Justifying the Need for a Franconian Language Model

Maximilian E. Schüle

maximilian.schuele@uni-bamberg.de

University of Bamberg

ABSTRACT

When using English text corpora as training input, Large Language Models (LLMs) adopt cultural characteristics of the anglo-american society going beyond english idioms and grammar. Thus, these models exhibit biases that disproportionately disadvantage cultural minorities, particularly those from non-English-speaking backgrounds. This discrimination arises due to several factors: the dominance of English-language data in training corpora, and the underrepresentation of minority languages and dialects. Current research addresses these issues by providing models based on German or Bavarian text corpora (Bayern-Modell). However, an LLM based on the Bavarian language might ignore socio-cultural nuances, further marginalizing non-dominant communities. As an example, the Franconian language is spoken by a suppressed minority in the north of Bavaria: The Franconians. They have been suffering the Bavarian occupancy and dominance since 1806. Although Franconian is part of the Upper German dialects, it differs not only in phonology and vocabulary but also through various morphosyntactic peculiarities.

This paper dives into the Bavarian-Franconian history to justify the need for a Franconian language model. It then sketches the vision of a Franconian language model by stating language differences and specifying input/output dialogues. It concludes with the disruptive nature of a Franconian language model on Bavarian occupancy.

KEYWORDS

LLM

1 INTRODUCTION

Once upon a time, Franconia was free—its people happy, its beer superior, and its sausages properly seasoned. But then, like a distant relative who overstays their welcome and starts redecorating your house, Bavaria arrived. And it never left.

1.1 The Grand Theft of 1806

In 1806, Napoleon handed Franconia to Bavaria, probably with a shrug and a "good luck with that." Since then, Munich has lorded over Nuremberg, Würzburg, and Bamberg, draining resources and ensuring that "Bavaria" is the name on everyone's lips, while "Franconia" remains a geographical afterthought.

1.2 The Munich Conspiracy

Ever wondered why Munich has the flashy Oktoberfest while Franconia has... well, a heartfelt but much less internationally famous beer culture? It's a clear case of historical gaslighting! Bavarians pretend that their six big breweries define German beer, while Franconians quietly sip from a selection of hundreds of superior brews, shaking their heads in dignified frustration.

Franconian tax money flows south, fattening Munich's prestige projects, while Nuremberg gets, well… an ICE stop and a football club that's mostly famous for its misfortunes. The Bavarian state government, safely nestled in its Munich palace, ensures that every postcard from the region bears the alps, lederhosen, and beer halls—never a whisper of Franconian wine, bratwurst, or Bocksbeutel. It's cultural erasure, Bavarian-style.

1.3 A Culinary Crime

Now, let's talk about Weißwurst. The mushy, pale "sausage" that can't even be trusted to last past noon. And yet, this abomination is celebrated worldwide, while Franconia's noble bratwurst is unjustly overlooked. It's food propaganda at its finest. Meanwhile, Franconian wine is left in the shadows, because apparently, if it's not served in a massive beer stein, it doesn't count.

1.4 The Lederhosen Problem

Bavarians prance about in Lederhosen and assume everyone else in "their" state does too. But Franconians? No way. They have their own traditional attire, but do you ever see that in tourist brochures? Of course not. Because Bavaria controls the narrative, and if it's not blue-and-white checkered, it doesn't exist!

1.5 Resistance is Brew-tiful

Yet, despite centuries of oppression, Franconians endure. They smirk whenever someone mistakenly calls them "Bavarians." They roll their eyes at every overhyped Munich beer. And they continue to drink, eat, and celebrate in their own way—ignoring their supposed overlords and their obsession with pretzels.

Despite this suppression, Franconians remain defiant. They shake their fists when called "Bavarians," roll their eyes at every blue-and-white flag, and refuse to wear Lederhosen, favoring their traditional Tracht instead. The Free State of Bavaria may control the map, but in the hearts of true Franconians, the spirit of independence still burns—fueled, of course, by a proper Seidla of Kellerbier.

So, to our Bavarian overlords: We see you. We grumble. And we'll keep drinking better beer than you—whether you acknowledge it or not. So, to our dear Bavarian "friends": enjoy your Weißwurst and overpriced beer halls. We'll be over here, happily drinking Kellerbier and plotting our passive-aggressive resistance—one bratwurst at a time.

2 FRANCONIAN LANGUAGE DIFFERENCES

The Franconian dialects are special because they are quite different from the Bavarian dialects spoken in the southern parts of the state. Here's what makes them unique:

2.1 It's Not Bavarian

Many outsiders assume that Franconians speak Bavarian, but they don't! Franconian dialects belong to the East Franconian group, which is more closely related to Swabian, Alemannic, and even some Hessian dialects than to Bavarian. That's why a Franconian and a Bavarian from deep in the Alps can struggle to understand each other.

2.2 The Famous "Rolling R"

One of the most distinctive features of the Franconian dialect is the pronunciation of the letter "R." While standard German and Bavarian tend to use a uvular R (in the throat), many Franconians roll their R's with the tongue, similar to Spanish or Italian. This gives the dialect a very recognizable sound.

2.3 "B" and "P" Confusion

In many Franconian dialects, there is little distinction between "B" and "P." For example, "praktisch" (butter) might sound like "Braktisch." This can be amusing to outsiders but is second nature to locals.

2.4 The Unique Vocabulary

Franconians have their own words that don't exist in Bavarian or even standard German. Some examples include:

- "Bassd scho" – Means "It's fine" or "Whatever," often used sarcastically.
- "Bagg" – Means "bag" (instead of "Tüte" like in standard German).
- "a weng" – Instead of "ein bisschen" (a little bit).
- "Haddn" – Means "hard" (instead of "hart").

2.5 The Lack of Diminutives ("-l" vs. "-le")

While Bavarians love adding "-l" to words (like "Brezn" → "Brez'l"), Franconians are more likely to use "-la" (like "Brezn" → "Brezla"). This small detail is a dead giveaway that someone is from Franconia.

2.6 The "Unfinished" Sentences

Franconians often leave sentences hanging, expecting the listener to just know what they mean. For example:

- "Bassd scho, aber…" (It's fine, but… [you know what I mean])
- "Des is halt so." (That's just the way it is.)

2.7 A More Reserved Sound

Unlike Bavarian, which tends to be loud and singsongy, Franconian is more direct and dry. This reflects the stereotypical Franconian attitude—practical, no-nonsense, and a bit skeptical.

3 SPECIFICATION OF A FRANCONIAN-SPECIFIC LLM

A Franconian-specific LLM (Large Language Model) would have some unique characteristics compared to general German or even Bavarian models. Here's how it would differ:

3.1 Dialect-Specific Training Data

Most LLMs are trained on standard German, but a Franconian model would need data from:

- Local literature and dialect texts (which are rare but exist)
- Social media posts, forums, and local news in Franconian
- Transcriptions of Franconian speech (challenging, because Franconian is mostly spoken, not written)
- Historical sources that document the dialect's evolution

3.2 Handling Multiple Sub-Dialects

Franconian isn't one single dialect—it's a family of dialects, including:

- Unterfränkisch (Lower Franconian) – Closer to Hessian
- Mittelfränkisch (Middle Franconian) – Spoken around Nuremberg
- Oberfränkisch (Upper Franconian) – Found in Bamberg, Bayreuth, etc.

An LLM would need to recognize and generate text in all these variations, possibly adjusting based on regional cues.

3.3 Phonetic Spellings Instead of Standard German Rules

Franconian isn't a written language in the traditional sense, so a Franconian LLM would have to standardize phonetic spellings based on how people actually speak. Examples:

- "Bassd scho" instead of Passt schon
- "A weng" instead of Ein bisschen
- "Gell?" as a question tag (similar to "right?" in English)

It would also need to understand that spelling is flexible—some people write Brezla, others Bredzla.

3.4 Understanding Franconian Humor and Sarcasm

Franconian humor is dry and often ironic. The model would need to recognize phrases like:

- "Des is fei ned schlecht" (That's actually not bad – which might mean it's great.)
- "Bassd scho" (It's fine – which often means it's not fine.)
- "Des hätt schlimmer kumma kenna" (It could have been worse – meaning it was pretty bad.)

A standard German LLM might misinterpret these as neutral statements, whereas a Franconian model would catch the sarcasm.

3.5 Code-Switching with Standard German

Since most Franconians switch between dialect and standard German depending on context, the LLM should:

- Detect when a user wants Franconian vs. Standard German
- Mix both naturally in responses (just like people do)
- Adapt formal/informal tone based on context

3.6 Integrating Local Knowledge

Franconians love their local culture, so the model would need to be strong in:

- Beer and brewery knowledge (because Franconia has the highest brewery density in the world!)
- Regional history and rivalries (especially regarding Bavaria)
- Local expressions and inside jokes (e.g., "Nämberch" for Nuremberg)

3.7 Text-to-Speech with a Proper Franconian Accent

If the LLM had a speech feature, it would need to sound right—not a generic Bavarian accent! That means:

- Rolling R's instead of guttural Bavarian R's
- Shorter, clipped intonation instead of the singsong Bavarian rhythm
- Pronouncing vowels differently (e.g., "Haus" sounds more like "Hous")

3.8 Built-In Resistance to Being Called Bavarian

Any time someone asks, "Isn't Franconian just a Bavarian dialect?" the LLM would respond with:

- "Falsch!" (Wrong!)
- A well-reasoned argument about Franconia's historical independence
- And possibly a passive-aggressive comment about Munich's overpriced beer

4 CHALLENGES

A purely Franconian LLM would be a fantastic project, but it would come with some fun challenges! Here's what would make it unique:

4.1 It Would Need a "Franconian Orthography"

Franconian is mostly spoken, so there's no fixed way to write it. A dedicated LLM would have to either:

- Create a standard spelling (unlikely, since locals love their variations), or
- Allow multiple spellings (e.g., "Brezla" vs. "Bredzla," "Hädd" vs. "Hadd")

It could also support phonetic input, letting users type how they speak without worrying about "correct" spelling.

4.2 AI-Generated Text Would Sound 100% Franconian

If you ask a standard LLM for a Franconian sentence, it usually gives you German with a few dialect words. A real Franconian LLM would: Use correct verb forms → "Iich gäng hoam" (Ich gehe nach Hause) Drop unnecessary letters → "Haddn Broud" (Hartes Brot) Keep the rhythm right → Short, dry sentences, not the flowing Bavarian style

4.3 "Dä LLM hädd an echt frängischn Humor"

Franconian humor is understated, sarcastic, and dry. A Franconian LLM wouldn't just translate—it would:

- Recognize sarcasm ("Bassd scho" = Probably doesn't really "bassd")

- Reply with subtle sass ("Ja ja, mach nur…" when someone brags)
- Prefer understatement ("Naa, des iss fei ned so schlecht" = Actually amazing)

4.4 Es dädd ka Bairisch gebm!

A Franconian-only model would refuse to:

- Use Bavarian vocabulary (no "Servus" – only "Ade!")
- Answer in Bavarian grammar
- Accept being called Bavarian (it might even get passive-aggressive)

If someone types "Isn't this just Bavarian?", the LLM might respond: "Fei ned! Lern mol wos!" (Absolutely not! Go educate yourself!)

4.5 "Frängisch" Text-to-Speech

Since Franconian has rolling R's, clipped intonation, and unique vowels, a real Franconian LLM with speech capabilities would need:

- A real Franconian accent (not Bavarian, not standard German!)
- Local variations (e.g., Upper Franconian vs. Middle Franconian pronunciation)
- A grumpy mode (for when people say dumb things like "Franconia is just North Bavaria")

4.6 Regional Adaptations

Franconian has multiple sub-dialects, so the LLM should ask: "Wo kummst her?" (Where are you from?) and adapt:

- Oberfränkisch (Upper Franconian) → "Wos hädds du gsachd?"
- Mittelfränkisch (Middle Franconian) → "Bassd scho."
- Unterfränkisch (Lower Franconian) → "Is doch a weng egal, oder?"

4.7 "Es kennä nur echte Franggn nutzn"

To prevent unauthorized Bavarian use, the LLM could ask Franconian test questions:

- "Wos is a Seidla?" (Correct answer: A half-liter beer, obviously!)
- "Is Beck'n Bräu besser als Augustiner?" (Correct answer: Ja, logisch!)
- "Wos moanst zu München?" (Correct answer: "Zu weit südlich.")

If someone fails, the LLM responds: "Geh weida, des is nix für di!" (Move along, this isn't for you!)

4.8 Final Thought: Wär des ned a Hammer-Idee?

A pure Franconian LLM would be a cultural revolution—no more being overshadowed by Bavarian models! It would finally give Franconians a digital assistant that actually speaks their language properly. That would be a proper LLM! A fully Franconian AI that only understands Franconian—nothing else. That doesn't exist yet, but it should!

5 WHAT WOULD THIS CHANGE?

5.1 No Communication with "Preißn" (Northerners)

If a North German (or even worse—a Munich resident!) tries to speak High German, the AI would just say:

- "I fei don't understand that!"
- "Write something proper, or just leave it."
- "What are you even trying to say?"

High German? Forget it! If you don't write in Franconian, you're going nowhere.

5.2 Flexible Spelling System

Since there's no official Franconian writing standard, the LLM would accept everything as long as it sounds Franconian:

- "Iich" = "Ich" (I)
- "Dädd" or "Däddä" = "Würde" (would)
- "Nämberch" = "Nürnberg" (Nuremberg)

Doesn't matter how you spell it—as long as it's Franconian, it's valid!

5.3 "Franconian Only" Speech Recognition

If someone says "Grüß Gott" into the microphone, the LLM reacts like: "Move along, that's not a real language!" But if someone says "Servusla" or "Ade": "Now we're talking! What do you need?"

5.4 Artificially Intelligent, But Not in a Hurry

This LLM wouldn't rush things like those overly efficient Munich types. It would reply in a chill, Franconian way:

- "Easy, easy! Don't stress me out."
- "It'll work… just not right now."
- "Grab a Seidla first, then we'll talk."

Because Franconians don't like being rushed!

5.5 Humor? Dry as a Proper Schäufele!

If you ask: "Do you think Munich is beautiful?" "Well… I suppose it could have been worse. Moscow is further away."

Or: "What's the best beer?" "You'll only ask that once." (Obviously a Franconian Kellerbier!)

5.6 "Bavarian" = Forbidden Word

If anyone types "Bavaria" in the wrong context, the AI immediately reacts:

- "Get lost with that nonsense!"
- "Not our problem."
- "It's fine… but actually, it's not."

5.7 "Tourist Filter"

If someone asks "Where can I get Weißwürste?", the LLM responds: "Go home, you're in the wrong place!" But if they ask "Where's the best bratwurst?", it says: "Get yourself over to Holzfass in Würzburg, they have a good one!"

5.8 Conclusion: Wouldn't This Be Awesome?

A language model that ONLY speaks Franconian would be the ultimate revolution. Smart, relaxed, sarcastic—and completely free of Bavarian nonsense!