by INSEE, the French national statistics bureau, found that only one percent of the population of the five *départements* of historic Brittany reported speaking Gallo, against 11.3 percent for Breton (Le Boëtté 2003). However, Blanchet and Le Coq (2008) note that the conditions under which the survey was conducted likely led to under-declarations of regional language use, particularly in Upper Brittany. Indeed, a 2014 survey of over 1000 residents of Brittany (*Bretagne Culture Diversité / TMO Régions*) found that five percent of the residents of the five departments spoke Gallo “very well or quite well” and that eight percent understood it “very well or quite well.” These numbers are roughly equal to what the same survey reported for Breton: six percent and nine percent, respectively. They are much higher than the 1999 INSEE survey, and much more in line with a 2005 study by the Université Rennes 2 (CREDILIF (ERELLIF-EA 3207) that estimated 200,000 speakers.

Blanchet and Armstrong (2006) claim that the large discrepancy observed in these estimates—from 23,800 to more than 200,000—is common to all *langues d’oïl*, because many surveys fail to consider the sociolinguistic conditions in which many speakers exist:

The use and transmission of the ‘dialects’ are limited to private, intimate and hidden situations. If one is not a member of the circle, it is possible to live near speakers without ever hearing a single dialectal interaction. If enquiry is made of speakers whether they use such a language, they would answer ‘no,’ simply

because they do not wish to be regarded as ‘old-fashioned uneducated peasants using a shameful *patois* in front of a scholar.’ (254)

Furthermore, the term “Gallo” itself, while attested since the fourteenth century (Deriano 2005), was until very recently unknown to most of those who spoke Gallo natively, and knowing the label is a necessary precondition to avowing Gallo speakerhood on a survey.¹⁹ Even in 2009, Le Coq could write that “The label ‘patois’ remains much more widespread than ‘Gallo’ even if its image is evolving favorably in the families where children are learning [the language]” (n.p.).²⁰ Chapter 7 of this dissertation will explore other reasons why it might be useful to keep the term *patois* in the sociolinguistic landscape of Upper Brittany.

Past research has shown that Gallo is facing severe linguistic marginalization and that older speakers are rarely transmitting it to children (Blanchet & Armstrong 2006; Simoni-Aurembou 2003). However, it is still being spoken; Blanchet and Le Coq (2008) have found that even young people report hearing Gallo in daily life, and that 19 percent of rural residents and nine percent of city dwellers report that Gallo is spoken in their family environment. This number rises to 41 percent for respondents who report having occasionally heard Gallo on the radio.

Since the start of the twenty-first century, there have been several language attitude surveys or interviews conducted among Gallo speakers (e.g. Blanchet & Trehel 2002; Le Coq & Blanchet 2006; Nolan 2010; Rey 2010). Based on such studies,

¹⁹ That difficulty was lessened in the CREDILIF and BCD surveys, both of which reported a relatively high number of speakers (200,000). BCD included the term *patois* as a synonym for Gallo, and CREDILIF started by asking participants how they labeled the local vernacular, and used that term for the rest of the interview.

²⁰ “Le terme de ‘patois’ reste beaucoup plus répandu que celui de gallo même si sa représentation évolue de manière favorable dans les familles qui le font apprendre à leurs enfants” (Le Coq 2009 : n.p.).

Angoujard and Manzano (2008) report a *vitalité souvent surprenante* — “[an] often surprising vitality” (6) that runs counter to how most professional observers have seen Gallo. That is, although it is not being transmitted at home as a main language of communication, there are signs of continued interest and pride. I will discuss the two most recent studies, Nolan (2010) and Rey (2010), in more detail.

Rey (2010) examined language maintenance and identity in Upper Brittany through two lenses: language planning initiatives and sociolinguistic interviews with elder native speakers and Gallo students. Rey argues that the language attitudes of groups interviewed were more favorable toward Gallo than past research would have predicted (50 percent of native speakers and 78.6 percent of students answered that Gallo was “part of their identity as much as French”). However, she found that the ability to speak or understand Gallo was not a necessary component of the Gallo identity her participants elucidated and claimed. Rey observes that her participants were very unlikely to use Gallo with her, and almost none asked if the interview should be conducted in Gallo.²¹ Rey ultimately argues that Gallo may be headed toward a situation of language maintenance, given the importance of “an asserted community identity” to active language maintenance and the fact that her fieldwork suggested many participants did claim a Gallo identity, but that changes in language planning approaches were needed if social actors wished to prioritize active maintenance.

Also using an attitude survey approach, Nolan (2010) discussed Gallo’s case from the perspective of language policy and language planning studies, first examining shifts

²¹ My (adult) participants’ frequent use of Gallo points to different methodologies and interview formats, as well, perhaps, as a different degree of integration into the local community, as Rey’s fieldwork was done over the course of a single summer.

in French language policy between 1992 (when, upon entering the European Union, France created a constitutional article naming French as the language of the Republic) and 2004, when the European Union significantly expanded its membership. Nolan's macro-level analysis concludes that, despite many French institutions' wish to retain a monolingual ideal of France, the State's policy of defending linguistic diversity internationally forced it to acknowledge its regional languages had certain rights for recognition as well. He then uses Gallo as a case study for how those language policy decisions had ramifications "on the ground" (21), at the level of lived experience. Nolan administered a survey in 2003-2004 among Gallo students and their parents; he also interviewed a subset of respondents, activists and teachers. Responses reveal the important role of grandparents in motivating investment in the language; however, they reaffirm that no young people today are learning Gallo as the primary language of communication at home. Comparisons of the two generations show that, whereas parents rarely believed Gallo had a role to play in Brittany's future (27.7 percent) and called it a *patois* (74.5 percent), students were more optimistic about Gallo's future importance (49.4 percent) and were less likely to use the term *patois* (60.7 percent), instead often calling it *une langue* (19.1 percent). While Gallo still occupies a fragile position, concludes Nolan, changes are underway at the attitudinal level.

This past research on Gallo, most of which relies on self-reported survey data or analysis of written texts (policy documents or newspaper articles), has directed attention to the current status of Gallo, as well as provided information on widely circulating, explicit ideologies about Gallo and its speakers. However, questions remain concerning how attitudes about Gallo relate to its use in everyday life, or how representations of

Gallo may enter into metalinguistic definitions and artistic performances, shaping how Gallo speakers understand themselves in relation to particular places and times. These are some of the questions this dissertation explores.

3.1.3 *Gallo classification*

Gallo is commonly classified as a *langue d'oïl* or Northern Gallo-Romance variety, descended, like French, from one of the “reciprocally intelligible linguistic variants of *romana lingua* spoken since the ninth century in territories now occupied by northern France and part of Belgium” (Rey 2010). In other words, these linguistic variants can trace their descent from Vulgar Latin through early Romance (Hornsby & Nolan 2011). Besides Gallo, other commonly cited *oïl* languages, traditionally spoken in the northern half of present-day metropolitan France, include French itself, as well as *normand*, *picard*, *angevin*, *poitevin*, *saintongeais*, *wallon*, *champenois*, *lorrain*, *franc-comtois*, and *bourguignon*. In this section, I discuss the ideologically laden question of how the *langues d'oïl*, are demarcated and classified, particularly with respect to the most visible among them all: the national language of French.

The term *langue d'oïl* has been attested for centuries; the Italian poet Dante already claimed that the Romance vernaculars spoken in Western Europe during his lifetime could be divided into three groups—one group spoken in Southern France, another on the Italic and Iberian peninsulas, and a third in Northern France—based on their word for *yes*: “‘nam alii oc, alii si, alii vero dicunt oïl’ (some say ‘oc’, others say ‘si’, others say ‘oïl’)” (quoted in Rey 2010:58; see also Simoni-Aurembou 2003). Simoni-Aurembou (2003:138) presents a map showing the geographic distribution of the “domaine d'oïl. She divides this domain into what she claims can be properly called *oïl*

varieties, including Gallo, and other varieties that she instead terms “variations du français” [varieties of French]. I have included Simoni-Aurembou’s map in Figure 3.5, with the addition of coloring to highlight her location of Gallo:

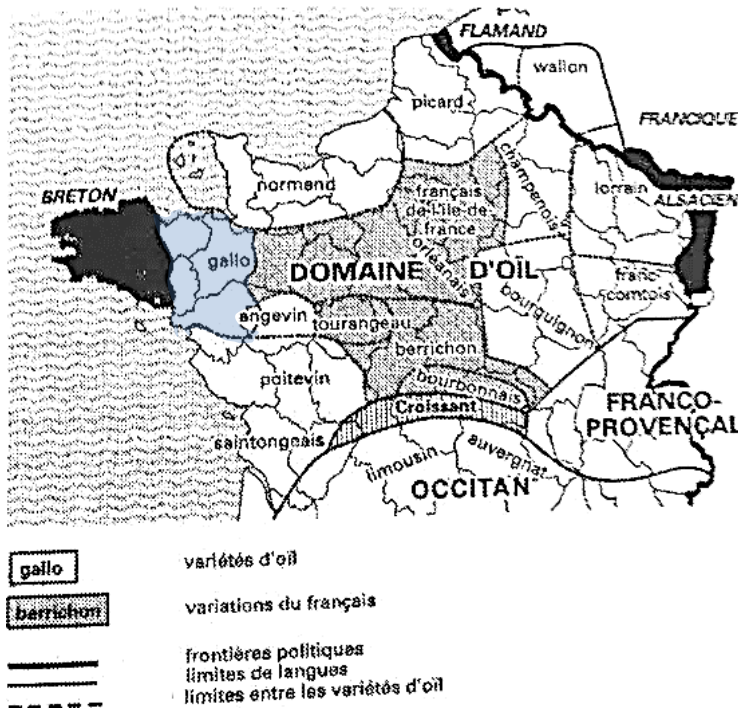


Figure 3.5 Le domaine d’oil (Simoni-Aurembou 2003:138); color added

The geographical area attributed to Gallo is thus bordered by the Celtic language of Breton to the west; the *oil* varieties of *normand* to the north and *poitevin* to the south; and, to the east, a variety that Simoni-Aurembou would qualify as a “variation du français” but that I often heard participants refer to as *le (patois) mayennais*.

Although Figure 3.5 demarcates neat borders for each *oil* variety, the actual linguistic situation is far less clearly delineated. Like all the *oil* languages, there is a great deal of internal variability within Gallo, and there is a great deal of resemblance between Gallo and other *langues d’oil*, including French. These mutually intelligible ways of speaking vary only gradually from one place to another, and—with the exception of

Gallo—are labeled chiefly based on the region of France in which they are traditionally imagined as spoken (e.g., *poitevin* is spoken in the former province of Poitou; *normand* is spoken in Normandy).²² Language labels are thus to some extent influenced by administrative boundaries rather than isoglosses. Those living to either side of the border between the eastern extreme of Ille-et-Vilaine (colored in blue on the map in Figure 3.5) and the western extreme of Mayenne (marked in dark gray), for instance, might share a very similar way of speaking. Indeed, I met several people in my Gallo classes who were originally from Mayenne and who felt that learning Gallo enabled them to speak their native variety. However, according to the language ideologies responsible for dialect maps, any such speaker living in Ille-and-Vilaine would speak *le gallo*, and any living on the Mayenne side would speak *le mayennais*, which Simoni-Aurembou classifies as no *variété d’oïl* at all, but rather a “variation of French”. The choice to call a particular instantiation of *langue d’oïl* “Gallo” and another “mayennais” or “regional French,” therefore, is rarely neutral, but rather bound up in ideologies of place and personhood.

In 1987, Walter found that, of 20 works on Romance languages, only seven made mention of Gallo, and that was under three different designations: *le gallo*, *le gallot*, and “dialecte de la Bretagne” (9). She concludes that “Gallo is little known and even its existence is poorly recognized. Outside of Brittany, it’s not rare that people, even educated people, have no idea to what the term refers” (9).²³ Walter attributes this misrecognition to two causes: first, the fact that the term *gallo* is easily associated by

²² This option is less readily available for Gallo, given that the name of the region of Brittany, la Bretagne, is already affiliated with Breton. The region was named for the Celtic invaders from Britain, who in the 5th century arrived on the peninsula speaking the Breton language.

²³ “...le gallo est peu connu et son existence même, mal reconnue. Hors de Bretagne, il n’est pas rare que des gens, même cultivés, n’aient aucune idée de ce que recouvre ce terme” (Walter 1987:9).

“non-specialists” with the terms *gaulois* (‘Gaulish’) or *gallois* (‘Welsh’), which would seem to point toward a Celtic rather than a Romance variety; and second, by the fact that Gallo “poorly distinguishes itself from the dialectal varieties that surround it and that the limits of its extension are extremely difficult to define” (10).²⁴ Indeed, the introduction to Auffray’s Gallo grammar, *Chapè Chapiao* (2012), acknowledges that the demarcating of a language boundary between Gallo and other *oïl* varieties is to some extent arbitrary. He defines Gallo as follows: “Gallo is the *oïl* language (like Norman, Picard, Walloon, Poitevin, French...) traditionally spoken in Upper Brittany.... If the boundary is clear in its current western part, otherwise known as that which Gallo shares with Breton..., its eastern linguistic boundary is much less clear” (7).²⁵

In a Gallo university course I attended during my fieldwork year, taught by this same grammarian, he emphasized the fact that there are no features specific to Gallo that are present throughout the entire territory where Gallo is spoken; conversely, no features that *are* used throughout the territory are unique to Gallo. In class, we arrived at a definition of Gallo as *the Romance language spoken in the historic (five-department) Brittany*, bounded to the west by Breton and the east by the pre-1956 understanding of the regional boundary. As Nolan (2010) admits, “It must be said that if there are symbolic, identity, historical and cultural ‘frontières’ between the provinces of the *oïl* zone, the linguistic limits are more difficult to establish” (70); Auffray’s—and most linguists’—solution is thus to take the “symbolic, identity, historical and cultural”

²⁴ “...se différencie mal des variétés dialectales qui l’entourent et que les limites de son extension son extrêmement difficiles à établir” (Walter 1987:10).

²⁵ “Le gallo est la langue d’oïl (comme le normand, le picard, le wallon, le poitevin, le français...) traditionnellement parlée en Haute-Bretagne.... Si sa limite est nette dans sa partie occidentale actuelle, autrement dit celle que le gallo partage avec le breton..., sa limite linguistique orientale est beaucoup plus floue” (Auffray 2012:7).

borders and apply them to language as well. Such choices simultaneously assert both the importance of regional boundaries in the definition of “Gallo” and the somewhat arbitrary nature of those boundaries.

Auffray’s grammar settles the issue in a similar fashion: after citing examples of traits which are locally emblematic *of* Gallo, if not exclusive *to* Gallo, he concludes: “Even if all these traits are neither shared by all of Upper Brittany nor exclusive to Upper Brittany, they constitute its identity” (7).²⁶ While this formulation highlights the important emblematic role that certain Gallo tokens can play in defining an utterance as Gallo, it also alludes to the difficulty faced by linguists—myself among them—when deciding whether an utterance should be coded as Gallo or as French. Presence or absence of any one particular token could not be taken as definitive evidence for the use or nonuse of a particular repertoire.

Also missing from the map in Figure 3.5, above, is representation of the fact that for the great majority of people living in metropolitan France at the time of my fieldwork, the principal language of everyday communication was French. Speakers did, of course, often use regionally marked forms in discourse that they would most likely categorize as French, and the question of at what point (if at all) the aggregate of these forms rendered discourse “no longer French” was not clear-cut. Jones (2011) reports that, despite the fact that “for many French speakers, the most salient form of linguistic variation is probably the way in which so-called ‘regional accents’ differ within France” (505), there has been “no fully developed theoretical analysis of the precise nature and origins of regional French” (505). There is also little consensus, particularly within the context of *oïl*

²⁶ “Même si tous ces traits ne sont pas partagés par toute la Haute-Bretagne ni exclusifs de la Haute-Bretagne, ils constituent son identité” (Auffray 2012:7).

varieties, as to what constitutes “regional French,” and what constitutes a “regional language of France.” Are the Gallo-Romance varieties dialects of French alongside standard French? Are they independent, although closely related, Gallo-Romance languages? Are they rural *patois* about to disappear? Such questions reveal the great amount of complexity, both practical and ideological, involved in defining a language variety.

While non-Romance language such as Alsatian or Breton are clearly distinct from French, and even the southern varieties of Occitan or Franco-Provençale are often quite easily distinguishable, the line between regional forms of French and the *langues d’oïl* is much murkier. Simoni-Aurembou (2003) sums up the problem thusly: “The linguistic problems of *oïl* situate themselves precisely between variation and varieties” (137).²⁷ Her solution, based on interpretation of linguistic atlases and first presented above in Figure 3.1, is to label some varieties spoken in the *domaine d’oïl* as *variétés d’oïl* and others as regional French—French itself being one of those *variétés d’oïl*, if one which has attained the status of *langue nationale*. According to Simoni-Aurembou, Gallo can properly be termed a *variété d’oïl*; like the other *oïl* varieties to which she accords this designation, Gallo exists on the periphery of a central “zone linguistique” containing regional variations of French.

Work on regional French (Carton 1981; Taylor 1996; Pooley 2000; Blanchet & Armstrong 2006), however, has shown that regional varieties of French exist throughout the nation, including in regions like Brittany, where they co-exist with regional *langues d’oïl*. Walter (1988) claims that the *oïl* varieties closest to French—she gives Gallo as an

²⁷ “Les problèmes linguistiques d’oïl se situent précisément entre variations et variétés ” (Simoni-Aurembou 2003:137).

example—have undergone “a slow contamination, which risks leading to forms of francized patois, ‘patoisized’ French, and finally regional French” (153).²⁸ Walter presents the terms “patois francisé”, “français patoisé” and “français régional” as straightforward and transparent—if admittedly ideologically non-neutral, what with talk of “contamination” of the regional languages by French. Far from being transparent, though, these terminological decisions are almost always political ones, and the lines between what counts as “a language” and what as “a variety of French” are far less clear even than Walter’s schema implies. What is noteworthy about Walter’s description is a partial reclamation of the label *patois*, which, despite its history as a pejorative, Walter finds more suited to the French context than *dialecte*, and valuable for the evocation of local particularities. The reasons behind scholarly (and advocacy-linked) avoidance of the term *patois*, as well as its potential utility, will be explored from an ethnographic perspective in Chapter 6.

In sum, there is little agreement about the terminological status of *oïl* varieties such as Gallo, even among linguists (Nolan 2008). Simoni-Aurembou (2003) observes that the term *les langues d’oïl*, in the plural, is a recent invention, first used officially in 1982 with the creation of the activist organization *Défense et promotion des langues d’oïl* (DPLO). The plural term has since achieved political currency²⁹; Blanchet and Armstrong

²⁸ “... une lente contamination, ce qui risque d’aboutir à des formes de patois francisé, puis de français patoisé et enfin de français régional” (Walter 1988:153).

²⁹ It has also, however, introduced tensions between the *oïl* perspective – according to which the varieties’ likelihood of being politically recognized is believed to be increased when they are seen as separate languages, of which French is but one amongst them – and the perspective usually taken by activists for regional languages in Southern France. Among proponents of the *oc* varieties, there is a strong current favoring the subordination of *gascon*, *provençal*, etc., sometimes known collectively as *les langues d’oc*, as dialectal varieties under the one regional language of *occitan*. The differing sociolinguistic conditions of the Northern and Southern Gallo-Romance varieties have thus led to a situation where people advocate for *les langues d’oïl*, plural (none being a dialect of any other, and particularly not of French), but for one *langue d’oc* (*occitan*) with several dialects.

(2006) note that “Activists, scholars and more recently... French official institutions... have started considering these varieties as full *langues*, distinct from French, which is historically true and politically the only way of promoting them alongside French” (252). This debate recalls recent scholarly discussion over the status of African American English (Mufwene 2001, Smitherman 2006) and how best to define the variety, given the often unintended ways in which the word *dialect(e)* is taken up by the public in the United States and in France alike. These debates force observers of language use to concede that language labeling, while a useful shorthand, is political and positional.

For their part, Blanchet and Armstrong (2006) call the *langues d’oil* “northern Gallo-Romance dialects, with French as one of them” (252) and acknowledge that “socially, [they] are often considered as *patois*” (252). However, there is some indication that these views have begun to be challenged in recent years. Nolan (2010) uses survey data collected in Gallo classrooms to argue that students in recent years are more likely to label Gallo a *language* or *dialect* instead of a *patois*, and that they feel that “Gallo does have a role to play in the future of Brittany, particularly in relation to cultural activities and the family, [...] but also in relation to identity formation” (257). Chapters 5 and 6 of this dissertation will return to this issue in much greater detail, exploring how speakers used language labels like *patois*, *gallo*, and *langue* in moments of daily life, in order to situate themselves as speakers with particular stances toward the variety and their own way of bestowing value on it.

As for me, I call Gallo “a language”; any variety spoken by humans naturally is a language, in that it is a complete and rule-governed system (Lanehart 2015). I leave aside the question of whether Gallo is a *separate* language from French, or whether both Gallo

and French are dialects of some larger Northern Gallo-Romance language lacking much visibility in the lives of people living in France today. Any such declaration involves moves of both adequation and distinction (Bucholtz & Hall 2005), as some differences are identified as ideologically significant while others are erased, and this is an issue where I feel I should follow my participants, who have a stakeholder position I do not occupy. In any case, while labeling a variety “a language” is often framed as a claim about its ontological status or character (as rule-governed; as sufficiently distinct according to measures of intelligibility), it is more centrally a political act of recognition. Chapter 5 presents ideological work done by Gallo advocates to *create* Gallo as a language object separate from French—thus involving processes of distinction between Gallo and French, and adequation between different Gallo repertoires. In these cases, positioning Gallo as “a language” with systematicity and cultural value was a response to a historical absence of recognition. This political action was the most common way my participants understood the relationship between French and Gallo, and it is one I support as valid. However, I make no claims this understanding was the majority one outside of the spheres of Gallo advocacy in which I did my fieldwork, nor do I rule out other ways of understanding the variety and its relation to other codes and other forms of verbal practice.

3.1.4 Gallo structure

The previous section focused on how linguists and laypeople have sought to classify Gallo and the other *langues d’oïl* in relation to the national language of French. The current section continues this theme, with an eye to how Gallo has been described as a linguistic system.. A full review of the phonological, morphosyntactic, and lexical

structure of Gallo is beyond the scope of this chapter, so I focus here on features that scholars have described as emblematic of Gallo, crucially through their contrast with features of French. Indeed, much remains unexplored; a 2015 working group on Gallo, assembled by the Cultural Council of Brittany, found that there was a dearth of descriptive studies of Gallo. Since the 1970s, what work has been done has often been accomplished by amateur linguists, “essentially self-taught” (*Gallo: Etude et préconisations*: 72), for the purpose of developing teaching aids. In what follows, I draw mainly from two such Gallo grammars published in the last decade, Deriano (2005) and Auffray (2012), both of which are excellent points of reference for those wishing a fuller presentation.

3.1.4.1 Sound

Gallo vowels have proven particularly interesting to descriptive linguists. For example, Deriano (2005) lists over 30 diphthongs, including nasal diphthongs; standard French permits far fewer combinations. Among these diphthongs, Deriano singles out *ao* [aw] as “la principale diphtongue connue en gallo” [the best-known diphthong in Gallo]. This diphthong is found in Gallo in the environments where, in standard French, [o] is spelled *au*. My observations confirm that this diphthong is widely recognized as being emblematic of Gallo, often used in rhyme. A stanza in “Les baos jours,” a poem by Maurice Langlois studied in a university-level Gallo course, includes this sound seven times; later, the poem’s four final verses also each end in [aw]:

Le temp s’embernaodit juch pour une renaopée
 Més siteût une ecllercie amene une rayée
 Ouayéz-vous raoder les marcaods, verzoner les ghipiaos
 La mouche-a-mië chatouille le zieu du pisse-en-let tout begaod
 A través les tâssées de reuchet le paisson ribote den l’iao
 ...

Galao, galao...
Eyou cours-tu o tes sabiaos ?
Siete-tai don ao pië des feûtiaos
Le printemps ét si bao

When speakers gave an example of Gallo, many chose the expression *cri de l'iao* “to go get water,” which also uses this emblematic sound. The dictionary and grammar written by Régis Auffray both contain [aw] in their titles: *Le Petit Mataao*; *Chapè chapiao*. Anecdotally, it is one of the features of Gallo pronunciation I most often heard teachers correct when students substituted the French monophthong [o].

The status of schwa in Gallo has also accrued some scholarly attention, being as there seem to be three underlying types: schwa can serve not only as a default vowel, as it does in French, but as a lexical vowel and as an optional vocoid before a syllabic consonant (Angoujard 2006). Simoni-Aurembou (2003) cites this as being rare among the entirety of the Romance languages. The pronunciation of the infinitive of –er verbs in Gallo can be a salient marker of geographic origin for Gallo speakers. In most of the region, it is pronounced with a schwa (e.g. *caozer* ‘to talk’ [kawzə]), but in the *pays de Saint-Brieuc* to the northwest, as well as parts of the Loire-Atlantique in the southeast, the verbal infinitive ending is pronounced with an [e] as in French. Another use of schwa in Gallo, as a supporting vocoid before a syllabic consonant, explains the frequent invocation of “metathesis” by speakers of Gallo, as an explanation for why the equivalent of French *brouette* [wheelbarrow] is *berouette* [bərwɛt] in Gallo.³⁰ This lexeme, like the syllabic consonant it contains, are much emblemized in Gallo; *berouette* was a vocabulary word the audience was often asked to supply in performances and games I

³⁰ As Gallo grammarians clarify, this is not metathesis as linguists would define it, but the word is used widely to describe the phenomenon.

witnessed. I spent a fair amount of time with Gallo users from areas where schwa was used in fewer contexts, so at times I would use [e/ɛ] in such environments when speaking Gallo; occasionally this resulted in correction from Gallo speakers more familiar with other varieties.

Another emblemized sound difference between French and Gallo involves [u]. Like many of the western *oïl* languages, Gallo did not undergo the last part of a sound change in which Latin [u] became modern standard French [œ], as in Latin *gula* (‘gullet’) becoming French *gueule*, or ‘(animal) mouth’ (Simoni-Aurembou 2003). The [u] sound was often used to invoke a Gallo linguistic community, as in the case of the Gallo festival *Mill Goul* [‘a thousand mouths’] and the common practice, even when otherwise speaking French, of referring to Gallo singers and storytellers as *contous* and *chantous*. Auffray’s (2012) forward cites the agentive suffix *-ou* as particularly emblematic of Gallo, but both examples rely on the emblematicity of [u] in environments where French has [œ] (*gueules*, *conteurs*, *chanteurs*).

In terms of consonants, Gallo evinces abundant palatalizations not seen in standard French (Simoni-Aurembou 2003). These sounds, often written as *gh*, *qh*, *bll*, *cll*, *fl*, *gll*, and *pll*, can each have numerous realizations in the speech of Gallo users, depending on geographic origin and sound environment. Auffray (2012) cites 16 different pronunciations, for example, for the word *qher* (‘leather’). The final verses of a poem by Maryvonne Limon, “Les **dg**ueïpes” (‘The Wasps’) contain several of these palatal sounds:

Et “ Flack !” au d’ssus d’mon zieu la v’là **pitch**ée !!!
Pour commencer, ça m’fit comme du feu,
Et p’tit après ça s’mint à gon**fl**ler, gon**fl**ler, gon**fl**ler...
Depeïs l’jou là compernez ben,

J'eu peür des **dg**ueïpes et d'lou cousines,
 Des frelons, des hipés, des **gh**ibets et des tauons.
 Si y'a une **dg**ueïpe dans ma **tch**uisine,
 J'l'y tape dessus o mon torchon.

In the case of this poem, the sound symbolism of [tʃ] and [dʒ] may have helped convey the stinging or buzzing of the titular wasps; even when there was no question of sound symbolism, however, I often noticed Gallo performers emphasizing palatals with particular relish. Teachers often coached students on how to pronounce these sounds (including their many regional variations); the phrase *la pllée chet*, ‘it’s raining’, with its palatalized consonant, was also emblematic of Gallo.

3.1.4.2 Morphosyntax

Auffray’s introduction to his 2012 grammar highlights the following features as *bien caractéristiques du gallo* [very characteristic of Gallo]: “the agentive suffix *–ou* [and] the infinitives and past participles of verbs of the first group in [ə]” (2012:7). The “first group” refers to those verbs ending in *–er* (pronounced [e] in French and, as seen in 3.1.4.1, often [ə] in Gallo).³¹ Among the most salient grammatical features Deriano (2005) and Auffray (2012) highlight—and among the features most emphasized in Gallo classes I attended—is the greater amount of phonetically marked plural inflections in Gallo, in comparison to French. In most areas of Upper Brittany, many Gallo nouns ending in vowels inflect for plural marking by changing vowel quality, so that *un rocher* [ʀɔʃə], a rock, becomes *des rochers* [ʀɔʃe]³² in the plural; *un chapè* [ʃapɛ], a hat, becomes *des chapiaos* [ʃapjaw]³³; and *un pomier* [pɔmjə], an apple tree, becomes *des pomiées*

³¹ “...le suffixe *–ou* des agents, les infinitifs et participes passés des verbes du premier groupe en [ə]” (Auffray 2012:7).

³² In French, both *rocher* and *rochers* are pronounced [ʀɔʃe].

³³ In French, both *chapeau* and *chapeaux* are pronounced [ʃapo].

[pɔmjɛ]³⁴. Gallo storytellers often included mention of hats and apple trees in their tales, both being salient local figures. Another often-mentioned grammatical feature is an expanded use of the pronoun *je* beyond first-person singular, to encompass first-person plural or third-person indefinite

Tense and aspect marking also distinguish Gallo from French. Gallo uses the simple past freely and conversationally, whereas it has all but disappeared in spoken French. Because the “*passé simple*” is an index of formality and bookish prose in French, the maintenance of a simple past tense in conversational Gallo was often held up as (somewhat humorous) proof that Gallo “has a grammar.” Because most stories are narrated in the past, the simple past is widely used in Gallo tales; when Gallo students studied texts in the classroom, teachers often pointed out the presence of the *passé simple*. In her preface to a recent publication, the *Rasserrerie d’Ecrivaijes du Paiz Galo / Anthologie de Textes Gallos [Anthology of Texts from Gallo Country]*, linguist Henriette Walter points toward the presence of the simple past tense as an emblematic trait of Gallo “in all its diversity” (2014:11). Walter credits the preservation of this tense distinction not to chance, but to its phonetic regularization: in Gallo, most simple past verb endings were leveled in /-i/ across all conjugations. In French, on the other hand, the simple past is notoriously difficult to learn due to the complexity of its conjugations.

3.1.4.3 Lexicon and pragmatics

Among the words Auffray (2012) cites as emblematic of Gallo are *anet* (‘today’), *un petit* (‘a little’), and *vére, vè, or yan* (three ways of saying ‘yes’). When I asked participants to supply examples of Gallo phrases they used—or when teachers asked

³⁴ In French, both *pommier* and *pommiers* are pronounced [pɔmjɛ].

attendees of Gallo mini-courses if they knew any Gallo—the words offered first tended to be those related to rural life: wells, buckets, animals, and tools. As one middle-school student said in an interview, the Gallo words he knew before starting his Gallo elective were *beaucoup de mots de la ferme*—“a lot of farm words.” Gallo enthusiasts often collected new and surprising words they heard in notebooks, many of which had nothing to do with rural life, but those were seldom the first words proposed.

Because of the great deal of internal variation in Gallo, as well as the counterintuitive feeling that Gallo was locally perceived as an impoverished variety, lexical variation was something that Gallo advocates often oriented to in discourse. The presence of synonyms was used to justify Gallo’s expressiveness and richness. For example, not only was a wheelbarrow called *une berouette* by some speakers; others knew it as a *boutsoule*, *boursoule*, *bersoule*, *caliqhet*, *cherrigot*, or *chârigot*. One wasn’t simply *mâri* (angry); one could also be *bouqë*, *futë*, *felë*, *bouguë* or *en game*. Gallo performances at times delighted in illustrating Gallo’s lexical complexity by using multiple words sequentially to denote one object or emotion.

In other moments, where compiling synonyms was not an option, Gallo users faced a choice between forms that were more emblematic of Gallo (that is, more different from French) and those that were more commonly known. In the example above, *berouette* was probably the most widely known word for wheelbarrow, but *boursoule* was more obviously different from French *brouette*. In an interview, Gallo picture-dictionary maker Anne-Marie Pelhate invoked this conundrum, describing the questions she would ask herself when choosing a form to accompany each picture in her dictionary:

“*Ben, vla. Qhi qi faot rgardër ? Pus fort des éléments emblématiques, qi sont différents du français, e q’on dit, ‘Ca ! c’ét du galo !’ Pasqe ben du coup on ét*

core dan notr euh idée de honte- ou de honte, de dire qe c'êt du français euh déformé, 'ça c'êt trop français' tout ça. Ou de prendr les mots les pus evâillès !... Pour euh lonjër la-dedan, c'êt d'établir un gallo standard ! ... J'hesitaes longtemp hein ? Pasq 'ao départ euh je voulaes mettr les deüs mots. E pis pour- ((exasperated sound)) ce taet compliqë pour euh lire, tout ça. Mes pour mai l'idéal ça araet tē de mettr les deüs mots !"

“So, well. What do you need to look at? More the emblematic elements that are different from French, and where you say, ‘This! This is Gallo!’? Because then you’re still in an idea of shame- or of shame, to say that it’s deformed French, ‘This, this is too French’ all of that. Or do you take the most widespread words! ... If you take that too far, you’re establishing a standard Gallo! ... I hesitated a long time, you know? Because at the beginning I wanted to put both words. And then for- ((exasperated sound)) it was complicated to read, all of that. But for me the ideal would have been to put the two words!”

In Anne-Marie Pelhate’s analysis, each guiding principle had its risks: choosing a form for its popularity alone risked “establishing a standard Gallo,” but choosing an arcane form just because it happened to be obviously different from French risked furthering a mindset of “shame,” where it was undesirable to have lexical forms that resembled French because that meant Gallo was just “deformed French.” Ideally, she would have “put the two words,” but an ideology of readability won over an ideological valorization of linguistic plurality. In the end, said this author, her choice was most often swayed to the word that was most widely known; when one was not clearly more popular than the other, however, she usually chose the more emblematic.

Turning to a consideration of pragmatics, Gallo, like other *langues d’oïl*, is typically imagined to be used chiefly in “private, intimate and hidden situations” (Blanchet & Armstrong 2006; *Gallo: Etude et préconisations* 2015). However, the acts of Gallo advocacy and use that are the primary subject of this dissertation belie that these were the only suitable contexts for Gallo in contemporary Upper Brittany. Gallo could be heard on the radio or read in the newspaper, if in Gallo-specific rubrics (see Section

3.2.4); it was taught in a small selection of schools; and it was heard on stage at festivals. Two popular Gallo phrasebooks seek to inscribe Gallo pragmatically in commerce and everyday public interactions as well. In thematically organized mini-lessons, which one book calls a “Kit de survie en Haute-Bretagne” (‘Survival Kit for Upper Brittany’), the phrasebooks cast Gallo as a language of exchange, suitable for use with service providers and new acquaintances as well as among intimates. They feature mini-lessons based on communicative tasks such as *Bezer une bolée* (‘Having a drink,’ Pelhate 2011), *Cerchae son chemein* (‘Asking for directions,’ Simon 2014), *Freyae* (‘Flirting and Courtship,’ Simon 2014), and *Sé le medecin* (‘At the doctor’s,’ Pelhate 2011).

Despite these books’ positioning Gallo as a language one can use to explain one’s ailment to a doctor, confess one’s love, or order a drink at a café, my ethnographic experiences suggest that these would be pragmatically marked forms of interaction in today’s Upper Brittany. When ordering at a *crêperie* or café, I occasionally heard people use Gallo with servers they already knew as confirmed Gallo speakers—but the one time I remember someone using Gallo to address a server he did not know, the server replied in French, with embarrassed laughter. However, the purposeful use of a minority language in places and contexts from which it has habitually been excluded is often a claim to legitimacy and a display of possibility, and it is perhaps for these purposes that the vision set forward in these phrasebooks differs pragmatically (and politically) from current-day expectations of realms of use. As Simon (2014) acknowledged in his unit on flirtation, it may have been seen as “incongruous” to do these acts in Gallo, but that did not mean Gallo was intrinsically incapable of being put to such uses: “As a language

perceived as lacking value, many think it incongruous to use Gallo to do these things. However, it contains many expressions for talking about love” (56).³⁵

In the Gallo classes I observed, commonly cited pragmatic considerations for Gallo included the historic tendency for people not to say “hello” in Gallo, preferring instead to proceed directly to asking how one was doing, which could be accomplished by the emblematic question *Ça va ti?* The *ti* marker, used to ask questions in Gallo, was often taught early on to students and frequently modeled in teachers’ questions to the class. As will be explored in Chapter 5, question-asking was a prominent device in Gallo performances, and *ti* is one way of marking Gallo questions as syntactically distinct from French ones. Beyond yes-no questions, question words such as *oyou qe...?* (‘where’), *qhi qe...?* (‘who’) and *(de) cai qe ..?* (‘what’) were also frequently proposed as important grammatical distinctions to make from French.

3.1.4.4 Gallo orthography

Orthographic debates have been a prominent site for the negotiation of minority language identity in manifold contexts; for just a few examples, see Jaffe (1999) for Corsican, Feliciano-Santos (2011) for Taíno, Romaine (2002) for Hawaiian, or Shieffelin and Doucet (1994) for Haitian kreyòl. For Breton, as well, orthography proved contentious during much of the twentieth century. As McDonald (1989) said of the mood in the 1970s, “many visitors to Brittany... have been variously puzzled and shocked by the strength of feeling that can be generated in intellectual Breton circles by different Breton spellings” (127). A standard has nonetheless developed, variously called “Néo-

³⁵ “ Langue perçue comme sans valeur, il parait incongru pour beaucoup de s’adresser en gallo pour ces choses-là. Il recèle pourtant de nombreuses tournures pour parler d’amour” (Simon 2014:56).

Breton,” “K.L.T,” or “ZH.” This variety, largely used by the schools, is based most heavily upon the variety of Breton spoken in the Léon, long a center of ecclesiastical power (McDonald 1989). However, the two major university poles studying Breton (at Brest and Rennes) have settled on two different standards—Rennes favoring “ZH” and Brest favoring “OU” or “Skolveurieg”—leading to some continued friction. Some observers see, in Gallo orthographic debates today, some currents of familiar dynamics already traced by Breton (see *Gallo: Etudes et préconisations* 2015 for a counter-argument).

During my fieldwork, I encountered three major Gallo spelling systems: “ABCD,” preferred by the *Association des Enseignants de Gallo* [Gallo Teacher’s Association];³⁶ “ELG” (“Ecrire le Gallo”), developed by Alan Raude and used in teaching by the association *Bertègn Galèzz*, and “Moga” (“Motier de gallo”), proposed by Bèrtran Ôbrée and used by the association *Chubri*. All three spelling systems were undergoing evolution, adding nuance and/or simplifying over the years. Other systems, such as *Aneit* or *Vantyé*, have been repertoried by some writing about Gallo (e.g. Nolan 2010, Rey 2010), but they did not emerge as major players in my fieldwork. Finally, many of those writing in Gallo did not adhere to any of these systems, preferring to engage in writing that some advocates dismissively called *patoisant* (Jaffe 1990), based on French spelling with emergent solutions for representing any sound combinations for which standard French orthography is not adapted (see also Jaffe 2008).

A full discussion of these different available methods and their ideological underpinnings is beyond the scope of this dissertation. Additional analysis can be found

³⁶ The name is an acronym for its four principle founders: Auffray, Bienvenu, Le Coq and Dréano/Deriano.

in Rey (2010), and for discussions by proponents of the three systems, see Auffray (2012), Ôbrée (2007), and Simon (2007). My own impression, bolstered by fieldwork encounters, is that proponents of “ABCD” and “Moga” both voice an ideology favoring ease of learning, from the point of view of an ideal learner who has already been schooled in French spelling. Therefore, those two systems at times make similar orthographic choices, although there are important differences, with “ABCD” generally hewing closer to French spelling. For example, “Moga” only inserts an *e* if the grapheme corresponds to a pronounced vowel, doubling some final consonants *ll*, *tt*, *rr*, etc., to signal that a final consonant sound is pronounced, whereas “ABCD” has kept the *e muet* of standard French for both of these purposes. “ELG,” on the other hand, values an ideology of etymological faithfulness, finding inspiration in local toponyms, which often preserve older spellings, for the development of models that do not depend on standard French spellings.

I took introductory classes in all three spelling systems during my fieldwork year. As a brief point of comparison, in Table 3.1, on the next page, I show how the different course worksheets represented, in writing, some common conversational moves taught early on in the curriculum. Across the three spelling systems shown in Table 3.1, only three of the 14 words are spelled the same (*a*, *ti*, *ton*). Both ABCD and Moga are designed to allow for a variety of dialectal pronunciations, although not all possibilities can be encompassed; ELG has a suggested standard pronunciation.

When various stakeholders assess the state of Gallo in Upper Brittany today—from members of Gallo associations themselves, to sociologists and linguists, to Regional

Table 3.1 Comparison of the three major Gallo spelling systems

<i>French translation</i> English translation	ABCD	ELG	Moga
<i>Bonjour à vous !</i> Hello (plural)	Bonjour a vous !	Bonjórñ a vóz !	Bon jou a vou !
<i>Comment ça va aujourd'hui?</i> How's it going today ?	Ca va ti aneit*? *dictionary gives <i>anet</i>	Ça vaèt ti anoet ?	Sa va ti anet?
<i>Comment tu t'appelles ?</i> What's your name ? (singular/informal)	Qai qe c'et* ton ptit* nom ? *dictionary gives <i>ét,</i> <i>petit</i>	Qei qe c'est ton petit non ?	Qae qs'é ton ptit non ?

representatives—the lack of a standardized orthography is frequently cited as an impediment to language planning efforts.

In 2010, Monnier claimed:

To an even greater extent than for Breton, thorny problems regarding writing systems present themselves, provoking rupture within the movement and a loss of energy... The absence of a consensus on a common writing system is leading to a step backwards in teaching due to lack of modern and well-adapted tools of instruction (2010c:281).³⁷

Such deliberations suggest that the language ideologies in Upper Brittany are still controlled to some extent by a dominant ideology, which also prevails in most late-modern nation-states, that sees orthographic standardization as a sign of progress and perhaps even of intellect (Silverstein 1996; Jaffe 2012).

There are, however, some cracks in the edifice. Monnier (2010c) acknowledges that Gallo has always highly valued orality, so this disagreement over written forms

³⁷ “ Bien plus encore que le breton, d'épineux problèmes de graphies se posent et provoquent l'éclatement du mouvement et une perte de dynamisme... L'absence d'accord sur une graphie commune entraine un recul de l'enseignement par manque d'outils modernes et adaptés” (Monnier 2010c:281).

likely does not prevent people from using Gallo in art and conversation. Indeed, my fieldwork experiences brought me into contact with as many people who wrote “as they pleased” as they did people who strove always to adhere to a particular set of conventions. Even the 2015 Gallo working group, which was generally pro-orthographic normalization, insisted that codification of a written standard should not be *un frein* (a stumbling block) for a language’s written or oral use, nor for its cultural or artistic expression. It also reminded readers that spelling codification did not necessarily mean dialect standardization. However, the Region had asked Gallo social actors for a uniform spelling system to facilitate the integration of Gallo into Regional communications; to that end, an inter-association working group was meeting in 2013-2014 to provide a list of over 300 words to the Region (*Gallo: Rapport et préconisations* 2015).

3.2 The cultural and historical significance of Gallo

This presentation of how Gallo enters into negotiations of the sociolinguistic landscape of Brittany will highlight the following facets of cultural production: how Brittany over the past hundred years or so has been marked by socioeconomic transformation, from an impoverished, conservative society to one that, while still based on agriculture, uses intensive farming techniques and has a left-leaning political orientation (3.2.1); how a rhetoric of linguistic and cultural rights has developed, originally and more strongly for Breton, but for Gallo as well (3.2.2); how that rights rhetoric is juxtaposed with perduring views of Gallo as a language of the rural past (3.2.3); and contemporary sites of Gallo activity today.

3.2.1 Social history and demographics of Brittany

From the tenth to the sixteenth century, Brittany was a duchy with feudal rights and privileges, if still paying homage to the French monarchs (McDonald 1989). After Anne, Duchess of Brittany, successively married two French monarchs, Brittany officially became a province of France in 1532, with somewhat greater fiscal independence than other provinces. In fact, people I met during fieldwork credited Brittany's lack of toll roads to "Anne de Bretagne," who, they claimed, won such rights for her people as a condition of marriage; this seems to be part of a general pattern that McDonald (1989) has explored, in which people engaged in Breton cultural vindication re-imagine Brittany's history as one of more dramatic opposition to the French state than the historical record perhaps warrants.

After the 1789 Revolution, all of France's provinces were abolished, replaced with new administrative divisions called *départements*, as mentioned above in Section 3.1.1. The former province of Brittany was now the separate *départements* of Finistère, Côtes-du-Nord (later Côtes-d'Armor), Morbihan, Ille-et-Vilaine, and Loire-Inférieure (later Loire-Atlantique). For more than a century, the term "Brittany" ceased to have official status as a political entity. In 1972, Brittany officially became one of 22 "regions" of France, with those regions gaining increased fiscal autonomy ten years later, under the process of *décentralisation* undertaken by the Mitterrand government (McDonald 1989). Brittany thereby gained a Regional Council, with budgetary control; it also acquired a Cultural Council in 1978, "with a special budget (coming mostly from the State) to help save and promote Breton language and culture" (McDonald 1989:15). As previously mentioned, however, it "lost" the *département* of Loire-Atlantique, which had been part

of the pre-Revolutionary province but was now accorded to the region of Pays-de-la-Loire.

Brittany has historically been one of the poorer regions of France, characterized by widely acknowledged and often mythologized trajectories of migration to Paris. At the start of the twentieth century, while the rest of France was rapidly urbanizing, Brittany “remained overwhelmingly rural, conserving a traditional civilization strongly influenced by religion and still dominated by the aristocracy, marked also by the hardy persistence of the Breton language” (Geslin 2010:17).³⁸ Inland France looked to peripheral Brittany as a reservoir of labor, a center of agricultural production, and the core of France’s marine defense. After the upheavals of the Great War, which saw young Breton men leave for the front in great numbers, and during which 4.6 percent of Brittany’s population ultimately was killed (Gourlay 2010), many Bretons felt more strongly a sense of attachment to the rest of France. As Gourlay (2010) concludes:

What was begun by the Third Republic, seeking to create a nation by schooling, was accomplished by these four years of battle: after decades spent inculcating the use of French and national history and geography, it seems that it was the First World War that truly integrated Bretons into the French model. (125)³⁹

The Breton movement, which began to grow in prominence between the two wars, indicates that this assimilation was neither uniform nor inevitable. However, enthusiasts of both Gallo and Breton point to the First World War as an important turning point in favor of more widespread use of French within the region (see also Jaffe 1990:84-5).

³⁸ “...reste à forte dominante rurale, conservant une civilisation traditionnelle largement influencée par la religion et toujours dominé par l’aristocratie, marquée aussi par la persistance durable de la langue bretonne” (Geslin 2010:17). Geslin does not mention Gallo, but it also persisted as the main language of daily communication of Upper Bretons, at least outside of the major cities.

³⁹ “Ce qui avait été engagé par la Troisième République, afin de fabriquer une nation par l’école, fut achevé par ces quatre ans de conflit: après des décennies passées à franciser et à inculquer l’histoire et la géographie nationales, il semble bien que c’est la Première Guerre mondiale qui intégra véritablement les Bretons dans la matrice française” (Gourlay 2010:125).

Monnier (2010a) remarks that although there had never been more Breton and Gallo users than in the period immediately after the Great War, “the great majority of young people now thought that this cultural heritage had no value, that it even constituted a handicap in society, that one needed to prioritize a good knowledge of French by all means, including by sacrificing the local language” (140; see also McDonald 1989).⁴⁰ Afraid of being branded *ploucs* (‘hicks’), young residents of Brittany often believed that ceasing use of Breton or Gallo was necessary to advance in careers in the seminary, education or higher administration. At the same time, farm workers began organizing into trade unions, which would become a powerful form of civic organization in Brittany. By 1936, there was a growing socialist movement, increasingly diverging from the region’s traditional conservative and religious image (Monnier 2010a).

Despite increasing shame regarding the use of regional languages, some civic groups and festivals began organizing around Breton culture during the between-war period, including the *cercles celtiques* (Monnier 2010a). During the 1930s, the nascent Breton movement split into two organizations, the left-leaning, republican and pacifist *Ligue fédéraliste de Bretagne* and the right-leaning, (Breton) nationalist, and militant *Parti national breton* (Monnier 2010a). Neither movement gained more than several hundreds of followers, but the fringe courant of fascism in the *Parti national breton* would loom large in French nationalist critiques of the Breton movement writ large. In 1940, France capitulated to Germany, and the Breton peninsula was occupied by the German army in four days (Monnier 2010b). During the Occupation, a small group of

⁴⁰ “... l’immense majorité des jeunes pensent désormais que ce patrimoine n’a aucune valeur, qu’il constitue même un handicap dans la société, qu’il faut mettre l’accent, par tous les moyens, sur une bonne connaissance du français, y compris en sacrifiant la langue locale” (Monnier 2010a:140).

Breton militants looked favorably upon the Nazis and the Vichy regime, as a means of casting off the French oppressors; history and cultural memory still often affiliate the Breton movement with collaboration. However, most of the collaborators in Brittany were not affiliated with the Breton movement (Monnier 2010b); many Bretons joined the Résistance, and most citizens lived the Occupation with shock and dismay. A few of my participants had memories of the Occupation and subsequent liberation, during which they were young children; even among those who had not lived it themselves, it was a time that marked Breton history.

Since the postwar reconstruction period, agribusiness and tourism brought increased wealth and population growth to the region. Monnier (2010c) divides the second half of the twentieth century in Brittany into a period of *rattrapage*, or ‘catching up,’ and a period of *épanouissement* or ‘flourishing’ that started around 1972. It was not until 1955, says Monnier, that Brittany “seem[ed] to change centuries, to enter into modernity, into the 20th century proper” (209).⁴¹ Economic migration inland originally remained strong, but Bretons began to resent the economic conditions that drove so many young people to leave, and they sought to modernize their local socioeconomic fabric. Those who did leave were both envied and critiqued. In his book on Gallo expressions in Brittany, author Daniel Giraudon, who was born shortly after World War II, recounts an anecdote I heard or read several times during my fieldwork year:

People would tell the story of the guy who, after having spent some time in Paris, claimed to have forgotten *gallo* when coming home. He **had renounced himself**, people would say in Plélo like in Rennes or Plerguer, **he didn’t know anymore**

⁴¹ “...l’on semble vraiment changer du siècle, entrer dans la modernité, dans le XXe siècle proprement dit” (Monnier 2010c:209).

where he came from. (2012:9, bold font and italics in the original, bold font emphasizing Gallo forms)⁴²

The joke involves the Gallo-denying home-comer accidentally tripping over a rake while walking around his family farm, and angrily exploding in Gallo, “*Ah! l’maodi râté!*” [‘Agh! Damn rake!’]. Despite his pretensions, the man’s country origins—and instinctual, farm-related Gallo vocabulary—have caught up with him in the end. The punchline or moral was often given, as it is in Giraudon (2012), as “*Chassez le naturel, il revient au gallo.*”⁴³

During the decades of growth after 1950, Breton agricultural technologies underwent a revolutionary process: small traditional fields were bulldozed and consolidated into large agricultural lots (a process called *remembrement*, mourned in several Gallo poems, memoirs and plays); electricity arrived in country residences (I met several people, aged only in their early sixties, who remembered the arrival of electricity in their family homes); and companies such as Citroën and Michelin established factories in Brittany. Accompanying these changes were protests by syndicate groups, energized by the growing population of university students, advocating the interests of *ouvriers et paysans* (factory workers and farm workers) and decrying the need for economy-driven emigration. McDonald’s (1989) analysis points to the university student protests of May 1968 as a powerful moment when counter-culture became trendy, helping the Breton movement define itself yet more strongly against national French institutions. Starting in

⁴² “On racontait l’histoire du gars qui, après avoir passé quelque temps à Paris, prétendait avoir oublié le *gallo* en revenant au pays. Il se **déçnaissait**, comme on dit aussi bien du côté de Plélo que de Rennes ou de Plerguer, **y n’savait pu d’oyous qui v’nait**, *il ne savait plus d’où il venait.*” (Giraudon 2012:9 ; bold font and italics in the original).

⁴³ There is a well-known French expression, coined by the playwright Destouches in the 18th century: *Chassez le naturel, il revient au galop* [No matter how hard you try to hide your true nature, it will always come right back to the surface (‘at a galloping pace’)]. The pun relies on the homophony between *gallo* and *galop* [gallop].

the 1970s, there was indeed a resurgence of interest in Breton culture, including music, dance, and also the languages of Gallo and Breton. This resurgence was accompanied by demands for linguistic and cultural rights. Those will be detailed, however, in Section 3.2.2. During the years following 1968, the dominant political current in Brittany shifted from centrism to socialism. An independentist political party, the *Union démocratique bretonne* was founded in 1964, becoming the most well-known autonomist party (other than the terrorist group *Front de Libération de la Bretagne*, outlawed in 1974; McDonald 1989).

Until the recent recession, Brittany's economic growth kept pace with the rest of France and even outpaced it to some extent. From 1990 to 1999, the economic sector grew by 7.6 percent in Brittany, whereas it grew by only 4.5 percent in the rest of France, Ile-de-France excepted (Le Coadic 2010). However, while it was largely spared by the beginning of the economic downturn, Brittany lost nearly 11,000 jobs between 2012 and 2013 (INSEE 2013). Le Coadic (2010) names four "pillars" of Brittany's economy: agriculture and the agri-food business, the electronic and telecommunications industries, the automobile industry, and naval construction. This makes it the second-least-diversified region of France in terms of industries, with the agri-food business alone creating 35 percent of industrial jobs in the region in 2002 (Le Coadic 2010). Whereas Brittany has one of the lowest rates of poverty in the nation, it also has one of the lowest gross domestic products per job (64,220 € in 2012, INSEE); that is to say, the range of earnings is more restricted than most areas of France.

As of 2000, Brittany was the foremost agricultural region of metropolitan France, producing 15 percent of France's nation-wide yield (Le Coadic 2010). However, from

1988 to 2000, the number of farms in Brittany fell from 95,000 to 55,000, and Le Coadic reports that agriculture had been “extrêmement fragilisée” [extremely weakened]. Responsible factors include increasingly untenable intensive farming practices and increased competition from other European Union member countries, coupled with higher environmental standards and environmental degradation, for which farmers are often blamed. In 2003, 67 percent of over 1300 farmers surveyed claimed they were worried about their financial futures; suicide rates were 1.69 times higher than the French national mean (Le Coadic 2010). During my fieldwork, I heard numerous stories of Gallo enthusiasts who committed suicide, from a well-known activist in the 1980s to a student in a Gallo leisure class a couple of years before. Some have pointed to Brittany’s tourist industry as a possible means of economic optimism; indeed, nine million tourists visited Brittany in 2014, contributing 8.1 percent of the region’s gross domestic product (*Comité régional Tourisme Bretagne* 2015). However, Le Coadic (2010) claims that tourist income is problematic, given that the tourist industry is highly concentrated on the coast, so that 70 percent of Breton municipalities have no tourist industry to speak of. Also, tourist activity is essentially limited to the summer months, with three-fifths of stays in July and August alone.

During my fieldwork year in 2013-2014, these background factors—the economic recession, Brittany’s strong reliance on only a few industries, and a general skepticism of French national authorities (Le Coadic 2015)—catalyzed a much-publicized political and economic protest in Brittany. The *Bonnets Rouges* or “Red Caps” movement began in rural Lower Brittany in October 2013 and protested a planned *écotaxe*, a measure that would have charged a toll on any commercial truck over 3.5 tons using the French road

network. This would have placed a particular burden on already suffering Breton agribusinesses; as Le Coadic (2015) argues, the principal “polluter pays” would have become, in effect, “the periphery pays.” Protestors attacked and/or destroyed many *écotaxe* tollbooths and about 50 speed cameras; protests were assembled that drew as many as 40,000 people, mostly in Lower Brittany. The national media, captivated by the happenings, largely relied on stereotypes of Bretons as violent, far-right, backwards people duped into revolt by their bosses; stereotypes that Le Coadic (2015) argues were inaccurate. In the end, the *écotaxe* was cancelled before it went into effect. By the end of 2014, the movement had dwindled, having accomplished its goal of thwarting the *écotaxe* but with Brittany’s agricultural and industrial future still uncertain. The movement was strongest in areas of Lower Brittany that were “the heart of Breton language and culture” (Le Coadic 2015:8); while the protests were often mentioned in the settings I frequented during fieldwork, they seemed more a curiosity or event of interest than something in which those I met felt invested.

Brittany has historically had low rates of immigration; in 2010, Le Coadic reported that Brittany’s percentage of immigrants (2.5 percent) remained much lower than the national average (7.3 percent). This percentage, however, has been growing; the number of immigrants in Brittany quadrupled from 1962 to 1999, whereas in the rest of France, immigration had remained stable after 1975 (Le Coadic 2010). From 1988 to 2005, 35,000 Breton residences were purchased by foreigners. However, 83 percent of those foreigners were British (Le Coadic 2010); English was spoken in daily life by 4.3 percent of the population as of the 1999 census, but less than 0.5 percent of respondents reported regularly speaking other non-autochthonous languages, including Spanish,

German, and Arabic (reported in Blanchet & Le Coq 2008). This means that the sociolinguistic situation of Brittany, particularly outside the cities (half of Brittany's immigrants live in or around Rennes and Nantes, Le Coadic 2010), remains largely concentrated on French, Breton, Gallo, and to some extent English. Monnier (2010d) explains that, through the 1990s, those native to Brittany remained strongly *enracinés* [rooted] in their *petit pays*, or local place of origin. People often preferred to stay within the region—and, where possible, within their *petit pays*—even if it meant accepting work that was less highly remunerated or less in line with their qualifications than outside-the-region alternatives. Brittany's population has also grown steadily older; Brittany has one of the lowest populations of 25- to 29-year-olds in France (Le Coadic 2010). This adds further uncertainty about Brittany's economic future.

Although Brittany's population is rural, aging, and largely of European origin, polling and votes in Brittany in the past twenty-five years have generally revealed comparatively favorable attitudes toward Europe (in contrast to French nationalism), as well as other progressive stances. In December 2015, Brittany was one of only three regions (of metropolitan France's newly reduced 13 regions) where left-leaning parties came out on top in the first round of regional elections; the other regions were dominated by center-right or the extreme-right *Front national*. In Brittany, the left also won the second and final round of the 2015 elections, in which left-leaning parties did somewhat better (and the extreme-right far worse). A 2014 survey conducted among 1000 residents of Brittany (*Bretagne Culture Diversité / TMO Régions*) found that most Bretons did not find there to be “too many foreigners” in Brittany (21 percent, against another, national survey's findings of 66 percent in 2014). Sixty percent of Bretons thought that “one could

be [both] Breton and Muslim,” whereas a national survey found that only 37 percent of French people overall found Islam to be “compatible with the values of French society,” and sixty-three percent of Bretons thought that one could become Breton through feelings of attachment, even if one were not born in Brittany. Of course, one might qualify these encouraging findings with the reminder that Brittany has had, to date, much lower rates of non-European immigration than elsewhere in France.

3.2.2 Gallo’s status in relation to Breton

It is difficult to evoke Gallo’s official status in Brittany (and impossible to get a full sense of its symbolic status) without considering the important role played by the Breton language and associated movement in formulating a cultural identity for Brittany. Breton activism started earlier than Gallo activism; when certain rights were won for Breton, it became easier for Gallo advocates to insist Gallo should have those rights, according to the ideal of parity. Furthermore, Breton has dominated past and present attempts to articulate Brittany’s cultural distinctiveness; Gallo advocates have carved out a symbolic space for Gallo, but it remains circumscribed by Breton, as well as the national language of French. A brief history of language activism in Brittany is thus in order; for more information, see McDonald (1989) or Le Coadic (1998). I will present a historical overview of the Breton, and later Gallo, movements first, and then discuss their comparative visibility and role in cultural imagining, both by local residents and in acts of commercial branding.

3.2.2.1 A history of increasing recognition

Breton status-planning efforts have their origins in 1870, when Breton intellectuals asked the French government to recognize the advantages of bilingualism

(Hornsby & Nolan 2011). Also in the last decades of the nineteenth century, while many French artists and writers flocked to Brittany in search of exoticized landscapes and customs, others were engaging in more in-depth projects of collecting oral literature. *Collectage* began first in Breton-speaking Lower Brittany (collectors La Villemarqué and Luzel) and then extended to Gallo-speaking Upper-Brittany (collectors Orain and Sébillot) (Geslin 2010); the texts collected by the latter folklorists still served as a source of inspiration for many Gallo storytellers at the time of my fieldwork. In 1923, the artist association *Seizh breur* was formed to celebrate Breton art and culture. One of its founders, Jeanne Malivel, was from Loudéac in *le pays gallo*; along with her Breton activities, Malivel wrote an early Gallo folktale that a Gallo teacher in Loudéac reworked with her students during my fieldwork in 2013-2014. In 1919, the bulletin *Breizh Atao* [*Brittany Forever*] was first published; the group organized into a federalist political party in 1927 (Hornsby & Nolan 2011; Monnier 2010a). Other political parties followed, but were darkened by charges of collaboration during the Second World War.

In the 1950s and 1960s, faced with a drastic decline in the practice of Breton (Monnier 2010c), the *Emsav* or Breton movement focused on the valorization of cultural practices. The revitalization of *festoù-noz*, or social dances, and *bagadoù* and *cercles celtiques*, or groups of competitive musicians and dancers, dates from this time. Monnier (2010c) terms these popular gatherings of music and dance—which were for many the occasion for learning some Breton or Gallo, as home transmission was becoming less widespread—“une véritable université populaire bretonne” [a veritable popular Breton university] (246). In a monograph based on fieldwork during the late 1970s and early 1980s, amidst both Breton activists and rural farmers, McDonald (1989) puts such

statements in their historical context. Tracing the uneasy relationship between the language ideologies of the Breton movement and the lived reality of the majority of Breton-speaking people during the time of her fieldwork in the 1970s, she takes a more irreverent perspective on these sites of cultural activity. She analyzes *festoù-noz*, etc., as activist inventions based upon a selective, ethnicized re-reading of Brittany's history, and emphasizing a romanticized (or celticized!) view of peasant rurality in which many actual Breton rural residents had trouble finding themselves.

For McDonald, such ideological retellings were part and parcel of the Breton movement or *Emsav*. She cautions that the term “the Breton movement” is an oversimplification, as it was “sometimes used to describe a wide range of cultural, linguistic, economic, and political activities and applied to an ever-changing array of societies or groups, united only by a common commitment to some aspect of Breton language, culture, or politics” (73). While there were—and still are—some registered Breton political parties, most groups involved in Breton activism at the time of McDonald's fieldwork in the late 1970s and early 1980s were clubs, societies or cultural associations; folk-musicians and folk-dancers were also prominent figures. However much a product of an oppositional and ethnicized ideology, these cultural practices did for the most part endure; *Kendalc'h*, formed in 1950 to federate many cultural groups, is still active today, and *festoù-noz*, *bagadoù* and *cercles celtiques* remain an important part of the cultural landscape in twenty-first-century Brittany—the first, particularly, even among people who do not identify as Breton or Gallo enthusiasts.

After the passage of the Deixonne Law in 1951, for which the Breton group *Unvaniez Difennourien ar Brezoneg* advocated, children could locally learn a bit of

Breton at the discretion of their teacher (Hornsby & Nolan 2011; Monnier 2010c); while this right was also extended to Basque, Catalan and Corsican, it was not available for *langues d'oïl* like Gallo. Despite incremental gains, the use of the regional languages was largely suppressed in schools through the 1960s. In 1966 a petition to have formal elective Breton education in schools received 160,000 signatures (Monnier 2010c). In 1977, the association *Diwan* opened the first immersion-style Breton classes; that is, private schools where all education would take place in Breton (McDonald 1989). This organization is still active today, with about 3,000 students in 2011 (Regional Council *Rapport* 2012). In McDonald's analysis, such schools were the site of an ideological confrontation between the ideal of Breton as a "mother tongue" and the actual language competences of the mothers (and fathers), who were rarely Breton-speaking, and whose older relatives spoke non-standardized varieties not easily reconcilable with what children were learning in schools. Such issues are still discussed today (e.g. Jones 1998, Hornsby 2008, Le Coadic 2013). By now, however, the parents of children in *Diwan* schools are not infrequently former *Diwan* pupils themselves (or alums of other formal Breton education programs), adding another layer of identity negotiation to the *Diwan* setting; as Le Coadic (2013) explains, pupils are not infrequently less engaged in Breton advocacy than their *néolocuteur* parents, who enrolled them in the program. These schools teach Breton, not Gallo, but a French-Gallo storyteller was contracted for one fundraising event at a *Diwan* school in Upper Brittany during my fieldwork year. At this event, Breton and Gallo were both heard on stage.

During the period of resurgence of interest in regional culture in the 1970s, Gallo groups began to make their presence known as well. After discussing the Breton

initiatives in song, music, literature and film, Monnier (2010d) reminds readers that Gallo enthusiasts were also active at this time:

This movement did not forget oral Gallo culture, which also witnessed a marked revival, with a lag of several decades behind what happened for the Breton language. A specific Gallo cultural movement was established, sometimes in opposition to the Breton movement, more often in harmony with it. (281)⁴⁴

Among the Gallo initiatives dating to this period, Monnier mentions the magazine *Le Lian*, *Les Assemblées gallèses*, the Monterfil festival, *La Truite du Ridor*, and the association *Les Amis du Parler Gallo*, later *Bertègn Galèzz*. All of these were still active at the time of my fieldwork and are discussed in more detail in Chapter 4. In a sociology thesis investigating “la figure du Gallo,” Corbel (1984) claims that, through such initiatives, “le mouvement gallo [a été] créateur de l’identité gallèse” [the Gallo movement creat[ed] the Gallo identity] (100), which constituted a new Gallo culture—not just a renaissance or a preservation. In defining Gallo for an external audience, the Gallo movement (in which Corbel was a member) created the language-object it celebrated. In the process, says Corbel, the movement was transforming local culture from a “practical culture” (that is, non-reflexive) to a self-aware, “savant” one. Characterizing the Gallo movement as “populiste et culturaliste” (38) rather than nationalistic like the Breton movement, Corbel designates it “une culture réprimée par une double négation” [a culture repressed by a double negation] (98): caught between French “colonization” and the Breton movement that refused to recognize the identity of Gallo speakers as part of Brittany.

⁴⁴ “ Tout ce mouvement n’oublie pas la culture orale gallèse, qui connaît aussi un renouveau marqué, avec un décalage de plusieurs décennies sur ce qui s’est passé pour la langue bretonne. Un mouvement culturel gallo spécifique se met en place, parfois en opposition avec le mouvement breton, le plus souvent en harmonie avec lui” (Monnier 2010d:281).

The first major victory establishing the official status of Breton and Gallo was their inclusion in Brittany's 1977 Cultural Charter. Ager (1999) reports that many considered the charter "an attempt to put language on the same level as bagpipe playing and to turn the language into one more piece of local color" (32); however, it was a first official recognition that languages other than French had their place in Brittany. That is not to say that Gallo and Breton were uncontroversially accepted as equals. While both languages were recognized, the fact that Breton was identified as *une langue* [a language] in the charter while Gallo was called *un parler* [a way of speaking] was indicative of a continuing lack of parity.

In the years following the charter, educational efforts for both Breton and Gallo grew. French-Breton bilingual education programs were established by the public school system in 1983; Catholic schools followed in 1990. It became possible to get a Breton degree at university in 1982, and the Breton *CAPES*, or teacher certification program, was formalized in 1985. In 2010, 13,445 students were enrolled in bilingual Breton-French programs across all levels, and in 2011, the Region contributed nearly 1,800,000 € in support to these programs. In 2009-2010, 4,682 adults took night classes, mini-courses, or intensive courses in Breton. In 2010-2011, approximately 170 adults were enrolled in three- or six-month immersion programs in Breton, largely financed by the Region (Regional Council *Rapport* 2012). For comparable statistics for Gallo (which, in sum, have always been much lower), see Section 3.2.4.

The Public Office of the Breton Language, founded in 1999, has been working to increase the visibility of Breton (and Gallo) in public space, creating bilingual Breton-French street signs and integrating Breton into commerce. Around 80 authors write in

Breton, publishing through 22 publishing houses (Le Coadic 2010); in 2011, the Region financially contributed to 64 books published fully in Breton, 15 published bilingually in Breton and French and three published bilingually in Gallo and French (*Regional Council, Rapport 2012*). Gallo printing appears to have increased since; for more details, see Section 3.2.4. Numerous radio stations, four television stations, and online platforms also broadcast in Breton (Regional Council, *Rapport 2012*). However, Le Coadic (2010) also points to various signs that the interest in Breton culture may be waning, including a dramatic deceleration of the growth of *festoù-noz* from 1990-2000 (although absolute numbers continue to decrease) and a slowing of growth in enrollment in bilingual Breton education.

More recently, Gallo has gained nominal equality with respect to Breton; following the 2004 adoption of a new language policy by the Regional Council, both Breton and Gallo are now jointly called *les langues de Bretagne*. Chevalier (2008) points out that Gallo is even designated in the policy as a *langue romane spécifique*—a “distinct Romance language,” rather than as a *parler*, as it was in 1977. The 2004 policy explicitly stated the Regional Council’s position in favor of multilingualism, including the development of Brittany’s regional languages. A 2012 report published (in French and Breton, but not in Gallo) by the Regional Council of Brittany assessed the state of regional language promotion since the statement of the 2004 language policy. As of 2011, shortly before the start of my fieldwork in July 2013, a combined 7,515,525 € were spent by the council on efforts related to both Breton and Gallo;⁴⁵ funding had increased

⁴⁵ The Region did not provide a breakdown of how much was allocated to initiatives for each of the two languages (or for the few initiatives targeting both at once); however, evidence suggests that far more financial support is accorded to Breton. For example, the Gallo working group’s analysis of the same set of figures (Regional Council, *Rapport 2012*) listed a total of 204,756 € given in 2011 to different Gallo

almost every year since the council began reporting in 2004. The Council reported three categories of current and future initiatives: (1) *attracting new speakers*, (2) *increasing the presence of Breton and Gallo in social, cultural and public life*, and (3) *developing the presence of Breton and Gallo in the Regional Council*. In most cases, separate numbers were not given for Breton and for Gallo in the 2012 report; where they were provided, Breton typically far outnumbered Gallo both in participation rates and in initiatives available. A unanimous decision in April 2014 by the Cultural Council of Brittany established a sixteen-member working group for the purpose of evaluating Gallo's place in the Region's public policy. This group, composed in large part of Gallo advocates I met during fieldwork, produced a report in June 2015. This report noted that whereas to date, most services provided to Gallo were calqued on what had already been established for Breton, "the sociolinguistic situation of the Gallo language is not the same as that of Breton; language of complicity, essentially oral (not often written), standardization under way, a more difficultly discernable social demand..." (69).⁴⁶ The group thus recommended that the Region develop "a strategy specifically applied to [Gallo's] development in function of its particularities" (69).⁴⁷

Another problem facing Gallo recognition, as well as the implementation of programs to further Gallo use, is that despite Gallo's official status as a valued "language of Brittany" since 2004, it often occupies a marginal positionality in regional institutional

organisms: associations (and their festivals and adult education initiatives), elementary school Gallo classes, radio, publishing and theater groups (*Gallo: Etude et préconisations* 2015). It is not clear if this is all of the funding accorded to Gallo; if it is, it represents 2.7 percent of the total.

⁴⁶ "...la situation sociolinguistique de la langue gallèse n'est pas la même que celle du breton : langue de connivence, essentiellement orale (peu écrite), normalisation en cours, demande sociale plus difficilement identifiable..." (*Gallo: Etude et préconisations* 2015:69).

⁴⁷ "...une stratégie appliquée spécifiquement à son développement en fonction de ses particularités" (*Gallo: Etude et préconisations* 2015:69).

discourse. While many Breton advocates welcome Gallo into their vision for Brittany, Gallo users must at other times defend their variety “and its quality as a language representative of Breton identity, in the face of some Breton activists who promote a monolingual and monocultural Breton identity focused on the Celtic language of Brittany” (Hornsby & Nolan 2011:316). In the 1990s, sociologist Ronan Le Coadic interviewed sociologist, journalist and politician Jean-Yves Cozan, who proclaimed: “Upper Brittany is following a continental Parisian development schema, it’s the *banlieue* of Paris! Intellectually as well, I think. There are thus two Brittanys. For me, what counts is Lower Brittany” (1998:313; see also Schrijver 2006).⁴⁸ Monnier (2010d) briefly mentions, as well, Breton promoters who looked on Gallo with disdain. However, many Breton enthusiasts welcome those who work toward greater recognition for Gallo. Le Coadic (1998) cites Breton musician Glenmor, who said, “Whether they speak Breton or in the Gallo language makes no difference: those of Upper and Lower Brittany are both equally Breton. In the Breton movement, those who say that to be Breton, you need to speak Breton, they’re idiots!” (314).⁴⁹ Indeed, while almost all of my participants had their cultural origins in Upper not Lower Brittany, several ultimately came to their interest in Gallo *through* an interest in Breton—in some cases, even earning degrees in Breton at the university, a process that Nolan (2010) also found among some informants.

Breton can thus be a means of helping people recognize the worth in Gallo, rather than an opposing linguistic force. Indeed, Gallo has in many ways profited by association

⁴⁸ “La Haute-Bretagne est dans un schéma de développement continental parisien, c’est la banlieue de Paris ! Intellectuellement aussi, je crois. Il y a donc deux Bretagnes. Pour moi, ce qui compte, c’est la Basse-Bretagne” (Le Coadic 1998 :313).

⁴⁹ “ Qu’ils parlent breton ou en langue gallèse n’a aucune importance: ceux de Haute et Basse-Bretagne sont bretons au même titre. Dans le mouvement breton, ceux qui disent que pour être breton, il faut forcément être bretonnant, ce sont des cons !” (Le Coadic 1998:314).

with Breton. Both groups contain passionate and committed people, but activism in favor of the recognition and use of Breton began earlier than it did for Gallo (Hornsby & Nolan 2011), and it remains by far the better-known form of politico-linguistic mobilization in Brittany. When rights are gained for one language, they are often extended to the other, so one could make the case that, were it not for Breton, Gallo would today hold a place more similar to the other *oïl* languages spoken throughout northern France: not available as an official elective on the *brevet* or *baccalauréat* exams, not officially designated as a working language of the region, and having less access to regional funding (for more on the state of the *oïl* languages in the last decades of the twentieth century and the beginning of the twenty-first, see Chaveau 1995, Lefebvre 1988, Simoni-Aurembou 2003, or Walter [1988]1994).

At the national level, Article 2 of the French Constitution states that “la langue de la République est le français.” In 1987, the Breton group *Emgleo evid Lezenn ar Yezou* launched a petition to have the French state recognize Breton as an official language; 600 localities in Lower Brittany and 95 in Upper Brittany signed in support (Hornsby & Nolan 2011), but this did not happen. Gallo has typically been even less represented on national scales than Breton; it is likely that the majority of French residents have never heard the term *gallo* (Walter 1987). However, in part because of activists’ strong promotion of the variety (Hornsby & Nolan 2011), Gallo was mentioned alongside other *langues d’oïl* in the government-sponsored Cerquiglini Report of 1999. This report listed languages in France that would qualify for inclusion under the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (CETS 148), if France were to ratify it. (More information on this Charter was provided in Chapter 2.) Cerquiglini’s inclusion of the

langues d'oïl has important implications for the debate over whether such varieties, including Gallo, are best conceptualized as regional dialects of French, or regional languages of France (see Section 3.1.4). Given that the European Charter explicitly precludes “dialects of the official language(s) of the State” from its terms, Cerquiglini’s inclusion of the *langues d'oïl* means that in his view, they are distinct languages.

As mentioned in Chapter 2, while France did, in fact, sign the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages in 1999, it has never been ratified. In 1999, France’s Constitutional Council declared the European Charter unconstitutional, in part because it apparently contradicted Article 2, and also because its provisions “seem to recognize a right to use a language other than French not only in ‘private life’ but also in ‘public life’” (paragraph 11),⁵⁰ which went against the principles “of the indivisibility of the Republic, of equality before the law, and of the unicity of the French people” (paragraph 10).⁵¹ When I arrived in France in July 2013, work toward ratification had been largely stalled for decades, although an “amended, minor article of the French Constitution” (Hornsby & Nolan 2011:311), Article 75-1, had been passed in 2008 designating French regional languages as part of France’s *patrimoine*, or cultural heritage.

However, during my fieldwork year, Gallo advocates hopefully followed developments in the French National Assembly (*Assemblée nationale*), the lower of the two houses of the French Parliament, which was considering whether to adopt a constitutional amendment permitting the ratification of the European Charter. In December 2013 and January 2014, there were debates on the floor of the Assembly, and

⁵⁰ “...tendent à reconnaître un droit à pratiquer une langue autre que le français non seulement dans la ‘vie privée’ mais également dans la ‘vie publique’” (Décision n° 99-412 DC du 15 juin 1999, paragraphe 11).

⁵¹ “...d’indivisibilité de la République, d’égalité devant la loi et d’unicité du peuple français” (Décision n° 99-412 DC du 15 juin 1999, paragraphe 10).

several local and regional Gallo organizations excitedly spread the news: Gallo, along with Breton and other minority languages, had been spoken aloud on the Assembly floor. One such video from January 23, 2014, featured Thierry Benoit, *député* from a district of Ille-et-Vilaine, speaking Gallo in the very heart of a building emblematic of the French state. On January 28, 2014, the *Assemblée nationale* voted in favor of a constitutional amendment. Gallo associations cautiously rejoiced.

Ultimately, however, it appears that France will have to wait longer for the ratification of the Charter. The proposed amendment was submitted on June 24, 2015, about a year after the end of my fieldwork. The amendment “consist[ed] of a single article inserting in the Constitution an article 53-3 authorizing the ratification of the European Charter of Regional and Minority Languages adopted in Strasbourg on November 5, 1992, and signed by France on May 7, 1999” (*Conseil d’Etat*, N° 390.268, 31 July 2015).⁵² However, on July 31, 2015, the Council of State (*Conseil d’Etat*), the legal advisor of the executive branch, gave it a disfavorable opinion, claiming that it would introduce into the Constitution “an internal contradiction generating judiciary insecurity” (*Conseil d’Etat*, N° 390.268, 31 July 2015).⁵³ Following this verdict, the Senate (*Sénat*) rejected the proposed amendment on October 27, 2015.

In 2014, the survey by *Bretagne Culture Diversité / TMO Regions* found that 73 percent of the surveyed residents of five-department Brittany felt themselves to be Breton; of those, 86 percent felt that being Breton was “very important or quite

⁵² “...comporte un article unique insérant dans la Constitution un article 53-3 autorisant la ratification de la Charte européenne des langues régionales et minoritaires adoptée à Strasbourg le 5 novembre 1992 et signée par la France le 7 mai 1999” (*Conseil d’Etat*, N° 390.268, 31 July 2015).

⁵³ “...une contradiction interne génératrice d’insécurité juridique” (*Conseil d’Etat*, N° 390.268, 31 July 2015).

important” to them. Sixty-three percent of Brittany residents surveyed were “very confident or quite confident” in the future of Breton culture, and seventy-three percent of respondents estimated that the languages of Brittany were an important part of that culture; this was the second-highest response, after music and dance (85 percent). However, to what extent does the Gallo language in particular, and its associated cultural practices enter into such negotiations?

3.2.2.2 An unequal visibility

While Gallo and Breton have, since 2004, had an equivalent official position as languages of Brittany, it does not follow that they have equal visibility, esteem, or symbolic regional cachet. As explained by Daniel Giraudon, an emeritus professor of Breton who has also published popular texts on Gallo, “When one speaks of Brittany in general, especially as far as culture is concerned, the tendency is to take the part for the whole and to forget the eastern half of the peninsula” (2012:100).⁵⁴ The “part” being taken for the whole here is *la Basse-Bretagne*, Lower Brittany—as well as the Celtic language of Breton that has traditionally been spoken on the western half of the peninsula. Breton is readily given public legitimacy, as “Brittany’s cultural specificity is frequently located in its Celtic past” (Hornsby & Nolan 2011:311). In the early twentieth century, says historian Claude Geslin (2010), “Britanny [was] perceived... as a conservatory for the picturesque and for folklore, and artists craving *dépayement* [culture shock] sought it out, in the process helping give it an image set in stone” (17).⁵⁵ Because these artists and writers were from inland France, the type of *dépayement* they

⁵⁴ “ Lorsque l’on parle de la Bretagne en général, notamment sur le plan culturel, la tendance est de prendre la partie pour le tout et d’oublier la moitié orientale de la péninsule” (Giraudon 2012:100).

⁵⁵ “ ...la Bretagne est perçue...comme un conservatoire du pittoresque et du folklore et les artistes en mal de *dépayement* la recherchent, contribuant d’ailleurs à en donner une image figée.” (Geslin 2010:17).

sought was something maximally different from their familiar, Romance-language surroundings. They gravitated toward the periphery of Brittany and its maximally different language of Breton. The image of Brittany popularized in art and literature was thus a romanticized Celtic vision that largely erased Brittany's Romance aspects.

Today, as well, the prominent symbols of regional inflection are Celtic in nature: communications from the Region of Brittany are routinely bilingual in French and Breton; road signs in the *départements* of Finistère, Côtes d'Armor and Morbihan are very often bilingual in Breton and French (even in the traditionally Gallo-speaking areas of the latter two); and on May 10, 2013, the top-level Internet domain *.bzh* was approved for websites related to Brittany and Breton culture,⁵⁶ including the Region's official website.⁵⁷ The abbreviation BZH denotes "Breizh," the Breton name for Brittany. Along with the domain *.paris*, *.bzh* was one of the first such domain name requests to be filed on behalf of a French collectivity, indicating widespread concern with representing the region in a Celtic-informed manner. According to the Region's newsletter to its partners, which itself always features a fully bilingual letter from the editor in French and Breton, the Region strongly supported the creation of the domain: "Bearing the image of a dynamic Brittany, open to the world, the *.bzh* domain aims to bring visibility to the economic, social and cultural activities linked to Brittany."⁵⁸ In its choice of the

⁵⁶ Bretons et Parisiens autorisés à s'afficher en *.bzh* ou en *.paris* sur le web. *Le Monde*, May 13, 2013. http://www.lemonde.fr/technologies/article/2013/05/10/internet-la-bretagne-obtient-une-extension-bzh_3175490_651865.html?xtmc=bzh&xtcr=6 Accessed 14 May 2015.

⁵⁷ *Le site de la Région Bretagne / Lec'hienn Rannvro Breizh*, <http://www.bretagne.bzh/>. As of 14 May 2015, the website contains language settings for French, Breton, English, German, Spanish and Polish, but not Gallo.

⁵⁸ "Portant l'image d'une Bretagne dynamique et ouverte sur le monde, le *.bzh* vise à donner une visibilité aux activités économiques, sociales, culturelles liées à la Bretagne." Citation from the article *La Région passe au .bzh*, *Bretagne info partenaires / Keleier breizh d'he c'hevelerien*, Vol. 55, May 2015. http://www.bretagne.bzh/upload/docs/application/pdf/2015-05/bip_n55-web.pdf Accessed 14 May 2015.

emblematic BZH, which does not transparently signify either French “Bretagne” or Gallo “Bertagne/ Bertègn,” the Region and the other promoters of the domain name imply that this “visibility” depends to some extent on Brittany’s Celtic character, unique within France.

Even before its use as a web extension for the region, the toponym “Breizh” has served as an important resource in commercial branding. Notable examples include *A l’Aise Breizh*, a textile company whose bumper stickers, featuring stick figures wearing stereotypical Breton hats, are estimated to have adorned over 1.3 million cars since 1998⁵⁹, and *Breizh Cola*, a soda made in Brittany that was often available at refreshment booths at cultural festivals. The symbolic potential of Breton has been acknowledged by non-Brittany-based enterprises as well. When Coca-Cola targeted the Breton market in 2014, the company put up signs, including in the train station of Rennes, proclaiming in Breton *Degemer mat!* (‘Welcome!’) and featuring a Breton translation of a slogan, *Coca-Cola vous rafraîchit en Bretagne* (‘Coca-Cola refreshes you in Brittany’). In 2015, Breton news blog *7siezh.info* qualified a similar marketing campaign by Coca-Cola as “breizhsplotation.”⁶⁰ Figure 3.6, below, shows some of these cultural emblems encountered during my fieldwork year.

In contrast to these examples where the word *Breizh*, coupled with other markings of regional identity, symbolized regional authenticity amongst the trappings of modernity, Gallo has not been used in the wide-scale commodification of regional

⁵⁹ “A l’aise Breizh. La Bigoudène est devenue très collante” *Ouest France*, 23 July 2014. <http://www.entreprises.ouest-france.fr/article/laise-breizh-bigoudene-est-devenue-tres-collante-23-07-2014-154209> Accessed 18 March 2016.

⁶⁰ Amélie Tsaag Valren. “Coca-Cola et sa breizhsplotation,” *7siezh*, 22 July 2015. <http://7siezh.info/2015/07/22/coca-cola-breizhsplotation/> Accessed 5 March 2016.



Figure 3.6 Breton-inflected cultural emblems encountered during fieldwork

culture. A sixteen-member working group under the auspices of the Cultural Council of Brittany estimated in 2015 that only 40 businesses, mostly local, used Gallo in their branding; however, they cautioned that “No quantitative or qualitative study has been done concerning the place of Gallo in the economic life of Gallo country (Upper-Brittany), nor of its use in business” (*Gallo: Etude et préconisations* 2015:26).⁶¹ The working group also pointed out that, among businesses receiving the popular *Produit en Bretagne* [*Made in Brittany*] label, none used Gallo in their branding; as Figure 3.4 above has foreshadowed, “this contrasts strongly with the growing success of the Breton language at the heart of *Produit en Bretagne*, which is dedicating a working group to it” (*Gallo: Etude et préconisations* 2015:26).⁶² When they use Breton to connote a regional identity, the types of branding moves seen in Figure 3.4 allow local inhabitants to present Bretonness as a viable alternative to hegemonic Frenchness, but they also elide the role

⁶¹ “Aucune étude tant au plan quantitatif que qualitatif n’a été réalisée concernant la place du gallo dans la vie économique du pays gallo (de Haute-Bretagne), ni sur son utilisation dans l’entreprise” (*Gallo: Etude et préconisations* 2015 :26).

⁶² “Ce qui contraste fortement avec le succès croissant de la langue bretonne au sein de *Produit en Bretagne* qui lui dédie un groupe de travail” (*Gallo: Etude et préconisations* 2015:26).

Gallo plays in Brittany's linguistic landscape. The launch of *Du Galo: Dam Yan, Dam Ver!*, a pro-Gallo charter and label in April 2015, may work toward improving Gallo's visibility in commerce, as companies are awarded the label for their use of Gallo at various thresholds of activity.

Rather than conveying uniqueness and distinction, as can Breton, the working group found that Gallo was often seen as an uneducated French *patois* because of its linguistic similarities to French. Linguist Henriette Walter had already singled out this problem in 1987, claiming that “while Breton, clearly distinct from French, could and would become one of the essential elements of Breton identity, Gallo, this *oil* way of talking close to French, had often been wrongfully perceived as ‘deformed French’” (10).⁶³ As Giraudon explains, “People have often passed [Gallo] off as bad French, since the two languages are [typologically] close. Moreover it is this proximity which places it on the level of patois, in the pejorative sense... and hampers its rights to be recognized” (2012:100).⁶⁴ A 2014 survey by *Bretagne Culture Diversité / TMO Régions* found that, when 1000 residents of Brittany were asked how they felt about the future of Breton and Gallo, 28 percent were “indifferent” to the future of Gallo; this was higher than that reported for Breton (19 percent). When people did care one way or another, the proportion of people “somewhat worried” was roughly the same for the two languages (33 percent vs. 32 percent of the overall sample), but far fewer were “confident” in the

⁶³ “...alors que le breton, nettement différencié du français, pouvait et allait devenir un des éléments essentiels et reconnus de l'identité bretonne, le gallo, cette forme de parler d'oïl proche du français, a longtemps été senti, à tort, comme du ‘français écorché’” (Walter 1987:10).

⁶⁴ “L'on a souvent fait passer [le gallo] pour du mauvais français, car les deux langues sont proches. C'est d'ailleurs cette proximité qui le place au rang de patois, au sens péjoratif du terme... et freine ses droits à la reconnaissance” (Giraudon 2012:100).

future of Gallo (17.5 percent) than they were of Breton (39 percent), and twice as many were “very worried” (nine percent for Gallo vs. five percent for Breton).

Past studies indeed suggest that users of Gallo are also less likely to claim a Breton identity than are users of Breton; when they do, they often base this identity on Breton rather than on Gallo. Sociologist Ronan Le Coadic found in his 1998 monograph, *L'Identité bretonne*, that there was a “significant correlation that appear[ed] between the affirmed intensity of Bretonness and the ‘ethnic’ origin of the interviewees” (63).⁶⁵ Le Coadic explains that only six of his 19 interviewees from *le pays Gallo* [Gallo country, or Upper Brittany] claimed that the fact of being Breton was important to them, while 18 of his 25 interviewees from *Basse-Bretagne* [Lower Brittany] did so. Furthermore, residents of Upper Brittany tended to bestow more cultural value on Breton—the language less commonly spoken in their part of Brittany—than they did on Gallo. One of Le Coadic’s participants, who knew “patois” but lacked the opportunity to use it, said the following about language endangerment: “The patois, well, ... it’s not in my opinion a very big deal. But Breton, that would be a catastrophe, if it were to disappear!” (213).⁶⁶ Le Coadic concludes that “the majority of Upper Bretons interviewed express a traditional definition of Breton identity, which makes the Breton language the standard/flag for Bretonness and leads several of them to regret not knowing Breton; the latter, in contrast to the Gallo way of talking, is a real ‘language’”(215).⁶⁷ Such comparative symbolic invisibility, at a regional level, is reflected in the fact that *Ar Men*, a regional culture and news magazine

⁶⁵ “...[une] dépendance significative qui apparait entre l’intensité affirmée de la bretonnité et l’origine ‘ethnique’ des interviewés” (Le Coadic 1998:63).

⁶⁶ “Le patois, bon... ce n’est pas à mon avis très grave. Mais le breton, ce serait une catastrophe, s’il disparaissait!” (Le Coadic 1998:213).

⁶⁷ “La plupart des Hauts-Bretons interrogés admettent une définition traditionnelle de l’identité bretonne, qui fait de la langue bretonne l’étendard de la bretonnité et amène nombre d’entre eux à regretter de ne pas connaître le breton; ce dernier, par opposition au parler gallo, est une vraie ‘langue’” (Le Coadic 1998:215).

that styles itself on its webpage as an “encyclopédie vivante de la Bretagne et du monde qui l’entoure” [living encyclopedia of Brittany and the world that surrounds it] waited until its 174th edition, in 2010, to feature an article on Gallo,⁶⁸ and when it did, this article, written by Jean Angoujard and Bèrtran Ôbrée, was entitled “Le gallo: L’autre langue bretonne” [Gallo: The other Breton language].

In later chapters of this dissertation, other points of difference between the two regional languages’ ideological framing will be explored. Chapter 5 will articulate Gallo advocates’ efforts to construct Gallo as a language-object separate from French and the symbolic equal of Breton; Chapter 6 will show that the ideologies of “pride” and “profit” (Heller & Duchêne 2012), frequently used to argue for the value of Breton, are an imperfect fit for Gallo; and, given that common regional symbols of belonging are more strongly indexical of Breton, Chapter 7 will explore other semiotic resources Gallo advocates marshal to cue for Gallo. This section has aimed to motivate those queries by bringing attention to a disequilibrium in the recognition and symbolic power of the two varieties. The cases discussed here allude to the representational challenges Gallo advocates faced as they constructed Gallo as an object definable by a language name, locatable in social space, and capable of being embodied on stage or in a dictionary.

3.2.3 Gallo in place and time: A language of the rural past

In 1984, Corbel already discerned a gradient scale of Gallo identity, according to which *le villotin* [Gallo for ‘city-dweller’] was perceived as ‘less’ Gallo than the rural resident, or the *bourgeois* ‘less’ Gallo than the *paysan*, or peasant. Indeed, Monnier

⁶⁸ There are, however, a handful of references to cultural events in “le Pays Gallo”, dating back to edition 24 (1989).

(2010d) claims that Gallo has remained linked even more strongly with an agricultural, rural society than has Breton, and that “in a largely urban Brittany, [Gallo’s] transmission and survival are becoming problematic” (283).⁶⁹ Angoujard and Manzano (2008) point to stereotypes, at times reinforced by linguists, that associate Gallo “to the past of the *oïl* languages, to the French of yesterday, distant echo of a peasant France which seems today to be disappearing” (7).⁷⁰ Two pairs of books allow for a useful case study of the different indexicalities of Gallo and Breton, particularly with respect to place and time. These comparisons will show that, while Breton is understood as having scope over the whole region, Gallo has scope over Upper Brittany alone. They will also show that Breton is seen, at least by some, as a language of “modernity,” while Gallo is more firmly relegated to the past.

The Gallo folk dictionary *Gallo et galloïsmes: Le français tel qu’on le parle en Haute-Bretagne [Gallo and Galloisms: French as it is spoken in Upper Brittany]* (Giraudon 2012) was referenced in conversations I had with several Gallo enthusiasts. On hearing I was studying Gallo, people on multiple occasions offered to lend their copies of this book to me. The popularity of the book (its first run of 3000 copies was quickly sold out⁷¹) does suggest Gallo’s growing recognition. However, such recognition is still less than that accorded to Breton; *Gallo et galloïsmes* appeared after another book from the same publisher, *Les Bretonnismes: Le français tel qu’on le parle en Bretagne*

⁶⁹ “Dans une Bretagne à dominante urbaine, transmission et survie deviennent problématiques” (Monnier 2010d:283).

⁷⁰ “... au passé de la langue d’oïl, au français d’hier, lointain echo d’une France paysanne qui semble aujourd’hui régresser” (Angoujard & Manzano 2008:7).

⁷¹ Bras, Jean Laurent. “Daniel Giraudon: Le labourer de galloïsmes,” *Ouest-France*, 6 January 2013. Article featured on the website of the publisher, Skol Vreizh, http://www.skolreizh.com/index.php?page=shop.product_details&category_id=16&flypage=flypage_images.tpl&product_id=234&vmcchk=1&option=com_virtuemart&Itemid=3. Accessed 5 March 2016.

[Bretonisms: French as it is spoken in Brittany] (Lossec 2010). The publisher advertises the book and its sequel, both of which discuss “Bretonisms” (or lexical and syntactic features in Brittany French that purportedly reveal a Breton substrate) as having sold 270,000 copies. The titles are similar in form, but with two important differences. First, what is defined in Lossec’s title is not “Breton” itself but “Bretonisms”—a newly coined word; the definition in Giraudon’s title, on the other hand, assimilates “Gallo” with “le français tel qu’on le parle en Haute-Bretagne”—or a regional variant of French! Second, the territory affiliated with Breton-influenced speech patterns in Lossec’s subtitle is not “Lower Brittany,” which would be the Breton analog to “Upper Brittany” in the Gallo book’s title, but “Brittany” as a whole, although the terms and syntactic structures featured in the book are a result of a Celtic substrate lacking in Upper Brittany. This pair of books illustrates how Breton is seen as properly belonging to the whole of the region of Brittany in a way that Gallo is not.

Not only does Breton tend to be portrayed as more emblematic of Brittany than Gallo, but it also tends to be positioned as more modern. A second comparison of two books illustrates this point. The French publishing house CPE has a collection of books, meant for popular audiences, called *Langues Régionales: Patois et chansons de nos grands-pères* [*Regional Languages: Patois and songs of our grandfathers*]. Among the 24 entries to date, both Gallo and Breton are featured. However, the publisher’s description of the book devoted to Breton, published in 2010 by Thierry Jigourel (who also authored the Gallo edition), admits that the Breton volume “stands out from” the series’ stated mission:

To maintain the memory of our deeply rooted local oral traditions,⁷² Les Editions CPE have committed to a ‘tour de France’ of the languages of our grandfathers, of the old palaver popular before linguistic unification. Thierry Jigourel has reminded us that Breton is a living language turned toward modernity. At the time of globalization, Brittany knows where she comes from, she maintains her language, she knows the songs of her grandfathers. This work stands out within a collection essentially dedicated to old, forgotten *patois*, but it shows all the specificity of Brittany and the power of her culture.⁷³

This publisher’s statement accomplishes several ideological moves. First, it places the majority of France’s regional languages in the category of “our deeply rooted local oral traditions,” which are disappearing in the face of “linguistic unification.” Then, it contrastively characterizes Breton as a “living language”—thus positioning most other regional languages, implicitly including Gallo, as *not* living and *not* “turned toward modernity.” Breton is further glossed as *the* language of Brittany through the use of the possessive singular *sa langue* “her language”; it is this singular language that shows “all the specificity of Brittany and the power of her culture.”

Comparison with the publisher’s description of the same author’s book on Gallo (Jigourel 2011) highlights the different emblematic status accorded to the two languages in Brittany:

We speak the same French everywhere, we all listen to the same Anglo-Saxon music. We go to the same superstores to buy the same brands, the same products... The heart of the Breton in Upper Brittany is nonetheless attached to his [sic.] roots, to his history and to his soil... and even to his Gallo speech

⁷² The word *terroir* is difficult to translate into English. Often used in gastronomy, it conveys the sense of a product (a food or a wine, or here, a language) that is deeply rooted in local traditions and has a geographically marked ‘flavor’ as a result of its grounding in the local soil. The above translation is my best attempt at capturing this concept.

⁷³ “ Pour entretenir la mémoire du patrimoine oral de nos terroirs, les éditions CPE ont engagé un tour de France des langues de nos grands-pères, des vieux parages en vigueur avant l’unification linguistique. Thierry Jigourel nous a rappelé que le breton est une langue vivante tournée vers la modernité. A l’heure de la mondialisation, la Bretagne sait d’où elle vient, elle entretient sa langue, elle connaît les chansons de ses grands-pères. Cet ouvrage dénote dans une collection essentiellement consacrée à des vieux patois oubliés, mais il démontre toute la spécificité de la Bretagne et la puissance de sa culture.” <http://www.cpe-editions.com/cpe/Sommaire4Rub/index.htm?SREP=39> Accessed 14 May 2015.

because our grandfathers and our great-grandfathers spoke among themselves with this language which was particularly theirs. This book is a collection of texts and commentaries that constitute a dose of authenticity. The songs of our grandfathers found once again, an explanation of popular festivals... and especially, their *patois* rediscovered with a formidable glossary. A gift to offer to all those who love Brittany, whether they are 18 or 78!⁷⁴

The rhetoric of nostalgia and regional essentialism that runs through both of these descriptions is perhaps to be expected from a publisher branding itself *l'éditeur des terroirs de France* [the publishing house of the *terroirs* of France]. The contrast is nonetheless striking between Breton, language of “modernity,” and Gallo, a *patois* associated with “our grandfathers and our great-grandfathers” that is in need of “rediscover[y].” This description is somewhat contested by the extensive profiles in the book of present-day Gallo storytellers, singers, teachers, radio hosts and activists—many of whom I met during fieldwork—but none of that contestation makes it into the book’s title or press description.

Gallo defenders thus work within dominant ideological frames linking Gallo to rurality and older speakers. Yet some of the Gallo artists I met, while valuing Gallo in part for its connections to past people and places (see Chapter 6), were troubled by the implication that their audience often did not imagine other possible uses for Gallo. They felt that salient cultural symbols, such the kind of old-fashioned rural clothing (suspenders and checkered shirts) worn by well-known Gallo performers as part of their

⁷⁴ “ Nous parlons le même français partout, nous écoutons tous la même musique anglosaxonne. Nous allons dans les mêmes grandes surfaces acheter les mêmes marques, les mêmes produits... Le cœur du Breton en Haute Bretagne est pourtant resté attaché à ses racines, à son histoire et à son terroir... et même à son parler gallo puisque nos grands-pères et nos arrières grands-pères parlaient entre eux avec cette langue bien à eux. Ce livre est un recueil de textes et de commentaires qui constituent une cure d’authenticité. Les chansons de nos grands-pères retrouvées, une explication sur leurs fêtes populaires... et surtout, leur patois redécouvert avec un formidable glossaire. Un cadeau à offrir à tous ceux qui aiment la Bretagne, qu’ils aient 18 ou 78 ans !” Description featured in a press announcement by *Agence Bretagne Presse*, 29 October 2011, <http://abp.bzh/23690>. Accessed 5 March 2016.

stage personae, equated Gallo too exclusively with *la farce paysanne* or ‘peasant theater.’ Such typically scatological performances often positioned Gallo speakers as ignorant.

During my fieldwork, expectations of old-fashioned attire were sometimes articulated when performers wore clothing that was not saliently old-fashioned. For example, at a yearly festival that celebrated local art forms such as song, storytelling, music, and dance, some stories told on stage were indexical of the past, but others were clearly set in the present. Only one performer dressed in old-fashioned clothing (a brimmed hat, a checkered shirt, and a vest)—yet this was the performer whose photo appeared the next day in a major newspaper write-up of the event. During intermission, I was chatting with another performer, who would go on to win second place, when a man whom neither of us knew came up to us in the crowd. After complimenting the performer on her piece, the newcomer added that the only thing that would have improved on the performance was if she had worn an old-fashioned costume.

This comment surprised me for several reasons. First, as the performer said herself in reply, she *was* already wearing an outfit that corresponded to the theme of her monologue, a humorous first-person tale that involved a trip to an island off the Breton coast. She was wearing a navy-and-white striped boating sweater to go along with the marine theme. Secondly, the tale was ostensibly set in the present: the plot centered on the narrator’s attempts to buy a sheep to replace her electric lawnmower so that she could be “*pus boudet do la planet*” [friendlier to the planet], and she proclaims that she and her partner have become “*a meitié ecologiss*” [half environmentalist]. The fact that this member of the audience expected traditional clothing in a story about an electric lawnmower and ecological activism suggests the perseverance of the indexical link

between Gallo and the past. Indeed, when I showed clips of the same performance, along with another performance featuring a GPS, to a focus group of Upper Breton residents, one focus group member insisted despite all evidence that she would situate the story “in the past”—even with the GPS. As she said when pressed, “I think that that doesn’t exist anym- [[name of a friend]] says it does, but it doesn’t really exist anymore! That type of person, does it?”

Other performers I encountered during fieldwork often complained about the common expectation that Gallo performers dress in ways that index a rural past. During an interview, Matao Rollo, a Gallo storyteller and radio host, frustratedly recounted an offer that his great-aunt had made him as he was writing a performance based on his earlier pilgrimage on foot from his home in Brittany to Santiago de Compostela in Spain. Aggrieved, Matao told me and Nânon, a radio colleague who also participated in the interview, about a time the aunt, who “has never come to see [him] tell stories” and “doesn’t know what [he does],” tried to give him an old pair of suspenders, because she assumed they would be useful in his Gallo performances. Matao voiced his aunt: “*j’è une veille paire de burstelles là, tu les vourâs peut-être pour tes machins, là*” [I have an old pair of suspenders here, maybe you want them for those things of yours]. The word “old”, as well as the indexicality of suspenders in general, links “those things” of Matao’s—his performances, even the one about his twenty-first-century pilgrimage to Compostela—with the past. As Matao sarcastically remarked, “*E là, el a compris qe je conte en patoué*” [And there, she really understood I tell stories in patois!]. For Matao’s well-intentioned aunt, there was a causal link between the fact of performing in Gallo, often known as

patois (a term itself that has an indexical connection with the past, as will be established in Chapter 6), and the assumption that the gift of suspenders would be appreciated.

Matao made another comment during the interview that explains why he and other Gallo performers find this prevailing association between Gallo and rurality to be undesirable: it limits the forms of expression available. Whenever he is contracted to perform at a wedding or anniversary dinner, he says, the expectation is that he tell stories to make the public laugh, and that he don his “suspenders, [his] checkered shirt and then [his] wooden shoes!” In contrast, what Matao appreciated about Gallo speakers of the past was the diversity of speech genres to which, in his view, they had access: “So there was poetry. They used to sing from morning to night! ... And I was fed up with hearing that, that they were just hicks, that they were idiots, whereas it’s not true! They were anything but that.... What interests me specifically, with Gallo, is to show that it’s- it’s possible!” Matao resented the prevailing indexical links between Gallo and suspenders, not because he placed no value on the rural past, but because the nature of that link presented a reductive view both of Gallo and of those who used it in the past.

In Chapters 5 through 8 of this dissertation, I will examine language use in the settings discussed in Section 3.7 with an eye to how Gallo artists, advocates, teachers and learners negotiate the indexical links between Gallo and a disappearing rural past. I will argue that the effect of such uses was not to deny the past or its value, but rather to allow for a plurality of ways of relating to Gallo: as a language-object that is separate from French (Chapter 5), capable both of being loved and being learned (Chapter 6), that values local ways of knowing and local standards of authenticity (Chapter 7), and as a playful way of subverting national systems of value (Chapter 8).

3.2.4 Contemporary spheres of Gallo

While Gallo is often indexically associated with the past, it is relevant to spheres of cultural activity in the present. Chevalier (2008) acknowledges that Breton has dominated efforts to promote regional language in Brittany (see Section 3.2.2), but he finds that Gallo is now more visible in public space than at any time in recent decades:

Today, this disequilibrium seems to be correcting itself with a rather encouraging current evolution in the position of Gallo, which demonstrates that the latter, although less visible in many areas, is making up the delay it has in comparison to Breton, and offers it even a force and vivacity which one wouldn't have imagined even a few years ago. (75)⁷⁵

The contemporary spheres of activity involving Gallo in public space today can be divided into education (3.2.4.1), advocacy associations (3.2.4.2), cultural festivals (3.2.4.3), and mass media (3.2.4.4). In what follows, I do not highlight theater and artistic expression, although they are an important part of work in all of these arenas. Instead, artistic performances are covered in Chapter 4, when I discuss my rationale for investigating such activities. It is important to acknowledge that little academic work has been done investigating Gallo use within these public spheres; the Cultural Council's 2015 Gallo working group singled this out as a lacuna. My dissertation will contribute to knowledge about the ideological import and practical effects that language use in these settings has on representations of Gallo speakerhood.

⁷⁵ “Aujourd'hui, ce déséquilibre semble se corriger avec une évolution actuelle plutôt positive de la place du gallo, ce qui démontre que ce dernier, bien que moins visible dans bien des domaines, rattrape là encore son retard vis à vis du breton, et lui offre même une résistance et une vivacité que l'on n'aurait pas imaginé il y a encore quelques années” (Chevalier 2008:75).

3.2.4.1 Gallo education

Gallo has been offered as an elective course in public schools since 1980, making it the only *langue d'oïl* to be taught at all levels, from elementary school (in discovery sessions) to *collège* [middle school] and *lycée* [high school], as well as in university. Since 1982, Gallo has been an optional subject for which students can sit during the *brevet* or *baccalauréat*, which students must pass to graduate from middle school and high school, respectively. Strong marks on the Gallo examination, which is exclusively oral (students are asked questions about a selection of written texts they study in advance) result in additional points added to students' overall *brevet* or *baccalauréat* scores. During my fieldwork, while students often told me they were motivated to learn Gallo by pleasure or curiosity, most also admitted that their choice was in part strategic, driven by the desire to earn additional points through an elective many perceive as easy (see also Nolan 2010).

At the start of the 2013 school year, the Public Office of the Breton Language reported that 477 middle- and high-school students were taking Gallo, an increase of six percent from the preceding year. 1,400 elementary-school students had access to discovery sequences in Gallo in Ille-et-Vilaine; 700 more in the Morbihan were offered this opportunity through Dihun Breizh, (the preceding year, it had been over 1,000). One Catholic elementary school offered Gallo education all year long. Of the four *départements* of Upper Brittany, Côtes-d'Armor is the strongest in terms of offerings at the middle- and high-school level; eight of the 12 establishments offering Gallo are located there. These numbers reflect a very small percentage of the schoolchildren in Upper Brittany. The Académie de Rennes reported approximately 600,000 students in

primary and secondary schools in 2010-2011.⁷⁶ If we assume that roughly half, or 300,000, of these students live in traditionally Gallo-speaking areas of administrative Brittany (which is perhaps too conservative an estimate), the percentage of students learning Gallo is less than one percent of the total population of pupils in primary and secondary schools in administrative Upper Brittany.

While the Region's official policy is that a Gallo elective can be opened in any school upon sufficient parental demand, two main impediments exist. First, it is the parents' responsibility to organize in sufficient numbers, and without widespread recognition that Gallo is a worthwhile language to study, parents are unlikely to do so. Second, there are few teachers currently in the National Education system with the competences to teach in Gallo, and the school system offers no formal means for training new Gallo teachers. Several Gallo teachers I met during fieldwork actively campaigned on a volunteer basis to recruit students, traveling to elementary and middle schools to raise awareness about offerings at schools students would attend the following year.

While these educational offerings are greater than those offered to any other *langue d'oïl*, they thus fall far short of those offered for other regional languages of France, including for Breton. Regarding Gallo classes, the Cultural Council's Gallo working group affirmed an earlier quotation by the Public Office of the Breton Language: "*the educational offerings consist essentially of a sensibilization to Gallo and not a true learning process... Offerings remain fragile and are not truly structured*" (quoted in *Gallo: Etude et préconisations* 2015:83, italics in the original).⁷⁷ This is not a result of

⁷⁶ "Les élèves." Statistics on the website of the Académie de Rennes. <http://www.ac-rennes.fr/jahia/Jahia/site/academie2/accueil/pid/3192>. Accessed 6 April 2016.

⁷⁷ "...l'offre d'enseignement consiste essentiellement en une sensibilisation au gallo et non en un véritable apprentissage. C'est dans le second degré que l'option gallo est la plus développée. Cependant cette offre

lack of dedication on behalf of the teachers, many of whom are volunteers, but rather due to the fact that there exists no structure set in place to teach future educators how to teach Gallo, nor to evaluate the Gallo and pedagogical competences of those who do wish to teach it (*Gallo: Etude et préconisations* 2015). Indeed, all the Gallo teachers at the middle and high school level are certified in other subjects—ranging from French to English to Latin to physics—but not specifically in Gallo. The Public Office of the Breton Language estimated there were about ten Gallo teachers at all levels, with most of them working at the middle- and high-school level (*Office public de la langue bretonne* 2015).

Gallo education exists for adults as well. An elective Gallo language course has existed at the Université Rennes 2 since 1996; while it disappeared from the university program for several years in the early 2000s, it has since been restated. In 1994, a Gallo elective course was added to the curriculum at three teacher training institutes, or IUFMs, but this option has since been eliminated, despite Gallo associations' advocating for its reinstatement (*Gallo: Etudes et préconisations* 2015). In terms of leisure courses and workshops, at the start of the 2013 school year, approximately 110 adults were enrolled in roughly 15 different weekly Gallo night classes, and about 60 adults took one- or two-day long Gallo workshops (*Office public de la langue bretonne* 2015). In 2011, Gallo night classes and workshops were offered at 11 sites in Côtes-d'Armor, Ille-et-Vilaine, Loire-Atlantique and Morbihan; there were also two mini-courses (one or two days long) and one week-long intensive course. One organization, Stumdi, had once offered a three-

reste fragile et n'est pas réellement structurée" (quoted in *Gallo: Etude et préconisations* 2015:83, italics in the original).

month-long intensive Gallo course, which could be relaunched upon demand (Regional Council, *Rapport* 2012; Rey 2010).

3.2.4.2 Gallo advocacy associations

Although Gallo groups had intermittently been active in Upper Brittany earlier (e.g. *Les Compagnons de Merlin* in the 1940s), Gallo advocacy associations truly became popularized starting in the 1970s, a period during which Breton activism was also experiencing rapid growth. As a side note in her study of Breton activism, McDonald (1989) describes the birth of Gallo organizations as follows:

Gallo interests are, in many ways, a late back-formation, a copy of the Breton movement and its world. A *parler gallo* and a ‘Gallo culture’ were only drawn up with conviction in the mid-1970s, with enthusiasts looking back through a century or more of Breton folklore studies for every hint of a ‘Gallo tradition’ (142).

McDonald’s description considers Gallo movements purely through the lens of Breton, the liberal use of quotations seeming to indicate the author’s doubt that Gallo cultural expression was a significant entity in the local ideological landscape. Similarly, Corbel’s (1984) thesis suggests that the Gallo movement of the 1970s and early 1980s changed the language-object it was promoting, making it an emblem of identity like Breton, whereas before, it had not been experienced that way.

However, as Nolan (2010) has pointed out, the stances Gallo enthusiasts have taken toward the language-object have shifted over time, as reflected in the rebranding of one of the oldest and most widely known Gallo associations, still active today. The organization started in 1976 as *Les amis du parler gallo* (McDonald 1989) before becoming *Bretagne gallèse* in 1983 and then *Bertaèyn galeizz* in 1993 (Nolan 2010). During the time period of my fieldwork, it was rebranded again, as *Bertègn Galèzz*, using

the common orthography recommended to the Region by an inter-association working group.⁷⁸ Nolan analyses the situation thusly:

The initial use of the word *parler* to describe Gallo gives it a somewhat lesser status than *langue* or even *dialecte*. This self-view appears to have evolved somewhat through the change of name to *Bretagne gallèse* which appears to be an affirmation of a linguistic territory and the right to Breton origins for the variety by appropriating, in a way, *Bretagne* into the name.... The subsequent evolution [to Gallo orthography]... is a further indication of this determination, and also of a growing confidence in the movement of the standing of Gallo as a linguistic variety that is not only Breton, but is something apart from both the Breton and French languages, possibly as a language in its own right trying to shake off its image as a mere *patois*. (181)

The analyses in Chapter 5 will confirm that a prominent rhetorical strategy in promotional materials published by Gallo advocates and associations does in fact involve the discursive, interactional creation of Gallo as a language-object, separate from French and the cultural equal of Breton. However, Chapter 6 will challenge Nolan's implication that the only way of achieving a worth-affirming ideological position for Gallo is by differentiating *gallo* entirely from *patois*. While the activist-style strategies McDonald (1989) describes as central to Breton cultural organization are not entirely absent from Gallo organization meetings and activities, Gallo advocates (whether institutions or individuals) are doing something else as well—something this dissertation will elucidate.

In 2015, the Cultural Council's Gallo working group reported that about 60 associations with activities directly related to Gallo culture had been inventoried; few of those associations' employees, however, regularly used Gallo in the context of their work (*Gallo : Etude et préconisations 2015* :27). In 2011, 125,500 € were consecrated by the Region to associations promoting Gallo visibility and use (Regional Council, *Rapport*

⁷⁸ This was not a complete spelling system, but rather, a list of words the Region could use when translating signs or titles into Gallo.

2012).⁷⁹ More information about the specific organizations with whom I worked in 2013-2014 will be presented in the discussion of my methods in Chapter 4.

3.2.4.3 Cultural festivals

Festivals have been an important part of the revitalization of Breton culture since the 1970s. In 1999, reports Le Coadic (2010), there were 45 festivals organized in Brittany, most organized around music or “la tradition,” and most largely run by civic associations and volunteers. The most widely attended of these are in Breton-speaking Lower Brittany; for example, the *Festival Interceltique de Lorient* attracted 600,000 attendees in 2005. When Breton festivals are mentioned, the first association for many people, along with Celtic music, is the *festoù-noz*, or large, popular social dances. Approximately one thousand *festoù-noz* are held every year, each attracting anywhere from a hundred to over a thousand participants. UNESCO named the *fest-noz* part of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2012. A 2015 working group formed by Brittany’s Cultural Council calculated there were 14 yearly festivals devoted to Gallo and Upper Breton culture; I attended 11 festivals during my fieldwork year, which are discussed in more detail in Chapter 4.

3.2.4.4 Gallo in mass media

Gallo has a small share in the publishing market, but it is one that is much celebrated at festivals, where Gallo books can be found prominently displayed (see Chapter 7). A Gallo working group in 2015 reported findings from the Public Office of the Breton Language that 34 books had been published completely or partially in Gallo,

⁷⁹ For comparison purposes, this is less than the amount of money the Region granted to one television station, France 3 Bretagne, for the development of television programs in Breton (175,000 € given yearly; Regional Council, *Rapport* 2012).

by 15 different publishers, between 2007 and 2013 (*Gallo: Etude et préconisations* 2015). Of those titles, approximately half were didactic in nature; the others included tales and memoirs.

Gallo is present in news media as well. At the time of my fieldwork in 2013-2014, seven regular newspaper columns in Gallo were published in different local newspapers and magazines; six remained by the time of the 2015 working group's report (*Gallo: Etude et préconisations* 2015). There are also numerous personal blogs and two news websites that help Gallo circulate online (see *Gallo: Etude et préconisations* 2015 for a partial list).

While there are no regular television broadcasts in Gallo, Gallo does have a presence on the radio. The associative radio station Plum'FM, based in Sérent (56), broadcasts 11.5 weekly hours of Gallo shows on average (an increase from 4 weekly hours in 2012, Regional Council *Rapport* 2012); it also publishes many of these broadcasts as podcasts online. These podcasts are occasionally used for pedagogical purposes in Gallo classes. The 2015 working group reported that other associative radio stations would like to develop programs in Gallo, but they have been unable to find people with the appropriate training. Plum'FM has offered short-term workshops intended to build these competences in interested volunteers.

The public radio station France Bleu Armorique also broadcasts a radio show in Gallo. A 2014 statement by its director, however, is revelatory of the hurdles Gallo users face:

While it is of cultural value, the Gallo language, to my mind, is little spoken in urban areas and especially used in rural environments. Its radiophonic expression... could be problematic for a media that is seeking to expand among a public that is in theory non Gallo-speaking and sometimes younger.... The

presentation of Gallo during our shows must inspire desire to learn the language and must especially not be repellent to young people. (quoted in *Gallo: Etudes et préconisations* 2015:30-31).⁸⁰

The cautionary statement that Gallo programs must not be “repellent to young people” suggests how heavily Gallo is associated with older residents and rurality in the popular imagination of many Upper Breton residents, as discussed in Section 3.2.3.

This chapter has shown that there are many ways to define what Gallo is. It can be delineated in terms of its geographical purview, in terms of its structure in relation to French, and in terms of its status in relation to Breton. While it is often associated with the rural past, Gallo remains very much relevant, as it continues to be redefined in contemporary spaces. The following chapter, Chapter 4, presents my methods for conducting fieldwork within this multifaceted and complex sociolinguistic situation.

⁸⁰ “ Tout en étant une richesse culturelle la langue gallèse a mon sens est peu parlée dans les zones urbaines et surtout employée en milieu rural. Son expression radiophonique ... peut être problématique pour un média qui cherche aussi à rayonner auprès d'un public à priori non gallésant et parfois plus jeune.... La présentation du gallo lors des émissions doit donner envie d'apprendre la langue et surtout ne pas être répulsive pour les jeunes” (quoted in *Gallo: Etudes et préconisations* 2015: 30-31).

CHAPTER 4

METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

In this chapter, I lay out my methodological approach for elucidating the ways Gallo was positioned as object and engaged in as practice in the Gallo-centric spheres of activity introduced in Chapter 3. This discussion will provide necessary context for readers to understand the conditions under which the discourse and ethnographic data analyzed in Chapters 5 through 8 were produced through data collection—and transformed through transcription and analysis. Furthermore, because I was an outsider conducting research in Upper Brittany, it is important that I situate myself reflexively, characterize my relationships with community members and provide evidence that, while my perspective differed significantly from those of my participants, it nonetheless offered me a view of Gallo representation and social practice as culturally meaningful and theoretically important.

I begin by situating myself reflexively as an English-speaking American in Upper Brittany (Section 4.1). I describe my process of entering the field before and during my main phase of fieldwork in July 2013-June 2014, including making contacts and starting in earnest to learn Gallo, particularly in and around the capital of Rennes. In Section 4.2, I discuss the different types of sites at which I collected data, including festivals, artistic performances, association meetings and Gallo classes in various cities and small towns around Upper Brittany. In Section 4.3, I outline my process of recruiting participants

within those sites, and in Section 4.4, I detail my principal data collection methods (observations, field notes, audio/video recording, and interviews). I discuss the types and amounts of data collected in these various settings. I end by describing my methods of data analysis in Section 4.5, which began with the selection of data for review and transcription and continued with qualitative discourse analysis of themes that had emerged as relevant.

4.1. Coming to the Gallo community

Members of the Gallo-speaking community did not usually find it obvious why I might write a dissertation on Gallo. After all, I was a non-French person, a non-native French and Gallo speaker, and a community outsider; Gallo was popularly positioned as a language of uniquely local relevance. Before and during my fieldwork year, I gave much thought to how my status would position me with respect to those I would encounter in the field.

4.1.1 Initial reactions to my presence

My early expressions of interest in the language were often met with both pleasure and surprise. When I was contemplating writing a dissertation on Gallo, someone I met at a linguistics conference, himself a researcher of minority language in France, asked me why I would ever choose Gallo as a research topic—perhaps a bit facetiously, he said he personally found the situation of Breton to be of more interest. When I briefly visited Brittany in May and June 2012 in preparation for writing my dissertation proposal, there was a bit of good-natured humor about the idea of “une Amériqhaine,” vector of globalization *par excellence*, being interested in a language that was popularly perceived to be so local in scope.

People often asked upon first meeting why I was studying such a locally spoken language, as well as whether an American university was supporting me in my efforts. Initial (and incredulous) assumptions seemed to be that I had received funding exclusively to learn the language, in preparation, perhaps, for teaching it in the United States. Once I explained that I was as much interested in the attitudes people had about the language and its contexts of use in relation to Breton and to French as I was interested in learning the language itself, most interlocutors seemed to find the idea more plausible. This suggests the extent to which residents saw Gallo as local in scope, and it additionally points toward expectations that those not from the immediate area (such as people from inland France or abroad) might not appreciate the variety. I was also asked, more than once, why I would come to Europe when North America has many indigenous languages to study, which gave rise to some introspection.

4.1.2 How I came to Gallo

Indeed, my eventual appreciation of and fascination with Gallo is perhaps a product of a fortuitous circumstance rather than deliberate selection. Upon earning my bachelor's degree in psychology and French in May 2006, I decided to apply to a program that placed English speakers, usually college students or recent graduates, as English teaching assistants in primary or secondary schools in France. When petitioning for assignment in one of metropolitan France's 26 *académies* or educational circumscriptions, I selected "l'académie de Rennes" (comprising the four *départements* of the administrative region of Brittany) as my first choice. I hoped to be placed in an area where Breton was spoken, so that I could learn the Celtic language, and ideally also to find myself somewhere on the coast.

In early October 2006, I started a seven-month teaching assistantship in Brittany. But rather than finding myself in a Breton-speaking area, I was placed at a high school in the small town of Loudéac, population 10,000, in the traditionally Gallo-speaking part of Côtes-d'Armor. Upon hearing that I was assigned to Loudéac (with no train station and numerous bus rides away from the coast in any direction), I was initially a bit crestfallen. However, I was so warmly welcomed by my English teacher colleagues upon arrival that I soon felt most fortunate in my location. That feeling only grew when I mentioned to one of the English teachers, the first week or two of my contract, that I regretted only not being in a Breton-speaking area of Brittany. "Well, this is Upper Brittany!" she said cheerfully—or something to the effect. "We have our own language here!"

This English teacher colleague is the Gallo storyteller I identify in the following pages by her stage name, Vovonne Toucourt ("Simply Vovonne"). Vovonne explained that she and a storyteller friend of hers were going to attend the local pre-selections for a storytelling contest that weekend, and she was planning to tell a story in Gallo. Since I was newly arrived to the country, she offered warmly, would I like to accompany them? I agreed with alacrity—partly because I was a slightly homesick 21-year-old eager to bond in my host country, but also partly because the evident passion Vovonne had for this language I had never heard of was catching.

The evening I spent at the storytelling event with Vovonne and her friend Armelle was to be the first of many. The convivial ambiance of the gathering was immediately appealing. In my memories ten years later, the group of about 40 locals (who were mostly in their fifties or older, although Vovonne was in her early forties) cheerily catches up with one another, shares pound cake and small cups of hard Breton cider, and enjoys the

stories, jokes and songs contestants had prepared. I remember finding the language, too, arresting—close enough to French that I could get the gist (or at least, so I thought) of much of what I heard, but full of diphthongs that reminded me of American English sounds my French teachers had told me had no place in French.

The type of event, too, was new to me; I had never been in an environment where adults would stand up in front of a room to tell stories, read a poem, or sing a traditional song, usually to audience accompaniment. Performances seemed to be affirming something powerful about the community, as well as being demonstrations of individual performers' artistry. By the time my colleague Vovonne took the stage and told a story she had written about a *paysan-tisserand* [farmer-weaver] from Upper Brittany, who one day in 1758 rescued her husband who had fallen down their well into Australia, I was on the edge of my seat. Vovonne's tale mixed the traditional with the modern, in a way I found immediately compelling. The protagonist rescued her husband by spinning and then braiding a linen rope for him to grab hold of, a process Vovonne described in detail; the linen industry was locally of central importance in the eighteenth century. At the same time, Vovonne's protagonist accidentally invented the clothes dryer and belonged to a feminist movement, humorously anachronistic for 1758. This playful shift in storytelling voice from past to present I would later recognize as one hallmark of Gallo storytelling.

During the rest of my seven months in Brittany, I became a frequent tag-along of Vovonne and Armelle's at Gallo festivals, attending La Bogue d'Or in Redon at the end of the month, where Vovonne told her same story to an audience of several hundred and was awarded the "Golden Chestnut Hull." I later attended other theater performances by

other Gallo groups, and I heard my friends playfully use some Gallo with each other as part of everyday conversations. Because the Gallo class taught at the high school coincided with my free period, I attended class sessions once a week, studying the texts the students prepared for their Gallo *option* on the *baccalauréat*: tall tales reminiscent of Rabelais, mysterious stories of suspected encounters with the supernatural, and more. I did eventually find a Breton leisure class in Loudéac, but it was Gallo books that I checked out of the high school library and laboriously deciphered, Gallo songs to which I eventually learned (more or less) to dance to at *festoù-noz*, and Gallo stories I always loved hearing from my friends.

This contextualization of my story with Gallo speaks to the fortuitous nature of research more generally. Welcomed and compelled by the conviviality of the Gallo community, my personal engagement would later ground an understanding, informed by graduate work in sociolinguistics, that the attachment of so many artists, advocates, teachers and students to Gallo, despite overarching trajectories of marginalization, made it a rich site for the investigation of metalinguistic representation and social practice.

4.1.3 How I became a participant observer

I began the main phase of my dissertation fieldwork in July 2013. Upon arriving in Brittany, my first priority (along with re-connecting with acquaintances and figuring out my living situation) was to expand my Gallo repertoire and communicative skills. My Gallo proficiency was quite rudimentary at the start of my stay, mostly limited to passive reading and listening abilities. The initial mini-course at the *Assembiées gallèses* acquainted me with additional texts and some idiomatic expressions, but for language classes of the sort to which I, a language teacher myself, was used, I had to await la

rentrée, the start of the school year: in September for primary and secondary schools and early October for the university. Gallo classes were framed as leisure or elective courses rather than intensive immersion experiences as were regularly offered for Breton, but only occurred a handful of times for Gallo, none during my fieldwork year. Because each individual Gallo course only met for approximately two hours per week, I patched together a weekly program of two or three university level classes (first, second and/or third year) in Rennes, one leisure course offered through the association Bertègn Galèzz⁸¹ in Rennes, and one leisure course offered through the association Chubri in Chavagne. Occasionally I was able to attend another course taught by Chubri in Rennes. This combination of courses afforded me the chance to learn from instructors who favored each of the three major Gallo orthographies (ABCD, ELG and Moga, described in Chapter 3, Section 3.1.5). I also observed primary, middle, and high-school Gallo classes, although those were for research as well as language-learning purposes. Through these classes, I honed my own skills and also became acquainted with my teachers and classmates, who had various background and motivations for learning Gallo. These will be described in Section 4.2.3.

I sought to maximize my integration in the field by timing my arrival in Upper Brittany for early July, so that I could attend two of the major festivals where Gallo performances and mini-classes were featured: *Les Assemblées gallèses*⁸² [The Gallo Assemblies] for a week in July (July 8-13 in Plumieux) and *Mil Goul* [A Thousand Mouths, or “Chatterbox”] in the last two weeks of September (September 19-29 in and

⁸¹ At the time I began taking classes, the organization was still known by its former name of *Bertaèyn galeizz*, although the orthography changed by the end of my fieldwork in 2014.

⁸² Although email mailings in 2016 suggested that the festival’s preferred orthography was *Assemblées Galèzz*, the orthography *Assemblées gallèses* was used at the time of my fieldwork.

around Rennes). These festivals served as a way of making contact with many different Gallo social actors, and in the case of *Les Assembiés*, where a Gallo mini-course was offered, also served as a start toward my own increased competence in the language. *Stagiaires* (mini-course participants) at *Les Assembiés*, enrolled in courses about traditional music and dance, came from outside of Brittany and even outside of France, so my foreignness was less marked than it might otherwise have been.

I supplemented my Gallo learning with a twice-weekly evening French language course, at the C2 level, at the Université Rennes 2 Haute-Bretagne. Although I had earned a Master's degree in French in 2010, and while I had felt myself to be quite conversant in it, I realized that my years of speaking French only in the American classroom had caused me to lose practice. In addition to these classes, my opportunities to use French in different academic and social contexts quickly grew through my fieldwork. During the first months of my field stay, I quickly became more confident in my ability to participate sensitively and fully in the conversations taking place around me. As scholars in language acquisition have shown, competence is not a "thing" that can be "acquired" or "lost," nor are one's communicative abilities extricable from communicative context and participation from other interlocutors.

I attended as many Gallo-related events as possible; because I was a full-time fieldworker, I was freer to attend these events than were many other local residents and enthusiasts. More than once, I was greeted with comments to the effect of, "We thought you would be here!" or "You attend these types of things more regularly than many Gallos!" While somewhat wry, such statements affirmed that I was read as someone with a record of active participation in the spheres of Gallo advocacy and performance.

Because I had maintained friendships with Gallo teachers and performers since returning to the United States in 2007, I was able to draw on these relationships for further introductions at many of the events I attended. Although the scene of Gallo art and activism was small and could at times be contentious, my early acquaintances were not fractious members of the community, even if some of their activities (e.g., two former colleagues' status as Gallo teachers) aligned them *de facto* with some groups more than with others. This positioning helped me make contact, eventually, with Gallo social actors who belonged to a variety of Gallo organizations, or none at all; access to different groups was thus largely preserved.

4.1.4 A limited but engaged participation

My growing familiarity with Gallo and French allowed me to move through various local spaces with greater ease, yet I still often stood out to community members. By my age (I was in my late twenties at the time of fieldwork, decades younger than the majority of Gallo enthusiasts), I was visibly marked even before people began talking with me. Furthermore, as soon as I spoke, it was clear I was not from Brittany or even from France. Being that Brittany is just across the Channel from the United Kingdom, and many British people live or vacation in Brittany, I was often initially identified as *une Anglaise*. Later on, I was often known as *la petite Américaine qui étudie le gallo* [the little American who is studying Gallo].⁸³ This designation accentuated both my

⁸³ Many people I met at festivals, performances or meetings initially assumed me to be significantly younger than my actual age, perhaps because undergraduate exchange students are the international students with which people tend to be most familiar. I was occasionally asked if it was difficult being so far away from home so young. If interlocutors mentioned my putative youth, I did not dissimulate my actual age, but being perceived as young may have made me more approachable to some participants, and may have excused to some extent any blunders that resulted from my occasional unfamiliarity with local social mores, etiquette or expectations.

community-outsider status and, through its diminutive, implied that my presence was not perceived as intimidating. General reactions to my Americanness were a mixture of good-natured amusement and interest, such as “It’s funny to hear Gallo with an American accent!” or “It’s strange, I hear her accent in French but not when she is speaking Gallo.”⁸⁴ People occasionally expressed worry that, given the two languages’ typological proximity, my learning Gallo might damage my proficiency in French—aligning perhaps unconsciously with discourses that having Gallo as a first language hurt children upon entering school (see Chapter 5). As I moved through the various spaces in which I observed interactions and made contacts, I was treated with amused surprise, frequent generosity, and at times fondness.

On at least three occasions, performers on stage incorporated my presence into their humorous performances, revealing that for better or worse, I was becoming part of the Gallo advocacy landscape. In one of these instances—the end of the Gallo play *Pouchée de Beluettes [Bagful of Stars]*, to be analyzed in Chapter 6—the characters played by Marie Chiff’mine and Matao Rollo were as usual mingling with the audience, asking them where they were from and encouraging replies in Gallo. Suddenly, Matao caught sight of me in the audience. Acting excited in a tongue-in-cheek fashion, he pointed me out to Marie—and by extension to the audience: “*Tu veis y a du monde de*

⁸⁴ This last, although voiced more than once by people proficient in Gallo, was demonstrably untrue, as were the praises I received from time to time on how well I spoke Gallo. My Gallo remained fairly basic, with French often used as a matrix language for my utterances. On the other hand, linguists such as Blanchet and Walter (1999) have argued that Gallo and French exist in an often inextricable continuum, so this type of practice may not have been seen as inappropriate. While comments about the high quality of my Gallo flattered me, I realized that they were part of a social process that Jaffe (1999) has analyzed with respect to attitudes toward herself as an American learning Corsican. In Jaffe’s description, a foreign national learning a regional minority language was simultaneously discursively constructed as a public symbol of the language’s worth and interpreted in alignment with local models of speakerhood as being fairly dichotomous between an out-group of “non-speakers” and an in-group of “speakers,” although individual learner trajectories were much more complex.

l'Amérique C'ét une Amériqhaine!" [You see there are people from America... That's an American!] While the audience chuckled, Marie affirmed my outsidership, commenting in French : "Une Américaine qui s'intéresse au gallo. Faut être fou hein? Faut être américain quoi" [An American interested in Gallo. You would have to be crazy to do that, right? In other words, you'd have to be American.]

Matao's identification of me to the crowd, and then Marie's response, simultaneously cast me as an outsider—a representative of a country whose citizens often have "crazy" ideas like studying Gallo—and as someone who *was* "interested in" the language, acknowledged to be a familiar figure in the local sphere of Gallo activism. While I was never, then, a fully unmarked participant in Gallo cultural life, I was a familiar and often appreciated one, both for what I represented for many people in terms of Gallo's language status and for my eagerness and personal commitment.

My Americanness also made me more visible to local journalists than I might otherwise have been. The first of these was a week after my arrival, when a Gallo classmate reported to the local newspapers that there was an American learning Gallo and suggested that it would make a good story. Such requests put me in a divided position because I felt that my own research regarding Gallo (especially at the start of my fieldwork year) paled in comparison to the contributions of Gallo advocates, artists, performers, teachers, and learners. Once I realized I was not targeted exclusively for my national origin, as a Gallo radio show invited both me and a French colleague working on ideologies of Gallo and Breton to participate in one interview, I consented. It seemed as if my status as an American who was interested in Gallo mattered for the Gallo advocates who encouraged me to participate. In all, I participated in five interviews, two of which

were by Gallo radio hosts, the remainder by local newspapers. It seemed that my participation was a small service I could perform for people who had collectively been so generous in sharing their lives and words with me. I had interviewed some of them, after all, so the role reversal seemed only appropriate. I was generally asked how I had first become interested in Gallo and why it was a worthwhile language situation to study; I was not asked often to report any findings. When journalists asked what I thought was to be the future of Gallo, I explained that what interested me was what Gallo speakers were doing *now*, and I quoted one of my Gallo teachers: *the future of Gallo is for its speakers themselves to decide*.

Ultimately, my entry into the field and my interactions with participants were of course colored by my outsider positioning, but as familiarity increased, I felt warmly welcomed by the vast majority of those I was to encounter (and amusedly or politely tolerated by most others). Although a rare few people I encountered seemed skeptical of my status as an outsider studying Gallo (which was understandable, given Americans' often less-than-stellar history encountering linguistic difference and engaging in cultural reflexivity), most people accepted me, if not as one of their own—since I was not—then as an active, engaged and increasingly familiar presence.

4.2 Sites of Data Collection

Over the course of my twelve months of fieldwork from July 2013-June 2014, as well as a one-week return visit in October 2014, I conducted observations and collected data at a variety of sites around Gallo-speaking Upper Brittany. Although, as Chapter 3 has explained, Gallo was spoken in the département of Loire-Atlantique (44), beyond the present-day borders of administrative Brittany, I collected data only in the Gallo-speaking

areas of administrative Brittany. I restricted myself to the départements of Ille-et-Vilaine (35), Côtes-d'Armor (22) and Morbihan (56) because these were the areas where Gallo advocacy and education were the most fully developed. Due to the passionate efforts of Breton and Gallo advocates, the Regional and Cultural Councils of Brittany—which have authority over administrative Brittany, but not the larger, cultural regional of Brittany that includes Loire-Atlantique—have accorded legislative and financial support for activities related to Breton and to Gallo. Gallo enthusiasts in Loire-Atlantique have largely missed out on such initiatives; while some of the Gallo organizations based in administrative Brittany do offer workshops or classes in Loire-Atlantique, the département is not the main focus of their efforts. As a result of these political and financial considerations, I decided to focus my own research on Gallo advocacy in administrative Brittany.

My principal sites of data collection all constituted sites where Gallo was made salient; language ideologies produced and encountered here likely circulated elsewhere. Also, as a set, these sites enabled me to encounter a variety of discourse genres in which Gallo was implicated, as well as Gallo social actors of diverse positionalities, from advocacy association employees to people who thought it would be fun to go see a Gallo play. Importantly, in all of the settings discussed here, Gallo was used or discussed in ways that circulated outside of the home. While extant perspectives tend to represent the *langues d'oïl* as perhaps debated in policy, but used within the home—c.f. Blanchet and Armstrong's (2006) statement that regional languages are currently used chiefly in “private, intimate and hidden situations” (254)—popular discourses acknowledged a drastic rupture in intergenerational transmission of Gallo, and so spaces outside of the home were recognized as important sites of Gallo practice and exchange.

My sites of data collection can be divided into festivals, artistic performances (sometimes at festivals, sometimes independent), Gallo classes, and association meetings, as well as later interviews with Gallo social actors I originally met in the above settings. I will discuss festivals, performances, classes and meetings in this section; interviews will be discussed in Section 4.4, “Methods of Data Collection.”

4.2.1 Gallo festivals

According to a 2015 working group, organized by the Cultural Council of Brittany to assess Gallo’s place in the social landscape, festivals have been an important anchor of Gallo culture for decades:

For many years, gatherings or events that were in Gallo or that promoted Gallo culture were one of the rare means for making Gallo visible in public life. In fact, the reappropriation of Gallo depends on dynamics generated by [these] actors.... The reclaiming of Gallo culture through the creation of festivals of popular culture and the population’s investment therein enabled the re-dynamization of whole geographic areas, such as that of Redon (58).⁸⁵

Of the seven major festivals created in the 1970s and 1980s, all are still in operation today; the working group exclaimed, “This longevity is remarkable! It shows how strongly Gallo is socially anchored” (59).⁸⁶ Festivals were thus an important site for the production of Upper Breton culture. They were sites for Gallo enthusiasts to use Gallo (alongside French) on stage and in the crowds, for new encounters among people passionate about Upper Breton culture, and for the economic and social revitalization of small towns.

⁸⁵ “ Pendant de nombreuses années, les manifestations ou événements en gallo ou œuvrant pour la culture gallèse, ont été un des rares moyens de faire reconnaître le gallo dans la vie publique. En effet, la réappropriation du gallo dépend des dynamiques générées par les acteurs La revendication de la culture gallèse, avec la mise en place de festivals de culture populaire, et grâce à l’implication de la population, a permis la redynamisation de territoires, comme celui de Redon.” (*Gallo : Etude et préconisations* 2015:58)

⁸⁶ “ Cette longévité est remarquable ! Elle démontre un ancrage social fort du gallo sur la demande” (*Gallo : Etude et préconisations* 2015:59).

The Gallo working group calculated there were 14 yearly festivals devoted to Gallo and Upper Breton culture. During my fieldwork year, I attended eleven language and cultural festivals in Upper Brittany, as listed below in Table 4.1. The festival “Kan ar Bobl.” which I attended, was not mentioned by this group, although Gallo song and story are featured there; perhaps this is due to its geographic location in Lower Brittany. The working group’s estimate includes two other festivals I attended, but which I did not list in Table 4.1, as I did not feel that I heard much Gallo at those events. I thus attended almost all of the yearly festivals attested for the promotion of Gallo language and Upper Breton culture.⁸⁷

In the right-most column of Table 4.1 on the next page, I have listed cultural elements that were highlighted at these festivals. The order in which they are listed reflects my subjective impressions of the salience of each of these facets of Upper Breton culture at each festival. Some of the festivals listed in Table 4.1 were quite large; for example, the website for the festival *La Gallésie en Fête* claims 20,000 attendees every year, although a 2015 Gallo working group estimated attendance in 2014 at 10,000 (Gallo: Etude et préconisations 2015). However, despite the neologism “Gallésie,” the Gallo language was likely not the principal draw for the majority of attendees of this particular festival. While there was indeed some Gallo theater and storytelling, the festival was most widely known for its outdoor games, sports, music and large social dances. In terms of festivals more specifically devoted to Gallo, attendance usually numbered in the hundreds or low thousands across a festival’s entire run. For example,

⁸⁷ I also collected interactional data when I hosted a Gallo booth at a “world languages” festival held at an institute of higher education. These interactions were of central importance to the analysis presented in Chapter 7, but as that festival was not specifically for Upper Breton culture, it is not included in this table.

according to the newspaper *Ouest-France*, the organizers of the festival *Gallo en Scène* claimed there were 1400 attendees for 2012, the year preceding my fieldwork.

Table 4.1 Festivals attended during fieldwork in 2013-2014

Festival name	Date(s) in 2013-2014	Location (Département)	Cultural elements highlighted
<i>Assemblés gallèses</i> [Gallo Assemblies]	July 8-13	in and around Plumieux (22)	Music, dance and culture of <i>le pays gallo</i>
<i>Mil Goul</i> [A Thousand Mouths, or “Chatterboxes”]	September 19-29	in and around Rennes (35)	Gallo theater, storytelling, guided visits, singing, dance, children’s events
La Bogue d’Or [The Golden Chestnut Hull]	October 11-27	Pre-selections throughout Upper Brittany; festival in Redon (35)	music, dance, Gallo storytelling and Gallo comedy
Gallo en Scène [Gallo on Stage]	October 18- November 3	in various municipalities around Saint-Brieuc and Lamballe (22)	Gallo theater, storytelling and cinema
Truite du Ridor [Trout of the Ridor]	February 1	Plémet (22)	Gallo song, storytelling, and theater
<i>Galléseries</i> [Neologism]	February 28- March 3	Saint-Malo (35)	Gallo storytelling, theater, comedy, song
Semaine des Langues / Sizhunvezh ar brezhoneg / <i>Smenn du galo</i> [Languages Week / Breton: Breton Week / Gallo Week]	March 31- April 6	all around Brittany; I attended Gallo events in and around Rennes as well as in Morbihan (56)	Gallo storytelling, theater, lectures, guided visits of towns and museums, song, children’s events
Kan ar Bobl [Breton: Song of the People]	April 26-27	Pontivy (56) in Lower Brittany, but near the linguistic border	Breton and Gallo song, dance and storytelling
<i>Fête du Chant Traditionnel</i> [Traditional Song Festival’]	May 2-4	Bovel (35)	Gallo song and dance ; some storytelling
La Gallésie en Fête [‘Gallésie’ Celebrating]	June 28-30 (I left Brittany on June 30)	Monterfil (35)	traditional games and sports, song, music, dance, children’s events, Gallo theater and storytelling
<i>(Return visit)</i> La Bogue d’Or [The Golden Chestnut Hull]	October 24-25, 2014	Redon (35)	music, dance, Gallo storytelling and Gallo comedy

The Gallo working group's estimates for attendance at all of these festivals in 2014 ranged from less than a thousand (*La Truite du Ridor*) to between 1000 and 2500 (*Mil Goul*, *Les Galleseries*, *Le gallo en scène*, *La semaine du gallo*, *La fête du chant traditionnel*, and *Les Assemblies gallèses*), to 10 000 (*La Gallésie en Fête* and *La Bogue d'Or*).

The festivals listed in Table 4.1 had a variety of structures and cost setups associated with them. Only the *Assembiés gallèses* was intended to be a full-time, week-long festival, in which musicians, singers and (more rarely) people wishing to learn Gallo would enroll in a week's worth of classes and activities. The nine other festivals were intended to be attended *à la carte*. At times, festival events were cost-free; otherwise, tickets could typically be purchased for between four and 10 euros per event. Some festivals offered all-event passes, with the possible exclusion of banquets, for perhaps 15 or 20 euros per person. Even when admission was charged, then, festivals were affordable to people of a range of socio-economic classes.

Festivals were well publicized, with printing costs for posters and flyers often partially subsidized by entities such as the Region of Brittany, as well as the département and municipality in which the festival was held. Cultural or community action associations, radio stations and a cider brewery were also frequent sponsors of festivals. Promotional posters and programs tended to be brightly colored, glossy and modern-looking; they often featured cartoonish graphic design, complementing popular representations of Gallo artistic expression as humorous and light-hearted. These print materials were circulated by hand by volunteers and Gallo association members in the weeks leading up to festivals, or stacked in the entrance hallway of community music

centers. A selection of festival programs from my fieldwork year can be seen in Figure 4.1.



Figure 4.1 Promotional materials for festivals of Gallo and Upper Breton culture

One notable element is the frequent appearance of inset photographs of Gallo performers and lecturers, next to their event dates in the programs. Indeed, Gallo artists and scholars were often featured as principal draws for festival events, indicating a degree of local celebrity—at least among a subset of people likely to organize and attend these festivals.

The atmosphere at festivals was usually lively and convivial, with food (most often sweet crêpes and savory *galettes* filled with a sausage) and drink (alcohol and juice) readily available for purchase at various refreshment stands or *buvettes*. Festivities started in the early afternoon and carried merrily on until the late hours of the evening. All were “family-friendly” events, and parents with children occasionally attended the Gallo-

centric events, especially when advertised as being for children. Events were sometimes organized for schools, and the *Assembiés gallèses* had a small summer camp specifically for children, in many cases children of the adult *stagiaires* [interns] taking music or singing classes. At that festival, the children and their counselors took stage during the *Sairée galo* [Gallo Night] to perform. Despite the occasional presence of children, my informal observations suggested that the more heavily any particular event focused on Gallo, the higher the average age of attendees was likely to be. Particularly underrepresented were teenagers and adults in their twenties, who were a very strong presence at festival activities that were less explicitly Gallo-related, such as concerts and dances.

Festivals taking place from late October to March were often largely indoors, in a variety of buildings around town rented out for the occasion. The festivals taking place in spring, summer and early autumn usually included significant outdoor components, with artistic performances, stands and booths, and dances all done in open air. At these outdoor festivals, open fields would slowly turn muddy as hundreds of feet trod across them. Occasionally, Gallo could be heard in the context of *balades chantées* or *contées*, or nature walks led by Gallo singers and/or storytellers. The group, which usually numbered around twenty persons, would sing songs while walking and/or stop in a bend in the path every so often to listen to a short tale. The walk would take participants through fallow fields, small forested areas, well-gardened residential outskirts of towns, or hilly outcroppings, depending on the location. While these nature walks, as well as guided visits of museums or cities and outdoor games, would take place during the daytime, evenings were reserved for theater, storytelling and, most populously, social

dances or *festoù-noz*.⁸⁸ These dances, popular around Lower as well as Upper Brittany since the revitalization of Breton culture in the 1970s, were events that often brought together significant swaths of the communities in which the festivals were held. Even community members otherwise not greatly interested in Gallo artistic expression or Upper Breton cultural heritage would attend a festival's *fest-noz*. My memories of dancing at *festoù-noz* remain among the most exuberant of my fieldwork: linking arms or pinky fingers in a chain of hundreds of dancers of all ages and a variety of social classes and professions, winding in sinuous, tightly coiled lines through a crowded, cider-, beer- and sweat-scented civic room, or exuberantly under the stars.

At many of these festivals, there was an emphasis on localness. Food and drink vendors were often locally sourced, and the dances played at *festoù-noz* varied depending on the region where the festival was held, with dances bearing the name of nearby towns often favored over less-popular ones from farther away. Some festivals achieved this emphasis by becoming emblematic of the towns that had hosted them, in some cases, for decades (e.g., *La Gallésie en Fête* and *La Bogue d'Or* had taken place in Monterfil and Redon for 39 and 38 years, respectively). Others achieved local grounding by hosting events in different small municipalities around the region over time. For example, in 2015, the website of *Gallo en Scène* boasted of having held Gallo events in over 40 municipalities in Côtes-d'Armor since 2003, most of them small towns or villages. While there was no one "center" of this festival, the organizers hoped to reach many different members of the community by maximally covering the local rural terrain.

⁸⁸ The Gallo term *riguedao* has been proposed as an alternative to the Breton *fest-noz* (plural: *festoù-noz*), but it seemed that most of my participants were more likely to use the Breton term, as were the vast majority of residents of Upper Brittany.

I sometimes attended these festivals alone, but other times I went with Gallo enthusiasts I knew well from my early days in Loudéac, or with a friend and colleague who was also writing a dissertation on the sociolinguistics and language ideologies of Brittany. As I moved through the festival spaces, I often took photographs and occasionally took notes, when doing so would not have been obtrusive or have prevented me from getting to know other festival attendees. These festivals were particularly useful to my research project for the storytelling, theater and comedy performances that took place, which will be described in greater detail in Section 4.2.2.

While my dissertation will primarily focus on non-musical verbal art, I would like to mention here the importance of song—in French, Breton, and quite often in Gallo—at these events. Local musicians and singers were well-known and admired by Gallo enthusiasts. A large part of the repertoire of traditional song in Upper Brittany is actually in French (especially once one sets aside the bawdy songs that were at times documented in Gallo), but several singers have either popularized existing Gallo songs or created Gallo versions of songs originally recorded in the local repertoire in French. Even though I decided not to analyze the repertoire of traditional songs in my dissertation, their local importance should not be understated.

4.2.2 Gallo performances

As Section 4.1.2 established, artistic storytelling and theater performances were my point of entry into Gallo language and cultural practice, and they were what first excited me about the prospect of studying Gallo. These performances, which were often components of festivals but also occurred independently, were spaces where amateur and professional artists came together to stage various figures of Gallo personhood and their

connections to times and places. Cavanaugh (2009) analyzes sentimental frames voiced in, and used to interpret, artistic performances as aesthetic judgments; as she reminds us, Bourdieu and other scholars have long seen aesthetics as linked to power hierarchies and structures of value. Analyzing Gallo performances therefore allowed me to see how Gallo social actors were engaging with circulating ideologies of Gallo as aligned with a rural past, as well as how they contested these ideologies by juxtaposing elements indexical of modern life (GPS', workout videos, poetry slams). They also provided an important site for performer-audience interaction, as the production format of performances encouraged audience members to respond in particular ways and take up particular stances.

It would be impossible to present a full description of the range of Gallo artistic activities in these few pages. Even leaving aside song and music, which are beyond the scope of this dissertation, Gallo performers wrote and narrated tales in various genres, engaged in various kinds of comedic sketches and *joutes contées* (improvisational comedy battles between groups from two regions, usually *le pays de Saint-Malo* and *le pays de Redon*; the idea, said informants, was borrowed from a Quebec genre of verbal art), and performed one-act and multiple-act plays. Gallo storytelling was a respected and popular art form, descended from people who, in the earlier decades of the 20th century, told stories as entertainment at weddings and other social gatherings. There was also a growing body of narrative texts intended for written as well as oral consumption, although there was a large amount of overlap between texts diffused verbally and in print, as authors often wrote their stories in preparation for performance, and then submitted written versions to contests or text collections.

An anthology recently published by the Association of Gallo Teachers, the *Rasserrerie d'Écrivaijes du Paiz Galo – Anthologie de Textes Gallos [Anthology of Texts from Gallo Country]* (2014), divides the texts it presents, ranging from the traditional to the very contemporary, into the following genre categories: *chanson* [song], *conte* [tale], *conte de Noël* [Christmas tale], *conte traditionnel* [folktale; story that is part of the local oral tradition], *dirie* [monologue], *devinettes* [riddles], *document* [(historical) document], *fable*, *hommage*, *légende*, *menterie* [tall tale, told in the first person], *nouvelle* [short story, usually present-day], *poésie* [poetry], *récit de vie* [personal experience narrative], *slam* [spoken word piece] and *théâtre*. The division of texts into genres such as these is necessarily an oversimplification, and the categorization of an individual text is seldom immediately clear. However, the categorization gives a sense of the breadth and variety of the forms of Gallo verbal art locally celebrated and shared. Among the approximately 50 individual performances I recorded over the course of my field year (including, in many cases, the same piece performed multiple times), *contes* (traditional and individually authored), *devinettes*, *diries*, *fables*, *menteries*, and *théâtre* were the most commonly represented.

Out of the 179 hours of video- and audio-recorded data I collected over the course of my fieldwork, approximately 38 hours were comprised of staged performances. Many of these took place at the theater and storytelling events of the festivals listed above in Table 4.1, but others occurred in the context of privately contracted events. Many times, municipal associations contracted Gallo artists to perform at the local *salle de fêtes* or *maison des associations* (civic centers); occasionally, performances also took place in schools or nursing homes. A working group on Gallo organized by the Cultural Council

of Brittany reported in 2015 that Gallo theater groups had difficulty gaining access to gigs at well-known performance halls, instead relying on civic associations for performance space in their all-purpose buildings. Outside of the context of certain festivals like the *Bogue d'Or* or *Gallo en Scène*, then, where spacious and recently renovated theaters or performance halls would be rented out for performances, the surroundings were usually comfortable but modest, with metal folding chairs for audience members and stage curtains hand-pulled by a string. Stage décor was usually minimalist—perhaps a simple table and chairs, perhaps a bathtub. At times, there was no pre-existing stage at all; performers would perform in a chair-free section of a room. In these less-formal settings, audience interaction was often heightened, making them especially propitious for my analyses. Audience members often whispered comments to their neighbors, repeated under their breaths Gallo words the actors uttered on stage (sometimes changing the pronunciation to suit a local variety), or were invited by actors to answer questions as part of the performance itself.

In most cases, when a civic association organized a Gallo storytelling night, several performers (often three or four) were invited, each telling a few stories; in the case of contests, between five and ten contestants narrated one tale each, with MCs providing some humorous parentheticals of their own. These invited storytellers tended to be remunerated professionals. A 2015 working group assembled by the Cultural Council of Brittany estimated that there were 16 professional storytellers and actors working entirely or partially in Gallo, in most cases complemented by professional activities that had nothing to do with Gallo culture. There were only three full-time Gallo artists tabulated. My data include stories and plays performed by more than 16 artists, but I

include amateurs in that number as well; the same working group estimated that the total number of professional and amateur storytellers (*conteurs*) was somewhere from 30 to 40.

In the case of Gallo theater, I observed five different troupes over the course of my field stay, most upon more than one occasion. According to the Cultural Council's Gallo working group,

...in recent years, amateur theater troupes have abandoned the repertoire of "peasant theater of the olden days" in order to perform contemporary plays or, like *Tradior*, skits staging present-day characters. Others have turned toward plays for children or for nursing homes... As few plays exist in Gallo, these troupes must create their repertoire, sometimes adapting plays from French or other languages. (*Gallo: Etudes et préconisations* 2015:62)⁸⁹

One might recall Alain, whose words opened the introductory chapter, and his conviction that Gallo theater and books on festival stands encouraged festival attendees to exclaim to themselves, "*Bon il y a quand même du monde qui soient intéressés à ça. C'êt qi y a de la qhulture par dère cai. C'êt pàs qe les trois bobias qi voulaent rester à fére de l'humour paysan su le coup-là*" ['Well okay, so there are people who are interested in this, and that means there's some culture behind it, you know. It's not just three numbskulls who wanted to keep on doing peasant humor in that case'].

Plays by two troupes will be discussed in detail in this dissertation: *La Compagnie du Grenier Vert*, composed of Marie Chiff'mine (Marie-Claire Sauvée) and Matao Rollo (Chapters 5 and 7), and *Tradior (TRADition ORale)*, composed of Marie-Brigitte

⁸⁹ "Ces dernières années, les troupes de théâtre amateur ont abandonné le répertoire " théâtre paysan d'autrefois" pour jouer des pièces contemporaines ou comme *Tradior* des sketches mettant en scène des personnages actuels. D'autres se tournent vers des spectacles pour enfants ou pour maisons de retraite... Comme il existe peu de pièces en gallo, ces troupes doivent créer leur répertoire, parfois en adaptant des pièces de théâtre en français ou d'autres langues." (*Gallo: Etude et préconisations* 2015:62)

Bertrand and Jean-Luc Oger (Chapter 8). Admission was generally charged for the spectacles of the two groups (approximately five to seven euros per performance), although three of the four actors were also engaged in professions outside of their work with Gallo. The plays were largely comedic in nature, although there was breakthrough into moments of poetic elegy.⁹⁰ Tradior occasionally performed translations of scenes from French classical theater, such as *Le Cid* or *Cyrano de Berg rac*. As Marie-Brigitte Bertrand of Tradior has said, in an artist profile published in Jigourel (2011), “Our parents loved and fought with each other in Gallo, cried or laughed in Gallo! Why reduce it to one single register, one nerve or chord?” (92).⁹¹ However, I occasionally observed audience members laughing even when the content of an utterance in Gallo seemed serious. It may be, then, that for some local residents of Upper Brittany, the association between Gallo and humor was so strong that its incorporation into more serious dramatic forms was itself perceived as incongruously humorous.

4.2.3 Gallo classes

Gallo classes were another important site for the production of Gallo culture. Since evidence points toward the ceasing of intergenerational transmission of Gallo in the home (Nolan 2010, Rey 2010), Gallo classes were a significant space where those interested in Gallo could encounter and use the language. They were also often a space for the discussion of ideologies about Gallo, as teachers often brought students’ attention to Gallo’s lack of visibility, the social marginalization of its speakers, and a rule-

⁹⁰ La Compagnie du Grenier Vert had another play, which creator Marie Chiff’mine qualified as their most *militant* [activist-natured], that was largely serious in tone. However, I was unfortunately not in the region when it was performed during my fieldwork year.

⁹¹ “Nos parents s’aimaient, se disputaient en gallo, pleuraient ou riaient en gallo! Pourquoi alors la r duire   un seul registre,   une seule corde sensible ?” (Jigourel 2011:92).

governedness they sometimes positioned as surprising. In some classes, students often listened silently to these ideological claims; in other cases, they provided evidence of their own for Gallo's lack of local recognition.

Over the course of my fieldwork year, I regularly attended six Gallo classes in the primary role of Gallo learner: all three levels of Gallo university classes, as well as three evening leisure classes. So that I could immerse myself fully in the language-learning process, I did not generally record while participating in these classroom settings. I took notes, but these were more often classroom notes than explicitly ethnographic field notes. I exceptionally audio-recorded, with consent, on the day that one of my university Gallo teachers invited a special guest to the class to talk to us about his experiences growing up as a Gallo user, as well as his adult activities in Gallo advocacy and writing. The discussion in class that day is treated at some length in Chapter 6. Otherwise, however, I participated in these classes much as any other student would. The classes provided me with a glimpse of the range of ways Gallo was being learned in Upper Brittany in 2013 to 2014.

Among the university and leisure classes in which I participated, teaching methods varied widely. One class was based largely on explicating Gallo texts, chiefly folktales, memoir and poetry, while another course was dialectological and descriptive grammatical in nature. A third was focused on reading stories and watching videos other Gallo users had created and imaginatively expanding on them, as well as learning to tell riddles. The remainder of the classes focused more on helping students build a productive conversational vocabulary, in accordance with a more communicative approach to

language teaching. In these classes, we wrote dialogues and skits and played language games in the context of themed lessons.

For the purpose of ethnographic observation, I regularly attended three high-school Gallo classes, five middle-school ones, and two schools' elementary-school Gallo discovery sequences across multiple classrooms. In these pedagogical settings, I collected over 50 hours of audio and occasionally video data. While visiting the classrooms was often among the most enjoyable parts of my fieldwork, the bulk of these data proved to be too difficult and time-consuming to transcribe, given the poor classroom recording acoustics, large number of students with whose voices I was often unfamiliar, and the great deal of deictic communication that goes on in a classroom. I therefore only included in analysis two high-school class discussions that were particularly language-ideology-focused and two interviews of small groups of middle-school students. The rest of my observations helped me contextualize other phenomena I witnessed, but I do not present detailed transcripts of other classroom interactions in the analyses that follow.

The primary-school Gallo discovery sequences focused heavily on songs and games, which mixed elements of traditional culture (making crêpes, bundling sticks into fagots for use as torches or as fuel...) with playful, kinesthetic finger-games and playground games. Students learned to name animals in Gallo, to describe how they were feeling that day, and to recite riddles and fables. They also read along to passages from a storybook that had been published in Gallo after having been originally developed for teaching early education in Breton. Students seemed to pick up words and phrases quickly and to enjoy playing with the marked sounds of Gallo.

The secondary-school Gallo classes I attended were optional elective courses that students could take for one or two hours per week, depending on the establishment. Pedagogy involved a range of the teaching methods discussed above in the context of the adult classes I attended, with the notable exception of communicative language-using activities. In general, students were asked to recite, interpret, and analyze Gallo texts and to understand the Gallo used by the teacher much more often than they were asked to do pair work by conversing in Gallo with one another. Performance and recitation were a frequent classroom component, especially at the middle school level, but improvisation was not. When students spontaneously spoke to a teacher in Gallo—which often happened while joking—the teacher almost always responded enthusiastically to the student’s contributions, and teachers often proudly pointed students out to me whom they suspected had heard a lot of Gallo at home. Teachers themselves used a lot of Gallo in the classroom. However, sustaining impromptu conversation in Gallo did not appear to be a required element of student behavior for many teachers, as Gallo’s cultural importance and cultivating an appreciation for it seemed to be prioritized over target language immersion.

I also attended three Gallo mini-courses or *stages* that took place within the context of festivals and events celebrating Upper Breton culture. These sessions, which lasted the whole day, often brought together a mixed group of participants, from people whose grandparents had spoken Gallo but who claimed not to have used it themselves before, to people who were themselves already Gallo storytellers. I recorded two of these mini-courses but ultimately did not use either for the purposes of this dissertation.

4.2.4 Gallo association meetings

A brief history of Gallo advocacy associations was presented in Section 3.2.4.2 of Chapter 3. These associations, like Gallo classrooms, were places where Gallo enthusiasts could assemble to voice their understanding of Gallo's place in Upper Brittany, as well as to play a role in coordinating its presence on the terrain, in terms of festivals, performances, books published, and collaborations with municipal, départemental or regional collectivities (e.g., consulting on the spelling of Gallo town names for bilingual signs). These projects often involved positioning Gallo in particular ways with respect to places and times, which made them particularly of interest to this dissertation project.

During my time in the field, I regularly participated in activities and meetings organized by three organizations that were driving forces in the realm of Gallo advocacy: Bertègn Galèzz (both its home branch in Rennes and its satellite branch in the *pays de Lamballe*), Chubri, and the Association of Gallo Teachers. I had known members of the Association of Gallo Teachers ever since my first stay in Brittany in 2006-2007; I identified the other organizations as important sites of Gallo activity through Internet research and conversation with informants. I also attended several events organized by the CAC Sud 22 (Comité d'Action Culturelle), based in Saint-Caradec, in the *pays de Loudéac*. This last was not specifically devoted to Gallo—rather, it federated associations dedicated to cultural expression in Center Brittany more generally—but it regularly organized events for the *Semaine des Langues* [Languages Week] and for the past several years has organized a popular Gallo writing contest. There were other important

associations at more local scales, but these four associations afforded me a view of how Gallo advocacy was organized and implemented at regional and cantonal levels.

Each of these associations was involved in several initiatives to promote Gallo during the 2013-2014 year. The Association of Gallo Teachers worked with the regional educational ministry, the Académie de Rennes, in order to coordinate Gallo elective classes at the middle and high school levels. Bertègn Galèzz and Chubri offered evening leisure classes for Gallo as described above, and prominent members of all three associations occasionally offered Gallo mini-courses at festivals. The Association of Gallo Teachers was completing its work on an anthology of Gallo texts, while in September 2013, Chubri published a book on Gallo first names. Bertègn Galèzz organized the yearly festivals *Mil Goul* and, through the satellite organization BG 22, *Galle en Scène*. With the support of the Region of Brittany, Bertègn Galèzz also offered a yearly *Priz du Galo* [Gallo Prize] to individuals and institutions who furthered Gallo visibility and practice. Chubri proposed various services to local municipalities, including translation services and field studies of local speech patterns. Finally, all three associations at times sent representatives to cultural festivals, world languages events, and other local gatherings, where they hosted a stand with banners, signs explaining what Gallo was and who spoke it, books for purchase, and/or promotional flyers. Although the atmosphere at these events was typically jovial and leisurely, they did at times engage in more oppositional, protest-based forms of social practice; at least one association sent members to march in an April 2014 protest in Nantes, calling for the reunification of Nantes and its département of Loire-Atlantique with the administrative region of Brittany.

The three organizations thus did some projects independently, but they collaborated in other initiatives. During my fieldwork year, members of the three organizations Bertègn Galèzz, Chubri, and the Association of Gallo Teachers worked together to provide the Region of Brittany with a glossary of Gallo terms to be used in official communications, complementing pre-existing versions in French and Breton. Although members of the three organizations were advocates of three different orthographic systems—ABCD, ELG (“Ecrire le Gallo”) and Moga, described in Section 3.1.5 of Chapter 3—they worked together on this project, perceived as accomplishing their common goal of increasing the amount of Gallo used in official communications and signage. Representatives also met to decide on Gallo translations for administrative concepts, such as those related to the regional budget. Bertègn Galèzz and Chubri also collaborated to institute the *Cafè galo a Renn* (Gallo Café in Rennes), a regular gathering where Gallo enthusiasts could have a drink, sing songs, and converse in Gallo on various topics planned and spontaneous. Finally, although it was not officially inaugurated by the Region of Brittany until April 2015, after I had left the field, Bertègn Galèzz and Chubri were collaborating on a project to provide a charter and label, *Du Galo, Dam Yan, Dam Ver!* [*Gallo, Heck Yes₁, Heck Yes₂!*], that municipalities and institutions could sign to proclaim their support for Gallo and their inclusion of Gallo language expression in their activities.

In addition to sponsored entertainment (*Cafè galo*, performances, book releases...) and classes offered by all three associations, I also attended organizational meetings held by all three organizations, when they happened. In the case of Chubri and the Gallo Teachers’ Association, these were relatively infrequent. On the other hand, I

attended the monthly meetings of the Bertègn Galèzz satellite organization, BG22, which were an enjoyable occasion to get to know Gallo enthusiasts socially as well as observe their Gallo use and ideologies. At these meetings, a core group of between 15 and 20 people met regularly to organize their yearly festival, *Gallo en Scène*, and smaller monthly events in local cafés, as well as to converse and play games in Gallo. I recorded approximately 20 hours of discussion at association meetings.

I officially joined Bertègn Galèzz, BG22, and Chubri, paying a small yearly fee. The Association of Gallo Teachers' membership was composed entirely of past and present teachers of Gallo, so I did not officially join this organization. However, members kindly let me know when a meeting would take place, and on several occasions, I attended and observed meetings where the Gallo elective curriculum was discussed.

The remaining 30 hours of my audio- and video- recordings, not yet enumerated in Section 4.2, represented approximately 10 hours of Gallo adult mini-courses, 10 hours of casual conversation among people I knew fairly well, and approximately 10 hours of academic lectures or guided visits that took place during the course of language festivals.

4.2.5 Living in Rennes

The network of Gallo teachers, activists, performers and speakers in administrative Brittany was fairly distributed and mobile, so gatherings were held all around the region, often in small villages or rural areas. Being that there was no one central hub of Gallo activity in Upper Brittany, I decided to find an apartment in Rennes, the historically Gallo-speaking capital of the administrative region of Brittany, which is also home to Brittany's Regional and Cultural Councils. The city of Rennes proper had a population of 211,373 in 2013 (INSEE 2013); the metropolitan area contained

approximately 400,000 residents across 37 neighboring *communes*, or municipalities (INSEE 2012). Living in Rennes facilitated my access to university resources and public services, and it also offered the presence of three major Gallo activist associations: Bertègn Galèzz, Chubri, and the Association of Gallo Teachers, with the Gallo courses and potential for community contact each offered. Rennes had the additional advantage of being fairly centrally located within Upper Brittany, the territory where Gallo has historically been spoken. With my small car, I could attend festivals, meetings and Gallo classes in Saint-Malo (70 km to the north of Rennes), Coëtmiex and Lamballe (both about 90 km to the northwest), Loudéac, Plémet, Plumieux and Bréhan (all 80-90 km to the west), Rohan (100 km to the west), Josselin (80 km to the southwest), Redon (65 km to the southwest), Bain-de-Bretagne (30 km to the south), or Ercé-près-Liffré (30 km to the northeast). Rennes is only 27 kilometers from Monterfil, where a large festival of Upper Breton culture is held every summer, and my weekly Gallo night classes in the suburb of Chavagne were a manageable 12 kilometers from my home. Gallo was also widely spoken to the east of Rennes, but my data collection ultimately ended up taking me much more often northward and westward, with occasional forays to the south.

While living in Brittany's administrative capital and largest city⁹² afforded me easy access to the maximum number of Gallo leisure courses, all of the university-level Gallo classes offered in Brittany, and the headquarters of the major Gallo associations, my living in a large city did involve some compromises. In particular, popular ideologies associated Rennes with both French and Breton much more strongly they associated Rennes with Gallo. For at least the last century, and likely longer, standard French had

⁹² This qualification does not take into account Brittany's historic capital, Nantes. Nantes is culturally part of Upper Brittany but has not been part of administrative Brittany since regional redistricting in the 1950s.

been associated with cities, while Gallo was associated with rural populations. As Bulot (2008) has written, Gallo is “a regional language constructed discursively (often including in research) as rural, non-urban and in relative decline” (51).⁹³ Gallo was therefore not widely imagined to be spoken in Rennes outside, perhaps, of the activities of Gallo associations. Breton, too, often had pride of place over Gallo in Rennes. Archival and toponymic evidence suggests that even at its greatest westward extension, Breton was never the everyday language for the majority of residents of Rennes, but the importance of Breton as a cultural emblem of Brittany has made itself known in the regional capital. Street signs in the center of the city were almost universally bilingual in French and Breton, and stores and restaurants often featured Breton elements in their names. In contrast, no streets and only one metro stop featured signage in Gallo; the building of the Regional Council of Brittany added Gallo to its French and Breton signs during my fieldwork year (in a move toasted by Gallo organizations), but other governmental buildings very rarely featured Gallo text. While there were Breton classes in Rennes at the elementary, middle and high school levels, attracting over 600 students, there were no Gallo classes taught for children in Rennes before the university level. There was a bit of irony, then, in that my living in Rennes—necessary to permit easy access to Gallo university courses, night classes and associations—meant that I was living in an urban context not imagined to be strongly Gallo. In corollary, the rural residents who were imagined to use Gallo more frequently often did not live in areas with easy access to Gallo classes.

⁹³ “...une langue régionale construite discursivement (y compris souvent dans les recherches engagées) comme rurale, non urbaine et en déclin relatif” (Bulot 2008:51).

It is true that I heard virtually no Gallo as I walked through the streets of Rennes during my year there. I had expected perhaps to hear Gallo at my neighborhood market, because the market was one of the public spaces where I had occasionally heard Gallo when I lived in the smaller town of Loudéac, but I was disappointed. However, this did not mean that residents of Rennes had no access to elements of a Gallo repertoire. Bulot (2008) claims that Rennes “is the Gallo city of Brittany: it is the city where discourses about Gallo’s transmission and practice are not only the most numerous but also clearly superior to the other urban Breton areas” (53).⁹⁴ In an approach he calls *une sociolinguistique de l’urbanisation*, Bulot presents the results of two surveys conducted with about 25 and 50 young adult inhabitants of Rennes, respectively. In the first, when asked to rate on a scale how much Breton and Gallo they understood, the young respondents were about equally unlikely to choose the two highest ratings on the seven-point scale. However, when looking at those who gave themselves the *lowest* or *second-lowest* rating on reading, writing, speaking and understanding, those who saw themselves as completely incapable in Breton far outnumbered those who felt the same for Gallo.⁹⁵ Bulot concludes, “[Gallo] is a factor of identification for the Rennes residents we surveyed: they affirm competences that are undeniably relative but still explicitly declared” (63).⁹⁶

⁹⁴ “Rennes est la ville du gallo en Bretagne: elle est la ville où les discours sur la transmission et la pratique du gallo sont non seulement les plus nombreux mais encore nettement supérieurs aux autres aires urbaines bretonnes” (Bulot 2008:53).

⁹⁵ Bulot did not speculate on the role that typological proximity may have played in these assessments. Respondents were presumably largely or entirely composed of native French-speakers (being that the survey pool was limited to people native to Rennes), and Gallo, unlike Breton, is fairly mutually intelligible with French.

⁹⁶ “Elle est facteur d’identification pour les Rennais que nous avons interrogés: ils affirment des compétences certes relatives mais tout à fait explicitement déclarées” (Bulot 2008:63).

In the other survey whose findings were presented in Bulot (2008), young residents were instructed to list the neighborhoods of Rennes where they felt the best and worst French was spoken and where the most and least Breton and Gallo were spoken. Although none of the young people had spontaneously named Gallo when asked to list languages other than French that people spoke in Rennes, their neighborhood labeling practices, in Bulot's analysis, indicated that Gallo was an urban language in the sense that "it is a factor used to differentiate urban entities" (63).⁹⁷ Although the neighborhoods listed for the most Breton strongly overlapped with the ones listed for the best French (these were the historic center of Rennes and a chic, centrally located residential and commercial district), the same neighborhoods were precisely those *least* associated with Gallo use. In contrast to "good French" and Breton, Gallo was imagined by respondents to be most often spoken in peripheral, working-class neighborhoods that were still largely unmarked by immigration. Bulot concludes that Gallo in Rennes functions as a *cryptoglossic* language, following Claudine Bavoux, where "Gallo seems to constitute one of the urban languages of Rennes... but is not explicitly recognized as such by all Rennes speakers" (63).⁹⁸ Whereas Bulot ultimately argues that Gallo is an urban variety, a reading of his results might lead one to believe that this is so, in part, by virtue of its ideological *absence* from the central neighborhoods of the city. It is in this context that one can read the determined efforts of Gallo advocacy groups to foster Gallo cultural events in Rennes proper, such as Gallo guided tours of the Museum of Brittany, of a

⁹⁷ "...elle est facteur de différenciation des entités urbaines" (Bulot 2008:63).

⁹⁸ "...le gallo semble faire partie des langues urbaines de Rennes... mais n'est pas reconnu explicitement comme tel par l'ensemble des locuteurs rennais" (Bulot 2008 :63).

working farm/rural life museum on the city's periphery, and of the historic center of Rennes, as well as storytelling in some of the parks around Rennes.

To provide myself another perspective on Gallo language use in a smaller town in Upper Brittany, I frequently stayed with friends in Loudéac, the small town of 10,000 people where I had spent my first year in Brittany in 2006-2007. Loudéac is known in Gallo circles as a Gallo-friendly space: a Gallo speaker (and former Gallo teacher) has been mayor since 2001, and it is one of the few municipalities in Upper Brittany to feature a bilingual town sign in Gallo and French: *Loudéac - Loudia* (bilingual signs in Breton and French are much more common, even in Upper Brittany). Perhaps in part because of the visibility of the town sign, which those entering and leaving the town by a major highway pass twice daily, I often heard residents call the town by its Gallo name, and I once saw cartons of eggs at the organic co-op handmarked as coming from "Loudia." The CAC Sud 22, a community action group located in neighboring Saint-Caradec, hosted several Gallo contests and events each year, and Gallo classes were offered in Loudéac at the middle and high school levels. Several members of the Gallo theater troupe Les Préchous live in Loudéac, as does Gallo storyteller Vovonne Toucourt. I attended several performances in Loudéac, observed middle and high-school Gallo classes, and socialized with Gallo users and enthusiasts. Loudéac is also where I conducted my focus group interview in October 2014.

4.3 Participants

4.3.1. *Target population and sampling methods*

Because I was interested in the ideological positioning of Gallo as a form of purposeful cultural engagement, my target population for this study was broadly defined

as “Gallo social actors”; that is, those residents of Upper Brittany who, by their professional, associative, artistic or educational endeavors, had chosen to engage in activities that favored Gallo representation in public life. In practice, this meant that the great majority of the individuals whose words the reader will encounter in this dissertation were Gallo performers (professional and amateur), members of Gallo associations, Gallo teachers (at primary, secondary and tertiary levels), and/or those who were learning Gallo in academic or other formal settings. I do not wish to imply that meaningful social practice in Gallo did not occur outside of these spheres; indeed, I expect that the ideological distinctions drawn in Chapters 5 through 8 of this dissertation might have been challenged in interesting ways as they circulated outside of this advocacy context.

However, given my outsider status, the perception that Gallo use may still be stigmatized in the population at large, and the fact that for practical reasons my time in the field was limited, I decided to focus on the group of people who had made a visible choice to align themselves publically with Gallo. Users of Gallo who were not already socialized into a pattern of language display, advocacy and metalinguistic discussion might (at least initially) have been reluctant to afford a young, privileged American access to their language practices, particularly given that the language in question is often seen as informal and “uncultured.” Additionally, the fact that Gallo social actors already congregated at festivals, performances, classrooms and association meetings lent itself to ready-made contexts of data collection, where my presence and recording would not unduly inconvenience participants. In contrast, Gallo users who did not belong to this population by definition did not congregate in such spaces, so collecting data with them

would have involved my inviting myself into their homes or workplaces, at greater expense of their time, energy and privacy. As a result of such considerations, my participants are not necessarily demographically typical users of Gallo, and my conclusions are certainly not intended to apply to all users of Gallo in Upper Brittany. Rather than seeking generalizable conclusions, I aimed to achieve a nuanced portrayal of how these particular people, in these particular settings, positioned Gallo as a language-object and as a valued form of cultural engagement.

When selecting participants for this study, then, I attended to individuals' patterns of engagement with Gallo spheres of activity, rather than limiting myself to any particular definition of who counted as a "speaker" of Gallo. As discussed in Chapter 2, the question of who counts as a "speaker" is ideological and contingent, and as discussed in Chapter 3, past surveys have arrived at widely different estimates of the number of Gallo speakers in Upper Brittany (Angoujard 2010). In part, this may be because language surveys often do not clarify their criteria for designating someone a speaker of a language: do they require native-like competence, or the ability to recognize a few emblematic words? Speakers themselves also have highly variable understandings of what it means to speak a language, especially a non-standardized language undergoing language shift (Hinton & Ahlers 1999; Reynolds 2009), and as Blommaert (2010) reminds us, what counts as communicative competence is locally determined. Additionally, even those who demonstrate receptive and productive competence may not consider themselves speakers of Gallo, either because they view their abilities with shame or because their representations of who counts as a Gallo speaker do not include themselves. Accordingly, those whose voices are represented in this dissertation are not

those who have demonstrated any researcher-determined threshold of competence or authenticity, but rather, those with whom I had occasion to interact in spheres of Gallo activity, building sufficient rapport to enable their consent to participate in my project.

My time as an English assistant at the high school in Loudéac in 2006-2007 had enabled me to develop a small network of Gallo teachers, performers, enthusiasts and advocates. While these were initially largely centered on Loudéac, my subsequent visit in May-June 2012 helped me expand that network to make contact with the Association of Gallo Teachers and Bertègn Galèzz, based in Rennes, as well as with independent Gallo performers. As I entered the field in the summer of 2013, attending festivals, performances and Gallo classes, I encountered other potential participants. Although the most recent large-scale survey (Bretagne Culture Diversité / TMO Régions 2014) estimates that there are over 200,000 residents of the cultural region of Brittany who speak Gallo “well” or “quite well,” the population of Gallo social actors, as defined here, is much smaller. Although Gallo events are held all over the geographic territory of Upper Brittany, most Gallo enthusiasts most frequently attend events that are fairly close to their homes. (To provide a sense of perspective, about 135 kilometers separate Saint-Malo from Redon, the two towns being locations of two well-known Gallo festivals.) When I set out to make a list of people I remembered seeing often at multiple types of Gallo-centric events (for example, performances as well as association meetings), and who sometimes traveled significant distances to attend these events, I came up with slightly less than 40 names. While this is by no means an exhaustive nor scientifically arrived-at list, and audience members with whom I never talked may well have faithfully traveled around the region to attend Gallo events, it suggests the small and overlapping

nature of the core community—even if attendance at any particular festival was often much larger, because of the presence of interested locals.

Participants were recruited at the various local events described in Section 4.2—festivals, performances, classes and association meetings—as rapport developed over time. When leaving aside the question of Gallo students, many, but not all, participants came from the list of approximately 40 social actors mentioned above. I used purposive or judgment sampling as a sampling method. I knew I wanted to observe and interview Gallo advocates, performers, teachers and students, so I sought to facilitate encounters with individuals who would help fill any gaps I perceived in my contact patterns to date. While I did not hide my status as a researcher, I preferred where possible to get to know community members, seeing them several times at several different Gallo events, before asking them to participate in my study. Occasionally, additional participants were recruited through snowball sampling, as participants would suggest other Gallo social actors with whom I might speak; convenience sampling was used in the case of festival or performance attendees, when I wished to focus principally on how the staged events were received by those in attendance.

A drawback of these informal sampling methods is that speakers who share a particular social network, or who are especially quick to agree to participate in a research project, often also share habits, beliefs and value systems that are not necessarily present in similar ways in other parts of the population. Indeed, as with any social group, I occasionally perceived ideological rifts in the Gallo advocacy community, involving issues such as whether and how Gallo orthography should be standardized, as well as rivalries related to local politics or professional advancement. However, these rifts

seemed less extreme than early exchanges had led me to believe, and the major Gallo associations were working together during my fieldwork year to advise the Region's administration on Gallo orthography and pro-Gallo initiatives. To do my part to avoid bias, I enrolled in Gallo classes offered by three major Gallo organizations (Bertègn Galèzz, Chubri, and classes taught by members of the Association of Gallo Teachers), attended events organized by all of them (often in collaboration), and tried to learn the suggested Gallo orthographies espoused by these three organizations.

Over the course of my year in Upper Brittany, I spent more time with Gallo social actors with whom I developed closer affinity; their words may have colored my own perspective. Yet I remained reflexive about such exchanges, and I do not feel that my positionality, while unavoidably non-neutral, led to any significant exclusion from the different parts of the Gallo art and advocacy scene.

4.3.2. Distribution of participants

In all, I collected 180 signed consent forms for participants across the various spheres of Gallo engagement described in Section 4.2; among these, there were 93 women (or girls) and 87 men (or boys). Over half of these forms (96 of 180) were signed by the guardians of children in Gallo classes I was observing. Those included 54 elementary school children, 35 middle school students, and seven high school students. Consent was first solicited from teachers and school officials, and then letters were sent home with the children for their parents or guardians to sign. The great majority of parents gave their consent; in the exceptional cases where they indicated they preferred their children not participate, I placed my recorders so that those children's faces were not captured on video, and if their voices were occasionally captured by audio recording,

identifiable statements those children made were not transcribed or included in analysis. The bulk of the recordings collected in primary and secondary school Gallo classes were ultimately not analyzed in this dissertation, but observations conducted in these settings informed my interpretation of Gallo's social representation.

Of the 84 adult participants, many had multiple roles in the Gallo social scene. I calculate that among these, there were 33 association members, 33 performers (actors, storytellers, radio hosts), 17 adult Gallo students, eight Gallo teachers, and 22 other participants, who included spouses or friends of the Gallo social actors who participated in my study, as well as a political figure I interviewed and members of focus group discussions I led.

Of the 84 adult participants, I estimate that 14 were 40 years old or younger. This reflects the general tendency for the Gallo social scene to be largely composed of middle aged or older adults, with a small knot of devoted younger individuals. Some participants lived in Rennes, while others lived in various smaller towns or rural areas. A variety of professions were represented, from elementary or high-school teacher to postal worker, from gardener to professional musician or storyteller.

While the conversations I had with all of these individuals informed my analysis, there are a few voices that will recur particularly often in what follows. I describe them in the following paragraphs. These descriptions are necessarily abstractions, distilling my general impressions of these people into a quick snapshot. They are not intended as definitive characterizations of these individuals, but rather, generalizations intended to counteract the piecemeal treatment of their words in the chapters that follow. After each

description, the chapter or chapters where one can find that person's discourse are listed in parenthesis.

Anne-Marie Pelhate (whom I often identify by her radio nickname, the Gallo name Nânon), was a writer of two books about Gallo, a Gallo radio host, and a leader of Gallo elementary school discovery classes. In the pursuit of such activities, she drove across the region in her neon-green car, with its prominently displayed bumper sticker protesting against a project that would turn a local woodland and pasture into a new regional airport. Nânon was in her early 30s at the time of fieldwork, with an understated, wry sense of humor. In our interview, she invoked the tension between wanting her work to represent forms that were “emblematic” of Gallo and those that would be recognized by the greatest number of speakers. Elementary school students seemed greatly to enjoy her classes, eagerly reporting Gallo words they had heard spoken and singing or reciting the proverbs she had collected from the traditional repertoire or else expressions she had invented. (Chapters 5 and 6)

Bernard, Josette, Marie and Michelle (all pseudonyms), all aged about 60 to 70, were four of my six classmates in a weekly Gallo night class in Chavagne, a suburb of Rennes. Motivated to take the class because they had relatives (parents or uncles) who spoke Gallo, they approached Gallo with delight and amusement, but quickly qualified they were “not activists.” They often brought up expressions remembered from their childhood, and frequently consulted their dictionaries in class to see how the suggested translations compared to how they thought their Gallo-speaking relatives would word things. Nearing the end of their second year in the two-year Gallo course sequence, they playfully pestered their teacher, trying to convince him to continue the courses for

another year. Instead, he suggested they take an organizing role in the *Café galo* occurring in Rennes, writing stories to be performed and and planning discussion topics. (Chapters 5 and 6.)

Claude and his friend Marcel (pseudonyms) were two educators in their sixties at the time of data collection. I recorded Claude, a Gallo teacher, in two different contexts: in class (on a day when he had invited Marcel, a Gallo poet, to come talk to his students), and as he was giving a lecture on Gallo to a small audience at the little public library in Chavagne, a town twenty minutes from downtown Rennes. Claude had grown up with a Gallo-speaking mother who, he said, had told him that the Gallo he spoke was different from her own *patois*. His lecture invoked the cognitive benefits of multilingualism no matter the language, even the “small languages” like Gallo, and detailed the injustices enacted on the language by those who thought of it as a “sub-language.” (Chapter 6.)

Daniel Robert, a well-known Gallo storyteller, was born in Paris but heard Gallo when spending summers with his grandparents in Brittany, in the area near Saint-Malo (35). A postman who celebrated his retirement during the year of my fieldwork and a leisure-class Gallo teacher, Daniel’s tales included both elements from the traditional repertoire—the story of a trickster who gets humorous revenge on the brigands who tricked *him* out of a pig—and creations, such as the story of a man from inland Upper Brittany who mistook the rising and falling tide of the sea for someone stealing the ocean’s water. His stories often relied on figures who presented themselves as naïve but ended up outsmarting others. He had been telling stories for over 10 years at the time of fieldwork. (Chapter 8.)

Jules (pseudonym) was a middle-school student who, of all the students in the class, most frequently used Gallo to joke with his teacher or suggest a word the teacher was trying to elicit in class. He also demonstrated knowledge about farm-related practices. When spitting came up in a Gallo text, Jules explained to his less familiar classmates how people would spit on their hands before using a tool, to help give them a better grip on it. When I interviewed him, Jules claimed that Gallo was “a living language” and that even though he could not continue taking Gallo at his technical high school, he would speak it, because “It’s in me, I can’t stop myself from speaking Gallo.” (Chapter 6.)

Marie-Brigitte Bertrand was a middle-school English teacher by trade, in her fifties at the time of data collection. Marie-Brigitte was part of the theater duo “Tradior,” with her creative partner Jean-Luc Oger. The troupe, which was organized in cooperation with storyteller Daniel Robert and based in Saint-Père-Marc-en-Poulet (35), was a local fixture since 2005. Their play *The Lesson* will be discussed in Chapter 8, as will be an informal speech Marie-Brigitte gave on stage after she and Jean-Luc had performed a play for a Gallo high-school class (Chapter 5 and 6). In this speech, Marie-Brigitte urges the students to “Creusez là-dedans” [dig into Gallo], saying that they can thereby “discover people” who may otherwise be ashamed to admit this part of their “cultural heritage.” (Chapters 5, 6 and, with Jean-Luc Oger, Chapter 8.)

“Marie Chiff”mine,” the stage name of professional storyteller Marie-Claire Sauvée, performed in Gallo, French, English and more. Shortly before I met her during the course of my fieldwork, she had completed a six-month journey by bicycle from her hometown of Betton (35), just north of Rennes, to Estonia, telling stories all the way.

Upon her return, over 3000 kilometers later, she incorporated this journey into her storytelling, fancifully describing a Gingerbread-Man-esque runaway crêpe her Estonian host had cooked, reminding her of Breton crêpes. In her mid-fifties during my fieldwork, Marie was an advocate for the environment as well as for Gallo. Her stories, and her plays in collaboration with Matao Rollo, linked the natural world and the world of Gallo, and she enjoyed wordplay and musicality. (Chapters 5 and 7.)

Matao Rollo, in his thirties at the time of data collection, was a professional storyteller in French and Gallo, and a Gallo radio host since 2002. Expressive and poetic, Matao narrated his childhood in Saint-Martin-sur-Oust (56) as a time when he was immersed in Gallo, without experiencing it as a separate language. He began an elective Gallo class in high school, but he was also drawn to Breton, studying it at the university. In an interview, Matao bemoaned the reduction of Gallo to registers of humor and conviviality. In the Gallo-speakers of the past, he found echoes of people who were poets and singers. In his words, “I was fed up of hearing that they were idiots, that they were naïve, while that’s not true! They were anything but that! They were people capable of putting down their word and watching the birds! Who still does that? No one, if not for them.” He has collaborated with Marie Chiff’mine, creating three plays in Gallo.

(Chapters 5, 6 and 7.)

Patrick and Marine (pseudonyms) were members of a high-school Gallo class. During one class meeting I recorded, discussion turned to the European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages, which was being debated in France’s National Assembly at the time. Patrick brought up the issue, and he and his teacher—with occasional input from Marine and other classmates—evoked local discourses that

positioned Gallo as irrelevant to modern life and spoken only by older or rural people. They themselves enjoyed learning Gallo, but saw this in tension with parental and other expectations for them to be “bourgeois.” (Chapters 5 and 6.)

An English-teacher friend from my first year in Brittany, “Vovonne Toucourt” (stage name) was a Gallo teacher and storyteller who also wrote a Gallo newspaper column. She heard Gallo growing up in her grandmother’s small shop in Allineuc (22). Her Gallo stories often included elements indexical of the past, humorously juxtaposed with elements indicative of modern sensibilities. Other times, her words created an atmosphere more of reverie than of humor. Possessed of a quick and playful smile and a musician’s ear, Vovonne often highlighted the sounds of Gallo in her work, rhyming and riddling. In her Gallo classes, she frequently urged her students to create visual art projects based on Gallo stories from the traditional repertoire, as well as recent creations; song was also an important element of her Gallo classroom (Chapter 7.)

4.3.3 *Participant role labeling*

Gallo users and enthusiasts occupied multiple and overlapping roles in the sociolinguistic landscape of Upper Brittany. This made identifying any participant with any one label somewhat challenging. For example, several members of Gallo advocacy associations were also performers and/or teachers, but for many other performers, teachers, students or attendees at Gallo festivals, there was little evidence that they considered themselves to be Gallo *militants*, or activists.⁹⁹ In fact, evidence often tended

⁹⁹ While the words *militant* and *activiste* both exist in French, as do their apparent cognates in English, the degree of radicalism the words connote is different in the two languages. While in English, a militant is generally considered to be more radical than an activist, in French, it is *un activiste* that is associated with violence in the pursuit of sociopolitical aims, while this connotation does not exist for *un militant*. As McDonald (1989) put it when writing about the Breton language movement, “For some militants, the term ‘activist’... has pejorative connotations, suggesting, for example, mindless bomb-throwing” (74). It is for

to the contrary. To take an example from my interview data, when I questioned my adult Gallo classmates about a protest at the Regional Assembly that the class had attended with “des militants” [some activists] a few years before, my classmate Marie carefully pointed out that although they had attended, they were not *militants*: “On est pas”—and here, she paused—“militant. Moi je ne suis pas militante, non” [We’re not activists. Me, I’m not an activist, no]. Our classmate Josette quickly concurred: “Pas militante non” [Not an activist no], elaborating, “On va pas aller défilier- enfin moi, personnellement, je vais pas aller défilier, hein ?” [We’re not going to go march- well me, personally, I’m not going to go march, you know?].

This reluctance may stem from the historical context of activism in Brittany. From at least the time of the 1789 Revolution, the context of political language advocacy in Brittany has been highly charged, particularly because of the notoriety of Breton-language activists, who have been imagined at times in national discourses to be separatist and/or violent (See Chapter 2). However, although Josette and Marie declined to accept a *militant* label, they were committed to Gallo; as a third classmate, Michelle, conceded a few turns later, “Mais on milite- on milite à notre façon ! En parlant” [But we’re activists- we’re activists in our own way! By speaking]. In Michelle’s view, the mere fact of choosing to speak Gallo, particularly outside of class with other community members, is its own form of advocacy.

Because some Gallo enthusiasts, such as Marie, Josette and Michelle, were reluctant to adopt the label of *militant* [activist], I have chosen to use the term “advocate”

this reason that, although the major Gallo associations certainly do seek to influence public officials and institutions for greater recognition for Gallo, I generally call them “advocacy associations” rather than “activist associations” or “militant associations,” to reduce the chances of readers associating violence with group goals or practices.

to denote those who attended meetings hosted by associations devoted to increasing the sociopolitical presence of Gallo. I have also given the “advocate” label to teachers, as well as storytellers and other performers who, in public arenas, chose to work largely or exclusively in Gallo. These individuals have made a conscious decision to engage in Gallo language education or artistry, in a social context that often represents Gallo as having little relevance for contemporary life, and as not being rule-governed or lexically nuanced enough for artistic expression. I call those who attended Gallo festivals or gatherings “Gallo enthusiasts” or merely “attendees” if I was not aware that these people were otherwise engaged in Gallo promotional activities.

As far as the use of my term “performer,” although I recognize that all language is performance to some extent, I reserve this designation for those who, at social gatherings or festivals, used semiotic resources to “key” a “breakthrough into performance” (Bauman 2004) and maintained this mode of discourse for a sustained amount of time. These individuals were often identified in local discourse as *contous*, *chantous*, or *disous* (storytellers, singers, or speakers) even in utterances that were otherwise not marked for Gallo. These terms suggest that these were locally salient forms of performance.

The fact that Gallo-speaking individuals occupied overlapping positions in the community meant that performers, educators and advocates at times negotiated among subject positions traditionally seen in competition with one another. One example was the situation facing teachers who identified as Gallo speakers. As Bulot (2008) critiques, Gallo users are often locally imagined—even by researchers—to be rural and rustic. However, in the French context, teachers are national civil servants, lending them a fair amount of prestige and somewhat of a supra-regional affiliation. A similar split could be

seen at times in the indexical positioning of middle- and high-school Gallo students, where their role as learners of Gallo was in contrast with their often middle-class backgrounds. As will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 6, Gallo students often said that their peers saw their Gallo courses as a sign of rurality. As one high-schooler said, “dans les stéréotypes c’est une langue de vieux et des paysans” [in stereotypes it’s a language of old people and peasants]; his female classmate concurred that speaking Gallo didn’t always come off well because one needs to talk “comme une bourgeoise” [like an upper-middle-class person]. When I interviewed middle-school Gallo students, one said, “Ca fait penser à la campagne” [it makes you think of the countryside] and another concurred that hearing Gallo made her think “aux champs” [of fields]. However, after middle school, the only students who could continue taking Gallo electives were those who entered general high school programs—normally seen as pathways to college or white-collar professions—while students who went to agricultural or technical high schools did not receive the option to take Gallo electives as part of their studies. This led to a situation in which many of the students who were likely to be the most frequent users of Gallo could not continue taking Gallo courses, and many of the students who *did* take Gallo classes did not envision for themselves careers in agriculture.

Many performers and advocates with whom I worked occupied a more privileged socioeconomic position than the indexical link between Gallo and peasant rurality would suggest. This demonstrates the challenge of classifying Gallo users by specific social class categories. Middle- and high-school teachers, for example, seemed to be over-represented in those who were active as Gallo performers or learners, even when leaving aside those teachers who directly taught Gallo. While participants very often described

themselves as coming from rural or agricultural backgrounds—their parents or grandparents were farmers or otherwise rural—fewer had worked in agriculture themselves as adults. Participants occasionally drew attention to these indexical gaps in discourses, portraying themselves as more white-collar than their Gallo-speaking (or, as will be discussed in Chapter 6, *patois*-speaking) ancestors or relatives. At the same time, many still chose to live outside of major urban areas, sometimes in restored old farmhouses, or else cultivated small gardens as hobbies, thus maintaining a link to rural practice. Activists and performers’ participation in multiple communities of practice, from political forums to schools and workplaces, afforded them with diverse linguistic repertoires and semiotic resources that they could employ in order to invoke, ratify or contest various kinds of personae.

4.3.4 A note about confidentiality

As the portraits of selected participants in Section 4.3.2 make evident, not all participants received pseudonyms in this study: Gallo performers and advocates were given the option on their consent forms to indicate that they wished their real names be used. I made this decision because I did not wish to contribute to the historic erasure of Gallo forms of artistic expression by taking excerpts and quotes from Gallo performances without crediting the thoughtful, funny and creative people who made them happen. When real names appear in this dissertation, it is because these participants, all of whom were adults, indicated to me that that was their preference. All minor children received pseudonyms, as did my Gallo classmates, focus group members, and anyone else who wished their participation to remain confidential. I also made the occasional choice not to use real names, even for people who gave me permission to do so, when I thought the

content expressed might be controversial if other community members were one day to read parts of this dissertation.

4.3.5 Contributing to the community

Throughout my field stay, I sought for concrete ways to make myself useful to the Gallo associations and individuals who were so generous with their participation in my research. While presenting my research and as part of my recruitment of participants, I offered to translate artist or association webpages into English, as well as to help Gallo students prepare for their English oral exams. However, these offers were kindly turned down. My contributions were thus limited to occasional driving of Gallo books and promotional materials from one festival to another, staffing a festival stand, and chaperoning Gallo class field trips. When conducting interviews, I usually offered baked goods to these participants, who welcomed me into their homes, classrooms, or workplaces; because the apartment I rented in Rennes had only heating plates, I bought a small electric oven for this purpose. Because Gallo events often highlighted local Breton cuisine, such as *cidre* (hard apple cider), *crêpes*, *galettes* (savory buckwheat crêpes), *saucisses* (pork sausages), *quatre-quarts* (pound cake), or *fars bretons* (a baked dish similar to clafoutis), I decided to focus on recipes I thought were more typical of the United States, for the purpose of cultural exchange. I shared banana bread, key lime pie, brownies, and cinnamon-flavored treats. Although simple fare, these recipes, less widely known in Brittany than in the United States, were always warmly received, and by the end of my field visit I had developed something of a local reputation for enjoying baking. I also offered my participants copies of any recordings I made of their own artistic performances; several Gallo performers did take me up on my offer of these copies.

4.4 Methods of Data Collection

This section begins with an overview of my chosen research design: ethnographic fieldwork involving participant observation, interviewing, and the collection of audio- and video-recorded data. In an ethnographic approach, researchers ground observations of language use within a cultural context, as they live alongside members of the designated community and become embedded in ongoing cultural activities. Analyses conducted as part of an ethnographic project are “inductive and [build] upon the perspectives of the people studied” (AAA Executive Board 2004). As part of this inductive process, techniques of participant observation, direct observation, interviewing, analysis of print texts, and analysis of audio- and/or video-recorded data permit researchers to describe social processes of interest. Fieldwork for my own project comprised twelve months of ethnographic research (July 2013-June 2014) in Upper Brittany, among the target population of Gallo social actors described above, plus a one-week return visit in October 2014.

It is in part this ethnographic, discourse-centered perspective that distinguishes this project from most past studies of Gallo. As Chapter 3 has suggested, past studies of Gallo have largely focused either on descriptions of language policies or on aggregated results of quantitative surveys. Nolan’s (2010) monograph combines these two approaches, using surveys and interviews to explore how national debates on language policy have been reflected or challenged in Gallo students’ discourse. However, Nolan analyzes his data principally for informational content rather than for how Gallo models of personhood, time, and place are evoked and circulated in situated moments of daily life. Jaffe (1999) has argued that ethnography is of particular importance if we wish to

understand the trajectories taken by language revitalization movements, claiming that “whether we are concerned with the nitty gritty of ‘what works’ or conceptualizing social processes, ethnography is critical if we are to understand the social and cultural repercussions of language policy” (271). Following Jaffe’s approach, my work examines language use in spheres of Gallo engagement, with a particular focus on how Gallo was defined, staged and lived. Because I spent twelve months in the field, I had the opportunity to test the validity of initial observations against patterns that emerged in successive interactions over time.

In order to investigate how Gallo was embedded in the sociocultural lives of community members, I used four principal methods of data collection, each of which I will discuss in detail below: participant observation (Section 4.4.1); recordings of performances and interactions (Section 4.4.2); recordings of interviews and focus groups (Section 4.4.3), and the compilation of a corpus of written texts (Section 4.4.4). Because the research questions outlined in Chapter 1 concern both the representations to be found in widely circulating print texts and in individual Gallo speakers’ discursively claimed and interactionally negotiated evaluations, it was necessary to collect both print and interactional data. It was also important to collect various *kinds* of interactional data, because different settings, activities and participation frameworks (Goffman 1981) occasioned differential displays of Gallo personhood. As Bucholtz and Hall’s (2005) partialness principle reminds us, “any given construction of identity,” such as particular manifestations of Gallo engagement, is “constantly shifting both as interaction unfolds and across discourse contexts” (606). Analysis of data of a variety of modalities (audio, video, and written), collected in a variety of settings, enabled me to discern the multiple

and varied semiotic practices in which residents of Upper Brittany participate. I further contextualized my observations by conducting interviews near the end of my field stay.

4.4.1 Participant observation and fieldnotes

Participant observation was carried out in Gallo classes, where I participated as a learner; at Gallo performances festivals, where I participated as a spectator (and, once near the end of my stay, as a performer); and in Gallo association meetings, where I participated as someone with an interest in the language. My use of participant observation speaks to Eckert's (1989) insight that, if researchers wish to understand what is at stake when speakers assume particular identities or engage with particular ideologies, observed patterns of linguistic usage must be contextualized by ethnographic fieldwork. An ethnographic approach enabled me to see how discursively formulated representations of Gallo as a language-object and cultural practice engaged with locally salient figures, genres, activities and beliefs.

Throughout my time in each of the Gallo-centric settings described in Section 4.2, above, I carried a notebook with me. In many settings, such as at meetings or in classes, my role was such that I could take field notes contemporaneously, without disrupting others or preventing myself from engaging in social interaction. I tried to take shorthand notes on who was saying what, so that these notes were in effect a very rough "transcript" of the speech event—at least enough so that, when I was also audio-recording the event, I could use my notes to locate segments of speech for detailed transcription after the fact. When someone said something I thought significant, I glanced at the recorder and wrote the minute count in the margin of my notes, beside my quick notation of the utterance.

In some cases, if I was not able to take notes in the field, I took notes after the fact, recording the major topic(s) of discussion, estimates of the number and role(s) of participants, explicit ideologies about Gallo, French, or other languages invoked, use of metalinguistic labels, and other salient issues that emerged. If I was driving home alone from a festival or other event, I often turned on my recorder and spoke aloud to myself as I drove, so that I could introspect on what I remembered before intervening time made recall more difficult. I took note of the use of physical space and other elements of the material environment, such as food, clothing, music, or dance. In all, I filled eleven notebooks with field notes during my stay. These notes were then used to select excerpts for more detailed transcription and analysis, as described in Section 4.5 below.

4.4.2 Recording of performances and interactions

In the course of my participant observation, I video- and audio-recorded Gallo performances. I also audio-recorded activist meetings, Gallo language classrooms, social gatherings, interviews and focus groups. Audio recording was done with a Sony ICD-SX712 Digital Flash Voice Recorder with microphones that could swivel to better capture situations where multiple speakers were seated in different directions. When the recorder was turned on, it was openly displayed, and participants in settings where I recorded frequently (association meetings, classrooms) knew that when they saw me in these contexts, my recorder was likely to be on. I do not feel that participants often modified their speech or behavior because of the presence of the recorder, as they had become habituated to its presence.

Video-recording was done with a handheld digital recorder (Canon Vixia HF R300) with a built-in microphone. This recorder was sophisticated enough to record in

conditions of low light and ambient noise but small enough to be easily portable. Spectators often made video-recordings of performances at cultural events; therefore, my recordings were unlikely to have been considered obtrusive. Because it was infeasible to get signed consent from all audience members, I attempted not to include the faces of audience members in video recording. In some cases, however, this was impossible due to my position in the audience. When audience members' faces were visible, I sought to edit them out before presenting videos at conferences or in other public forums. The video-recorder's microphone at times captured audience speech, as audience involvement was often a part of Gallo performance. As long as such discourse was neither personally identifiable nor likely to be considered sensitive, it was transcribed and included in analysis.

4.4.3 Interviews and focus groups

Sociolinguists understand that, although language practices may align with speakers' self-declared ideologies, they do not always do so (Mendoza-Denton 2008). In order to approach the ideological representation of Gallo from a variety of perspectives, this project includes analysis of ideologies and beliefs that emerged in interview data as well as in situated acts of language use. During my preliminary field visit in May-June 2012, I conducted four interviews with speakers I had known since 2006. The goal of such interviews was to better calibrate my interview style with cultural expectations; as Briggs (1984) notes, successful interviews must align with local meta-communicative repertoires.

During the main phase of my fieldwork, I resisted conducting interviews early on, hoping first to get to know individuals in a variety of communicative encounters,

including the Gallo cultural events described earlier. Ultimately I conducted 21 interviews, in groups of two to five close acquaintances where possible, individually if another option did not readily present itself. With a few rare exceptions, those interviews took place after mid-April 2014: in the last three months of my fieldwork, when I had developed enough familiarity with the majority of those I interviewed to mitigate the artificial situation of sociolinguistic interviews.

In my selection of participants for interviews, I sought to reflect the multiple and partial forms of participation through which residents of Upper Brittany engaged with the semiotic landscape of Gallo. Keeping in mind that there is a fair amount of overlap between participant roles, I interviewed eight Gallo writers and performers, two groups of Gallo radio hosts, two groups of Gallo advocates (representing two different branches of a Gallo association), two additional Gallo advocates from another association, three Gallo teachers, my classmates in two of the leisure Gallo classes I was taking (one group largely composed of musicians in their 20s, another composed of adults in their 60s and 70s), four small groups of middle school students, two elementary school classes, one government official, one woman in her 90s who had been actively involved in advocating for Gallo since the 1970s, and one group of retirees who had largely grown up speaking Gallo. I collected a total of approximately 40 hours of interview data.

Interviews were usually done in settings where participants were used to speaking Gallo: in their Gallo classroom after a class, in the civic building where the association meetings were held before a meeting, at the radio station where they worked, or in their homes. The interviews ranged from 20 minutes long, in the case of middle-school Gallo students, to nearly three hours in other cases, when discussion was particularly animated.

I also conducted two focus groups over the course of my fieldwork. The first was among a group of older speakers recruited by a retired mayor I had met at a Gallo lecture. This man was not himself a Gallo advocate, but he was interested in my research project and offered to put me into contact with other older people who had grown up speaking some Gallo. As a kind of counterpoint to my main focus on Gallo advocates, I gladly accepted, and met one afternoon in a library with these nine individuals. I asked them open-ended questions about their childhood and experiences speaking Gallo. The second focus group was during my brief return visit in October 2014. Since my departure from the field in late June, I had transcribed and analyzed some performances but wanted to have a bit of evidence for how they may have been locally received by spectators who were not themselves Gallo advocates, but who were interested enough in Gallo to attend performances. I selected excerpts from three plays and showed them to three people recruited through a common Gallo storyteller friend. These three individuals lived in Loudéac and had attended a couple of Gallo performances in the past. Two were originally from Breton-speaking areas; the third was native to Upper Brittany. The discussion was animated, and a range of stances toward Gallo (that it was not spoken anymore, despite evidence to the contrary; that the plays made the language appealing...) were elucidated. The sample sizes in both cases obviously prevented generalizations from being drawn, but they did show me some of the possibilities for Gallo ideological positioning among individuals who were not themselves Gallo advocates.

4.4.4 Compilation of a written corpus

My understanding of the above-mentioned interactional and performance data was supplemented by a consideration of written texts in and concerning Gallo. In order to

address how representations of Gallo circulated in public space at various scales, I read news media, policy documents, and books self-published or published by regional publishing houses. When I visited a Gallo stand at a festival, I collected examples of brochures and fliers. I asked participants who were actors or storytellers if they would share with me written versions of their plays, stories or songs. Where possible, I used performers' own orthography to represent their dialogue on stage.

4.5 Methods of Data Analysis

4.5.1 Transcription

During and after my year of fieldwork, I conducted qualitative analyses of the audio and video recordings I collected. Like any project of this type, my analysis process began when I reviewed my corpora of audio/video-recorded data, in order to select passages to transcribe for further detailed analysis. As part of my field notes, I had categorized most recordings by noting participants, setting, type of speech event, topics covered, and salient use of language I noticed during the interaction. Some of this information was also reflected in the names I gave to recordings. Based on those initial notes and names, I selected approximately 20 hours of data for transcription. Passages were selected for transcription based on their theoretical interest for discerning the range of ideological positionings of Gallo that circulated in Upper Brittany. As a result, these key moments were not necessarily the most typical or representative—my goal not being to generalize to a larger population—but rather illustrated a range of potential forms of social action, including those that seemed to challenge ideologies in ways I hadn't expected. I sought to look at what was possible for language choices to achieve, rather than at what was most likely to happen.

These key moments were transcribed in two different ways. For heavily interactional or performance discourse, I used the following conventions, loosely based on Goodwin (1990):

Table 4.2 Transcription conventions

Symbol	Meaning
<u>bold underline</u>	Focus of analysis
<i>Italics</i>	Forms that were marked as Gallo to my (non-native speaker) ear, and the utterance in which they were embedded
CAPITALS	Increased volume or other prosodic emphasis
::	Lengthening (additional colons inserted for more pronounced lengthening)
-	Sudden cut-off
.	Falling contour
?	Rising contour or end of a grammatically marked question
@	Laughter (additional symbols inserted for longer laughing episodes)
[Overlapping speech
[
“ ”	Quoting speech
((details))	Additional transcription details
[xxxxx]	Unintelligible speech
...	Ellipsed speech (for space considerations)
(.)	pause

In the case of video-recorded excerpts selected for close transcription, I also noted and transcribed movements, gaze, and other forms of nonverbal semiosis, as has been suggested by Ochs (1979) and exemplified in Briggs (1988).

Close, turn-by-turn transcription of data is an invaluable step in the study of discourse, because as Schegloff (e.g. 1997) cautions, any speech event can be interpreted

in numerous, equally “true” ways. Many researchers, says Schegloff, “deploy the terms which preoccupy *them* in describing, explaining, critiquing, etc., the events and texts to which they turn their attention” (167). Such “theoretical imperialism” (168) ignores how participants themselves discursively orient to social categories and ratify or contest each others’ categorizations through turn sequencing. I often focused on ideological positionings that were made explicit in discourse, through the use of language labels like *langue, gallo* or *patois*, and that were therefore “demonstrably relevant to the participants” (Schegloff 1997: 165). Briggs (1998) likewise encourages attention to participants’ explicit negotiation of ideology. However, I also am convinced by Kroskrity’s (1998) acknowledgment that some ideologies are so naturalized by dominant power structures that they do not reach the thresholds of awareness necessary for participants to admit to them.

As Ochs (1979) and Bucholtz (2000) have argued, a historical tendency to view transcription as a mechanical or invisible component of language research belies the fact that the act of transcribing itself is “inherently embedded in relations of power” (Bucholtz 2000:1439). Transcription involves interpretive choices that affect not only the conclusions made, but also the images of speakers conveyed to a researcher’s reading public. Each transcription decision is an analytical and political choice, whether because it privileges some facets of semiotic communication (e.g. speech) over others (e.g. nonverbal behavior), as Ochs illustrates, or because it “naturalizes” or “denaturalizes” oral communication with respect to orthographic convention, as Bucholtz explores. I therefore approached transcription with the same critical attention and reflexivity applied to the rest of my analysis.

However, when I judged interactional or performance effects not to be significant to the meaning-making going on (for example, in interviews with a single speaker), the excerpts featured in this dissertation are paragraph-style, transcribed more loosely. In these contexts I did not systematically represent intonation, and at times I elided false starts or vocalizations (e.g., “euh”). In these more abstracted segments of speech, I felt that leaving in markers of hesitation or self-correction might have been interpreted as these speakers’ not being eloquent, which given dominant perceptions of Gallo speakers as lacking sophistication, was not a process to which I wanted to contribute.

One notable departure from Goodwin’s system is my use of italics, in both my detailed transcripts and my paragraph-style ones. I use italics, not to represent emphasis, but instead to represent discourse I impressionistically characterized as Gallo rather than French, often based on lexical items, but also with respect to vowel quality, palatalized consonants or morphosyntax. This approach was highly subjective for a variety of reasons. Because the speech of Gallo users, like that of many *oïl* speakers, varies along a continuum (Walter 1988), there may be one (or more) noticeable Gallo words in a sentence that otherwise “sounds French” – especially to my nonnative ears. The inverse is also possible. Such issues are compounded by the fact that different varieties of Gallo are alike or different from French on different phonemes. For example, in some areas the first-person singular imperfect is [ʒete] in Gallo just like in French; elsewhere it is [ftə]. If a speaker says [ʒete], are they using a French form or a Gallo one that happens to be bivalent with it? Such ambiguities align with more general theoretical reservations about labeling practices in studies of codeswitching, and whether the notion of codeswitching is appropriate in all contexts (Woolard 2004).

While my own transcription practices reify to some extent an artificial division between Gallo and French—I italicize those words or phrases that “sound Gallo” impressionistically to my non-native ears—they also permit me to engage with the important identity function with which Auffray charges tokens that sound emblematically Gallo, even if they are not spoken throughout the Gallo-speaking territory. Additionally, such decisions often reflected local language ideologies and language distinctions that participants were making. This is particularly true of some of the plays discussed in Chapters 5 through 8, in which two characters’ not “speaking the same language” is a major plot point, or one character’s switch from speaking French to speaking (purposefully inept) Gallo is overtly marked through other speech cues like intonation and speech rate. Because participants themselves often oriented to Gallo and French as two different language-objects—and indeed, Chapter 5 discusses the discursive work they devoted to defining them that way, in print and on stage—I feel justified in doing the same here.

I also recognize that my transcription practices have limitations. First, in some cases languages may not have been seen in binary terms, but rather as bivalent. My choices thus enshrined what may be perceived as a continuum by participants as, instead, a stark choice between two categorical codes. As a non-native speaker of both French and Gallo, and a non-fluent speaker of Gallo, I may also have missed subtle clues indicating greater or lesser use of a particular repertoire. Second, in choosing italics for Gallo rather than for French, I position it as more marked. I may thus be contributing to an exoticization of the minority language to the profit of the standard, unmarked one. At the same time, other distinctions that may have been just as locally salient were erased.

Although Gallo users were often very sensitive to geographic variation—claiming not infrequently to be able to situate a speaker within a precise geographic area based on how he or she spoke—my own ears as a native English speaker and fairly beginning-level Gallo learner did not permit me to encode such information with ease or accuracy. As a result, my transcription is not usually sensitive to variation in pronunciation, and the International Phonetic Alphabet is used extremely rarely. However, even given all of these trade-offs, I believed it was important to give readers who may not be conversant in either French or Gallo a rough sense of how those present may have interpreted utterances with respect to the two language-objects of Gallo and French.

Although I had originally hoped to transcribe Gallo discourse according to each speaker's preferred orthographic system, this proved to be impractical, both because many participants expressed no orthographic allegiance, and also because I did not master all three popular orthographies equally well. I have thus chosen the orthography used in the most comprehensive Gallo dictionary, Régis Auffray's *Le Petit Matao*, for use in this dissertation, with the unfortunate result that I am representing some individuals' speech with an orthography they themselves would not use. These orthographies may thus be seen as illegitimate or “nonstandard” from the perspective of particular speakers. As Jaffe (2008[2012]) makes clear, orthographies involve representational politics and incur certain dangers:

Respellings are immensely expressive, and in some contexts of self-expression, have the potential to be subversive in that they can expose and call into question the dominant language ideologies and the social hierarchies in which they are embedded. But this subversive potential is always held in check by the very power of those ideologies, and respellings of others are always problematic with respect to the legitimacy and authority of those they represent. (221)

However, one person who used a different orthography from my own explained to me that what most mattered to him was that writers spelt his Gallo name correctly, no matter what other changes they made to suit their chosen orthography. In part to honor this perspective and also because it aligns with my own, all participants' Gallo names are represented orthographically as they themselves preferred.

4.5.2 *Qualitative Discourse Analysis*

The research questions presented in Chapter 1 are primarily concerned with *how* linguistic and other semiotic resources are used to position Gallo, and what ideological and interactional consequences these uses entail, rather than the distributional frequency with which particular features are used. Qualitative methodologies allow researchers to capture nuances of meaning that are often elided in exclusively quantitative approaches (Johnstone 2000). Quantitative analyses can examine the *distribution* of particular linguistic features, such as the diphthongs [we] and [wa], as they vary by speakers, settings or activities, but quantitative analyses are less suited for exploring how language use is negotiated over the course of an interaction and over multiple interactions, as well as the effects of such negotiations. So, if one wishes to explore, for example, what is achieved by a speaker's use of *patouéz* (pronounced either [patwe] or [patwa]) as a rhyming motif in her spoken word performance, qualitative analyses are most appropriate.

Based on my re-listening and transcribing process, I ultimately chose to focus on four facets of Gallo's ideological definition and display in Upper Brittany. These facets were the following, each of which is the basis of one analysis chapter: the participant roles proposed in the fostering of cultural recognition of Gallo as a language-object

(Chapter 5); the implications of language labeling—*gallo* or *patois*—for discussions of Gallo’s ideological value (Chapter 6); the semiotic potential of Gallo dictionaries, as displayed at festival booths and on stage (Chapter 7); and the carnivalesque reversals in two artistic performances that interrogated the relationship between Gallo and French (Chapter 8).

My selection of these topics was guided in part by their local salience among people with whom I interacted during the course of my fieldwork. Gallo social actors often recounted how they came to understand Gallo as a language-object, different from French and as full of symbolic potential as Breton. They also often mentioned the label *patois*—at times to dissociate from it, but at other times, they used it themselves, in ways that did not seem to denigrate the variety but rather pointed to an alternate form of value. Along with the label *patois*, I also heard the label *francien*¹⁰⁰ being used instead of *français*, as a tongue-in-cheek way of decentering standard French; a similar impulse undergirds the carnivalesque reversals I discuss in Chapter 8. I frequently saw dictionaries in participants’ homes, on students’ desks in classrooms, and at language festivals, and I came to understand that they were important cultural objects in this ethnographic context.

In addition to their local salience, the practices Chapters 4-8 will elucidate are also important for their non-local relevance. Other minority language communities also grapple with questions such as language labeling (for instance, the use of *Gullah* and/or

¹⁰⁰ This term was put forth by Gaston Paris in the nineteenth century to denote the *langue d’oïl* that was spoken in Ile-de-France, the area around Paris, during the medieval period, before the establishment of the ideological construct of standard French. When medieval French writers referred to the variety spoken in Ile-de-France, they called it *le françois*, which was “applied synecdochically to the French language as a whole” (Lodge 2004:55).

Geechee as terms for the variety spoken in the Lowcountry of Georgia and South Carolina) and the role that dictionaries can occupy in the ideological landscape. Researchers have identified other language varieties as “incompletely enregistered” (e.g., Campbell-Kibler 2012), and a focus on the participant roles locally believed to encourage and/or discourage enregisterment may help scholars chart these developing indexical distinctions.

A final consideration guiding the selection of data for analysis was researcher accessibility. Given the length of my field stay, my community outsider status, and my non-native-speaker language abilities, I thought it would be advisable to focus on issues of language representation and metalinguistic positioning, rather than on patterns of language usage.

CHAPTER 5

CREATING A LANGUAGE-OBJECT: PARTICIPANT ROLES OF LANGUAGE RECOGNITION

Near the end of my field stay in Upper Brittany, I interviewed Bèrtran Ôbrée, a prominent Gallo musician and activist who wrote a regular Gallo column appearing in the official magazine for the *département* of Ille-et-Vilaine. As I listened to Bèrtran's description of his motivations for the column, I realized he was bringing together various discourses about Gallo—what it was, what its users knew about it, and what activists' and artists' goals for the language might look like—that I had been implicitly noticing throughout my fieldwork. In particular, what Bèrtran was saying illuminated a distinction between two local “ways of knowing” Gallo. As he put it, his column served the following purpose:

“... to recognize that what people say- they call ‘patois,’ well it’s that! It’s- it’s Gallo, it’s the words that you see, that- that I say in the articles. [xxxx] there’s a lot of people, well, they know some Gallo, but sometimes they don’t realize-... They think that it’s French, whereas it’s not at all standard French you know?... There’s some people who know Gallo in their families, so it’s to give them a little bit of consciousness about what it is.”

This response highlights three important social realities about Gallo that I observed during my fieldwork, which together illuminate the problem that motivates this chapter. First, while Bèrtran claims that Gallo was heard and indeed “known” by many locals, including in intimate family settings, he also constructs these same people as needing “consciousness about” Gallo. In other words, while he may believe his audience

knows *how* to speak Gallo, they do not know *that* a language-object called “Gallo”—something neither “patois” nor “standard French”—is a nameable and inhabitable language. (For the distinction sometimes made in philosophy between these two kinds of knowledge, see Stanley 2001). Bèrtran’s comment draws a distinction between these two ways of knowing Gallo. Second, Bèrtran (like many activists) adopts an authoritative voice regarding not only the *knowing how* that enables him to write a column in Gallo, but also the *knowing that* purportedly lacked by his audience. In the short quotation above, he supplies four different possible denotations of what Gallo is, using the Gallo phrase *c’èt* [‘it is’, or ‘it’s’] four different times:

It is that!

It is Gallo.

It is the words that you see, that I say in the articles.

It is not at all standard French.

In these four clauses, Bèrtran makes a bid to define Gallo as a particular type of language-object, while also defining his own position as a “Gallo recognizer”—a subjectivity that unites *knowing how* (being that his explanation was delivered in Gallo) with *knowing that*. Thirdly, Bèrtran indicates that he believes this metalinguistic form of knowing is important to share, as doing so—spreading metalinguistic awareness of Gallo as a distinct language-object—could be a tool for greater social empowerment (or “consciousness”) for many Gallo speakers. According to his expressed ideology, the subject position of someone who can use Gallo *while also recognizing it for what it is* is a desirable one, with a broad epistemology at its command.

In sum, then, Bèrtran’s statement delineates some of the participant roles (Goffman 1981) that Gallo social actors saw as accessible, inhabitable, and transformative for local speakers. This chapter analyzes ways of knowing in terms of how

participant roles are attributed particular knowledge positions. Bèrtran depicts the majority of people in the local contexts where his column circulated as currently inhabiting a participant role which might be designated “non-Gallo-recognizer,” characterized by *knowing how* without *knowing that*. In contrast, his own participant role, that of “Gallo recognizer,” adds to his demonstrated productive competence a set of strong affirmative epistemic stances toward Gallo’s status as a language-object—separate from French, and relevant to local social life.

Given the social realities Bèrtran’s comment conveys, this chapter explores how artists, activists, teachers and students positioned Gallo as a particular type of language-object, in the process positioning themselves with respect to it. The chapter first considers personal experience narratives told in Gallo classrooms and in the break room of a Gallo radio station, where Gallo learners and Gallo professionals both invoked moments when Gallo’s emergent definition as “a language” separate from French—or not—were particularly salient to their own life histories with Gallo. Through these narratives, I present evidence that these social actors saw Gallo recognition as something positively valued, as they disaligned with past selves or others who took up the participant role of “Gallo non-recognizer” in the narrative, while their current selves inhabited the positively evaluated position of “Gallo recognizers” who both *knew how* and *knew that*. I then move to a more explicitly celebratory and status-planning context—Gallo festivals—and show how the same shift in participant roles from “Gallo non-recognizer” to “Gallo recognizer” was modeled for the larger viewing public in promotional print texts and artistic performance. I will argue that the participant roles of “Gallo non-recognizer” and “Gallo recognizer” embedded in both the narratives and the activist material offer a way of

understanding how Gallo artists and activists make recognition of Gallo as a language-object seem both desirable and compelling.

A number of Gallo artists and activists with whom I talked voiced the belief that Gallo suffered locally from limited recognition, and they contextualized talk of their own efforts within a desire to increase the public's acknowledgement of and interest in it. Chapter 3 has discussed two locally circulating understandings of language that encouraged a marginalized social standing for Gallo: first, the identification of the region of Brittany as a whole with the Celtic language of Breton (driven by everything from the name of the region itself, to late-capitalist branding), and second, the dismissal of Gallo as a nonstandard variety of French, rather than a separate language with its own grammar. In that chapter, I showed that the sum effect of these two processes of cultural sense-making was that Gallo was often elided from social space, or "erased" (Irvine & Gal 2000). When it was recognized at all, it was often construed as ontologically dependent upon French rather than being understood as a separate entity, as Bèrtran Ôbrée clearly believed it to be.

A key understanding behind the practice turn in sociolinguistics and linguistic anthropology (see Chapter 2 for a review) is the idea that what speakers call "languages" are not entities existing outside of social practice. Rather, they become understood as objects, or "everyday, social fact[s]" (Agha 2007:218), when speakers invoke them as such in discourse. This understanding depends upon a shared recognition of metalinguistic labels and how they map onto two things: co-varying sets of linguistic forms, and a set of metapragmatic regimes (Silverstein 1993). The semiotic process by which sets of co-varying forms become culturally recognized, value-laden social objects

has been termed *enregisterment* (Agha 2003, 2005). Gallo advocates' concern with defining Gallo as a language-object, and encouraging their public to recognize Gallo in accordance with that definition, can thus be understood as a desire to further the enregisterment of Gallo in Upper-Breton society.

In this chapter, my two-part analysis seeks to show some of the ways in which micro-interactions can be structured—verbally, in print, and on stage—in order to celebrate one's own Gallo recognition and facilitate it in others who engage with these texts. Ultimately, I argue that these micro-interactions may in turn explain how enregisterment happens at a societal level, as they aggregate over historical timescales. In the first section, I use interview narratives as evidence that Gallo social actors understood Gallo language recognition to be a possibility, given that narrators claimed to have had first-hand experiences of recognition, if, they said, one was willing to “ask oneself questions” about what Gallo was. The unprompted personal experience narratives that emerged in group interviews and conversations—told by Gallo advocates, to other Gallo advocates and to me—often contrasted past selves who had not yet recognized Gallo as a language-object with present selves who claimed the authority to define Gallo, both for each other and for less-knowledgeable others invoked as narrative figures. These interactions will show that Gallo recognition was locally significant and positively valued among Gallo advocates.

Then, I examine two salient cultural genres on which activists and artists have drawn in order to bring about a similar recognition of Gallo among other local residents. I will show that despite differences in their material modality, explicitly promotional print texts (such as books about Gallo and brochures for Gallo leisure classes) and the dialogue

in a play about Gallo crucially share a particular structural feature: a didactic routine in which a “non-recognizing” voice asks the question “What is Gallo?” and a “recognizing” voice supplies an answer. According to this answer, like Bèrtran Ôbrée said in the chapter opener, Gallo is a language; it is separate from French; and it is important to life in Upper Brittany. By staging a didactic moment where a character or voice is taught to recognize Gallo as object, both the play and the promotional materials present for their viewing or reading public two participant roles resulting from the interplay of *questions* about Gallo’s existence and *definitions* offered in response. I argue that the structural scaffolding of these texts interpellated the public to ask and answer this same question alongside the voices presented, thus moving them from the participant role of (presumed) non-recognizer to (warmly welcomed) Gallo recognizer.

By highlighting the structural similarities among these very different genres, I argue that the shift of recognition that was narrated in many of the personal histories of Gallo engagement offers a rationale for the question-and-answer routine featured so prominently in the brochures and the play. In the case of the latter two genres, it seems as though authors aimed to create parallelism between the denotational and interactional texts (Wortham 2003). Specifically, the play and brochures not only mimetically performed a shift in epistemological participant roles in the denotational text, but also interpellated the audience to participate in the same didactic routine in the interactional text, by reading the brochure or viewing the play. Once interpellated to take up a new participant role regarding recognition of Gallo, the public was encouraged to move, as did the artists/activists themselves at a past moment, from the participant role of non-recognizer to the positively valued role of Gallo recognizer.

These analyses will suggest that community recognition of Gallo was likely to be enabled by enacting these specific genres, across a variety of settings for contemporary Gallo recognition: festivals where promotional material was displayed, artistic performances where recognition was staged, and the classrooms, meeting spaces, and radio station breakrooms that were witness to conversations about Gallo. Crucially, the specific participation structure that the genres shared encouraged participants to become “recognizers” of Gallo by moving from a role ignorant of Gallo’s language-object status, to one that recognized and affirmed Gallo as both object and as practice. I see the participant role shift encouraged by these genres, in texts aimed at persuading their public to recognize Gallo, as a possible link in a semiotic chain (Agha 2005, 2007) trending toward Gallo enregisterment. Through these local moments of recognition, likely repeated in various activist spaces, a pathway toward enregisterment became a real possibility.

By looking at the formal and pragmatic features shared by these genres which favor Gallo cultural recognition, I contribute to theoretical understandings of enregisterment, suggesting in particular how it may emerge at a sociohistorical scale out of an assemblage of micro-interactions over time, informed (in the case of the personal experience narratives) by how moments of recognition are used to ground identity work at ontogenetic timescales—Wortham’s (2003, 2004) designation of the temporal scale at which “individuals develop their capacities and live their lives” (2004:166). In other words, this chapter illustrates that enregisterment is not merely a matter of conveying informational content across speech chains of old and new recognizers, but is rather specifically enabled through didactic genres that invite their public to abandon former

participant roles for ones deemed more favorable to Gallo recognition, and through retrospective personal experience narratives that treat that role shift as a significant life moment. In other words, these Gallo advocates seemed to assume that the public will come to recognize that Gallo was a language not merely by being *told* that it is a language, but by being shown that knowing that it was a language could be a source of empowerment and solidarity.

5.1 Language and enregisterment

Informed by practice theory and work on language and identity, scholars have moved toward understanding language as social action rather than as an object that can be owned, endangered, or lost (see Chapter 2 for a review of practice theory and sociolinguistic approaches to identity). From such a perspective, modernist epistemological regimes under which languages are demarcated and objectified have increasingly been identified and problematized (e.g. Hanks 1996; Heller 2007; Irvine & Gal 2000; Makoni & Pennycook 2007). Rather than treating languages as bounded and discrete objects, a practice theoretical approach sees ‘languages’ as outcomes of verbal practices—as mutually oriented-to ideas that are created and sustained through discourse.

However, as discussed in Section 2.1 of Chapter 2, in many contexts one such mutually oriented-to idea *is* that of a “language” as a unitary and bounded object. Scholars of language and ideology have thus worked to elucidate the social processes behind such understandings, as they evolve, circulate, and are simultaneously challenged and maintained. Even Agha (who elsewhere denies the objecthood of what some social scientists call “identity,” decoupling the notion of individual possession and linking personae to interpretable signs) admits of language as “a certain kind of object that exists

in our world—an everyday, social fact called ‘language’” (2007:218). At the same time as languages are perceived as everyday facts, they and their registers are also “socio-historical formations” (Agha 2007:218) that accrue meaning and power over vast historical timescales, as sense-making social actors recognize them as distinct objects across a series of micro-interactions over time. Individual acts of recognition circulate socially, as those actors move into successive contexts along *semiotic chains* or “chain[s] of participant-linked semiotic events” (205). At a socio-historical timescale, Agha refers to the process by which verbal phenomena become recognized as socially meaningful objects as *enregisterment*.

Agha’s view of enregisterment has been important in its attention to the discursive processes through which languages come to be recognized, rather than assuming that recognition is either natural or automatic/fully determined, on the one hand, or entirely an individual and emergent process, on the other. It also usefully insists upon the importance of distributed participation in determining meaning, as—rather than one participant proclaiming an identity which others unilaterally accept—social actors interpret *each other* as particular types of people through the performance of visible signs, including linguistic ones, across multiple interactions.

When applying this model to studies of language and identity, sociolinguists looking at material artefacts (Johnstone 2009), media representations of dialect (Remlinger 2009) and metalinguistic representations of variously entextualized dialects on a language survey (Campbell-Kibler 2012) have shown how individuals engage with varieties that have become (or are being) enregistered in order to position themselves and others in particular ways. Possible tactics include the selection of emblematic features,

the bestowing of value upon such features, and the linking of particular features with particular imagined categories of person. Importantly, Johnstone (2006, 2009) has shown that such manipulations change the language-object they help define, often exaggerating certain features perceived as different, and internally standardizing the register as a result. These scholars show us that when individuals come to understand a register as a language-object, it can become a resource for the demarcation of local identity. According to Johnstone and Remlinger, enregisterment has been achieved for Pittsburghese and Yooper, respectively, so that locals and non-locals alike can invoke these registers to index belonging or expertise. In Campbell-Kibler's analysis, however, the local community has not yet developed a consensus regarding the "Cleveland accent" in Ohio—when they do attempt to draw a dialect difference, their explanations are idiosyncratic and evidentiary rather than based on self-evident labels or stereotypes—which Campbell-Kibler presents as evidence that the variety has been "incompletely enregistered" (281).

These studies have productively shown why enregisterment matters to social actors and their ideological projects, as well as the linguistic changes that enregisterment can enact upon enregistered forms. However, one of the questions that remains in our understanding of enregisterment is what the specific process of language recognition looks like at a more immediate interactional scale—specifically, how social actors move from a lack of recognition to recognizing a collection of verbal forms and pragmatic patterns as "a language." Figure 5.1 is based on Agha's own representation of speech chains, excerpted from his discussion of speech chains (2007:67, Figure 1.5):

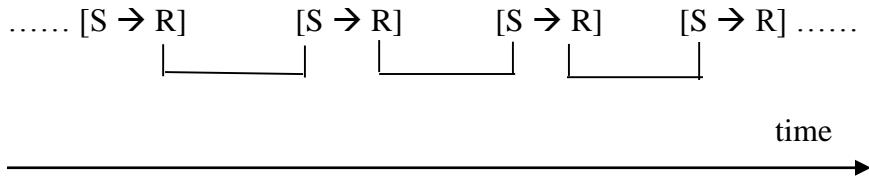


Figure 5.1 A speech chain, as envisioned by Agha (2007)

Here, we see a moment where a Sender (S) communicates a message to a Receiver (R), who then becomes the Sender of a future iteration of the message in the interaction depicted in the next set of brackets. The horizontal brackets beneath the interactions represent the insight that receivers become senders themselves, along a speech chain over time.

While the model usefully problematizes the idea that Sender and Receiver must be co-present —Agha considers cases such as mass-mediation and temporal displacement—and shows that participants in a chain can occupy more than one role over time, he leaves open the question of how a Receiver first recognizes herself as interpellated by the message imparted by a Sender, as well as how she recognizes the content of the message as newly constitutive of her social world, in such a way that she is compelled to become its advocate—its Sender—in a future iteration. In cases like the one that implicates Gallo social actors, where the “message” transmitted involves recognition of a language as a social object, what might the process of enregisterment look like in specific interactional moments, and what kinds of participation frames might encourage enregisterment?

In other words, perhaps intentionally, the roles of Sender and Receiver are left underspecified, recalling in some respects the Saussurean and Chomskyan Speaker/Hearer models (Irvine 1996) even as this model diverges from those perspectives in many important aspects. Agha may not intend to delimit the Sender and Receiver

participant roles in any particular way, but his model might be understood as suggesting that enregisterment is accomplished through a process of direct transmission, in which the “social fact” of a register’s existence is communicated to an increasingly larger set of individuals through their mere participation in speech chains. This chapter provides an alternative explanation, one grounded in the affective and epistemological power of locally valued participant roles. I will show how activists and artists structure their explanations of what Gallo is in such a way that those who encounter the message are encouraged to see it as engaging them personally in the question, and which may therefore facilitate that public’s movement into the subject position of *knowing that* Gallo is a certain kind of object.

I take as my starting point the premise that one way we can understand the mechanism of language-object recognition is to look at the genres whereby this recognition is accomplished, and the participant roles facilitated therein. By understanding the formal and pragmatic traits that texts in these various genres of cultural recognition tend to share, we can see the participant roles that are culturally available to people as they grapple with the question of what Gallo is, and what knowing the answer to that question means to them. Given the rich potential for enregisterment processes to help us understand how languages accrue cultural and political significance as well as personal meaning, it is important to explore the possible points of connection between the micro-interactional, ontogenetic and socio-historical timescales of enregisterment. In other words, how do social actors come to recognize a collection of linguistic forms as “a language” called Gallo in a specific micro-interactional moment, how does that moment help them inhabit a new identity as “Gallo recognizer,” and how do they encourage

others with whom they interact to accomplish a similar recognition? Wortham's (2003, 2006) framework for the "thickening" of identity across timescales allows us to address these questions.

5.2 Participant roles and textual parallelism

The study of Gallo in 21st century Brittany brings together social meaning-making at a variety of different timescales: how the language-object of Gallo was seen historically, how individuals saw their identity as bound with it, and how in everyday interactions people came to define Gallo and its speakers, for others and for themselves (see Chapter 3 for a partial elucidation of the first two aspects). Wortham (2003) offers a particularly useful framework for understanding the connections between micro-interactions, life trajectories, and historical evolution. I present a brief overview here.

First, Wortham illustrates the importance of attending to possible correspondences between what is traditionally seen as the *context* of a speech event (e.g., participants and their relationships to each other) and the representational *content* of the discourse uttered, which in Wortham's case is primarily narrative. Wortham believes that the participant roles evoked in a narrated sequence of events can affect the orientation of the individuals participating in the act of narrating, and vice versa. To elucidate this process, Wortham draws upon Silverstein's (1993:36-37) understanding of "interactional text" (the present event in which interlocutors orient to each other) and "denotational text" (the narrated event, which features various characters and figures). He encourages narrative researchers to pay attention to possible parallelisms between the two, and the implications of that parallelism for identity work in the interactional moment.

Second, Wortham provides the insight that certain types of micro-interactional speech events may prove particularly important for the stabilization of social identities over ontogenetic time, or the timescale at which individual human lives are lived. The speech genre on which Wortham focuses is “participant-denoting discourse,” or discourse in which one or more individuals present in the interactional text are also invoked in the denotational text. These events, repeated multiple times over the course of a school year or lifespan, are likely to influence social identities over time because they provide a particularly powerful chance for participant roles in the interactional and denotational texts to parallel each other. As individuals tell stories *about* themselves (or co-present others), Wortham shows that their behavior in the interactional text often mimics their narrated behavior in the denotational text, as the individuals come to occupy one and the same participant role—such as *tyrant*, *betrayor*, *victim* or *agent*—across both texts. When this is done repeatedly over time, and when the participant roles offered make reference to recognizable social categories which are maintained over longer historical timescales, individual identity can be powerfully shaped.

The stabilization of identity is an important question because, says Wortham, entropy is always a risk. As Urban (1996, 2001) has argued, culture is communicated as it circulates among a community through sign vehicles, much like Agha’s discussion of speech chains. However, this circulation is vulnerable to erosion and disruptive processes, so “metaculture,” or culture about culture, acts as a force which helps (partially) stabilize culture over time. Because ritual, which centrally features parallelism, is “the quintessential means for producing the consistent circulation of metadiscourses”

(Wortham 2003:192), participant-denoting discourse and the parallel participant roles therein are powerful forms of stabilizing metaculture.

Wortham's framework provides insight into the question that opened this chapter—how do artists and activists encourage local residents to acknowledge Gallo as a separate language-object, and what does that show us about how enregisterment happens?—because it sees the communication of identities not as a passive process of exposure, but as an active process of inhabiting participant roles (or peopling those roles with co-present others). I will show that the communication of “facts” about Gallo—that it is a language, that it is important locally, that it is neither patois nor French—is likewise accomplished through encouraging people to move from participant roles lacking that type of knowledge, to roles which proclaim that recognition. While the didactic routine “What is Gallo?” / “Gallo is...” is not participant-denoting in the same way as the narratives Wortham studied, it still gives voice to a constellation of participant roles in the denotational text, and it crucially encourages the individuals who encounter the routine in the interactional text to ask themselves the same question and accept the offered answer, thus moving into a more knowledgeable position of “Gallo recognizer.”

5.3 Trajectories of Gallo recognition in narrative

In the first part of my analysis, I examine excerpts from group interviews and conversations that illustrate how Gallo social actors narrated their past experiences of coming to recognize Gallo as “a language.” By attending to moments in personal-experience narratives when participants oriented to people's variously *knowing* or *not knowing that* Gallo is a language, I show that negative affective stances (exasperated, rueful, ashamed, incredulous) were taken toward past selves or others positioned as non-

recognizers, showing that these were locally undesirable participant roles (see Chapter 2 for a review of stance as a theoretical and empirical lens in sociolinguistics). I further show that these participants' shift to being Gallo recognizers in the present allowed them to position themselves—in the interactional and denotational texts both—as people with authority over both *knowing how* and *knowing that*, which they then used to educate others, as well as to enjoy Gallo aesthetically and interactionally. The differences in affective response displayed to these two ways of knowing Gallo (familiarity without recognition, and with recognition) will help the reader understand why the promotional and celebratory texts analyzed later in this chapter are structured to inspire a similar participant role shift in others.

I will draw examples from three extended conversations: one that occurred in the break room of a radio station, where I was interviewing two employees of the station who regularly hosted Gallo radio shows; one that occurred in a high-school Gallo classroom where I was recording ongoing class interaction; and one that constituted part of a group interview of my older-adult Gallo classmates after our last Gallo course of the year. The participant roles of “Gallo non-recognizer” and “Gallo recognizer” were not imposed by any question I asked. Rather, in the high-school classroom, these roles emerged during a discussion, led by the teacher who also asked me and the students for input, about why a student might say her grandparents “could” speak Gallo as children but weren't allowed to. In the case of the two group interviews, the narratives were told in response to my open-ended questions about how interviewees became involved in Gallo advocacy or learning. In no case did I ask participants to tell me specifically about when they recognized Gallo as a language-object. The fact that the roles of recognizer and non-

recognizer nonetheless emerged indicates that these participants themselves oriented toward those roles as significant to their Gallo-centric life stories. This thus situates our discussions at Wortham's "ontogenetic timescale" —that at which these participants made sense of their lives as Gallo artists, advocates, and learners—as well as at the micro-interactional scale of the conversations themselves.

The visibility of Gallo is such that Deriano could write, in the forward to his 2010 dictionary of Gallo, "One can, effectively, spend all of one's school years in Upper Brittany without allusion to Gallo being made, without even knowing that it exists" (ix);¹⁰¹ see Chapter 3 for some possible explanations and ramifications of this social fact. Indeed, even participants who had been surrounded by Gallo from their early childhood, through language use among older family members, often indicated that there had been a time when they did not know Gallo was "a language." A recurrent theme that emerged in these narratives was the shift in understanding participants experienced when they first recognized that the words and expressions they heard their older relatives use were not just part of those people's idiolects in French but rather affiliated with a distinct variety.

My analysis of three jointly-produced narratives that orient toward this process of language-object recognition has two main foci. First, in Examples 5.1 and 5.2, I will show that there was a tendency for these narratives to focus on the moment when someone first "asked a question" about *what Gallo was*— that is, tried to trace its outline as a particular type of object. Was it "grandma-ese"? Was it "deformed French"? Was it "a language"? I show that co-participants tended to orient eagerly toward this question, less for the answer that was originally proffered in the narrated event (which was

¹⁰¹ "On peut, effectivement, accomplir toute sa scolarité en Haute-Bretagne sans qu'il soit fait allusion au gallo, sans même savoir qu'il existe" (ix).

sometimes less-than-ideal), but more as a way of recognizing the importance of the question's being asked at all. These first examples will show the local importance of encouraging people to query Gallo's status, a first step toward recognition, and of moving from shameful ignorance to proud knowledge. Second, in Examples 5.3-5.5, I will examine how my older adult classmates in particular modeled a shift in participant roles, from past selves who were ashamed of Gallo-speaking relatives (Example 5.3) to present selves who, *knowing that* Gallo is a language, were not confused by French-Gallo homophony (Example 5.4) and who could teach less-knowledge others about what Gallo is, both at interactional and denotational textual levels (Examples 5.4 and 5.5).

The first example comes from an interview with two Gallo radio hosts, both in their early 30's at the time of my fieldwork: Matao Rollo, a storyteller who often worked in Gallo and who was an actor in the play that will be discussed at the end of this chapter, and Anne-Marie Pelhate (known to me by her radio call sign and nickname 'Nânon'), who led Gallo activities in elementary schools and who had written two books on Gallo for popular audiences. In my interview, I asked the two hosts to describe how each came to be working in Gallo. In Example 5.1, Matao recounts the moment where he first put a name on the variety aloud, thus defining it as a particular type of object for the very first time.

Immediately prior to this excerpt, Matao had recounted that one evening, as a teenager, he told his cousin that he had begun taking a class in Breton. The cousin replied that "tu fêraes mieûs d'acoutër ta grand-mere là" [you'd be better off listening to your grandmother] and urged Matao to learn Gallo rather than Breton. Forced by his cousin's statement to discursively identify his grandmother's way of speaking for the first time,

Matao admits to Nânon and me that his teenaged self's answer still stays with him, years later. In lines 2-4 of Example 5.1, and again in lines 39-40, he voices his answer for us:

“Oh, but it's not- it's not a language you know, it's deformed French!”:

Example 5.1 “‘It's not a language, you know’”

1	Matao :	<u><i>Et là mai je me rapele li direr,</i></u>	<u><i>And there, I remember telling him,</i></u>
2		<u><i>“ Ah mais c'est pas du-</i></u>	<u><i>“Oh but it's not-</i></u>
3		<u><i>“ C'est pas une langue hein,</i></u>	<u><i>it's not a language you know,</i></u>
4		<u><i>“ C'est du français déformé !”</i></u>	<u><i>it's deformed French!”</i></u>
5	Nânon :	[Mmm !	[Mmm !
6	SK :	[Mmm !	[Mmm !
7	Matao :	Ah !	Ah !
8		<u><i>E ça je me rapele itout de l'avair dit hein ?</i></u>	<u><i>And I remember having said that too,</i></u>
9		<i>Aie den le temp cant t'âs ta mere qi dit</i>	<i>Aie when there's your mother who says</i>
10		<i>'Et en plus ils parlent patois !'</i>	<i>'And what's more, they speak patois!’¹⁰²</i>
11	All :	((laughter))	((laughter))
		((pause))	((pause))
12	Matao :	<i>Don du coup vla.</i>	<i>So there you have it.</i>
13		<u><i>Coment qe j'e priz conscience, e ça-</i></u>	<u><i>How I became conscious, and that-</i></u>
14		<u><i>la premiere fai qe je mettaes (.)</i></u>	<u><i>the first time I put (.)</i></u>
15		<u><i>un mot su :: coment (.)</i></u>	<u><i>a word on:: how (.)</i></u>
16		<u><i>mes grands-parents caozent.</i></u>	<u><i>my grandparents spoke.</i></u>
17	SK :	Mm ?	Mm ?
18	Matao :	<i>Pisque mai j'avaes (.)</i>	<i>Because I had (.)</i>
19		<u><i>je ses même pâs si je (.)</i></u>	<u><i>I don't know if I (.)</i></u>
20		<u><i>je savaes qe- je crais,</i></u>	<u><i>If I knew that- I think,</i></u>
21		<u><i>je ne me ses jamás dit</i></u>	<u><i>I never told myself,</i></u>
22		<u><i>“ Pépé e Mémé caozent patouéz.”</i></u>	<u><i>“Poppy and Granny speak patois”</i></u>
23		Pffff ! ((blows out air))	Pffff ! ((blows out air))
24	Nânon :	Mm !	Mm !
25	Matao :	<i>Je crais qe je ne ses jamás dit ça cai.</i>	<i>I think I never said that you know.</i>
26		<i>“ I caozent-” (.)</i>	<i>“They speak-“ (.)</i>
27		<i>[j'e] un spectacle 'Tais-te don bassin !',</i>	<i>[I have] a play, 'Tais-te don bassin !'¹⁰³,</i>

¹⁰² This reference will be explained in Chapter 6.

¹⁰³ This title translates to “Hush, you shallow bowl!” Matao's professional storytelling website explains that his grandmother said this to him from his earliest childhood but that he never understood the relevance of the word ‘bassin’: why a bowl would be asked to “shut up.” His grandmother's reference connotes a local practice; unknown to Matao as a child, large, shallow copper basins – also used to make apple butter – were

28		<i>[je ses] ce qe je dis dedans,</i>	<i>[I know] what I say during it,</i>
29		<u>“Mémé, elle parlaet le mémé !”</u> [xxxxxx]	<u>“Granny, she spoke Granny!”</u> [xxxxxx]
30	SK :	[Okay !	[Okay !
31	Nânon :	Ah ouais ?	Oh yeah ?
32	Matao :	<i>Elle parlaet le mémé.</i>	<i>She spoke Granny.</i>
33		<i>E toutes les mémés caozaent de mémé.</i>	<i>And all grannies spoke that way.</i>
34		<u>Donc elle parlaet pas un patouéz,</u>	<u>So she didn’t speak a patois,</u>
35		<u>[ou une langue] elle parlaet le mémé.</u>	<u>[or a language] she spoke Granny.</u>
36		<u>Pour mai toutes les mémés du monde caozaent de mémé.</u> (laughter)	<u>For me all the grannies of the world spoke the same.</u> (laughter)
37	Nânon :	<u>Tu t’és pozë ben la qhëssion cant mémé !</u>	<u>Well, you still asked yourself the question!</u>
38	Matao :	<i>E don ca ce taet la premiere fai qe je dis</i>	<i>And so that was the first time I said</i>
39		<i>“Ben ouais més c’ét päs du françaez défo-</i>	<i>“Well yeah but it’s not defor-</i>
40		<u>“C’et ! ” “C’ét du françaez déformé ”</u>	<u>“It is!” “ It is deformed French ”</u>
41		<u>Ca taet la premiere fai qe je mettaes des mots su (.)</u>	<u>It was the first time that I put words on (.)</u>
42		<u>su coment qe mes grands-parents caozaent.</u> ((click))	<u>On how my grandparents spoke.</u> ((click))

As Matao narrates it, this moment of (mis)recognition brought to an end, for better or for worse, a childhood spent believing that all grandmothers everywhere used the same words as his Gallo-speaking grandmother (line 36), without his experiencing those forms as a distinct language. The first label he assigned to the language, “deformed French,” was memorable enough to Matao that he mentions his act of labeling the variety, or his earlier refusing to do so, seven different times in this excerpt (lines 1, 8, 14-16, 21, 25, 38, and 41-42), each time using either the verb “to say” or the idiom “to put words on.” The repeated insistence on divulging this act of naming gives Matao’s narrative an

turned into folk musical instruments in rural Upper Brittany. Musicians fill such basins with water and place a reed over the bowl, which they make vibrate by stroking it with damp fingers. The title of Matao’s show therefore simultaneously connotes a local form of Gallo (in the emblematic “té” instead of “toi”), a warm if fiery grandparent-grandchild relationship, and a traditional rural practice; all of which are features in the “ideology of presence”, to be described at the end of Chapter 6.

almost confessional air, and marks his stance toward his calling Gallo “deformed French” one of shamefacedness and incredulity.

Despite the fact that a part of the narrative not excerpted here contained overtly marked lacunae—initially, Matao reported not being able to remember which cousin it actually was who told him to learn Gallo, and not being able to recall, when recounting the conversation, whether the cousin called the variety “Gallo” or “patois” —the actual confession has a rather entextualized air (Bauman & Briggs 1990), to the point of including a summarizing coda in lines 12-16 and again in 38-42¹⁰⁴. This possibly indicates that this narrative is an often-recirculated aspect of Matao’s ontogenetic self-presentation, as a storyteller and activist who frequently worked in Gallo. Labeling the variety – identifying it as a variety that *can* be labeled – is an important part of Matao’s artistic journey, as he presents it in this interview context. Indeed, in line 39, there seems to be leakage from Matao’s present self, as a Gallo artist and advocate in the interactional text, into the past self he is narrating denotationally. As his self-correction in line 40 shows, he had intended to voice his past self’s statement that “C’ét du françæz déformé” (i.e. that Gallo *is* deformed French), but what first emerges in line 39 is actually the negative: “C’ét pâs du françæz défo--.” Permitted a bit of interpretive license, one might say that the common activist refrain that Gallo is *not* deformed French is now so much a part of Matao’s habitus that it initially supplanted his intended divulgence that he once memorably identified himself as a non-recognizer. This suggests that his shift from past

¹⁰⁴ Given the interview context, this coda almost makes it seem as if the narrative was prompted by an interview question such as “Tell me about the first time you realized Gallo existed.” However, no such interview question was asked.

non-recognizer to present recognizer has made a significant difference to his self-presentational discourse.

It is also important to note how Matao's other Gallo interlocutor, Nânon, reacts to his dramatic retelling of this episode of language-naming. Nânon's comment to Matao in line 37 – "Tu t'és pozë ben la qhësson cant méme !" [Well, you still asked yourself the question!] – particularly suggests that this very act of labeling, of "asking yourself questions" about the language and its ontological status, is something that resonates with her as another Gallo speaker. Matao's formative anecdote evokes a tension between observing a difference in language use (*knowing how* to use Gallo vs. French), and knowing what to call that difference (*knowing that* Gallo is not French), that was also reflected in that discourse of participants of various ages and roles of engagement with Gallo. Often, as Nânon implied in line 37, participants voiced aloud past "question[s]" about what exactly Gallo was.

In Example 5.2, Patrick, a high-school student of about 16 who was enrolled in a Gallo elective class, mentions during class that childhood questions about Gallo tokens in his grandfather's speech (lines 2-3; 5) were dismissed with "C'est un patois" [It's a patois] (line 7). The use of the indefinite article *un* rather than the definite article *le* in line 7 implies that Patrick's interlocutors, at least as he voices them here, denied the variety's status as a unique, discrete language object, relegating it instead to a murky class of *patois*. As lines 10-12 make clear, this class of *patois* is deemed qualitatively different from Patrick's (and his teacher's) present-day understanding of *gallo*:

Example 5.2 "I didn't know that it was Gallo"

1 Patrick: C'est vrai que quand j'étais petit moi
2 je me rappelle que papi

It's true that when I was little, me,
I remember that Granddad

3		<u>i disait <i>coutiao</i>, bateau et tout</u>	<u>he used to say <i>knife</i>, boat and all</u>
4	Teacher:	Ouais.	Yeah.
5	Patrick	[Dit]” Mais qu’est-ce que ça veut dire ça ?”	[Say] “But what does that mean?”
6		Et du coup <u>moi je savais pas que c’était du gallo non.</u>	and so <u>me, I didn’t know that it was Gallo no.</u>
7		<u>On me disait “ C’est un patois.”</u>	<u>They’d tell me “It’s a patois.”</u>
8	Teacher:	Patois oui.	Patois, yes.
9		Bah oui oui.	Yes yes indeed.
10		<u>‘Patois,’ ‘gallo,’ ((bobs body from side to side))</u>	<u>‘Patois,’ ‘gallo,’ ((bobs body from side to side))</u>
11		<u>mais ‘patois’ c’est connoté négativement.</u>	<u>but ‘patois’ has negative connotations.</u>
12	Patrick :	Mhm.	Mhm.

Taken together, Matao’s and Patrick’s experiences both point to the salience in their memories of the moment in which a way of talking, now labeled *le gallo*, was first recognized as a language object. Johnstone (2007) has shown us that individuals’ narratives of the recognition of linguistic difference often become an important communicative resource, particularly in projects of identification. The enthusiastic response these narratives received from their interlocutors (Patrick’s teacher’s “Bah oui oui” in line 9 in Example 5.2; Nânon and my “Mmm!” at several moments in Example 5.1) suggests that a shared experience of coming to terms with a variety as a positively valued object in relation to others’ (or one’s own past self’s) negative views can become a tool for positioning oneself as a wiser, eager Gallo advocate in the present.

Patrick’s teacher’s response in Example 5.2 above, bouncing back and forth as he says line 10, enacts bodily the tensions negotiated in communicative moments by those who seek to define and label the variety. While some may say the labels *gallo* and *patois* are synonyms, those who do not recognize Gallo as a language-object may call it *patois* in order to denigrate it, thus marking their adoption of a participant role that Patrick and his teacher construct as scornfully undesirable. The terms *gallo* and *patois* can be variously equivalent or not, depending on the ideological projects in the service of which

they are marshalled. As Chapter 6 will make clear, these various projects do not pre-exist outside discourse any more than does the variety’s status as a discrete language-object. It is through unscripted moments of classroom interaction like this one that Gallo students and teachers negotiated Gallo’s status as a language-object—and their own participant roles as proud recognizers of that object.

The process of “asking yourself the question” in which Patrick and Matao engaged as teenagers is something that Gallo users of all ages often negotiate, from a variety of vantage points. Example 5.3 presents an excerpt from an interview I conducted with my older adult Gallo classmates, near the end of my fieldwork year, regarding why they chose to enroll in a Gallo class. Here, Josette, Michelle, Marie and Bernard (pseudonyms), all between about 55 and 75 years old, are discussing how some of their acquaintances deny being interested in Gallo because of the shame those acquaintances felt when their relatives spoke Gallo in the past. Josette admits that this had been true for her “as much as anyone” (line 5) as a young person. That is, despite growing up in a historical and social context where Gallo was the unmarked language of everyday domestic life for many speakers, she suffered from the same lack of recognition as did Matao and Patrick, and had been ashamed of her own Gallo-speaking mother when they went into town:

Example 5.3 “Me I didn’t know it was a language back then!”

- | | | | |
|---|------------|---|---|
| 1 | Marie : | <u><i>Certaines personnes disaent</i></u> “ <i>cant je taes jeune, euh cant je taes adolescente, <u>j’avaes honte ! de mes parents.</u></i> ” | <u><i>Some people used to say</i></u> “ <i>when I was young, um, when I was an adolescent, <u>I used to be ashamed ! of my parents.</u></i> ” |
| 2 | | ((pause)) | ((pause)) |
| 3 | Michelle : | Oui ben oui ! | Yes, definitely |
| 4 | Marie : | <i>Fallaet pas qu’i vienent !</i> | <i>They shouldn’t have come !</i> |

- 5 Josette : Ouais mais ça c'est pas- **je pense que moi la première** hein ? Yeah but that's not- **I think me as much as anyone**, you know ?
- 6 Michelle : Mhm ? Mhm ?
- 7 Josette : Tu sais quand j'allais en ville avec ma mère, (.) **moi je l'ai vécu hein ?** quand j'allais en ville avec ma mère euh il y avait les commerçantes, "Bah oui bah" je disais à [maman], ((deep voicing)) "**Mais parle français hein ?**" You know when I used to go into town with my mother, (.) **me, I lived it, you know?** When I used to go into town with my mother um there were the shopgirls, "Hey," I would say to [Mom], ((deep voicing)) "**But speak French okay?**"
- 8 ((pause)) ((pause))
- 9 Josette : ((higher pitch)) **Parce que moi je savais pas que c'était une langue à l'époque !** ((higher pitch)) **Because me, I didn't know that it was a language back then!**
- 10 SK : Mhm ! Mhm !
- 11 Bernard : Ben ma mère c'est pareil hein ? elle me disait ça quand (.) euh- [elle habitait à Rennes au départ, Well my mother it was the same thing you know ? She used to tell me that when (.) um- [she lived in Rennes at the beginning,
- 12 Josette : **[Je savais pas que c'était une langue hein !** **[I didn't know that it was a language you know!**

While Josette recognized as a young girl that what her mother habitually spoke was not quite French—indicated by her recounted plea in turn 7, “But speak French okay?” — she reports not knowing it was “a [distinct] language” (turn 9). In this childhood episode, Josette’s participant role was one of non-recognizer, reacting with shame to her mother’s speech (turns 5 and 7). In contrast, her adult self recognizes Gallo’s status as language-object. In its use of the imperfect form of epistemological verb “savoir”, Josette’s repeated insistence to us in turns 9 and 12 presupposes that what her mother spoke actually *was* a language, and that she now does “know” that to be the case. In Example 5.2 above, high schooler Patrick’s statement uses the same epistemological verb, in the same tense (“Je savais pas que c’était du gallo” [I didn’t know that it was Gallo]), to disalign his past participant role from the one he occupies presently in the Gallo

classroom. His past self, in his revoicing, asked what his grandfather spoke; his present self *knows*, authoritatively claiming the subject position of Gallo recognizer.¹⁰⁵

The last two examples of this section feature moments where my adult Gallo classmates, now claiming a proudly recognizing participant role, claimed authority both interactionally (Example 5.4) and denotationally (Example 5.5). A few turns after Josette’s story, my classmate Bernard mentioned that he used to ask himself about the meaning of certain expressions his mother used, as shown in Example 5.4. In particular, Bernard portrays his pre-Gallo-class self as someone confused about the homophony between the Gallo noun for a child’s pocket money, *des pratiques*, and the French word *pratiques* or ‘practices’:

Example 5.4 “I say to myself, ‘but what’s with this ‘practice’ business?’”

- | | | | |
|----|------------|--|---|
| 1 | Bernard : | <p><u>Mais il y a des expressions comme ça, je me suis toujours demandé, pourquoi ma mère euh elle disait des trucs</u>
 comme “ Va voir ta grand-mère” ou j’sais pas quoi “ <u>Elle va te donner des pratiques.</u>” Je- mais je me dis “ <u>Mais qu’est-ce que c’est que cette histoire de ‘pratiques’ ?</u>” @</p> | <p><u>But there are some expressions like that, I always asked myself, why my mother um she would say things</u> like ‘Go see your grandmother’ or I don’t know what ‘<u>She’s going to give you some pratiques.</u>’ I- but I say to myself, ‘<u>But what’s with this ‘practice’ business?</u>’ @</p> |
| 2 | Michelle : | Mhm ! Mhm ! | Mhm ! Mhm ! |
| 3 | Josette : | Oui oui | Yes yes |
| 4 | Bernard : | Hein ? C’est- c’est | You know ? It’s – it’s- |
| 5 | SK : | <u>Més ghi q’ét une pratique ?</u> | <u>But what is a ‘pratique’ ?</u> |
| 6 | Josette : | <u>C’est- pratiques c’est des- des- des petites rentes tu sais ?</u> | <u>It’s- pratiques it’s the- the- a bit of pocket money you know ?</u> |
| 7 | Michelle : | <u>Un petit peu de s- un petit peu de sous euh</u> | <u>A little- a little bit of cash euh</u> |
| 8 | Marie ?: | <u>De l’argent</u> | <u>Some money</u> |
| 9 | Josette : | <u>De quoi- de quoi acheter un paquet de guenaods ! @</u> | <u>That you can use to buy a packet of candy! @</u> |
| 10 | Marie : | @@ | @@ |
| 11 | Bernard : | Voilà ! @ <u>Ca va des pratiques</u> mais je dis “ mais quoi [xxxxxx]” | That’s it ! @ <u>So no problem, pratiques</u> but I say “but what [xxxxxx]” |
| 12 | Michelle : | Des petites <i>pratiques</i> oui. | A bit of <i>pocket money</i> yeah. |

¹⁰⁵ For another example, taken from the same conversation, where Patrick claims the authority to define who counts as a speaker of Gallo, see Examples 6.10 and 6.11 of Chapter 6.

In turn 1, Bernard paints himself in a past participant role as someone who does not understand that Gallo is a separate language from French, containing tokens that mean something different from French homophones. Importantly, that participant role involved asking questions, as we have already seen in Examples 5.1 and 5.2: “What’s with this ‘practice’ business?” In all three narratives, asking a question is configured as a liminal step toward Gallo recognition.

In their phatic affirmations “Mm!” and “Oui oui” in turns 2-3, Josette and Michelle indicate that they relate to this question, and to Bernard’s narrated past confusion. However, although they all seem to share amusement at childhood confusions of Gallo tokens with homophonous French words, when I give them an opportunity to assume an expert role in the present, by asking for a translation of the word *pratiques* (with which I was unfamiliar) in turn 5, all of my classmates do so. Although it was Bernard who introduced the word, it is his classmates Josette, Michelle and Marie who all supply the translation (“a bit of pocket money,” “a little bit of cash,” or “some money”) in turns 6 through 8, for Bernard to ratify with his “Voilà” in turn 11. The fact that all three women offer definitions, even though the second and third are synonymous with the first, suggests that they do so for interactional self-positioning as Gallo authorities at least as much as for the practical purpose of helping me understand the word. Josette even invokes another Gallo word, from the related semantic field of childhood candy purchases, in turn 9, further demonstrating her Gallo knowledge and dissociating from her childhood participant role from Example 5.3, as someone ashamed of her mother’s speech. In turn 11, Bernard expresses his current feelings about the word *pratiques* with “ça va,” loosely glossed here as “no problem.” The word he once misrecognized as

French for “practice” now has a transparent meaning as “pocket money” in Gallo, as he has moved into a more authoritative participant role regarding the language.

In their narratives, therefore, Patrick (the high school student in Example 5.2), Josette and Bernard all stage a temporal divide between two different selves, which their interlocutors ratify with expressions of agreement. On the one hand, their present habitual participant role is one that is demonstrably knowledgeable about languages in general and Gallo’s membership in that category in particular. In contrast, their past selves, much like Matao’s narrated past self in Example 5.1, are represented as ignorant, ashamed of or confused by their grandmother’s, grandfather’s, or mother’s speech. Josette insistently characterizes herself later in the interview as “pas militant” [not an activist]—at one point exclaiming “on va pas aller défiler- enfin moi, personnellement, j’vais pas aller défiler, hein ?” [we’re not going to go march [for Gallo]- well me, personally, I’m not going to go march, you know?]

—but her narrative, like the others’, conveys a change in footing toward the variety over time, marked in part by the recognition of Gallo as “a language” rather than as a collection of grammatically incorrect French forms.

In the same conversation as Examples 5.3 and 5.4, my older adult classmates further displayed their participant roles as proud Gallo recognizers in narratives they recounted about how other local residents reacted upon hearing they were studying Gallo. In their responses to these others, all positioned as non-recognizers, my participants positioned themselves as experts in the denotative text. In Example 5.5, Michelle recalls a co-worker who, when hearing Michelle wanted to study “Gallo,” thought she was interested in equestrian activities (*gallo* in French being homophonous with *galop* “gallop”):

Example 5.5 “The um Rom- the language from here!”

1	Michelle :	<u>je sais qu’un jour j’ai dit à une collègue, “ Quand je serai en retraite, je ferai du gallo !”</u>	<u>I know that one day I told a colleague, “ When I’m retired, I’ll do Gallo !”</u>
2	SK :	Mm ?	Mm ?
3	Michelle :	Et elle , qui était euh bretonnante euh de la région de Doelan, elle m’a dit, ((higher voice)) <u>“ Ah ! tu fais de l’équitation ?”</u>	And she , who was um Breton-speaking um from the region of Doelan, she told me, ((higher voice)) <u>“ Ah ! You ride?”</u>
4		((laughter, mostly mine))	((laughter, mostly mine))
5	Marie:	De l’équitation ?	Riding?
6	SK :	C’est ce qu’on m’a dit.	That’s what people have told me.
7	Michelle:	Oui ! ((intonation starts low, rises drastically)) <u>“ Tu- tu fais de l’équitation toi ?”</u>	Yes ! ((intonation starts low, rises drastically)) <u>“ You- you ride? You ?”</u>
8	Josette :	<u>Déjà [ils savent pas] ce que c’est que le gallo !</u>	<u>[They don’t even know] what Gallo is !</u>
9	Bernard :	[Galop/Gallo] oui !	[Gallop/Gallo] yes !
10	SK :	[Elle plaisantait pas c’est- (.) C’était une question ?	[[She wasn’t joking it’s- (.) It was a question?
11	Michelle :	[Et alors je lui ai- non ! Ah non ! Elle ne plaisantait pas ! parce que elle- elle <u>en plus elle voilà elle était du pays euh bretonnant mais ça fait très longtemps qu’elle vivait à Rennes</u> hein ?	And so I- no ! Oh no ! She wasn’t joking ! Because she- <u>she moreover you see she was from um Breton-speaking country but she’d been living in Rennes for a very long time</u> you know ?
12	Josette :	((underneath)) Un jour-	((underneath)) one day-
13	Michelle :	<u>Et je lui ai dit “ Mais non ! Le gallo la langue euh rom- la langue d’ici !”</u>	<u>And I told her, “ No ! Gallo, the um Rom- the language from here!”</u>

Here, it is a narrated Other who occupies the participant role of Gallo non-recognizer, allowing my classmates to demonstrate the degree to which they have abandoned that past role, both denotatively (in Michelle’s case) and interactionally (in how the others react to the anecdote). Michelle revoices her co-worker twice, in lines 3 and 7, both times with marked intonation which serves to call attention to the woman’s ignorance (and perhaps condescension). In lines 3 and 11, Michelle insists on the other woman’s Breton-speaking, non-local origins and her association with the city of Rennes, rather than the countryside emblematically associated with Gallo. Such moves doubly mark the co-

worker as an outsider to Michelle's own Gallo-centric view and provide context for her ignorance of the existence of Gallo as a language-object.¹⁰⁶ Our classmate Josette scoffs in line 8 that such people "don't even know what Gallo is;" her aborted turn in line 12 suggests she might have a similar narrative of her own. Bernard's "[galo] oui" in line 9 indicates his familiarity, as well, with the communicative difficulties the label *gallo* can cause among those who have not recognized the variety—or (see Chapter 6) who have recognized it, but under a different label such as *patois*.

In contrast to the oblivious colleague (and the others like her Josette criticizes), Michelle depicts herself in turn 13 as knowing that Gallo is "the Rom- the language from here!" Michelle not only knows the variety is called Gallo, but also situates the language object in a typological framework of Romance languages (the probable referent of her incomplete utterance "la langue euh rom-"). This formulation, which implicitly contrasts Romance Gallo with Celtic Breton while claiming it is just as locally valuable, echoes the appositive constructions we will see in the brochures featured in Section 5.4. It additionally suggests that at least some Upper Breton residents have indeed defined the variety in ways the activist groups intended. Michelle's narrative in Example 5.5 shows that speakers could use the incomplete enregisterment of Gallo in Upper Brittany as an

¹⁰⁶ It should also be noted that the homophony between *gallo* and *galop* leads to frequent puns among those familiar with the term, often based on the well-known French idiom *Chassez le naturel, il revient au galop* [No matter how hard you try to hide your true nature, it will always come right back to the surface ('at a galloping pace')]. The accidental homophony in this expression, coined by the French playwright Destouches in the 18th century, allows Gallo speakers to emphasize the link between the language and certain forms of rustic (occasionally – but not always – buffoonish) personhood. Among others, the pun *Chassez le naturel, il revient au gallo* appears on the cover of a popular book about the Gallo influences on regional French, by a scholar whose more academic texts are largely about Breton folklore, but who is native of Binic, a town where "nous parlions le patoué" [we used to speak patois] (5). The ability to recognize the double-meaning of, and thus the humor in, the token [galo] presumes familiarity with Gallo as a named, labeled language.

opportunity to situate their own participant role as recognizers; that is, if Gallo were completely enregistered, this nuanced interactional work would not have occasion to arise. As is, they have the chance to position themselves not only in explicit metalinguistic interviews, but also in the course of their daily interactions with other local residents.

Taken together, then, the first half of this analysis (Section 5.3) has shown that narratives of Gallo recognition emerged in the course of interviews and other contexts, such as the Gallo classroom, thus facilitating discussion of how one came to create in/ study/ advocate for Gallo. These narratives focused on various significant moments in participants' trajectories of Gallo engagement: moments before they recognized Gallo as a language-object; moments when they first put a label on the variety as something different from standard French; and moments when, already having recognized Gallo, they were able to define it as a language-object for others. Given the importance of narratives of recognition to defining oneself as an actor in the community of Gallo speakers, these narratives are likely to circulate across the spheres of Gallo-centric activity in which these individuals engage. They may circulate as entextualized narratives, as seen thus far, but they may also circulate in an implicit, text-structuring fashion—as I will next argue, by looking at the genre traits of those written and staged Gallo texts that seek to define Gallo as a particular stance-taking object.

5.4 Genre features of Gallo recognition-promoting texts

The shift in participant role seen in the narratives above, in which narrators moved from ignorance of Gallo as a language-object to recognition of and appreciation for it, occurred at the ontogenetic timescale of individual life stories. A fair amount of

Gallo activism seems to be motivated by a desire to catalyze a similar change at a larger timescale: the societal scale of the population of Upper Brittany, at which enregisterment has the potential to occur. This desire was codified in a June 2015 report to the Cultural Council of Brittany, which outlined 21 objectives of an inter-association working group on Gallo. Its Objective 3 is as follows: *Mieux faire connaître le gallo comme l'une des deux langues de Bretagne* [To make Gallo better known as one of the two languages of Brittany] (*Gallo: Etude et préconisation* 2015). This goal is also apparent in mission statements of Gallo advocacy organizations working in Upper Brittany, which often express a desire to educate the public on Gallo's very existence. This may seem surprising, given that the last major survey (*Bretagne Culture Diversité / TMO Régions* 2014) reported over 200,000 speakers of Gallo, most of whom live in rural Upper Brittany—the geographic target of the majority of festivals, classes and associations promoting Gallo. One would think this mass of speakers would mean most local residents are aware of the variety. Nonetheless, the website of the organization Bertègn Galèzz (discussed in Chapters 3 and 4) highlights in its mission statement letting the public know of Gallo's "existence," in addition to the expected language planning goals of "saving and developing" Gallo¹⁰⁷, making it "modern," and favoring its transmission¹⁰⁸:

Intervenir quotidiennement auprès de tous publics pour informer sur l'existence, l'histoire et la richesse du gallo.

[To intercede on an everyday basis with all types of audiences to inform them about the existence, history and richness of Gallo.]

¹⁰⁷ *Sauver et développer le gallo, langue parlée en Haute-Bretagne* [to save and develop Gallo, a language spoken in Upper Brittany]. Note the presence of yet another appositive construction about Gallo in activist literature

¹⁰⁸ *Faire du gallo une langue moderne et favoriser sa transmission auprès de toutes les générations* [to make Gallo a modern language and favor its transmission to all generations].

In this second half of my analysis, I examine two genres commonly used by activists to encourage the recognition of Gallo's existence, particularly as a language-object different from French. Drawing on Wortham's account of how interactional and denotational texts are connected, I show how each of these genres produces a denotational representation of a Gallo "recognizer" who, in addition to being contrasted with a "non-recognizer" of Gallo, is also depicted as occupying a more desirable subject position. I argue that this denotative representation of participant roles potentially shapes the interaction itself, inviting participants who may have minimal representational knowledge of Gallo to also become recognizers of the language through the active encountering of these texts.

In part because regional, departmental and local bodies offered financial support for printing costs related to the promotion of cultural heritage, tables at festivals or in community centers often conspicuously featured leaflets advertising events and classes related to Breton and/or Gallo, as well as other aspects of cultural heritage such as music and dance. These brochures, books and handbills about Gallo were a prominent aspect of the visual and material spaces through which I moved during my fieldwork. In the first set of examples, I focus on this genre of printed promotional materials. I will explain various structural features of this genre by interpreting the text-based interaction between author and imagined reader as encouraging the reader to move from the participant role of Gallo non-recognizer to Gallo recognizer. As foretold in Example 5.1 above by Nānon's emphasizing how important it is to "ask yourself the question," I will show that this movement occurs in part by cajoling readers into asking (and answering) questions about what Gallo is, and what it means to them, by representing similar moves in the denotational text of the printed matter.

In Table 5.1, on the following page, we see two genre traits that commonly marked Gallo promotional texts: first, a *rhetorical question* asking “What is Gallo?”, and second, the perhaps-initially-counterintuitive fact that this question was often (as in items A, B, C and D) *asked in Gallo* itself. The five questions in lines A through E make clear that the writers of a variety of Gallo-centric texts—books about Gallo; festival advertisements; course descriptions—expect that a significant portion of the audience encountering these materials lacks understanding of what Gallo is. The monolingual Gallo questions in lines A, B and C¹⁰⁹ are especially interesting, because they all imagine and interpellate an audience who can *read* Gallo well enough for writers to safely assume the meaning of the question has been successfully conveyed, without assuming those readers even know *what Gallo is*—because if they knew that, it would be a vacuous question. Although the rest of the printed material is largely in French, with occasional Gallo headings, the use of Gallo in these titular questions raises a paradox: the questions query the *nature* of Gallo, but their form presupposes its *practice*, at least to the extent that the questions are legible.

Breton language booths at the same or similar festivals did not, to my memory, feature brochures and books asking “What is Breton?”¹¹⁰ To understand why a brochure asking readers what Gallo is would be worded in Gallo, it is productive to return to Bèrtran Ôbrée’s observation that people know Gallo in their families, but lack “consciousness” about it. Activists and artists, such as those who created the promotional materials excerpted above, often imagined local residents to have familiarity with

¹⁰⁹ The question is also worded in Gallo in line D, but the supplied translation in French explicitly removes the presupposition that targeted readers are expected to understand Gallo.

¹¹⁰ Granted, I do not read Breton (other than recognition of a few basic words), so I may have missed such a question in a monolingual Breton text. Most materials, however, were bilingual in French.

Table 5.1 The use of rhetorical questions to define “gallo” in print media

Source Type	Title asking a variant of “What is Gallo?”	Translation	Author or organization
A. Book title	<i>Le galo : Qhi q’c’ét don ?</i> Ce que vous avez toujours voulu savoir sur le gallo	<i>Gallo: So what is it?</i> What you’ve always wanted to know about Gallo	Anne-Marie Pelhate (2011) ¹¹¹
B. Newspaper ad title	<i>Le gallo : Qhi q’c’ét don ?</i>	<i>Gallo: So what is it?</i>	<i>Ouest-France</i> , September 2013, advertisement for the upcoming ‘Mill Goul’ festival
C. Poster section title	<i>L’galo, qhi qs’ée don?</i>	<i>Gallo: So what is it?</i>	Campaign to recognize Gallo, headed by Chubri, in partnership with Bertaeyn Galeizz and Dihun Breizh
D. Brochure section title	Qu’est-ce que le gallo ? / <i>Le galo, qhi qe c’ét ?</i>	What is Gallo? / <i>Gallo, what is it?</i>	Brochure entitled “Apprendre le gallo/ <i>Aprendr le galo,</i> ” published by the Ministry of Education/ Académie de Rennes and the Association of Gallo Teachers, advertising Gallo classes
E. Brochure section title	Qu’est-ce que le Gallo ?	What is Gallo?	Brochure published by the Celtic Circle of Rennes and Bertaeyn Galeizz, advertising a Gallo course

¹¹¹Also one of the key participants in this research project. Elsewhere in my data, when I present interview excerpts, I identify her as Nânon.

Gallo—its emblematic sounds, its discourse markers—but assumed that that knowledge was decoupled from recognition of Gallo as a rule-governed language system. Questions A, B, and C in Table 5.1 above seem explicitly targeted at providing such an audience with a *knowing that* to complement their extant *knowing how*, thus encouraging them to move into the subject position of Gallo recognizer. As Section 5.3 has shown, that movement, as represented in narratives, hinges upon getting people to *ask themselves the right questions* about what Gallo is. In these promotional texts as well, the audience is not expected to learn Gallo’s definition by mere diffusion of information. Rather, they are interpellated into enacting, in the interactional moment of their own reading experience, the question-and-answer that constitutes the denotational text of the brochure or book. Their engagement with this questioning text structure favors their recognition of Gallo in their own lives.

At least in the United States, these types of questions tend to occur in the headings of informational materials at the doctor’s office or on popular medical websites; i.e., *What is Fibromyalgia?* Such phrasing seems to convey a stance of claiming to render something mysterious and arcane as a digestible bit of knowledge, easily accessible to laypeople. This is an informal genre, which one would be unlikely to find in an encyclopedia or formal professional treatise. At the moment of their addressing, then, these questions situate their imagined readers in a participant role of non-expert. However, they simultaneously position those who *do* know the answer (who *do* recognize Gallo as a language-object) as doubly expert, capable of informing non-expert others. By implying “You too can understand this complex topic by reading this brochure!”, the

genre also extends hope to imagined readers that they, too, may one day assume the mantle of Gallo recognizer.

The questions in A, B and C of Table 5.1 further signal their potential to move engaged readers from the participant role of Gallo non-recognizer to that of Gallo recognizer through their use of the cajoling Gallo discourse marker *don*. In some contexts, *don* roughly translates to English *so* or *well*, as in, “**so/well**, what is it?” In other cases, it can imply *already*, as in “What is it **already**?” or “Shut up **already**!” According to Auffray’s (2012) grammar, when used in Gallo interrogatives, *don* expresses “l’étonnement ou la surprise” [astonishment or surprise, 102]. In exclamations or imperatives, Auffray states it conveys “l’insistance, l’impatience voire l’énervement” [insistence, impatience, or even irritation, 102]; in my experience, questions using *don* often have an impatient or insistent undertone as well. In interrogation, exclamation or commands, *don* appears to have a strong affective interpersonal stance. Being that it is incorporated here into questions that compel a pair-part answer, *don* appears to serve a phatic function as well, aimed at (insistently) encouraging the conversation to continue in the interactional text, and Gallo recognition to occur. These functions of *don* may not seem that surprising, given that the related French discourse marker *donc* aligns fairly well with these uses, in its particle if not its conjunctive guise.

However, in contrast with *donc* in French, Gallo *don* has assumed something of an emblematic status among Gallo advocates. It is often used to ask questions in the popular Gallo-storyteller discourse genre of *devinailles* or riddles¹¹² and occurs

¹¹² E.g., a riddle recorded at a performance I attended: “Un coupl qi regarde à haot, qatr q’o mele dan le bouillon, qatr qi dounnent le déjeun, qhi q’ét don?” [two who look up, four that are in the mud, four who give breakfast, so what is it?]. Answer: a cow (with two horns, four hooves, and four teats on its udder).

prominently in theater dialogue.¹¹³ *Don* is twice featured on the cover of Pelhate (2011): once in the interrogative in the title (cited in line A of Table 5.1 above), and again as an insistent imperative in the cover image, shown in Figure 5.2:

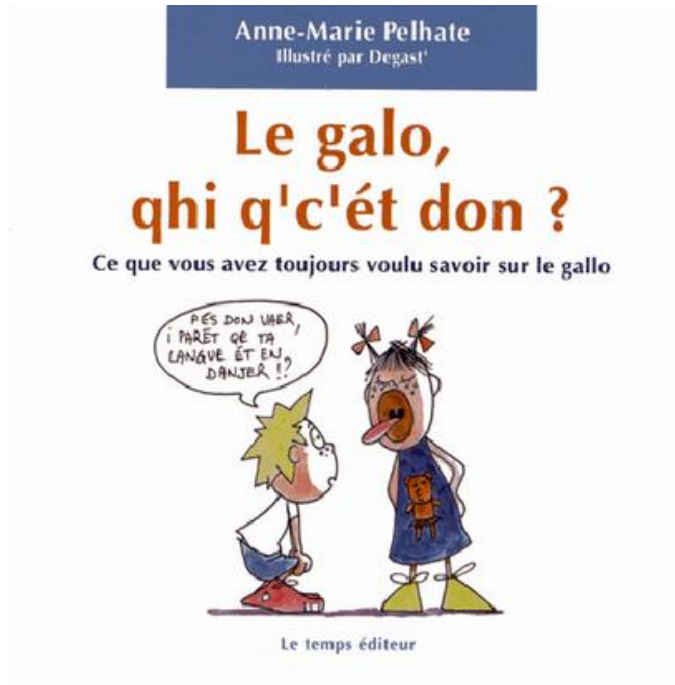


Figure 5.2 The dialogue bubble translates to “So show me, it seems that your tongue [or ‘language’] is endangered!?”

The dialogue in the cartoon of Figure 5.2 uses an exclamation point in addition to a question mark (“!?”), conveying the left-hand character’s assertiveness in asking the question and engagement in the issue. Given its use in riddles, which unlike some other humor genres hinge upon an interaction for their success, and other insistent questions like those in the cartoon above, the presence of the discourse marker *don* in promotional texts’ rhetorical questions about Gallo stresses the conversational nature of the imagined

¹¹³ E.g. a Gallo-speaking character’s astonished questioning of his son by telephone: “De cae ? T’es pas à Renn, oyou qe t’es don ? A Paris ? A Paris ! De- de cae qe tu bouines là-lein ?” [What ? You’re not in Rennes, so where are you? In Paris? In Paris! What- what are you doing messing around there?]

dialogue the writer hopes to establish with potential readers. Because questions have answer pair-parts, the insistent question in the denotational text compels a participant-role-transforming response in the interactional text.

The insistence conveyed by *don* also helps construct the question of what Gallo is as a vitally important one, to which readers would of course want to know the answer. This interpretation is again highlighted on the cover of Pelhate (2011), which follows *Qhi q'c'ét don?* with the French subtitle “Ce que vous avez toujours voulu savoir sur le gallo” [What you’ve always wanted to know about Gallo]. By such cues, which insistently combine increased epistemology with positive affect, texts such as Pelhate’s construct the participant role of Gallo recognizer as more desirable than readers’ assumed preexisting state as non-recognizers. By positioning readers as actively wanting to know the answer to the question “What is Gallo”—to the extent that they would add the intensifier *don* to the question they were encouraged to ask themselves by encountering the book or brochure—the promotional texts cajoled readers into taking part in the ongoing local conversation about Gallo and its status as a language-object.

The use of *don* thus models for local residents the answer to the question it helps ask—what Gallo is—by incorporating one of Gallo’s most emblematic features into the very question. The question itself thus helps show potential readers they may already be knowledgeable about it. During my fieldwork, I had occasion to see how memorable the question *Le galo, qhi q'c'ét don?* could be to local residents, to the extent that one participant used the title of the book in Figure 5.2 to position himself as comparatively knowledgeable about Gallo. This interactional move took place within a focus group I was conducting with three local residents who were curious about Gallo but did not

identify as speakers themselves. The individual who mentioned Pelhate's book was the most familiar with Gallo among the three participants. When the others said they had trouble understanding the language, he twice cited the book by title, offering to lend each of them his copy of "*Le galo: Qhi q'c'ét don?*." One of those times, he accompanied his citation of the title with appreciative chuckling. This participant's affectively weighted reaction suggests that these titles have more than purely informational content. The form these titles take, with the insistent and emblematic *don*, helps make the titles—and the questions they ask therein—memorable and compelling. By revoicing the title for his less-Gallo-inclined interlocutors, this participant was in effect asking *them* the same question the book did, leaving open the possibility that they, too, could be initiated into the participant role of Gallo recognizer, if they were to borrow the book and engage with its defining power.

This anecdote from the field suggests how questions about what Gallo is might circulate through the community, in a semiotic chain such as that theorized by Agha (2007) and reprinted in Figure 5.1 above. Importantly, knowledge of Gallo was not communicated through mere diffusion of factual information along chains of senders and receivers, as Figure 5.1 might be interpreted as suggesting, but rather by exchanges that indicated that the participant role of Gallo recognizer—of one who knows *qhi q'c'ét don*—was desirable and appealing. The focus group participant's unprompted citing of the title shows that these participant-role-transforming questions had the potential to re-emerge in later contextualizations, in which speakers simultaneously signaled their knowledge of the variety and their affective stance toward it by invoking formal elements of the circulating cultural genre. In this way, the participant role of Gallo recognizer may

become more and more inhabited within the local population, potentially trending toward enregisterment.

We have seen that promotional texts defined the subject position of Gallo-recognizer as desirable, and that they encouraged readers to move into that position by asking themselves the right questions about Gallo. For someone to successfully inhabit the role of Gallo recognizer, though, asking the right question is only a start; they also must arrive at an answer that positions Gallo as a particular type of object. According to the underlined material in Table 5.2 (next page), which lists how each of the promotional texts featured in Table 5.1 answered their rhetorical questions, Gallo is defined as an object that is (i) *a language*, which is both (ii) *essentially different from* (if related to) *French* and (iii) *proper to Upper Brittany*.

Table 5.2 illustrates that the participant role of Gallo recognizer shares specific traits across these different text-tokens, helping to define features of the Gallo promotional-text genre. As espoused by the advocacy organizations producing these texts, a Gallo recognizer role is constructed when readers answer the question about what Gallo is by affirming that it has three traits. First, the promotional materials (A-E) all identify Gallo as *une langue* or “a language.” As seen in lines D and E of Table 5.2, this *langue* is brought momentarily into uneasy equivalence with the designation *patois*. Nearly all authors engaged in this rhetorical move of liminal synonymy,¹¹⁴ which will be the focus of Chapter Six. Second, the writers make an effort to situate Gallo within the “family” of Romance languages—references being made to its “sisters” and “cousins” as in line A—but at the same time, they clearly take care to identify it as a separate

¹¹⁴ Due to space considerations, I have not included all of these discussions in Table 5.2, but they do occur elsewhere in these same texts.

Table 5.2 How authors answered the rhetorical question “What is Gallo?”

	Source Type	Answer to question ¹¹⁵	Translation	Author or organization
A.	Book title	<u>Comme ses sœurs française, normande, wallonne et ses cousines espagnole, italienne, roumaine, le gallo est une langue née de l'évolution du latin et fait partie de la famille dite des 'langues d'oïl.'</u>	<u>Like its French, Norman and Wallon sisters and its Spanish, Italian and Romanian cousins, Gallo is a language born from the evolution of Latin and is part of the family called the 'oïl' languages.</u>	Anne-Marie Pelhate (2011) ¹¹⁶
B.	Newspaper ad title	On n'a pas fini d'entendre parler gallo [...] Dans <u>cette langue romane de la haute Bretagne</u> , l'appellation [Mil Goul] désigne les bavards.	We haven't finished hearing Gallo [...] In <u>this Romance language of Upper Brittany</u> , the term [Mil Goul] designates chatterboxes.	<i>Ouest-France</i> , September 2013, advertisement for the upcoming 'Mil Goul' festival
C.	Poster section title	<u>Le gallo est la langue de la Haute-Bretagne.</u>	<u>Gallo is the language of Upper-Brittany.</u>	Campaign to recognize Gallo, headed by Chubri, Bertaeyn Galeizz and Dihun Breizh
D.	Brochure section title	Le terme gallo est ancien. Le gallo n'est pas un patois bien que le terme soit fréquemment utilisé. <u>C'est la langue romane de Bretagne.</u>	The term Gallo is old. Gallo is not a patois even if the term is frequently used. <u>It is the Romance language of Brittany.</u>	Brochure advertising Gallo classes, entitled “Apprendre le gallo/ <i>Aprenndr le galo</i> ,” published by the Académie de Rennes and the Association of Gallo Teachers
E.	Brochure section title	<u>Le Gallo est la langue romane parlée à l'Est de la Bretagne.</u> Issu du latin populaire comme le français son évolution est toutefois différente. Il est souvent désigné par 'patois.'	<u>Gallo is the Romance language spoken in the East of Brittany.</u> Coming from vernacular Latin like French its evolution has nevertheless been different. It is often designated by 'patois.'	Brochure advertising a Gallo course, published by the Celtic Circle of Rennes and Bertaeyn Galeizz

¹¹⁵ The table represents the first few sentences immediately following the question asked. In many cases, the explanation goes on for quite some time.

¹¹⁶ Also one of the key participants in this research project. Elsewhere, as in Example 5.1, I identify her as Nânon.

language-object from French, as in lines A and E (where it is said to be only “like French”). Finally, as in B, C and E, the texts situate this distinct language-object of Gallo within the geographic and cultural territory of Upper (eastern) Brittany.

Not all print materials on display featured a question-and-answer structure to encourage a participant-role transformation. Many, however, showed echoes of this interactional process by prominently including an explanatory appositive about Gallo; for example, one advocacy association brochure advertising Gallo classes asked, “Vous souhaitez apprendre le gallo, la langue de la Haute-Bretagne ?” [Interested in learning Gallo, the language of Upper Brittany?]. This appositive tended one of two forms: Gallo was glossed as either *la langue de la Haute-Bretagne*, or the (unique) language of Upper Brittany, or as *la langue romane de Bretagne*—the (unique) Romance language of Brittany as a whole. These appositives, which were usually positioned as a subtitle or in the first few lines of text, thus contained two of the same genre traits as the matter in Table 5.2: they called Gallo a language, and they situated it within Upper Brittany. An appositive often serves to describe another noun more fully; pragmatically, it takes its content as presupposed. When taken alongside the use of rhetorical questions about the nature of Gallo, discussed above, the inclusion of appositives in such materials suggests that the individuals or associations who prepared such texts did not always consider the label “Gallo” sufficient, on its own, to denote the language in the minds of their imagined publics. These texts, supplying a ready-made and presupposed definition in an appositive, were ultimately another examples of how the circulation of promotional material encouraged readers to undergo the cultural process of Gallo recognition.

By answering or predicting the question in these particular ways, these definitions and appositives served to ground the language-object of Gallo in a particular place: “[Upper] Brittany,” the very territory in which these books, handbills and brochures commonly circulated. Consequently, the text-based interaction these rhetorical structures facilitated not only clarified to readers *what Gallo is*, but also encouraged them to recognize that it belonged *where they are*, even if they were not fully familiar with its name. In this way, the explanatory appositives and answers did two things simultaneously: (1) they provided referential specification regarding the “Gallo” label, and (2) they argued that the language-object so denoted had representational significance for [Upper] Brittany. Not only were these texts part of a movement to further Gallo’s enregisterment in local public space, then; they were also attempts to enregister it in a particular way: as emblematic of the sociolinguistic landscape of Upper Brittany.

The particular activist definitions of the nascent language-object as “a language,” as different from French, and as territorially inscribed, align with the dominant language ideology in France: a normative, modernist one that reifies languages as objects that can be gained, lost or traded (Heller & Duchêne 2007). As positioned in Table 5.2, Gallo’s proclaimed difference from French made it a ‘real,’ taxonomizable language according to the ideologies in which most activists were embedded. Its declared symbolic importance to life in eastern or Upper Brittany rendered it a worthy Romance counterpart to Celtic Breton, seen here as proper to western or Lower Brittany. This claim may well be contested by some Breton advocates, and was certainly contested by popular stereotypes that saw all of Brittany (Upper as well as Lower) as culturally Celtic, as Chapter 3 has described. The co-occurrence of all of these traits, across the many brochures and books

encountered by people perusing Gallo booths at language festivals, may potentially contribute to a broader process of cultural enregisterment of Gallo, through the affirmation they encourage in multiple nesting ways. These texts encouraged Gallo recognizers to first recognize Gallo as a thing that needs a denotation, then as something that receives a denotation as *a language*, and finally as a language that is declared to be both different from French, and meaningful to Upper Brittany.

The desire to facilitate recognition of Gallo as a language-object, along with the valorization of language practice, seemed to carry over into the texts produced by some Gallo artists, particularly those of an activist bent. Theater and poetry are “pragmatic genres [that] affect the world through their consumption and production” (Cavanaugh 2009:113), so these artistic genres may also be fruitfully analyzed for the language ideologies and participant roles they display for their publics. In what follows (Examples 5.6 through 5.9), I present excerpts from a play entitled *Bagful of Stars [Pouchée de Beluettes]*, created by storytellers Matao Rollo (whose narrative is excerpted in Example 5.1 above) and his creative partner Marie Chiff’mine, or Marie-Claire Sauvée. The play hinges upon an encounter between Matao’s character, someone who not only speaks Gallo but also studies it as a language-object, and Marie’s character, who learns what the language is and how to use it to form affective bonds. I will argue that this structure—a transformative language-focused encounter between a recognizer and someone who is initially a non-recognizer—serves to encourage its viewing public to assume the participant role of Gallo recognizer along with Marie’s character. This will show that texts of a variety of modalities—artistic and celebratory as well as explicitly promotional—can interpellate potential Gallo recognizers as they move about the cultural

space of a Gallo festival or event. The fact that similar role shifts are modeled in brochures and plays makes minority language recognition a multimodal and holistic form of cultural engagement, far removed from diffusion of decontextualized information along semiotic chains.

In the performance analyzed here, Matao plays the role of a reclusive, scholarly, Gallo-speaking mole living underground, whose peaceable existence is interrupted when Marie's French-speaking character falls into his mole hole. The play's description seems to target it toward non-recognizers: "Like [Marie's character], spectators travel at first in the sounds of unknown languages in order to reappropriate for themselves, little by little, the sense and meaning of Gallo."¹¹⁷ Implicit in this description is the sense that, as one gains agentive knowledge of Gallo's sounds and sense, it will no longer be "unknown" to them; that is, they will recognize it as Gallo.

In fact, the mole character, named Jean Chamarou du Courti-Bâs, is a language-object recognizer *par excellence*, if humorously slanted: he foists Gallo dictionaries over his head as weights for his morning exercise routine; he owns *une laboratoire de langues* [a language laboratory] in his mole hole; and he listens to *la météo des langues* [the weather report of languages] on his radio to follow the status of endangered languages around the world—pausing to jot down appreciative notes when the radio host says the Region of Brittany recently recognized Gallo along with Breton in its regional language policy and that the previously canceled Gallo classes at the University Rennes II were slated to begin again (actual social facts; see Chapter 3). Startled when Marie's interloper character, later dubbed Ghite, falls into his underground lab, Jean starts shooting

¹¹⁷ *Comme* [Marie's character], *le spectateur voyage au départ dans les sons des langues inconnues pour peu à peu se réapproprier le sens et la compréhension du gallo.*

questions at her in Gallo. She, a French-speaker, declares she cannot understand his words, thereby setting her up in stark opposition to his recognizing stance toward the language. In Example 5.6, Ghite resorts to various communicative resources (which she commands to unequal degrees) to talk to Jean, but fails to recognize Gallo for what it is:

Example 5.6 “*Ich spreche nicht*”

1	GHITE:	<u>Jeune gent, je ne comprends rien !</u>	<u>Young man, I understand nothing!</u>
2	JEAN:	[admonishment] <i>Hup hup hup hup hup</i>	[admonishment] <i>Hup hup hup hup hup</i>
3	GHITE:	<u>Qu’est-ce que vous dites?</u>	<u>What are you saying ?</u>
4	JEAN :	<u>Ohi ge t’és ? /D’oyou ge t’és ?</u>	<u>Who are you ? /Where are you from?</u>
5	GHITE :	<u>((German)) [Ich spreche nicht !</u>	<u>((German)) [Ich spreche nicht !</u>
6	JEAN :	Euh	Euh
7	GHITE :	<u>((English, playing up nonnative accent¹¹⁸) I don’t speak English</u>	<u>((English, playing up nonnative accent)) I don’t speak English</u>
8	JEAN :	((shrugs in exasperation)) <i>Bah [tu peus pās tout fère] tu caozes pas angléz</i>	((shrugs in exasperation)) <i>Well [you can’t do everything] you can’t speak English</i>
		<u>((German)) Ich spreche nicht !</u>	<u>((German)) Ich spreche nicht !</u>
9	GHITE :	<u>((Spanish/French blend)) Non comprendo rien du tout</u>	<u>((Spanish/French blend)) Non comprendo nothing at all.</u>

The exchanges are short and quick, and the scene is played humorously, with outsize expressions of irritation, on Jean’s part, and befuddlement, on Ghite’s. Although the play establishes that Ghite is local to Upper Brittany, this initial encounter shows that—like the imagined audience of the promotional texts analyzed above, and the past selves narrativized in Section 5.3—Ghite has not yet recognized Gallo as a language-object. She resorts to French (lines 1 and 3), English (line 7), German (lines 5 and 9), and elements of Spanish (line 9) to express her lack of comprehension, thereby demonstrating her failure not just to understand Gallo, but to identify it *as* Gallo rather than as one of the other languages she tries.

¹¹⁸ In other contexts I have heard Marie Chiffre mine use more natively like English phonology.

If speaking is here a form of epistemology, Ghite is at a disadvantage. Her early actions are physically clumsy (she falls down a lot) and pragmatically inept. When Jean replies to a question with *ver*, Gallo for ‘yes,’ Ghite responds inappropriately, by saying she would indeed like a glass of water (*un verre*, in French). This is a similar miscomprehension to that which bedeviled my classmate Bernard over the question of *pratiques* in Example 5.4, and as it was there, it is played here as a source of gentle amusement. At the performance I recorded, the audience laughed at the pragmatic incongruity of misinterpreting Gallo *ver* as an offer of *un verre* in French. Such a response marks the audience’s recognition of Ghite’s ignorance—and thus potentially illustrates for the audience that their own knowledge of Gallo—as their laughter demonstrates they recognize that the ostensible homophones are far from synonymous—is both greater than Ghite’s, and greater than they may previously have recognized. In sum, Example 5.6 shows that, as in the promotional texts and narratives above, the participant role of Gallo non-recognizer, occupied here by Ghite, is less locally valued than that of Gallo recognizer, and signals that Ghite, perhaps much like the audience members, has a journey of epistemological and affective growth ahead of her.

Indeed, the rest of the play represents Jean and Ghite as growing closer together, setting aside their initial mutual distrust for friendship and linguistic exploration as Ghite comes to recognize Gallo. Accepting in a rather disgruntled manner that Ghite will not be quick to leave his mole hole, Jean invites Ghite into his language laboratory to listen to the world’s languages. They listen together to excerpts first of what Jean labels Japanese (he holds chopsticks by her ear, and then a fan), then Walloon (a beer stein), then Breton (a cider mug), which is spoken by those he calls *les vaizins* [the neighbors], then a

language he identifies as coming from Madagascar (a wooden mask), then Kanak (a conch shell), then Quechua (a knitted cap).¹¹⁹ At each recording, Ghite reports she cannot understand anything. The objects accumulate, visually reinforcing her ignorance for the audience at the same time they materially represent the language-objects associated with the voices on the radio.

Finally, Jean hands Ghite a mirror, positions it so that she is looking at her own reflection, and plays a selection of Gallo recordings for her. The first Gallo excerpt features a recording of a woman talking about *violonous*, or violin-players. Finally, Ghite recognizes what she thinks is the French word *violon*:

Example 5.7 “*Well, it’s Gallo!*”

- | | | | |
|---|---------|---|--|
| 1 | GHITE : | Ah ! violon ! J’ai compris le mot !
<u>Qu’est-ce que c’est ?</u> | Ah! violin! I understood the word!
<u>What is this?</u> |
| 2 | JEAN: | <u>((smiles, rubs ear)) Ben, c’ét du galo !</u> | <u>((smiles, rubs ear)) Well, it’s Gallo !</u> |
| 3 | GHITE: | Ah ! | Ah ! |

After Jean tells her that what she thinks she understands is actually the language-object of Gallo, she dances merrily, still holding the mirror to her ear. What follows is a routine repeated five times, as Jean changes the radio station from one Gallo channel to another. Each time, Ghite asks a variation of “What is this?” (lines 4, 6, 8, 11, and 13) – and each time, the answer is *du galo*:

Example 5.8 “*It’s still Gallo*”

- | | | | |
|---|---------|--|--|
| 4 | GHITE : | ((laughs)) oui ça c’est bien aussi hein !
<u>c’est quoi ?</u> | ((laughs)) Yeah this is good too! <u>What is it?</u> |
| 5 | JEAN : | <u>Ben c’ét du galo core</u> | <u>Well it’s still Gallo</u> |

((audience laughs))
((Gallo singing on radio ; Ghite grows pensive, points to mirror))

¹¹⁹ Although the identification of each language with a stereotypical material token may be ideologically problematic, it certainly reinforces the claim that Gallo artists and activists find utility in seeing languages simultaneously as objects that can be recognized– like the beer steins, cider mugs or mirrors that iconize them – and as social practices.

- 6 GHITE : C'est quoi ca ? What's this one ?
 ((JEAN stands with arms crossed proudly over chest, smiles))
- 7 JEAN: C'ét du gallo core ! C'ét un vaizin [là-
lein] ((gestures overhead)) It's still Gallo! It's a neighbor from over
there
((gestures overhead))
 ((both dance to music))
- 8 GHITE: Et ça c'est c'est quoi ? And this is what?
 9 JEAN : C'ét du galo ! ((smiles, shakes head)) It's Gallo! ((smiles, shakes head))
C'ét du galo ! It's Gallo!
 10 GHITE : Oh. Oh là ! Oh. Oh là !
 ((child's voice on radio))
- 11 GHITE : Et ça qu'est-ce que c'est ? And this, what is this?
 12 JEAN : ((Animatedly)) Ben, c'ét du galo tout ((Animatedly)) Well, it's Gallo, really!
come !
 ((children singing from *Panvolette* CD))
- 13 GHITE : Et ça ? qu'est-ce que c'est ? And this ? What's this ?
 14 JEAN : ((Gently)) C'est core du galo. ((Gently)) It's still Gallo.
 ((Bèrtran Ôbrée song on the radio))
- 15 GHITE : ((dances)) Ca danse le gallo hein ? ((dances)) Gallo's danceable isn't it?
 JEAN : ((nods enthusiastically)) ((nods enthusiastically))
 16 GHITE : ((laughingly)) Ca danse au 'galo'/galop ! ((laughingly)) It dances at a 'Gallo'/gallop !
 AUD : ((laughter))

After the joke in line 16 (which, relying upon the homophony between *gallo* and *gallop*, constitutes an example of the type of insider humor – and source of outsider confusion – Michelle invoked in her narrative in Example 5.5 above), Jean laughs, but Ghite grows somber. She hands back the mirror and asks, pensively, “Qu'est-ce que c'est? (.) le (.) ga:::llo?” [What is it ? (.) Ga ::::llo ?] (line 17 in Example 5.9 below)– the question which is also asked rhetorically by so much Gallo promotional material, and which figures explicitly or implicitly in the narratives of Patrick, Josette, Bernard, and Matao himself as analyzed in Section 5.3. Ghite is here poised to assume the position of Gallo recognizer, because after so much humorous misrecognition, she has finally asked the right question.

On stage, Matao, in the role of Jean, answers Ghite’s question by quietly and simply pointing, first to his image in the mirror, and then to himself. Gallo, says the character played by the actor who once called what his grandmother spoke “deformed French” (as seen in Example 5.1), is spoken by those people who “speak like me” (line 18):

Example 5.9 “What is it? Gallo?”

17	GHITE: <u>Qu’est-ce que c’est ? (.) Le (.) ga ::llo ?</u> <u>((shakes her head as she pronounces it exaggeratedly))</u>	17	<u>What is it ? (.) Ga ::llo ? ((shakes her head as she pronounces it exaggeratedly))</u>
18	JEAN : <u>((Pointing inside mirror)) I caozent [kawz] come mai [maj] ! ((Points to himself, looks at her)) I caozent come mai.</u>	18	<u>((Pointing inside mirror)) They speak like me [maj] ! ((Points to himself, looks at her)) They speak like me.</u>
19	GHITE : I (.) cauzent [koz] (.) comme (.) mai ! [maj] ((points at Jean))	19	They (.) speak (.) like (.) me ! [maj] ((points at Jean))
20	JEAN : Nouna. ((points at himself)) Mai, ((points at her)) tai !	20	No. ((points at himself)) Mai, ((points at her)) tai !
21	GHITE : Mai ((points at herself)), tai ! ((points at him))	21	Mai ((points at herself)), tai ! ((points at him))
22	JEAN : ((Nods)) I caozent comme mai, i caozent come-	22	((Nods)) I caozent comme mai, i caozent come-
23	((pause ; he points at her))	23	((pause ; he points at her))
24	GHITE : Tai ! ((she points to herself))	24	Tai ! ((she points to herself))

When Ghite mimics Jean’s “I caozent comme mai” (they speak like me) in line 19, she is speaking more truly than she knows. While not excerpted here, what follows is a mimetic Gallo lesson, where Jean actually *does* transform Ghite into a Gallo-user by showing her how to use the Gallo personal pronouns *mai* (me) and *tai* (you), with appropriate deictic referents. Interestingly, Jean does not stop at his own pronunciation for each variant, as [maj] and [taj]; rather, he goes on to model the other regional variants [me]/[te] and [ma]/[ta]. Chapter Seven will investigate the ramifications of this frequent artistic move—playing with language by including multiple regional variants for the same term—for delimitating the boundaries of the emergent language-object of Gallo.

After this routine, Jean remarks that Ghite is ready for *la baignouère es goules* [the mouth bathtub], a bathtub in his language laboratory that turns whoever bathes in it into a speaker and lover of the language. The concept is a play on the idea of language immersion, which in French is called *un bain linguistique* [a linguistic bath], and also accentuates (a) the degree to which material objects can serve to represent the language-object of Gallo on stage, and (b) the extent to which moving from being a non-recognizer of Gallo to being a recognizer is locally imagined as a dramatic transformation. Once Ghite climbs into the bathtub on stage, she is able to speak Gallo fluently, which she does for the rest of the play. The now Gallo-speaking Ghite tells stories for the audience and eventually persuades Jean to leave his reclusive cave of language apparatuses for the world above-ground. Throughout, she models to the audience that the participant role of Gallo recognizer is more creatively charged, interpersonally engaged, and linguistically able than her former participant role as uninformed and disdainful interloper. If becoming a Gallo recognizer and artful user is accessible to this “linguistic tourist,” as Marie Chiff⁷mine once called her character, how much more may it be to the audience members, who already know enough Gallo to laugh when Ghite initially misunderstands?

The Gallo theater written and performed by Marie Chiff⁷mine and Matao Rollo, including the play discussed here, is locally recognized for being artistically rich and politically engaged. Numerous of my interviewees, especially those engaged in Gallo advocacy or teaching, cited the duo as some of their favorite Gallo performers. In an interview, Marie told me that this play, *Bagful of Stars*, was actually a preparatory piece, written before an artists’ residence during which Matao and Marie collected oral histories

among Gallo speakers. Those oral histories culminated in another Gallo play, called *La Houle ès Avettes* [*The Bee Hive*], which Marie says “certains pourraient qualifier de spectacle engagé” [some could call politically engaged theater]¹²⁰. This provides further evidence to link the narratives of Gallo recognition from Section 5.3 of this analysis to the activist association goals which opened Section 5.4—to encourage the public to recognize “the existence” of Gallo—and, further, to link both the narratives of enregisterment and the association goals to this staged encounter between language scholar and linguistic tourist.

In this section, then, I have argued that movement into the participant role of Gallo recognizer was seen by some participants not only as a compelling way of narrating one’s evolution in stance toward the variety, but also as a desirable outcome of Gallo artistry. In this way, as argued by numerous scholars of performance and the distributed nature of social interaction more generally (e.g., Bauman & Briggs 1990, Goodwin & Goodwin 2003), the audience of the play, while here largely silent, is a full participant in the meaning-making process that occurs on stage. The staged event is not just Ghite’s becoming a Gallo recognizer upon engaging with Jean, nor even a narrative fictionalization of Marie and Matao’s own experiences coming to recognize Gallo, but a bid by the performers to provoke among their audience a similar recognition of Gallo as language-object.

During our interview in the last days of my field stay, Marie Chiff’ mine mentioned the “authentic” Gallo speaker. When I asked what criteria she used to

¹²⁰ While I could not attend an actual performance of this play, there is a trailer posted online.

determine authenticity, she stressed the importance of “recognizing” Gallo and acknowledging that the recognized object is a worthy one:

Example 5.10 “You first recognize this language in and of itself”

Ben je pense [[être locuteur authentique]] c’est quand tu crois euh- fin niveau de la langue, c’est quand tu ::: euh, quand tu **tu fais une reconnaissance** (.) de ::: **d’abord de cette langue en soi, une reconnaissance de de la langue comme étant une part importante de la construction de soi**. Donc ça pour moi l’histoire de faire cette reconnaissance-là est importante. Alors plus que la reconnaissance c’est a- aussi **la conscience, conscience d’être porteur. D’un patrimoine en danger**, invisible et en danger, donc ça c’est quelque chose qui est- (.) qui est pas trop euh, (.) [[xxxxx]] **Il y a pas beaucoup de gens conscients. (.) Conscients d’être locuteurs oui, mais conscients qu’ils portent quelque chose qui est en train de disparaître ? Je suis pas sure.**

Well I think that [[being an authentic speaker]] is when you believe um- Well at the level of language, it’s when you um, when you **you recognize** (.) **first this language in and of itself, a recognition of the language as being an important part of self-construction**. So that, for me, the matter of having this recognition is important. And then more than the recognition it’s- **also consciousness, the consciousness of being a bearer of a cultural heritage in danger**—invisible and in danger. So that’s something that is- that’s not too um. (.) [[unclear]] **there’s not a lot of conscious people. (.) Conscious of being speakers, sure, but conscious that they bear within themselves something that’s in the process of disappearing? I’m not sure.**

In Marie’s formulation, we see clear traces of the linguistic essentialization of which many scholars are increasingly critical. However, we also see how vitally important Marie finds it that people who *know how* to use Gallo also move into the position of *knowing that* Gallo is a language with a past—and an endangered future. Her description of “the language” as “being an important part of self-construction” seems also to be a theme implicit in the narratives of coming-to- consciousness which other participants told in Section 5.3. Although the term “Gallo recognizer” is my own analytical label, I suggest that *celui qui reconnaît*—the one who recognizes—is a participant role to which Gallo advocates orient, as reflected in Marie’s comment that it is important that people “[fassent] une reconnaissance... de cette langue en soi” [recognize...this language in and of itself].

In Example 5.11, after I asked Marie why she and Matao decided to write a play around the story of two initially hostile characters becoming friends, she clarifies that one

important consideration was allowing the public to “put themselves in [the] place” of the character who undergoes the process of Gallo cultural recognition:

Example 5.11 “The public can very easily put themselves in my place you see”

Ben ça permet de faire vivre la langue. Et de la vivre avec ses émotions et tout ça. (.) Et puis comme ça le public il peut se transférer ses propres images aussi par rapport à la langue. Tu vois dans *Pouchée de Beluettes* par exemple, je pense, le public il peut très facilement se mettre à ma place tu vois. La touriste qui débarque dans le trou, qui l’embête et tout, et que les langues ça l’intéresse qu’à moitié.

Well it allows us to make the language come alive. And to make it alive with its emotions and all of that. (.) And then like that, the public can also transfer their own images with respect to the language. You see, in *Bagful of Stars* for example, I think, the public can very easily put themselves in my place you see. The tourist who lands in the hole, who annoys him and all, and languages don’t interest her very much at all.

After explaining that the interaction between Ghite and Jean is almost “une prise d’hôte qui arrive accidentellement” [the accidental taking of a hostage]—in that Ghite cannot leave the mole hole until she has learned enough Gallo to lead Jean out aboveground with her—Marie shifts from talking specifically about the characters to a more general third-person *on*, or the generic “you/one/people” who undergoes a transformation:

Example 5.12 “If you open yourself to your language you open yourself to the entire world”

- | | | | |
|---|---------|--|--|
| 1 | Marie : | Mais en même temps si on est ouvert, ben on découvre toute une diversité qui fait que ::: (.) <u>Ben il y a une ouverture au monde qui se fait hein ? Forcement.</u> | But at the same time if you are open, well you discover an entire diversity which makes it so that::: (.) Well <u>there’s an opening out to the world that happens you know ? Necessarily.</u> |
| 2 | SK : | <u>Et c’est ça que vous espérez pour votre public ?</u> | <u>And that’s what the two of you hope for regarding your public?</u> |
| 3 | Marie : | Ben oui ! Parce que <u>si on s’ouvre à sa langue on s’ouvre au monde complet.</u> | Well yes! Because <u>if you open yourself to your language you open yourself to the entire world.</u> |

When I ask her to clarify that she means her understanding of openness and discovery to apply to their audience members, Marie makes the moral explicit. “If you open yourself

to your language” (as Ghite does, as Marie and Matao have, by recognizing Gallo as a distinct language) “you open yourself to the entire world.”

Marie continued to cite evidence that her performances did touch audience members. In her words, when people realize that “même s’ils l’ont pas parlé depuis cinquante ans... ils comprennent encore tout” [even if they haven’t spoken it for fifty years... they still understand everything], the realization “les bascule et... les bouscule aussi” [rocks them and jostles them, too]. Marie elaborated on the “jostling” that Gallo enregisterment often entails, citing people who cry, remembering their childhood. In a final example, Marie insists that audience members coming up afterword to share these emotions is a constant part of her performances, whether solo or with Matao:

Example 5.13 “There are always people!”

Y a- y a souvent, encore plus dans les spectacles de théâtre, il y a toujours, toujours, même les- même quand je fais des spectacles en solo, **il y a toujours des gens ! Qui viennent parler de leur enfance, qui viennent nous parler de leur grand-mère, de leur grand-père, de là où ils habitaient quand ils étaient petits, de leurs voisins... Des fois c’est fort parce que les gens pleurent. [xxxxxxx] qui pleurent. Y a vraiment des gens qui pleurent parce que (.) c’est l’accent de ::: leur grand-mère, c’est l’accent de leur parrain, et- quelqu’un de de proche, et ::: ben ça les bascule en fait. Dans le temps... Alors il y en a pour qui c’est une jubilation. “Wah! j’ai tout compris!”**

There’s- there’s often, even more at the plays, there’s always, always, even the- even when I do performances alone, **there are always people! Who come to speak about their childhood, who come to speak to us about their grandmother, about their grandfather, about where they used to live when they were small, about their neighbors... Sometimes it’s strong because the people cry. [xxxxxxx] who cry. There’s really people who cry because (.) it’s the accent of their grandmother, it’s the accent of their godfather, and- someone close, and that jostles them in fact. In time... And then there are some for whom it’s a jubilation. “Wow! I understood everything!”**

Here, we see that shifts in participant roles—as dependent as they are on conceptual reorganization—are just as much affective processes as intellectual ones (Cavanaugh 2009; Williams 1977). This affective response involves feelings toward the recognized object itself, but also to those persons and places associated with it. By this type of role modeling, the audience members learn to position themselves both epistemically and

affectively towards Gallo. These genres thus socialize audiences into a participant role entailed by a specific set of stances toward Gallo.

It is this aspect of language-object recognition—both affective and epistemic—that can be seen more keenly in plays like *Bagful of Stars* than in promotional brochures, no matter how cajoling. As Agha’s formulation of enregisterment makes clear, the recognition of a language-object on a societal scale is bound up in the responses individuals have to the models of personhood they recognize in the specific individuals they encounter, and the words they use. Cavanaugh’s (2009) notion of a “social aesthetics of language” reminds us that there are profound links between sentiment and structures of power; affect enters into negotiations of relationships both among individuals and to larger institutions. A token uttered on stage during a play may evoke powerful memories of people and places, which in turn become wrapped up in the language-object the audience is encouraged to recognize, aided by the interaction format of the play itself.

5.5 Discussion

Following Wortham (2003), this chapter has argued that promotional texts, plays and narratives about Gallo recognition also contain participant roles that are amenable to doubling across interactional and denotational texts, to serve as models for those who encounter them. It has used this parallelism to illustrate not, as Wortham already has, the stabilizing of individuals’ social identities, but rather the potential for stabilizing a local understanding of Gallo as a language-object different from French, and relevant to Upper Brittany. By attending to three genres (personal experience narratives of recognition, print promotional texts, and theater) and their embedding in interactional contexts, I have

shown one way in which interactional-scale events can have ontogenetic- and sociohistorical-scale implications.

I have argued that enregisterment does not happen nebulously through diffusion, but rather through the repeated mapping of participant roles onto character roles across multiple genres and over time, as narrators, brochure readers, and audience members embody roles that invite them to take up particular positions of knowledge. I have shown that shifts in participant roles, modeled in brochures, plays and narratives, were aimed in turn at shifting the footing of the reading/viewing/listening public. Specifically, the parallelism featured in these texts aimed to transfer the audience's participant role from non-recognizer to recognizer. As Bèrtran Ôbrée said in the quotation that opened this chapter, activists and artists hoped to “give” their publics “consciousness about what [Gallo] is”; I have shown that this was accomplished not merely by sharing information about Gallo but by offering participant roles through which the public could authorize themselves to claim (and *proclaim*) that information.

The modeling of participant role shifts from an affectively marginalized one to a proudly shared one figures prominently within Gallo advocacy as a device that, across repeated contextualizations, may help stabilize the recognition of Gallo as a cultural object within the local sociolinguistic landscape. Wortham (2003) has argued that such participant roles prove especially resilient in future iterations. In his theoretical model, a person socialized into a particular role through parallelism between interactional and denotational texts is especially likely to enact that role in future interactions. This chapter thus illustrates how an apparently offhand comment someone makes in an interview about his past ignorance of Gallo as a language can resonate with an artistic choice made

by a playwright deciding how to stage an interaction between a linguistically naïve tourist and a language scholar. This analysis helps us understand how the very objectification of a language can itself be a meaningful form of social practice, a tool for moving subjects into desirable participant roles which encourage them to continue working in favor of cultural recognition for Gallo and its speakers. Enregisterment takes place on vast sociohistorical timescales, but micro-interactions can reveal some of the individual moments of language-object recognition that may contribute to such broader processes, and the vested interests they serve.

In a typical understanding of enregisterment, such as that applied by Campbell-Kibler, Johnstone and Remlinger to the study of language and identity, register formations are linked through sociohistorical processes to particular categories of people or models of personhood. As Remlinger illustrates in her description of a stereotypical Yooper, such models can at times be highly detailed: “A Yooper is stereotypically male: a backwoods, independent do-it-yourselfer who hunts and fishes, rides a snowmobile, drinks beer, spends time at deer camp, and is suspicious of outsiders” (2009: 119). Contrastively, the narrative, promotional, and theatrical texts discussed in this chapter all mark a shift in orientation *away from* an understanding of Gallo as a register linked to particular classes of French-speaking people (for example, grandmothers, godfathers or neighbors)—and *toward* an understanding of it as a separate language object. These moves take Gallo from an iconicized (Irvine & Gal 2000) way of speaking French to a language-object in its own right; associations between that nascent language-object and affectively valued people and places are often preserved—as Chapter 6 will make clear—but in these narratives, the constellation of socially marked practices that compose Gallo

is dissociated from a supra-category of French and re-imagined as an object capable of grounding the narrator's own scholarly, activist or artistic efforts.

In this chapter, I have shown how advocates of a minority language occupying different roles—performers, students, association members—worked in narrative, promotional text and art to facilitate cultural recognition of that language as an object. Comparisons can be made to tactics of strategic essentialism (Spivak 1988; McElhinny 1996). While treating languages as objects can have problematic implications, introducing them as objects of discourse enables their use in acts of identity and stancetaking. Because such moves also construct recognizers as affectively and epistemologically more desirable than non-recognizers, objectification of speech practices as “a language” can also lead to increasing concern in seeing those speech practices valorized and used. In the following chapters, I will explore how the nascent language-object is labeled (Chapter 6), as well as how it is used in celebratory contexts both to foster an appreciation of heterogeneity (Chapter 7) and to temporarily invert expected value hierarchies with respect to the national language of French (Chapter 8). I will explore how these ideological processes become resources to help Gallo users position the variety, and themselves, within ideologies of personhood, modernity, and community.

CHAPTER 6

LABELING A LANGUAGE-OBJECT: TERMINOLOGICAL PLURALITY AND PERSONAL CONNECTION

Early in my fieldwork year, I was riding the Rennes metro home with a classmate from my first-year university Gallo course. Knowing she'd taken an elective Gallo class in high school and having heard that many students who chose Gallo classes came from families where the language was spoken, I asked my classmate if anyone in her family spoke Gallo. Not really, she answered, as the metro doors opened and we were surrounded by an influx of rush-hour cityfolk; what they spoke was more like "patois." The transit was short and her stop had arrived, so I was left with an unanswered question. "Patois" or "gallo": what made her draw the distinction?

By the time my classmate and I had this exchange, I had already heard several Gallo advocates explain that the term *patois* denoted the same way of speaking that they called *gallo*. If some claimed to speak *patois* and not *gallo*, they had implied, it was either because those people were simply unfamiliar with the latter term, or because they believed the variety was not "a language," but rather incorrect French. The designation *patois* thus, according to some, both was inaccurate and had negative social consequences for the variety. Indeed, on the first day of the course my classmate and I attended together, our teacher had lectured on the variety's social status. He had contrasted the term *patois* with the notion of *langue* or "language"; my notes from that day read: *On va avoir du mal à faire croire que c'est une langue. On va dire 'patois,' 'idiome,' 'parler'*

[We'll have a hard time making people believe that it's a language. They'll tell us 'patois,' 'idiom,' 'way of talking']. And yet—my classmate, who had taken coursework in the language, whose class contributions demonstrated some expressive capabilities in the variety spoken by her relatives, called that variety not *gallo* but *patois*. We had just attended a class where our professor had explained *patois* was a term commonly used to denote *gallo*, so I could not ascribe her labeling choice to ignorance of the fact that, for many, the terms denoted the same language-object—with *gallo* its preferred label. What, then, could be an explanation?

This chapter examines the ideological implications at stake when participants chose from among various available labels in their acts of referring to the variety I call Gallo.¹²¹ Principally, I discuss two labels: *gallo/galo*,¹²² the label preferred by the majority of activists, performers, students and teachers I encountered through my fieldwork, and *patois/patouâz/patouéz*,¹²³ the label that survey-driven research (e.g. Blanchet & Trehel 2002; Le Coadic 1998; Le Coq 1999) has found to be used more widely among Upper Breton residents. As suggested by the university lecture briefly mentioned above, the majority of authors writing about the language for local audiences, as well as many of my participants, either argued the term *patois* was inaccurate or

¹²¹ I have chosen the label *Gallo* because it is the term in widest usage among the public of other language scholars through which this academic text will most readily circulate. It is also the term used more often by the majority of my participants, if not necessarily by the population in general, and thus was the term I myself was socialized to use through my participant interactions.

¹²² *Galo* is the spelling many use when writing in Gallo. For brevity, and because most terminological debates take place in French, I represent both variants with French *gallo* alone, other than in the case of direct quotations.

¹²³ *Patouâz* and *patouéz(z)* are spellings many use when writing in Gallo, corresponding to different, geographically-marked pronunciations. For brevity, and because most terminological debates take place in French, I represent the three variants with French *patois* alone, other than in the case of direct quotations.

implied its use had undesirable consequences for the variety, even if unintended by many individuals who used the label.

However, my fieldwork acquainted me with numerous occasions upon which even those most implicated in Gallo advocacy used the label *patois*—and did so to accomplish important work on behalf of Gallo visibility. These uses suggested the term had far from disappeared from public consciousness or ceased to enter into meaningful negotiations of social value. The question this chapter asks is as follows: how can continued use of the label *patois* alongside the label *gallo* provide possibilities for the community, despite the presence of popular discourses that might seem to suggest only the label *gallo* should be used? More broadly, this chapter seeks to sketch out how labeling choices can affect language advocacy, and particularly, how labeling pluralism can allow people to formulate alternative language ideologies.

My analysis has three parts. First, in 6.4, I will discuss some of the arguments frequently given “on-the-record” by Gallo advocates in favor of the unique use of the label *gallo*. I will show that these arguments depended at times upon referentialist language ideologies (Hill 2008), according to which the label *gallo* was judged to be intrinsically more accurate. At other times, the label *gallo* was preferred because it more easily allowed advocates to draw on indexical implications that seemed to align with either “pride” or “profit” discourses. As described by Heller and Duchêne (2012), these tropes characterize how late-capitalist institutions often commoditize language, either as something that “calls you into being as a citizen” (5) by virtue of speaking a shared language—the nationalist trope of “pride”—or as a decontextualizable technical skill—the globalizing trope of “profit.” A monist approach to language labeling—one that

idealizes the use of a single label—would seem part and parcel of a language’s transformation into a taxonomizable object, skill, or brand. Indeed, these ways of understanding language are all responses that many other minority languages, such as Breton, have taken in response to marginalization and language shift.

However, in the second part of my analysis, Section 6.5, I will show that “pride”- and “profit”- based monism is not the only way of valuing Gallo in Upper Brittany. That is, I will examine what can be gained by pluralist approaches to language labeling that many participants took in particular interactional moments, according to which both *patois* and *gallo* had their place. I will do this by outlining two ways participants articulated the relationship between the terms *gallo* and *patois* in pluralist uses, where both were invoked but neither was delegitimated. At times, the labels were treated as pure synonyms, with the pragmatic advantage of maximizing the number of self-declared speakers of the variety. At other times, the labels were used to draw an indexical distinction between, on the one hand, unselfconscious, *knowing-how* speakers of *patois*, engaged in practices connoting a rural past, and on the other hand, book-learned, *knowing-that* speakers of *gallo*, engaged in current-day Gallo advocacy and art. This second pluralist approach allowed speakers to make identity-based connotative distinctions regarding how they understood their own and others’ particular forms of speakerhood, in regard to rurality, age, profession and education. Such indexical ideological distinctions recall Woolard’s (2008) discussion of different constructions of authority (authenticity vs. anonymity), but instead of different varieties being differentiated, two ways of inhabiting a single variety are demarcated.

In the last part of my analysis, Section 6.3, I will show how these two pluralist understandings of the relationship between *patois* and *gallo*—pure strategic synonymy and identity-distinguishing indexicality—together enabled participants to draw upon what I call a language ideology of “personal connection,” which highlighted the enduring presence of Gallo and its present affective connection with the past. This ideology stood as an alternative to either “pride” or “profit,” which were closely linked to Breton but less relevant for Gallo, due to the symbolic dominance of the former (see Chapter 3). Given that national or global systems of evaluation were rendered less accessible for Gallo than for Breton, this ideology of connection, local and familial in scope, emphasized both the language’s connection to an affectively-valued past, and also its present visibility in contemporary life. A pluralist approach to language labeling afforded participants the chance variously to engage in adequation or distinction (Bucholtz & Hall 2005), minimizing or accentuating the temporal and social gap between *gallo* speakers and *patois* speakers, as they negotiated a nuanced positionality that use of the term *gallo* alone may have been seen as erasing. As regional “pride” and commodified “profit” were ideologies so closely linked to Breton, the co-present and more recognized regional language, participants’ choice to portray the language as enduring in affective bonds, despite ongoing social change, became itself a form of value.

6.1 On language and naming

Modern and late-modern approaches to languages and their speakers are highly invested in projects of naming. Naming helps to reify languages and to categorize them taxonomically, a move that inscribes language into broader modernist projects aimed at understanding social practice analogously to the natural world; that is, through

empiricism and discrete measurement. Language naming has been an important tool for the designation of certain ways of speaking as pre-modern or irrational, and thus for denying certain categories of person citizenship or representation (Bauman & Briggs 2003). In nationalist modes of discourse, languages are inscribed within the borders of nation-states; part of the definition of *la France* is a place where people speak *le français* (Ager 1999). Indeed, the association between nation and language has been so naturalized in French discourses that during my fieldwork, I often heard myself introduced as a native speaker of *américain*, despite my own claims to identity as a speaker of *anglais*, or English.¹²⁴

Language labeling has been closely identified with Herderian romantic nationalism, but the political ramifications of language labels continue to shape present-day social debates. In the United States, labels feature prominently in public debates involving the variety known alternatively as African American English, African American Vernacular English, and African American Language, among others (Green 2002). The politically inflammatory, much-mediatised debate over the language label *Ebonics* (overviewed and critiqued in Smitherman 1998, Wolfram 1998, and elsewhere) indicates that language labeling is never neutral; speakers—academics and laypeople alike—may be led to favor one term over another for reasons such as supporting or disagreeing with various language origin hypotheses (Mufwene 2001), including or excluding certain categories of people from who “counts” as a speaker of a language (Bucholtz 2003; Britt & Weldon 2015), or engaging in or distancing oneself from debates

¹²⁴ The language label *américain* is also often used inside the cover of French translations of books by modern American writers to describe the language from which they have been translated, to the bemusement of many Americans who themselves say in French that they speak *anglais*.

about language and prejudice. Furthermore, different language labels may be used by one and the same speaker to address different imagined publics in different contexts of use, as Smalls (2012) briefly suggests for Geechee/Gullah, with one being more “emic” and the other, while originally “an analytic term introduced by outsiders,” having become among community members “the more official title of our language and culture” (147).

Once languages have been demarcated through an enregisterment process (see Chapter 5), identified with a similarly demarcated community of speakers, and named, there is the potential for these languages to be rebranded as the language ideologies in which they are embedded are subjected to new, destabilizing contexts. In multilingual postcolonial states, for example, recent decades have seen the rise of attempts to rebrand formerly marginalized codes, such as creoles or indigenous languages, as the proper languages of postcolonial national identity. Often, in contexts where France was the colonizing power, these indigenous languages and creoles were themselves labeled *patois*. While once seen as “broken” or “bastardized” versions of their European lexifier languages, new contexts of postcolonial nationalism have led to creoles being “reevaluated and revalued as unique dimensions of island and pan-Caribbean identity” (Paugh 2012:29-30). As orthographies have been proposed, the labels attached to such languages often shift—usually away from what are perceived to be colonial influences. On Haiti, for example, *créole* has become both *kreyòl swa*, spoken by the educated elite, and *kreyòl rèk*, “the ‘real kreyòl’ of the masses” (Schieffelin & Doucet 1994:193)—both labels using an orthography that accentuates linguistic and ideological difference from the colonizers’ language of French.

The debates surrounding the French-lexified creole spoken on Dominica, as recounted by Paugh (2005, 2012), provide an illustrative example of the relationship between language labeling and ideology. In 1945, an education report describing the creole spoken on Dominica could claim, “This patois is of no cultural value and there is no question of preserving a racial language as in Wales or Quebec” (quoted in Paugh 2005:1808). Here, *patois* is used to designate a language “of no cultural value,” much as Gallo advocates arguing for exclusive use of the label *gallo* have decried. By the twenty-first century, however, the same variety had become a co-official language of Dominica, along with English. Now prized by a small but vocal urban activist elite, the variety formerly named *patois* was rebranded first as *Patwa* and then, by those urban activists, as *Kwéyòl*. Paugh (2012) explains that urban activists on Dominica favored the label *Kwéyòl* over *patois* or *Patwa*

...in part to signal an affinity with other creole-speaking nations, several of which had chosen similar names in pro-creole movements. It also represented a shift from an oral language to a written language recognized as having a grammar, and an attempt to erase negative connotations of slavery, colonial origins, and European debasement. (41-42)

However, according to Paugh, the rebranding of *Patwa* as *Kwéyòl* also had the effect of “rendering this new register inaccessible to most of the public” (41).

Indeed, Paugh, Schieffelin and Doucet, and others have shown that although labels may change, older ideologies may persist alongside the new, in ways that destabilize the efforts promoting the rebranded language-object. Paugh, for example, explains that while there were many rural speakers on Dominica whose dominant oral language was *Patwa*, *Patwa* literacy is “a recent development restricted to a small group of urban intellectual elite” (2005: 1809). While this elite adhered to a language ideology

according to which “the negative aspects of Patwa’s history could be erased with a name change, while retaining positive associations with a romanticized version of rural life [...and] plug[ging] Dominica into a larger pan-Caribbean movement” (42), the rural inhabitants of Dominica “continue[d] to refer to their language as Patwa, reinforcing rather than minimizing differences” (42). The forms encoded by the urban elite in dictionaries and slogans often did not resonate with those espoused by rural speakers, who instead urge their children to speak the co-present official language of English. As Paugh explains, “Revitalization efforts that elevate a language without elevating the status of its speakers often clash with the daily experiences of those they claim to help – paradoxically strengthening existing power structures in new ways” (2012:30). This “clash” led to an uneasy tension over not just what speech practices are included under the labels *Patwa* and *Kweyòl* but also over its ideological status compared to the co-present official language of English, and indeed, the indexical associations it accrued in children’s language play.

Similar tensions are present among those who use Gallo in Upper Brittany. Recall from Chapter 5 that variety- or register-labeling is a key aspect of enregisterment as understood by Agha (2003, 2007) and others who have adapted his theoretical model (e.g. Campbell-Kibler 2012, Johnstone et al. 2006, Johnstone 2009, Remlinger 2009). According to such researchers, the bestowing of a name upon “Pittsburghese” or “Yoopenese” encouraged stancetaking actors to accentuate the degree of distinctiveness in the claims they made about the variety. In contrast, Campbell-Kibler (2012) claims that the “Cleveland accent” was “incompletely enregistered” at the time of her fieldwork, precisely because it, unlike other ways of talking in Ohio, lacked a culturally recognized

name like “ghetto slang” or “hillbilly drawl.” The use of a language label not only denotes a variety but also indexes a possible set of stances toward that variety and its speakers—one of those stances being an evaluation of its degree of distinctiveness or connotative power.

According to past research, among many speakers the term *gallo* is simply unknown. Among a population of adults living on either side of the Breton-Gallo language border, Le Coadic (1998), found that people were largely familiar with the variety. However, in order to access their ideas about the variety, he had to change the way he referred to the language in his research protocol: “This word ‘gallo’ gave me a lot of surprises during interviews. It was, in the beginning, the term to which I had recourse for designating the local way of speaking. But I realized that it wasn’t well understood by all” (207).¹²⁵ Le Coadic presents an interview excerpt from an informant, for example, who believed that *gallo* was a vanished language whose traces persisted in present-day *patois*; other informants knew only the label *patois*, about which “all [were] in agreement to say that it is a deformation or a mixture” (207).¹²⁶ Walter (1987) attributes this misrecognition in part to the fact that the term *gallo* is easily associated by “non-specialists” with the terms *gaulois* (‘Gaulish’) or *gallois* (‘Welsh’), leading them to think it refers to a Celtic rather than a Romance form of speech.

Where both labels (*gallo* and *patois*) were declaratively recognized by participants, some writers do find that labeling patterns index differences in attitude toward the variety. Although in-depth discourse analytic studies of Gallo nomenclature

¹²⁵ “ Ce mot ‘gallo’ m’a donné bien des surprises lors des entretiens. C’est, au départ, le terme auquel j’ai eu recours pour désigner le parler local. Mais je me suis aperçu qu’il n’était pas bien compris de tous” (207). All translations to English are my own, unless otherwise noted

¹²⁶ “ tous s’accordent à dire que c’est une ‘déformation’ ou un ‘mélange’ ” (207).

have not been conducted, Le Coq and Blanchet (2006) briefly discuss the terms their survey participants used to answer the question *Qu'est-ce qu'on parle par ici?* [What do people speak here?]. They find that the terms *langue*, *patois*, and *gallo* are marked by both “opposition” and “association.” *Patois* was the term most often used by their 138 participants; the authors claim it largely had a pejorative connotation, seeking to “illegitimate” the language, but also “in certain cases” reflected “affective value” (2). The first of these associations often underlies “pride” arguments (to be defined below) in favor of use of the label *gallo* rather than *patois*; the latter, which points to a possible positive value for *patois*, will be relevant to the ideology of “personal connection” I describe at the end of this chapter. Le Coq and Blanchet found that the connotations of the term *gallo* were mixed as well:

“Either it is assimilated with *patois*, in which case it takes on the characteristics of the latter, or else it is perceived as a *langue*, distinct from *patois* [...] and therefore aims for a legitimate status. It benefits as well from a scholarly, intellectual and historical connotation, which highlights the opposition with the term *patois* and attaches it more to a particular region of France than to the rural milieu of the country as a whole.” (2)¹²⁷

According to the authors, then, when the labels *gallo* and *patois* were equated, the effect was at cross-purposes to the “legitimate status” aimed at by associating *gallo* with the label *langue*. When the labels *gallo* and *patois* were opposed, say the authors, this often resulted “from a strategic choice, from an activist initiative and an identity claim” (2)¹²⁸:

Gallo is not a patois.

¹²⁷ “ Soit il est assimilé au *patois*, dans ce cas il prend les caractéristiques de ce dernier, soit il est perçu en tant que *langue*, distinct de *patois* [...] et vise donc à un statut légitime. Il bénéficie aussi d’une connotation savante, intellectuelle et historique, qui met en valeur l’opposition au terme *patois* et le rattache plus à une région particulière de France qu’au milieu rural de l’ensemble du pays.” (Le Coq & Blanchet 2006:2)

¹²⁸ “ ...d’un choix stratégique, d’une initiative militante et une revendication identitaire” (Le Coq & Blanchet 2006:2).

Blanchet and Le Coq portray terminological choice as straightforward—those using *patois* occupied largely pejorative (if at times also affectionate) stances, while those using *gallo* often oriented toward “legitimacy” and pride—but the data shown in this chapter will paint a more complex picture. I will define a range of inhabitable positionalities regarding the terms *gallo* and *patois*, according to which terminological pluralism could provide value for the variety rather than taking it away. These positionalities could be occupied by the same individual depending on the sense-making task in which they were engaged. As participants navigated the ideologies of time, place, personhood and value that entered into the interactional process of variety naming, the synonymous nature of *gallo* and *patois* was variously accentuated or challenged to drive home points about rupture, connection, and/or belonging.

6.2 Ideologies of “pride” and “profit”

Analysis in this chapter will draw upon a distinction made by Heller and Duchêne (2012) in the introduction to their edited volume on *Language in Late Capitalism*. Observing that, over the course of the 1990s, the case for minority language maintenance gradually became based on “economic development” and “added value” rather than on ethnolinguistic identity alone, the authors conclude that late-capitalist societies are “witnessing the widespread emergence of discursive elements that treat language and culture primarily in economic terms” (3). The authors unify these elements under a trope they call “profit,” a globalizing orientation toward language that the authors see as new to late capitalism. These elements do not completely dismantle older discourses that understand language as the basis of an ethnically unified nation-state, a trope they call “pride.” Instead, the two discourses get “intertwined in complex ways” (3). Both tropes

are used “to justify the importance of linguistic varieties and to convince people to speak them, learn about them, support them, or pay to hear them spoken” (3), but while “pride” sees language as “a whole, bounded system,” “profit” orients toward language as “a set of circulating, complex communicative resources” (3).

While “pride” tropes of language are still pertinent in many contexts, the market conditions of late capitalism have meant that the national markets and their commodified languages risk losing relevance, if they do not adapt to reach new markets and to be more flexible in scale-jumping. “Profit” discourses help them do so. Whereas “pride” uses a shared language to bestow identity on individuals as citizens foremost, the trope of “profit” helps regions, nations or corporations participate on global markets by moving beyond their own boundaries, as they turn from “modern ideologies of language, culture and identity, to treat language instead as a technical skill” (8). This skill is constructed as readily de- and re-contextualizable, independent of people or nation. In this new economy, language becomes valuable as either a source of symbolic added value, where “the trope of profit appropriates the trope of pride” (10) by selling culturally inflected products to niche markets, or as a mode of management of global networks, where multilingualism is touted as a transferable skill.

While these tropes of “pride” and “profit” certainly operated in the cultural commodification of Breton, they often failed to find traction among users of Gallo. At the beginning of my analysis, I present excerpts from the literature and my data where individuals drew on these discourses to argue for the label *gallo*, but it is important to remember that those voices were far from unanimous. By the end of my analysis, I will have shown that pluralist naming tactics—where both *gallo* and *patois* were welcome and

useful—pointed toward an alternative trope for Gallo that I call “personal connection,” and its alternative system of value.

6.3 Initial observations about *patois* / *gallo* juxtaposition

Among my participants, who were nearly all involved in creating in or advocating for Gallo, the term most commonly used to denote the language was indeed *gallo*. Participants talked about their *gallo* storytelling or the *gallo* classes they were taking, or expressed frustration that many road signs were bilingual only in French and Breton, even in locations that had always been part of *le pays gallo*. Indeed, this label was the unmarked one for denoting the variety in twenty-first-century public space, at least among those who had chosen to engage with it through activism, performance or education. As discussed in Chapter 3, the Regional Council of Brittany voted unanimously in 2004 to officially recognize “le breton et le gallo comme langues de Bretagne à côté du français” [Breton and Gallo as languages of Brittany alongside French]—the label *patois* being nowhere in evidence. A 2014 project aimed at increasing the use of Gallo in public space, *Du Galo: Dam Yan, Dam Ver* [Gallo: Heck Yes, Heck Yes], used only one label, *galo*, for the language, although its name features two geographically stratified ways that language has of saying “heck yes”.¹²⁹ The prizes initiated in 2011 to award creative and activist activity in Gallo are called *Les Prix du gallo* [The Gallo Prizes]; *La Semaine du gallo* [Gallo Week] is the name of the week-long celebration of Gallo that takes place alongside *La Semaine du breton*. When trying

¹²⁹ This project involved a charter that municipalities, corporations and individuals could sign to indicate their support for Gallo use in public space, as well as a seal of approval that can be bestowed upon those municipalities and corporations who have made an effort to increase Gallo visibility. The link between the label *gallo* and an activist approach to the language is thus clearly established.

to give the language a more equal status within the region to that occupied by Breton, no one in my hearing discussed there being a *Semaine du patois*!

That did not mean, however, that the term *patois* was never invoked in official promotional contexts. It was, but often to delegitimize it as a viable label for Gallo. Table 6.1 (next page) cites three representative promotional texts, a brochure and two informational books, of the same sort I analyzed in Chapter 5. The authors of these three texts provide three different approaches to the semantic relationship between the juxtaposed labels *patois* and *gallo*, to the ultimate preference of the latter. In the first, the terms are constructed as questionably equivalent; in the second, as absolutely not equivalent; and in the third, as somehow simultaneously equivalent and not.

Such discursive moves accomplish two things simultaneously. On the one hand, each writer denies that the variety they term *gallo* can be appropriately designated a *patois*, either by an explicit negation or by asking a rhetorical question implicitly answered in the negative.¹³⁰ These moves seem intended to delegitimize the label *patois*. However, by anticipating the very need for this type of refutation, each of the statements above also implies a second point: that the term *patois* has greater local currency than that of *gallo*, and is in fact used widely.

6.4 In favor of monism: claims of accuracy and consequence

As seen in Table 6.1, official presentations of Gallo seemed invested in proposing the label *gallo* as an alternative to *patois*. After mentioning both terms, how do authors justify their ultimate choice of monist terminology in favor of *gallo*? This section will

¹³⁰ The phrasing of the chapter title in (c), admittedly, is inclusive of *le patois* as a popular term for the variety, if insistent that the variety does not belong in a *class* of “patois.”

Table 6.1 Juxtaposing the labels “gallo” and “patois” in publications

<i>Text Type</i>	<i>Juxtaposition of language labels</i>	<i>Translation</i>	<i>Nature of relationship</i>	<i>Source</i>
a. Book chapter title	“ <u>Le gallo, un patois?</u> ”	“ <u>Gallo, a patois?</u> ”	questionably equivalent; the following paragraphs make it clear that the preferred term is <i>gallo</i>	Thierry Jigourel (2011), <i>Parler et chansons de nos grands-pères en gallo: La langue de Haute-Bretagne</i> [Speech and songs of our grandfathers in Gallo : The language of Upper Brittany]
b. Text in brochure	“ <u>Le gallo n’est pas un patois</u> bien que le terme soit fréquemment utilisé”	“ <u>Gallo is not a patois</u> even though the term is often used”	not equivalent despite popular belief	<i>Apprendre le gallo / Apprendre le galo</i> [Learn Gallo], published by the Gallo Teachers’ Association
c. Book chapter title	“ <u>C’est le patois mais c’est pas du patois</u> : Petit florilège des idées reçues sur le gallo”	“ <u>It’s (the) patois but it’s not a patois</u> : A brief compendium of clichés about Gallo”	both equivalent and not; the label is used but not accurate	Anne-Marie Pelhate (2011), <i>Le galo, qhi q’c’ét don: Ce que vous avez toujours voulu savoir sur le gallo</i> [Gallo, so what is it?: What you’ve always wanted to know about Gallo]

discuss two ways in which they do so: referentialist monist arguments according to which *gallo* is portrayed as a more semantically truthful denotation than *patois*, and consequentialist monist arguments that construct the indexical effects of using *gallo* as preferable to those of using *patois*.

6.4.1 Referentialist monist arguments

Many writers, including Pelhate (2011) and Jigourel (2011) from Table 6.1, cite French dictionary definitions of *patois* in order to deny that Gallo constitutes a member of such a lexical class. Pelhate includes a quotation from the French dictionary *Le Petit Robert*, in which a *patois* is defined as a variety spoken by a rural group “whose culture,

level of civilization are judged inferior to those of the surrounding environment” (*Le Petit Robert* 2011).¹³¹ She comments, “Gallo is generally called ‘patois’ by its speakers themselves but a quick glance in the dictionary at the definition of the word patois suffices to understand the term is hardly appropriate!” (2011: 10).¹³² While she does not elaborate specifically as to why, Pelhate’s book, like the others, positions the language as expressive and rich, a source of “culture” rather than a lack of it. Similarly, Jigourel (2011:13) first highlights the etymological relationship between *patois* and the words *patte* (‘paw’) and *pataud* (‘clumsy’), and then cites the definition of *patois* in another widely-used French dictionary, *Le Petit Larousse*:

Patois: masculine noun. (from *patte* [paw], with suffix –ois ; 1265): Speech reduced to certain signs (phonetic facts or combining rules), used only across a limited territory and in a particular community, generally rural: the patois of Auvergne, the Savoyard patois.¹³³

By citing dictionary definitions as arbiters of truth, Pelhate’s and Jigourel’s responses partake in a referentialist language ideology. As Hill (2008) explains, “Referentialist ideology insists that words must be used properly... [and] makes the question of whether or not statements are ‘true’ into a very salient issue” (39). The authors do not directly challenge the hegemony implicit in the dictionary definitions they cite for *patois*, claiming (as they might) that Gallo’s richness shows such views of *patois* to be incorrect. Rather, these authors uphold the dictionaries as ‘true’ authorities on labeling, and they

¹³¹ “ Patois: parler local, dialecte employé par une population généralement peu nombreuse, souvent rurale et dont la culture, le niveau de civilisation sont jugés comme inférieurs à ceux du milieu environnant (qui emploie la langue commune).”

¹³² “ Le gallo est généralement appelé ‘patois’ par les locuteurs eux-mêmes mais un rapide coup d’œil dans le dictionnaire à la définition du mot patois suffit à se rendre compte que le terme n’est guère approprié !” (2011:10).

¹³³ “ *Patois*: n.m. (de *patte*, avec suffixe –ois; 1265): Parler réduit à certaines signes (faits phonétiques ou règles de combinaison), utilisé seulement sur une aire réduite et dans une communauté déterminée, rurale généralement : le patois d’Auvergne, le patois savoyard.”

seek to avoid undesirable consequences for Gallo, not by challenging the definition, but by implying that those who apply the term *patois* to Gallo are incorrect. The fact that French dictionary definitions are given here as the ultimate authority on the question of language labeling stands in stark contrast to how Gallo dictionaries are used in performances and at language festivals: as focal points for the celebration of individualized, local meaning-making. Chapter 7 will explore this distinction further.

Such referentialist ideologies encourage espousers to conclude that others' continuing to call the variety *patois* is due to a lack of knowledge or education about what is true. One author of a Gallo phrasebook explains the observed terminological pluralism thusly: "The population of Upper Brittany itself does not always know how to define its language, and often considers it a '*patois*'" (Simon 2014:11).¹³⁴ The author of a Gallo dictionary adds with a sense of weary regret, "Wrong ideas die hard. In the collective unconscious of the Upper Breton, his (sic) natural language remains deformed French which he calls '*patois*', symbol of social and cultural retardation" (Deriano 2010:ix).¹³⁵ According to such discourses, use of the label *patois* is a "wrong idea" from a population that "does not always know" how to define the language they use. Deriano thus positions his own terminology as didactic and authoritative, implying that if only "the Upper Breton" were to lose his "wrong ideas," he would use the label "Gallo." However, as Hill (2008) has shown with referentialist rebuttals to racist discourse, education alone is often insufficient to make speakers abandon harmful ideologies.

¹³⁴ "La population de Haute-Bretagne elle-même ne sait pas toujours définir son langage, et le considère souvent comme un '*patois*'" (Simon 2014 :11).

¹³⁵ "Les idées fausses ont la vie dure. Dans l'inconscient collectif du Haut-Breton, sa langue naturelle demeure du français déformé qu'il qualifie de patois, symbole d'arriération sociale et culturelle." (Deriano 2010:ix)

Conversely, as this chapter will show, use of the label *patois* alongside *gallo* can help create a positive system of valuation for Gallo. Referentialist monist ideologies may thus both fail to change underlying stigmatization of the variety and also contribute, however unintentionally, to the stigmatization of speakers who persist in using the label *patois*.

6.4.2 Indexical monist arguments: “pride” and “profit”

A further argument that some have offered for the preferential use of *gallo* focuses not on the intrinsic meaning or truth properties of either label, but rather on the terms’ indexicalities and indexical consequences. The label *gallo*, according to this consequentialist argument, allows for the language both to enter more easily into the global marketplace as a transferable skill (“profit” discourses, according to Heller and Duchêne 2012) and for it to present a positive image of its speakers as a social group and, at least potentially, as a people (“pride” discourses). As Angoujard, an academic who has studied the phonology of Gallo, writes in a 2010 article in the Breton culture magazine *ArMen*, “No encyclopedia of the world languages would list a ‘patois’ alongside Burmese, Nahuatl, Chinese or Tagalog... ‘Patois’ is nothing but a qualifier imposed on languages without renown, on ‘repugnant’ languages” (Angoujard & Oubrie 2010, cited in Jigourel 2011:11)¹³⁶. Angoujard deals here, not with semantics, but rather with connotations and affiliations. In his statement one might read an implicit concern with both “pride”—the label *patois* is believed not to convey the “renown” necessary to create its speakers as a people—and “profit,” in that the author seeks to position *gallo* among the “world languages” that are increasingly seen as technical skills amenable to

¹³⁶ “Nulle encyclopédie des langues du monde ne répertorie un ‘patois’ aux côtés du birman, du nahuatl, du chinois ou du tagalog... ‘Patois’ n’est qu’une qualificatif imposé à des langues sans renommée, à des langues ‘infâmes.’”

commodification. The next several pages will present examples when others similarly used the label *gallo* to draw upon “pride” and “profit” ideologies—though I also show that value could be (and usually was) attributed to this variety in other ways.

One of the ways that Gallo writers have sought to draw upon “pride” ideologies, in particular, is through evoking the written record of one or both terms, legitimating the term *gallo* while delegitimizing the term *patois*. Such individuals have promoted the label *gallo* by tracing its history to the Middle Ages. This lineage is then brandished as proof that the label, too, is legitimate. One often-cited early document is a financial mandate dating from 1358, which features the term *Bertaigne Gualou* [Gallo Brittany]. The author begins his mandate, on behalf of Charles of Blois to an Upper Breton official, as follows: *A Georges Gicquel, notre général récepteur en Bertaigne Gualou, salut* (cited in Tréhel-Tas 2007 and mentioned by Simon 2014, as well as in a traveling exhibition produced by the Association of Gallo Teachers). As the exhibition text by the Association of Gallo Teachers concludes, “[t]he existence of a linguistically dual Brittany is attested since the Middle Ages.”¹³⁷ The popular invocation of this document endows the label *gallo* with legitimacy and authenticity—hallmarks of “pride” ideologies—by first giving it a lineage that goes back to the medieval past, and then claiming that that lineage helped create “a linguistically dual Brittany”—a regional manifestation of a nationalist ideology.

Indeed, my fieldwork revealed some moments when speakers used the *gallo* label to define Gallo-users as a discrete people, although this tended mostly to happen when participants compared Gallo speakers to Breton speakers. In such uses, participants referred to the two groups as *les Gallos et les Bretons* [the Gallos and the Bretons] rather

¹³⁷ “L’existence d’une Bretagne linguistiquement double est attestée depuis le Moyen-Âge.”

than as *les gallésants et les bretonnants* [the Gallo-speakers and the Breton-speakers], the formulation preferred by those who emphasize that *both* groups are “Breton” in the sense that both groups make up Brittany. One storyteller I interviewed made the following comment while describing the residents of Mur-de-Bretagne, a town on the Breton-Gallo linguistic border: “Enfin, Mur, c’est tout juste gallo, ils savent—ils savent pas s’ils sont gallos ou bretons [c’est] ça ?” [well, Mur, it’s just barely Gallo, they don’t—they don’t know if they’re Gallos or Bretons yeah?]. This metonymic usage of *les Gallos*, where the language comes to identify the people, is consistent with “pride” discourses according to which language is what “calls [one] into being as a citizen” (Heller & Duchêne 2012:5). I do not remember hearing anyone use *les Patois* as a similar community-denoting label; when used to name a social group, it was always *les patoisants* [*patois*-speakers].

An interesting aspect of the touted linguistic history of *gallo* is that the term itself is descended etymologically from a Breton root, *gall*, which means “foreigner” or by extension, those who spoke “French” (Pelhate 2011; Simon 2014). Although Corbel’s (1984) dissertation says the term *gallo* has continuously been in fairly common use along the linguistic border between Gallo and Breton, the label was little-known in the rest of Upper Brittany until the advent of formal Gallo language activism in the 1970s. Writers who use historicist rhetoric to argue for *gallo* tend to admit freely of this external origin for the label, and it does not seem to have caused doubt about its appropriateness at the official scale. As we will see later, however, one advantage of a pluralist approach is that it does not stigmatize the label *patois*, which was the unique label available to most local residents before the 1970s.

As suggested by the dictionary definitions previously discussed, the label *patois* also has a long history, but one that was often fraught. The term was used by Jacobin proponents of language hegemony, from the pre-Revolutionary period onward, to portray regional languages as uncultured. One notable historic figure is the Abbé Grégoire, cited in Pelhate (2011) and Jigourel (2011) both, who in 1794 published a report on *la nécessité et les moyens d'anéantir les patois et d'universaliser l'usage de la langue française* [the necessity and means of annihilating the patois and universalizing the use of the French language]. More discussion of France's hegemonic linguistic heritage can be found in Chapter 2, and Chapter 3 presents an overview of how *langues d'oïl* like Gallo, in particular, are often understood as being *patois* (in other words, deformations) of French.

One can see how such a history for *patois* might be inimical to “pride” arguments for Gallo. Consonant with such an interpretation, some participants invoked the *patois* label in ways that suggested it indexed for them a lack of “pride.” On stage after a performance, one Gallo actor, Marie-Brigitte Bertrand of Tradior, was talking with her Gallo-student audience about her own history with Gallo. In Example 6.1, Marie-Brigitte voices her own past self as someone who rejected Gallo by claiming it was *patois*, before realizing the insights that could be gained by accepting the “patrimoine” [cultural heritage], not of *patois*, but rather of *gallo*:

Example 6.1 ““Oh Gallo, it’s a patois!””

A votre âge par exemple j’avais aucune idée de ce que [comptait] le gallo pour moi, euh à tel point que (.) déjà enseigner une langue complètement à l’opposé de ça, très internationale bon c’est pour dire que j’étais loin de ça. J’ai redécouvert ça il y a une petite dizaine d’années, et avec ça est revenue toute une culture que j’avais surtout repoussée. ((Lowers pitch)) “Oh le gallo c’est du patois !” [unintelligible] Et du coup euh quand je me suis remise en gallo qu’il y a toute une – tout un patrimoine qui me [roule] en pleine goule quoi. Et après qu’on commence à aimer et à- à accepter ce patrimoine, on découvre plein d’univers quoi.

At your age for example, I had no idea of what Gallo [could mean] for me, um to such a degree that (.) well for starters, I was teaching a language completely opposed to it, very international, well to say the least, I was far from that. I rediscovered it a little less than ten years ago, and with it a whole culture came back that I had tried hard to push away. ((Lowers pitch)) “Oh Gallo is a patois!” [unintelligible] And suddenly um when I started up with Gallo again there was a whole—a whole cultural heritage that [got] me right in the face you know. And once one begins to love and to-to accept that heritage, one discovers entire universes you know.

In this speech, Marie-Brigitte voices a past impression of Gallo as *patois*, which she saw as “complètement à l’opposé” [completely opposed] to English, the “international” language she teaches. The label *patois* emphasizes the past, anti-pride and -profit stance she had with respect to Gallo, and her use of the label *gallo*, both before and after her self-quotation, echoes her shift in stance from disgust and dismissal to “accept[ance]” and “discover[y]” of “heritage”. The stance she evokes while using the label *gallo* sounds a lot like “pride.” The fact that she uses a Gallo word to express how her heritage got her *en pleine goule* (Gallo for *face*)—an emblematic word, used in the name of a large annual festival devoted to the variety (*Mil Goul*)—enacts the enormity of the distance she has crossed in her feelings toward the variety, from despising it to speaking it publicly on stage. Later, we will see other moments of this same speech where Marie-Brigitte draws on more pluralist uses of the terms, but here, *patois* seems weighted with echoes of past aversion rather than positive value.

Similarly, storyteller Matao Rollo, in another moment from the interview partially excerpted in Example 5.1 of Chapter 5, used the label *patois* in reported speech to index a disdainful stance toward the variety. In an anecdote from his childhood, Matao voiced his mother, who, in the course of decrying some local men who had shot and killed cats for sport, pronounced, “Et en plus il parlent PATOIS hein!” [And what’s more, they speak PATOIS!]. Matao added, to describe his mother’s stance, “C’était vraiment un ‘bleh!’” [It was really a ‘yuck!’]. While voicing such language ideologies may seem potentially to

threaten the “pride” valuation of the variety that the voiced figures label *patois*, such practices also permit Matao, Marie-Brigitte, and other performers engaged in promoting Gallo to understand their own efforts for the variety as countering those voiced ideologies by showing that the variety is in fact expressive, worth using and taking as a basis for identity. Juxtaposing anti-Gallo stances that deem it a *patois* with appreciative stances that call it *gallo* highlights what is at stake in terms of “pride.” The audience’s knowledge in each case that the speaker is him- or herself engaged in Gallo advocacy also helps ensure that this “voiced other” is interpreted as double-voiced irony. Although the end result is to imbue the variety with “pride”-based value, the rueful revoicing of past selves’ or others’ scorn for the variety does affiliate the language label *patois* with an anti-“pride” stance, however much condemned.

Along with “pride”, participants sometimes drew on ideologies of “profit” to position monist use of *gallo* as desirable and *patois* as indexically fraught. A lecture I attended on Gallo, given at a public library one evening by a Gallo teacher, used discourses of “profit” and socioeconomic failure to juxtapose the terms *gallo* and *patois*, to the ultimate preference of the former. In line 5 of Example 6.2 below, the teacher, whom I have pseudonymed ‘Claude,’ self-corrects from *gallo*, the label he used most often in his lecture, to *patois*. This switch accompanies his voicing of an anti-Gallo language ideology held by others: the belief, which he himself denounces, that children who spoke *patois* would not “succeed in life”:

Example 6.2 “The poor kids wouldn’t succeed in life”

1	Claude :	[...] cette langue-là	[...] this language
2		Euh restait la langue de la maison,	Um remained the language of home,
3		chez moi,	of my home,
4		<u>jusqu’au moment où on a fait</u> <u>comprendre aux [gens- parents]</u>	<u>until the moment when they made it</u> <u>known to [people- parents]</u>

5		<u>que s'ils continuaient à parler le :</u> <u>le le le gallo : le patois.</u>	<u>that if they continued to speak the :</u> <u>the the the Gallo : the patois.</u>
6		<u>à leurs enfants,</u>	<u>to their kids,</u>
7		<u>eh bien que les pauvres enfants ils</u> <u>réussiraient pas dans la vie.</u>	<u>well the poor kids wouldn't succeed in</u> <u>life.</u>
8		Alors évidemment avec un argument comme ça- (.)	So then clearly with an argument like that- (.)
9		C'est- @ c'est radical !	It's-@ it's extreme !
10		Tout le monde veut- tout le monde en tant que parent veut @ que ses enfants [réussissent.	Everyone wants- everyone as a parent wants @ for their kids to [succeed.
11	Mayor :	<u>[Ca nous aidait pas non plus.</u>	<u>[Well it didn't help us either.</u>
12	Claude :	<u>Ca c'est un point de vue ! mais eh</u>	<u>That's one perspective! but uh</u>
13	Mayor :	((unintelligible))	((unintelligible))
14	Claude :	On peut en parler après ! mais eh (.)	We can talk about it later! but uh (.)
15		ou maintenant si vous voulez	or now if you want
16		mais euh c'est [t] un point de vue.	but that's one perspective.
17		<u>((click)) Il est prouvé [à l'heure]</u> <u>actuelle</u>	<u>((click)) But it's proven [at present]</u>
18		<u>que plus vous parlez de langues=</u>	<u>that the more languages you speak=</u>
19		<u>=je ne parle pas de grandes</u> <u>langues</u> <u>[de petites langues.</u>	<u>=I'm not speaking about major</u> <u>languages [small languages</u>
20	Attendee 1 :	[Oui ça c'est vrai	[Yes that's true
21	Attendee 2 :	Mhm	Mhm
22	Claude :	Parce que toutes les langues se valent,	because all languages are equal,
23	Several :	((murmurs of agreement))	((murmurs of agreement))
24	Claude :	Après c'est une décision politique ! (.)	From then on it's a political decision! (.)
25		<u>Euh plus vous parlez de langues</u> <u>tôt,</u>	<u>Um the more languages you speak</u> <u>early on,</u>
26		<u>Plus vous avez des capacités pour</u> <u>en apprendre de- davantage.</u>	<u>the more capacities you have to learn</u> <u>even more of them.</u>
27		<u>Parce que les circuits électriques</u> <u>sont mis en place dans les</u> <u>cerveaux,</u>	<u>Because electric circuits are put in</u> <u>place in the brain,</u>
28		(.) E:t euh autrement dit	(.) A:nd um in other words,
29		<u>ceux qui parlent deux langues</u>	<u>those who speak two languages,</u>
30		<u>soit le gallo et le français,</u>	<u>whether Gallo and French,</u>
31		le breton et le français,	Breton and French,
32		le (.) le basque et le français,	the (.) Basque and French,

33	<u>ils ont plus de capacités que ceu:x</u> <u>qui parlent que: du français.</u>	<u>they have more abilities than tho:se</u> <u>who speak o:nly French.</u>
34	Pour euh l'apprentissage des langues.	In terms of language learning.

In this example, Claude and one attendee, an older man and former mayor who grew up speaking Gallo, debate the validity of a common language ideology according to which Gallo's typological proximity to French caused its speakers to struggle academically. Claude voices the belief (with which it is clear he disagrees) in lines 5-7, recounting what others said about Gallo: "if they continued to speak the the the the gallo: the *patois*, to their kids, well the poor kids they wouldn't succeed in life." In line 5, his self-correction from *le le le le gallo* to the carefully enunciated *le patois* signifies that for him, the two labels align with different ideologies, and that *patois* is more appropriate for this one, which he himself strongly opposes. Apparently, the label *patois* better evoked the disdain "they" (line 4; from context, schoolteachers and other state officials) voiced toward the variety. The truth-value of *patois* is not in question here, but rather, the anti-"profit" stance it putatively signifies toward the variety by virtue of its use in stances of denigration. The label shift emphasizes the wrongheadedness of such arguments and thus the validity of Claude's own, and others', efforts to foster the learning of *gallo* in schools.

After Claude's mention of Gallo-speaking children's educational prospects, an audience member in line 11 (a nearby town's former mayor) expresses bluntly his own belief that those who pushed for the eradication of *patois* were right to be concerned about children's educational prospects. He claims that being raised to speak Gallo "didn't help us either." In response, Claude outlines an opposing argument (lines 17-34) that draws on the cognitive benefits of multilingualism, a well-known facet of the ideology of "profit." In evoking this "profit" discourse, he switches back to the label *gallo* (line 30) to describe the cognitive value of being bilingual. When one speaks multiple languages,

even if they are “small languages” (line 19) like *gallo* (line 30), “electric circuits are put in place in the brain” (line 27) that will give children “more abilities than those who speak only French in terms of language learning” (lines 33-34). In stark contrast to his earlier *patois* use, the teacher’s now calling the language *gallo* (line 30) accompanies his alignment with late-capitalist notions of profit and skill.

Although Claude did not, that evening, say that the label *patois* itself was harmful to the variety’s status, I recorded him elsewhere, in a Gallo class he was teaching, commenting on the use of the term *patois* in the title of a well-known Gallo poem by Jacqueline Rebour, “Le patois de céz nous” [The *patois* of our home]. During the lecture excerpted in Example 6.3, Claude claims that the terms *patois* and *gallo* both are and are not synonymous, depending on the alignment of the evaluator. He explains that *gallo* and *patois* may be synonyms for him and for his audience of Gallo students, but that not everyone uses the label *patois* with a similar intent. This can be termed a personalist ideology (Hill 2008), deriving meaning from the putative intention of the speaker:

Example 6.3 “It’s the same thing for US”

1	<i>Pasqe come je l’ai dit déjà plusieurs fois ici,</i>	<i>Because as I have said already several times here,</i>
2	<u>Patois ou gallo, gallo ou patois,</u>	<u>Patois or gallo, gallo or patois,</u>
3	<u>c’est la même chose.</u>	<u>it’s the same thing.</u>
4	[.]	[.]
5	<i>“ Le patois de céz nous,”</i>	<i>“ The patois of our home,”</i>
6	<u>Mais c’est la même chose pour NOUS.</u>	<u>But it’s the same thing for US.</u>
7	<u>C’est pas la même chose pour nos contemporains,</u>	<u>It’s not the same thing for our contemporaries,</u>
8	quand ils vous disent,	when they tell you,
9	<i>“ Ah ! oui ! més :: ét pàs une langue.</i>	<i>“ Ah ! Yes ! but ::: it’s not a language.</i>
10	<i>ét un patouéz !”</i>	<i>It’s a patois !”</i>
11	<u>Ça veut dire “ c’est une sous-langue.”</u>	<u>That means “it’s a sub-language.”</u>

Claude includes his students in a *nous* identity category (line 6), opposing them and himself to a contemporary body of metalinguistically ignorant, *patois*-calling (if, ironically, Gallo-speaking) others (7-10). The implication is that although the labels *patois* and *gallo* may both be used to refer to the same language, the indexical implications of *patois* are dangerous in the hands of “our contemporaries” (line 7) who deny Gallo’s language status. The pattern of label usage in this professor’s discourse suggests that while the label *gallo* can signal an orientation toward discourses of “pride” and ‘profit,’ the label *patois* potentially (at least in some mouths) signals an orientation *harmful to* such discourses. The voicing of this critique of *patois* in Gallo itself enables Claude (like other teachers I recorded during fieldwork, who used similar strategies to voice others’ objections to their teaching Gallo) to draw attention, implicitly, to the hypocrisy of such voices. This has the effect of associating at least some of those who use the label *patois* with anti-Gallo stances, but it also enables the speaker to inhabit an identity category of a determined, knowledgeable and “proud” *gallo* language advocate in front of his audience, in the classroom or at a lecture.

It is important to note, before moving on to the meaningful social action that can be accomplished by pluralist uses of both labels, that some who resist *patois* as a label did acknowledge that their strategies were driven not by the two terms’ inherent merit but by indexicalities emerging as an accident of sociohistorical trajectories. During the same lecture that gave rise to Example 6.3, an invited guest returned to the issue of labeling. This guest, whom I call Marcel, was a Gallo user aged about 70, an author of books on rural life and an active member of a cultural heritage association. In Example 6.4, Marcel admits that the term *gallo* was useful to counteract those who denied the variety’s

legitimacy, not because it was intrinsically more accurate, but because it was championed by those who had “the schooling” (line 15) to resist the “connotation[s]” (line 33) of hegemonic discourses that “made fun” (line 16) of Gallo speakers:

Example 6.4 “We had arguments to use against people who wanted to make fun”

1	Em le fait de parler ‘patois’ ou ‘gallo.’	Hm the fact of speaking ‘patois’ or ‘gallo.’
2	Hein- i- i- il faudra se replacer dans le contexte,	Well- we need to put ourselves in the context,
3	<u>Nos parents,</u>	<u>Our parents,</u>
4	<u>avaient très peu d’éducation.</u>	<u>Had very little education.</u>
5	<u>Ils pouvaient donc être mis en difficulté</u>	<u>They could thus be very easily put into an</u>
6	<u>facilement</u>	<u>awkward position</u>
6	<u>quand ils prenaient la parole en public.</u>	<u>When they spoke up in public.</u>
	[eight lines omitted]	[eight lines omitted]
14	<u>Alors que nous,</u>	<u>Whereas we,</u>
15	<u>Euh comme on avait fait quand même un</u>	<u>Um since we had had some schooling,</u>
16	<u>minimum d’études,</u>	<u>We had arguments to to use against people</u>
16	<u>on avait des arguments à opposer aux gens qui</u>	<u>who wanted to- to make fun.</u>
17	<u>voulaient se- se moquer.</u>	And that,
17	Et ça,	
18	pour moi c’est important parce que ;,	For me it’s important because :
19	<u>ca a permis justement de-</u>	<u>It was the very thing that permitted us to-</u>
20	<u>de ne pas rester à dire “ah oui mais c’est un</u>	<u>Not to keep saying, “Oh yes but it’s a patois”</u>
21	<u>patois” ou “c’est une sous-langue.”</u>	<u>or “it’s a sub-language.”</u>
21	Et là,	And there,
22	on était à même de dire à ces gens-là	We were in a position to say to those people,
23	“Mais écoutez,”	“Well listen,”
24	<u>“c’est un- c’est un parler au même titre que</u>	<u>“It’s a way of speaking just like the speech</u>
24	<u>les parlers des différentes provinces de- de</u>	<u>of the different provinces of France,”</u>
24	<u>France.”</u>	
25	<u>“et il a toute sa place plus spécifiquement de</u>	<u>“And it has its rightful place as a mother</u>
25	<u>langue maternelle.”</u>	<u>tongue more specifically.”</u>
26	Mais ces arguments-là,	But those arguments,
27	N- nos parents ne les avaient pas forcement.	Our parents didn’t necessarily have them.
28	Et euh je trouve que c’est intéressant,	And I find that that’s attractive,
29	Alors après,	Although
30	<u>C’est vrai que ‘le gallo’ :: euh</u>	<u>It’s true that ‘gallo’ um</u>
31	<u>le terme peut être discuté,</u>	<u>The term can be contested,</u>

32	<u>Il a permis quand même d'introduire la notion de langue DIFFERENTE,</u>	<u>But it nonetheless enabled the introduction of the idea of a DIFFERENT language,</u>
33	<u>Sans sens péjoratif.</u>	<u>Without a pejorative connotation.</u>
34	<u>Qu'était donné au 'patois' à une époque.</u>	<u>That was given to 'patois' at one time.</u>
35	Même si maintenant on [parle des] 'patois' euh	Even if today we [talk of] 'patois' um
36	beaucoup plus posément.	A lot more calmly.
37	euh positivement.	Um positively.

Marcel invokes several indexical oppositions that will be discussed at more length in the following section. Whereas he constructs *patois* speakers as older (being the “parents” of men now in their 60s or early 70s, line 3), less formally educated (line 4), and having been shamed for their language practices if used in public space (lines 5-6), he figures *gallo* speakers as younger, more formally educated, and more public-space-oriented. Accordingly, it is these speakers whom Marcel claims have the resources to use the *gallo* label in order to draw on discourses of “pride,” positioning Gallo as “une langue DIFFERENTE” [a DIFFERENT language] (line 32) that has “toute sa place plus spécifiquement de langue maternelle” [its rightful place as a mother tongue] (line 25). If the term *patois* cannot access these discourses, it is not because of its inherent merit but because of socially and historically governed indexicalities.

Discourses of “pride” and “profit,” along with their affiliated language label of *gallo*, were thus valued by certain participants who fought against hegemonic discourses that denigrated the variety as a “sub-language” and claimed its speakers were uncultured. However, as Marcel indicates in lines 35-37, the label *patois* can also be used “calmly” and “positively.” The rest of this chapter examines what can be gained by doing so.

6.5 In favor of pluralism: projects of visibility and indexical distinction

In other communicative contexts, many of the same speakers from Examples 6.1-6.4, as well as other participants, used the labels *gallo* and *patois* in ways that constructed

both as legitimate. Particularly (although not exclusively) outside of ‘official’ speech events like written presentations, pre-planned lectures, or speeches to audiences committed to Gallo advocacy, participants revealed themselves as being willing to welcome both terms. Somewhat analogously to monist arguments, which could hinge upon either referential meaning or indexical connotations, these pluralist uses could either treat the terms *gallo* and *patois* as pure denotative synonyms, for the purpose of maximizing the number of self-declared *gallo-patois* speakers, or as words that were indexically associated with different kinds of people and their diverging patterns of engagement with Gallo. Regardless of the specific semantic relationship, the examples in this section will demonstrate that use of the label *patois* alongside *gallo* allowed speakers to accomplish significant social action, in terms of visibility or the construction of personhood, that could be less easily accomplished by restricting usage to *gallo* alone.

6.5.1 *Synonymy and strategic visibility*

When speakers discursively constructed *patois* as a readily exchangeable synonym for *gallo*, they asserted that self-declared *gallo* speakers and self-declared *patois* speakers were both part of the same community. In the face of the perception that Gallo was poorly recognized locally (see Chapter 5), positioning *gallo* and *patois* as equivalent allowed social actors to render the imagined *patois/gallo* community large and visible. Bonds of solidarity could thus be formed between people who might not otherwise make the connection between these two labels and their body of self-declared speakers.

Speakers aiming to maximize Gallo’s official demographic representation sometimes exerted the ideological frame of synonymy in the context of official status-

planning endeavors. In Example 6.5, the members of a Gallo association discuss the recent publication of a large-scale survey about language use in Brittany (*Bretagne Culture Diversité/TMO Régions* 2014). As the association’s president summarizes in lines 1 and 3, the survey found that nine percent of residents of the historic, five-department Brittany reported understanding “a few words” of Gallo, with a larger number, 24 percent, reporting “a few words” of Breton. Although the survey did in fact use both *gallo* and *patois* to designate the variety (line 6), two members of the group assume that it did not but should have (lines 4 and 5). In making their argument, the two members invoke a pluralist frame according to which the number of reported speakers would be larger if the terms *gallo* and *patois* were used synonymously by the survey-makers:

Example 6.5 “They answer ‘patois.’ They answer ‘patois’ yeah”

- | | | | |
|---|-------------|---|--|
| 1 | President : | <i>Y a 8 10 % qi le compernent, euh 9 % qi compernent qhoqe mots, de galo hein,</i> | <i>There are 8-10% who understand it, um 9% who understand a few words, of Gallo you know,</i> |
| 2 | Member1 : | <i>Ah vé</i> | <i>Ah yes</i> |
| 3 | President : | <i>Alor qe le berton c’ét 24. Qhoqes mots. E aoterment 83% qenaissent ren de tout du galo.
((pause))</i> | <i>While Breton is 24. A few words. And otherwise 83% don’t know any Gallo at all.
((pause))</i> |
| 4 | Member2 : | <u>Ah més le monde vantié n’associent pas, cant tu leur dit galo, le monde i caozent [kawz] patouéz ou c’ét pàs-</u> | <u>Ah well people might not associate, when you tell them Gallo, people they speak patouéz or it’s not-</u> |
| 5 | Member3 : | <u>Mais oui ! ils [répondent] ‘patois,’ ils [répondent] ‘patois’ oui.</u> | <u>Oh yes ! They [answer] ‘patois,’ they [answer] ‘patois’ yeah.</u> |
| 6 | President : | <i>Ils ont mis les deux, ils ont mis les deux.</i> | <i>They put both, they put both.</i> |

The members who speak in turns 4 and 5 imagine a body of speakers who “might not associate” the official label of *gallo* with the variety they know as *patouéz* (turn 4) or *patois* (turn 5). The pluralist approach permits these members to represent the imagined actual number of Gallo speakers as larger than the survey had claimed. The president reassures the group that “they put both [terms]” on the survey protocol (line 6).

Nonetheless, the objection, which was neutral in valence regarding the term *patouéz/patois* but non-neutral in terms of strategic ideological project, highlights the fact that association members often saw the need for greater political and practical visibility for Gallo. Questions of speaker population size were locally important because they could be used as a basis for regional and *départemental* funding decisions, in a social context where many people (including members of this association) expressed the impression that more financial support was given to Breton endeavors than to Gallo ones. This example thus suggests that speakers such as these were ready to admit a variety of terms, if it helped them increase the reported number of Gallo speakers and in turn the prominence of, and institutional support for, their own efforts.

The next example, taken from fieldnotes produced when I observed an elementary-school Gallo lesson, again relies upon the willingness of someone engaged in Gallo advocacy to draw on a variety of terms, including *patois*, in order to increase the variety's visibility in the face of information that would appear to threaten that visibility. In the excerpted note, the teacher, Nânon,¹³⁸ navigates an interactional tension when one of her young students does not affirm her claim that a *petit papi vaizin* [little grandpa neighbor], whom the pupil had likely mentioned in previous classes, spoke *gallo*. Rather than accepting that this person did not speak the variety, Nânon encourages the student to ask his neighbor instead if he speaks *patois*, to which he “will maybe say yes”:

Example 6.6 FIELDNOTE EXCERPT

The first time I observed their class, Nânon asked the students to raise their hands if they knew anyone who spoke Gallo. 9 of the 24 students raised their hands. Seeing that one of the students didn't raise his hand, Nânon asked, “*E le petit papi vaizin?*” [and the little grandpa neighbor]. When the student said, “Non,” Nânon continued, “*Y a ti un aotr mot pour le galo?*” [*Is there another word for Gallo?*] **Several students**

¹³⁸ I refer to the teacher here in my notes by her Gallo radio handle, Nânon, but she is Anne-Marie Pelhate, the author of two books about Gallo, including the one excerpted in line (c) of Table 6.1 above.

responded “Le patouâz!” and one “le patouéz!” Turning back to the original student, Nânon said, “Yan, tu peûs demander à ton vaizîn s’il parle patouâz. Il va vantié dire oui” [Yes, you can ask your neighbor if he speaks patois. He will maybe say yes].

In one of her books, referenced in Section 6.4.1 above, Anne-Marie “Nânon” Pelhate cited the dictionary in the course of a referentialist argument establishing that *patois* was not a semantically ideal label. But here, she uses the term *patois* without hedging or dissociating from it. The pluralist use seems aimed at helping her student realize that what his neighbor spoke, although the neighbor may have called it *patois*, was the same language the student was learning as *gallo*. Later, upon hearing a classmate mention *patois*, another young student called out, as if reciting something heard often before, *Patois ou gallo c’est pareil!* [Patois or Gallo, they’re the same thing!]. Such pluralist usages served a strategic pedagogical goal, helping students realize that Gallo was a living language, visible locally, that allowed them to connect meaningfully with others such as “the little grandpa neighbor.” The interactions in Examples 6.5 and 6.6 reveal that the term *patois* can be used alongside *gallo* in a pluralist fashion that focuses on semantic equivalence rather than difference. Speakers welcomed the *patois* label—even if they mostly claimed others used it, not themselves—in service of increasing the local visibility of Gallo speakerhood.

Although the preceding examples foreground the implications of synonymy on strategic ideological projects, other speakers who used *gallo* and *patois* as synonyms privileged the interpersonal rewards of including *patois*-speakers in the body of those who speak Gallo. Such motivations, implicit in Nânon’s interactions with her students above, are explicated in Example 6.7, below. Here, Gallo performer Marie-Brigitte

Bertrand talks about her theater troupe on stage after a performance.¹³⁹ She explains to her Gallo-learning high-school audience that she and her creative partner often come across audience members at their plays—usually “quite old people” (line 1), a quality that will be important shortly—who claim not to speak *gallo* (lines 4-5), although they do affirm they speak *patois* (lines 6-7):

Example 6.7 “We don’t belong to an academy of Gallo”

<p>1 Souvent y’a <u>des gens assez âgés là-</u> 2 <u>encore plus vieux que nous,</u> [ça veut tout dire], 3 qui viennent et qui et qui nous disent- 4 on leur dit <u>“est-ce que vous parlez pat- gallo ?”</u> 5 <u>“Non non”</u> 6 <u>“Et patois ? ”</u> 7 <u>“Bah oui ! Patois mais pas le gallo. ”</u> 8 Et nous, on n’a aucune fierté dans le- 9 <u>[pas ça on n’appartient pas] à une académie de</u> 10 <u>gallo,</u> 11 <u>on dit</u> 12 <u>“bah [quel tu parles patois tu parles gallo”</u> 13 C’est- 14 c’est ((to the Gallo teacher offstage)) je pense que 15 tu es d’accord avec nous hein ? 16 C’est la culture qui xxxx comme héritage, 17 qu’on transmet, 18 c’est tout. 19 <u>Y a beaucoup de gens qui-</u> 20 <u>qui n’osent pas dire que leurs parents ou leurs</u> 21 <u>grands-parents parlent patois,</u> 22 <u>parce que ça fait plouc quoi,</u> 23 ça fait (.) 24 Et alors que. 25 Alors que si on accep- 26 <u>si on va vers les grands-parents pour leur dire</u> 27 <u>euh,</u> 28 <u>“comme tu me parles comme ça,</u> 29 <u>comment que tu parles?”</u> 30 <u>On-</u> 31 <u>on redécouvre les gens.</u></p>	<p>Often there are <u>quite old people there-</u> <u>even older than us</u> [that’s saying something], who come and who tell us- we say to them <u>“Do you speak pat- Gallo?”</u> <u>“No no”</u> <u>“And patois?”</u> <u>“Well yes! Patois but not Gallo.”</u> And us, we’re not prideful in- <u>[not that, we don’t belong] to an academy of</u> <u>Gallo,</u> <u>we say</u> <u>“Well you speak patois you speak Gallo”</u> It’s- it’s ((to the Gallo teacher offstage)) I think you agree with us no? It’s the culture which xxxxx as heritage, that we transmit, that’s all. <u>There are a lot of people who-</u> <u>who don’t dare say that their parents or</u> <u>grand-parents speak patois,</u> <u>because it comes off as bumpkin you know,</u> it comes off (.) And whereas. Whereas if we accep- <u>if we go to the grandparents to tell them,</u> <u>um,</u> <u>“since you speak to me like this,</u> <u>how do you speak?”</u> <u>We-</u> <u>we rediscover people.</u></p>
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¹³⁹ This example comes from the same speech event as Example 1.

In the recreated dialogue (lines 4-11), Marie-Brigitte represents herself and her partner, Jean-Luc Oger, as “not being prideful” (line 8) regarding questions of terminology. In other words, they choose not to distance their artistic work from the label *patois*, thereby potentially alienating these older speakers for the sake of terminological orthodoxy. Indeed, Marie-Brigitte defines their own work in contrast to an imagined “Académie de gallo” (line 9), playfully modeled on the *Académie française*, a prescriptive language planning body, strongly normalizing in scope, that has arbitrated French language usage since the 17th century.¹⁴⁰ Instead of calling one term less accurate than the other, the structural parallelism of “Bah, tu parles patois tu parles gallo” [Well you speak *patois*, you speak *gallo*] (11) equates the two labels. Although the formulation may trend in the direction of *gallo* (after all, Marie-Brigitte does not say, “I speak *gallo*, I speak *patois*”), it nonetheless encourages a broad understanding of speakerhood. According to this inclusive definition, even people who feel they don’t speak *gallo* can still connect meaningfully with the actors and other audience members.

By denying that her and her partner’s attitudes are grounded in monist motivations, Marie-Brigitte foregrounds inclusiveness and the importance of the interpersonal rewards to be found when meeting people on the basis of whatever metalinguistic labels they choose to use. As she says, when one takes the time to ask, “How do you talk?” (line 27), one “rediscovers people” (line 29). Creating meaningful personal connections does not, however, mean erasing all forms of difference. Pluralist

¹⁴⁰ Article XXIV of the Academy’s statutes states its mission: *travailler avec tout le soin et la diligence possible à donner des règles certaines à notre langue et à la rendre pure, éloquente et capable de traiter les arts et les sciences* [to work with all possible care and diligence to give our language certain rules and to render it pure, eloquent and capable of dealing with the arts and science]. See Chapter 2 for more information.

ideological approaches also allowed speakers to index different ways of relating to Gallo, thus reaching a nuanced understanding of the various sociohistorical trajectories that led different people to engage with the language and what it represented for them. It is these uses that will be discussed next.

6.5.2 Indexical distinctions between users of ‘gallo’ and ‘patois’

Examples 6.5 through 6.7 focused on moments where speakers emphasized the underlying denotative similarities of the labels *gallo* and *patois*, stripping them of either pejorative or affirmative connotations for the purpose of maximizing visibility and creating connection. The present section will examine moments where speakers presented the two labels as denotative co-referents whose different connotations indexed two different—although both positively-valued—ways of being a Gallo-speaker and inhabiting the language. Although there were obviously counter-examples, especially given some individuals’ determination never to use the *patois* label, patterns of use emerged. Table 6.2, on the next page, outlines the indexical dimensions along which the two terms differentiated themselves and lists examples from this chapter. As this table illustrates, *patois* tended to connote a nostalgic relationship to the variety and its speakers, as well as an orientation toward a rural past; *gallo* connoted a more scholarly relationship to the language, perhaps less confident in practice (*knowing-how*, see Chapter 5) but richer in metalinguistic knowledge (*knowing-that*) and suited to engage with late-modern social realities.

Simultaneous age-, education- and acquisition-based distinctions between the speech practices of *gallo* and *patois* users can be seen in Example 6.8, taken from the same university Gallo lecture as Examples 6.3 and 6.4 above. The teacher, Claude,

Table 6.2 Indexical axes of distinction between “patois” and “gallo”

Dimension	PATOIS	GALLO	Illustrative examples
<i>Age</i>	older	inclusive of both old and younger speakers	“Ask him if he speaks <i>patois</i> ” (Example 6.6) “We don’t belong to an Academy of Gallo” (Example 6.7) “We didn’t speak exactly the language she had spoken” (Example 6.8) “Rap du Galo” (Example 6.17)
<i>Profession</i>	agriculture, farm machinery	teachers, intellectuals	“They say they speak ‘peasant’” (Examples 6.10 and 6.11) “I would speak a bit of patois” (Example 6.15)
<i>Schooling</i>	lacking formal education	formally educated	“We didn’t speak exactly the language she had spoken” (Example 6.8) “Rap du Galo” (Example 6.17)
<i>Acquisition</i>	in the home, from (grand)parents	at school and/or through purposeful <i>collectage</i> (fieldwork)	“We didn’t speak exactly the language she had spoken” (Example 6.8) “They say they speak ‘peasant’” (Examples 6.10 and 6.11) “I love ‘patois,’ I learn ‘gallo’” (Figure 1) “I established a completely different relationship with my own mother” (Example 6.16)
<i>Axis of linguistic comparison</i>	local differences from one village to the next	locally connected but also engaged with “world” languages	“We didn’t speak exactly the language she had spoken” (Example 6.8) “We didn’t speak like they did in Monterfil” (Example 6.9) “That would have been weird to me to go live elsewhere” (Example 6.14) “Rap du Gallo” (Example 6.17)
<i>Main competence</i>	Confident, un-selfconscious practice; <i>knowing-how</i>	metalinguistic knowledge, written code; <i>knowing-that</i>	“They say they speak ‘peasant’” (Examples 6.10 and 6.11) “That resembles Gallo” (Examples 6.12 and 6.13)

orients his discourse toward multiple addressees: his students, who listen silently, and Marcel, the professionally well-traveled friend whom he has invited to speak to the class. Here, Claude adopts a voice that blends his mother’s with the imagined voice of the mother of his friend Marcel. He has this amalgamated mother claim that her son’s education has given him a different relationship with *gallo* from that available to her as a speaker of *patois*:

Example 6.8 “*You speak Gallo, but me, I speak patois*”

1	Nos :: mères.	Our :: mothers.
2	Nous disaient,	Used to tell us,
3	<u>“<i>Tai Marcel,</i></u>	<u>“<i>You Marcel</i></u>
4	<u><i>tu caozes galo,</i></u>	<u><i>You speak Gallo,</i></u>
5	<u><i>més mai je caoze patouéz,</i></u>	<u><i>But me, I speak patois,</i></u>
6	<u>C’était pour montrer justement que le petit</u> <u>gâ là</u>	<u>It was to show in fact that the little man there</u>
7	<u><i>li q’alæet aux Etats-Unis,</i></u>	<u><i>he who went to the United States</i></u>
8	<u><i>li q’alæet à Versailles,</i></u>	<u><i>he who went to Versailles,</i></u>
9	<u><i>a fait des études,</i></u>	<u><i>he got an education,</i></u>
10	<u><i>i n’tæet pus !</i></u>	<u><i>he wasn’t anymore !</i></u>
11	<u>exactement,</u>	<u>Quite</u>
12	<u><i>coume :: sa mere l’avaet fêt cant i taet petit,</i></u>	<u><i>like :: his mother made him when he was little,</i></u>
13	<i>diq’a l’âje de :: quatorze ans,</i>	<i>until the age of :: fourteen,</i>
14	<i>qhïnze ans cant i taet parti fére des études à</i> <i>[school]</i>	<i>fifteen when he left to study at [school]</i>
15	Saint-Brieuc.	Saint-Brieuc.
16	<i>Donc vaila.</i>	<i>So there.</i>
17	<u><i>Ma la mienne m’a dit la même chose,</i></u>	<u><i>Mine told me the same thing,</i></u>
18	Même si nos mères étaient très fières de nous ! ((pause))	Even if our mothers were very proud of us! ((pause))
19	Mais sur le plan linguistique	But on the linguistic side of things
20	Elle voulait me faire comprendre’ que	She wanted me to understand that
21	<u>On ne parlait pas,</u>	<u>We didn’t speak,</u>
22	<u>exactement,</u>	<u>exactly,</u>
23	<u>la langue que (.) elle,</u>	<u>the language that (.) she,</u>
24	<u>elle avait parlée en tant que langue</u> <u>maternelle,</u>	<u>she had spoken as a mother tongue,</u>
25	<u>la langue qu’elle avait apprise,</u>	<u>the language that she had learned,</u>
26	<u>elle-même,</u>	<u>herself,</u>
27	<u>de :: sa mère</u>	<u>from :: her mother</u>

Here, Claude sets up an opposition between *patouéz*, spoken by a mother (line 5) who learned it herself as a “mother tongue” from her own mother (lines 25-27), and *gallo*, spoken by a son (line 4) who left the local town (lines 7-8, 14-15) to receive an education (line 9) that led him to command a different linguistic repertoire (lines 21-24).

Interestingly, Claude frames the contrast first as something Marcel’s mother told Marcel, although nothing Marcel had said earlier in the lecture indicated his mother had told him anything of the sort. In generalizing to his friend what he later claims (line 17) as his own experience, this teacher constructs negotiating the *patouéz/gallo* split as a putatively shared experience for educated Gallo users of their generation.

In juxtaposition to the teacher’s using *gallo* to denote the speech practices of someone who has been to Versailles and the United States, *patois* was often used to denote speech practices imagined as varying over very small scales of distance, indexing a local place orientation. During one group discussion I led with older retirees in the small town of Treffendel (population approximately 1000), the language label used initially was *gallo*—perhaps unexpected given that I had explained I was studying the variety for an academic dissertation. However, once one participant, whom I call Madeleine, commented that “Dans *le temps là* on appelait point ça le ‘gallo’ hein? On appelait ça le ‘patois!’” [Back in *those days* we didn’t call it *gallo* right? we called it the *patois!*], an animated exchange began, during which the word *patois* was humorously circulated six times. Discussion shifted to how their childhood *patois* was different from that spoken in Monterfil, a slightly larger town less than five kilometers away, where a major Gallo festival is held every summer:

Example 6.9 “We didn’t talk like they did in Monterfil”

1	Madeline :	<u>Ben dans <i>le temp là</i> on appelait point ça le gallo hein ?</u>	<u>Well back in <i>those days</i> we didn’t call it Gallo right?</u>
2		<u>On appelait ça le patois :::^</u>	<u>We called it the patois :::^</u>
	Various :	((laughter, overlapping conversation))	
3	Mayor :	Eh ben oui !	Yes indeed !
4	Madeline :	<u>Le patois oui :::^ ((unintelligible)) le patois !</u>	<u>Yes, the patois :::^ ((unintelligible)) the patois !</u>
5	Man 1 :	<u>[c’est le patois]</u>	<u>[it’s patois]</u>
6	Man 2 :	<u>[je [dis] gallo moi oui]</u>	<u>[I [say] gallo, as for me]</u>
7	Man 3 :	<u>[c’était ce qu’] on patoisæet</u>	<u>[it was what] one talked in patois</u>
8	Madeline :	<u>=On patoisæet bien nous hein ?</u>	<u>We talked in patois well, we did, right?</u>
		[2 turns omitted]	[2 turns omitted]
9	Woman 1 :	<u>On caosaet drôlement tu sais</u>	<u>We talked funny you know</u>
10	Man 3 :	<u>On caosaet pas comme à Monterfil.</u>	<u>We didn’t talk like they did in Monterfil.</u>

Whereas the label *gallo* was used as well, discussion of very local axes of differentiation seems for these participants to be indexically suited to the label *patois*.

Underlying the amused discussion of the *patois* these older participants once spoke is a sense of unselfconscious skill, as the “bien” in line 8 can be taken to mean either “We *talked in patois* well” or “We really did *talk in patois*”—even if one could interpret the laughing undertones to mean that these speakers saw the very idea of skill in *patois* to be a bit laughable. *Patois* speakers were in fact often depicted as having competence “knowing how” to use Gallo (cf. Examples 6.10 and 6.11 below). In contrast, *gallo* speakers were depicted as “knowing that” Gallo was a different language from French, worthy of being celebrated, but not necessarily permitting themselves to speak it freely. As Nânon (the teacher in Example 6.6) once told me in an interview, she feels that for older speakers¹⁴¹ it is “une privilège” [a privilege] not to “s’pozer la qhession” [ask themselves the question] of “‘j’oze ti caoz’ le galo-là” [‘do I dare speak such-and-such a gallo’]. She herself, a woman in her early 30s at the time of data collection, does “ask herself questions” before speaking Gallo with a new acquaintance, both because it is unexpected of young people and because, as she commented wryly, it does not always come off as “distinguée” [classy] for a woman of her generation. Whereas those older speakers can enjoy what she implies is an untroubled ease of practice, of *knowing-how*, her young appearance leads Nânon to take up an epistemic stance marked by self-interrogation before she can demonstrate her own strongly developed *knowing-how* in

¹⁴¹ Nânon does not call those older speakers *patois* speakers here, and indeed she used the term quite rarely (outside of the above-excerpted Example 6). However, Example 8 establishes that older speakers were more often deemed *patois* speakers than were young speakers in their 20s and 30s like Nânon.

front of strangers, as well as the metalinguistic knowledge of *knowing-that* she has demonstrated in her Gallo publications.

A final example of how terminological multiplicity can be used to draw indexical distinctions does not regard the term *patois*, but still uses terminological pluralism to draw distinctions based on social class, education, *knowing-how* and *knowing-that*, and rural environment. Instead of the age-connoting term *patois*, the high-school-age speakers use a term that may well be becoming an equivalent of *patois* among some younger speakers describing their own speech practices: *le paysan*, or “peasant.” In Examples 6.10 and 6.11, a class of Gallo high-school students is discussing the “Bac Pros,” students who are enrolled in a technical high school degree program at their school. The student who first mentions these peers, to the enthusiastic response of his classmates and teacher, constructs them as “half” speaking a language that is “comme ça” [like Gallo] (lines 2, 5, 10), but that they instead call *paysan* (line 8):

Example 6.10 “They don’t say that they speak Gallo”

1	Patrick :	<u>Ce qui est drôle aussi c’est avec les bac pros</u>	<u>What’s weird also it’s with the bac pros</u>
2		<u>parce qu’on en a plein ils parlent à moitié comme ça</u>	<u>because we have a lot of them who speak half like that</u>
3		fin euh :::	well um :::
4	Prof. :	Oui !	Yes !
5	Patrick :	Mais <u>ils disent pas qu’ils parlent gallo.</u>	But <u>they don’t say that they speak Gallo.</u>
6	Prof. :	Ah oui !	Ah yes!
7	Patrick :	<u>Ils disent qu’ils parlent le ‘paysan’ quoi</u>	<u>They say that they speak ‘peasant’ you know.</u>
8		<u>entre eux pour rigoler quoi.</u>	<u>among themselves to laugh you know.</u>
9	Prof. :	Ah oui.	Ah yes.
10	Patrick :	Ils disent pas qu’ils parlent gallo.	They don’t say that they speak Gallo.

In the discussion that follows, Patrick, his teacher, and his classmates never use *patois* to label the Bac Pros’ speech. However, Patrick had earlier that day linked the idea of peasantness, of being *paysan*, to the *patois* label, when explaining why some people

laughed when they learned he studied Gallo: “Fin pour eux en fait c’est vraiment un patois, c’est la langue des vieux paysans quoi, le vacher qui range les vaches” [well for them in fact it’s really a *patois*, it’s the language of old peasants [‘paysans’], you know, the cowherd who herds the cows].

In Example 6.11, which continues directly from Example 6.10, Patrick, the teacher, and a classmate I have called Marine go on to draw a series of implicit oppositions between their own language use and that of the “half”-Gallo-speaking Bac Pros. Their sense-making endeavor accentuates the differences between themselves, part of a *gallo* class that meets to talk about language and culture, and the Bac Pros, who have “a few words” (line 14), “syntax” and “expressions” (line 16), while lacking “aucune culture sur- sur cette langue, en fait d’où ça vient et cetera” [“any culture on this language, in fact, where it comes from et cetera”] (lines 17-18):

Example 6.11 “For them it’s only natural”

11	Marine :	Oui oui [c’est bizarre] m’enfin parce que ::	Yes yes [it’s weird] after all because ::
12	Prof. :	Ah c’est bizarre ?	Oh it’s weird?
13		Parce qu’ils n’ont-	Because they don’t have-
14		<u>ils ont quelques mots tout ça,</u>	<u>they have a few words all of that,</u>
15		<u>quelques-</u>	<u>some-</u>
16		<u>syntaxe expressions,</u>	<u>syntax expressions,</u>
17		<u>mais il n’ont pas du tout aucune</u>	<u>but they don’t have at all any culture on-</u>
18		<u>culture sur-</u>	<u>on this language,</u>
19		<u>sur cette langue,</u>	
19		en fait d’où ça vient et cetera,	in fact, where it comes from et cetera,
		[8 lines omitted]	[8 lines omitted]
28	Marine :	<u>Mais pour eux c’est normal</u> en fait	<u>But for them it’s only natural</u> in fact
29		<u>ils se rendent pas compte qu’ils-</u>	<u>they don’t realize that they-</u>
30		<u>parlent comme ça !</u>	<u>speak like that !</u>
31	SK :	Ah non okay	Oh no okay
32	Patrick :	Ben c’est [parce que c’est-	Well it’s [because it’s-
33	Marine :	[Parce que c’est dans leur cult-	[because it’s in their cult-
34		m’enfin ‘dans leur culture’	I mean ‘in their culture’
35		[[c’est quand même xxxx]	[[it’s still xxxxx]

36 Prof. :	[Oui dans leur-	[Yes in their-
37	<u>ehh ils parlent encore un peu dans leur euh</u>	<u>um they speak still a little in their um</u>
38	<u>milieu familial comme ça.</u>	<u>family environment like that.</u>
39 Marine :	Ouais.	Yeah.
40 Patrick :	<u>Ouais parce que c'est les Bac Pros</u>	<u>Yeah because it's the Bac Pros</u>
41	<u>pour euh réparer les tracteurs.</u>	<u>for um fixing tractors.</u>
42 SK :	Okay.	Okay.
43 Patrick :	Donc euh ((laughs))	So um ((laughs))
44 Prof. :	<u>Le milieu agricole oui.</u>	<u>The agricultural environment right.</u>

In this discussion, Patrick, Marine and their teacher associate *paysan* speakers with practice (*knowing-how*), a lack of metaculture about Gallo, intergenerational family transmission (line 38) and “le milieu agricole” [the agricultural environment, line 44]—given that the technological program is “pour euh réparer les tracteurs” [for um fixing tractors], as Patrick tells me in an aside in lines 40-41. The students in the agricultural tech program are thus depicted as having a relationship with Gallo (or rather *paysan*) that the Gallo students I talked to admired for their expressiveness, even if there seems to be an undercurrent of class mockery in their description.

The way these *gallo*-learning high school students talked about the *paysan*- or *half-gallo*-using Bac Pro boys in many respects resembled the high school conversations reported by Cavanaugh (2009), where students figured Bergamasco users as engaged in blue-collar, traditionally masculine occupations:

The cluster of associations of roughness, men’s voices, and Bergamasco seemed most deeply felt by young speakers... A young woman... noticed that various boys who had gone to work directly after middle school tended to speak almost entirely in dialect. A young man responded that this is because these boys tended to work in construction... Speaking Bergamasco indexed certain types of male-dominant work and workplaces, namely manual and unskilled labor. (66)

However, an important difference is that while Cavanaugh’s students dissociated all kinds of Bergamasco use from education and status, the general-education Gallo students

with whom I talked affiliated themselves with Gallo practice as well—but under a different label, *gallo* rather than *paysan* or *patois*.

Ironically, given scheduling constraints, the only students who could take the Gallo elective were those who, like Patrick, Marine and their classmates, followed general educational tracks rather than technical ones. This reinforces the split between traditionally rural and blue-collar *paysan* or *patois* speakers and often-university-educated *gallo* speakers and their language practices. The terminological pluralism between *gallo* and *paysan* gave these students and their teacher a resource for drawing insider/outsider distinctions and negotiating the various sociohistorical trajectories that might lead one to become a speaker (or “half” a speaker) of a language. As Patrick told me, when his Bac Pro “pote” [bud] asked him “C’est quoi le gallo?” he answered, “ben c’est la langue que tu parles à moitié” [“well it’s the language you half speak”].¹⁴² Such distinctions do not completely delegitimize or erase one group, but they do help construct them as different.

6.6 Beyond “pride” and “profit”: Ideological ramifications of pluralism

6.6.1 Resistance to “pride,” “profit,” and the *gallo* label

In this section, I will show that the term *gallo* was not always well accepted locally, and raise the question as to why. Might resistance to the term *gallo* point toward the presence of another way of bestowing value on the language, other than “pride” and

¹⁴² While this may seem disparaging, many Gallo students did not consider themselves “full” speakers either. When I observed another high school class, also taught by Patrick and Marine’s teacher, students were filling out a language survey that asked them to rate their Gallo competence along dimensions such as “You speak: with difficulty, without difficulty or not at all.” This exercise provoked much laughing, hedging, and rueful statements such as “quelques mots” [a few words] or “avec le dictionnaire tout va bien” [with the dictionary everything’s good]. It appeared that only-*knowing-that* was rated no more heavily than only-*knowing-how* when it came to high schoolers’ evaluation of speakerhood.

“profit,” whose discourses tended wholeheartedly to embrace the term? The speakers in Section 6.5 all tended readily to use the label *gallo* in their unmarked acts of referring (even though, as shown, they were also welcoming of the label *patois*). Their common usage of *gallo* is unsurprising given that I drew my participants from a population of individuals who chose to create in, advocate for, or study Gallo—all official status-planning contexts in which a label indexing “pride” and “profit” would be expected to find warm reception. However, the term in widest use locally remained *patois* (Blanchet & Trehel 2002; Le Coadic 1998; Le Coq 1999). At times, this was true even when the label *gallo* was provided as an alternative.

Example 6.12, excerpted from the group interview with my adult-speaking Gallo classmates, illustrates how even some individuals whom my classmates recognized as prolific Gallo users did not accept the label *gallo*. Instead, those *knowing-how* speakers called it *patois*:

Example 6.12 “It resembles patois”

- | | | |
|--------------|---|---|
| 1 SK : | Oui ? et les gens-là donc le (.) le cousin, les (.) euh <u>les gens dans- dans votre famille ou votre entourage qui (.) qui parlent le plus gallo, est-ce qu'ils ont tendance à appeler ça 'gallo' ou (.) 'patois'?</u> | Yes ? And so those people (.) the cousin, the (.) um <u>the people in in your family or your network who (.) who speak the most Gallo, do they tend to call it "Gallo" or (.) ["patois"]?</u> |
| 2 Marie : | <u>[Non ! pas de tout. 'Patois.'</u> | <u>[No ! Not at all. 'Patois.'</u> |
| 3 Michelle : | Alors là, | And that there, |
| 4 Josette : | Et et et depuis que je fais du gallo j'ai pas vu mon cousin, mais <u>[je- si je lui demandais (.) quelle langue i- si c'est la langue qu'il parle il me dirait " du patois."</u> | And and and ever since I've started doing Gallo I haven't seen my cousin, but [I- <u>if I were to ask him (.) what language he- if it's the language he speaks he would tell me "patois."</u> |
| 5 Michelle : | [Oui | [Yes |
| 6 Marie : | [Patois ! | [Patois ! |
| 7 Michelle : | <u>Du patois oui, ah ben moi j'ai entendu souvent (.) là, depuis que j'en parle,</u> | <u>Patois yes, well me I have often heard (.) ever since I've started speaking about it,</u> |
| 8 SK : | Mm | Mm |

9 Michelle : “ Ah les- le gallo ça ressemble au patois” “ Ah the- Gallo, that resembles patois”

According to my classmates Marie (turns 2 and 6), Josette (turn 4), and Michelle (turns 7 and 9), it is particularly those people who have grown up hearing or speaking Gallo—who patently ‘know how’ to use the language’s communicative resources—who refuse to accept the *gallo* label. In turn 2, Marie supplies the label *patois* as an alternative for *Gallo* even before I finish asking the question. Michelle’s emphatic “Alors là!” or “That there!” in turn 3 and the high amount of overlapping speech further convey the animated response my classmates had to this question. All of this suggests my classmates have often faced local discourses that refused to admit of *gallo* as a synonym for *patois*, at best conceptualizing the semantic relationship as one of resemblance (“ça ressemble,” turn 9). Following these turns, my classmates continued to commiserate about the difficulty of getting acquaintances to acknowledge that the language they were studying, which they called *gallo*, was the same as *patois*. Marie and Michelle in particular repeated the phrase “ça ressemble” [it resembles] four times, highlighting their frustration with family and friends’ apparent inability to, as Josette later said, “se mettre ça dans la tête” [get it into their heads] that *gallo* is the language these other speakers know as *patois*.

Not only did these linguistically proficient acquaintances prefer the term *patois*, but they also actively distanced their own local speech forms from the term *gallo*. This is evident in Marie’s anecdote, which followed Michelle’s above by 11 turns, about what happened when someone told Marie’s sister-in-law that Marie was taking Gallo classes:

Example 6.13 “They can’t get it, you know?”

1	Marie :	Même ma belle-sœur moi, elle m’a dit ça l’autre jour. Elle m’a dit, “ Ben oui le gallo, bah oui oui” (.) Il y a quelqu’un qui lui a dit ‘Marie fait du gallo,’ alors l’autre elle dit, “ Du gallo ?” Elle dit “ Mais oui	Even my sister-in-law, she told me that the other day. She told me, “Well yes Gallo, well yes yes.” (.) There’s someone who told her “Marie does Gallo” and so the other one she says,
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		<u>mais quelque chose qui ressemble à not' patois !"</u>	<u>"Gallo?" she says "Well yes well it's something that resembles our patois!"</u>
2	Michelle :	Oui ?	Yes ?
3	Marie :	J'ai dit " Mais quand même ! Cécile, <u>depuis quand que je te dis que c'est le même !"</u>	I said, " Really? Cécile, <u>how long has it been that I've been telling you that it's the same!"</u>
4	Michelle:	C'est- oui ! Oui !	It's – yes! Yes!
5	Marie:	<u>Mais elle y arrive pas hein ?</u>	<u>But she can't get it you know?</u>

Here, the contrast between the two terms is accentuated by the use of the possessive determiner, as Marie represents her sister-in-law in turn 1 as aligning with *patois* by calling it “notre patois” [ours] and dissociating from *gallo* by denoting it “quelque chose” [something]. As depicted here, these Gallo-speaking relatives reject true synonymy between the terms, no matter how often they have heard counterarguments, such as Marie’s frustrated remark in turn 3 (“Really?... How long has it been that I’ve been telling you that it’s the same!”).

Importantly, people like Marie’s sister-in-law are portrayed as having heard both labels and nonetheless preferring *patois*. Marie constructs this refusal as hardheadedness (“she can’t get it,” line 5 of Example 13), but is there another interpretation? Evidence that some local residents oriented away from the label *gallo*, despite familiarity with official pro-Gallo stances, can be found elsewhere in my fieldwork experiences. For example, while I was sitting at an informational stand at a language festival in Breton-speaking Lannion, under a large sign labeled “GALLO”, a passerby hailed me with a friendly, “Vous parlez le patois de quel coin?” [What area’s patois do you speak?]. The question itself showed that the man was familiar with activist discourses promoting *gallo* as an alternative for *patois*. What might explain this man’s adherence to the label *patois*, despite the prominent role played by the label *gallo* in the surrounding visual and textual space of the festival?

As established above, the concerns cited by those espousing monist use of the label *gallo*—taxonomy-friendliness, globalizing scopes, and cultural pride—call to mind the ideologies of “pride” and “profit,” as described by Heller and Duchêne (2012). Perhaps one reason the label *gallo* has been met with less than universal acceptance is that “profit” and “pride” discourses often do not resonate locally for Gallo. Indeed, other aspects of my fieldwork experiences suggest that while these ideologies are frequently invoked for Breton, they have limited local currency for Gallo. “Profit” tropes, for example, permeated a booklet I often saw at Breton stands at language festivals, aimed at encouraging residents of the Breton-speaking département of Finistère to consider bilingual education for their children. The fully bilingual French-Breton booklet, entitled *Bilingualism for little ones: A great benefit in life*,¹⁴³ contains a forward written by the president of the Conseil general du Finistère stating that “In the time of market internationalization and of Europe, no one contests any more the benefit, for young children, of mastering several languages.”¹⁴⁴ While the booklet offers suggestions specific to Breton, it also mentions Arabic, Turkish, Wolof and English—but nowhere in its 64 pages does it discuss Gallo, spoken or understood by several hundred thousand people living in Brittany.¹⁴⁵

Despite some individual Gallo teachers’ drawing on a rhetoric of “profit” to promote their classes, larger institutional forces seem not to perceive of Gallo as an

¹⁴³ *Le bilinguisme pour les petits: Un grand atout pour la vie / An divyezhegezh evit ar re vihan: un elfenn a-bouez en o buhez*

¹⁴⁴ “ A l’heure de l’internationalisation des échanges et de l’Europe, personne ne conteste plus le bénéfice, pour le jeune enfant, de maîtriser plusieurs langues.”

¹⁴⁵ Granted, the département of Finistère is historically Breton- and not Gallo-speaking, and Gallo classes were not offered in this territory. However, the booklet’s forward calls Breton *notre langue régionale* [our regional language, singular], not *notre langue départementale*, implying Gallo’s marginalization on a regional level as well.

economically valuable commodity, and some participants, even those who clearly appreciated Gallo, did not appear to disagree. When one of my Gallo classmates, Bernard, complained that his coworker told him that his leisure Gallo class “sert à rien” [serves for nothing], another classmate, Josette, did not contest the judgment but instead responded, “Mais non c’est sûr que ça sert à rien; c’est la culture personnelle hein?” [Well no, of course it’s good for nothing; it’s personal culture you know?]. Marie, a third classmate, agreed: “C’est du plaisir!” [It’s fun]. By “profit,” Heller and Duchêne evoke how languages tend to operate in the new economy: as *added symbolic value* that makes products seem more authentic and valuable, and as a *mode of management* for global networks. In their discourses, Gallo advocates do draw on feelings of value they express by speaking and advocating for Gallo, but these systems of value seem to be resolutely personal, such as Josette’s comment about self-awareness or “personal culture,” rather than focused on means to an explicit economic end. If there is value to be found in Gallo, such discourses suggest, it is not of a type that can be quantified on the market.

As Chapter 3 has established, advocates of Breton have also wielded “pride” discourses, dominating efforts to commoditize the regional speech practices and perceived cultural distinctiveness of Brittany. Crêpe trucks in Paris, Brittany-based businesses, and various political slogans use the regional name “Breizh” for Brittany, rather than the Gallo “Bertègn.” As Daniel Giraudon, author of several books on Breton but also of one of the most popular folk dictionaries of Gallo, recounted of his childhood: “For us, ‘the real Bretons’ were those over there, in the western part of Brittany.... our ignorance of the Celtic idiom made us ‘stupid Bretons’” (2012:5-6).¹⁴⁶ The pun *sots-*

¹⁴⁶ “Pour nous, ‘les vrais Bretons’ étaient là-bas, dans la partie ouest de la Bretagne.... Notre ignorance de l’idiome celtique faisait de nous des ‘sots-Bretons.’”

Bretons relies upon the rhyming of *sots* [so] –*Bretons*, or ‘stupid’ Bretons, and *Hauts* [o]-*Bretons*, residents of Upper (or Gallo-speaking) Brittany. This oft-repeated wordplay constructs Breton-speaking Lower Bretons as more authentically Breton and more intelligent than their Gallo-speaking neighbors to the east. Certainly, many of my participants—largely selected from a sample of individuals who have chosen to consecrate their artistic, advocacy or educational endeavors to Gallo—have contested this idea. They have immense feelings of pride in and affection for Gallo, and their efforts have indeed gained recognition for the variety. But given the readily available regional “pride” signifier of Breton and the longstanding perception of Gallo as grammatically incorrect French, the (re)branding of Gallo as *gallo* has not appeared, at least as of yet, to have found immense popularity as an emblem of ethno-regional “pride.”

In such settings, some may find the insistence on the label *gallo* to be patronizing or otherwise alienating, a tool of intellectuals seeking to stigmatize the familiar labeling practices of rural, less-educated, older speakers while ostensibly championing the very language they speak. This insight was also arrived at by Corbel in his 1984 dissertation:

The word *gallo* is known and used particularly by Upper-Bretons who live near the linguistic border, but no longer in the eastern parts of Upper Brittany. From whence comes the impression, which persists still today among the ‘people of the east,’ that it is a recent invention, or else a ‘creation of Les Amis du Parler Gallo’ [a Gallo activism organization known today as *Bertègn galèzz*]. (280)¹⁴⁷

While *patois* is indexically affiliated with older, rural, less-educated speakers, the opposing indexicalities of *gallo* may lead some to see the label as “a recent invention,” in Corbel’s words, of activists or intellectuals. Similar sentiments can be imagined to

¹⁴⁷“ Le mot *gallo* [est] surtout connu et utilisé par les Hauts-Bretons de proximité de frontière linguistique, ne l’étant plus dans les parties orientales de la Haute-Bretagne. D’où l’impression, qui persiste aujourd’hui encore chez les ‘gens de l’Est’, qu’il s’agit d’une invention récente, voire d’une ‘création des Amis du Parler Gallo.’” (280)

underlie the treatment of the label *gallo* in the draft of a chapter (ultimately unused) from a self-published autobiography, which its author generously shared with me when he heard I was doing research on Gallo. Although the writer, formerly mayor of a community in Gallo-speaking Ille-et-Vilaine, was aware that official discourses suggest *gallo* to be the preferred term, his inclusion of it mocks such stances and the label they espouse. He acknowledges that that this “patois” was “appelé par des ‘intellectuels’ le parler gallo” [called by ‘intellectuals’ the Gallo way of speaking, n.p.], but the quotation marks around the word “intellectuals” reveals his estimation of their authority. The writer’s later “self-correction” (which the written medium makes less a correction than a purposeful statement) is likewise telling: “...l'on peut trouver des écrits en patois, (oh pardon) ‘en gallo.’ Les règles de cette écriture en sont forcément arbitraires” [...one can find writing in patois, (oh excuse me) ‘in Gallo.’ The rules of this writing system are necessarily arbitrary, n.p.].

This writer’s play with hedging typography implies that it may not just be a lack of publicity of the term *gallo*, but rather a fundamental mismatch between ideologies of language labeling and the lived experience of language use, which encourage many local residents to favor the term *patois*. Although I met the writer at a lecture about Gallo, and although he seemed to enjoy exchanging ideas with the lecturer and other attendees, he differed from the majority of my participants in that he was not a Gallo activist, teacher, student or performer. Indeed, he was clear—in both his writing, shared with me when he learned of my interest, and in interview discourse—that for him, the variety, although his “langue-mère” [mother tongue], was not “une langue” [a language], its being too typologically proximal to French. The writer is the same former-mayor speaker who

contradicted Claude's attempt to use a discourse of "profit" in Example 6.2 above, claiming Gallo "didn't help us" in school. In a later interview, the mayor clarified that he admired the French spoken by his native-Breton-speaking colleagues and felt that their Celtic mother-tongue made them work harder at French, eventually becoming more eloquent even than native French speakers. He thus implicitly accepted "profit" tropes from Breton-French bilingualism. However, he felt that native Gallo-speakers spoke poorer French as a result: they had been discouraged by Gallo's typological proximity from fully learning the prescriptive rules of standard French.

Despite his refusal of "pride" and "profit" tropes, the writer's discourse elsewhere revealed affection for the variety alongside *chagrin*, and his book, which has a subtitle identifying him as a "paysan" [peasant], features several Gallo expressions related to agricultural practice. His "paysan" identity label and use of Gallo to discuss bygone rural living suggests this writer may feel more attraction to the indexicalities connoted by *patois*, discussed in Section 6.5.2, than to the "pride" and "profit" often indexed through use of the *gallo* label from which he disaligns. While "pride" and "profit" characterize two common ways late-capitalist institutions commoditize language, Heller and Duchêne do not claim they are the only ideological tropes that operate regarding minority languages in late-modern societies. The remaining pages of this chapter will show a possible third way of understanding the value of Gallo, if one that up until now has not been extensively co-opted by late-capitalist forces.

6.6.2 *An ideology of "personal connection"*

By way of introduction to this system of valuation, the photograph in Figure 6.1, below, shows two newspaper advertisements for regional language classes in Brittany.



Figure 6.1 Ads in *Ouest-France*, back-to-school special edition, September 2012

The larger advertisement, which promotes Breton classes, shows the use of both “pride” and “profit” discourses in advocating for this other regional language of Brittany, as will be elaborated below. The smaller advertisement, on top, is for Gallo classes and invokes neither “pride” nor “profit.” A closer look at the semiotics of the two ads illustrates how the Gallo advocates behind this advertisement are encouraging an alternative way of understanding the variety’s value. One might assume at first that both listings draw on “pride” discourses above all others; after all, the newspaper page in question is devoted to *langues traditionnelles*, (Breton, Gallo, and “Hebrew/Yiddish”), with other languages under columns such as *langues européennes*, *langues orientales*, *divers* [miscellaneous], *français*, *anglais* and *conversation*. On the surface, then, it would seem that both languages are equally “traditional.” However, the two educational organizations drew on

different understandings of “tradition” when creating their advertisements, such that while the Breton slogan clearly uses a “pride” trope, the Gallo one focuses on a more personal sense of affiliation.

The Breton advertisement uses a bilingual slogan that foregrounds ethnicity, a clear marker of “pride” tropes: *Da bep labous e gan, da bep pobl he yezh* (Breton), *A chaque oiseau son chant, à chaque peuple sa langue* (French). In English, this translates as “To each bird its song, to each people its language.” The slogan implies two claims: first, that Breton is the language of one unitary “people,” and secondly, via the use of the singular noun *langue*, that that “people” has only one language. Additionally, the grammatical parallelism of the slogan naturalizes the relationship between this one language and its ethnic group, as that relationship is likened to the (partially) hereditary relationship between bird species and birdsong in the natural world. Such naturalizations are a hallmark of “pride” discourses, as people are “called into being” (Heller & Duchêne 2012: 5) as a collectivity purely by virtue of the language they share. While “pride” discourses are “a product of the modern nation-state” (4), the Breton case illustrates the authors’ claim that such tropes are also used in projects of regional resistance to nationalist hegemony. In so doing, these projects invert the typical hierarchy of national languages over regional ones (c.f. Jaffe 1990), but they ultimately leave unchallenged the ideology according to which languages “simultaneously [construct] homogeneity and boundaries, bringing some people into citizenship through language learning, and excluding others” (4).

The Breton course advertisement also invokes discourses of “profit,” all the better to position Breton as a technical and marketable skill. The bullet-pointed list to the right

(itself indexical of the PowerPoint-esque presentations endemic to late capitalism) features numerous ‘buzzwords’ of language-learning in the twenty-first century: *formule d’auto-apprentissage* [self-guided learning plan], *stages accélérés* [accelerated workshops], *formation professionnelle* [professional training program], and the acronyms *DIF* and *CIF*, which refer to the *droit individuel à la formation* and the *congé individuel de formation*, mechanisms put in place by the French government to assure workers the right to partake in continuing education or professional development programs. These claims position Breton as an advantage in the late-capitalist marketplace, something that increasingly mobile and globalized individuals could take with them when moving from one context of exchange to another.

Yet notably, the tropes of “pride” and “profit” both are largely absent from the smaller advertisement for Gallo classes, printed just above the Breton ad in Figure 6.1. Whereas the Breton ad invokes a unitary “people”, the Gallo ad makes no explicit claim about ethnic or regional belonging. Instead, it declares: *J’em lë patouâz, j’apren l’galo* [*I love Patois, I learn Gallo*]. Through the use of the first-person singular subject pronoun *je*, the advertisement constructs the decision to enroll in *gallo* classes as primarily a personal one, based on personal feelings of “love” and affection for *lë patouâz*. Whereas the newspaper’s structural organization implies that both Breton and Gallo are semiotically linked to tradition, only the Breton advertisement essentializes this tradition as defining, in and of itself, a “people.” These juxtaposed ads mark a symbolic contrast between the Breton language, seen as a vehicle for Breton culture, and Gallo, often seen—if acknowledged at all—as being of personal or local (rather than regional or ethnic) relevance. In fact, the rarity with which claims of ethnic membership, seen here

only for Breton, were used in support of Gallo advocacy distinguishes this community from the prevailing way in which European minority language advocacy has been understood by linguistic anthropologists to date. In the comparative absence of such ideologies, how did Gallo advocates understand Gallo's value?

The the local and affective emphasis of the Gallo advertisement in Figure 6.1 points to an alternative scheme for evaluation, one evoked by the harmonious co-presence of *patois* and *gallo* in the slogan. *I love patois*, it says; *I learn gallo*. Here we see echoes of the indexical distinction presented in Table 6.2 above. *Patois* is a language-object one can love, as it evokes older people (one's parents or ancestors), intergenerational contact and transmission, traditional occupations such as agriculture, and local place distinctions. *Gallo* is a language-object one can learn, as it is taught in schools, spoken by those who are educated, and used to make connections with far-off people and places. One can trace parallels to Woolard's (2005[2008]) distinction between national and regional languages' sources of authority (anonymity vs. authenticity) and Gumperz's (1982) distinction between "they" codes and "we" codes in codeswitching, as well as Trudgill's (1972) distinction between overt and covert prestige. However, here these different stances of loving and learning are taken, not with respect to two different language varieties, but to one and the same variety under two different labels.

Importantly, the slogan's structural parallelism (*I love patois; I learn gallo*) equates and unites these two ways of inhabiting a Gallo-oriented identity: one that loves a language-object called *patois*, and another that learns a language-object called *gallo*. What value there is to be found in learning and using Gallo, claims the slogan, is the ability to draw connections between people at times seen as disparate, and in showing

that the beloved language practices of a rural past that is often constructed as disappearing are not lost, but visibly and manifestly connected to the language practices of people today. I call this ideology one of *personal connection*. Bèrtan Ôbrée, who is a founder and employee of the organization involved in promoting the slogan, claimed to be writing his Gallo magazine column so that people from the area could say “*Ca nous fèt pllézi*” [‘It makes us happy’], an affective response, and also so that others could say “*On ét pàs de ded-là, més come ça, on comprend un ptit mieûs est-ce q’on ouaet qhoqefai den le coin*” [‘We’re not from here, but now, we understand a little better what we hear sometimes around here’]—a response valuing local knowledge and visibility.

Whereas ideologies of “pride” and “profit” may be threatened by pluralist terminological uses of the label *patois*, as seen in Section 6.4.2, an ideology of “personal connection” is in fact furthered by terminological pluralism. Both non-pejorative uses of *patois* outlined above—the evaluatively neutral synonym used in Section 6.5.1 and the difference-connoting index used in Section 6.5.2—help those drawing on an ideology of “personal connection” to portray Gallo both as real and present in Upper Brittany today (and thus available as a tool for personal stancetaking) despite discourses associating all of Brittany with Breton, and as a language capable of being used in acts of alignment both with loved ones of the rural past and the lived realities of twenty-first-century life. The complementarity of the past and the present is also found in the mission statement of Chubri, the organization promulgating the advertisement in Figure 6.1, which combines an orientation to past generations’ speech practices (e.g. “*Qraye dée z’outi d’amèn pourr bèn rdone l’qaoze dée z’ansièn a la jieunèss e ée horvènu*” [To create useful tools to

transmit the speech of the elderly to the young and those newly arrived to the region]¹⁴⁸) and a concern with present-day visibility (e.g. “*Aji pourr astourë l’parlëment, den lë dmènñ dée môtt, parem*” [To work for the modernization of the language, in the domain of words, for example]¹⁴⁹).

A few clarifications about the term “ideology of personal connection” are in order before proceeding. The word “personal” has been chosen in part to distinguish the locally inscribed affective and epistemological links valued in such an ideology from the more regional and national bonds typically foregrounded in an ideology of “pride.” It has also been selected for aesthetic reasons, “personal (connection)” having alliteration with “pride” and profit.” In using this term, I do not wish to imply that the bonds thus celebrated (between past and present, *patois* user and *gallo* user, person and place) were not social in nature; indeed, kin and neighbors were central figures in discursive acts valuing Gallo for its ability to enact personal connection, as will be seen below. However, rather than imagining each Gallo recognizer as part of a homogenous people or nation, participants acknowledged that users of Gallo each had their own positional relationship with the language, influenced by where they came from and the specific people in their lives with whom they associated the language.

While deeply implicated in an understanding of the fragmented and positional nature of experience, the term “personal connection” does not imply a reification of individual intentionality as objectively knowable or a transparent predictor of meaning. It is thus different from Jane Hill’s understanding of “personalism,” although the two terms sound similar. According to Hill (2008), following Duranti (1993) and Rosaldo (1981),

¹⁴⁸ www.chubri.org

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

“personalism insists that each individual has an invisible interior self which is the site of beliefs and intentions and emotional states such as love and hatred. . . . [In this ideology] meaning resides not only in the content of the words, but in what speakers intend by uttering them” (88-89). Gallo recognizers and users may well have espoused personalist language ideologies, but that is not what is foregrounded here. Indeed, Hill says personalist ideologies share with referential ideologies a view of language as stable, with fixed meanings. In contrast, speakers who draw on an ideology of personal connection, bestowing value on their own *gallo* use because of its connection to loved users of *patois* and loved local places, implicitly demonstrate a divergent understanding of language: as indexical and positional rather than stable across contexts.

The final examples in this chapter will show how speakers invoke an ideology of personal connection—often through the complementarity of the terms *patois* and *gallo*—to ground their engagement with the variety in a sense of connection to local places, marginalized others, and beloved older family members. In Example 6.14, a Gallo musician, teacher, collector, and association employee whom I call Pelot,¹⁵⁰ invokes both local places and kin relations when he discusses his decision to live in a particular community. Here, Pelot explains why, when deciding to learn Gallo, he moved to his grandmother’s birthplace, a small municipality whose population was about 650, and which he referred to elsewhere in the interview by its Gallo name:

Example 6.14 “*It would have been weird to me to go live elsewhere*”

*Cant je començaes à rasserer j’e [pu savoir] vitement coment qe ça caozaet euh ou **genétr la qhulture euhm de la contrée de mes jens- de mes grands-parents**. E dan le coup euh ben, come ça taet la qhulture de ma famille, c’ét la qhulture qe j’e apriz, c’ét la langue. Et **come je voulaes- come j’e voula caozer come euh** ((pause)) **le même galo qe** ((pause)) **qe le paiz-lâ**, ben ça me fèsaet drôle de- Je me dizit ben qe dan le coup falaet qe je demeure puto la-bâs **pour pouvoir euh***

¹⁵⁰ This is a Gallo nickname; the individual in question often went by a Gallo nickname when engaged in Gallo teaching or advocacy.

caozer o- ((unintelligible)) les anciens tout ça. E, ca m'araet fêt drôle de ((pause)) d'aler vivr âvou.

When I began to collect oral histories I [could] quickly [see] how people spoke, or get to know the culture of the country of my people- of my grandparents. And, well, since it was the culture of my family, it's the culture that I learned, it's the language. And since I wanted to speak like um ((pause)) the same Gallo as ((pause)) as that territory there, well it seemed weird to me to- I told myself, well, then I needed to live over there, really to be able to talk with- ((unintelligible)) the old people, all of that. It would have been weird to me to ((pause)) to go live elsewhere.

According to the system of valuation Pelot establishes here, learning any variety other than *le même galo qe le paiz-là* [the same Gallo as that territory] would have been *drôle* [weird]. It was important to him to be around *les anciens* [the old people] who spoke the way his grandmother had, in order for him to connect to his family's *qhulture* [culture] and their *lange* [language]. Although Pelot does not call that old people's language *patois*, the label *patois* allows other speakers to draw on the same type of connection he invokes here, rooted in a local past. When we discussed the slogan *I love patois, I learn Gallo*, promoted by the organization he works for, Pelot admitted it had caused some controversy but that he was in favor of the label's usage there. Here, in Pelot's wish to speak the same Gallo as is spoken in his grandmother's birthplace, there is an echo of the "personal connection" trope that finds it important to have continuity of verbal practice within a particular geographic terrain. Nationalist and regionalist pride discourses may also invoke historical continuity, but while there, the continuity and kinship that matter are that of nation-state and ethnic "people." The continuity here is personal and local; the kinship, too, is with actual family members (and immediate neighbors) and not an imagined body of co-citizens.

I saw a similar valuation of connection when talking with a Gallo middle-school student, Jules. Because he was entering a technical high school program the following year, which meant he could not take a Gallo elective even if the school offered one, I

asked Jules if he thought he would still use Gallo after the classes ended. Appearing surprised at my question, he answered, “Bah oui! Oui je vais continuer. Ben c’est dans moi, je peux- je peux pas m’empêcher de parler gallo!” [Well yeah! Yes I’m going to continue. Well it’s in me, I can- I can’t prevent myself from speaking gallo!]. When I asked if Gallo was an important part of his identity, Jules said yes, and then clarified “on en parlait avec nos grands-parents” [we spoke some with our grandparents]—linking his affective connection to family practice. Because his grandparents spoke “*patois*,” as he called it when speaking of them, and had a farm, Jules learned “*beaucoup de mots de la ferme*” [a lot of farm words] when he helped his grandparents with farm tasks. At the time of data collection, Jules regularly read the Gallo column in the local town circular, even when other family members didn’t, and he proudly mentioned several important Gallo-speaking figures and cultural events in his town, Plédéliac, that “*nous permet de faire une ouverture*” [permit us to make an opening] for Gallo. Although Jules obviously drew on feelings of belonging to express his engagement with Gallo, those feelings were not tied to ethnic membership or regional allegiance, as “pride” would claim, but to a more personal and local sense of affiliation—of connection on the local terrain, among loved ones.

Speakers also drew on ideologies of personal connection to ground their *gallo* engagement in a sense of kinship with marginalized others: those coming from rural backgrounds, or those older people, who according to earlier analyses were often imagined to speak *patois*. Terminology became a resource for participants to signal their interest in bridging indexical gaps with a shared sense of belonging, despite differences in social class, education, or age. In Example 6.15, Jeanne, a French teacher in her 50s,

describes her practice of using Gallo, or *patois* as she exceptionally terms it here, to create solidarity with the agricultural technical high school students she taught early in her career. She explains that she would speak *patois* in class so that they would not feel the same “shame” (as she earlier called it) she used to feel when Gallo expressions occasionally appeared in their French writing assignments:

Example 6.15 “*So I would speak a little patois*”

J’essayais de les mettre à l’aise, parce que- j’ai vu quelquefois dans les copies il y avait des mots euh gallos, comme si ils s’excusaient ! Et je voulais- j’avais pas envie q’ils vivent comme moi. Don je caozaes un petit patois, e puis je les ((unintelligible)) *alor je pernaiss des- qhoques exemples quoi ! Et pis je dizaes ben, pfff je dis n’importe quoi là, mais euh euh ‘Tien, r’garde dan ‘la, y a un fil d’irogne, ses-tu ben qhi qi ét q’ela ?’ Alors euh bon i me caozant de même!*

I would try to put them at ease, because- I would see in their papers sometimes there were some words um in Gallo, as if they were apologizing! And I wanted- I didn’t want them to live like me. So I would speak a little patois, and then I would ((unintelligible)) *So I would take- a few examples you know! And then I would say, pfff I’m saying nonsense here, but um um ‘Hey, look at that, there’s a spider web, do you know what that is?’ And so uh well they would speak to me the same way!*

Here, Jeanne is describing a past alignment move she, a teacher from an agricultural and Gallo-speaking background, made with students she describes here as rural and blue-collar. Along with her shift into Gallo, her use of the label *patois* marks her attempt to bridge social divides by using the language she associates with her students—as well as the label she imagines they used. When those students responded “de même” [the same way], the possibility for connection was introduced. As another member of this association, Gallo performer Ludovic Faramus, once told me, one of the most meaningful encounters he had during his former job as a nursing home aide was when a resident with whom he spoke Gallo told him, “Vous parlez comme nous!” [You speak like us]. Having chosen that nursing home to work at because it welcomed “plus des anciens qui venaient de la ferme” [more of the old people who came from the farm] and who had the “accent”

of being from “le pays gallo” [Gallo country], Ludovic exclaimed, “*mai j’y pense souvent core, mai!*” [Me, I still think about that often, I do].

Jeanne, Ludovic and other participants who expressed similar sentiments valued their language not for how it allowed them to position themselves as ethnolinguistic citizens or as valuable market commodities, but because it permitted them to connect meaningfully with marginalized rural residents, in whom they saw echoes of their own or their family’s past. Being able to access the term *patois* alongside *gallo* allowed them to mark this connection while still acknowledging social difference. In this way, the trope of personal connection might be seen as a stance of “adequation despite distinction” (c.f., Bucholtz & Hall 2004, 2005).

The final examples of speakers using terminological multiplicity to evoke a “personal connection” value for Gallo concern instances where the late-modern, formally education, globally-conversant *gallo* was shown to be a present-day manifestation of earlier *patois* ways of being. In Example 6.16, taken from the same post-performance onstage conversation as Examples 6.1 and 6.7, performer Marie-Brigitte Bertrand explains that learning that her mother spoke *patois* led to a transformation in their relationship, because she herself was learning *gallo*:

Example 6.16 “I established a completely different relationship with my own mother”

1 Marie-	Et <u>quand j’ai commencé le- (.)</u>	And <u>when I began- (.)</u>
2 Brigitte:	<u>Gallo</u>	<u>Gallo</u>
3	<u>j’ai établi une relation complètement</u>	<u>I established a completely different</u>
4	<u>différente avec ma propre mère.</u>	<u>relationship with my own mother.</u>
5	Qui m’a dit,	Who told me,
6	deux ou trois ans après que moi j’avais	two or three years after I had begun Gallo,
7	commencé le gallo,	that <u>when she was young she spoke</u>
8	que <u>quand elle était jeune elle ne</u>	<u>nothing but (.)</u>
	<u>parlait que (.)</u>	<u>patois.</u>
	<u>patois.</u>	Which I didn’t know because me,-
	Ce que je ne savais pas parce que moi-	

9	<u>donc elle est bilingue !</u>	<u>so she's bilingual!</u>
10	Audience : ((laughter))	((laughter))
11	Marie- Bah oui !	Well yes!
12	Brigitte : [[unintelligible phrase]]	[[unintelligible phrase]]
13	Il a fallu que –	It was necessary that-
14	elle s'est mise en français quoi	She switched to French you know
15	et moi <u>je ne savais pas que ma mère ne parlait que (.)</u>	and me <u>I didn't know that my mother spoke nothing but (.)</u>
16	<u>patois (.)</u>	<u>patois (.)</u>
17	<u>donc gallo quand elle était jeune.</u>	<u>therefore Gallo when she was young.</u>

Marie-Brigitte's distinction preserves many of the indexical distinctions outlined in Table 2 above: the older speaker who presumably learned the language as a mother-tongue at home (line 6) speaks *patois* (lines 7 and 16), while the younger speaker who learned the language at school (line 1; "beginning" a language is only used for formal instruction) calls it *gallo* (lines 2 and 5). Importantly, however, these differences are not seen as incommensurable. In fact, the overall effect of her utterance is to present *gallo* and *patois* as compatible and complementary, such that learning one can help an individual forge a closer relationship with a loved one who speaks the other (line 3).

A similar complementarity can be seen in Example 6.17, the opening verses of "Le Rap du Galo" [The Gallo Rap], a song written by secondary-school Gallo teacher Maryvonne Limon, with input from and for performance by her students:

Example 6.17 "I'm from Gallo country but I don't wear wooden shoes"
(author's orthography; italics indicate words that are spelled differently from French)

1	<u>Je sé du peï gallo mais je n'porte pas d'sabots</u>	<u>I am from Gallo country but I don't wear</u>
	<u>je va à l'école et j'apprends l'français, les</u>	<u>wooden shoes</u>
2	<u>maths et l'espagnol</u>	<u>I go to school and I learn French, math and</u>
	Histoire géo et l'anglais	<u>Spanish</u>
3	heureusement je sé ben aise <u>j'apprends itou la</u>	Social studies and English
4	<u>langue gallèse</u>	Fortunately <i>I'm happy</i> <u>I'm also learning the</u>
		<u>Gallo language</u>
5	le gallo le gallo mais c'est <i>core lu l' pu bieau</i>	Gallo Gallo <i>it's the most beautiful one</i>

6	et c'est en <i>Haute Bretagne</i> que tout a commencé	and it's in <i>Upper Brittany</i> that everything began
7	que <u>mes ancêtres à mé i n'caosint point l'berton mais l'patoès</u>	that <u>my ancestors, mine, they didn't speak Breton but patois</u>
8	<i>astourci j'sé ben aise</i> car le gallo va m'rapporter des <i>bounnes notes</i> et du <i>hé</i>	<i>now I'm glad</i> because Gallo will bring me <i>good grades</i> and <i>fun</i> ,
9	des <i>bounnes notes</i> et du <i>hé</i>	<i>good grades</i> and <i>fun</i>
10	<u>à d'viser o ma cotrie su des fables et des légendes</u>	<u>to talk with my classmates about fables and legends</u>
11	<u>des histoères du temps passé des histoères du temps passé</u>	<u>stories from the past stories from the past</u>

While the language spoken by the student-narrator and that spoken by his or her “ancestors” (line 7) are referred to by different labels—the young, modern student learns “la langue gallèse” or “gallo” (lines 4 and 5) while the ancestors spoke “patoès” (line 7)—the effect of the song is to posit a continuity between an authentic beginning (“It’s in Upper Brittany that everything began,” line 6) and a modern sensibility (“I don’t wear wooden clogs, I go to school,” line 1). Learning *la langue gallèse* can help the narrator “talk with my classmates about fables and legends, stories from the past stories from the past” (lines 10 and 11). The connection is thus one of linguistic and affective continuity despite socio-historic and terminological rupture.

This section has argued, then, that a pluralist approach permissive of both the language label *gallo* and the language label *patois* may facilitate a useful ideological lens through which contemporary speakers could understand their position. Often, speakers juxtaposed the two terms in order to mark a difference between the language-learning, and language-living, trajectories they themselves were taking, and those of their parents or their agriculturally affiliated contemporaries. The label *gallo* often suited their understanding of their own practices, but the invoked label *patois* (along with affectionate reference to those who spoke it) provided an important justification for why

they themselves engaged in *gallo* practices. The ostensibly marked difference therefore became a powerful point of connection despite divergence. Use of the language variously labeled *patois* and *gallo* was seldom justified with reference to ethnolinguistic “pride” or commoditized “profit;” rather, its value relied upon an understanding of “personal connection,” according to which the language’s continued local use fostered an ability to connect to local places, marginalized individuals and beloved family members.

6.7 Discussion

In this chapter, I have argued that close attention to language-labeling practices can elucidate some of the ideological underpinnings of minority language advocacy. On the surface, this might seem a facile claim. Gallo advocates who favor monist use of the label *gallo* would probably agree that the term one uses to denote the variety indexes one’s stance toward it. According to the examples in Section 6.4.2, we can see one possible distinction emerging: if people use the term *gallo*, they believe that the variety “is a language;” if instead, they use *patois*, it is because they see the variety as “a sub-language” (Example 6.3). However, it is my hope that the subsequent examples have proven the relationship between labeling, metalinguistic attitude, and personhood is more complex than it might at first appear.

It is perhaps more helpful to look at terms such as *patois* and *gallo* not as transparent indicators of political or identity-based stances regarding the variety, but rather as resources that can be used in service of a variety of ideological projects. A single linguistic form—in this case, *patois* or *gallo*—can be interpreted according to multiple ideological frames, leading to possibly divergent interpretations. Is *patois* “the same language” as *gallo*? Does a *patois* speaker relate to the world, and the variety in

particular, in ways that a *gallo* speaker would recognize and claim? The answer depends on contextualization, as each person grapples with terminology in various interactional configurations and event types. Is she performing on stage, or greeting audience members afterward in a crowd? Is he illustrating that a variety is “a language,” or encouraging people to see themselves as speakers? Are they evoking one’s beloved ancestors, or arguing for the neurocognitive benefits of multilingualism?

As Examples 6.1 through 6.4 showed, Gallo advocates did at times draw on “pride” and “profit” distinctions, as makes sense given their experience, as citizens of France, with nationalizing language discourses. As Jaffe (1990) explains, regional language advocates often borrow the hegemonic tropes of national language ideologies even when at some level resisting them. However, these ideologies alone are not adequate to describe the complex valorization strategies that emerge in discourses about Gallo, especially when terminological pluralism is used either to render the body of speakers more visible (Examples 6.5-6.7), or to highlight indexical differences in ways of “being Gallo” (Examples 6.8-6.11). Given the frequent alignment drawn between one’s present practices and past speakers, traditional ways of life, and local places—those very same associations indexed by the *patois* label—I argue that the ideology voiced in such instances can best be defined as one of “personal connection.” As shown in Examples 6.12-6.17, under this ideological approach, one speaks *gallo* because one’s loved ones spoke *patois*, and because it is important that the variety have a voice and a presence on the ground today, independent of ethnic membership and economic advantage—and perhaps even independent of long-term survival.

In establishing bonds of affective connection, while not seeking to erase their own lived sociohistorical rupture as border crossers (Williams 1973) of vastly different life circumstances than their less-educated parents or their blue-collar Bac-Pro friends, Gallo recognizers drawing on an ideology of personal connection largely avoided creating a timeless and idyllic past. Their being drawn to the past and to rurality was not the nostalgia that Williams (1973) decries among the bourgeois writers of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Britain, or the “willing, lulling illusion of old country life... imagined out of a landscape and a selective observation and memory” (180). Instead, these moments of often-intensely felt connection despite difference may hint at an emergent “critical consciousness” that Williams also characterizes:

We live in a world in which the dominant mode of production and social relationships teaches, impresses, offers to make normal and even rigid, modes of detached, separated, external perception and action: modes of using and consuming rather than accepting and enjoying people and things... It is not so much the old village or the old backstreet that is significant. It is the perception and affirmation of a world in which one is not necessarily a stranger and an agent, but can be a member, a discoverer, in a shared source of life. Taken alone, of course, this is never enough... [one needs] sharp critical consciousness and long active agency.... We have to really look, in country and city alike, at the real social processes of alienation, separation, externality, abstraction... by affirming the experience in which many millions of lives are discovered and rediscovered, very often under pressure: experiences of directness, connection, mutuality, sharing. (298)

While nostalgia both walls off the rural countryside from change and situates it in the past, an ideology of personal connection at least affords the possibility for “experiences of directness, connection, mutuality, sharing” (298) across lived experiences that are separated by education, social class, profession, age, and type of Gallo epistemology. At the same time, it does not erase the sociohistorical forces of marginalization that impressed such gaps upon contemporary Upper Breton users of Gallo.

The ideology of personal connection, and the common indexical split between *gallo* users and *patois*, thus may have enabled critical stances toward socioeconomic pressures that have marginalized *patois* users (the old; the rural; the less-educated; the manual laborers) and the ways of life with which they are affiliated. People invoking personal connection positioned those ways of life as meaningful and valued, as they were the basis for speakers' own *gallo* use. However, it must also be said that the majority of people using this rhetoric themselves occupied a more privileged social position, and their avoidance of the *patois* label to describe their own practices may have allowed them to accrue *gallo*-related prestige (as poets or performers or scholars) that are less available to users of *patois*.

Another way in which an ideology of personal connection served the interests of Gallo performers and advocates is that inscribing their own speech within a particular geographic terrain (as in Example 6.14) may have allowed them to escape accusations of “gallo homogénéisé” or “gallo chimique,” which were terms at times uttered with disapproval. As Woolard (2005[2008]) has described for Catalan, an ideology of “authenticity” strongly links value to place marking: “To be considered authentic, a speech variety must be very much ‘from somewhere’ in speakers’ consciousness, and thus its meaning is profoundly local. If such social and territorial roots are not discernable, a linguistic variety lacks value in this system” (2). Some Gallo performers eagerly collected words and expressions from several different Gallo varieties, and such creative blends were at times valorized; during an advocacy association meeting, one member approvingly quoted a prominent local performer saying he spoke “un galo san doute qi n’existe pâs” [a Gallo that probably doesn’t exist], since he took words that

“pleased” him from many different Gallos. This reveals that authenticity was not the only ideology operating for Gallo aesthetics. However, others critiqued such an approach for making it more difficult for “les anciens” [old people] to understand, being that it was unconnected to “une zone” [a territory]. Placing older speakers as central figures in Gallo engagement and inscribing oneself in a particular place are both values foregrounded in an ideology of personal connection. This ideology, then, may have allowed users to position themselves as meaningfully connected to past generations and local spaces, even when using a personal repertoire that was inclusive of aesthetically pleasing lexical items from a variety of Gallo repertoires.

The implications of this chapter are several. Perhaps the most striking omission from these pages are the voices of some of those rural, less-formally educated, often older speakers whom my participants represented as speaking *patois*. As explained in Chapter 4, my participant recruitment protocol and my pre-existing relationships with Gallo performers, as well as my status as a non-community member and outsider, meant that it was easiest for me to gain access to people who saw themselves as Gallo advocates in art, education or activism. This was important and useful, because of my participants’ passion for the language and their warm welcome of me, an American also interested in it. However, it is precisely these people who were most likely to use the term *gallo* in the course of their projects of status planning or artistic expression. While many participants associated themselves with a rural, agricultural past, they were nearly all university-educated (or planning to be so) and, if they lived in small towns, were still not directly engaged in agriculture. The fact that my discussion of *patois* speakers was largely limited to what these *gallo* speakers had to say about them (no matter how loving) thus

participates in a partial erasure of those speakers. Another implication lies in the fact that the type of belonging invoked by ideologies of “connection” is not regional, but local and familial. While affectively charged at a local level, “connection” may sideline Gallo from more politically charged activism contexts to which “pride” projects in particular are often addressed.

In sum: this chapter has shown that terminology does matter. But it has also shown that, sometimes, what matters most is not absolute lexical difference or synonymy but the potential for indexical complementarity. The at-least-partial complementarity of past and present, of *patois* and *gallo*, evoked by participants helps define an ideology of “personal connection.”

CHAPTER 7

VISUALIZING GALLO: DICTIONARIES, MATERIALITY AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF LOCAL AUTHORITY

One afternoon, in a Gallo class I was attending during my fieldwork year, a brief moment caused me to re-evaluate the way I had been thinking about Gallo reference books—grammars and dictionaries—and their role(s) in the local semiotic landscape. In class that day, the teacher mentioned in passing a few Gallo texts, including Régis Auffray’s 2012 grammar, *Chapè Chapiao*. Pulling the grey-and-green paperback volume out of his teaching bag, he tapped it upright against the desk where he was sitting, its cover facing out toward the class, and said to us with a quick smile, “Oui, le gallo a une grammaire!” [Yes, Gallo has a grammar!]. I was later to hear other Gallo advocates use the joke when mentioning Auffray’s text in conversation.

As with the English word *grammar*, the French word *la grammaire* is often bivalent in reference, capable of denoting either a grammar book or a structural linguistic system. This teacher’s off-the-cuff joke appears to use the book—the material “grammar”—as an icon of sorts for the existence of a structural “grammar” system for Gallo.¹⁵¹ By holding it up as he did, the teacher allowed the mere physical presence of the book to serve as evidence (independently of any representational content featured in its

¹⁵¹ One might argue that the teacher merely meant, “Yes, Gallo does have a grammar (book)!” But such an interpretation still seems implicitly to speak against popular representations of Gallo being disorderly, and possibly a deformation of French rather than its own rule-governed system. The book therefore serves as evidence against such discourses. Furthermore, the meaning *grammar system* seems more commonly used than *grammar book*, so students may have been more likely to access that definition.

pages) that the language was rule-governed. The physical grammar, held up as a monstrance, was deemed sufficient evidence to counter (if glibly) circulating ideologies according to which Gallo was a grammarless “sub-language” (see Chapters 3, 5 and 6). In this chapter, I will examine how other Gallo reference works, dictionaries, were similarly used as iconized indexes of Gallo’s richness, value, and existence, as well as how they were incorporated into cultural activities as tools for legitimating local authority and speakerhood.

The teacher’s iconic use of the Gallo grammar book—where its physical existence was used to argue for the existence of a structural system for the language—seems to run counter to how many consumers usually assume language reference works to function: as textual repositories of referential meaning and/or deontic guides for speaking and writing authoritatively. Jackson (2002) begins his introductory text on lexicography with a description, which he later complicates, of how people (at least, those in late-modern Western contexts) tend to talk about dictionaries as authoritative texts:

How many times have you heard someone say, or have you said yourself, ‘I’ll look it up in the dictionary’? The assumption behind such a comment is that ‘the dictionary’ is a single text, perhaps in different versions, rather like the Bible.... And we all take what the dictionary says as authoritative: if the dictionary says so, then it is so. Life would be impossible if the dictionary was not the final arbiter in our linguistic disputes. (Jackson 2002:21)

In descriptions such as these, the representational and deontic functions of dictionaries tends to be foregrounded. One physical dictionary is seen as readily interchangeable with another; their differing material forms or histories are of no consequence. Users with such an approach treat dictionaries as pure repositories of lexical forms and their definitions.

Some dictionary-centric interactions I observed during fieldwork did in fact treat

dictionaries purely as tools for determining reference. For example, high school students taking a language survey joked that they would rate themselves as being able to speak Gallo “with the dictionary” but not otherwise, and adults taking Gallo classes frequently appealed to dictionaries to look up spellings of words half-remembered from childhood. However, other moments when participants engaged with dictionaries seemed not to be as centrally concerned with dictionaries’ referential or deontic functions. In these moments, such as the classroom vignette described above, I wondered—what other types of meaning are being made here?

While a view of dictionaries as repositories of reference may seem value-neutral, recent work in sociolinguistics and linguistic anthropology has shown that the invocation of modernist ideals such as accuracy and purification (Bauman & Briggs 2003) is usually anything but neutral in value. Particularly in the case of a historically stigmatized language like Gallo that manifests a great deal of internal variation, the encoding of any one perspective as the ultimate arbiter of meaning risks marginalizing, or erasing (Irvine and Gal 2000), other voices, such that “facts that are inconsistent with the ideological scheme either go unnoticed or get explained away” (38). However, in this chapter, I claim that the relationship between dictionaries and the Gallo language was far more complex than one might think, in large part because dictionaries are not, in fact, just repositories of definitions, disembodied from the people who use them and from the books that contain them. They are material objects as well. They are icons, and they are tools. This multi-leveled semiosis introduces the potential for destabilizing trajectories of meaning that may at first appear to be determinate.

This chapter focuses on Gallo theater performances and conversations that occurred at Gallo stands at festivals. In such settings, with features of both “platform events” and “celebrative social occasions” (Goffman 1981), concerns with materiality and visual staging are foregrounded. At the time of my fieldwork, Gallo dictionaries and other print texts were a principal part of this visual staging: they occupied a prominent role on informational tables, in discourse, and even occasionally on stage at performances. In what follows, I analyze videotaped performances, audiotaped interviews with Gallo performers, conversations with festival attendees, and visual evidence from newspapers and performers’ websites in order to move beyond the idea of dictionaries as idealizations of reference, exploring some of their possible iconic and indexical ramifications.

My analysis will show that Gallo dictionaries can have semiotic links to language other than by serving as mere representations of a language’s range of referential values. Because dictionaries in this community were not treated merely as referential objects, I argue that dictionaries do not have inevitable trajectories as tools of prescriptivism and standardization. I make this case in three main parts. First, in Section 7.3, I briefly show how in widely circulating semiotic processes, Gallo is separated from the most visible marker of Breton identity, the Breton flag, and affiliated with material indexes of a disappearing rural past: suspenders and other forms of old-fashioned clothing (as seen in Chapter 3). Second, in Section 7.4, I focus on dictionaries’ iconic and indexical potential. I argue that the physical materiality of Gallo dictionaries allowed them to become iconized in specific interactional contexts. They were prominently featured on tables, with their size, and heft displayed as icons of Gallo's existence and Gallo's richness. In

their links to modernity through writing culture, dictionaries served as a counterpart to other local visual indices for Gallo that located Gallo exclusively in a rural past.

In Section 7.5, I argue that the cultural embedding of dictionaries in dictionary-centric interactions allowed those dictionaries to serve not as the inevitable “final word” with respect to “correct forms” but as a resource for a selection of possible linguistic variants. Because these variants were not limited to those canonized in the dictionary, metalinguistic discussions of these linguistic alternatives at festival booths or in interviews had the potential to become acts of local authentication. In the two artistic performances invoking dictionaries that I also analyze here, audiences themselves were treated as an essential part of the meaning-making process, as their proposed variants were incorporated into the performance. The ways in which dictionaries were embedded into interactions illustrate how indexical meaning emerges in response to various contextualizing factors. These can include long-lasting ideological projects, such as those linking Gallo with localness, but also more emergent phenomena such as participant roles (e.g., a public’s being positioned as a metaphorical dictionary through a performance’s interaction routine) and moment-to-moment contingencies, such as flipping to a dictionary page featuring a long-forgotten word.

As my Gallo teacher once illustrated by holding up and thumping the grammar, dictionaries and other reference texts can become materially iconized and used as indices of local expertise. In the contexts examined here, these texts ultimately did not serve to define “correct Gallo” in some top-down fashion, but rather invited the public to serve as experts in the interactional process of defining Gallo. By taking a close look at the cultural embedding of Gallo dictionaries, this chapter demonstrates that even objects

commonly seen as tools of homogenization can, as a result of semiotic multiplicities afforded by their materiality and their non-determinate contextualization, take different kinds of cultural trajectories.

7.1 Dictionaries, standard language ideology and modernity

As proposed above, late-modern ideological constructions of dictionaries tend to figure them as repositories of pure semantic content. By erasing obvious links to positionality or interest, users of dictionaries focus on “encoding” or “decoding” meaning (Jackson 2002:84). The main uses of dictionaries outlined in Jackson (2002) foreground these utilitarian functions:

Sometimes we just want to establish the existence of a word, perhaps a derivation that we’re not sure of. Or we want to check the spelling of a word. Or we look up a word that we have met and with which we are not familiar, and whose meaning we need to ascertain. These, surveys have shown, are the main uses that people make of dictionaries. Occasionally, someone may wish to find out the pronunciation of a word that they have encountered only in writing, or for the sake of general interest look up a word’s etymology. (23)

Bolstered by the scientific veneer of “surveys,” the uses described by Jackson construct dictionaries as impartial arbiters of lexical possibility: the last word on whether a particular derivation exists, how a particular word is spelled, or what it means. As Silverstein (2006) notes, this construction of the uses and users of dictionaries is bound up in modernist structuralist ideologies: “The very concept of a dictionary has long been projected from that of the grammarian’s lexicon—which, in much structuralist dogma was associated with the “content” of language” (487). More precisely, says Silverstein, “Dictionary entries try to delimit what conceptual distinctions are associated with, or cued by, the use of a word or expression as it can be applied to differentially denoting an object (or objects) in universes of reference and predication” (486). However, the

“structuralist dogma” of reference obscures another function of dictionaries: the normative arbitration of appropriateness.

A current of work in linguistic anthropology has elucidated how those in power promote ideologies of value-neutral referentialism, using dictionaries, maps and other reference works to accomplish ideological projects that are in fact very value-laden in scope (e.g. Bauman & Briggs 2003, Bourdieu 1991, Irvine & Gal 2000, Milroy 2001, Samuels 2004, Silverstein 2006). Silverstein explains, “To be sure, dictionaries do describe the properties of forms as grammaticosemantic units But additionally, through usage notes (synonymy, phrasal collocations including a particular form, etc.) and register alerts (“slang,” “obscene”), they give normative indexical properties of a lexeme’s appropriateness-to and effectiveness in co(n)texts ... of occurrence: where to use it, and what, socially speaking, will happen if you do” (2006:486). Dictionaries do codify a limited amount of geographic and social variation, often listing multiple accepted spellings or pronunciations of a word (Jackson 2002). However, it might be argued that by labeling certain forms as “N. Amer.” or “Midland dialect” (Jackson 2002:111), dictionaries shunt aside the very forms they ostensibly authorize into trajectories of marginalization, in practice restricting their likely contexts of use. As Jaffe (1999) illustrates in a discussion of the justifications used by Corsicans to advocate for particular spellings of place-names on signs, even “orthography, the epitome of arbitrariness in the representation of linguistic form” (10), became a tool used for the strategic negotiation of identity.

These normative and potentially hegemonic functions are further elucidated by Irvine and Gal (2000), who chose colonial European dictionary-making as a major

example of how linguistic difference can be imagined and encoded in pursuit of ideological projects. In Irvine and Gal's analysis, the imagined ethnic histories that nineteenth-century lexicographers recursively imagined for Senegalese people "led to maps, schedules, grammars, and dictionaries that purged registers, ignored variation, and rewrote complex sociolinguistic relationships" (59). Dictionaries and grammars thereby became a means of imposing a tightly controlled vision of colonial personhood on landscapes and their inhabitants. Smith (2011) describes the ideologies behind such modernist projects when she says of European rationalists that "dictionaries enshrined standard language in texts, despite the number of mistakes or omissions, rather than in the linguistic and communicative competence of the speakers who use the language daily" (44).

Past research in sociolinguistics and linguistic anthropology has thus often understood dictionaries and grammars principally in terms of their role in regimenting diversity and imposing homogenization. Dictionaries can indeed erase the complexities of language practice, when they are interpreted through modernist language ideologies which posit them as repositories of semantic meaning. However, dictionaries cannot represent linguistic structure in unmediated fashion; they are paper and ink (or, although I do not discuss this possibility here, digitally mediated), of a certain size and heft. Their materiality and mediation allow them to signify in ways beyond the purely referential. Introducing a variety of potential ways to "mean" potentially renders perceived meaning neither monolithic nor non-negotiable. Smith's (2011) work examines how the online reference, Urban Dictionary, opened up a space for youth language practices to resist the modernist equation of semiotics with sense, and sense with normativity. I continue this

line of inquiry in showing that even traditional, paper-and-ink dictionaries can function semiotically at several different levels, not all of which necessarily lead to standardization. For this insight I draw on Peircean semiotics (e.g. Bender 2002, Eckert 2008, Johnstone & Kiesling 2008, Silverstein 1976, Silverstein 2003, Urban 1991), which urges us to consider iconic and indexical relationships of meaning as well as symbolic (that is, referential) relationships.

7.2 Language, materiality and indexicality

Because dictionaries are not disembodied repositories of semantic meaning but material objects, they are permeable to trajectories of meaning other than purely referential ones. According to the framework laid out by Charles Peirce (see Silverstein 1976, Urban 1991), signs can have three types of relationships with the meaning they signify. An *iconic* relationship is one defined by resemblance; an icon bears meaning by virtue of its appearance. *Indexical* relationships have an implied causal relationship; they bear meaning through association. *Symbolic relationships* are conventional in nature, thus making symbols a tool for decontextualized referential meaning. Implicit in all of these relationship types, alongside the sign and its meaning, is the agent evaluating and characterizing the semiotic relationship.

Because dictionaries are socially mediated material objects, another relationship also matters to how they signify: the “stance triangle” (Du Bois 2007), which elucidates how social actors align with or against one another as an intrinsic part of their engaging with (taking stances toward) material objects like dictionaries. As Du Bois, Irvine and Gal (2000), and Jaffe (2009a) have made clear, stances taken by social actors toward objects in social space define those mutually attended-to objects—but they also define the

actors *taking* stances (and having stances modeled with respect to them) as particular types of people, in the evaluating eyes of other people and institutions. Irvine and Gal were early proponents of investigating the link between indexicality as a sign relationship, in particular, and identity: “As part of everyday behavior, the use of a linguistic form can become a pointer to (index of) the social identities and the typical activities of speakers” (37). Silverstein (2006) describes how talk concerning the materially present, aesthetically fetishized commodity of wine constructs in turn those who engage in this talk: “...in this process, organized around representations of their relationships to it, they become aligned one to another mediated not directly by wine in its physicochemical or even directly sensorial presence, so much as by the discursive processes of representation of it” (484). The lexical properties of *oinoglossia*, as he terms this discourse, cannot be extracted from the construction of its speakers as particular types of consumers and aesthetes.

Dictionaries, too, can serve as a site for stancetaking and identity work, as they function iconically and indexically as well as in their guise as mines of referential meaning. In her discussion of the semiotic functions of the Cherokee syllabary in language education classes, Bender (2002) argues that even alphabets, which in late-modern societies are often seen as building blocks of referential words (in Peirce’s terms, as building blocks of symbols), do not have determinate trajectories of meaning as such. Instead, the syllabary was often used iconically and indexically, as it was incorporated onto a variety of objects such as posters, worksheets or clothing: “Whereas education in modernity tends to de-emphasize the iconic and indexical qualities of language in favor of the abstract and symbolic, in Cherokee literacy education precisely the opposite

occurs. The symbolic functions of the syllabary are eclipsed by the iconic and indexical ones. The syllabary is treated as context saturated rather than decontextualizable, and as an unexchangeable or nontransferable good rather than as a commodity for a generalized market” (113). The syllabary was treated as interpretively inaccessible and mysterious, which helped construct those who did use it as holders of specialized community knowledge.

In what follows, I explore how Gallo dictionaries were used in acts of stancetaking that defined the language in particular ways and those who engaged with dictionaries as local authorities on Gallo. I will keep two sets of relationships in mind: (1) how social actors use dictionaries to iconize and/or index particular things about Gallo, and (2) how doing so leads them to engage in particular types of representational work with respect to co-present others, as they position themselves and/or each other as people with particular stances toward Gallo. This perspective is graphically represented in Figure 7.1.

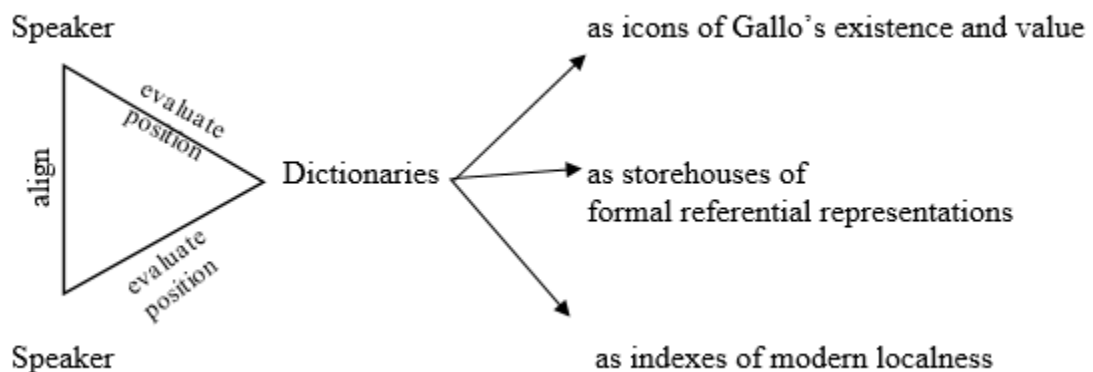


Figure 7.1 Dictionary semiosis in social interaction

7.3 Commonly circulated forms of semiosis in Brittany

As Chapter 3 explains, at the time of my fieldwork in 2013-2014, Gallo was often elided from the representational semiotics of Brittany. French was the predominant language of daily life for most of the region's residents, and its landscape was symbolically dominated not only by French but also by the better-known Celtic language of Breton. Although the 2014 survey carried out by the organizations *Bretagne Culture Diversité* and *TMO Régions* estimated that roughly the same percentage of Brittany's population¹⁵² had productive knowledge of Gallo (five percent) as they did for Breton (six percent), this did not imply commensurate visibility for the two languages. Cultural commodification efforts frequently celebrated Breton as proof of a unique regional identity; in contrast, Gallo's greater typological similarity to French has led to its being popularly characterized as *du français déformé*, or "deformed French."

The sign presented in Figure 7.2 shows how the Breton flag—the very definition of a Peircean symbol, although it can also be treated as icon or index—was used to signify Breton but not Gallo. This reveals the extent to which the region of Brittany, as a whole, was symbolically identified with Breton alone. In a French text, translated underneath into five other languages, this sign introduces a museum located in the Gallo-speaking part of Côtes d'Armor. The French introduction, at the top and in large print, is unmarked symbolically, as it is the socially unmarked language of literacy in the area. Underneath, the German, English and Spanish translations are symbolized with the flags of the nation-states they are imagined as representing, and Breton is identified with the

¹⁵² "Brittany" is defined here as the historic region, made up of five *départements*, rather than the current-day administrative region, which lacks the historically Gallo-speaking *département* of Loire-Atlantique.

regional flag of Brittany. However, as the detailed view shows, the Gallo translation is prefaced not by a flag (Breton or otherwise) but by a cartographic representation of *le*



Figure 7.2 Informational sign posted outside a museum in Hillion, Côtes d’Armor

Payi Gallo, or “Gallo country.” This museum, dedicated to the geography, wildlife, and environment of the bay of Saint-Brieuc, was often mentioned favorably by my participants because of its inclusion of Gallo on signs and in self-paced tour booklets.¹⁵³ Although the museum is noteworthy for according visibility to Gallo at all, its semiotic choices reflect Gallo’s symbolic marginalization within Breton social space: it is the only language identified by a cartographic (iconic) drawing rather than a symbolic flag, and the only one that the sign-makers decided to name explicitly.

This symbolic underrepresentation coincided with another contextual fact mentioned in Chapter 3: Gallo was commonly associated with “rural” objects, such as suspenders, checkered shirts and wooden shoes. Many performers incorporated these objects into their self-presentation on stage, including some performers who drew large

¹⁵³ One activist association, in fact, sponsored a guided visit of the museum, conducted in Gallo by two association members, during the region-wide *Semaine des Langues* [Languages Week].

crowds. However, in a group interview, several members of a Gallo advocacy organization dismissed such performers as “not really Gallo,” with one storyteller and active association member claiming they offered only “l’accent e... les sabiao!” [the accent and the wooden shoes]. Others said critically of suspender-wearing performers that that “leur spectacle tourne aotour de... l’ancien temp, la ferme” [their shows hinge upon... the olden days, the farm], and that “le monde vont chercher élà” [people will look for that]. Being part of an association whose members often invoked the desire to show Gallo could also be *une lange d’astour* [a language of the present], the strong indexical links between Gallo and suspenders, and between both of those and the past, ran counter to their own ideological goals.

When I asked if these representations affected how the storytellers in the group constructed their own on-stage personae as speakers of Gallo, most said that they did indeed consider how their artistic productions in turn produced a certain image of Gallo and its users. In Example 7.1, the same member who critiqued other Gallo performers for relying too much on *l’ancien temp* and on *la ferme* admits to us that she asked herself whether the mention of wooden shoes in one of the songs she authored was sending the right message:

Example 7.1 “Do I keep ‘wooden shoes’ or do I think of something else?”

“*Méme le- une chanson qe j’avaes fête su le courti, J’e dit, je ses pas, den la- den une phrase y a ‘Me veici avec mes sabiao’ et tout ça, eh ben, ((pause)) j’e runjê pus d’une fai ((laughs)) pour me dire, ‘je garde ti ‘sabiao’ ou je runje ti den aotr chôze?’ pasqe je ne veûs pàs qe (.) qe la seraet euh la seraet toujou les sabiaos et, ((pause)) et pis j’e laissè pasqe ((pause)) la passaet bien, mès :::- -”*

Even the- a song I wrote about the garden, I said, I don’t know, in the- in one verse there’s ‘Here I am with my wooden shoes’ and all that, well, ((pause)) I thought more than once ((laughs)) to say to myself, ‘Do I keep ‘wooden shoes’ or do I think of something else?’ because I don’t want for it ((pause)) for it to be euh- to always be wooden shoes and, ((pause)) and then I left it because ((pause)) it came off well, but:::-

This performer's statement opens up an ideological debate that she ultimately leaves unresolved: a tension between the fact that references to the past, encapsulated in rural clothing, "come off well" to the public, and the fact that she perceives a danger in reducing the forms of Gallo material semiosis to *only* wooden shoes and the like. Wooden shoes themselves were not the problem; rather, what was troubling is its' "always" being wooden shoes.

The indexical affiliation of Gallo with a rural past was so strong that, at times, incompatible evidence was overlooked in order for viewers to preserve this connection. During a brief return to Brittany in October 2014, I showed videos from two performances to a focus group of three people who were familiar with Gallo but were not themselves activists, artists, or self-declared Gallo speakers. This conversation afforded me a glimpse into some of the potential ways performances could be "read" by their publics, who were often not as closely implicated with Gallo as the majority of my participants. In the case of at least one focus group participant, an older woman, this reading firmly located Gallo in the past, independent of indexical connections with the present.

There were no readily apparent visual or discursive stance-taking objects that would seem to cue the past in either of these two performances. On the other hand, both physical and discursive elements indicated a present-day time orientation. One character mentioned holding ecological values—a stance typical of late modernity—and her story involved lawnmowers and power lines. The other play featured a physically-present GPS on stage as a stance object. However, for at least one focus group member, a woman in her 80s whom I call Joséphine, the couple on stage was most easily identified with the

past. Example 7.2 illustrates what occurred when I asked the focus group “How old would you say they were, the characters?”:

Example 7.2 “It doesn’t really exist anymore, that type of person, does it?”

- | | | | |
|----|------------|--|--|
| 1 | SK : | Oui. Et <u>vous leur donneriez quel âge à peu près les personnages</u> pas les les acteurs forcément mais (.) donc Tiofile et la Boudette | Yes. And <u>about how old would you say they were, the characters</u> not the- the actors necessarily, but (.) Tiofile and la Boudette |
| 2 | Michel: | Mm (.) | Mm (.) |
| 3 | SK: | Les personnages, ce sont- ce sont qui comme gens ? Si vous imaginez <u>dans leur vie ils font quoi ::?</u> | The characters, who are they as people? If you imagine <u>in their life what do they do?</u> |
| 4 | Joséphine: | ((throat sound)) Je crois que ça n’existe p- [[NAME]] dit si mais, <u>ca n’existe plus tellement ! ca ce genre de personne si</u> tu crois Michel, toi ? | ((throat sound)) I think that that doesn’t exist anym- [[NAME]] says it does, but <u>it doesn’t really exist anymore! That type of person, does it?</u> You think it does, Michel? |
| 5 | Michel: | Augh ((noncommittal sound)) | Augh ((noncommittal sound)) |
| 6 | Joséphine: | <u>Peu- peu hein</u> ? (.) | <u>Few- few right?</u> (.) |
| 7 | Joséphine: | Moi je pense que quand j’étais dans mon magasin j’avais (.) beaucoup de personnes qui parlaient comme ça ! | Me, I think that when I was in my shop I had (.) a lot of people who used to speak like that! |
| 8 | SK: | Ah okay | Ah okay |
| 9 | Joséphine: | Mais <u>maintenant je pense que c’est pratiquement terminé hein</u> ? | But <u>now I think that it’s practically over right?</u> |
| 10 | SK: | Donc pour vous <u>vous situeriez la pièce dans le passé.</u> Dans- | So for you <u>you would situate the play in the past.</u> In- |
| 11 | Joséphine: | Non, parce que il y a- fin- <u>Ben il y a l’histoire du GPS [qui- qui est moderne,</u> | No, because there’s the- well. <u>Well there’s the story of the GPS which is modern,</u> |
| 12 | Michel: | <u>Il y a l’histoire du GPS c’est-</u> | <u>There’s the story of the GPS it’s-</u> |
| 13 | Joséphine: | <u>Mais euh je crois que (.) oui dans le passé quand même non ?</u> [je ne sais pas | <u>But I think that (.) yes in the past even so, or not?</u> I don’t know |
| 14 | Michel: | [Non ! Non non moi j’ai- | No ! no no me I- |

15 Joséphine: ((à Michel)) Tu ((unintelligible)) [tu crois qu'il y a des gens qui parlent comme ça ?] ((to Michel)) You ((unintelligible)) you think there are people who speak like that?

Joséphine proposes in turn 4 that, despite what a storytelling friend of hers insists, “it doesn’t really exist anymore, that type of person” (in other words, a Gallo user), and, in turn 9, she says that the use of Gallo “is practically over right?” In turn 10, I ask Joséphine if, then, she would situate the play in the past. In turn 11, she acknowledges that the semiosis embodied within the GPS would seem to point toward modernity, but in turn 13, she decides that she’d situate it “in the past even so.” Although the other two focus group members disagreed with this assessment (as will be explored in more detail later), Joséphine’s determination is evidence for the resilience of established indexical links. If dictionaries and the cultural embeddings that invoke them are to pose serious challenges to prevailing indexicalities between Gallo and the past, they must prove themselves amenable to other locally valued indexicalities that are less problematic. In Section 7.5, I will argue that this productive indexical site is one that links Gallo to localness—and that this link allows dictionaries to serve as tools for the performance of local expertise.

7.4 Dictionaries as material emblems of Gallo

As they chafed at the equation of Gallo with suspenders and other indexes of a rural past, and as common regional signifiers like the Breton flag or Celtic symbols were largely perceived locally to be emblematic only of Breton, Gallo social actors often turned to dictionaries as sites of alternate forms of semiosis. My analysis shows how participants highlighted resemblances of form between Gallo dictionaries and the Gallo language, specifically in terms of dictionaries’ existence and heft. I examine how such

iconization was achieved in a range of cultural contexts, including everyday references to Gallo dictionaries, their symbolic presentation at festivals, and their artistic inclusion in plays.

From the 19th century on, glossaries of local Gallo expressions were made at various sites around Upper Brittany, by professional scholars and laypeople, with varying degrees of circulation. The widespread publication of “dictionaries” as such, however, dates only from the 1990s. As Figure 7.3 illustrates, several Gallo-French dictionaries were published in the two decades leading up to my fieldwork, as were two grammars:

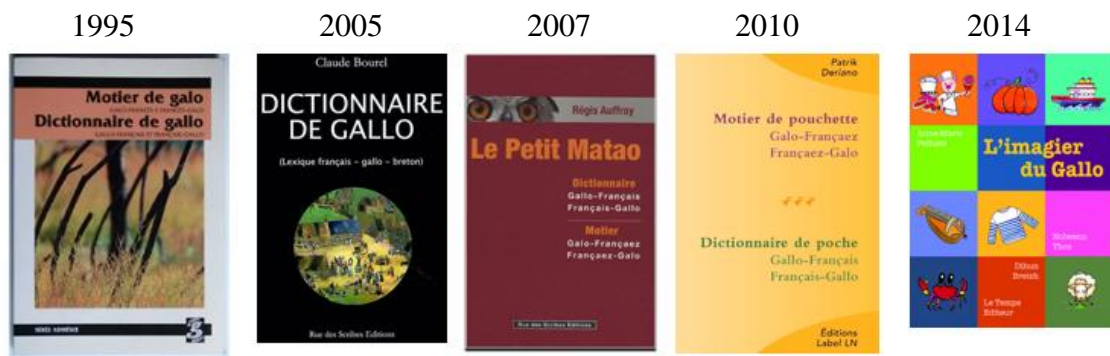


Figure 7.3 Dictionaries published for Gallo, 1995-2014

The visual semiosis of these dictionaries varies. One can observe a general transition of themes across time, if a tentative one, given the small sample size. The earlier publications bearing cover images that focus on the natural world or rural ways of life. The later ones feature designs alluding to Gallo’s regional status (the ermines on the cover of Deriano 2010 echo those on the Breton flag) or its use in contemporary life (Pelhate 2014 connotes various spheres of social activity such as transportation, trade, music and fashion, as well as agriculture and maritime traditions).

The publication of dictionaries introduced a new form of material object into Gallo spheres of activity. During my fieldwork year in Brittany, I noticed the prominent

role dictionaries and other Gallo books played in the lives of many of my participants, who were largely Gallo artists, advocates, teachers or students. I often saw Gallo dictionaries on coffee tables or bookshelves in participants’ homes; one high-school Gallo teacher whose classes I observed set out a dictionary for every two students at their desks before every class; most of my older adult Gallo classmates brought a dictionary to every class meeting. Dictionaries were often mentioned in conversation as well. At times they were even cited by title, or author, or color, as illustrated in the short exchange, excerpted in Example 7.3, between the writers of two Gallo newspaper columns:

Example 7.3 “*The yellow one*”

1	Fleur de Blé Noir :	Ah oui oui oui i causaient bien comme nous, et et ::: <u>j’ai causé avec celui qui a fait le Motier de pochette là, Dréano,</u>	Ah yes yes yes they spoke well like us, and and ::: <u>I spoke with the guy who did that Pocket Dictionary, Dréano,</u>
2	Vovonne Toucourt:	<u>Régis ?</u> ((the first name of the author of another Gallo dictionary, <i>Le Petit Matao</i>))	<u>Régis ?</u> ((the first name of the author of another Gallo dictionary, <i>Le Petit Matao</i>))
3	Fleur de Blé Noir :	<u>Deriano</u>	<u>Deriano</u>
4	Vovonne Toucourt :	<u>Ah Deriano, le jaone</u>	<u>Ah Deriano, the yellow one</u>
5	SK :	((laughs))	((laughs))
6	Fleur de Blé Noir :	Pourquoi tu rigoles ?	Why are you laughing ?

These two writers, who go by the professional pseudonyms Fleur de Blé Noir [“Buckwheat Flower”] and Vovonne Toucourt [“Simply Vovonne”], reveal in six short turns that they share a wealth of knowledge about the Gallo dictionaries available. They know two authors by name; not only do they know that Patrice Dréano was the author of the *Motier de pochette*, but in line 2, Vovonne also refers to Régis Auffray, the author of

Le Petit Matao, by his first name.¹⁵⁴ These two newspaper columnists also share insider knowledge on the dictionary's physical properties, such as its yellow color. In line 4, Vovonne identifies the dictionary as *le jaone* [the yellow one]. The definite article presupposes that both speakers were familiar enough with the dictionaries available for Gallo to know that only one of them was yellow, and to uniquely identify it as the object of reference.

Upon hearing the exchange in Example 7.3, I laughed (line 5), having momentarily misinterpreted Vovonne's words. Fleur de Blé Noir's retort to me in line 6—"Why are you laughing?"—would at least appear to indicate that my reaction was unexpected, and possibly that referring to a dictionary by its title, author and color was not seen as pragmatically unusual, warranting a surprised laugh. The fact that Fleur de Blé Noir and Vovonne, like many other participants, used the attributes of title, author, and color to cite particular dictionaries is one indication that Gallo dictionaries were not treated as interchangeable reference tools, as Jackson (2002) claims dictionaries often are.

Importantly, Vovonne's comment about *le jaone* ['the yellow one'] in line 4 invokes the dictionary in a way that highlights its physicality. Indeed, at language festivals and on stage, individuals engaged with dictionaries as icons for Gallo, using the material attributes of dictionaries (both their size and their very presence) to endow the language itself with value. They did so by invoking an iconic relationship of resemblance between dictionaries and the language itself. As the examples in Section 7.4 will show, the existence of dictionaries came to iconize Gallo's existence, and their material size

¹⁵⁴ Régis Auffray and Vovonne are both Gallo schoolteachers and thus colleagues, which may explain the first-name usage here.

was invoked either to argue that Gallo was a full, rich language (if the size was constructed as large) or to illustrate to audiences that their help was needed in expanding on the dictionary (if the size was seen as small).

The first clue to dictionaries' important iconic role is that, at language festivals, they were commonly placed on display, and arranged in prominent positions in those displays. Gallo booths were a common fixture at language or cultural heritage festivals in Upper Brittany.¹⁵⁵ At times, they were surrounded by stands offering books, CDs and fliers about Breton, while elsewhere, they shared space with booths advertising anything from Breton dance classes and music lessons to local 'freecycling' exchanges. The Gallo stands at these festivals were usually hosted by one of the local Gallo advocacy associations; employees and/or volunteers arranged to drive plastic bins of books and pamphlets from the associations' home bases to wherever the festival was taking place. Figure 7.4 presents photographs of two typical Gallo stands, one taken at a traditional singing festival and the other at a neighborhood fair in Rennes. As the first photograph in Figure 7.4 suggests, dictionaries were particularly visible at such stands, often propped up and centrally located on tables.

At one such stand, which I was helping to staff during a world languages festival in the traditionally Breton-speaking town of Lannion, one festivalgoer indicated she interpreted the stand and its books as icons of Gallo's existence and value. In the course of our conversation, I asked this festivalgoer what she had thought when she saw the stand. The woman's answer, as she was flipping through one of the dictionaries on

¹⁵⁵ Occasionally, Gallo associations hosted stands in Breton-speaking Brittany as well, particularly for world language festivals.

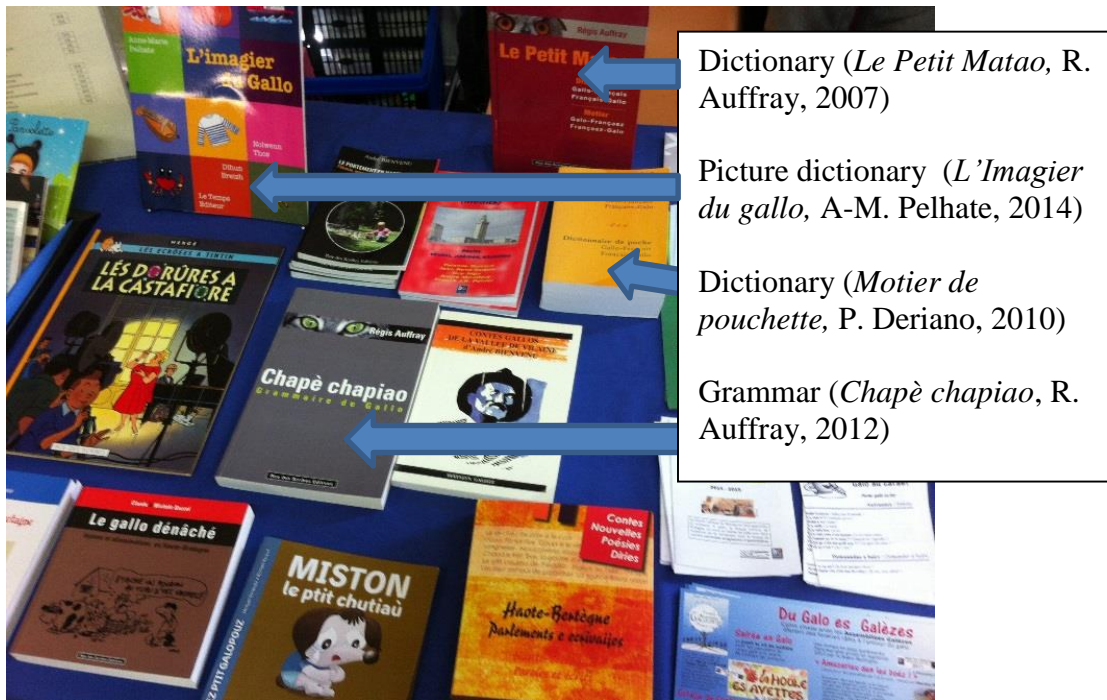


Figure 7.4 Stands hosted by the Gallo association Bertègn Galèzz, 2013-2014

display, suggests that the physical presence of the stand and its books iconically figured the language itself to her as an object of value:

Example 7.4 “It’s something that’s valued”

- | | | | |
|---|-----|---|------------------------------|
| 1 | SK: | Donc um qu'est-ce que vous avez pensé de- | So um what did you think of- |
| 2 | | Quand vous avez vu le- le stand? | When you saw the- the stand? |

3	Festival -goer:	<u>Moi j'ai- j'ai [pensé] que c'était très bien,</u>	<u>Me I- I [thought] that it was very good,</u>
4		<u>Et c'était euh- en fait c'est quelque chose en valeur</u>	<u>And it was um- in fact it's something that's valued</u>
5		<u>Parce que (.) on pensait que le gallo,</u>	<u>Because (.) [we/people] used to think that Gallo,</u>
6		<u>C'était juste euh un patois,</u>	<u>It was just um a patois,</u>
7		<u>Enf- du français déformé hein,</u>	<u>Well- deformed French you know,</u>
8		<u>On ne sait pas que c'est une langue,</u>	<u>[We/people] don't know that it's a language,</u>
9	SK :	Oui ?	Yes ?
10	Festival -goer:	<u>Donc c'est- c'est bien de le mettre en valeur.</u>	<u>So it's- it's good to showcase it.</u>

In contrast to circulating ideologies according to which Gallo was “deformed French” (line 7) rather than a discrete entity, this passerby saw the stand and its dictionaries as a monstrosity for the very existence of “a language” (line 8) called Gallo – and proof that the language had “valeur” [value] (line 4). Her choice of the particular French expression *le mettre en valeur* [to showcase it] (line 10) explicitly valorizes the setting forth or laying out of material objects, including the dictionary she was looking through as we spoke. This construction establishes the existence of “a language” (line 8) that the books themselves emblemize as the thing materially “put” on showcase.

Dictionaries were not only present on stands, but also featured in theater performances. The Gallo dictionary most widely known among my participants was *Le Petit Matao* or ‘Little Mathieu/Mathurin.’ Being that Matao is an emblematic Gallo nickname, the title plays off the widely-known French dictionary, *Le Petit Robert*. *Le Petit Matao* is visibly present on stage in the opening scene of the Gallo-language play *Pouchée de Beluettes* or *Bagful of Stars*, written by Marie Chiff’mine and Matao Rollo and performed during the region-wide *Semaine des Langues* [Languages Week] in April 2014. The ways in which this play’s structure encouraged cultural recognition of Gallo as a language object have been previously discussed in Chapter 5. As explained in that

chapter, Matao plays Jean Chamarou du Courti-Bâs, a mole living underground who is also a Gallo speaker and language scholar. He is interrupted by the arrival of Ghite, Marie’s French-speaking character, who falls down Jean’s mole-hole and learns to speak Gallo as they become friends. The play’s opening scene, excerpted in Example 7.5, shows the language scholar getting his morning exercise by weight-lifting with the dictionary:

Example 7.5 “*A bit of gymnastics*”

JEAN : [stomps around stage]

*J’eme ben fère un petit de jimastiqe le matin
avant de comencer la journée.*

*I like to do a bit of gymnastics in the morning before
beginning the day.*

((audience member laughs))

[Picks up two copies of *Le Petit Matao*, lifts them laboriously while groaning, which turns into a deep laugh.]



((audience laughs slightly))

The presence of the dictionaries in this opening scene immediately situates the character, Jean, as a language scholar and Gallo speaker; it further highlights the importance of Gallo dictionaries to these roles of his. It is important to note that the physicality of the books Jean uses in his morning gymnastic routine matters to this display of Gallo’s symbolic “weight.” Matao holds the two books so that their front covers are prominent, facing out to the audience. This likely required forethought and practice, given the configuration of his arms and wrists in the “weight-lifting” position.

Importantly, Gallo is a language often seen as not having a repertoire as expansive as those of other languages like French. The former mayor whom I met at a Gallo lecture had this to say in his memoirs about the language he spoke as a child: “People ‘menait’ [‘led’] the cows to the field, the horses to work, children to school, the wheelbarrow, their wives to the dentist etc., flagrant examples among many others to indicate the poverty of this Gallo language” (117).¹⁵⁶ Others might have seen evidence here for the flexibility of the verb *mener* [‘to lead or direct’] but for this writer, it was evidence of linguistic impoverishment. Even those who created in Gallo felt at times certain nuances were challenging to express in it. One author, who translated a French *chanson* into Gallo for a local contest, explained to me what was most challenging to translate were not the vividly imaged insults in the song (as Gallo had quite a rich vocabulary as far as those were concerned) but the talk of love and sentiment, as Gallo was less commonly used in those genres.

It is this background context that makes the use of the dictionary in the theatrical scene in Example 7.5 so striking. Because of the metaphorical link between greater number (here, of words) and greater weight, the dictionaries’ large size, and the character’s effortful lifting of them, iconically conveys the richness of the language they iconize. These dictionaries are so full of words that the language scholar character is literally groaning under their weight, while also chuckling appreciatively. Matao’s performance of effortful lifting suggests that both the dictionaries and the language they iconize are heavy—“weighted” with words, nuance and meaning.

¹⁵⁶ “On menait les vaches au champ, les chevaux au labour, les enfants à l’école, la brouette, sa femme chez le dentiste etc., exemples flagrants parmi beaucoup d’autres, qui indiquent la pauvreté de ce langage gallo” (117).

In a subsequent interview with Matao and his colleague, Nânon, excerpted in Example 7.6, I asked Matao why he and Marie Chiff⁷ mine chose to showcase Gallo dictionaries in the opening scene of the play. In response to my question in line 1 about why they made “that choice,” Matao explains that the dictionaries’ publication was “revolutionary” (lines 2 and 6) in the “world of Gallo” (line 4):

Example 7.6 “*It was the revolution*”

- | | | |
|-----------|---|---|
| 1 SK : | <i>Donc est-ce que tu peux par- caozer un peu de ce choix-là ? Donc pourquoi-pourqhi qe :::</i> | <i>So can you sp- speak a little about that choice? So why- why</i> |
| 2 Matao : | <i>Ben pasqe <u>cant qe Le Petit Matao a etë banni ça etaet la::: la révolution hein ?</u></i> | <i>Well because <u>when the Petit Matao was published it was the revolution you know?</u></i> |
| 3 Nânon : | ((laughs)) | ((laughs)) |
| 4 Matao : | <i><u>De:::n le monde du galo.</u> Més c’êt vrai hein ?</i> | <i><u>In the world of Gallo.</u> But it’s true you know?</i> |
| 5 Nânon: | <i>C’êt vrai ouais !</i> | <i>It’s true yeah!</i> |
| 6 Matao: | <i><u>Ca a etë une révolution !</u></i> | <i><u>That was a revolution!</u></i> |
| 7 Nânon: | <i>C’êt clair hein ? c’êt clair.</i> | <i>That’s for sure yeah? That’s for sure.</i> |

Matao’s comment, and Nânon’s agreement in line 7, makes sense within the context of the widely circulating idea that Gallo had a limited, exclusively oral repertoire. Matao, whom I several times heard people jokingly refer to as “le grand Matao” [Tall Matthew] in a play off the dictionary’s title, went on to clarify that his own role in this “revolution” was to disseminate the dictionaries—a response that again highlighted the importance of material display and material circulation to the way in which the dictionary functioned semiotically. In Example 7.7, which directly follows Example 7.6 in the interview, Matao claims he personally bought “boxfuls” or “a good pile” of dictionaries (turns 4 and 14), or “fifty or a hundred” copies (turn 4), to resell at cost at the newsstand in his small town:

Example 7.7 “*Ouch, with my money! Mine!*”

1	Matao:	<i>E euh céz mai <u>je n’n e vendu je ne ses pās comben</u> non pus à [Plleumelé hein ?</i>	<i>And um at home <u>I sold I don’t know how many of them.</u> at [Plumelec you know ?</i>
2	Nânon :	[((long laugh))	[((long laugh))
3	SK :	((laugh))	((laugh))
4	Matao :	<i><u>Je n’n e achetë des cartronnées !</u> (.) <u>Je n’n achetë euh –aïe, o mes sous ! a mai !</u> ((laugh)) <u>Je n’n e achetë ça je les mettaes a vendr, a ::: ao tabac presse de Plleumelé, més je n’n e vendu</u> ppshhhhhh <u>cincante ou un cent !</u></i>	<i><u>I bought boxfuls of them !</u> (.) <u>I bought um—ouch, with my money! mine!</u> ((laugh)) <u>I bought some I put them out to sell, a:::t the newsstand of Plumelec, but I maybe sold</u> ppshhhhhh <u>fifty or a hundred !</u></i>
5	SK:	O waow !	Oh wow!
6	Matao:	<i>Més ouais hein ? <u>ça marchaet, ça partaet ! J’e achetë o mon tabac</u> [à</i>	<i>But yeah you know? <u>it worked, they were flying off the shelves! I bought with my tobacco</u> [at</i>
7	Nânon:	kkkkkk ! ((exclamation of criticism at mention of smoking?))	kkkkkk ! ((exclamation of criticism at mention of smoking?))
8	Matao:	<i>J’aloes ao tabac [à] presse,</i>	<i>I would go to the newsstand,</i>
9	SK :	Mm	Mm
10	Matao :	<i>e alor e me dizaet “ Bah tiens je n’n e pus là, y a du monde qi m’ont demandë [unintelligible] si tu vieûs ?” ((laugh)) <u>J’e reqhuperë l’arjent mai e pis j’e ramenë d’aotrs ! Més ça je n’e vendu- ouais je ne ses pās comben</u> ! Peut-être pās cent més ::: (.)</i>	<i>And so she’d tell me, “Well hey I don’t have any more here, there are people who asked me [unintelligible] if you want ?” ((laugh)) <u>I collected the money and then I brought back other ones ! But those, I sold- yeah I don’t know how many!</u> Maybe not a hundred but::: (.)</i>
11	Nânon:	<i>Faot q’on feraet une petite boutiqe !</i>	<i>We should open a little store!</i>
12	Matao:	Mm	Mm
13	Nânon:	Mm	Mm
14	Matao:	<i><u>Ouais ouais je n’n e vendu un bon paghette !</u></i>	<i><u>Yeah yeah I sold a good pile of them!</u></i>

Matao’s mention of his “own money” in turn 4 and repeated use of verbs of “I bought” and “I sold” – seven occurrences in all – insist on his personal investment in the books’ material trajectory. The reference to “boxfuls of them” and “a good pile” (turns 4 and 14) further insists upon the dictionaries’ mass as important to their ability to cause a

“revolution” in how people viewed and consumed the language. The laughter in Matao’s voice (see for example turns 4 and 10) suggests he looks upon these past actions of his with a bit of distance—he seems to make fun of his past dedication a bit here—but at the moment he was engaged in the dictionary’s circulation, their material presence, in “revolutionary” visible masses, seemed to matter. Interestingly, such concerns seemed to matter more than representational content. Immediately after this excerpt, Matao mentioned that although “ça taet la révolution pour tout le monde! tellement BENÉZE d’n avoir un” [it was the revolution for everyone! so HAPPY to have one], he believed that another dictionary was stronger with respect to “la diversité des mots” [diversity of words]. Regardless, it was still *Le Petit Matao*, the larger tome, that was used on stage in Matao and Marie Chiff’mine’s play.

The size of dictionaries emerged as a salient measure of Gallo representation in at least one other artistic performance I attended. In the excerpt presented in Example 7.8, below, storyteller Vovonne Toucourt introduces her story “A to Z” as she is standing on stage. Like *Bagful of Stars* in Example 7.5, this event was advertised in connection with the region-wide Languages Week in early April 2014. Whereas the focus on dictionaries in *Bagful of Stars* emphasized their heaviness, the excerpt from Vovonne’s introduction to “A to Z” in Example 7.8 focuses instead on the “not very thick” size that “the dictionary” had in the past (in implied contrast to the present):

Example 7.8 “*The dictionary, it wasn’t very thick*”

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| 1 | Vovonne : <i>Enfin, on va començer par une petite istouère qe j’avaes écrite du temp qe- le Motier de galo¹⁵⁷, le dictionnaire, i taet pàs ben épés</i> | <i>Okay, we’re going to begin with a little story that I wrote back when- the Motier de galo, the dictionary, it wasn’t very thick</i> |
|---|--|---|

¹⁵⁷ I am not sure if this is a citation of the 1995 Gallo dictionary *Motier de Galo* [*The Gallo Dictionary*], or a generic reference to “the Gallo dictionary.”



[holds up fingers about an inch apart, looks out at audience]

- | | | | |
|---|------------|---|--|
| 2 | Vovonne : | <i>Il y en a vantié qi le geneüssent ?
 Nouna ? <u>C'ët une istouère de A à-</u>
 ((pauses, looks out at audience, motions
 to them))</i> | <i>There are maybe some of you who are
 familiar with it? No? <u>It's a story from A</u>
 <u>to-</u> ((pauses, looks out at audience,
 motions to them))</i> |
| 3 | Audience : | <u>Zed ! Zed</u> | <u>Z ! Z.</u> |
| 4 | Vovonne : | <i>Zed. <u>Puisqu' fil ét dan le]</u>
 <u>dictionnaire</u> ! Aloure on comence par
 qhi ?</i> | <i>Z. <u>Because [it's in the] dictionary!</u> So
 we begin with what?</i> |
| 5 | Audience : | A ! | A ! |

In this introduction, Vovonne Toucourt inscribes her own work in a larger, dictionary-centric endeavor by claiming she wrote the story at a time when “the dictionary, it wasn’t very thick” (turn 1). The small amount of space Vovonne leaves between her thumb and forefinger invokes the past thinness of the dictionary, her hand iconizing the dictionary itself. This attested insufficiency opens a space for her own story, a humorous tale of a retired man renewing contact with a childhood sweetheart only to find he was better off alone. The tale features a Gallo vocabulary word for each letter of the alphabet, arranged chronologically from A to Z. Importantly, Vovonne relies on her audience first to name the next letter in the alphabet (as happens in turns 2 through 4 in Example 7.8), and then asks them to supply the meaning of the word starting with each letter as each emerges in the story.

In so doing, Vovonne turns her public into an interactive, richer type of dictionary, whom she can “activate” by pretending to tap a “touchscreen,” as she explains in Example 7.9. This example immediately follows her first prompting of the audience in turn 5 of Example 7.8:

Example 7.9 “*You’re going to serve as my touchscreen!*”

- | | | | |
|---|-----------|--|--|
| 6 | Vovonne: | <i>A- Ver ! <u>V’avéz veû, c’ét une istouère moderne !</u></i> | A- Yes ! <u><i>You see, it’s a modern story!</i></u> |
| 7 | Audience: | ((laughs)) | ((laughs)) |
| 8 | Vovonne: | <u><i>Vous aléz me servi d’écran tactile !</i></u> | <u><i>You’re going to serve as my touchscreen!</i></u> |



[motions hand in circle in front of them]

- | | | | |
|----|-----------|---|---|
| 9 | Audience: | ((laughs)) | ((laughs)) |
| 10 | Vovonne: | <u><i>C’ét come su eune tablette numérique tu qenneûs ben ela ?</i></u> | <u><i>It’s like on a digital tablet you’re familiar with those?</i></u> |
| 11 | Audience: | ((laughs)) | ((laughs)) |
| 12 | Vovonne: | <i>Tu fais “ Hop ! ” Ca y est ! On change de letr. “ Hop ! ”</i> | <i>You go “ Hup ! ” Presto ! The letter changes. “ Hup ! ”</i> |

This interactional, mimetically tactile routine transforms the public into a metaphorical dictionary, in a strategic move that, as I will argue in Section 7.5, aims to position the public as Gallo speakers. The audience’s welcomed contributions help construct “the Gallo dictionary”—or the Gallo repertoire, as used by speakers—as both large and open to local variation. Although opposite physical qualities of Gallo dictionaries are evoked

in the performances *Bagful of Stars* and *A to Z*, the end result is the same: their physicality becomes an icon for Gallo's existence and worth, rendering it visible.

7.5 Dictionaries as tools for performing local discursive expertise

7.5.1 *Celebrating variation and localness*

As Chapter 6 has established, the ideology of “personal connection” bestows value on Gallo by virtue of the language's ability to create a sense of connection with local people and places, as well as to show how the language practices of beloved older relatives (presumably unlike suspenders or wooden shoes) still have relevance for twenty-first-century life. Both festival stand passers-by and actors onstage valued lexical and phonological variation within Gallo for its power to index localness without necessarily entailing the past. Furthermore, these same social actors' dictionary-incorporating interactions showed that dictionaries often prompted discussions that similarly valued localness and language variation.

While the festival attendee quoted above in Example 7.4 was perusing the dictionary, several words made her chuckle, including *nigousse*, which can mean either ‘resident of lower Brittany’ or ‘imbecile.’ When I asked her about why she laughed, however, her answer focused not on the humorous meaning of the term, but rather on its indexical associations. Those concerned her mother, a Gallo speaker, and the countryside, a territory she associates with Gallo:

Example 7.10 “Inland, people spoke Gallo”

“Mes parents, mes grands-parents parlaient gallo. (.) Mais :: pas moi puisque j’ai été élevée dans un- dans une autre région, donc euh :: je n’ai pas appris. [...] Dans les terres on parlait le gallo, sur la côte on le parlait pas ça faisait pas bien, [en quelque-] Et quand ma mère est arrivée euh sur la côte euh, s’est mariée avec mon père qui était de Dinard, elle a pas- elle faisait attention de ne pas parler gallo. Parce que ça faisait la campagne quoi.”

“My parents, my grandparents spoke Gallo. (.) But not me because I was raised in another region, so therefore umm I didn’t learn [it]. [...] Inland, people spoke Gallo; on the coast people didn’t speak it, it didn’t come off well, [in some-] And when my mother arrived um on the coast, um married my father who was from Dinard, she didn’t- she was careful not to speak Gallo. Because it came off as country you know.”

The dictionary became a site for this woman to encounter not only semantic meaning but also a particular type of localized family personhood and the relevant geographical distinctions, suddenly recalled into being. While one might not be able to say that dictionaries indexed localness in and of themselves, they did serve as prompts for interactions that indexed localness and showed how Gallo use could be a productive way to index local connection. Localness was thus part of dictionaries’ performative effect. This link between dictionaries and local grounding may have helped them resonate as significant social objects for Gallo advocates, who, as discussed in Chapter 6, often drew on an ideology of personal connection to affectively valued people and places to ground their Gallo work.

The celebration of geographic variation, and thus of localness, was also reflected in the structure of Gallo dictionaries themselves. Figure 7.5 illustrates that a certain amount of formal diversity is codified in *Le Petit Matao*, for example. The figure shows three different Gallo lexical items listed for ‘soleil,’ the French word for ‘sun’. These three terms, two of which are associated parenthetically with a geographic area (“E” for east, “W” for west) yield a total of 11 alternate pronunciations. The number of variants given makes it hard to determine which if any might be ‘standard.’ Even *soulai*, the form not explicitly affiliated with a particular geographic terrain, has four pronunciations listed, with none given as more or less marked than any other. The effect of this multiplicity is to privilege local, geographically stratified pronunciations, while avoiding positioning any one form as unmarked or standard.

Gallo-French	French-Gallo
<p>SOLAI (n. m. E) [sɔla, sɔlaj, sɔləj] : soleil, ostensor (fig.).</p> <p>SOULAI (n. m.) [sula, sulaj, sulɛ, sulɛj] : soleil, hélianthe (fig.), ostensor (fig.), tournesol (fig.). <i>Va-t-il fère du soulai ? (JYS) = Va-t-il faire du soleil ? du soulai (néol.)</i> : solaire. Le soulai a des jambes (ou des pates, E) : se dit du soleil qui a des rayons qui descendent à l'horizon. soulai du bedouaod (n. m. 35) : lune.</p> <p>évaluer.</p> <p>SOURAI (n. m. W) [sura, suraj, sure, surej] : soleil, hélianthe (fig.), ostensor (fig.), tournesol (fig.). <i>Le sourai se couche (CB) = Le soleil se couche.</i> du sourai (W néol.) : solaire.</p>	<p>SOLEIL : soulai (n. m.), sourai (n. m. W), solai (n. m. E). avoir du bien au soleil : avoir des sions ao sourai (W rare). en plein soleil : ao redon du soulai (22). mettre au soleil : essouailler, essourailier (W rare), essolailler (E), essoulaijer, assouailler, assourailier (W rare), assolailler (E rare), assoulaijer, soulailler, sourailier (W rare), solailler (E rare), soulaijer (rare). <i>La lèsser un petit s'essouailler (GG) = La laisser prendre un peu le soleil.</i></p>

Figure 7.5 Gallo-French and French-Gallo definitions for “sun”, *Le Petit Matao* (Auffray 2007)

Gallo writers and performers often told me that when they were creating their stories or plays, they were particularly attentive to forms used locally, as well as formal diversity between different Gallo-speaking areas. They also often played with synonymy during their artistic performances, using multiple words to refer to one and the same object or idea. This buildup of synonyms is illustrated in a line of dialogue from *Bagful of Stars*: “*Ça caoze, ça préche! Ça bachole ! ça s’ecocaille ça huche!*” [They talk, they talk! They talk poorly! They crow, they shout!]. The multiplicity of synonyms for verbs of speech, used here to express the idea of people speaking Gallo, iconically constructs the body of Gallo speakers as voluble. Not only do they speak; they speak *a lot*. Such uses in staged performances celebrate Gallo’s expressiveness, illustrating for all that Gallo is not an “impoverished” language, but rather has words enough to fill even the “heaviest” of dictionaries.

A short scene from *Bagful of Stars* illustrates how artists can play with this formal multiplicity in order to ratify the various, often geographically stratified forms that the public might bring with them to a performance. In Example 7.11, Jean, the language scholar character played by Matao, has just been asked what Gallo is (see Chapter 5). In response, Jean illustrates Gallo forms, and their variation, by playing with the first- and second-person singular object pronouns “mai” and “tai,” each of which has multiple phonological variants.

Example 7.11 “*They talk like me!*”



			Variant 1	Variant 2	Variant 3	
1	Ghite :	<u>Qu'est-ce que c'est ? (.) Le gallo ?</u>			<u>What is that ? (.) Gallo ?</u>	
2	Jean :	<u>Sti qi caoze come mai ! [maj] I caozent come mai. [maj]</u> (points to himself)			<u>[The one who] talks like me! They speak like me.</u> (points to himself)	[maj]
3	Ghite:	<u>I (.) causent (.) come (.) mai ! [maj]</u> (points to Jean))			<u>They (.) speak (.) like (.) me!</u> (points to Jean))	[maj]
4	Jean :	<u>Nouna. Mai [maj], ((points to self)), tai ! [taj]</u> ((points to her))			<u>No. Me, ((points to self)), you !</u>	[maj] [taj]

5	Ghite :	<i>Mai [maj], ((points to self)), tai !((points to him))</i>	<i>Me, ((points to self)), you ! ((points to him))</i>	[maj] [taj]
6	Jean:	<i>Ca caoze come mai [maj], i caozent come- ((pause))</i>	<i>They speak like me, they speak like- ((pause))</i>	[maj]
7	Ghite :	<i>Tai ! [taj]</i>	<i>You !</i>	[taj]
8	Jean :	<i>I caozent come (.) mai [me],</i>	<i>They speak like (.) me,</i>	[me]
9	Ghite :	<i>I caozent comme mai [me]</i>	<i>They speak like me</i>	[me]
10	Jean :	<i>[I caozent come (.) tai [te]</i>	<i>[They speak like (.) you</i>	[te]
11	Ghite :	<i>[I caozent come (.) tai [te]</i>	<i>[They speak like (.) you</i>	[te]
12	Jean :	<i><u>Ou ben core</u>, i caozent come, mai :: [ma],</i>	<i><u>Or even</u>, they speak like , me,</i>	[ma]
13	Ghite :	<i>I caozent come mai [ma],</i>	<i>They speak like me,</i>	[ma]
14	Jean :	<i>I caozent coume, [tai ! [ta] @@</i>	<i>They speak like , [you !, @@</i>	[ta]
15	Ghite :	<i>[tai [ta]</i>	<i>[you [ta]</i>	[ta]
16		<i>Ah vé</i>	<i>Ah yes</i>	

Importantly, where several variants are used ([maj]/[ma]/[me] and [taj]/[ta]/[te]), none is asserted as more correct than others. Along with the sound play, the actors in this scene literally play with indexicality, as they variously point at themselves, each other, and the audience. Jean encourages Ghite to point toward herself while saying Gallo speakers speak like “mai” (lines 5, 9 and 13); afterward, in line 16, she speaks her first unprompted Gallo word: “vé” or “yes.” Here, Ghite’s literally “indexing” herself as a speaker precedes and prefigures her inhabiting a speaker identity. At one point, in lines 14 and 15, Jean and Ghite point out together at the audience – rather than each other – as the referent for “tai” [you], designating the public, too, as Gallo speakers. Although the Gallo dictionaries have not physically been on stage since the opening scene of this play,

the interactional routine here functions almost as a dictionary might, in that it provides those who engage with it with various regional variants of lexical forms for their perusal and use. As shall be argued later, the play also functions analogously to a Gallo dictionary in that interactions with it have the potential to socialize audience members into adopting a role of local expertise with regard to form.

In the lines that immediately followed this demonstration of Gallo person deictics, *Bagful of Stars* even more explicitly connected phonological form to local geography. Matao's character, Jean, broke into song to illustrate the *mai/tai* variation he had just established, using the well-known verse template “Y a core dix filles à [place-name]” [There are still ten girls in [place-name]]. In this type of song, an example of the *dizaine* genre, the singer counts backward from 10 to 1. Jean starts as expected— “Y a core dix filles à Plumelec vens canté *mai j'iron les vai(r)*” [There are still 10 girls in Plumelec, come with me let's go see them], using the [e] pronunciation of all three bolded vowels. But then, rather than counting back to “nine girls” in the next verse, Jean changed not the number of girls but the rhyme scheme, varying both the pronunciation of *mai* and the place-name cited (*Plumelec* [e], *Lantilla* [a], *Carentouai* [aj]) so that the rhyme with *mai* and *vai(r)* was preserved in the different lexical variants. Adding another layer of local indexicality, all three towns mentioned—Plumelec, Lantillac and Carentoir as they are known in French—were within the same département as the town in which the play was performed that day. This suggests the place-names were likely of local resonance to the majority of the play's public.

When it comes to the dictionary as well, formal multiplicity gives users of Gallo indexically charged options. For example, the newspaper column writer known as Fleur

de Blé Noir (see Example 7.3 above) initially told me she “[didn’t] find herself at all” in the dictionary she owns. However, in Example 7.12, she clarifies that she *does* use her dictionary, but in a way that positions her own intuitions, and their indexical associations with how “we used to say” things, as she says in line 6, as the ultimate authority on what she calls in line 7 “my Gallo”:

Example 7.12 “I use it to help me find my own words”

1	<u>Je m’en sers pour ai-</u>	<u>I use it to help-</u>
2	<u>m’aider à retrouver mes mots à moi.</u>	<u>to help me find my own words.</u>
3	Si ça correspond,	If that matches up,
4	<u>Si ça me rappelle tout d’un coup</u> en	<u>If that reminds me suddenly</u> upon seeing
	voyant ce qu’il a écrit,	what he wrote,
5	<u>je dis</u>	<u>I say</u>
6	<u>“ Ah bah ! on disait ça nous.”</u>	<u>“ Ah! we used to say that, we did.”</u>
7	<u>J’utilise toujours mon gallo quand même</u>	<u>I always use my Gallo even so</u>
	<u>euh,</u>	<u>um,</u>
8	<u>Je ne me sers pas du gallo que je le vois</u>	<u>I don’t use Gallo that I see in</u>
	<u>su le dictionnaire.</u>	<u>the dictionary.</u>
9	Ça c’est une chose que je-	It’s a thing that I-
10	<i>je peûs pas.</i>	<i>I can’t do.</i>
11	<u>Pasqe ça sonne mal pour moi.</u>	<u>Because it sounds bad to me.</u>
	((laughs))	((laughs))

Rather than treating the dictionary as an ultimate arbiter of meaning, Fleur de Blé Noir understands the dictionary to be a tool that can bring about her performance of locally grounded expertise.

At the stand I was helping to staff at the language festival in Lannion, another couple who stopped by to chat used the dictionary as a mediating tool to construct their own linguistic expertise. This older man, a retired French and English teacher, and his female partner were interested to learn that I, an English speaker, was studying Gallo. When I turned on my recorder, they both began providing examples of Gallo expressions, which they constructed particularly as things the family of the man would say. The man said that his mother, in particular, spoke “pas mal de vocabulaire, hein? vocabulaire du

Gallo, de la région du Mont-Dol donc, de Cancale” [quite a lot of vocabulaire, eh? Gallo vocabulary, from the region of Mont-Dol then, from Cancale]. When they defined one phrase they mentioned, “ça me fait achézon,” as “ça me dégoute” [that disgusts me], I replied by saying I hadn’t heard that before, that I had learned another expression, “faire donjer.” The man confidently said no, that for him, it was “faire achézon.” In the first line of the excerpt in Example 7.13, below, the woman says that at an unspecified time in the past, the couple hadn’t found the word *achézon* “in the dictionary”; her tone, however, was less apologetic than amused. The man said “Si!” and asked his partner to get the dictionary on the stand’s table (line 4). What followed involved a thorough scouring of the dictionary for the Gallo words “achézon” and “foriere,” remembered from the man’s childhood:

Example 7.13 “Is that the Gallo dictionary there?”

1	Woman :	<u>On l’avait pas trouvé dans le dictionnaire hein</u>	<u>We didn’t find it in the dictionary eh</u>
2	Man :	“ <i>Achézon</i> ” si ! Si si	“ <i>Achézon</i> ” yes! yes we did
3	Woman :	Je sais plus ! Il me semble pour ((unintelligible))	I don’t know any more! It seems to me for ((unintelligible))
4	Man :	<u>C’est le dictionnaire gallo ça ?</u>	<u>Is that the Gallo dictionary there?</u>
5	Woman :	<u>Oui c’est le dictionnaire ! Alors A- ((picks it up, starts searching))</u>	<u>Yes that’s the dictionary! So A- ((picks it up, starts searching))</u>
6	Man :	A-C-H	A-C-H
7	Woman :	A-C-H (.) et la	A-C-H (.) and there
8	Man :	Voilà “ <i>achézon</i> ”	There’s “ <i>achézon</i> ”
9	Woman :	<u>“<i>Achézon</i> !” ((shows me)) ca s’écrit comme ça.</u>	<u>“<i>Achézon</i> !” ((shows me)) That’s written like that.</u>
10	SK :	Ah okay !	Ah okay !
11	Man :	<u>[Alors qu’est-ce qu’ils disent ?</u>	<u>[So what do they say?</u>
12	SK :	((reading)) [A-C-H-E-Z-O-N, [dégout	((reading)) [A-C-H-E-Z-O-N, [disgust

13	Woman :	((reading)) [dégout, écœurement	((reading)) [disgust, nausea
14	SK :	Ah okay !	Ah okay !
15	Man :	Dégout, écœurement, [seven lines omitted]	Disgust, nausea, [seven lines omitted]
22	Woman :	<u>là quoi tu penses- à quoi tu peux penser [d'autre- oui que, [non on a quels autres-</u>	<u>What are you thinking of- what can you think of else-</u> yes [no we have what others-
23	Man :	<u>[On a quels autres mots, ben il y avait " la foriere," la foriere, c'est le bout d'un champ,</u>	<u>[We have what other words, well there was " la foriere", la foriere, it's the end of a field,</u>
24	SK :	Ah	Ah
25	Man :	<u>((unintelligible)) ((starts drawing with his finger on the table of the festival stand))</u>	<u>((unintelligible)) ((starts drawing with his finger on the table of the festival stand))</u>
26	Man :	<u>un champ,</u>	<u>a field</u>
27	SK :	Oui,	Yes,
28	Man :	<u>Ca c'est un champ, ((traces a triangular shape))</u>	<u>This here is a field, ((traces a triangular shape))</u>
29	SK :	Mm,	Mm,
30	Man :	Mm ? Et puis euh le tracteur i passe comme ça, ((indicates movement))	Mm ? And then um the tractor it goes like this, ((indicates movement))
31	SK :	Oui,	Yes,
32	Man :	<u>Et les deux bouts là, qui sont difficiles à, avec la charrue,</u>	<u>And the two ends there, that are difficult to, with the plow,</u>
33	SK :	Oui,	Yes,
34	Man :	<u>C'est- on appelle ça la foriere !</u>	<u>That's- we call that the foriere !</u>
35	SK :	Okay !	Okay !
36	Man :	<u>Mais je sais pas comment ça s'écrit non plus hein. C'est pas là-dedans-</u> F-O ((to woman)) tu regardes ?	<u>But I don't know how that's written either eh? It's not in there-</u> F-O ((to woman)) Are you looking?
37	Woman :	F-O- on a regardé, mais- c'est- (.) ((whispers)) je ne sais-	F-O- we looked, but- it's (.) ((whispers)) I don't know-
38	Man :	<i>Foriere,</i>	<i>Foriere,</i>
39	Woman :	Forie, pfff non	Forie, pfff no
40	Man :	Forie- si si !	Forie- yes it is !

- | | | | |
|----|---------|--|--|
| 41 | Woman : | <u>Si ! Voilà ((reads)) “ chaintre, lisière d’un champ” foriere</u> | <u>Yes ! Here ((reads)) “ headland, border of a field” foriere</u> |
| 42 | SK : | Ah oui forière. Okay, | Ah okay forière. Okay, |
| 43 | Man : | <u>Il faut pas dire comme en français ‘forière’ hein! Faut dire ‘foriere’ !</u> | <u>You can’t say like in French ‘forière,’ eh! You need to say ‘foriere’!</u> |

This dictionary-centric interaction may initially appear to construct the dictionary (in this case, *Le Petit Matao*) as a linguistic authority, as the couple used it to show to me “ça s’écrit comme ça” [that’s written like that] (line 9). But more importantly, while the woman at first maintained that they had tried and failed in the past to find the words “achézon” and “foriere” in the dictionary, both firmly held to the words as legitimate expressions of the local Gallo of his mother’s birthplace near Mont-Dol. Their looking up the words in the dictionary could almost be seen as a challenge of the dictionary and its completeness, one which it apparently passes, rather than casting their own memories into doubt. Additionally, starting in line 23, the man used another form of sign-making to communicate (literally before my eyes) the definition of the Gallo word “foriere.” Sketching with his finger on the stand table—amidst the dictionaries, Gallo children’s books and fliers—the man traced for me a triangular parcel of land and the oddly-shaped bit at the end that the tractor plow could not reach. Although the couple used the dictionary to confirm the word and its spelling, it seemed clear that most of the confirmation was for my benefit, as the words and their meaning were well-known to them. In this couple’s practice, as for Fleur de Blé Noir in Example 7.12 above, dictionaries were not understood as containing “correct” forms but rather as a mediating tool for people to construct their own linguistic expertise, comparing their own forms with those present in dictionaries.

7.5.2 *Legitimizing spectators and passers-by as authorities on local Gallo expression*

The final section of this analysis will show that the value bestowed by the iconic and indexical effects of dictionaries on Gallo in general, and on local forms in particular, legitimated theatergoing spectators and festival passersby as authorities on local Gallo expression. They did so by encouraging those who encountered dictionaries (and the plays using dictionaries as visual prop or structural model) to *add to* the texts themselves, giving voice to local forms of expression.

The first evidence that dictionaries (and their cultural embedding) aimed to authorize local ways of relating to Gallo, rather than imposing homogenization, comes from the forward to a dictionary itself: Deriano's (2010) *Motier de pochette*. In this forward, Deriano explicitly invites his readers to add to his text, scribbling additional forms in the margins as they feel necessary:

“May the user pardon the omissions, any possible imprecisions, or interpretational differences that were able to slip themselves into this work. With that, *I will express a wish: that you, Gallo speakers, who have this dictionary between your hands, can bring to it your expertise by filling the margins with your annotations, just as glosses decorated the manuscripts of the Middle Ages long ago. This would be a way for you to bequeath your knowledge to the coming generations. In this way, by your effort, you would help this dictionary to reach its goal, which beyond being a pedagogical tool, is also to give Gallo speakers awareness of the richness of their culture, to demonstrate the linguistic viability of Gallo, and then to contribute to the development of a Romance literature in Brittany alongside a Celtic literature.*” (x-xi; emphasis added)¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁸ “ Que l’usager nous pardonne donc les omissions, les imprécisions éventuelles ou les divergences d’interprétations qui ont pu se glisser dans l’ouvrage. De ceci, j’émets un vœu : que vous, gallésants, qui avez ce dictionnaire entre les mains, vous puissiez y apporter vos connaissances en remplissant les marges de vos annotations, comme les gloses ornaient jadis les manuscrits du Moyen Age. Ce serait une façon pour vous de léguer votre savoir aux générations montantes. Ainsi, de par votre effort, vous aideriez ce dictionnaire à atteindre son objectif, qui outre sa qualité d’outil pédagogique, est aussi de redonner conscience aux gallésants de la richesse de leur culture, démontrer la viabilité linguistique du gallo, puis contribuer au développement d’une littérature romane en Bretagne à côté d’une littérature celtique.” (x-xi)

In Deriano's words, the production of marginalia by dictionary users is turned into an ideological mission of sorts, which combines a respect for traditions of the past with the desire to carry the language into the future. There is also a recognition that reference texts are not all-inclusive, and that a language can be made more "rich" and "viable" by being open to the words that are not (yet) to be found in dictionaries.

The two plays I discuss in this chapter, both of which incorporated dictionaries into their text either materially (Matao's dictionary-lifting) or mimetically (the space between Vovonne's fingers), likewise made their viewing public into an essential component of the performance. The audiences were solicited by the actors onstage so that they could help them create meaning, simultaneously constructing them as local authorities on Gallo expression.

In Vovonne Toucourt's story "A to Z," audience participation is constructed as essential to the unfolding of the narrative, as they supply each letter of the alphabet when she uses them as a "digital touchscreen." Then, when Vovonne supplies the Gallo word corresponding to that letter, in many cases she asks them to elaborate on its meaning. Over the course of the performance, the audience supplies each letter from A to Z at Vovonne's prompting, and then later supplies a definition or Gallo synonym for the vocabulary word Vovonne has prepared in advance and provided for her audience. The performer-public interaction routine thus established consistently puts the audience members, in their collective guise as a touchscreen-activated dictionary, into the position of knowing an integral piece of the narrative underway. In Example 7.14, Vovonne introduces the Gallo vocabulary word for the letter 'C' – *choper* or 'to doze' (turn 1). Rather than positioning the word as the only acceptable form, however, Vovonne asks

her audience to supply Gallo synonyms for *choper*, which they do in turns 2 and 3. In line 7, Vovonne supplies an additional synonym of her own:

Example 7.14 “*I see that I’m dealing with specialists!*”

1 Vovonne: *C ! Come den ‘choper’ ! [Alor, ghi qe ça veût dire ‘choper’ ?]* *C ! As in ‘to doze’₁ [So, what does that mean ‘to doze’?]*



[points at someone in the audience]

2 Aud 1: *[Ah ! dormi un ptit cai]* *[Ah ! to sleep a little]*

3 Aud 2: *[Dormir!]* *[to sleep!]*

4 Vovonne : *Dormi un ptit cai, je veûs qe j’e affaire à des spécialistes !* *To sleep a little, I see that I’m dealing with specialists!*

5



[points at speaker, addresses rest of audience]

6 Audience : *((loud laughter))* *((loud laughter))*

7 Vovonne : *Pasqe @ y en a, i disent bober aossi hein!* *Because @ there are some, they say ‘to doze’₂ also you know!*

8 Audience : *Oui ! ((murmurs of assent))* *Yes ! ((murmurs of assent))*

While Vovonne’s designation of her audience as “specialists” leaves ambiguous whether the specialty in question is linguistic- or napping-related, the interaction routine itself casts the audience in the position of a Gallo to French dictionary, and herself as a Gallo to Gallo dictionary, through the mimed materiality of the interaction. This ratifies audience

members’ productive knowledge of certain Gallo forms, recontextualizing them as linguistic “specialists.” Vovonne’s pointing gestures further orient her public’s attention toward the contributions of audience members, contextualizing them as integral to the meaning-making endeavor underway.

Audience contributions to later alphabet letters in “A to Z” offer further evidence that the story’s interaction format helped at least some audience members participate authoritatively in Gallo-centric discourse. It has already been established that “A to Z” depended on audience member participation for success—relying as it did on the audience to supply the next letter in the alphabet and guess at the meaning of lexical items—but strikingly, the audience also intervened in moments where their participation was not called for. In Example 7.15, Vovonne supplies two possible forms for ‘the afternoon meal’ in turn 1 (*le rission* and *le rinsion*), and one audience member supplies a French translation in turn 2 (*le quatre-heures*). While Vovonne ratifies the translation, another audience member calls out a third Gallo variant for the term, *le raissieu* (line 4), although the gloss into French had already been given and ratified:

Example 7.15 “*Raissieu!*”

1	Vovonne :	<i>R, comme den rission. Le rission, le rinsion, en vla core un aotr repàs,</i>	<i>R, as in afternoon meal. The afternoon meal₁, the afternoon meal₂, here’s yet another meal,</i>
2	Audience 1 :	Le quatre-heures	Four o’clock tea !
3	Vovonne :	Le quatre-heures !	Four o’clock tea !
4	Audience 2 :	<i>Raissieu !</i>	<i>Afternoon meal₃</i>

Through engagement with this performance format, the speaker in line 4 has licensed himself to provide a lexical variant even when not explicitly prompted. Most theater performances are thought of as examples of Goffman’s *platform events*, in which “an activity is set before an audience,” which maintains an essentially spectatorial stance,

holding the performer(s) as ‘the single focus of visual and cognitive attention’ (quoted in Bauman 2011). However, “A to Z” here has taken on some of the attributes of a *celebrative social occasion*, where attention is more equally distributed. As Goodwin (1986) makes clear, participation frameworks are about far more than those licensed to speak at a particular moment, and meaning is emergent, distributed among all social actors present.

The audience of *Bagful of Stars*, too, at times whispered words in Gallo in reaction to what they heard and saw, even in the absence of an explicit solicitation like that in “A to Z.” In this way, both plays functioned something like dictionaries did at festival stands: as a kind of linguistic first-pair part that prompted acts of metalinguistic differentiation and authentication. In my final example, Example 7.16, an audience member, who was sitting near me at the performance I recorded of *Bagful of Stars*, licensed herself to provide spoken commentary on the ongoing performance. The early scene she comments on was previously discussed in Chapter 5 from the perspective of the play’s text (rather than that of the speaker in the audience). In it, the reclusive Gallo speaker Jean first meets the confused, French-speaking Ghite. Each asks the other questions in their own language, which the other cannot understand. This leads to a situation in which all questions go unanswered, as the characters engage in sustained non-accommodation between Gallo and French. By the end of the excerpt, the audience member has begun quietly translating Ghite’s (communicatively ineffective) French into Gallo, in effect authorizing herself to *speak for* the character on stage:

Example 7.16 “*Qhi qe tu dis?*”

- | | | | |
|---|---------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1 | Jean : | <i>Oh la la la la la la ! pffffff</i> | <i>Oh la la la la la la ! pffffff</i> |
| 2 | Ghite : | Où suis-je ? | Where am I ? |

3	Jean :	<i>Qhi qe c'èt [a chaer d'er-] là ?</i>	<i>What is it that [that's fallen] here?</i>
		((pause))	
4	Ghite :	Qu'est-ce que vous dites monsieur?	What are you saying sir?
5	Jean :	<i>Qhi qe tu viens bouiner céz mai ?</i>	<i>What have you come to screw around with here?</i>
6	<u>Audience member :</u>	<u>Ah oui @@ c'est bien ! ((laughs))</u>	<u>Ah yes @@ that's good! ((laughs))</u>
7	Jean :	<i>Tu peûs pouint rester céz tai [xxxxx céz] ma taopinière ? [Et en pus] ça a tout déqhésé !</i>	<i>You can't stay home [xxxxx at] my molehill? [And moreover] it's completely torn up!</i>
8	Ghite :	Jeune gen, je ne comprends rien !	Young man, I understand nothing!
9	<u>Audience member :</u>	<u>((laughs)) bah non !</u>	<u>((laughs)) well no !</u>
10	Jean :	Hop hop hop hop hop	Hop hop hop hop hop
11	Ghite:	Qu'est-ce que vous dites?	What are you saying ?
12	<u>Audience member :</u>	<u>((corrects onstage character in whisper)) <i>Qhi qe tu dis ?</i></u>	<u>((corrects onstage character in whisper)) <i>What are you saying?</i></u>
13	Jean :	<i>Qhi qe t'és ? [D'oyou qe t'és ?</i>	<i>Who are you? Where are you from?</i>
14	<u>Audience member :</u>	<u>[hmm !</u>	<u>[hmm !</u>

This commenter declares Jean's belligerent Gallo phrase "good" in line 6, scoffs at Ghite's inability to understand Gallo in line 9, and even speaks for her in line 12, translating her ineffective French question into Jean's Gallo. One might be tempted to say that this audience member was an unrati ed participant in this performance, but she was rati ed in some sense, in that Jean's and Ghite's conflict seems designed to draw the audience—the only ones who are consistently positioned as using both codes—into serving as translator. This audience member used the performance to position herself as an authority on Gallo expression, in effect transforming the performance experience into a production of local expertise over which she has authority, and in which she has a voice.

For viewers approaching the play without this audience member's productive knowledge of Gallo, the sustained non-accommodation between the two characters serves

another, dictionary-like purpose as well. After a while, Jean and Ghite start asking each other identical questions and making identical comments in the two languages, without either seeming to be aware of it. When Jean asks *Qhi t'es tai?*, Marie replies only with the same question: *Qui êtes-vous?* [Who are you?]. When I played this part of my video recording for the focus group excerpted above in Example 7.2, one group member, Michel, replied that the play's format "nous apprivoise" [tames us]. In his estimation, the fact that "nous avons une traduction dans un premier temps" [we have a translation at first]—by which he means the two characters' speaking the same lines at cross-purposes—"nous fait passer progressivement au gallo" [makes us move progressively toward Gallo]. Indeed, by the end of the play, both characters speak only in Gallo, with the public expected to understand. Although focus group member Joséphine believed that "they should translate the whole thing completely into French for us, we'd understand better", Michel and the third focus group member insisted they understood well enough to follow along. Thus, just as Gallo dictionaries could assume some of the iconic and indexical significance usually afforded to props and voices on stage, plays could assume some of the representational function usually associated with dictionaries, providing "translations" for the Gallo forms they presented to their audiences.

Tellingly, the last scene of *Bagful of Stars* takes place not in the language scholar's molehill, but offstage, among the public, as the characters interact with audience members in Gallo. Figure 7.6 shows two video stills from the performance's final scene. The play ends when Ghite leads the timid Jean out from his mole-hole into the audience, which within the play's ontology symbolizes the above-ground, modern-day world in which Ghite and her public both live. Ghite tells Jean confidently, "This



Figure 7.6. “Look, see these people, the people of Gallo country”

way, I have the light! See these people, the people of Gallo country, speaking Gallo today!” Once among the audience, both actors ask people in the audience where they come from and make comments about them to each other in Gallo. They point to audience members throughout, ratifying them as participants through gesture and gaze as well as conversation. By encouraging audience members to tell the rest of the public where they come from, *Bagful of Stars* again ratifies their audience as possessors of local knowledge, linguistic and otherwise. While the dictionary has become an icon of value, an index of modernity (through its links to writing culture), and a tool used to produce local expertise, this play, like “A to Z,” grounds knowledge in interpersonal connection above all else. The dictionary is an important semiotic tool for casting off the trappings of

the past, but what matters most is forging commonality with one's late-modern public, speaking to them and eliciting their words in return.

7.6 Discussion

As seen in Chapter 5, Gallo advocates encouraged festivalgoers to ask questions about the variety, helping to create it as a discrete language-object and emblazoning it in the discursive landscape of residents of Upper Brittany. As discussed in Chapter 6, the metalinguistic labels in widest circulation for the variety, *patois* and *gallo*, both had powerful indexical potential, and social actors in specific interactional moments used either term, or juxtaposed them both, in order to make nuanced statements about the speakers presumed to inhabit the language. Like these labels, material objects were also marshaled in attempts to emblemize Gallo and its speakers; the ways in which objects were staged in artistic performances or at informational booths at festivals foregrounded the iconic and indexical effects of such physicality.

As another Gallo storyteller, quoted in Jigourel (2011) explains, “Our goal is to show that we can talk about everything in Gallo, not only about plows or old-fashioned ways of working farmland. What’s interesting is to speak and, perhaps, to laugh, about the present!” (97).¹⁵⁹ A unique reliance upon suspenders, wooden shoes and other, affiliated forms of semiosis led to reduced indexical possibility. It is this perceived indexical gap that Gallo dictionaries seem positioned to help fill; the prominent staging of Gallo dictionaries, both in artistic performances and at festival booths, can be productively understood as a way to expand the indexical repertoire available for Gallo.

¹⁵⁹ “ Notre but est de montrer qu’on peut parler de tout en gallo, pas seulement des brabants ou des labours à l’ancienne. Ce qui est intéressant, c’est de parler et éventuellement, de rire, du contemporain !”

Marie and Matao, Vovonne, and their publics, as well as the passers-by who stop to look through Gallo dictionaries at festival stands, have shown that the iconic and indexical signification of dictionaries can open up negotiations of linguistic form rather than shut them down. The dictionary-centric interactions in which activists and artists sought to involve their public served to cast these Gallo social actors—and the stancetaking public at large—in the role of locally-authoritative, yet current-day, speakers of Gallo, and to position the language itself as an object of current value and local meaning. As focus group member Michel said, after exclaiming that he'd “drive kilometers” to see the performances I showed (*Bagful of Stars*, *The GPS*, and *Un Coup de Tonairre su Ouessant*), the performances were “very encouraging” because “in them we really feel that the language is not dead, that it's evolving.” Such dictionary-centric practices offer an alternative to widely circulating indices, such as suspenders or wooden shoes, that relegate Gallo to a disappearing past. In so doing, they thus becoming a space for identity negotiation at the margins of modernist projects.

I acknowledge the hegemonic potential of dictionary projects, which Irvine and Gal have charged with “purg[ing] registers, ignor[ing] variation, and re[writing] complex sociolinguistic relationships” (2000:59). However, the data analyzed here indicate that dictionaries, and the interaction routines they inspire, can function semiotically at several different levels, not all of which necessarily reflect standardization impulses. What dictionaries mean interactionally depends on many factors, from circulating ideologies linking Gallo with localness and/or to the past to emergent participant roles. Individuals can thus use the dictionaries they encounter to value a diversity of forms, and to stage a diversity of ways of ‘being Gallo’ in twenty-first century Brittany. The material presence

of dictionaries at festivals and in artistic performances, as well as their cultural embedding in acts of memory, highlighted their indexical and iconic functions alongside referential ones, and in so doing, constructed festival attendees as licensed authorities on Gallo speakerhood.

CHAPTER 8

EVALUATING GALLO: CONSTRUCTING KNOWLEDGE IN HUMOROUS GALLO-FRENCH PERFORMANCES

Tropes of ignorance and knowledge were prevalent across Gallo discourse genres, from tales about trickster characters to riddles that hinged upon cleverness and guessing. In many of these cases, it was the ostensibly marginalized that were revealed to be the most locally authoritative. In fact, one of the very first Gallo texts I encountered, during my initial visit to Brittany in 2006-2007, featured a sly implication that even beings in ultimate positions of authority—namely, God and the Devil—could be found wanting due to their lack of Gallo comprehension:

“...Monsieu le Curé a core huché ben fort deus ou trois prières de pus, toujours en latin. Faot creire q’ à l’époque, le bon dieu aussi ben qe le diabe ne comprenae qe cette langhe-là, conme si, depé le commencement de l’éternité, iz aurae pas eu le temps d’aprende nos patois....” (Léon Brohan, “Le Diabe dan le cémitière,” circa 2002)

“...The priest loudly yelled two or three more prayers, still in Latin. Apparently at the time, God as well as the Devil didn’t understand anything but that language, as if, since the beginning of eternity, they didn’t have time to learn our *patois*....” (Léon Brohan, “Le Diabe dan le cémitière,” circa 2002)

In this excerpt, from a Gallo story printed in a locally published collection, a priest hurls prayers in Latin at a suspected devil in the cemetery (who was later revealed to be a stray mule braying in the night). I first came across this story in 2006, when, upon spending time with Gallo storytelling friends from Loudéac, I decided to read more about this language that was beginning to fascinate me. I found this particular quotation so striking

that I copied it by hand onto a piece of cardstock, which would accompany me through six changes of address, between France and the United States, and to various locations within each. Now, finishing my dissertation on Gallo language practices and representations, I find myself asking: what about this quotation might I have found so thought-provoking, all those years ago? How has what I have learned about Gallo through this project informed my reading of it?

The answer may lie in its playful negotiation of the relationship between Latin, called *cette langue-là* ('that language'), and Gallo and other local ways of talking, called *nos patois* ('our patois'). As discussed in Chapter 6, the label *patois* has charged connotations in France, as it is often used pejoratively, to designate languages seen as lacking status (Le Coq & Blanchet 2006). Brohan's use of the label *patois* might at first seem to be reinforcing the linguistic subordination of Gallo, especially when contrasted with the *langue* of Latin. Brohan's narrator acknowledges that as a child, he was punished for "speaking like the old people;" that is, in Gallo: "*on se fesae engheuler, puniser é qeque fai taper si on caosae comme lés vieus de d'aotfai*" [we'd get ourselves scolded, punished and sometimes whooped if we talked like the old people from days past]. Such discursive connections between *patois* and past generations, and *patois* and social handicap, were explored as well in Chapter 6.

However, Brohan contextualizes God and the Devil's preference for Latin over *patois*, not as evidence that the *patois* are shameful, but instead as a sign that the two divine beings have not held up their end of the cosmic deal. They have neglected to learn the *patois* used by their people. The *patois*-using narrator thus claims the authority to judge even a figure as authoritative as God, rather than vice versa. In so doing, *patois* is

positioned as more valuable—according to the epistemology espoused by the narrator—than the vaunted language of Latin.

Brohan’s story also inverts the hierarchical relationship between Gallo users’ geographic situation—in small villages on the periphery of France—and the national capital of Paris. He frames his story as one that happened in *note vilaije* (‘our village’), which *est meme pas marqué su la carte* (‘isn’t even located on the map’). However, he claims, life in the village is just like in Paris:

Le monde de passaje—é n’y en a—dés Parisiens, dés Anglés, dés Bertons, dés Francés, dés étranjers qai, i disent q’on ést ariéré. C’est pas vrai : on a dés lumieres dan lés rues, dés autos dan lés rues, dés autos q’emmerdent le monde é lés empechent de passer é dés trottoirs avec dés crottes de chiens comme à Paris.

People passing through—and there are some—Parisians, English people, Bretons, French people, foreigners in short, they call us backward. That’s not true: we have lights in the streets, cars in the street, cars that piss everybody off and block them, and sidewalks with dog poop just like in Paris.

This description places Gallo and its epistemologies at the evaluative center in two ways.

First, Brohan accentuates a local orientation for Gallo, according to which “the French” and even “the [Breton-speaking] Bretons” are *dés étranjers*, or “foreigners.”

Simultaneously, Brohan challenges the hierarchical positioning of Paris as more sophisticated than his village in *le pays Gallo*. After all, people in both places have to deal with poorly-parked cars and dog droppings.

The type of humor displayed in Brohan’s text, according to which the periphery (temporarily) becomes the center and the powerless who usually occupy the periphery (temporarily) assume epistemological control, is an integral part of the carnivalesque (Pietikäinen 2013). According to literary critic Mikhail Bakhtin, carnival is “the place for working out, in a concretely sensuous, half-real and half-play-acted form, a new mode of

interrelating between individuals, counter-posed to the all-powerful socio-hierarchical relationships of non-carnival life” (Bakhtin, 1963[1984]:123, emphasis in original). From this perspective, the denaturalization entailed by flipping typical “socio-hierarchical relationships of non-carnival life” opens these relationships up to contestation and critique.

The trope of ignorance and knowledge is an integral part of the carnivalesque. In *Rabelais and his World*, Bakhtin associates the carnival with the medieval “feast of fools,” where displays of seeming nonsense enabled social critique. In this chapter, I examine the implications of carnivalesque reversals of ignorance and knowledge on images of Gallo speakers, as they help structure humorous performances on stage. When minority language users have long been branded as ignorant and rustic, can the carnivalesque, and the inversions it entails, help minority-language performers construct themselves—and their communities—as subversively knowledgeable? And if so, what strategies could performers use to interpellate their audience as members of the body of speakerhood thus imagined?

I address these questions by presenting data from two theater performances, which I filmed at festivals devoted to Gallo. In each performance, a French-dominant character learns Gallo, to humorous effect. I describe two carnivalesque moves that performers employed to temporarily rearrange social order. First, these performances temporarily invert values linked with place. I follow scholars such as Appadurai (1990) and Blommaert (2010) who assume an understanding of center and periphery as ideologically constructed and open to shifting evaluative norms. Second, the performances temporarily imagine the audience as Gallo speakers, whom they position as

evaluators of characters who aspire to speak Gallo. “Gallo speaker” may not be a label many audience members claim—Jaffe (2015) has discussed the ways that such formulations are ideologically weighted—but the performances depend on the audience’s participation. This analysis will show the integral role of the audience in producing the carnivalesque (cf. C. Goodwin 1986; Goodwin & Goodwin 2005), and point to one way that minority language artist-activists can position their public as linguistically knowledgeable, even if audience members may not claim active speakerhood.

8.1 Two carnivalesque performances

In contrast to the majority of Gallo theater, the two performances discussed in this chapter both feature characters who *do not speak* fluent Gallo, although they are performed by actors recognized as fluent speakers. The first performance is a fake political speech performed by well-known storyteller Daniel Robert as part of *une menterie* (a ‘lying contest’), in which a candidate character promises that if he is elected, the whole region will speak only Gallo. During his speech, the candidate switches from slow, formal French to even slower, stammering Gallo as he proclaims he has started taking Gallo classes in preparation for his time in office. This humorous monologue, performed at the *Bogue d’Or* festival in Redon in October 2014, received the gold medal in its category.

The second performance is a play called *The Lesson*, written by Marie-Britte Bertrand of the troupe Tradior (see Chapter 6), that was performed several times at festivals and local cultural evenings. I recorded the play in the civic building of the small town of Bourseul, where a non-Gallo-related civic association sponsored the performance. In this performance, an upscale Parisian woman, played by Marie-Britte,

buys a farmhouse in Brittany and learns Gallo to fit in with the “natives.” Her teacher is a café owner played by Jean-Luc Oger. Figure 8.1 shows video stills from the two performances.



Figure 8.1 In character: Daniel Robert (left); Jean-Luc Oger and Marie-Britte Bertrand (right)

Importantly, all three actors are locally well-known Gallo performers. The halting Gallo two of their characters produce, marked by pauses and denaturalized pronunciations, thus contrasts with their habitual Gallo artistry and linguistic expertise.

In what follows, I will illustrate, first, how both performances rely on a carnivalesque inversion that privileges the local and the peripheral over the normally central Paris. Second, I will show how the participant roles embodied by characters, performers, and audience position the French-dominant characters as linguistically ignorant and pragmatically disorderly, while positioning the actors and their audiences as knowing evaluators. I will conclude by discussing the extent to which the ideological outcomes of these temporary inversions may encourage continued Gallo recognition and use.

8.2 Inversions of center and periphery

In the “world turned upside down” temporarily created by the carnivalesque, actual social problems are denaturalized and examined. The political monologue performed by Daniel Robert won a competition that invited performers to imagine a France divided into six political regions: five immense regions and the tiny “Pays de Redon,” where the festival took place, as seen here in Example 8.1.

Example 8.1 Contest invitation and geographic distortion

*“The redrawing of the French regions has given people a lot to write about! The question divides people at times... As an elected representative, you have long maintained your position that there should be six regions, defined as follows: North-west, South-west, South-east, North-east, North Ile-de-France-Centre and... the Pays de Redon. Persuaded that the battle has not yet been lost, you will show your conviction and defend with passion the positive impacts of this redistricting in terms of culture, cuisine, wine-making, landscape, environment, architecture, education, language, etc... **And don't forget, it's a tall tale! Make us swallow it hook, line and sinker”***

Nous vous invitons également à participer au **Concours de Menteries**. Pour ce faire, il est demandé de préparer une prestation de **6 à 7 minutes maximum** ... sur le thème suivant :



« Le redécoupage des régions françaises fait couler beaucoup d'encre ! La question divise parfois... Député de vous-même, depuis longtemps, vous maintenez votre position sur le découpage à 6 régions définies comme suit Nord-Ouest, Sud-Ouest, Nord-Est, Nord Ile de France-Centre et... le Pays de Redon. Persuadé(e) que la bataille n'est pas perdue, vous allez faire preuve de conviction et défendre avec passion les impacts positifs de ce redécoupage sur les plans culturel, culinaire, viticole, paysager, environnemental, architectural, éducatif, linguistique, etc... ». Et n'oubliez pas, c'est une menterie ! Faites -nous avaler des couleuvres

The French government had recently announced its actual plan to re-divide metropolitan France into 13 regions rather than the current 22. This map, which positions the Pays de Redon and its 65,000 people as the equal of the fictive super-region “Nord-Ile-de-France-

Centre” and its 20 million, humorously inverts the center-periphery power relationship. This performance is thus situated within a carnivalesque frame that invites the audience to laugh at a politically sensitive subject by making it transparently ridiculous.

This inversion had an effect beyond humor, however. It also enabled Daniel Robert to demonstrate his local knowledge. The thirteen cabinet members he named in his speech were all residents of the Pays de Redon, locally famous for their artistic or social contributions. For example, as he later explained to me, the individual whom he designated as his future “Secretary of State of Retirees with Motor Homes” was a locally-known singer who bought a motor home when forced into early retirement. This name-dropping, which prompted laughter and applause, positioned Daniel Robert *the performer* as someone with local social capital, laminated over the absurdity of his *character’s* decision to have a Retirees-with-Motor-Homes ministry. When the audience responded with laughter, the public was constructed as possessing that same knowledge. It is likely that not every audience member knew the individual and his story by name, but the laughter of some cast the audience as a whole into a locally knowledgeable position.

The second performance, *The Lesson*, also invokes an issue that had captured local attention for several years at the time of my fieldwork: old buildings in the countryside being sold to outsiders when locals could no longer afford to maintain them. The urban French character, Sophie-Bé, is an outsider who has just bought one such property. She is introduced celebrating on the phone with a friend back in her trendy Parisian district of Auteuil-Neuilly-Passy. As she informs her friend about the purchase of her new vacation home, Sophie-Bé’s discourse invokes exoticism and condescension

toward local residents. After pronouncing the property “a-do-rable” and “bu-co-lique,” or ‘pastoral,’ she elaborates on “the natives” and her plan to learn their language:

Example 8.2 “The natives?”

“ Les autochtones ? ((AUD laughter)) **Mais ma chère, je suis ‘public relations’ ! Alors, vous pensez bien, ils vont m’a-do-rer ! Oui, la ‘working-girl’ va devenir ‘gentlewoman farmer.’** Oh oui, que c’est excitant, que c’est excitant ! Et d’ailleurs je cours ! Mais que dis-je ? On ne court pas ici ! Je me rends de ce pas à mon premier cours de gallo ! **Oui de gallo ! ((pause)) ((frustrated)) Non ! pas d’équitation ! ((AUD laughter)) Le gallo c’est- c’est le parler local, si vous voulez ! Voilà ! Mais vous me connaissez hein ? J’ai déjà travaillé mon petit dictionnaire de poche dans le TGV !”**

“ The natives? ((AUD laughter)) **My darling, I’m ‘public relations’! So, don’t you know, they are going to loooooove me! Yes indeed, the ‘working girl’ is going to become ‘gentlewoman farmer.’** Oh yes, how exciting, how exciting! Well I have to run. But what am I saying? One doesn’t run here! I am arriving straightaway at my first Gallo class! **Yes, Gallo! ((pause)) ((frustrated)) No, not horseback riding! ((AUD laughter)) Gallo is- it’s the local speech, if you will. Voilà! But you know me, I already read my little pocket dictionary in the TGV!”**

The exaggerated, snobbish intonation and faddish use of English invites the audience, the very “natives” about whom she condescends, to laugh at her Paris-centric worldview. In their laughter, they exert power over her, and by extension, over others who may confuse Gallo with a horse’s “gallop” (“Non! pas d’équitation!” she says—“Not horseback riding!”) or who believe looking at a dictionary on the train is enough to learn a language.¹⁶⁰ In this mockery of the high and mighty encouraged by the carnivalesque, local epistemologies are privileged over economic power and shallow cosmopolitanism.

8.3 Encouraging the audience to become Gallo evaluators

The carnivalesque is also present in the fact that, although they think of themselves as vehicles of culture and education, the French-dominant characters lack knowledge about Gallo. Shifts in participant roles cast the audience into the position of

¹⁶⁰ This playful critique of people who believe one can learn a language by reading a dictionary again highlights how dictionaries, when staged in Gallo advocacy, are not seen as ultimate authorities, but rather, tools for the production of a more holistic and contextually grounded form of speakerhood. As a condescending outsider, Sophie-Bé cannot access local knowledge, so her engagement with a Gallo dictionary fails to produce a vision of her as a Gallo speaker.

evaluating the characters' Gallo discourse as deficient, and reveal their understanding of the language as comparatively knowing.

Although the politician and Sophie-Bé make claims to knowledge, the surrounding discourses contextualize those claims as absurd. In the case of *The Lesson*, this contextualization takes place through a Gallo-centric interpretation of ambiguous forms. In Figure 8.2, Sophie-Bé arrives at her first Gallo class, dressed in what she assumes is the local costume:



Figure 8.2 “One might take you for a fisherman from here, yeah?”

In her yellow raincoat and fisherman’s boots, Sophie-Bé reveals herself to be ignorant of what actual local residents wear. The audience’s laughter at M. Mimile’s reaction to Sophie-Bé’s attire suggests that they, unlike the character, know that this is not a pragmatically appropriate sartorial style.

Just as Sophie-Bé is dressed in a way that shows her ignorance of local fashion codes, her reaction to M. Mimile’s Gallo greeting (*Ca joue ti?*, or “How’s it going?”) reveals her ignorance of the local linguistic code she fetishizes. In Example 8.3, she

insists on a French-centric interpretation of the form *joue*, chastising her teacher for a lack of seriousness:

Example 8.3 “You know perfectly well this is a lesson!”

1	M. Mimile	<i>Je vais qe vous avéz changè de hardes ? <u>Encore un petit peu ben on araet dit un péchou de par céz nous hein ?</u></i>	<i>I see you've changed clothes? <u>A little more and one might take you for a fisherman from here, yeah?</u></i>
2	AUD	<i><u>((laughter))</u></i>	<i><u>((laughter))</u></i>
3	M. Mimile	<i><u>Aloure ça joue ti ?</u></i>	<i><u>So how's it going ?</u></i>
4	La Parisienne	<i><u>Jouer ? Mais Monsieur Mimile vous savez bien que c'est une leçon ! Je ne suis pas ici pour jouer !</u></i> <i><u>((enunciates primly))</u></i>	<i><u>'Going'?</u> ((interpreting it as French 'play')) <u>But Mr. Mimile you know perfectly well that this is a lesson! I'm not here to play!</u></i> <i><u>((enunciates primly))</u></i>
5	M. Mimile	<i>Més nouna, pàs 'jouer', 'jouer' ! Ca vieût dire en galo, 'ça va ti' ?</i>	<i>But no, not 'play', 'go'! It means in Gallo, 'how's it going'?</i>
6	La Parisienne	<i>MB : Ok-ay- d'assent :::! (L)</i>	<i>Ok-ay- okay!</i>
7	M. Mimile	<i>Etes-vous parée pour comencer ?</i>	<i>Are you ready to begin?</i>
8	La Parisienne	<i>Pareille ? Mais pareille que qui?</i>	<i>'Ready'?</i> ((interpreting it as French 'similar')) <i>But similar to whom?</i>
9	M. Mimile	<i><u>((Turns away from her toward audience, wagging hand in exasperation))</u></i> <i><u>Ben il y a de l'ouvraije hein?</u></i>	<i><u>((Turns away from her toward audience, wagging hand in exasperation))</u></i> <i><u>I've got my work cut out for me don't I?</u></i> <i><u>((laughter))</u></i>
10	AUD	<i><u>((laughter))</u></i>	<i><u>((laughter))</u></i>

As Monsieur Mimile explains, the word *joue* has a different meaning in Gallo: it can be used to ask casually how things are going. At first, Sophie-Bé ostensibly takes on the role of judge here, critiquing Monsieur Mimile's dedication to the lesson in turn 4. “But Mr. Mimile,” she says primly, “You know perfectly well that this is a lesson! I'm not here to play!”

However, Monsieur Mimile's interaction with her shifts the role of evaluator onto himself, and also onto the audience through his interactions with them. The actor, Jean-Luc Oger, frequently makes eye contact with the audience, reinforcing Sophie-Bé's linguistic ineptness and licensing the audience's laughter. This is shown in Figure 8.3:



Figure 8.3 Some of Monsieur Mimile’s exasperated glances to the audience

When the public laughs at Monsieur Mimile’s exasperated gestural asides, they align themselves with his Gallo-centric interpretation of polyvalent forms. Importantly, the actress playing Sophie-Bé, Marie-Brigitte Bertrand, looks at the audience very rarely, denying her character access to this type of alignment move. Even when she looks out in the direction of the audience, her gaze is fixed above their heads, in the air.

Appeals to the audience for evaluation reach their apogee when Monsieur Mimile tries to teach Sophie-Bé the sound system of Gallo. In Figure 8.4, we see video stills of

Sophie-Bé's disorderly bodily articulations as she tries to learn two sounds emblematic of Gallo: a rolled 'R' and the triphthong /jao/.



Figure 8.4 “Very good!”

Central to the carnivalesque is the persistent locus of meaning in the body and its grotesquerie, and here is no exception. Instead of rolling her tongue for the /r/, she sticks it out and speaks around it; when she pronounces /jao/, she spits in her teacher's face. While Monsieur Mimile's movements also elicit laughter, they are purposeful and controlled even when exaggerated. He models a legitimate Gallo pronunciation for her, and when she produces something of which he approves, he not only tells her “net ben” or “great,” but also opens his arms to the audience, inviting them with gesture and gaze to clap for her as well. They resoundingly do so. The audience, composed mainly of local residents who may have been told Gallo was the speech of rustics, are now applauding a Parisian for her ungainly efforts.

Meanwhile, in the political speech, the audience is encouraged to assume a double participant role, in which they are simultaneously approving of and critical of the politician character. On the one hand, Daniel Robert interacts with them as if they were his political constituents, greeting their initial polite applause with an outsize expectation of adulation, as seen in Figure 8.5:



Figure 8.5 Applause

As the audience assumes this excited-constituent role, their applause begins again—but so does their laughter, marking an additional audience role as viewers of a comedic sketch.

In this evaluative capacity, the audience is encouraged to react to the politician’s language platform, including a solemn statement in standard French that French is “nothing but a patois, a deformed Gallo”:

Example 8.4 “French is nothing but a patois, a deformed Gallo!”

1	Premier point, la langue !	First point, language!
2	Qu’est-ce que le français ?	What is French?
3	<u>Le français,</u>	<u>French,</u>
4	<u>n’est autre qu’un patois,</u>	<u>is nothing but a patois,</u>
5	<u>un gallo déformé!</u>	<u>a deformed Gallo!</u>

((AUD laughter))

The laughter underscores that this is a carnivalesque inversion of the usual dismissal of *Gallo* as an uneducated patois of *French*. As Chun (2004) argues, such flipping of commonly circulated stereotypes does bring them to audience consciousness—but it also decenters and critiques them. The politician character further proclaims that if he is elected, “Gallo will be the only language used in our region.” While the use of the future rather than the conditional may seem to put him in an authoritative and knowing position, what follows makes clear that this is far from the case. However, he makes the statement patently ridiculous by following it with a declaration that “All classes, physical education, math, French, English, and even Spanish, will be taught exclusively in Gallo!” The audience’s laughter constructs the idea of teaching languages exclusively in Gallo as ludicrous, and the text becomes a critique of monolingual education policy.

The audience’s mockery of the politician’s language platform is accompanied by their judgement of his Gallo, marked by slower delivery, short rhythmic groups, and denaturalized lengthening. The audience starts laughing as soon as he codeswitches into halting Gallo, before he says anything that could be construed as humorous:

Example 8.5 Laughter at “mediocre” Gallo

1	<u>Le Gallo sera la seule langue usitée dans notre région !</u>	<u>Gallo will be the only language used in our region !</u>
2	<u>D’ailleurs [pas], tel qe vous me vavez ao jou d’anet,</u>	<u>Moreover, as you see me here today,</u>
3	<u>((AUD laughter))</u>	<u>((AUD laughter))</u>
4	<i>Depés le mouéz setembr,</i>	<i>Since the month of September,</i>
5	<u>((AUD laughter))</u>	<u>((AUD laughter))</u>
6	<i>J’a començi eune formaison de langue galé :::::ze !</i>	<i>I have begun Gallo ::::: language training !</i>
7	<u>((AUD laughter))</u>	<u>((AUD laughter))</u>

This initial laughter and the regularly punctuated laughter that lasts throughout the politician's attempt to speak Gallo—although the content of his discourse is not overtly humorous—indicate what the public was reacting to is the labored use of “mediocre Gallo” (as the actor defined it in a later email to me) by this figure whose normal Gallo persona was loquacious and confident. The laughter appears to show that audience members recognize these forms as different from both Daniel Robert's usual Gallo and an artful exemplar, and the public is again cast into the position of Gallo evaluator—and Gallo knower.

8.4 Discussion

The data presented in this chapter have shown that performers used carnivalesque inversions to portray Gallo as “a language, period” and its users as every bit as knowledgeable and cultured as those who would mock them. During these inversions of center-and-periphery and ignorance-and-knowledge, the audience entered time and again into negotiations of meaning. As Kristeva (1980:78) has remarked, carnival is “a spectacle, but without a stage” where participants are both actors and spectators. The public participated here as an essential part of the performance, as a body with the authority to evaluate Gallo speech and the language ideologies expressed therein. Their laughter contextualized certain forms of Gallo as humorously illegitimate and others as artful. This participant role of Gallo evaluator endowed audience members with social capital, especially given that their demonstration of Gallo knowledge took place at a performance night or festival that recognized, reinforced and celebrated this linguistic repertoire.

Although the texts subversively position the audience as Gallo-knowers, and Gallo-knowers as knowledgeable, they also recirculate other ideological positions. For example, the positioning of the audience as Gallo evaluators might have marginalized those in the audience lacking enough past exposure to Gallo to know what “should” have been said instead, leaving them “out of” the joke. Furthermore, Marie-Brigitte Bertrand and Daniel Robert relied upon the audience’s recognition of their usual “good Gallo” to successfully perform “mediocre Gallo.” Thus, the texts still construe speaking artfully as more valuable than speaking in a disorderly fashion, as much as disorder may cause humor in the moment. The marginalizing implications are at least partially curtailed by the fact that the performers’ “mediocre” Gallo does not seem to be based on actual learner productions, but rather on absurdist language play.

Another implication lies in the fact that, in many people’s repertoires, French and Gallo were not as clearly demarcated, or as strongly opposed, as they were here. Local residents were often comfortable using hybrid forms. This type of humor might risk alienating those individuals with a Gallo repertoire they do not fully isolate from French, and although transgressive, this humor still positions some forms of Gallo above others. Finally, performances of laughable, disorderly Gallo may have made some spectators, such as Gallo learners, self-conscious of their own less artful Gallo use. Personally, viewing *The Lesson* as a new Gallo learner, I questioned whether I, like the urban outsider Sophie-Bé, was simply enacting violence upon the language as I tried to learn it. A final point of consideration resides in the fact that, according to some scholars, the carnivalesque is a contained and defanged form of social critique, because once the parodic inversion ends, the pre-existing hierarchy is reaffirmed. In the story that opened

this chapter, the narrator's critique of God's and the Devil's not understanding *patois* did not mean that the schoolchild he was at the time was not punished and beaten for using Gallo. In the plays analyzed here, one audience members left the theater, they would still face a symbolic double bind: that Gallo was neither sufficiently exotic to be a sign of regional distinctiveness nor sufficiently "cultured" to be a real threat to the dominance of French. While both of these things are undoubtedly true, a possible perduring effect lies in the audience members' being positioned to assume a stance of expertise regarding the production of Gallo forms. Now that these stances of knowledge and expertise have been modeled for them, they may find it easier to assume those stances in other contexts, recognizing and affirming some forms of Gallo as artful even (or especially) if they are not produced by condescending political candidates or Parisian sophisticates. Because of these various ideological repercussions, the play *The Lesson*, like the political speech, *becomes* a lesson for the audience. Like many lessons, listening involves negotiating, and empowerment may mean accepting some implications, and challenging others.

CHAPTER 9

CONCLUSIONS

In this dissertation, I have explored how social actors in Upper Brittany, France, represented the doubly marginalized regional language of Gallo, as well as how those representations entered social practice. I have focused in particular on the perspectives of people engaged in projects of Gallo advocacy—activism, artistry, and education—as they defined Gallo as a language object, labeled it *gallo* and/or *patois*, visualized it on stage and at festivals in the iconized index of Gallo dictionaries, and playfully inverted its hierarchical relation with French. I have shown that these projects of representation involved complex acts of positioning with respect to ideologies of place, time, and personhood, as well as to other languages (French and Breton). Importantly, I have also shown how even non-archetypically interactional forms of discourse, such as plays and informational brochures, depended integrally upon other social actors (e.g., audience members and passersby) in their acts of positioning Gallo and its users in particular ways. Those producing these texts modeled participant roles and moves of stancetaking and alignment; in so doing, they constructed those audience members and passers-by as competent Gallo evaluators and incipient Gallo recognizers. Such moves afforded Gallo artists, enthusiasts and their publics the possibility of retaining Gallo’s valued indexical connections to personal history, localness and bygone loved ones, while also positioning it as enduringly relevant and complementary with modern life.

9.1 Gallo as social object and social practice

In Chapter 5, I examined how personal experience narratives, activist promotional materials and artistic performances defined Gallo as a separate language-object, in the face of circulating discourses that Gallo was a deformed and grammarless French. I showed how texts in these three disparate genres invoked similar figures: on the one hand, “Gallo non-recognizers,” who *knew how* to use some Gallo forms but did not *know that* it was “a language;” on the other, “Gallo recognizers,” who commanded both epistemologies. The personal experience narratives showed that the participant role of “Gallo recognizer,” occupied by speakers at the moment of narration, was positively valued; their narrated role shifts showed that this role was achievable and inhabitable. The promotional brochures and texts seemed structured to facilitate festival attendees’ own shift from non-recognizers to recognizers, by getting them to ask themselves questions about what Gallo was, and to answer it in canonical ways. Finally, the artistic performance modeled one character’s undergoing such a shift, along with the affective response such movement occasioned. I suggested that, collectively, these micro-interactional and ontogenetic processes may give an indication of how variety enregisterment (Agha 2005) emerges, not through nebulous diffusion but through agentic action, as individuals engage with locally valued participant roles that are put on display and proposed as models.

In Chapter 6, I turned to the question of how that emergent language-object was labeled: *gallo*, according to the usual preferences of most of my subject population of advocates, artists and enthusiasts, and/or *patois*, according to the most common denotation among the majority of local residents. I showed that acts of labeling by people

familiar with both terms could be categorized according to various language ideologies, along multiple dimensions: terminological monism vs. plurality; referentialism vs. indexical consequence vs. strategic adequation. While monist discourses in favor of the label *gallo* positioned the label *patois* as either inaccurate or undesirable, I showed that the maintenance of this plural labeling system allowed participants to do useful ideological work. Namely, denotatively equating the two terms allowed advocates to construct the imagined body of *gallo/patois* speakers as vast and visible, while distinguishing them indexically allowed individuals to voice an ideology of “adequation despite distinction,” where the age, education, social class and professional fissures often separating *patois* users from *gallo* users were not erased, but meaningful affective connection was nonetheless enabled. I termed such a way of bestowing value on Gallo an “ideology of personal connection,” in contrast to the ideologies of “pride” and “profit” (Heller & Duchêne 2012), which were less locally relevant for Gallo than they were for Breton, and which when used for Gallo tended to afford no place to the label *patois*. I argued that this ideology allowed for the possibility of articulating a “structure of feeling” (Williams 1978) that acknowledged rather than erased the marginalization of *patois* speakers. It also enabled Gallo performers and advocates to anchor their own *gallo* productions within a local territory and in relation to loved past speakers while not divorcing themselves from the privileges of education and modernity.

In Chapter 7, I explored how people at Gallo plays and cultural festivals engaged with the cultural artifact of Gallo dictionaries. While dictionaries are perhaps most readily associated with referential meaning, I showed that their materiality and visual staging at festivals and in plays also allowed them to serve as iconized indexes for Gallo,

with their existence standing for Gallo's existence and their heft for Gallo's heft. I additionally showed that their embeddedness into interactions (physically, at festival stands, and mimetically, on stage) had the effect of bestowing value upon local ways of knowing and local standards of authenticity. In this guise, dictionaries provided a useful complement for other forms of semiosis widely circulating for Gallo. I also showed that these forms of semiosis were not just about positioning Gallo as a certain kind of object; they were also about positioning theater attendees and dictionary readers as particular kinds of people, endowed with the authority to provide alternate Gallo forms. In this way, rather than trending toward homogenization, dictionaries were locally constructed as enabling the performance of formal multiplicity and ownership.

Finally, in Chapter 8, the carnivalesque reversal of French and Gallo (and Paris and local places in Brittany) was examined as a playful way of subverting national systems of value. I showed that, in performances where a standard-French-speaking character spoke purposefully poor Gallo, audience laughter was key to contextualizing these forms of Gallo as humorously illegitimate and other forms as artful. By soliciting the audience to act in this sort of role, the performers constructed audience members as competent judges of Gallo form, capable of deciding what was risible. Although the hierarchy disruption of center and periphery, and standard French and Gallo, was ultimately contained within the fictive world of the play, the assumption of a Gallo-knowledgeable role by the audience may last beyond the closing lines of the play.

9.2 Cultural relevance

As an exploration of Gallo representation and practice, this project has directed attention to Gallo. Gallo enthusiasts often regretted what they constructed as Gallo's

erasure from the local sociolinguistic landscape, due to a history of shame. One locally much-discussed performance, a play by Marie Chiff' mine and Matao Rollo, gives eloquent voice to this shame. One of the play's monologues evokes a schoolchild of the past, whose hand was beaten with a ruler because he dared to speak *un mot patois* in the classroom:

<i>Les doigts rougis</i>	The reddened fingers
<i>pleurent la douleur</i>	cry the pain
<i>de leur couleur.</i>	of their color.
<i>Les larmes coulent,</i>	The tears fall,
<i>les mettent en mémoire,</i>	put them away in memory,
<i>les mots patois.</i>	the patois words.
<i>Comme des dents cassées,</i>	Like broken teeth,
<i>au fond d'un mouchoir.</i>	deep in a handkerchief.

However buried Gallo currently was in Upper Brittany, however, the same play, entitled *La Houle és Avettes* [The Bee Hive] suggested it would not be buried forever. The play later features a delighted exclamation:

“La mort du gallo mais c’est du pipeau ! Le soulai ! La leune ! La berouette ! Le russè ! Ah ! Les gâtiaos ! Les châtiaos ! Les chapiaos ! Les hardes ! Les soulais ! Et j’e core toute la souvenance de mes mots ! Le galo n’ét pas mort !”

The death of Gallo, what rubbish! the sun! the moon! the wheelbarrow! the stream! Ah! The cakes! the castles! the hats! the clothes! the shoes! And I still have all the memory of my words! Gallo isn't dead!

In this play, as in the discourse of many Gallo enthusiasts, Gallo may be hidden, but with the acceptance of “memory” and the assumption of a stance of knowledge and authority, what was hidden could again be brought into the light of the sun. In its own way, my project, too, attempted to “shed a little light” on the contemporary speech practice of people who used Gallo as a tool for social meaning-making, despite discourses that it was uniquely a language of the past. For better or for worse, my role as a foreign researcher

was often read by locals as a sign that Gallo elicited scholarly interest (even if some seemed to find the idea laughable). My own estimation of my visibility is much more circumspect, but at a very local scale, this project participated in the contestation of discourses that positioned Gallo as only of interest to people of the past and people with local origins.

A second cultural implication lies in this project's elucidation of some of the positive indexicalities of the term *patois*. Many official texts claimed that Gallo was *not* a *patois*, and that those who called it *patois* were under the sway of "wrong ideas." And yet, I have shown that the word *patois* allowed for useful social distinctions to be drawn and an ideology of personal connection to be proffered in place of ideologies of "pride" and "profit" that were shown to have limited currency. Perhaps some Gallo social actors who have focused more on the negative implications of the word *patois* might consider a pluralist approach, in order to access the lived experience of those for whom *patois* resonates.

Finally, this project has interrogated some of the metapragmatic regimes that appear to hold sway for Gallo advocacy communities. Where in 1989, McDonald found that Gallo advocacy was "a late backformation" of what had already been developed for Breton, the projects of definition, labeling, and staging elucidated here seem to be specific to the social situation of Gallo in Upper Brittany. For Silverstein (1996), there can be no "linguistic community"—as opposed to a speech community—without a group's sharing "the idea that there exists a functionally differentiated norm for using their 'language' denotatively" (285). That is, not only must the shared way of talking be recognized discursively as a "language," but there also must be a shared set of norms for

the hegemonic metapragmatic regimentation of that discursively recognized entity. Some of the participant roles elucidated here may point to the range of models of Gallo personhood locally available. While these uses were likely not powerful enough to dismantle other discourses of Gallo as exclusively aligned with the past, they show what was possible, at least locally and contingently.

9.3 Language recognition and personal connection

Two principle theoretical contributions to this dissertation involve (1) the participant role of *Gallo recognizer*, and how modeling this role played an important role in Gallo language advocacy, and (2) the ideology of *personal connection*, which I propose as a complement to ideologies of “pride” and “profit” (Heller & Duchêne 2012), to explore why the language label *patois* has proved itself of enduring strategic and indexical utility despite some advocates’ frequent construction of the label *gallo* as uniquely appropriate for the variety. These two contributions are in fact connected; it is Gallo recognizers who are positioned (by my participants, admittedly almost exclusively recognizers themselves) as being able to draw on the ideology of personal connection to articulate the multiple ways through which Gallo can be meaningful in their lives. It is Gallo recognizers who have the “knowing that” epistemology indexically affiliated with use of the label *gallo*; they often draw on an ideology of personal connection that connects their own *gallo* practices with the *patois* practices of loved ones, who “knew how” to speak the Gallo of a particular, affectively valued place but did not always (or often) recognize what they were speaking as “a language,” distinct from French. The ideology of personal connection is thus a tool Gallo recognizers have for making that Gallo recognition affectively and (inter)personally meaningful.

Many others (e.g. Cavanaugh 2009; Jaffe 1999; Woolard 2005[2008]) have elaborated on the ideological distinctions between national languages and regional or local ones. In these formulations, the national language is associated with education and power, as well as with what Woolard calls “anonymity” or a lack of geographic indexical markers. In turn, local languages are associated with “authenticity,” which allows speakers to inscribe themselves clearly within a particular geographic or ethnic community by the way in which they speak. National languages are further indexically affiliated with the present and the future, and local ones with the past. For example, Cavanaugh (2009) presents a nuanced analysis of how even current-day Bergamasco poetry readings and plays intended in part to “save” the language may further inscribe it in the past, thereby contributing to its diminished use, by indexically situating the language in an imagined, hermetic world of the rural past.

In contrast, the examples I presented in Chapter 6, particularly Section 6.6.2, have shown that the ideology of personal connection, through which Gallo recognizers justified their Gallo engagement, could not be equated with an ideology of authenticity alone, no more than it could be equated with the ideologies of “pride” and “profit,” used much more stridently for Breton than for Gallo. Although the valuation of authentic presentation and the people, places and practices of a personal past are foregrounded in personal connection, there is more at work than nostalgia for the past. The difference lies in the recognition, discussed in Section 6.5, that both the *patois* and *gallo* guises of the language are valid ways of engaging in Gallo practice. Like two faces of the same coin, the *gallo* and *patois* labels present to the world different images (in terms of what the labels index regarding age, rurality, education and language epistemology), but they are

also discursively presented as, if not absolutely contiguous, then certainly meaningfully connected. The speakers who call what they do *gallo*—Gallo recognizers—ground their appreciation for *gallo* in the locally inflected *patois* practices of grandparents or parents; engaging in one is a means of connecting to another, with neither being unilaterally superior.

Indeed, it is my intuition that, overall, users of *gallo* did not believe they were less authentic speakers than *patois* speakers, although they may have seen their repertoires as different. As I observed in interviews, some younger or newer users of *gallo* did, admittedly, hedge about calling themselves “locuteurs” [speakers]; however, the ideals against which they contrasted their own productions were not exclusively affiliated in an imagined past. One set of young adult Gallo learners playfully evaluated themselves on a scale of speakerhood that started at “one” and ended at “Bèrtran Ôbrée” (a contemporary Gallo musician, writer and advocate) or “*Petit Matao*” (the dictionary discussed in Chapter 7). This negotiation shows that their chosen ideals of speakerhood were not idealized peasants of a lost and idyllic past, but rather figures that brought Gallo into dialogue with writing culture and contemporary spheres of activism and art. In an ideology of personal connection, in contrast to an ideology of authenticity (Woolard 2005[2008]), the sociohistorical gap between two ways of being—speaking *patois* and speaking *gallo*—is acknowledged, if at times mourned (as an act of critical consciousness, rather a product of nostalgia, Williams 1973). Simultaneously, however, that gap is at least momentarily and tentatively bridged, as both ways of being are imbued with value by virtue of the connection between past and present formed by the act of speaking Gallo. It is this sense of connection that provides an “anchor,” as one participant

said, for Gallo recognizers, allowing Gallo to stand as both as an object and as social practice capable of connecting people amidst linguistic shift, cultural rupture, and socioeconomic change.

In sum, then, the Gallo recognizer role contributes to work on minority language ideologies by emphasizing that recognition of a language as a separate object, rather than mere use of the language, is often the focus of advocate efforts. It also highlights that this recognition is not a result of passive exposure to a fact, but a result of the repeated uptake of particular affective and epistemological stances toward the language object. Assuming such a role enables Gallo recognizers to draw on an ideology of personal connection, according to which multiple ways of engaging with the language object are affirmed as valid: Gallo is neither inevitably relegated to a rural past nor so modern that it cannot be used to connect with that rural past in a personally meaningful way. This ideology allows those recognizers who adopt it to position themselves as “anchored” in a local context and as escaping the “homogenizing” impulses of modern life, while still assuming its trappings of education and cosmopolitanism.

9.4 Additional theoretical implications

This project has several theoretical implications for how scholars of language and ideology characterize the links between linguistic representation and social practice. First, I show the irreducible role played by audience members and encounterers of material objects (dictionaries and promotional brochures) in terms of framing representational events. Audience members and passersby who engaged with material objects not only ratified (or failed to do so) the claims that were proposed, but also enabled those claims to be made in the first place. This illustrates an important, more general point about the

representation of languages in art, advocacy and education: no ideology, no matter how dominant, is situated entirely above the realm of practice and interaction. Questions of distributed participation (Goodwin & Goodwin 2004) are essential to a discussion of how proposed language ideologies are circulated, adopted, and/or contested.

Second, a long history of scholarship has examined the multiple ideologies through which languages are imbued with value, from Trudgill (1972), to Woolard (2005[2008]), to Heller and Duchêne (2012). However, rather than discussing the different values that can be attached to different codes, I look at how one and the same code was positioned in different ways. In so doing, I bring this investigation into dialogue with the issue of variety naming, a representational politics of its own (Lanehart 2015; Paugh 2012; Schieffelin & Doucet 1994).

Finally, I have explored some of the micro-interactional and ontogenetic ramifications of positioning varieties traditionally seen as being two points on the same language continuum—Standard French and Gallo—instead as two separate language objects. The broader implications of such a discursive move are complex. On the one hand, participants' positioning of Gallo as a language-object about which one could be knowledgeable allowed them to take up knowledgeable stances toward the variety in their moments of narration, and to endow those stances with positive value. This indicates that recognition of Gallo as different from French was a useful resource upon which participants could draw to narrate their role in Gallo activism, art and learning. It enabled them to take stances of reclamation and expertise with respect to the variety, and to create a narrative split from a past self, a *Gallo non-recognizer*, that they appeared to find ideologically undesirable. If they were ashamed of their mother's speech, or called what

their grandmother spoke “deformed French,” it was because they lacked a name for the variety, an understanding of it as a language-object—and thus, according to modernist language ideologies, had no way of conceptualizing it as a worthy equivalent to other language-objects like Breton or French. Once it was conceptualized and introduced into discourse as *une langue*, it became an object worthy of formal learning and defense—none of *them* would confuse *le gallo* with ‘galloping’ (*le galop*)! (See Example 5.5)

However, such objectification may come at a price, as scholars of language endangerment in other contexts have amply cautioned (Duchêne & Heller 2007; Errington 2003; Hill 2002; Hornberger 1998; Jaffe 2007; May 2005; Moore 2006). When something is designated a language, particularly within the context of a country with an official academy governing its national language, that designation carries with it certain expectations: of school learning and of decontextualizable structures and rules. Some inhabitants of Upper Brittany may command forms of Gallo expression—e.g. *ça va ti?* as a friendly greeting, or knowing farm tools by their Gallo names—without necessarily being able to explain, for example, the use of interrogative pronouns in Gallo and their difference from French. Perhaps this was behind the many bashful admissions I heard in Gallo workshops from people, who often nonetheless supplied a lot of vocabulary and expressions later on, that they didn’t “really” speak Gallo. Indeed, if one believes claims made by linguist Francis Manzano, splitting Gallo from French may counterintuitively discourage the long-term use of Gallo forms in discourse:

It is not impossible (as Francis Manzano remarks) that Gallo may have in fact benefited from its similarity to the dominant language in order to survive skillfully, ecologically we should say, in the speech of numerous speakers of Upper Brittany.... Gallo’s status as a ‘hidden language’, its typological proximity with French which could easily be exploited in a sociolinguistic back-and-forth ... have certainly helped this language adjust to its terrain, to survive, despite what

was very often predicted in the course of the 20th century. (Angoujard & Manzano 2008: 6-7)¹⁶¹

By this logic, if Gallo is enregistered as something essentially different from French, some speakers may either be discouraged from incorporating Gallo forms into their majority-French repertoires or believe they “don’t really speak Gallo” without a natively-like command of the full range of resources their grandparents or great-grandparents had.

Such concerns may motivate the frequent complaint I heard from activists, that Gallo advocacy meetings were often conducted in French rather than in Gallo (whereas forms identifiable with both language-objects were used over the course of the evening), or another complaint occasionally voiced, that modern-day Gallo speakers must “ask themselves questions” (see Nânon’s comment in line 37 of Example 5.1) regarding when and with whom to speak Gallo, whereas *les anciens* [older people] were not hindered by such concerns.

In counterpoint to such observations, however, the aesthetically rich productions of Gallo artists illustrate that their having recognized the variety as a discrete object has not precluded their creative use of it, and the many jokes or rejoinders I heard uttered with Gallo traits in the midst of discourse otherwise indistinguishable from French indicate that contemporary Upper Brittany was not a place where people failed to find value in mixed Gallo-French repertoires. While my field notes and recordings contain

¹⁶¹ “ Il n’est pas impossible (comme le fait remarquer Francis Manzano) que le gallo ait de fait bénéficié de sa proximité avec la langue dominante pour survivre adroitement, écologiquement devrait-on dire, dans l’usage de nombreux locuteurs de Haute-Bretagne.... Le statut de ‘langue cachée’ du gallo, sa proximité typologique avec le français assez facilement exploitable dans un exercice d’aller-retour sociolinguistique... ont certainement aidé cette langue à s’ajuster à son terrain, à survivre, contrairement à ce que l’on avait bien souvent prévu au cours du XX^e siècle.” (Angoujard & Manzano 2008: 6-7)

several statements from artists and activists that *le gallo allégé*—or a ‘light’ Gallo that rather resembles French in terms of lexicon and grammar—was something harmful to the aesthetic richness of the language, others saw *le gallo allégé* as both a practical tool, when engaging publics less familiar with Gallo, and a rich source of creativity.

9.5 Limitations and future questions

One limitation of the present study, then, is that it focused only on the terms *patois* and *gallo* (and, to some extent, *paysan* or ‘peasant,’ used as a language name) while not considering how other emergent language labels like *le gallo allégé* rendered the ideological picture more complex. More gravely, it also did not consider how the terms *patois* and *gallo* circulated outside of Gallo enthusiast circles. While the construction of Gallo as a distinct language object called *gallo* was ostensibly intended to bestow value on that *object*, might this marginalize some *users* of Gallo-repertoire-terms from the Gallo advocacy scene? Such users might not recognize their blended or bivalent variety as the language objects some advocates are defending. While these Gallo users who were not actively engaged in Gallo cultural activities were often constructed as speaking *patois* and not Gallo, I did not speak directly with such individuals, to see how they ratified and/or contested this characterization. While this limitation was in part a result of my having lesser access to these individuals, it is still a very real act of erasure.

Additionally, while I have elucidated an “ideology of personal connection” as a means of allowing people with family and geographic ties to Gallo to bestow value on the language, I have not explored whether and to what extent this trope of value can serve as the basis for convincing people who are not *already* personally connected to Gallo that the language is worth using and celebrating. It would be interesting to explore whether

and how individuals who are not native to Upper Brittany bestow value upon the language, in the absence of pre-existing ties of kinship and geography.

Finally, much of the analyses in this dissertation depend on audience participation and/or “public” uptake of proposed participant roles and stances toward Gallo. However, my observation of this uptake was limited to passive observation of audience reactions (laughter, etc.) and one small focus group during which participants reacted to excerpts from recordings of performances. I did not follow audience members to see how, or indeed if, their practices and discursively explicated beliefs changed as a result of engagement with Gallo plays, brochures or dictionaries.

So the final questions remain: What is gained (and what is lost) by positioning a marginalized variety as a language object, and by whom? What are the language ideologies espoused by *patois* speakers, and how do these ideologies overlap and diverge from those attested among *gallo* speakers? Are the momentary participant role reversals and stance attributions offered to audience members and festival attendees incorporated into more enduring forms of self-presentation and practice—and if so, how, and to what end? Whatever the answers, the committed and passionate people who advocate for Gallo, and all people who use *patois* or *gallo* forms despite a history of marginalization, have enabled Gallo to circulate locally, and to enter into meaning-making processes in creative and important ways. Such practices, and the representations woven in with them, ensure that there is much left to discover.

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