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Foreign influences in Bernese Swiss German

SIDG Conference Vilnius 2018

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Introduction

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> What research says about Standard German:

- Dunger (1899) and Stiven (1936): English influences into German since 1400
- Onysko (2007) Welt/Spiegel: Around 1,2% of all printed words are borrowed from English
- Eisenberg (2011): German borrows words from English on a regular basis since 17. cent.
- Fiedler (2014): Research on Anglicisms since 1945 (Press, Commercials usw.)

Introduction

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> What research says about Swiss German:

— Dalcher (1966): Responsible for research on Anglicisms in Switzerland, starting in 1948 until 2008

— Collection of Anglicisms in 1964/65

— **Dalcher‘s private library**

Introduction

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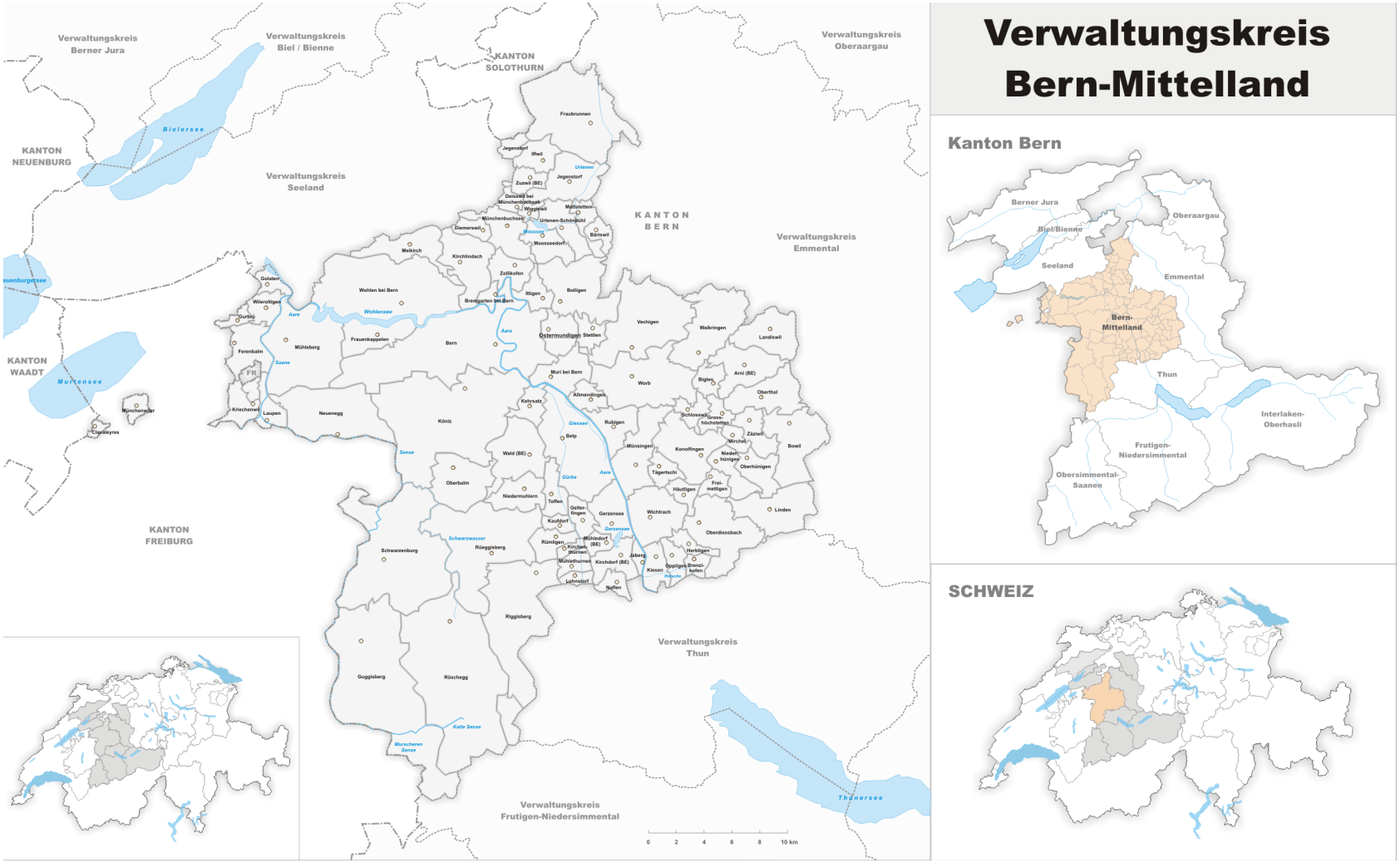
- Two projects
  - *STRUT vowel* project
    - Phonetic/sociolinguistic approach
  - Diphthong */ei/* project
    - Variationist linguistic approach
  - No historical material to compare
  - Work in progress

Introduction – Research area



STRUT Vowel project

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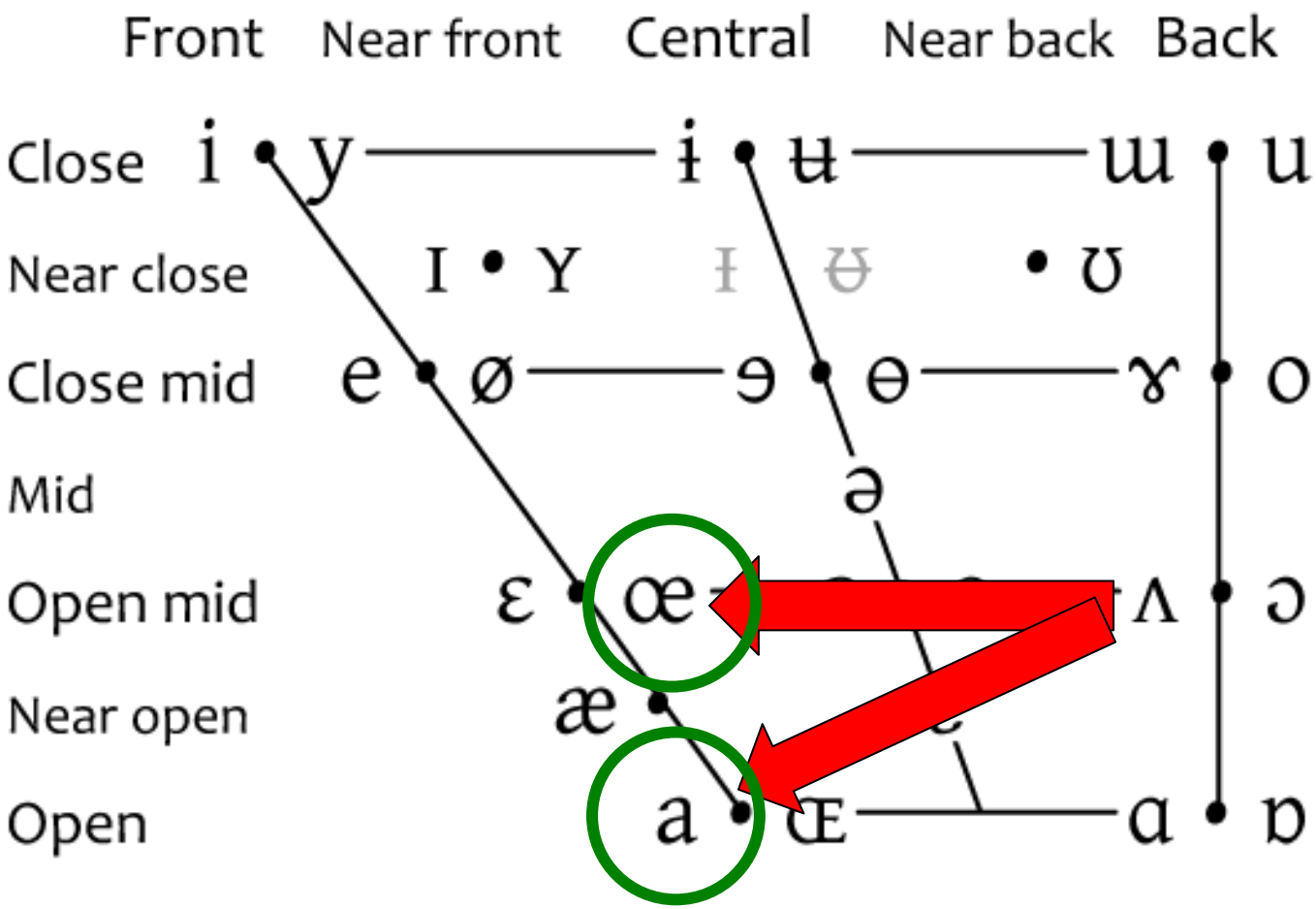
- Research question: The vowel inventary of Bernese Swiss German has no STRUT vowel /ʌ/. In borrowed words /ʌ/ is replaced by /a/ or /oe/. Which vowel is chosen by whom?
- Hypothesis:
  - The better the borrowed elements are integrated into the Bernese Swiss German lexicon, the more often /oe/ is chosen to replace the STRUT vowel /ʌ/

STRUT Vowel project



STRUT Vowel project

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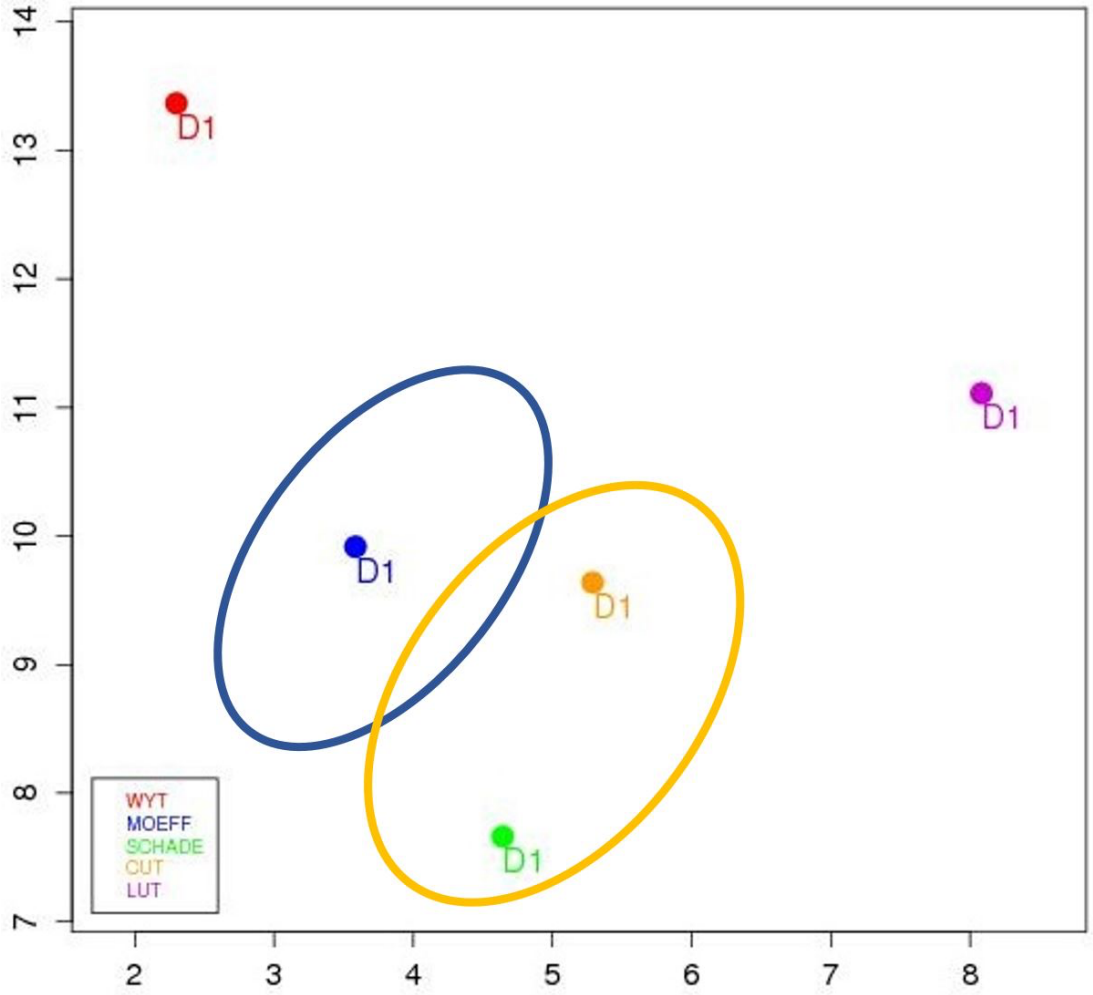
- Data collection:
  - One age groupe (20-40), male and female equally balanced, name-a-picture task
- Analysis:
  - Formants mesured and ploted
  - Degree of integration according to Eisenberg (2011) :
    1. Late 19. or early 20. cent., integration completed (Bluffer) *[plœf:ər]*
    2. Mid 20. cent., partially integrated (Pub) [*pʰœp* or *pʰap*]
    3. Late 20. cent., not (yet) integrated (Update) [*ʔapdɛɪt*]

STRUT Vowel project



STRUT Vowel project

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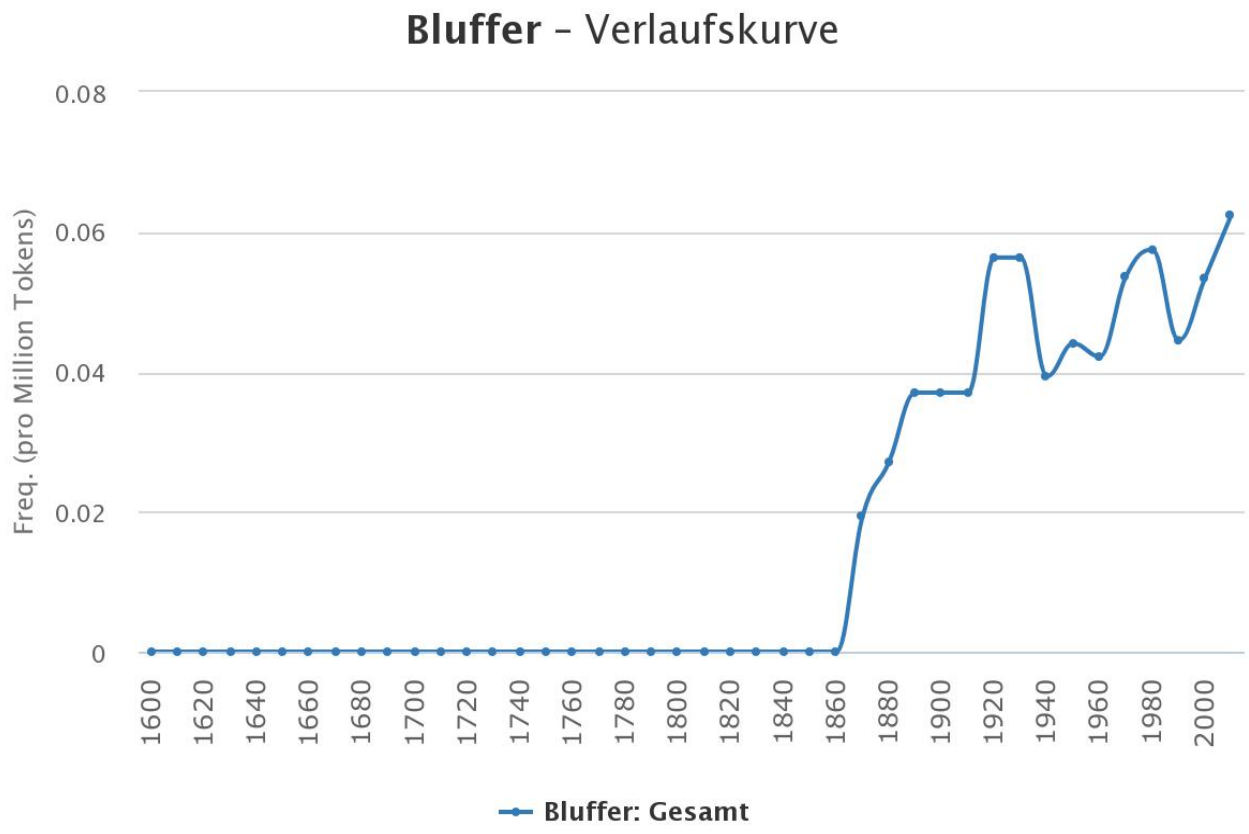
> Bluffer in Standard German

In use since late 19. cent.

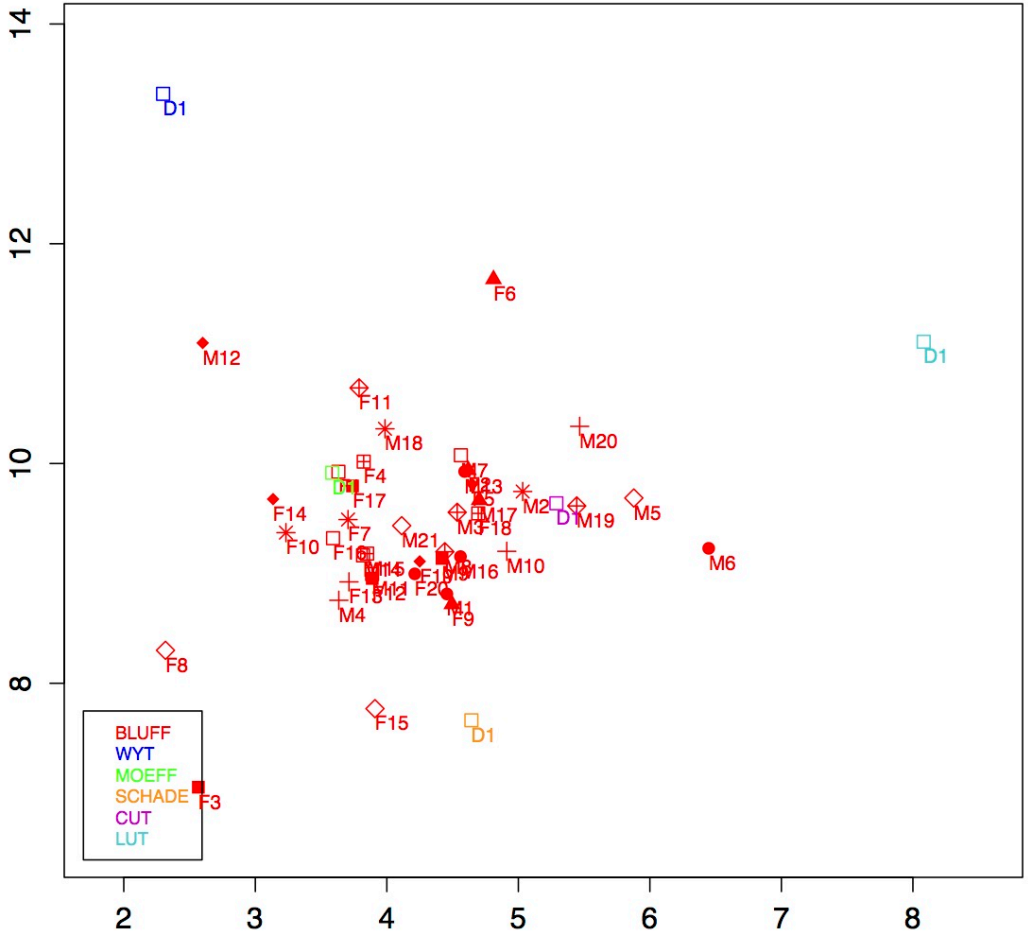


STRUT Vowel project

> Results: Bluffer

In Bernese Swiss German almost only procunced as

/plœf:ər/



STRUT Vowel project

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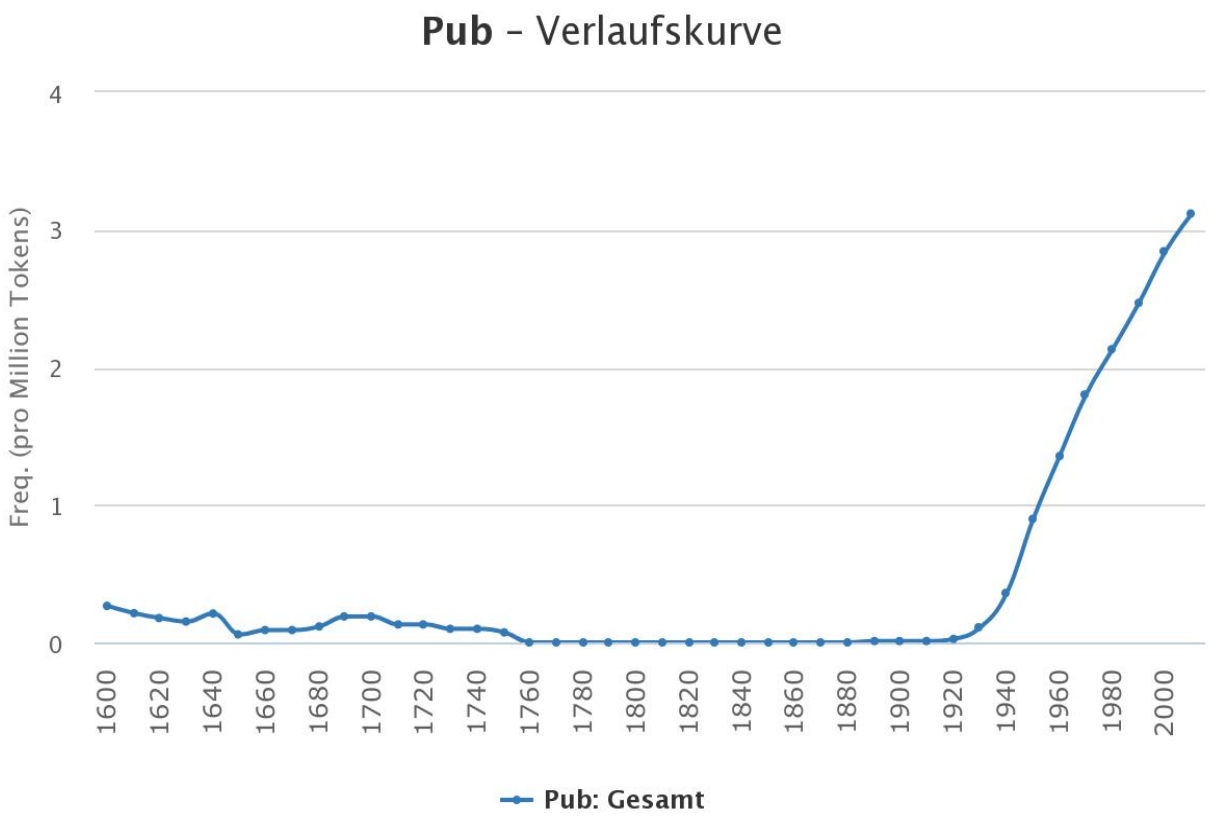
> Pub in Standard German

Use increases in the middle of the 20. cent.



STRUT Vowel project

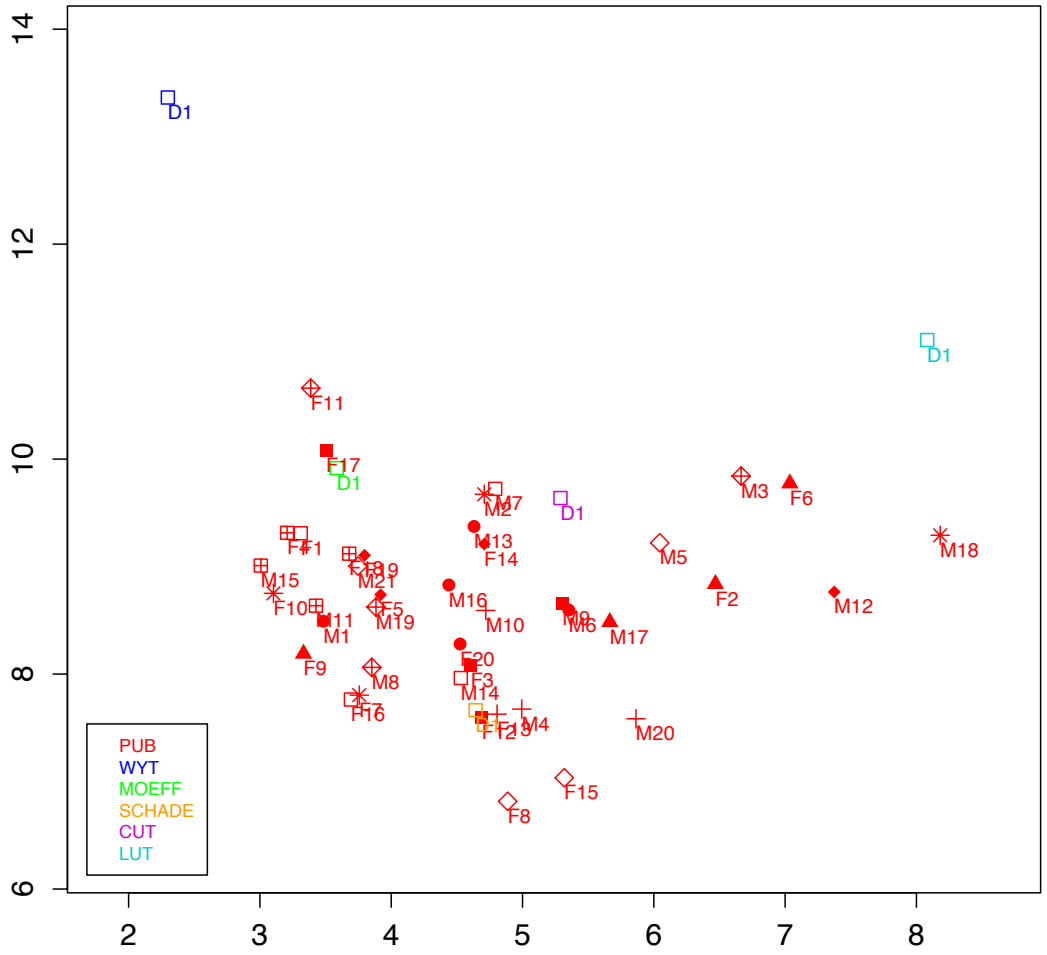
> Results: Pub

In Bernese Swiss German

/pʰab/ and */pʰœb/* are used,

variable is socially marked

(educated vs. uneducated)



STRUT Vowel project

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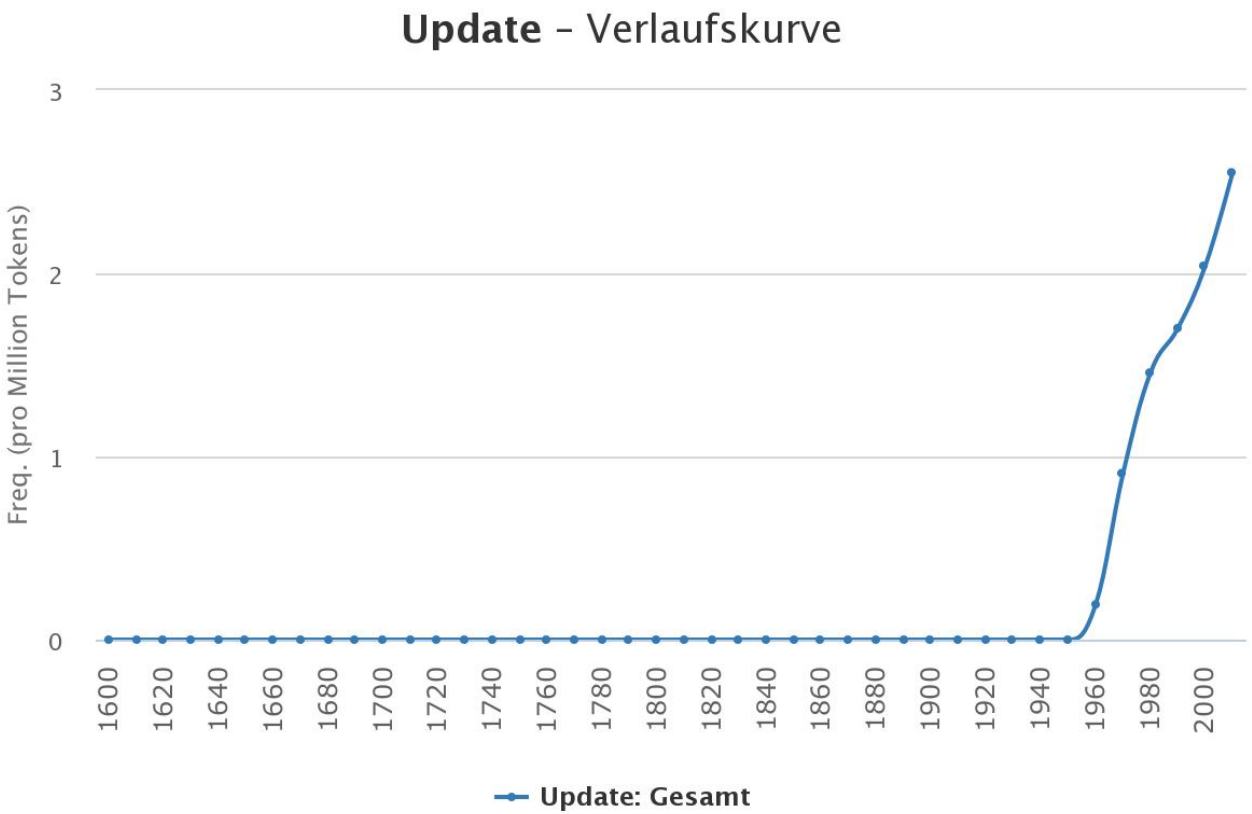
> Update in Standard German

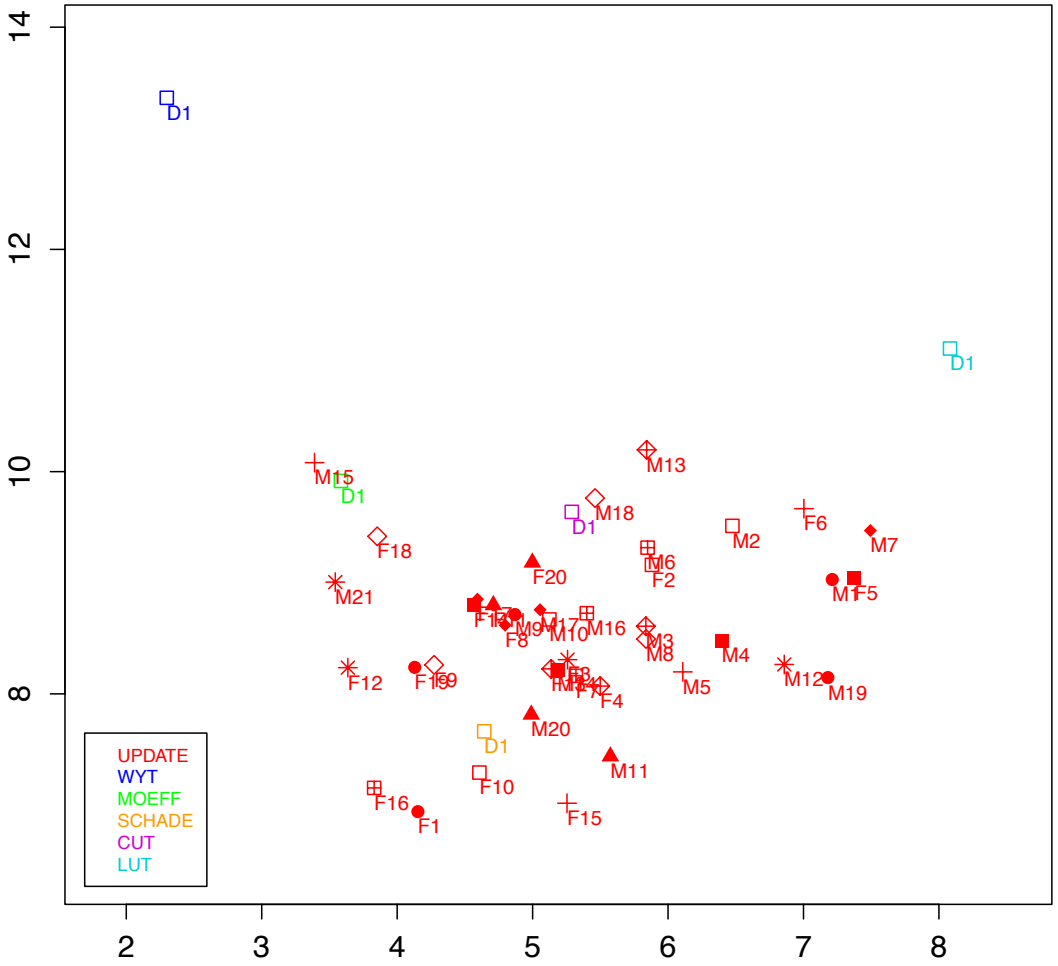
Use increases around 1960



STRUT Vowel project

> Resultate: Update

In Bernese Swiss German pronounced as *ʔapdɛɪt/*



STRUT Vowel project

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- Discussion
  - Integration according to Eisenberg make sense
- Problems
  - Integration not tested with other variables
  - Reference formants are not very precisely measured
  - Not much social data collected

Diphthong /ei/ project

Diphthong /ei/ project

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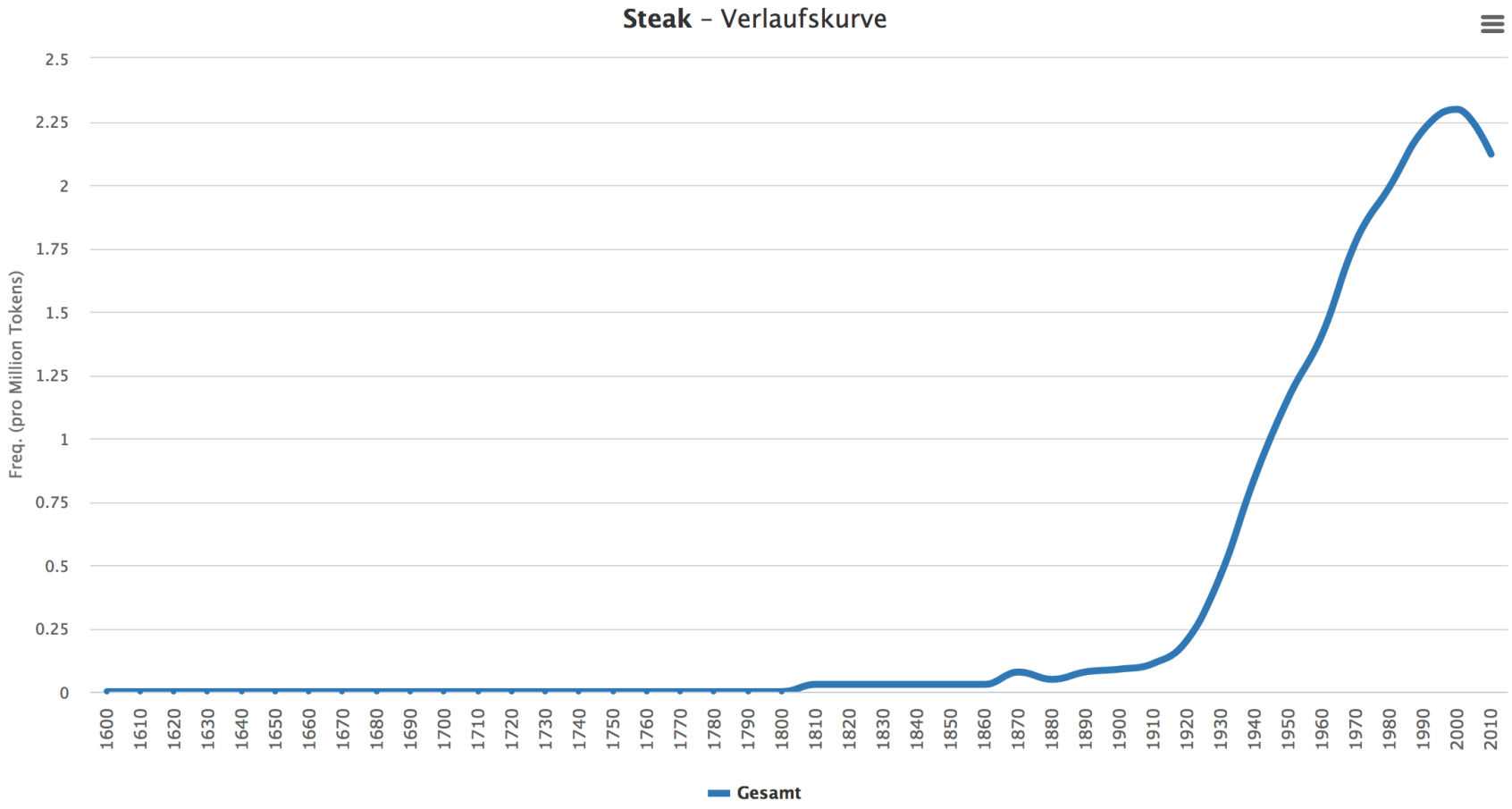
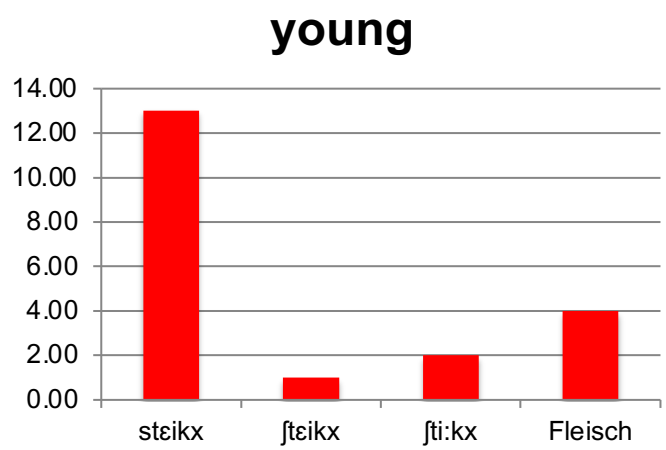
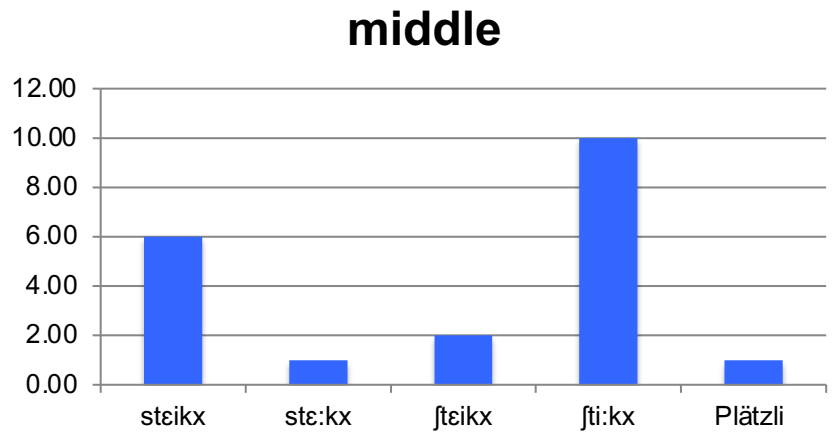
- Research question: In Bernese Swiss German, *steak* is pronounced as *stɛɪk(x)*, *ʃtɛik(x)* oder *ʃti:kx* and many more. Who uses which variant and why?
- Hypotheses:
  1. ʃti:kx is the result of a monophthongisation, which happened during the integration to Bernese Swiss German
  2. Level of English is an important fact when it comes to the pronunciation of *steak*
  3. ʃtɛik(x) is the result of a combination of integration and a certain level of English

Diphthong /ei/ project

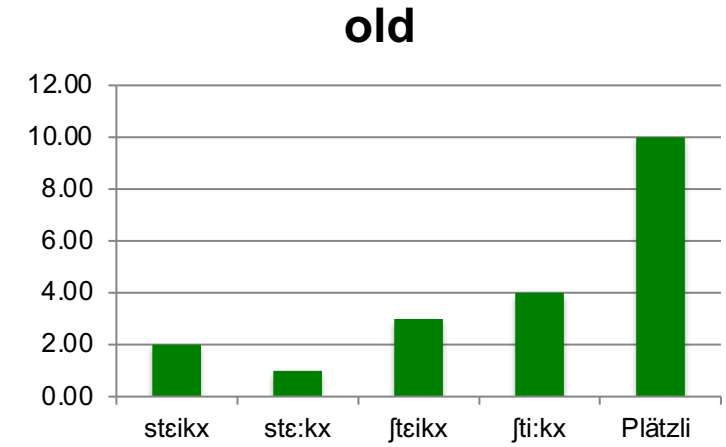


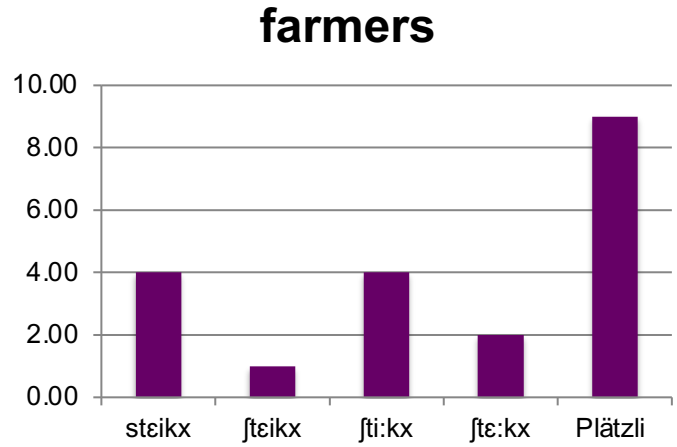
Diphthong /ei/ project





n = 20 per age group





Diphthong /ei/ project

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- Results (Level of English)
  - Level of English has an effect
    - Youngest speakers
      - Since 2004 English is compulsory at Swiss Schools
      - Level of English already before, use of Media
    - Middle speakers
      - Learned some English and try to keep up
      - Sometimes uncertain
    - Oldest speakers and farmers
      - Only little knowledge of English
      - *Steak* not very often, but old variant *Plätzli*

Diphthong /ei/ project

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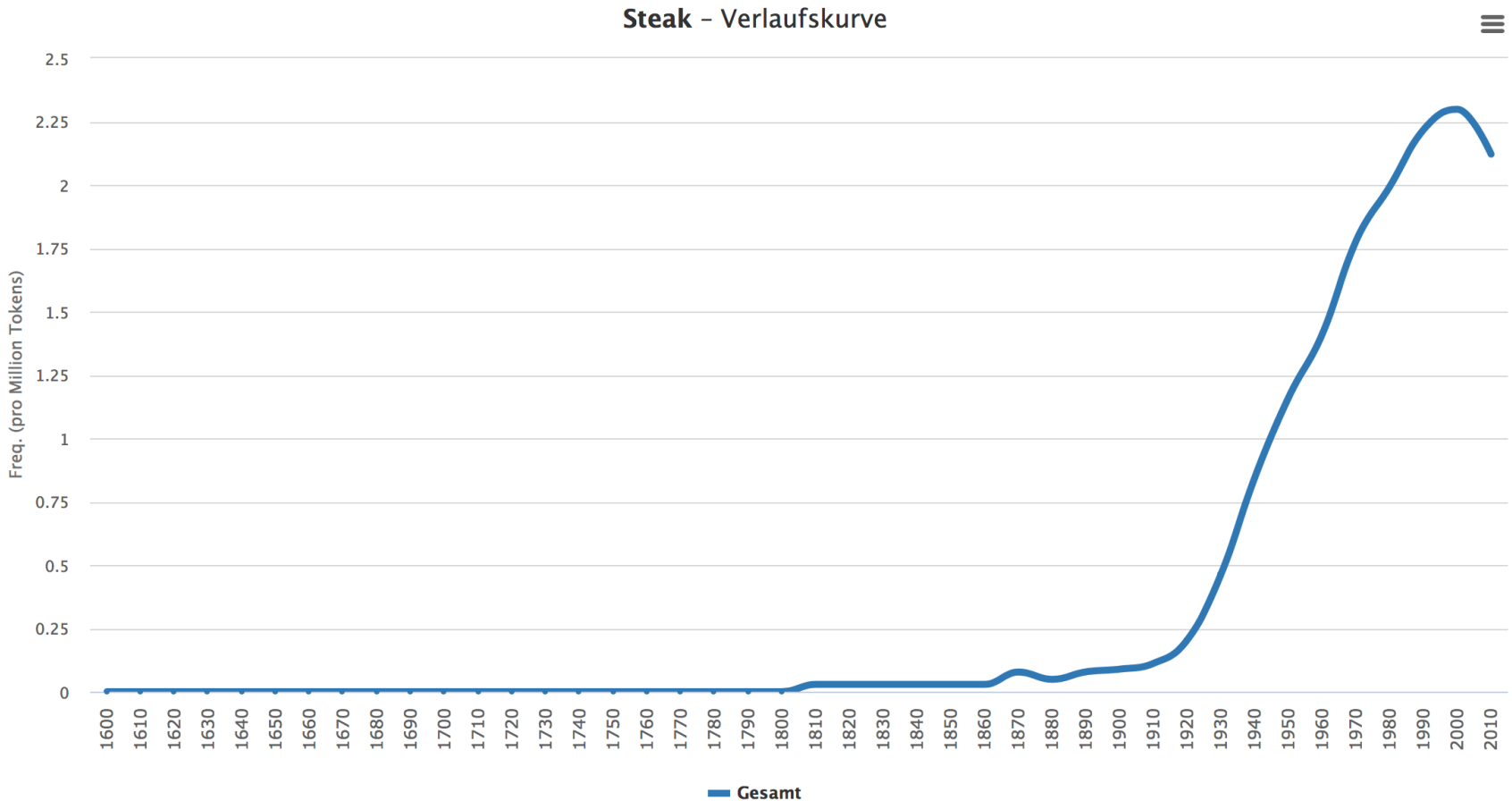
> Results (Monophthongisation)

— Monophthongisation of stɛɪk(x) → ʃti:kx means full integration of the item into Bernese Swiss German

— Chart shows first or second degree of integration according to Eisenberg (2011)

Diphthong /ei/ project



Diphthong /ei/ project

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- Results (Monophthongisation)
  - Monophthongisation of stɛɪk(x) → ʃti:kx means full integration of the item into Bernese Swiss German
  - Chart shows first or second degree of integration according to Eisenberg (2011)
  - Probleme:
    - Why present in middle age group? Uncertain? More open towards the full integration of an Anglicism?

Diphthong /ei/ project

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> Next steps

— Analysis of sociolinguistic data

— Closer look to monophtongisation necessary

— Material Peter Dalcher

Vielen Dank für die Aufmerksamkeit!