VIEW[Z]

VIENNA ENGLISH WORKING PAPERS

VOLUME 6 NUMBER 2 DECEMBER, 1997

CONTENTS

LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

The present issue comes to you a little behind schedule, thanks largely to a protracted move to a new building, which began in October and is now, in mid-January nearing its final stage. (Please note the new mailing address and phone and fax details below.)

This time we have the usual interesting mix of historical and applied linguistics. Alan Davies, whom we were delighted to have here last

summer as a guest professor, reexamines the notions of linguistic correctness and prescription from an applied linguist's viewpoint, and issues challenges to both normativists and normalists, which we hope will lead to some discussion in future numbers of VIEWS. Robert McColl Millar presents a debate on creoles, creoloids and koineoids, with reference to past and present states of English. This will, we believe, be of great interest to sociolinguists and historical linguists alike, and we hope that this will also start a debate and promote some feedback from readers. The latter is the explicit aim of Barbara Seidlhofer's urgent invitation to rethink the teaching of English, formulated as an agenda for applied linguistics. H.G. Widdowson then offers his view of the act (or art) of translation, which he views as an extension of the normal processes of text creation and interpretation. And there is also something by Niki Ritt …

Before asking you for your views on the contributions to this VIEWS, we'd like to thank ALL of you who so actively kept us going through 1997. Your donations have not only provided us with the necessary funds to cover our costs (ATS 50 per copy) but also with the reassurance that VIEWS is more to you than hollow words! Therefore, many thanks indeed to:

Werner Abraham, Valerie Adams, Arleta Adamska-Salaciak, anon. (Italy), Roland Bacchielli, Nicola Bari, Margit Brückner, Wolfram Bublitz, Martin Bygate, Alan Davies, Bernhard Diensberg, Hans-Jürgen Diller, Colin Evans, Alwin Fill, Andreas Fischer, Olga Fischer, Jacek Fisiak, Udo Fries, Helmut Gneuss, Klaus Gnutzmann, Gertraud Havranek, Risto Hiltunen, Boris Hlebec, Jonathan Hope, Yoshihiko Ikegami, Therese-Susanne Illés, Allan James, Jennifer Jenkins, Andreas Jucker, Lucia Kornexl, Merja Kytö, Roger Lass, Geoffrey Leech, Uta Lenk, Ursula Lenker, Christian Liebl, Hans Christian Luschützky, Christian Mair, Gerlinde Mautner, Gabriella Mazzon, Robert McColl Millar, Ardith Meier, Adam Nadasdy, Stephen Nagle, Terttu Nevalainen, Winfried Nöth, Hermine Penz, Carol Percy, Reinhold Peterwagner, Claus Pollner, Helena Raumolin-Brunberg, Matti Rissanen, Ernst Ritt, Gabriella Rundblad, Hans Sauer, Iris Schaller-Schwaner, Viktor Schmetterer, Edgar Schneider, Larry Selinker, Aimo Seppänen, Jenny Shepherd (Lucy Cavendish College), Jeremy Smith, Anna Maria Sosnowska, Michael Stubbs, Peter Trudgill, William van der Wurff, Laura Wright, Anna Zbierska-Sawala

Please send contributions of the reactive and/or proactive type to:

VIEW[Z]
c/o Institut für Anglistik & Amerikanistik der Universität Wien
Universitätscampus AAKH, Spitalgasse 2-4, Hof 8
A – 1090 Vienna; Austria

fax	**(intern.) 43 1 4277 9424**
eMail	**nikolaus.ritt@univie.ac.at**
3W	**http://www.univie.ac.at/Anglistik**

The Editors

Real Language Norms: description, prescription and their critics. A Case for Applied Linguistics[1]

Alan Davies

Abstract

The article argues that questions of correctness, of prescription and of norms are proper concerns of Applied Linguistics because of the insights they provide on language attitudes, language change and language vitality. A distinction is made between the two meanings of the title of the article: real norms of language (there are language norms and these are real) and the norms of real language (norms of the real as opposed to the idealised language). While other areas of Linguistics (especially Sociolinguistics) have also investigated issues of norms and correctness, what distinguishes Applied Linguistics is its attempt to grapple with the institutional implications of prescriptive attitudes and normative behaviour.

1.

Language prescription, a quasi-evangelical act of norm-enforcement, and its associated belief system of prescriptivism (or correctness), is commonly dismissed as a pre-theoretical primitive, to be noted in passing by linguists as fuelling popular views of language, not serious or interesting in itself. Linguists have about as much interest in notions of correctness, we might say as astronomers do in astrology (but see Joseph 1987, Milroy and Milroy 1991, Cameron 1995, Millar 1997).

However, such notions are widely held, perhaps universally so. They reflect the individual's claim on membership of the speech community which shares such attitudes; they also confirm the speech community's positive attitude towards the language under discussion. Just as gossip can confirm inclusion in the group of the gossiped-about, so complaints about norm violation may be a confirmation of language vitality.

What this means is that we all, linguists included, share to some extent the normative views of our speech community. Indeed, if we did not, our membership of the speech community would be in doubt. Therefore, when H.C. Wyld,

---

[1] A version of this article was given as the Inaugural Lecture of the Chair of Applied Linguistics at the University of Edinburgh on 11 November 1993.

the well-known anglicist, claimed that Received Standard English (what is more commonly now called Received Pronunciation) 'is superior...to any other form of English in beauty and clarity' (Wyld 1934) we may be surprised to read such a view expressed by a professional linguist. But our surprise is probably more a reaction to the public context of Wyld's remarks than to the utterance itself. While we are shocked that a Professor of the English Language should be so prejudiced, we are more shocked at his indiscretion. Just as all native speakers of English include the glottal stop within their phonetic repertoire so we all retain prescriptivist and correctness notions which easily flip over into prejudice against non-standard varieties and their speakers. One of the tasks of Applied Linguistics is to investigate which social model a speech community in practice selects as its language standard or model, to attempt an explanation of that choice, however hegemonic it may be, and to explore the concomitant institutional implications.

2. Correctness

Correctness is pervasive, from Ross's U – non-U distinction (Ross 1954) to insecurity about proper and polite linguistic behaviour, such as avoiding the split infinitive and the preposition at the end of the sentence.

(An amusing example of the latter was published in the Weekly Guardian of 6 June '93 and is signed by Michael Dunn, Quebec:

> Regarding prepositions at the end of a sentence, Blanish McKurney in the excellent entry with four prepositions may not have heard of an even richer version with eight prepositions. (For this version one must know that the book referred to concerns Australia):
>
> 'What did you bring that book I didn't want to be read to out of about down under up
>
> (why did you bring that book I didn't want to be read to/out of/about down under/up/for?)

Greenbaum (1988) refers to three criteria common to views of correctness:

1. preferences for earlier forms and meanings
2. desirability of preserving and creating distinctions
3. appeal to logic

Greenbaum points to the absurdity of the views of prescriptivists; the absurdity of what they say, not of the fact that they say it. As we shall see, the activity of prescription tends to accompany language vitality. This may be correlational rather than causal. Vitality leads to differentiation, and it may be the

variety produced by vitality rather than the vitality itself which triggers prescription.

Whether directly or indirectly caused by vitality, the act of prescription indicates the necessity to choose among competing claimants. 'If we need a distinction,' Greenbaum remarks, 'we shall be able to make it'. (Greenbaum 1988)

It is useful to link prescription to description.

3. Description and Prescription

Crystal argues that both the descriptive and the prescriptive approaches to language are necessary.

> The descriptive approach is essential because it is the only way in which the competing claims of different standards can be reconciled: when we know the facts of language use, we are in a better position to avoid the idiosyncracies of private opinions, and to make realistic recommendations about teaching or style. The prescriptive approach provides a focus for the sense of linguistic values which everyone possesses, and which ultimately forms part of our view of social structure, and of our own place within it. (Crystal 1987:2)

Unlike other countries England/Britain has never had an Academy, although it has been suggested that this was the original idea behind the foundation of the Royal Society in the 1660s. Jonathan Swift was a keen promoter of the idea to, as he put it, 'ascertain' the English tongue and thereby 'fix the language for ever'. The experience of the French and Spanish academies has shown of course that any such hope of stability is vain. As usual Dr Johnson cut through the cant, mocking the lexicographer who imagines that

> his dictionary can embalm his language, and secure it from corruption, and decay, that it is in his power to change sublunary nature, or clear the world at once from folly, vanity and affectation. (Johnson 1755)

As much as Johnson began his lexicographic work as a prescriptivist, his seven years on the Dictionary resulted in a basically descriptive presentation of the vocabulary of English.

Description is of course the positive side of prescription, they are separated by an ever shifting boundary, the one defining the other. At bottom, description may be regarded as a form of prescription since it involves selecting these items, this dialect, these words rather than those: description, like all choice, may not of itself represent a value judgement, but it certainly confers value.

Indeed Bloomfield (1927), the great American linguist, insists that all societies have strong notions of correctness which members impose on one another through proscription. In his view there does not have to be a written language for such pro- and presciptivism to take place. Bloomfield's experience

of the Menomini (a small native American language group) caused him to expand this view and to assert that individual qualities can cause attribution of superiority in language, as elsewhere and without appeal to a written standard language:

> the Menomini will say that one person speaks well and another badly, that such and such a form of speech is incorrect and sounds bad.
>
> by a cumulation of obvious superiorities, both of character and of standing, as well as of language, some persons are felt to be better models of conduct and speech than others.

Bloomfield's point is essentially a social or sociolinguistic one, that there is always an attribution of prestige, that there is always a model accepted by the community. Disputes about accuracy, about language standards and about which standardised version of a language to adopt (for education, for teaching languages to foreigners, etc.) are basically disputes about models and ultimately about identity, which group one chooses to belong to. Examples of such disputes abound, for example American and British English, Scottish and English English, Greek katharevusa and dhimotiki, High German and Austrian German.

Even in the most centralised states (for example France), the fissiparous tendencies of language change persistently threaten stability and therefore question national and community identity. And so it is not surprising that purist movements (Thomas 1991) continue to burgeon, even in (perhaps above all in) more stable speech communities because what they indicate is sociolinguistic vitality. English has for example the Society for Pure English, the Queen's English Society, the Plain English Movement etc.

4. Norms

The notions of correctness, to which Bloomfield alludes, are the touchstones of our prescriptive intuitions. They are the outward manifestations of our social norms, those underlying conventions of our sociolinguistic behaviour, to which group members adhere. In her discussion of language norms, Renate Bartsch (1987) reports that linguistic correctness has always been a basic notion of traditional grammar, which has been concerned with what the correct expressions in a language are and what the correct use of these expressions is. Even today when, as we shall see, there seems little theoretical interest in the topic, correctness still plays a major part in, for example, the area of grammatical intuitions.

Bartsch distinguishes types of correctness: of the basic means of expression (e.g. sounds of the language, spelling), of lexical items (is it in the language or not?), of syntactic form, semantic correctness, pragmatic correctness, of texts (the notion of text coherence is, she says, the broadest of correctness notions and may explain that vague sense of unease we feel when reading a text by a fluent but non-native speaker, or one whose L1 is a regional variant of the standard). Bartsch contrasts norms with rules. Speaking of language learning she explains:

> it is not the theoretical linguistic rules that have to be learned, but the norms of the language; and for that it is necessary to present the correctness notions.

In other words the role of the correctness admonitions is to allow us to demonstrate, to ourselves and to others, that we adhere to the norms and in so doing give public recognition to our acceptance of them.

> norms are the social reality of the correctness notions: the correctness notions exist in a community by being the content of norms (Bartsch 1987: 4).

Greenbaum (1988) maintains that norms 'are highly significant for speakers of the language' and makes what is surely an exaggerated claim that '…Correct performance marks the user as a responsible member of society' (1988: 33). And we may add that adherence to the norms does not necessarily mean practice of the norms in language any more than in any other area. Here prescription and description are of course non-isomorphic: we can invent the precept: 'say what I tell you to say not what I actually say.'

The expectation that our linguistic conventions are generally shared extends to much wider assumptions about shared understandings. Talbot Taylor (1990) points up this issue by asking the question 'what does it mean to say that someone is speaking English as a normative activity?' He contends that understandings must involve the ability to explain effectively, respond appropriately and use an expression acceptably. That is what speaking normatively means. Of course we are free linguistic agents; we don't have to do these things, unlike the linguistic rules, neglect of which produces gobblydegook and breakdown, not just lack of acceptability. Which means that while we don't argue about accuracy, the rules, we do about acceptability, the norms.

It is interesting of course that Taylor uses the term "moral" of norms: morality is after all that set of rules society assumes which are not legally binding: laws are to linguistic rules what morality is to language norms.

5. Real Language Norms

I want now to examine the opposing views we take of norms and in particular the strongly (and often contradictory) views they attract. In doing so I discuss

the main title of the paper, Real Language Norms. Real Language Norms is one of those ambiguities which can be disambiguated by bracketing, marking the immediate constituents. So we have two senses of the phrase:

1. Real (language norms)
2. (Real language) norms

I shall suggest that each meaning attracts an internal opposition, the first loosely an opposition within the political left and the second, even more loosely, within the political right.

5.1 Real (language norms)

Within the first sense - Real (language norms), that is that there are language norms and these are real - there are two positions.

5.1.1 The first position is the negative one, that there shouldn't be any norms. This is the nativist, leave development alone, position which tends to an affirmation of oracy, of dialects, social and regional and a dismissal of the standard language as serving to reproduce the existing power structure. In part this reflects the position of certain critical theorists. Donald, for example, calls for:

> a shift of emphasis away from the normative or consensual aspects of culture, order, authority, identity to the dialogic processes out of which these are formed.
>
> (Donald 1989:2)

5.1.2 The second position here holds to the opposite view, viz. that norms must be taken seriously. This position is taken by those who have a strong concern for norms but wish either to follow them or to change them. Among those who advocate change are critical discourse advocates and the politically correct (PC). The assumption behind this position reflects an underlying Whorfianism. The argument is that language not merely reflects, mirrors society but also influences it and in particular is a major instrument in channelling - perhaps causing - discrimination and bias.

The merest suspicion of racism and sexism in words is therefore the cutting edge of politically correct movements. D'Souza quotes Alexander Aleinikoff, a Michigan law professor, on the need for avoidance in the protection of minorities:

> There is some speech that contributes nothing to the dialogue. To me, racial epithets are not speech. They are bullets. They can be outlawed in the same way that bank robbery can be outlawed. (1991:152).

Aleinikoff's confidence is surely excessive. It may indeed be possible to outlaw such epithets, but such action does not remove the problem, which in

essence has little to do with epithets, however bullet-like they may be. The problem remains, and replacement epithets become in their turn replacement bullets; or they may be replaced by an uncomfortable silence which, however racially charged, cannot be outlawed anywhere.

Such views on classification in my judgement misinterpret the nature of language and exaggerate its importance. If we accept language variety as basic to the nature of language, then derogatory and negative language cannot be removed by fiat any more than swearing and vulgarity can. And there is something surely naive about the claim that by acting upon the language we are thereby changing society and social attitudes. Alas! if only it were that simple.

But it is too easy to make fun of PC activists and other ideologues. Better to examine their motivation, which attempts to change our perception of sensitive issues. That perception is said to be constrained by traditional language use. We may well dispute the method while still supporting the aim. But it may also be that changing attitudes through language is not the actual purpose of a PC approach, rather it is some form of deliberate consciousness raising.

5.2 (Real language) norms

I have considered the first bracketing of my Real (language norms), that there are (or are not) real norms of the language. I come now to the second sense of my title, viz. that these norms are norms of the real language as opposed to the fossilised or to the idealised language. Again I distinguish two positions.

5.2.1 The first position here is taken by those who believe that the norms of the real language need to be maintained. Since these shock troops, verbal hygienists (Cameron 1990, 1995) or linguistic detectives, are at bottom the counterparts on the right of the PC activists we have just been discussing on the left it may be that the nice ambiguous distinction in my title does not hold for these two groups. No matter, they clearly distinguish themselves in terms of whether change is necessary or not. For while this, for want of a better term, traditionalist group wants to fix the language as is (or more usually as was), the PC group want to fix it as will be after their changes have been made. Where they come together is in their desire to stabilise and prevent further change.

As so often, the right is much more fun than the left, lending itself to caricature in a way that the left allows only for sermons and vilification. No doubt that is why satire seems to come more from the right than from the left.

Here is John Rae, former headmaster of an English public school writing in the Evening Standard of November 1988, commenting on a recent report (the Cox Report) on English teaching:

> At the heart of the report is a classic 60s fallacy. It is argued that the accurate and grammatical use of English is no better than what the report calls 'non-standard forms of English'. So that if a child uses phrases such as "we was," "he ain't done it," "they hing inherently wrong.

> The idea that children can be persuaded to learn Standard English when they are told at the same time that it is no better than any other type of English is a typical intellectual conceit. Children want to know what is right and what is wrong.

An initially more persuasive argument comes from H.C.Wyld, whom we have already quoted. Wyld set out (in one of the Tracts of the Society for Pure English 1934: 39) to demonstrate that the accent he called Received could be scientifically demonstrated to be the best available accent of English on intrinsic not just extrinsic grounds, that is not just because the best people spoke it, but because of its own inherent qualities. In the event he inevitably failed and what he regarded as the criterial intrinsic quality, that of the marked distinctiveness and clarity in its sounds (therefore making it the most intelligible), is shown to be a matter of opinion and therefore extrinsic after all.

Wyld is worth quoting in full for the attitudes his views encapsulate:

> RS is superior, from the character of its vowel sounds, to any other form of English, in beauty and clarity and is therefore...the type best suited for public speaking.

> Nowhere does the best that is in English culture find a fairer expression than in RS speech. And under this should be included not merely pronunciation, but also the inflexions and modulation of the voice. If I were asked among what 'class' the 'best' English is most consistently heard at its best, I think, on the whole, I should say among officers of the British Regular Army. The utterance of these men is at once clear-cut and precise, yet free from affectation; at once downright and manly, yet in the highest degree refined and urbane.

We may laugh at views such as Wyld's, indeed we do well to do so. But what their embalmed risibility should promote is the importance of searching for their modern equivalent in ourselves. Apart from his extrinsic-intrinsic linkage which is, I suggest, profoundly mistaken, what Wyld's argument is really about is which social model a speech community selects as its language standard or model. Stripped of its snobbishness Wyld is essentially echoing Bloomfield's comments on the Menomini.

The most severe disputes about language tend to be over social norms (e.g. politeness, apologising, inviting etc.) rather than, say, over textuality. That is to say we are more ready to accept the universality of a genre model for a particular type of text (say a medical report) than we are to accept a model for politeness. This may be a reflection of a general acceptance of a single written language norm as compared with a wider tolerance for different spoken norms and therefore a resistance to having one imposed.

A more recent traditionalist, John Honey, has been very unkind to the Scots - or has he? Are his comments about Susan Rae, a BBC Scotland newsreader who moved to London, objective? Has the extrinsic become intrinsic?

Ms Rae herself reported receiving neo-racist reactions to her accent, real hatred, the kindest comment being: 'get back to the hills and the heather'. But Honey's view is that the reactions were not just (or not at all) xenophobia, snobbishness and English insularity. The real problem, he maintains, was her lack of intelligibility.

> In many varieties of Scottish English it is impossible to distinguish, as other English accents can, between the sounds of dose/doze, baize/base, pulling/pooling. Susan Raeś accent has some of those features; it also merges collar and caller and dogś honours with dogs'owners, she also announced the Food Programme as if it were for podiatrists. To do her justice, her accent does show some signs of modification...in the direction of RP,

Honey (1989) firmly concludes.

The linguistic right is not yet, I think, on the wane in the UK and therefore the views of John Marenbon, one of its pillars, are worth noting. Writing in 1987 (Crowley 1991), Marenbon offers as a panacea that we bring back the teaching of Latin

> as it has developed, Standard English has been shaped by Latin usage and by the understanding of grammar involved in a classical education. The traditional, classically based grammatical categories have themselves influenced the way educated men have spoken and written...The terminology of traditional grammar remains the best instrument for describing the broad features of Standard English, and so of prescribing usage to those learning it

My favourite rightists, however, are American. Barron (1982) quotes a survey done for the Harper Dictionary of Contemporary Usage (1975), comments from a panel of 136 distinguished consultants on usage. Here is a typical example:

> disinterested/uninterested: Asimov: Iṁ very proud of knowing the distinction and insist on correcting others freely.

This first position on the norms of real language is, as we have seen, taken by those who see what they regard as the real language under attack. Theirs is a traditional view of the real language which seeks to restore traditional values in the language (as in other areas). But because the object of veneration is no longer current, and cannot be resurrected, the aim is chimerical and the object in fact just as idealised as under my second position here.

5.2.2 This second position is taken by those who claim that there are no norms of the real language, the only ones being of an idealised language. I have put it in an extreme way and it would be more appropriate to say that this position is held by those whose interest is in linguistic rules and who see nothing of

interest for linguistics in a concern with norms as we have been discussing them. This is a view which accounts for language change largely intrinsically, in terms of internal language change.

Taylor characterises this approach thus:

> we have today an academically enshrined linguistic science which takes as its data a decontextualized, ahistorical and autonomous product, ignoring the voluntary, contextualized actions of individual agents in producing that data. (Taylor 1990:130).

Linguistics in this tradition is deliberately idealised, its data are regularised, decontextualised and standardised. Taylor must have in mind linguistics at its most abstract. Sociolinguistics with its fundamental interest in context, and psycholinguistics with its interest in the individual, must be excluded from this attack.

Taylor, like his mentor, Roy Harris, is convinced that linguistics has become too narrow. And Taylor does indeed have a point about the need for linguistics, some linguistics, to take account of the normative character of language and not ignore it as being of no interest.

> Academic linguistics, by excluding the normative character of language (quite unlike all earlier discourse about language) from the cocoon of scientific enquiry, prevents itself from connecting up with or even understanding contemporary debates on the important political issues of language, i.e. on those aspects of language which really matter to speakers/hearers. (Taylor 1990)

One such topic which has aroused both interest and passion is that of Ebonics, the newer term for African American English, which has been much discussed in releases of the electronic Linguist (Internet) List following a decision by the Oakland (California) School Board:

> The Board declared its intention to instruct 'African American students in their primary language (Ebonics) for the combined purpose of maintaining the legitimacy and richness of such language and to facilitate their acquisition and mastery of English language skills. (Baron 1997).

Ebonics was supported by the Oakland School Board in California as a means of attracting Federal funding to the city which has a high degree of school drop-outs among the African American population. The argument in essence was that Ebonics is a language distinct from Standard American English, and as worthy of support as, say Spanish or an American Indian language.

In the List discussion, contributors focused on the status of Ebonics as a language. Charles Fillmore was one of the few contributors to point to the applied linguistic implications of the Oakland decision:

> the language of the school will be easier and more effective if it is seen as building on a home language whose properties the children are encouraged to examine rather than as an endless process of "correcting mistakes." If that's all the new policy

> achieves, it will have been worth it. If teachers can attain precise understandings of the nature of that language, that will be even better. If all of this discussion encourages everyone involved to make whatever other changes need to be made to improve the school performance of African American children in the district, Oakland will achieve a new and more welcome kind of fame. (Fillmore 1997)

6. A case for Applied Linguistics

The lack of serious academic study of the issues that affect individuals in society who in their turn affect language has been widely noticed, an early advocate being I.A. Richards. Richards turned to research into basic language learning when he determined that his work on practical criticism had been a failure. He made

> a positive recommendation that an inquiry into language, - no longer confused with the grammarianṡ inquiry into syntax and into comparative linguistic morphology or with the logicianṡ or philologistṡ - be recognised as a vital branch of research, and treated no longer as the peculiar province of the whimsical amateur (Richards 1929).

We do not have to go back to Richards, worthwhile though he remains, or conjure up a whimsical amateur. What is needed, as Taylor argues, is "to reincorporate concepts of correctness, authority, norm in a 'redefined' linguistics, and thereby address the major question: why does language exhibit such a great degree of regularity?" Such regularity, he notes, is both external and internal, and contemporary linguistics is interested only in the internal. What it therefore ignores are "the normative source of those regularities in the everyday, humdrum, political battles of will that make up the normative practices of verbal interaction."

This argument reminds us that language is informed both by culture and by cognition. It may now be important to reassert the more anthropological ideas on similarities in development and practice between language and culture.

The need that Taylor expresses may not have been addressed by a narrow syntactic linguistics but it certainly has been by sociolinguistics and, as I shall argue, by Applied Linguistics.

What Applied Linguistics does is twofold: first, it recognises that language is normative and it provides methods for studying and developing this aspect of language; second, it demystifies by taking a sceptical view of normative behaviour and acknowledging both that language changes and that deliberate change (often called language planning), though difficult, is in the right circumstances possible.

By this two-engined approach Applied Linguistics treads delicately between the extremes of right and left, holding that yes, of course there are lan-

guage norms which are real, and yes, indeed, that these norms are norms of the real language, which changes and is flexible.

The approach is on a number of fronts and I will briefly mention five here:

6.1

Language learning in context: this is the particular interest often referred to as second language acquisition, which researches into that special type of language learning which is or may be non-developmental (unlike first language learning). As such, the constraints, the context sensitivity (the norms) are salient. What is the relationship in second language learning between rules and norms? Why is it that learners succeed in learning second languages? That is the focus of attention in SLA studies rather than how can we teach second languages better, although of course knowledge of the first may have implications for the second.

6.2

Language proficiency definitions and judgements: I have mentioned ‘success’ above but without any kind of gloss. What do we mean by success and is success differential across contexts and domains? How do we operationalise the proficiency construct in order to make valid language tests? These are some of the questions taken up by Applied Linguistics studies of language proficiency testing.

6.3

Codification rules for language teaching are the spelling out for teaching purposes of the linguistic rules which have been shown as forming the blueprint of the language. Such a study brings together rules and norms, this time the norms of what is possible/acceptable in a teaching situation, under the frequently used label of pedagogic grammar. And to be effective, the pedagogic grammar has to act as a bridge between the idealised and the real language.

6.4

Appropriate text patterning: this is very much broader territory since text (and discourse even more) is widely claimed across disciplines. But Applied Linguistics has long had a healthy interest in the ways texts pattern (normatively) both to facilitate reading comprehension and to exemplify writing strategies.

And I would place stylistics here too since both linguistic and literary stylistics are crucial for language teaching especially at advanced levels: the province therefore of (Applied) Discourse Analysis and Stylistics.

6.5

Deliberate language change: a study which again crosses disciplines, language planning. Here, Applied Linguistics attempts to observe the methods and understand the motives of what are essentially operations on normative practices of language. This topic recognises that choices and attitudes are themselves part of the data. Language planning (which Greenbaum calls modern prescription) makes it explicit that Applied Linguistics cannot be value free.

7. Envoi

I have argued that the apparent absurdities of people's daily language concerns are in fact no more absurd than, say, their concerns about their illnesses and their eating habits. We accept that these require study and research in academic studies of nutrition and general medical practice. Equally so with the social uses of language. It has been my contention that Applied Linguistics provides an academic resource for such studies.

Like it or not we all (well, all except, as we now know, officers of the British Regular Army) feel insecure about our language, just as we do about our health and happiness. Donald Hall expresses this worry in his poem "To A Waterfowl" (1973/4) in which he describes his thoughts as he takes his poetry around the country on lecture tours:

To a Waterfowl

Women with hats like the rear ends of pink ducks
applauded you, my poems.
These are the women whose husbands I meet on airplanes,
who close their briefcases and ask, "What are <u>you</u> in?"
I look in their eyes, I tell them I am in poetry.
and their eyes fill with anxiety, and with little tears.
"Oh yeah?" they say, developing an interest in clouds.
"My wife, she likes that sort of thing? Hah-hah?
I guess maybe I'd better watch my grammar, huh?"
I leave them in airports, watching their grammar.

References

Anderson, B. 1983/91. *Imagined communities: reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism.* London: Verso.

Baron, D.E. 1982. *Grammar and good taste* Yale University Press.

Baron, D.E 1997. Ebonics'*Linguist List* 8/55

Bartsch, R. 1987. *Norms of language: theoretical and practical aspects* London: Longman (translated from *Sprachnormen: Theorie und Praxis* (1985) Tübingen: Niemayer Verlag.

Betjeman, J. 1954. How to get on in society'in *A few late chrysanthemums.* London: John Murray.

Bloomfield, L. 1927. Literate and illiterate speech'*American Speech* 2/10:432-439.

Bolinger, D. 1980. *Language the loaded weapon: the use and abuse of language today* London: Longman.

Cameron, D. 1990. Demythologizing sociolinguistics: why language does not reflect society' in Joseph J.E.and T.J. Taylor (eds), 79-96.

Cameron, D. 1995. *Verbal Hygiene* London: Routledge.

Crowley, T. 1991. *Proper English? readings in language, history and cultural identity* London: Longman.

Crystal, D. 1987. *The Cambridge encyclopedia of language* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Cummins, J. 1984. *Bilingualism and special education: issues in assessment and pedagogy* Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

DSouza, D. 1991. *Illiberal education: the politics of race and sex on campus* New York: The Free Press

Dixon, J. 1976. *Growth through English set in the perspective of the seventies* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Edelman, M. 1977. *Political Language: words that succeed and policies that fail* New York: Academic Press Inc.

Edwards, V. 1979. *Language and disadvantage* London: Edward Arnold.

Fillmore, C.J. 1997. Ebonics'*Linguist List* 8/49.

Greenbaum, S. 1988. *Good English and the grammarian* London: Longman

Guardian Weekly 1993 (30 May and 6 June)

Hall, D. 1990. *Old and new poems* New Yor: Tickner and Fields.

Honey, J. 1989. *Does accent matter?* London: Faber.

Johnson, S. 1755. Preface'to *A dictionary of the English language* London.

Joseph, J.E. 1987. *Eloquence and Power* London: Francis Pinmter.

Joseph, J.E. and T.J. Taylor (eds.) 1990. *Ideologies of language* London: Routledge.

McArthur, T. 1992. Enter the era of caring words'*The Independent on Sunday* 23 August.

Mills, C. Wright Situated actions and vocabularies of motive'*American Sociological Review* 5 December: 904-913

Millar, S. 1997. Behaviour with attitude: prescription in language'paper given at ICLASP meeting, Ottawa.

Milroy, J. and L. Milroy 1991. *Authority in Language* (2nd ed.) London: Routledge.

Phillipson, R. 1992. *Linguistic Imperialism* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Richards, I.A. 1929. *Practical criticism: a study of literary judgement* London: Kegan Paul (San Diego Harvest/HBJ).

Ross, A.S.C. 1954. Linguistic class-indicators in present-day English' *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen* 55.

Taylor, T.J. 1990. 'Normativity and linguistic form'in Davis H.G. and T.J. Taylor (eds.) *Re-defining Linguistics* London: Routledge, 118-148.

Thomas, G. 1991. *Linguistic Purism* London: Longman.

Trudgill, P. 1984. 'Standard English in England'in Trudgill P. (ed.) *Language in the British Isles* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 32-44.

Wyld, H.C. 1934. 'The best English: a claim for the superiority of received standard English' in Tract 39 Oxford *Society for Pure Englis*h.

English a koinëoid*? Some suggestions for reasons behind the creoloid-like features of a language which is not a creoloid.*

Robert McColl Millar, University of Aberdeen

Abstract

This paper revisits the debate on whether typological changes in the development of English are similar to those seen in the development of creoles. It challenges a full acceptance of Thomasson and Kaufman's contention that the structural developments in English were of a fundamentally lesser degree. Developing Trudgill's idea of English as a creoloid, it will suggest that a more accurate term for present-day Standard English is koinëid.

It is proposed that in the North of England a koine of Norse and English developed, most likely by speakers at the lower end of the social scale. This koine would have emphasised the lexical similarities of its sources while downplaying their grammatical differences.

Because of the general tendency in the Germanic languages to "drift" towards analytical structures, more southerly dialects would have exhibited similar – if lesser – tendencies to those found in the koine. In order to cope with ambiguities in their systems, these dialects could conveniently borrow 'coping mechanisms' from their neighbours to the North. Since they did not borrow all of the 'new' features of the koine, they could be termed koinëids. In this way, the slow overall pace of what were rapid changes at a local level can be explained.

This mediated, staged, explanation for language change in English might also explain why certain features present in the original koine, and found in many dialects of English today, were not incorporated into the standard: when London English crystallised as the standard at the end of the Middle English period, these features had not yet penetrated prestige forms of that dialect.

1. Introduction

The first thing which strikes any student when she or he first encounters Old English is how 'different' it looks. At first this awareness derives primarily from the orthographic dissimilarities between Old and Modern English. But as knowledge of Old English grows, this is replaced by a deeper understanding: that in grammatical and syntactic terms the two languages are of fundamentally different types.

rigid SVO[+] (or, to use Denison's terminology, V-F transformed to V-2, as in the early Modern English period, then to V-3) (Denison 1993: § 4.1.3) pattern is followed throughout the system.

On both fronts (since the developments appear to be interlinked), the great change which altered the very nature of the English language took most of the Middle English period to work through. But in the various dialects of the time, the developments involved could (and did) take as little as two or three generations to change much of the typology of one particular dialect. It is this speed which has raised questions about the change and its stimuli.

This article will suggest that it is the large-scale Norse influence on the language of the North of England during and after the Viking period which acted as the original (if certainly not the sole) goad for the speed of the developments involved. It will also provide something approaching a model for their dissemination.

As has been said, all of the typological developments discussed above point to the fact that major — and sometimes startling — change has occurred within the English language. It has even been suggested by a number of scholars that English is, in fact, a creole language, not to be compared with, say, Modern High German in terms of genesis and development, but rather with a language like Tok Pisin.

Some of the over-statements and misconceptions inherent in these ideas have led other scholars to argue that the development of English does not differ in any material sense from that of any other language — that languages alter

and develop, jettisoning marking-systems which are no longer relevant or workable and replacing them with new systemic features. From this it follows that if alteration in linguistic framework is a sign of creolisation, then most, if not all, of the languages of the world are *ipso facto* creoles.

Since, as will become evident, neither of these viewpoints is entirely satisfactory, this paper will attempt to find a 'middle ground' between the two competing conceptualisations. It will show that while seeing English as a creole is a little extreme, features similar to creolisation have been at work in English at least at one point (and possibly more) in its development. If we see the process as being primarily triggered by the 'friction' in the North of England between Norse and Old English, then the similarities in type between the two varieties could lead to a comparison with the *koinëisation* processes found elsewhere in the world.

2. Extrasystemic influences upon English

When we compare English with the other West Germanic languages found in Europe (Afrikaans and the Continental North Germanic languages are another matter), it is apparent that English has come under considerably greater extrasystemic influence. In the period under discussion here, only two languages — Norse and French — can be said to have presented sufficient extralinguistic stimuli (for reasons that I do not need to go into here[1]) that they might influence not only the surface but also the deep structure of the language.

2.1. Overt French Structural Influence

Both extra-systemic sources have had their exponents among those who postulate a creolisation hypothesis for the development of English. Since French has had such a material effect upon the lexis of English, it might seem unreasonable if French had had no effect upon the language-system as a whole (Adam 1883; Kühnelt 1953; and Bailey and Maroldt 1977).

But there are a number of points which can be made against a simplistic acceptance of this view. The first is a logical one: what apparent overt transference phenomena scholars who support this view claim as evidence for French-English creolisation (at least at times debatable) cannot obscure the fact that

[1] I ignore the considerable influence Latin had upon Old English lexis. Although many Anglo-Saxons would have been able to read, write, and probably speak Latin, it is difficult to imagine anyone speaking it as a first language. If anything, the linguistic influence would be in the opposite direction, thus creating a very English'form of Latin.

most of the 'great changes' in the English language at the very least *began* before the French influence upon the language was anything other than barely perceptible. To borrow an idea from Thomasson and Kaufman, those who suggest solutions of this type might be guilty of using isolated examples rather than thinking in terms of the systemic entirety which a creolisation requires (Thomason and Kaufman 1988: § 9.8.8).

For example, proponents of this view may well be correct in their assumption that expressions along the lines of *the son of John* rather than *John's son* are evidence of grammatical transfer from French to English, although reasons have been put forward for why this particular development could be seen in purely intrasystemic terms (Denison 1993: § 4.6.2.1 and Wischer [typescript]). The fact is that other examples of this type are by no means common in terms of the language's structure as a whole. Furthermore, using examples of this type does not address the fact that the collocation's introduction post-dates the morphological confusion which encouraged its adoption.

The creolisation process proposed by these scholars is also somewhat at variance with linguistic situations elsewhere in the world where a linguistic minority in dominant status adopt the language of those they dominate. If we compare the development of French, Bulgarian and Guaraní (in eastern Paraguay) we can see that on none of these occasions did the language involved re-emerge in quite the state in which it had been prior to the 'submersion'. Yet this was not so much a movement towards the structure of the language of the oppressors as it was a quickening of the changes inherent in the languages themselves. By this I mean that different though French may be from the other Romance languages (Wüest 1979); different though Bulgarian may be from some other Slavic languages (Mladenov 1929: § 3-4, 6, 9, 32; de Bray 1951: 193; Fine 1985: 36, 68-9); different though the Guaraní of eastern Paraguay may be from that of the west (Bareiro Saguier 1980: xi) none of these languages exhibit much in the way of structural influence from the once (or still) dominant Frankish, Bulgar, Byzantine Greek and Spanish languages. What happened instead (as can also be seen for English) was that there was for a period no naturally conservative native elite to control the rate of linguistic change.

There can be little doubt that 'foreigner talk' phenomena would have developed among the French-speaking minority as they shifted to the majority language. Given the prestigious nature of these new speakers, it is not beyond the bounds of possibility that some of these phenomena could have been carried over into the English language as a whole: as we have seen, there is considerable evidence for small-scale phenomena of this type. But it is highly doubtful if we could call this — even in the broadest sense of the term —

creolisation (particularly when we think in terms of a systemic entirety). As will be seen, however, French does have an important position within the motivation for this development, but it is influence of a generally rather indirect sort (see Section 6 below).

2.2. Norse Influence

The influence Norse has had upon English appears to be considerably less than that exerted by French. Although highly visible, its influence upon English lexis — in its standard form — is not really much greater than that felt from, for instance, Italian. But when it is recognised that some of the dialects of English show a considerably larger debt of gratitude to the Norse lexical system than the standard variety does, we can see that we are dealing with an influence which is quantifiably different from that felt from French. There is no one dialect of English which demonstrates a greater French influence than another (with the exception of Scots, where the local political situation was different from that found in the rest of the Island of Britain in the late Middle Ages). This rings true with the idea of the French-speaking aristocracy as a sparse, but nonetheless relatively evenly spread, ruling class.

Furthermore, as has long been recognised, borrowing from Norse is evident not only in the lexical words but also in the function words — most famously the paradigm of *they*, but also — at least arguably — in other systems of the language: for instance, in the use of *shall* (Kirch 1959: 508; but see Einenkel 1906). Without question these alterations within the language can be traced to what Michael Samuels termed the 'Great Scandinavian Belt': the areas of Lancashire, Yorkshire and northern Lincolnshire which demonstrate a fundamentally different — and more intense — variety of Scandinavian influence than that found either to the North or South (Samuels 1989c). The linguistic particularities of the dialects of this region can be tied into its nature as a crucible for primary contact between languages. Examples of this are the use of *at* as infinitive marker, and *slik* for *such* in the medieval dialects of these areas, and the contemporary use of such lexical items as *laik* for 'play' (not even found in such 'close' secondary dialects as Scots).

Moreover, it is intriguing that these very areas seem to be the region where the 'great changes' which affected all of English over the next few centuries first took hold.[2] Due to processes which this paper will attempt to explain,

[2] It is unfortunate that because of the unsettled environment at this point, our first inklings that something ȯdd'was happening to the nature of English come from texts, such as the gloss to the *Lindisfarne Gospels*, which originate in a part of the North which exhibits

these changes (both great and small) were transmitted into the surrounding dialects.

3. Is English a creole of Old English and Norse?

3.0. The Creolisation hypothesis

The points made above have led a number of scholars to believe that the language contact situation which pertained in the North of England at this point was comparable with that analysed elsewhere in the world in pidginisation/ creolisation environments in more recent times (for instance, Dominigue 1977 and Poussa 1982). From this point of view at least the original product of the contact could be considered as a creole, even if in its broadest sense, in that we arguably find a situation where the tension between two languages used in the same region leads to the creation of a new, simplified 'make-shift' language which is a pidgin (Holm 1988-9: 5). In being extended in function and in acquiring native speakers, this new form becomes a creole.

3.1. Thomasson and Kaufmanṡ views, and a reaction to them

But while this is attractive in many ways, it is dubious whether it could be maintained in its entirety. It was the lack of a holistic view on the development which led Thomasson and Kaufman in their *Language Contact, Creolization, and Genetic Linguistics*, to attack the concept in its entirety (Thomasson and Kaufman 1988: § 9.8). Nonetheless, although many of their points strike home in terms of some of the more exaggerated claims made for the 'creolisation hypothesis', and whilst making it plain that I do not wish in any way to denigrate either of the authors' expertise or understanding within the field, I would claim that Thomasson and Kaufman are also guilty of over-stating their view. With this in mind, I will give their opinion and follow that immediately with a response of my own where I will point to why an only partial acceptance is possible. In this I am in general agreement with a number of scholars who accept the singular importance of Norse in the development of English while baulking at the term *creole* for the result (Görlach 1986; Hines 1991; and Mitchell 1994. Rot 1984 argues for the joint responsibility of Norse and French [although by

---

both then and now a lesser Scandinavian influence (to the extent of being readily classified as a Secondary Contact dialect), and which were written by older, probably conservative, men who had a considerable grounding in the South-Western *Schriftsprache*.

different methods] for this development). The difference is that I will present an alternative model, which these scholars do not do.

(i) According to Thomasson and Kaufman, the 'great changes' which altered the nature of English cannot be traced to the structure of the Scandinavian dialects as they were imported into England. In fact, Old English and Viking Norse share most grammatical features. Therefore linguistic transfer, they would claim, can be ruled out. What structural transfer evidence they present is hardly startling and could have been achieved in any situation greater than a very casual acquaintance between speakers (Thomasson and Kaufman 1988: § 9.8.6.10).

Furthermore, they would claim, Norse dialects were not spoken in the North long enough for the transmission of such information, as the Viking demographic presence, in their opinion, was not as great as has been stated elsewhere (Thomasson and Kaufman 1988: § 9.8.6.3).

Yet whilst it is true that none of the 'great changes' can be immediately traced to direct transfer of Norse linguistic information, it is nevertheless suspicious that they should have taken place in the very area where there was some presence of a language community which may even have been in a majority in certain parts of the area in question. In using only one source for their analysis of Norse settlement (Sawyer 1971: 171-3) they may also be guilty of special pleading. There has been, of course, a long debate over the level of Norse settlement in the Danelaw and the length of time that Scandinavian dialects were spoken there. No final conclusion has been reached, and it seems unlikely that it will ever be.

Certainly, if the Scandinavian presence was small and linguistically brief, it must have been sufficiently shocking to the system of the surrounding dialect to allow these changes to take place — something which is by no means unacceptable, especially given the status of the Norse as new, often conquering, settlers. Although too much could be made of this, it is the language of these newcomers which supplied a large part of the language of administrative structure and practice in the North until relatively recently (such as *wapentake*, *riding* etc.).

Let us compare this situation with that of the Western European incursion into the Middle East in the eleventh and twelfth centuries (itself a form of Viking/Norman invasion). Although the presence of the *Farangi* was relatively brief, although they never made up anything other than a tiny proportion of the populations of the territories they ruled, although their languages were not related at all to that of the natives, the language they used between each other and with the locals — *lingua franca* — lived on in the Middle East for centu-

ries after their expulsion, primarily because it served a functional purpose (Holm 1988/9: I, 14; Todd 1990: 31 ff.; and Hancock 1984). On all these counts the Scandinavian presence in the North of England — even if small — was far more propitious.

But there is no reason to resort to such a 'shock' theory. If the Scandinavian presence was greater, and their dialects were spoken for a considerable period of time, even perhaps until the twelfth century in some more isolated areas (Ekwall 1963: 54-67; and Samuels 1989)[3] and perhaps of some Norse grammatical usages surviving well into the Middle English period (Ekwall 1910; Arngart 1947/8: 65; Kirch 1956), there is more than enough time for Norse in England to have exerted considerable influence over the language that surrounded its speakers. There is, furthermore, considerable evidence for a mixture in population over this period (Arngart 1947/8: 85; Ekwall 1963: 96; and Cameron 1971).

Further, it is probably a mistake on Thomasson and Kaufman's part to underrate the level of direct Norse transfer of central linguistic material. Without making too much of a point out of the material at hand, it is perhaps significant that many of the changes both in the demonstrative systems, where there was a gradual shift from a bipartite to a tripartite concept of deixis (albeit of a different morphological realisation at surface level) and the word order rules of English at this time mirror similar developments which were taking place, or had taken place, in the Norse dialects. While simultaneous but independent development cannot be ruled out, it is certainly intriguing that English should have chosen these particular roads to follow.

Need all linguistic change due to contact represent direct transfer of systemic material from one language to another? This neither represents the totality of the creolisation phenomenon as analysed elsewhere in the world (Holm 1988/9: I, 61-5), nor our understanding of what was going on in the confused environment of the North of England at the time. As will be argued, it is the friction between the two competing systems which brought about the developments discussed here.

(ii) The transfer of pronominal paradigms such as that of *they* from one language to another is, they claim, by no means unusual, even in terms of English (Thomasson and Kaufman 1988: § 9.8.10). But by focusing solely on *they*, and not recognising its proper importance (Werner 1991), Thomasson and Kaufman have ignored the level of grammatical rather than purely lexical material

[3] There is, after all, considerable evidence for later Norse sound changes having taken place in Northern England as well (Arngart 1947/8: 84; Dieth 1955; Ekwall 1963: 96; and Samuels 1989:10).

which we *know* was transferred from North to South during the Middle English period, whether directly of Norse origin (such as *both*) (OED2: s.v. *both*) or developed under its aegis (such as *she*) (Dieth and Werner 1991: 391-4).

(iii) The level of Norse lexis to be found in either Standard English or any of the most affected dialects, while impressive, is by no means extraordinary, they claim. Such transfer at a surface level would suggest more a 'Norsified English', an English which had taken on some of the trappings of Norse, rather than a genuine *Mischsprache* (Thomasson and Kaufman 1988: § 9.8.6.10). As significantly for them, if not more so, the phonology of this new variant is not fundamentally different from that found elsewhere in England at the time. There is nothing terribly Norse in it, save in the phonemic structure of the loan words (Thomasson and Kaufman 1988: § 9.8.6.13).

But even if we accept all their points in their entirety (and some are debatable), it should be remembered that Old Norse and the dialects of the North of England in particular (and Old English in general, in fact) were very similar in lexical and phonological terms at the time (Smith [forthcoming]). Thus some of the lexical and phonological transfers/simplifications seen elsewhere are impossible here primarily *because* of this initial similarity. It is one thing to have transfers of this type between completely unrelated languages such as Turkish and Greek (Thomasson and Kaufman 1988:); quite another to try to find similar phenomena developing between closely related dialects.[4] Further, the Northern dialects of Middle English (and to a certain extent Modern English) **do** demonstrate the lexical and phonological influence of Old Norse. Indeed *she* may well demonstrate just such a contact phenomenon disseminated throughout English.

(iv) This 'Norsified English' exhibits more features which are North Midlands than genuinely Northern, they claim. Thomasson and Kaufman relate this to the earlier conquest of North Lincolnshire and the subsequent exportation of nearly a whole dialect into the later conquered areas of Deira (Thomasson and Kaufman 1988: § 9.8.6.4 - 9.8.6.5).

But it is difficult to see why they should consider this proposed provenance so significant. Certainly there are very good reasons to recognise many of the features which they report as being of North Lincolnshire origin. Yet I fear that they might be placing too much emphasis on the necessarily scattered texts from the North in this period and for a considerable period following. The chances are that if we had a full quota of different textual sources for the pe-

[4] The same point applies for grammatical/syntactic developments, as Thomasson herself earlier showed (Thomason 1980: 364).

riod and area, there would not have been the correct environment for the changes under discussion to have taken place.

We do not know enough about the scribal practices of the time and their bearing upon our understanding of dialect. Saying that one text is 'Northern', another 'North Midlands' because of a variety of features which we know from later periods to have signified these distinctions does not necessarily mean the same thing in earlier times (Hogg 1988). It is not entirely certain that anyone — particularly in what was evidently a period of considerable linguistic flux — would have written as they spoke. Furthermore, we cannot make hasty decisions when we do not know the life history of the author(s), scribe(s) and texts in question, as the glosses to the *Rushworth Gospels* show (Campbell 1959: § 11, 19).

Yet even if their assumption were true, there is every reason to believe that the proposed Lincolnshire provenance of this primary dialect would have been within the central 'Scandinavian Belt' (Samuels 1989). Thus its proposed Midlands provenance need not demonstrate what they apparently believe it does.

(v) The 'great changes' so central to the analysis of other writers are, to them, little different from the fundamental grammatical and morphological changes to be found in other Germanic languages. Thus, they would claim — and they are not alone in this view — that English is, in effect, no different from the other languages either in scope or nature of linguistic change (Thomasson and Kaufman 1988: § 9.8.6.3 and § 9.8.9).[5] It would seem unlikely that all the Germanic languages were the products of creolisation. In this they are in line with Burchfield, who suggests 'native' solutions for the 'simplification' (although there are problems with some of the arguments he employs) (Burchfield 1985: 13-14).

It is certainly true that with the exception of Modern High German in its written standard form and Modern Icelandic, a high degree of grammatical 'simplification' has taken place in all Germanic dialects (Lass 1987: 330-1). On practically no occasion has the complete inherited system been preserved; indeed on one notable occasion, Afrikaans, the 'degeneration' has proceeded to a greater degree than with English (Holm 1988/9: II, 338-52). There are also other indications that English is not alone in its developmental process. Old Norse had more distinct number forms with the present indicative verb and a more distinctive case system than Old English had. None of the standard Continental Norse languages has preserved anything but the most 'fossilised' verb

[5] This concept no doubt stems from the same perceptions as that spoken of in Sapir (1921: 144 ff.) as 'drift'.

number or noun case distinctions (Skautrup 1947: 144 ff.; Wessén 1956: § 75-80; and Seip 1971: 224 ff., 356 ff., 394 ff.). Yet with both Afrikaans and Continental Norse situations not dissimilar to that spoken about above can be envisaged.

Afrikaans appears initially to have been the result of a genuine enough creole developed in the Cape in social intercourse between people of different ethnolinguistic backgrounds — and particularly those of Dutch and Khoi (Hottentot), and possibly Malay, heritages. This is not the ancestor of Modern Standard Afrikaans, however, which — in a development not dissimilar to that discussed in this paper — seems to have derived from a combination of this new creole and more 'traditional' forms of Dutch learned in Church and School and used as the language of government at least until the loss of the Cape to Britain in the early nineteenth century (Trudgill 1983; Trudgill 1989; and Holm 1988/9: II, 338-52).

More controversially, the level of simplification in the Continental Norse dialects could well be the result of the tension felt between them and the Low German of the Hansa merchants who were so dominant in later Medieval Scandinavia (Wührer 1954; Dahlberg 1954/6; Haugen 1976: § 5.2; Ureland 1986; and Ureland 1989). Similar phenomena can also be postulated for the Germanic *Sprachinseln* found south of the Alps in predominantly Italian- or Slovenian-speaking territory (Markey 1988: 371, n.6).

Yet it would be too neat to claim that all of the 'simplification' to be found in the Germanic Languages is due to developments analogous to that proposed for English. Dutch and Low German, relatively unaffected by pressures similar to those discussed above, have undergone nearly as many developments in their grammatical systems (van Loey 1954: § 83-4). Indeed, even Modern High German has not been immune to some of the levellings we have been discussing, particularly in its spoken forms (Barbour and Stevenson 1990: § 5.5). One point that could be made with these varieties is, however, that it is one thing to simplify a system, to have two grammatical genders instead of three, for instance; it is another to have a system which bears but scant resemblance to that of the ancestral dialects; only English and Afrikaans (and to a lesser extent Continental Norse) have developed in such a direction.

Further, the main point which distances English from the other Germanic dialects is the speed with which the changes took place. In so far as we can tell, since many of the languages under discussion were in at least partial eclipse at vital moments, the changes in the Continental West Germanic Languages at least were quite gradual. In English the 'great change' might have taken a few centuries, but in certain dialects — even given the conservatism of

script — the developments involved might take only a few generations: a classic example of which being the speed of change seen in the final hands of the *Peterborough Chronicle*.

In fact, much of the emotion involved in this debate over the typological status of English may come from an over-reliance on terminology which is not entirely appropriate to the situation at hand. Certainly, the same accusation could be pointed at this paper also. I would therefore like to step back and consider the argument from another point of view. Much of what follows is not original with me[6]; many of the emphases and connections are.

4. The koinëid hypothesis

Let us imagine a fairly peaceful co-existence in the North Country between speakers of two separate but nonetheless very closely related languages. Whether Norse and English are mutually intelligible is, naturally, impossible to say, since there is evidence for both this view and the opposing one (Fellows Jensen 1980: 187), but there is sufficient understanding for the common 'bones' of the ancestral language to be felt — as it still can be, albeit to a much more restricted extent. Elementary communication at the very least, based upon this perceived kinship, is possible. In order to facilitate this, much grammatical simplification would be involved, primarily because of the large areas in which Old Norse and English were morphologically incompatible. A particularly thorny example of this can be seen when we compare the Old Norse and Old English for the relatively commonplace 'the man had two sons':

Old English: *se mann hæfde twegen suna*

Old Norse: *maðrinn (manninn) hafði tva sonu.*

Even if we recognise the fact that the dialects shown are literary varieties, with all that entails, and that Old Norse is of a considerably later period than the Viking Norse imported into England, we can still see the considerable ingenuity in morphological analysis needed to see (or hear) the connection. At this point, a doubtless unconscious decision was made about what was central, what peripheral to the system (Dones et al. 1966). As can be seen in later varieties, these decisions gradually set adrift certain features of the ancestral language, such as grammatical gender and case, while concentrating (and often simplifying) other features, such as word order. The problem is that once one feature (say, case-distinctive morphology) becomes peripheralised, and is eventually jettisoned as unwieldy or ambiguous, other originally central features which relied upon this now peripheralised set (such as grammatical gen-

---

6 I would single out Jespersen 1938: §§57-80, Naomi Baron 1971: 113-40 and Trudgill (in particular 1983) for especial mention.

der) are inclined to follow them to the periphery (Vachek 1980: 373). This process is continued, as we will see, until a new status quo of a largely coherent system is achieved.

Time passes, and the nature of the situation creates families where one parent is from one language community, one from the other (see above). The children of such a union will grow up not so much in a bilingual situation, as, more likely, in one in which this 'bare bones' language is used for day-to-day communication within the home. This tendency is also repeated and amplified beyond the home because of the relatively low status of this phenomenon within the community as a whole. The situation would also be exacerbated by the nature of child language acquisition.

As has long been recognised, the earliest years of speech are those in which the most marked variation from the adult norm — often in a simplifying direction — is present (Baron 1971; Romaine 1989). As Hooper has pointed out, those morphemes which are on the periphery of a grammatical system are the first to disappear (or be 'swallowed' by the forces of analogy) when a child is learning a language (Hooper 1980): in the case of Present-Day English, this is often the strong verbs. In earlier times nominal, adjectival and pronominal morphology were particularly under threat. In general, these phenomena are 'ironed out' in the day-to-day contact between children and adults.

But in the situation we are discussing the adults themselves speak what we can assume to be a low status variety in which they themselves do not have much confidence, and are not in general aware of anything approaching a literary form of either of the source languages. It does seem to be the case that in diglossic situations the Low variety changes more rapidly than does the High (Fasold 1987: 37). Under those circumstances it would not be surprising if some of the features of the 'childish' variety were carried on into the next generation's adult variety. This would particularly be the case if, as has been suggested, some of these phenomena were in accord with developments in their parent's idiolects. For instance, in the German, and in particular Dutch, of the descendants of immigrants to Australia we can see precisely these phenomena taking place. A lack of confidence in their language by the adult population is matched and amplified by childish variation — particularly since very few are now literate in the ancestral language (Clyne 1980). When a whole community begins to speak a combination of the separate eccentricities of various speakers, we can begin to talk not in terms of peculiarity, but rather variety.

It would probably be wrong to call this new variety *pidgin* or even *creole*. As we have seen, the 'distance travelled' between source language(s) and the eventual product is not really great enough, or consistent enough, for such a

lingua franca for the North of England.

It should be noted, however, that it would be unlikely for this to have been the form of language in use by writers in the North for a considerable period after this. Even if class-terminology is somewhat anachronistic for the period, it

---

[7] A term also used by Trudgill (1983: 105) and Poussa (1982). It should not be confused with the use of *koine* employed by Rot (1984).

is certainly useful for a discussion of this type. The new *koine* would have been of very Low prestige within a literate community with knowledge and respect for past forms and centralised language systems — no matter how vaguely understood. We might profitably compare the situation to that to be found in Switzerland until relatively recently, where a High variant, no matter how distant from the popular speech, would be preferred in script by those few who could read (Ferguson 1959).

Yet the actual spoken form of those reading and writing, whilst no doubt influenced by that of their script, would probably have been very different, and considerably closer to that of the new koine; we can see this in mistakes made and variants given in the gloss to the *Lindisfarne Gospels*. As seen elsewhere in diglossic situations, this is an example of 'seepage up' of originally low status usages (Abdulaziz Mkilifi 1978). We could see in this the first stage in a long running compromise of conservative and radical tendencies which would inevitably lead to an even wider koine (or koinëoid) which gradually included less and less of the original koine's 'simplification'.

5. Spread throughout English

The question must therefore be addressed — why should these relatively low status dialects affect the higher status dialects to the South? Why is it that two radically separate, if closely related, languages did not develop within England?

To answer this we must envisage the following. The original Northern koine came into contact with Midlands dialects whose fundamental tensions of ambiguity led them to import certain features of the koine which helped them in their dis-ambiguation process (although also often setting up new ambiguities for which new compromises had to be put forward). In time, these dialects would themselves transfer materials to more Southerly dialects. By dint of this, the initial koinëisation process between different languages was followed by a series of similar processes between dialects of the language itself. These new compromises cannot be termed koinës proper, however, primarily because the differences between the 'parental' dialects are not in general great enough to hinder large-scale comprehension, and the difference is therefore one of degree rather than nature. Furthermore, with one exception which will be discussed at some length in what follows, the 'semi-koinës' English developed in the Middle English period were never sufficiently stable in systemic terms to represent the developments postulated for the creation of koinës proper. For want of a better term, *koinëid* is preferred in this paper, basing its coinage upon the con-

ceptions inherent in *creoloid*. Highly significant to this development was the absence of an English-speaking ruling class whose inherent linguistic conservatism would have slowed down the developments discussed here even more — and might even have been able to halt them. Since English was partially 'submerged', a more laissez-faire attitude to the language came into play. In this we see the first indirect French influence on these processes.

Yet this staging, this gradualism, explains how a situation where rapid change was taking place towards the new, 'simplified', language should have taken so long to work through from North to South. It also explains why some of the more radical developments of the koine should have been retarded or even ignored as transfer followed transfer.

We might profitably compare this situation with that described for the South/Central Indian language Marathi by Southworth. He postulates a situation whereby the interference phenomena inherent in the contact between Indo-Aryan and Dravidian languages grew stronger as the Aryan invaders moved south through the sub-continent to the extent that Marathi (at the southernmost end of this continuum) shares many similarities with its Dravidian neighbours (Southworth 1971). We might extrapolate from this that Marathi is the result of a long chain of transmissions where interference phenomena increased in impact. This is, in essence, the mirror image of what we have here, where the interference phenomena (or the memory of them) lessen in impact as the chain of transmission extends.

A reasoning behind the spread — if in a mediated, mutated form — of the koinëised variety of English proposed above may even be found in the universal simplification to be found in all the Germanic languages (albeit to a greater or lesser degree), which Thomasson and Kaufman used to question the phenomenon's existence (see p. 26 above). The very changes which had happened so rapidly and radically in the North of England may have been analogous to similar — if considerably lesser — tensions and ambiguities in more Southerly dialects. This is similar to the situation reported for Estonian by Maandi, where 'radical' features in the Estonian of refugees to Sweden (presumably quickened by contact with the dominant Swedish) and their descendants are matched by lesser tendencies in dialects spoken in Estonia itself (Maandi 1989: 239).

We can therefore envisage spread of the new forms and structures in an attempt to deal with these ambiguities. We might also envisage situations where a combination of the force for change from the North and that from the lesser Southern source would inevitably lead to the crystallisation of what can only be termed 'conservative radicalism', a stage where an attempt was made to retain the fundamental distinctions deemed necessary for the language, without the ambiguities caused by it. This is in line with Kury≈owicz's 5th Formula:

> Pour rétablir une différence d'ordre central la langue abandonne une différence d'ordre plus marginal
> (Kurylowicz 1949: 31; see also Schuh 1980; Millar 1995; and Millar [in preparation]).

For instance, the 'new' usages which developed in the Midlands in the Middle Ages were not necessarily those of the North. It might be suggested, in fact, that the importation of new solutions to problems from elsewhere led to new imbalances within the system, and that a type of calque formation might have been preferred under certain circumstances. For instance, because of developing ambiguities between the Old English third person singular present indicative and the plural, the new Northern *-s* form was borrowed by the Midlands dialects into the 3rd person present indicative singular of the verb. But the native *-en* (itself not the original form used in this position) was preferred to Northern *-es* in the plural, thus preserving some degree of subject/verb concord. Yet this has been, as we will see, one of the most difficult distinctions for Modern English to retain. It might be argued that once the seeds of possible ambiguity are sown, they cannot but bear fruit, at least somewhere in the system (Bryan 1921; Mustanoja 1960: 481-82; Stein 1986; McIntosh 1989; Samuels 1989; and Markus 1990: § 6.7.e).

Another example of this 'conservative radicalism' may well be found in sub-systems such as that envisaged by Charles Jones as a means of retaining some degree of the paradigmatic basis of the grammatical gender system — although not, strangely enough, of grammatical gender itself in any meaningful sense — in order to maintain the morphological apparatus of case-distinction (Jones 1967a and 1967b; Jones 1983; and Jones 1988). Yet again on this occasion the force of the Northern change was too great for the eventual abnegation of such stopgap measures to be avoided. In general, as has been postulated, this sub-system conservatism was too unstable and riven with ambiguity to survive.

But in the written material dating from this period it is rare indeed to find a text from South of the Humber which demonstrates a fully consistent example of some level of this change. It is quite normal to find examples of contradictory (and often anachronistic) elements in the same hand. How could such a level of variation and systemic alteration be possible?

Perhaps we are looking at the situation from the point of view of the rather monolithic nature of modern written standard varieties. In semi-literate or illiterate situations, where the language which is in the process of swift change lacks prestige in the community as a whole, variation and change are the rule rather than the exception (see above). If we assume for the moment that a text

from this period represents the actual system of the period,[8] we might see evidence of processes discussed by Labov. He suggests that after struggling to preserve the 'main points' of two competing sub-systems, and thus engendering considerable ambiguity between the competing systems, a language variety will jettison the less wieldy variant (Labov 1994: 84). This may also explain the rather piecemeal nature of the developments involved — forms from the North being borrowed as and when they proved useful (Samuels 1989b: 65-7; and Werner: 381).

6. A re-assessment of the French influence

It has long been accepted that the mass borrowing of French lexis into English in the late Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries is due to the death of Anglo-Norman at the time — with its speakers — prestigious in the society as a whole — carrying with them many words to do with the (mainly French) world of High Culture and 'Science'. Yet high status languages and their speakers have been absorbed elsewhere without having such an impact on the newly resurgent majority language.

As an example of this, let us look at Germany in the period from the end of the Thirty Years War to the Revolutionary Wars — a period not much shorter than the French-speaking near-eclipse of English. Although there are several dissimilarities between the two situations (not least the fact that literacy was considerably more prevalent in Germany than it had been in England), there are more in the way of similarities. Thus, while in general the native ruling class of Germany was not replaced by a French one (although this did take place in areas of the Rhineland), the native ruling class was Francophile, Francisised and sometimes even Francophone rather than Teutophone by choice. The civil service of the various states were also often at least partially Francophone, because of that language's importance in cultural and diplomatic terms. Furthermore, there was not such a well-established concept of 'Germany' at the time as there was of 'England' after the Norman Conquest (Waterman 1966: 138; Fulbrock 1990: 66-9, 74-5).

Of course there is a considerable French presence in German lexis today, but, despite all the above, French does not have anything like the influence over German that it does over English. Certainly this lack is connected to the nationalist reaction to French culture triggered by the final stages of the Napoleonic Wars, and prolonged by Franco-German animosities until the 1950's. Nevertheless there was an even more prolonged — and often more bitter —

[8] This is a little dangerous given the archaising tendencies found among many texts of the time (Jack 1979: 325-6; Stanley 1969 and Stanley 1988).

breakdown in the relationship between France and England, and English still bears the earlier mark of the common cultural heritage. I do not wish to press this point too much, but it is possible to see the massive importation of French words into English as being analogous with the re-lexification which takes place when a creole begins to stabilise (Holm 1988/9: I, 46-8; Todd 1990: 31ff.). In other words, the new koinëoids were perfectly feasible from the point of view of structure; what may well have held them back from complete functional applicability was a lack of vocabulary for various concepts and a concomitant lack of a consistent means of word formation. Despite the surface competition between native and French lexical items, I would argue that something exceptional is happening in English lexis at the time.

Certainly the importation of French vocabulary has much to do with new concepts, prestige values, and language death (for French in England): but in such great numbers? This suggests a genuine need. It is perhaps worth noting at this point that Old English and Norse differ fundamentally in the means by which they form words. Even today, Icelandic does not form compounds by the addition of prefixes. Old English used this as one of its primary means of word-formation (Baugh and Cable 1993: 62-5). In the proposed koine of English and Norse this formation-process would probably have been among those felt necessary to be jettisoned (although, again, this would have been a development fought against for a considerable period of time as the koinëoids spread and altered, thus perhaps explaining the lexical competition) (Sauer 1992; Baugh and Cable 1993: 177-8).

Another example of semantic problems caused by systemic breakdown is when, as described by O'Neil, the use of grammatical case-realisation in primarily semantic rather than grammatical situations (i.e. with the prepositions, the verbs etc.) is rapidly jettisoned due to ambiguity (O'Neil 1982). When case as a functionally active marker disappeared in English, these subtle semantic distinctions must disappear. This might also explain the purpose of some of the importations from French. They were actually brought in to fill semantic gaps created by the swift grammatical breakdown. This pressure would have been felt particularly in a situation where case-breakdown was also encouraging the proliferation of prepositional realisation, thus exacerbating an already fraught situation (Mustanoja 1960: 348 et passim).

At the same time, such a large importation of new material might well present problems all of its own to what was left of the inherited systems — particularly case and grammatical gender. In texts which trace their genesis to the early thirteenth century, native nouns much outweigh those of French origin. Certainly, due to the tensions developing even in the more conservative dia-

Thomasson and Kaufman make much of this (1988: § 9.8.11). Yet unlike the preceding period the grammatical systems are not that dissimilar. By the time of Shakespeare, certainly, the progressive and the *do*-periphrasis were on the rise in London English (Samuels 1972: 173-6). Furthermore, Chaucer still used at least some remnants of the inherited endings-system, as did many of his Southern contemporaries. Yet apart from that — very little.

In fact, even this last point is interesting. In earlier forms of London English, such as that realised in the Auchinleck Manuscript, the *-e* appears not to be pronounced or have a grammatical function. Certainly, if it was pronounced, then a great many English poets did not know how to scan. But Chaucer and his contemporaries did use it, and generally in a grammatical way. It is somewhat unusual for a change to render a usage moribund, only for it to be resur-

rected in the following generation (in a consistent, rather than self-consciously archaistic way) (Samuels 1989a: 9).

Clearly Michael Samuels has a point when he suggests that this change within London English (along with many others) is due to the alteration in levels of immigration of affluent people to London in the preceding generations. Before around 1350, the main source for London had been the East Anglian counties. After that, this source was equalled and even surpassed by the Central Midlands (Samuels 1972: 165-70 and 1989b: 67-78). But why should people of undoubted London extraction have taken on grammatical features if they did not have vestiges of the original system themselves? It would surely not be too surprising to suggest that a conservative reaction to what was considered too radical a change could have started up to the south of London — or even in one of the possibly class-based, regionally conditioned, competing dialects within London itself (for which we have phonological evidence). It is worth noting that Kentish, the southern dialect which lies as a bulwark behind London, is the most conservative dialect of all in the late Middle English period, as seen in its preservation of some of the elements of the grammatical-gender marking apparatus well into the fourteenth century (Gradon 1979: 80, note 1). The fact that the dialect of the newly prestigious immigrants was welcomed would have been at least partially because certain of its features were conservative, yet also contained features which could respond to the ambiguities of the more conservative dialects.

Yet this compromise and attempt to shore up the more conservative features of what was mutating from a Southern to a Midlands dialect would fail within a generation of Chaucer's death. This is yet another example of the problems essentially peripheral usages have of remaining functional within a system. One of the major grammatical functions which *-e* had in late 14th-century London English was to distinguish between strong and weak adjectives (Samuels 1989a). But the primary purpose of the distinction (as seen in other Germanic languages of today) is to provide gender and case information with the 'strong' paradigm. This function had been rendered obsolete by earlier peripheralisations in English.

8. The developing standard: the final koinëid?

In the compromises which we find in the early fifteenth century we see what might be called the final koinëoidisation: final not because the language had reached a stage of perfection, but rather because many of its features were ossified by standardisation.

But there must be reasons why it was more acceptable (and has proved to be far longer-lived) than those which came before. One way of thinking about this is to look at a map of England. We can see that by the time at which incipient standardisation took place, the Northern influence, which I have classified as a koinëisation process, had reached as far south as it was going to get, and had been adopted — in its mediated form — by what was fast becoming the prestige variety of the language. With one exception, which we will come to very shortly, many of the grammatical innovations which post-dated this geographical completion — such as the *do*-periphrasis, probably from the West — were from other locations.

9. The consistency of some non-standard realisation: a koinëid too far?

One final point needs to be made, however. From the very earliest stages of Norse contact evidence exists for an at least partial breakdown in the relationship between subject and number in the present tense of the verb (this went earlier with most verbs in the past tense). As has already been pointed out, the attempts to circumvent this breakdown differed from area to area,[9] but confusion and ambiguity there certainly was.

In Southern English, by the fifteenth century, there was a delicate situation where the verb paradigm was attacked by the phonological breakdown of many of the *Ablaut* distinctions, by the 'weakening' of many verbs (itself partially inspired by the nature of the koinëoids), and by the importation of many foreign polysyllabic verbs which did not fit the English system terribly well. In order to counteract this, the prestige London variety imported the *do*-periphrasis in its full extent (Samuels 1972: 73-6). Yet there is evidence from the same time that another solution was reached for the present indicative — at the very least a partial jettisoning of subject/verb concord. We can see that in informal situations even in high prestige varieties the 'rules' which we now follow assiduously were not kept in anything like a consistent way until at least the eighteenth century (Milroy and Milroy 1985: 39; Edwards 1993: § 7.2.3). What must it have been like in less prestige variants?

The answer is here in front of us. Nearly everywhere we go in the English-speaking world — especially those areas which were colonised after standardisation — low prestige varieties demonstrate a very tenuous link with verb/subject concord. Certainly in some places this can be derived from the

[9] This can still be seen in present-day varieties (see Macafee 1983: 50; Harris 1993: § 5.3.3).

high level of non-native speakers at certain times in certain areas, most noticeably North America (Fasold 1972). But in other places, such as Australia or American Appalachia, where until relatively recent and highly literate times the primary linguistic source was Anglophone, elements of the same simplifications are found in low prestige varieties as are found in low prestige immigrant varieties in North America.[10] It is tempting to see this as the final development of the koinëoidisation.

The arrival of an at least partial loss of subject/verb concord in the South-East of England as a solution to ambiguity must have been just too late to prevent its solely non-standard status. Standardisation and printing practice had ossified the usage of the educated. It is tantalising to imagine what would have happened if the process of standardisation had taken place two centuries earlier — would we have retained some of the original case and grammatical gender-system in Standard English? The problem with this, of course, is that English would then have shattered in two. There is no way in which it could have survived when some of its varieties had such a central typological feature, some had not. A final compromise which might at first seem to have come about purely by chance may therefore have some level of raison d'être underlying it.

10. Conclusion

English is not a creole, but it certainly exhibits some of the features which we would define as creoloid, even if it would be difficult to argue with the idea that a great many of these features would have developed independently of as traumatic an event as creolisation. Yet the speed with which the 'new' features were taken on by varieties of the language as it developed argues against the 'natural development' concept in its entirety.

Nor is Present-Day English a creoloid. That term should, it has been argued, be confined in use to languages (such as Afrikaans) where the intial contact was between unrelated languages. It might be better, therefore, if the word *koinëid* were employed instead. As this paper has suggested, English has been the product of a number of separate grammatical compromises between

[10] See Wolfram and Christian 1976 and Eisikovits 1991. I am not suggesting from this that all immigrant Anglophones to these territories were standard speakers. On the contrary I would assume that they would primarily have spoken their own dialect, but had had some contact with the standard (perhaps in church). To back this up, it is worth noting that North America did not develop its own independent standard, and that little in the way of 'old country' variation survived a generation. Confusingly, this process has been termed *koinëisation* by Peter Trudgill (Trudgill 1986: chapter 4).

or within closely related varieties which are comparable to the koinës seen in various places in the world in both past and present, if of a rather more *ad hoc* nature. This may well represent a similar process to that seen for late Medieval Continental Norse.

Yet because the first koine was one created within the unusual relationships in the North of England after the Scandinavian migration, it exhibited a higher degree of creoloid tendencies than the present standard. Certain of the analogical features of this and later varieties may even have led to changes in the word-formation patterns of the language so great that the mass importation of French words into the language in the late thirteenth century is comparable with the re-lexification of post-creole languages. The koinës, or koinëoids, which followed are not as clear-cut, however. On the one hand they are successful in transmitting into the new variety the grammatical features of the preceding koine deemed necessary to reduce ambiguity. On the other, they simultaneously slowed down or even stopped those features of the preceding compromise which were not considered necessary for the new system. That this often failed may be put down to the fundamental changes which were inherent even in those varieties relatively untouched by Scandinavian contacts. A critical mass of change must have been necessary before the process itself could be halted. But as compromise followed compromise, less and less of the original creoloid nature would be preserved in the new koinëoid.

It can therefore be argued that the sometimes disparaged Scandinavian influence upon the English Language was the unintentional primary trigger for the greatest grammatical changes ever to affect the latter. This change is, however, not to be seen so much in actual borrowing from a source language to a receptor, as it is in the creative friction between two close, but separate, varieties.[11]

References

Abdulaziz Mkilifi, M.H. 1978. Triglossia and Swahili-English bilingualism in Tanzania. In Fishman 1978: 129-52.

Adam, L. 1883. Les idiomes négro-aryen et malé-aryen: essai dʼhybridologie linguistique. Paris: Maissoneuve.

---

[11] This article develops some of the features of two papers given in May 1996, at the Dictionary of Old English, University of Toronto, Canada, and the 31st International Congress on Medieval Studies, University of Michigan, Kalamazoo, USA. I am very grateful to all who attended for their many useful comments and criticisms.

I would also like to thank Daniel Donoghue, Angelika Lutz, Ilse Wischer and Marion C. Millar for reading and criticising this piece during its composition. That does not mean to say that they agree with all of the conclusions expressed herein.

Andersen, Henning. 1988. Center and periphery: adoption, diffusion, and spread. In Fisiak 1988: 39-83.

Anderson, John (ed.) 1982. Language Form and Linguistic Variation. Papers dedicated to Angus McIntosh. Amsterdam: John Benjamins B.V.

Arngart, O. 1947/8. Some Aspects of the Relation between the English and the Danish Element in the Danelaw. *Studia Neophilologica* 20: 73-87.

Bailey, Charles James N. and Karl Maroldt. 1977. The French Lineage of English. In Meisel 1977: 21-51.

Barbour, Steven and Patrick Stevenson. 1990. *Variation in German: a critical introduction to German Sociolinguistics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Baron, N.S. 1971. A reanalysis of English Grammatical Gender. *Lingua* 27: 113-40.

Bareiro Saguier, Rubén (ed.) 1980. *Literatura Guarani del Paraguay*. Caracas: Biblioteca Ayacucho.

Baugh, Albert C. and Thomas Cable. 1993. *A History of the English Language*. 4th edn. London: Routledge.

Blake, N.F. and Charles Jones (eds.) 1984. *English Historical Linguistics: Studies in Development*. CECTAL Conference Papers Series, No. 3. Sheffield: The Centre for English Cultural Tradition and Language, University of Sheffield.

de Bray, R.G.A. 1951. *Guide to the Slavonic Languages*. London: J.M. Dent & Sons.

Breivik, Leiv Egil and Ernst Håkon Jahr (eds.). 1989. *Language Change. Contributions to the Study of its Causes*. Trends in Linguistics Studies and Monographs 43. Berlin and New York: Mouton de Gruyter.

Bryan, W.F. 1921. The Midland Present Plural Indicative Ending -e(n). *Modern Philology* 18: 457-73.

Burchfield, Robert. 1985. *The English Language*. Oxford: Oxford University Pres.

Cameron, Kenneth. 1971. Scandinavian Settlement in the territory of the Five Boroughs: the place-name evidence. Part III, the Grimston hybrids. In Clemoes and Hughes 1971: 147-63.

Campbell, Alasdair. 1959. *Old English Grammar*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Cheshire, Jenny (ed.) 1991. English around the world. Sociolinguistic perspectives. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Clemoes, P. and K. Hughes (eds.). 1971. England before the conquest. Studies in primary sources presented to Dorothy Whitelock. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Clyne, Michael. 1980. Typology and Grammatical Convergence Among Related Languages In Contact. *ITL Review of Applied Linguistics* 38: 49-50, pp.23-34.

Coleman, Julie. 1995. The chronology of French and Latin loan words in English. *Transactions of the Philological Society* 9:, 95-124.

Dahlberg, T. 1954/56. Das Niederdeutsche im skandinavischen Raum. *Wirkendes Wort* 6: 193-9.

Denison, David. 1993. *English Historical Syntax*. Longman Linguistics Library. Harlow: Longman.

Dieth, E. 1955. Hips: A geographical contribution to the ‘she’puzzle. *ES* 36: 208-17.

Dominigue, Nicole Z. 1977. Middle English: Another Creole? *Journal of Creole Studies*: 89-100.

Dones, F., K. Haraek, V. Skalicka, P. Trost and J. Vachek (eds). 1966. Les problemes du centre et de la peripherie du systeme de la langue. *Travaux Linguistiques de Prague* 2. Prague: Academia, Editions de l'Academie Tchéoslovaque des Sciences.

Dorian, Nancy (ed.). 1989. Investigating obsolescence. *Studies in the Social and Cultural Foundations of Language* 7. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Edwards, Viv. 1993. The grammar of Southern British English. In Milroy and Milroy 1993: 214-38.

Einenkel, Eugen. 1906. Die dänischen Elemente in der Syntax der englischen Sprache. *Anglia* 29: 120-8.

Eisikovits, Edina. 1991. Variation in subject-verb agreement in Inner Sydney English. In Cheshire 1991: 235-255.

Ekwall, Eilert. 1910. Einige skandinavische Flexionsformen im Mittelenglischen. *Anglia* 21: 47-54.

Ekwall, Eilert. 1963. Selected Papers. *Lund Studies in English* 33. Lund: C.W.K. Gleerup.

Fasold, R. 1972. *Tense Marking in Black English: A Linguistic and Social Analysis*. Arlington VI: Center for Applied Linguistics.

Fasold, Ralph. 1987. *The Sociolinguistics of Society*. Revised edn. Oxford: Blackwell.

Feagin, C. 1979. Variation and Change in Alabama English: A Sociolinguistic Study in the White Community. Washington DC: Georgetown University Press.

Fellows Jensen, G. 1980. Conquests and the place-names of England, with special reference to the Viking settlements. Norna-Rapporter 17: 192-209.

Ferguson, C.A. 1959. Diglossia. *Word* 15: 325-40.

Fine, John V.A., Jr. 1985. The Early Medieval Balkans. A Critical Survey from the Sixth to the Late Twelfth Century. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Fishman, Joshua (ed.) 1978. Advances in the Study of Societal Multilingualism. The Hague: Mouton.

Fisiak, Jacek (ed.) 1980. *Historical Morphology*. The Hague: Mouton de Gruyter.

Fisiak, Jacek (ed.) 1984. *Historical Syntax.* (Trends in Linguistics Studies and Monographs 23) Berlin, New York, Amsterdam: Mouton de Gruyter.

Fisiak, Jacek (ed.) 1988. *Historical Dialectology. Regional and Social*. (Trends in Linguistics Studies and Monographs 37) Berlin, New York, Amsterdam: Mouton de Gruyter.

Fulbrock, Mary. 1990. *A Concise History of Germany*. 2nd edn. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Gambhir, S.K. 1981. The East Indian speech community in Guyana: a sociolinguistic study with special reference to koine formation. Unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Pennsylvania.

Godden, Malcolm, Douglas Gray and Terry Hoad (eds.) 1994. *From Anglo-Saxon to Early Middle English*. Studies Presented to E.G. Stanley. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Görlach, Manfred. 1986. Middle English – a creole? In Kastovsky and Szwedek 1986: 327-344.

Gradon, Pamela (ed.) 1979. Dan Michel's *Ayenbite of Inwyt*. Introduction, Notes and Glossary. *EETS* os 278.

Hancock, Ian. 1984. Shelta and Polari. In Trudgill 1984: 384-401.

Haden, Ernest F, and Eugene A. Jolial. 1940. Le genre grammatical des substantifs en Franco-Canadien emprunté à l'Anglais. *PMLA* 55: 839-54.

Harris, John. 1993. The grammar of Irish English. In Milroy and Milroy 1993: 131-86.

Haugen, Einar. 1976. *The Scandinavian Languages: An Introduction*. London: Faber & Faber.

Hines, John. 1991. Scandinavian English: A Creole In Context. In Ureland and Broderick 1991: 403-27.

Hogg, Richard M. 1988. On the impossibility of Old English dialectology. In Kastovsky and Bauer 1988: 183-203.

Holm, John. 1988-9 *Pidgins and Creoles. Volume I Theory and Structure*. Volume II Reference Survey. Cambridge Language Surveys. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hooper, Joan Bybee. 1980. Child morphology and morphophonemic change. In Fisiak 1980: 155-87.

Hymes, Dell (ed.) 1971. *Pidginization and Creolization of Languages*. Proceedings of a Conference Held at the University of the West Indies, Mona, Jamaica, April 1968. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Jack, G.B. 1979. Archaizing in the Nero Version of the Ancrene Wisse. *NM* 80: 325-6.

Janda, Richard D. 1980. On the Decline of Declensional Systems: The Overall Loss of OE Nominal Case Inflections and the ME Reanalysis of -ES as HIS. In Traugott, Labrum and Shepherd 1980: 243-52.

Jankofsky, Klaus P. (ed.) 1992. *The South English Legendary. A Critical Assessment*. Tübingen: Francke Verlag.

Jespersen, Otto. 1938. *Growth and Structure of the English Language*. 9th edn. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Jones, Charles. 1967a. The Functional Motivation of Linguistic Change. *ES* 48: 97-111.

Jones, Charles. 1967b. The Grammatical Category of Gender in early Middle English. *ES* 48: 289-305.

Jones, Charles. 1983. Determiners and Case-Marking in Middle English: a Localist Approach. *Lingua* 59: 331-43.

Jones, Charles. 1988. *Grammatical Gender in English 950-1250*. London: Croom Helm.

Kastovsky, Dieter and Aleksander Szwedek (eds.). 1986. *Linguistics across Historical and Geographical Boundaries. In Honour of Jacek Fisiak on the Occasion of His Fiftieth Birthday*. Volume 1. Linguistic Theory and Historical Linguistics. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Kastovsky, D. and G. Bauer (in collaboration with J. Fisiak) (eds.). 1988. *Luick Revisited*. Tübingen: Narr.

Kirch, Max S. 1959. Scandinavian Influence on English Syntax. *PMLA* 74: 503-10.

Knobloch, Johann (ed.) 1953. *Ammann-Festgabe*. 1. Teil. Innsbrucker Beiträge zur Kulturwissenschaft 1. Innsbruck: Selbstverlag des Sprachwissenschaftlichen Seminars der Universität Innsbruck.

Kühnelt, Harro H. 1953. Die wichtigsten Veränderungen des Englischen, bedingt durch die Normaneneroberung. In Knobloch 1953: 53-72.

König, Ekkehard and Johan van der Auwera. 1994. *The Germanic Languages*. Routledge Language Family Descriptions. London: Routledge.

Kury≈owicz, Jerzy. 1949. La nature des proces dits ‘analogiques’. *Acta Linguistica* 5: 15-37.

Labov, William. 1994. *Principles of Linguistic Change*. Volume 1: Internal Factors. Language in Society 20. Oxford: Blackwell.

Laing, Margaret (ed.) 1989. *Middle English Dialectology*. Essays on some principles and problems. Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press.

Lass, Roger. 1987. *The Shape of English*. London: Dent.

van Loey, A. 1954. *Schönfelds Historische Grammatica van het Nederlands*. Klankleer, Vormleer en Woordvorming. 5th edn. Zutphen: W.J. Thieme & Cie.

Macafee, C. 1983. *Glasgow*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

McIntosh, Angus. 1989. Present Indicative Plural Forms in the Later Middle English of the North Midlands. In Laing 1989: 116-22.

Maandi, Katrin. 1989. Estonian among immigrants in Sweden. In Dorian 1989: 227-41.

Markey, Thomas L. 1988. Ladin and other relic language forms in the eastern Alpine region. In Fisiak 1988: 357-75.

Markus, Manfred. 1990. *Mittelenglisches Studienbuch*. Tübingen: Francke Verlag.

Meillet, Antoine. 1926. *Linguistique historique et linguistique générale*. Paris: Honore Champion.

Meisel, Jürgen M. 1977. Langues en contact – Pidgins – Creoles – Language in contact. Tübingen: Narr.

Millar, Robert McColl. 1995. Ambiguity in Ending and Form. Reinterpretation' in the Demonstrative Systems of Laȝamon's Brut.' *NM* 96: 145-68.

Millar, Robert McColl (in preparation). From System Collapse System Birth. The Demonstrative Pronouns of English from the Tenth to the Fourteenth Centuries and the Development of the Definite Article.

Milroy, James and Lesley Milroy. 1985. Authority in Language. Investigating language prescription and standardisation. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Milroy, James and Lesley Milroy (eds.) 1993. Real English. The Grammar of English Dialects in the British Isles. London: Longman.

Mitchell, Bruce. 1994. The Englishness of Old English. In Godden, Gray and Hoad 1994: 163-81.

Mladenov, Stefan. 1929. *Geschichte der bulgarischen Sprache*. Berlin and Leipzig: Walter de Gruyter & Co.

Moleas, Wendy. 1989. *The Development of the Greek Language*. Bristol: Bristol Classical Press.

Mustanoja, Tauno F. 1960. *A Middle English Syntax*. Part I. Parts of Speech. Memoires de la Societé Néophilologique de Helsinki XXIII. Helsinki: Neophilologique.

Nelde, Peter H., P. Sture Ureland and Iain Clarkson (eds.). 1986. *Language Contact in Europe*. Proceedings of the Working Groups 12 and 13 at the XIIIth International Congress of Linguists, August 29-September 4, 1982, Tokyo. Linguistische Arbeiten 168. Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag.

van Ness, Silke. 1994. Pennsylvania German. In König and van der Auwera: 420-38.

Nida, E.A. and H.W. Fehderau. 1970. Indigenous Pidgins and Koines. *International Journal of American Linguistics* 32: 146-55.

O'Neil, Wayne. 1982. Simplifying the Grammar of English. In Anderson 1982, 285-306.

OED2 = Simpson, J.A. and E.S.C. Weiner. 1989. *Oxford English Dictionary*. 2nd edn. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Palmer, Leonard R. 1980. *The Greek Language*. London: Faber and Faber.

Poussa, Patricia. 1982. The Evolution of Early Standard English: The Creolization Hypothesis. *Studia Anglica Posnaniensia* 14: 69-85.

Romaine, Suzanne. 1984. Relative-Clause Formation Strategies in Germanic. In Fisiak 1984: 437-70.

Romaine, Suzanne. 1989. The role of children in linguistic change. In Breivik and Jahr 1989: 199-225.

Rot, Sandor. 1984. Inherent Variability and Linguistic Interference of Anglo-Old Scandinavian and Anglo-Norman French Language Contacts in the Formation of Grammatical Innovations in late Old English and Middle English. In Blake and Jones 1984: 67-86.

Samarin, W.J. 1971. Salient and substantive pidginization. In Hymes 1971: 117-40.

Samuels, M.L. 1972. Linguistic Evolution with Special Reference to English. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Samuels, M.L. 1989a. Chaucerian Final ‘-E.’ In Smith 1989: 7-12.

Samuels, M.L. 1989b. Some Applications of Middle English Dialectology. In Laing 1989: 64-80.

Samuels, M.L. 1989c. The Great Scandinavian Belt. In Laing 1989: 106-115.

Sapir, Edward. 1921. *Language*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and World.

Sauer, Hans. 1992. Some Aspects of Word-Formation in the SEL. In Jankofsky 1992: 120-39.

Sawyer, P.H. 1971. *The Age of the Vikings*. 2nd edn. London: Edward Arnold.

Schuh, Russel G. 1980. Paradigmatic Replacement. In Fisiak 1980: 349-58.

Seip, Didrik Arup (edited and extended by Laurits Saltveit). 1971. *Norwegische Sprachgeschichte*. Grundriss der Germanischen Philologie 19. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.

Siegel, Jeff. 1985. Koines and koineization. *Language in Society* 14: 357-79.

Skautrup, Peter. 1947. *Det Danske Sprogs Historie*. Vol II. Fra Unionsbrevet til Danske Lov. Copenhagen: Gyldendalske Boghandel.

Smith, J.J. (ed.) 1989. *The English of Chaucer and his contemporaries*. Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press.

Smith, J.J. (forthcoming) Some similarities between Scandinavian and Northern English, and their implications.

Southworth, Franklin C. 1971. Detecting Prior Creolization. An analysis of the historical origins of Marathi. In Hymes 1971: 255-73.

Stanley, E.G. 1969. Laȝamon’s Antiquarian Sentiments. *Medium Ævum* 38: 23-37.

Stanley, E.G. 1988. Karl Luick’s Man schrieb wie man sprach’and English Historical Philology. In Kastovsky and Bauer 1988: 311-34.

Stein, Dieter. 1986. Old English Northumbrian verb inflection revisited. In Kastovsky and Szwedek 1986: 637-50.

Thomason, Sarah Grey. 1980. Morphological instability, with and without language contact. In Fisiak 1980: 359-72.

Thomasson, Sarah Grey and Terrence Kaufman. 1988. *Language Contact, Creolization, and Genetic Linguistics*. Berkeley: Univeristy of California Press.

Thomson, George. 1960. *The Greek Language*. Cambridge: W. Heffer & Sons.

Todd, Loreto. 1990. *Pidgins and Creoles*. 2nd edn. London and New York: Routledge.

Traugott, Elizabeth Closs, Rebecca Labrum and Susan Shepherd (eds). 1980. *Papers from the 4th International Conference on Historical Linguistics*. Current Issues in Linguistic Theory 14. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Trudgill, Peter. 1983. *Language contact and language change*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Trudgill, Peter (ed.). 1984. *Language in the British Isles*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Trudgill, Peter. 1986. *Dialects in Contact*. (Language in Society 10) Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Trudgill, Peter. 1989. Contact and isolation in linguistic change. In Breivik and Jahr 1989: 227-37.

Ureland, P. Sture. 1986. Some Contact-Linguistic Structures in Scandinavian Languages. In Nelde, Ureland and Clarkson 1986: 31-79.

Ureland, P. Sture. 1989. Some contact structures in Scandinavian, Dutch and Raeto-Romansch: inner-linguistic and/or contact causes of language change. In Breivik and Jahr 1989: 239-76.

Ureland, P. Sture. and George Broderick (eds). 1991. *Language Contact in the British Isles*. Proceedings of the Eighth International Symposium on Language Contact in Europe, Douglas, Isle of Man, 1988. Linguistische Arbeiten 238. Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag.

Vachek, Josef. 1980. Problems of morphology seen from the structuralist and functionalist point of view. In Fisiak 1980: 373-81.

Waterman, John T. 1966. *A History of the German Language*. Seattle: University of Washington Press.

Werner, Otmar. 1991. The Incorporation of Old Norse Pronouns into Middle English. Suppletion by Loan. In Ureland and Broderick 1991: 369-401.

Wessén, Elias. 1956. Svensk Språkhistoria. Vol. III. *Grundlinjer till en historisk syntax*. Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell.

Wischer, Ilse (typescript). Internal versus External Factors in the Origin and Development of the English of-phrase as a Noun Modifier.

Wolfram, W. and Christian, D. 1976. *Appalachian English*. Arlington VI: Center for Applied Linguistics.

Wüest, Jakob. 1979. La dialectalisation de la Gallo-Romania. Problemes phonologiques. *Romanica Helvetica* 91. Berne: Éditions Francke.

Wührer, K. 1954. Der Einfluß des Deutschen auf die skandinavischen Sprachen. *Muttersprache*: 448-59.

What's the use of historical linguistics?
A question, a report and an invitation

Nikolaus Ritt

Last September, at a meeting of the European Society for the Study of English (ESSE), Olga Fischer, a historical English linguist from Amsterdam, and myself (also a historical English linguist, in case you might wonder) convened a workshop on the question what our discipline was actually good for and, how – if it was indeed good for something – historical English linguists might best live up to their task, both in research and in teaching. In this report on the event, I would like explain why we thought it necessary to face this question in its crudest and most general form, to sketch the opinions voiced at the workshop and to draw your attention to an internet site, in which the contributions and some results of the workshop can be easily accessed.

The main reason why we considered it vital for colleagues within our particular sub-discipline of English studies to reflect on the present status of our discipline was that in the curricula of many European English departments, historical linguistics has – during the last two or three decades – been increasingly marginalised, in some cases to the point of abolishment. Thus, at the English department of Copenhagen university, where Otto Jespersen produced his classic on *The growth and Structure of the English Language*, for example, historical linguistics has been removed from the core curriculum for some years; Amsterdam has only just abolished its MA course on English Historical Linguistics; and in Austria Vienna sports the last English department in which confrontation with the history of the language is obligatory for every student. So, in spite of the fact that there may be exceptions to the trend, it seems that the demand for historical linguistics is very much on the decline.

The reason for this appears to be simple. For better or for worse, academic communities are not these days blindly trusted with the definition of their own tasks (though I doubt they ever were). Instead, contemporary societies and governments tend to state rather unambiguously that they want something back for the money they invest in university research and education. And this seems to translate often – and rather unimaginatively, I might add – into more of the same, i.e. more money. Where the results produced by academic research and the skills acquired during university training cannot be directly translated into

economic wealth, they are expected at least to translate into things like a stronger army, a healthier workforce or more efficient legal institutions, because the roles these play in producing, protecting and distributing economic wealth are more or less generally acknowledged. Of course, while some faculties – such as rather obviously economics, medicine, law or science – don't find it particularly difficult to face this challenge, others, such as the humanities, tend to have a harder time, with the historical disciplines being under particular pressure. Now, English, as a subject taught at non-native universities, is relatively well off. After all, English is generally considered an 'important language', and there's a lot of business waiting to be done in it. The problem is that the kind of competence contemporary society seems to expect English departments to impart on their present students/customers and future tax paying patrons does not seem to depend on knowing much about the history of the language and related fields of knowledge at all. The stress is first and foremost on practical linguistic competence. If there is explicit demand for anything else, then it's didactic-pedagogic skills and possibly some kind of educated language awareness, both of which are arguably necessary if one wants not only to use English well but to be able to impart that competence to others. Some literature, finally, may be taken on board, but not because it's so essential or valuable in itself but more because the language in it is considered 'good' and, hey, a bit of 'culture' is a prestigious thing to have and won't do you any harm, if consumed in small doses. Simply put, English departments are expected to produce – in the most possibly efficient manner– a required quantity of efficient English teachers. And nobody seems to think that historical linguistics has much to contribute to that.

It is possible of course to take a detached view of such developments. After all societies typically change and what they expect from the academic institutions they fund may change as well. Therefore, it may also happen that some disciplines simply grow out demand, and there may not even be much more to that. Only this time it's historical linguistics' turn. – However, it seems to me, for a historical linguist to take such an attitude cannot really be considered stoic resignedness to the way of the world, but strikes me as a rather frivolous attitude. After all, either we are convinced that what we are doing is meaningful, or we are not. In the first case, if we have a point to make, we are obliged to make it, are we not, for who else could. In the second case, we had better ask ourselves why we do actually practice historical linguistics (and get paid for it on top of it), rather than turn our energies to more useful work.

I doubt, of course, that there are many colleagues out there who are not working on the assumption that what they are doing is meaningful. After all, we have been trained and employed to be historical linguists, and this seems to

prove that there is demand for the discipline, or doesn't it? As employees, we might prefer to think, it is not our job to question our employers' good sense. Also, most of us take such personal interest in historical English linguistics that we see no particular reason for doubting its value. When one is enjoying oneself, one does not normally question the meaning of life, and philosophy typically starts in worried minds.

While this explains why we have focused our energies on doing, rather than reflecting on the merits of, historical English linguistics, however, it seems that we are now challenged to make our intuitions explicit. For as the developments described above show, we seem to be about the only ones left to take the value of our discipline for granted.

It was awareness of this situation, then, that motivated a brainstorming session on the status and applicability of historical English language studies at last year's ESSE conference. And, gladly, interest within the academic community was high. Eight stimulus papers by colleagues from a variety of European universities were presented, commented on and discussed. They focused on three basic issues.

First, some of the reasons were sketched why historical English linguistics has lost much of its traditional esteem within the 'English Studies' community and among students in particular. The gist seems to have been that the traditional concentration on formal aspects of historical linguistics, and on phonological change in particular, has to bear much of the blame. The situation may have been additionally aggravated by the fact that the inherent difficulty of the more abstract aspects of the discipline was often used to stem the tide of continually increasing student numbers, which typically understaffed university departments had to face during the seventies and eighties. Thus, historical linguistics came often to be taught for the purpose of actually putting students off the idea of studying English rather than for encouraging them to do so. That its popularity has suffered in result can therefore not really be considered a surprise.

Second, an attempt was made to isolate and highlight insights it can offer that do meet current demand after all. It was shown that in spite of the general bias, there are many lessons to be learned from the history of English, which ought to be valuable not only for enthusiasts, but for future teachers of English as well. While there was some debate on the degree to which historical language studies can actually help to explain the present state of English, all of us agreed that the historical perspective can help to elucidate the relationship between language and society better than many other approaches.

And finally, it was discussed whether the lack of demand for some of the apparently more esoteric aspects of our discipline might not be due to a failure on our part on getting their relevance across rather than to their complete lack of such. Thus, it was proposed that the difficulty which some common-sense concepts such as 'dialect', 'style' or 'variety' have in coming to terms with the dynamic diversity of language and its variation in time, space and society might teach us valuable lessons about the ways in which human minds approach reality and about the inherent limitations of these ways. It was argued that, if seen from the right perspective, even the more abstract, difficult and sometimes mind boggling aspects of our discipline could be made to count in its favour instead of being held against it.

Apart from these issues there was of course a large variety of other ideas and opinions that were voiced and responded to, more than I could possibly do justice to within this short report. Although much ground was covered, however, it was agreed that the workshop itself should be regarded as the mere beginning of a discussion which needs to be continued if it is to bear any substantial results. In order to facilitate this continuation, a web site was established, through which all written contributions to the workshop (i.e. stimulus papers plus comments) can be easily accessed, downloaded, read and responded to. The URL is **<http://www.univie.ac.at/Anglistik/hoe>**, and, no matter if you are a historical linguist yourself or not, you are heartily invited to browse in, see what's there and send back your own **VIEWS**.

List of Workshop Contributions

Martin Davies: *The Origins of the Notion of 'Standard English"*

Malgorzata Fabiszak: *Applying Historical Linguistics at Teacher Training Colleges in Poland*

Gabriella Mazzon: *The study of language varieties in diachrony and synchrony, or: on methodological cross-fertilization*

David Prendergast: *Middle Age Spread or Plain Old Age:Where is Historical Linguistics' Sex Appeal*

Matti Rissanen et al.: *The Importance of Being Historical*

Steen Schousboe: *Teaching Historical Linguistics*

Dieter Stein: *Motivations and Place of Historical Linguistics in an 'English' Curriculum*

Franciska Trobevsek: *Historical linguistics in English studies*

Commentaries were written by Martin Davies, Maurizio Gotti, Olga Fischer, Nicola Pantaleo, Nikolaus Ritt, Hans Sauer, Herbert Schendl, Ute Smit *and* Paloma Tejada-Caller.

Are there any VIEWS readers interested in applied linguistics out there??
Reactions please!

Rethinking Teacher Education: Setting an Agenda for Applied Linguistics

Barbara Seidlhofer, Vienna

The role of English

Due to major socio-economic developments and new technology, both the role of English in the world and the study of language have changed quite radically in recent years. English is fast growing into a global language increasingly used as a second language or as a lingua franca in intercultural communication, and it has been continually gaining significance with the expansion of the European Union (Crystal 1997)[1]. So far so familiar. What is thought about and talked about far less, however, is that these developments have also created a need for a systematic reconsideration of the subject 'English as a Foreign Language' on the school curriculum, and for a concomitant reconsideration of the tertiary education that prepares future teachers accordingly. So all I want to do in this short contribution is to think aloud/visibly about the consequences of the unfolding role of English in the world, especially the consequences for teacher education.

In Europe in particular, we are currently witnessing a diversification of language as more and more nations are bidding for membership in the Union. This development will require many individuals to be able to function in several languages in order to make possible intercultural communication for both social and economic ends. This is likely to be facilitated by developing in people a general language awareness, i.e. an understanding of how languages work to fulfil their functions in social life. At the same time, the need for a lingua franca is rapidly gaining importance. Due to the spread it already has, English is des-

[1] The few references I give in this short piece are often **not** the most recent ones. Instead, I have tried to select those which are potentially most useful for readers not familiar with the 'mainstream' applied linguistics literature.

tined to fulfil that role. This constellation of factors creates the opportunity to use the teaching of English, from early schooling onwards, as an integrative force equipping young people with two crucial assets simultaneously: the **instrumental** one of access to a lingua franca, and the **educational** one of fostering language awareness.

English in education

Most European countries have responded to the changing role of English in the world by acknowledging ideas/ideals such as "intercultural competence" and bi-/multilingualism" in new school curricula worked out during the 90's. Obviously it will take some time for these fairly abstract principles to be translated into everyday pedagogic practice, and indeed relatively little has changed in recent years about the way English lessons in, say, Austrian secondary schools[2] typically happen as regards textbooks and supplementary materials used, techniques employed and criteria formulated for evaluation. And fundamentally nothing **can** change, I would argue, unless teacher education is carefully re-evaluated, re-thought, and re-formed. One might draw a parallel here with other areas of life, for instance healthcare: while there are sound arguments and great demand for various forms of "alternative medicine", most doctors still rely exclusively on a repertoire of drugs and surgery simply because this is what they were taught in medical school. Genuine change in healthcare can only come in the wake of changes in medical training.

Looking back

COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING

Over the last two decades or so, curricula, teaching methods and materials for English as a foreign language (EFL) worldwide have come to be based on the communicative approach (Brumfit & Johnson 1979, Canale & Swain 1980, Candlin 1981). Communicative language teaching (CLT) has developed into a generally accepted orthodoxy (cf. overviews in Bausch, Christ & Krumm 1995) – so much so that many people in the field have lost, or never had, a historical sense of how CLT came into being. But this is an important question, because the circumstances of its *conception* are very different from the circumstances of its subsequent *application* to formal language teaching in European schools.

---

[2] I am referring here to the kinds of secondary and tertiary education that I am personally most familiar with, i.e. secondary schools which provide a qualification for admission to university, and teacher education at university (rather than, say, pedagogic academies).

CLT was largely developed for settings and objectives which are very different from those obtaining in European schools: the Council of Europe's so-called Threshold Level and English for Specific Purposes. Both of these were based on an analysis of eventual needs. The Council of Europe's Threshold Level (Van Ek & Trim 1990) was worked out to solve problems to do with language learning by adults in continuing education, i.e. *beyond formal schooling*. The concern here was mainly to draw up specifications for meeting the needs of individuals working and communicating in different European countries. This Threshold Level has been an important influence in promoting a communicative approach to the teaching of various modern languages, and has resulted in the proposed solutions being transferred to *schools* in Europe and gradually to schools everywhere else, so that communicative language teaching is now presumed, somewhat uncritically, to be suitable for every situation (one of the "problems with solutions" discussed in Widdowson 1990: ch. 2)

The other force in the development of communicative language teaching, English for Specific Purposes (Swales 1988), also focuses on the *ends* rather than the *means* of learning: the objective here is to help specialists to function in English to the extent required for their professional work, such as engineering, nursing, or agriculture.

Coming back to EFL teaching in schools, it would seem obvious that all such teaching has to take into consideration two essential factors: the GOAL to be eventually achieved, and the PROCESS for reaching that goal. However, the currently predominant approach to the teaching of English as a foreign language as a school subject must be called into question on both counts.

PROCESS:

From the point of view of mainstream foreign language teaching in schools, it is important to realize that in the original conception of CLT, the emphasis throughout was on the eventual *aims*, not on the *learning process* itself. CLT is essentially goal-oriented: it started from a needs analysis, a specification of a foreign language repertoire required for communication in fairly predictable situations (Munby 1978). It is in this sense that this approach was meant to be 'communicative', i.e. directed at 'communication' as the desired outcome. But as opposed to adults who need English for fairly precisely defined purposes, English as a school subject cannot be based on such a clear needs analysis. The purposes for which school leavers might, or might not, need English are impossible to predict and will vary widely. Consequently, the teaching of English in schools needs to be based on criteria other than eventual needs. What CLT did not take into account is the *starting point* that learners are at (esp.

their first language, cf. Ringbom 1987) when they begin their language learning, nor the process which would be suitable to help learners get from that specific starting point to the goal, the (variably defined) target competence. Communicative methodology as it is widely practised derives directly from the definition of the goal, and the assumption has tended to be that activities and procedures geared to achieving the communicative outcome are as unproblematic as the goal itself, universally applicable, independent of local circumstances. Little consideration has thus been given to questions of their cultural appropriacy, ethical desirability, or practical feasibility. (Holliday 1994)

GOAL:

But it is not only with respect to the process that CLT has proved unsatisfactory, also the target as set down by it has to be called into question. In most curricula, the eventual aim is defined as 'communicative competence' as 'intelligibility for native speakers', where *communicative* target behaviour refers to the *community* of native speakers of English, based on the description of native speaker discourse in specific contexts of language use. But for most adolescent learners in European schools communication with native speakers of English is not a primary goal. The description and operationalization of the notion of English as an *international* language has yet to be reflected in school curricula (Knapp 1987).

Bearing in mind the global developments mentioned at the outset, this brief description of the main tenets of CLT should make it clear that its relevance for language learning in European schools is in need of a critical re-evaluation, in terms of both the learning target and the learning/teaching process.

Looking forward

Such a critical appraisal has important implications for several interconnected aspects of the subject EFL in school language learning:

– MOTIVATION

A direct consequence of the absence of clearly defined goals and processes is the lack of motivation experienced by many learners (and teachers!) of English in schools. If the *needs* cannot be predicted and specified with some certainty, there is no clear definition of terminal behaviour that can be worked towards. This means that the objective needs to be redefined educationally in terms of process rather than eventual ends. So it is actually the lack of appropriate *processes* sensitive to specific circumstances that is the important problem to be addressed for the school subject: where learners are not normally motivated by

eventual pay-off or purpose, it is the processes themselves, the means of learning, that need to be motivating.

– MATERIALS AND METHODS

These need to be elaborated with reference to both goals and processes, and are unsatisfactory on both counts. The way methods and materials for CLT evolved does not necessarily make them transferable to European foreign language classes (although they *have* been transferred): methods and materials were largely developed by native speakers of English, very often in quite different circumstances, such as English being taught not as a foreign but as a second language, or in private language schools in English-speaking countries with foreign students from a variety of first language backgrounds. Understandably, these contexts also favoured the monolingual teaching of English, in which the role of the learners' mother tongue was minimized, and the use of activities like translation and contrastive analysis was proscribed (Richards & Rodgers 1986).

– ROLE OF THE TEACHER

The requirement of competences that teachers need to have also varies with circumstances. Here, again, the default assumption has been that teachers should approximate to the native speaker ideal as closely as possible, and the emphasis in teacher education has tended to be on teachers' *linguistic/pragmatic* competence while the importance of their *pedagogic*[3] competence has generally not been acknowledged.

– DEFINITION OF THE SUBJECT

These observations indicate that there needs to be a systematic enquiry into the way English is taught, and a redefinition of the subject in the light of the changing role of English, and the new ways in which it is studied in linguistics and related disciplines. CLT is concerned with the phenomenon English as a native language, and the focus has been on teaching *English*, which happens to be a foreign language for the students. This, however, is not to be confused with the subject English, where we are dealing with the teaching and learning

[3] By *pedagogic competence* I do not mean expertise with certain teaching techniques, often glossed as didactic skills of a **trained** teacher. Rather, a teacher with pedagogic competence is an **educated** teacher, who has acquired knowledge and an awareness of theoretical issues beyond the need of the moment and knows how to use this knowledge sensitively to foster learning.

of a *foreign language* which happens to be English (Widdowson 1994). This shift of emphasis has important implications for all factors in the teaching/learning process, and the resulting priorities are often in direct conflict with the ones propagated by CLT.

The critique of CLT implied in the above observations is not meant to deny the fact that when CLT was developed it effected an important liberation from many unimaginative practices of the grammar-translation and audiolingual methods, and that a great deal of valuable expertise has evolved in this way. But CLT was developed to suit very specific conditions, which may no longer obtain, or be at variance with the requirements of some contexts in which it is applied. It is therefore necessary to subject CLT to a thorough re-evaluation, and to ask questions about its appropriateness to certain contexts of foreign language teaching (Kramsch & Sullivan 1996). The world has changed a good deal since the emergence of CLT over two decades ago, but approaches to English language teaching throughout the world have not kept up with these changes, nor with developments in related disciplines. On the contrary, the gap is widening between inclusive claims made at a fairly abstract level and exclusive forces prevailing in reality (de Beaugrande 1997): while pluralism, multiculturalism and the importance of regional varieties are professed in theory (Kachru 1992), teachers in their classrooms are still faced with the realities of native-speaker cultures and economies defining *their* linguistic norms as targets, and fiercely competing for old and new markets for the huge English language teaching industry (Pennycook 1994; Phillipson 1992). It would seem to me, then, that there is an urgent need to reconsider English teacher education in a way that enables local teachers to assert the value of English as an international language as a school subject in its own right (Seidlhofer, in press).

Research Questions

The aim of the proposed research agenda, then, is to develop a rationale for a pedagogy of English as an international language, from the point of view of a country in which English fulfils two major functions that have been largely neglected in the current orthodoxy, namely

- ‘foreign language par excellence’, that is to say the foreign language as a vehicle for understanding the concept of a language other than one’s mother tongue, and for learning to learn foreign languages in general (the educational objective), and
- lingua franca, a means of international communication, predominantly among non-native speakers of English (the instrumental objective).

Starting from a redefinition of the subject along these lines, a new framework could be elaborated which first establishes principles for innovation and then makes suggestions for implementation. It should be emphasized that such an applied linguistic project needs to be interdisciplinary, for it has to draw on relevant, but disparate work in such fields as linguistics, learning theory, sociology, ethnography, cultural anthropology, communications technology, and pedagogy. All these disciplines offer insights and procedures of enquiry which are potentially relevant for educational language planning and the formulation of pedagogic principles.

A comprehensive research project will thus need to address questions in the following areas:

A. Principles: the rationale

- Which implications for teaching result from the fact that most communication in English worldwide now takes place among non-native speakers? What is the practical value of teaching this use of the language as a lingua franca?
- Which implications for teaching result from the emphasis on foreign language learning for language awareness, over and above the perfection of skills in English? What is the educational value of this reorientation towards awareness, understanding of 'otherness' (linguistic and otherwise)?
- What is the relevance of the currently most productive lines of research directly related to language use and language learning? A new framework will obviously have to be concerned with language description (contact linguistics, corpus linguistics, discourse analysis, pragmatics, the study of variation and World Englishes); the role of the language in different societies and communities (language planning, English/Language for Specific Purposes, literature), as well as psycholinguistic questions (second language acquisition research, communication strategies). But to go beyond this narrower focus, an interdisciplinary approach will be needed that can draw on insights from various social sciences for elaborating a suitable framework.
- Which design features in principle are necessary for curricula, syllabuses, materials and teaching procedures to make them suitable for the teaching of English as an international language?

B. Implementation: diffusion of innovation

- Once general principles have been established, how can these guide the localisation of the teaching of English?

- What are the strengths of local teachers of English, and how can they best be deployed?
- What are the strengths of locally produced materials, and how can they best be developed and produced?
- What education do teachers need to help them fulfil their educational role? In particular, how can university departments modify their teacher education programmes to adapt to changing conditions and meet new requirements?
- How is this reorientation perceived by learners, teachers, policy makers, and by the public at large?

I am well aware that what I have outlined here is a rather grand scheme, one which can keep many applied linguists busy for a long time.[4] But it seemed important to me to try and sketch the overall context in which such work would be situated. To summarize, the main points that emerged as bearings for my own research are:

In SCHOOL LANGUAGE LEARNING, I foresee a relative shift of emphasis from acquiring a repertoire of skills for immediate use to the investment in a more general capacity for subsequent use and further learning. Such a shift might well involve developing a greater AWARENESS in learners about the nature of language to explore with them the concept of a language other than one's own, and to foster their respect for the parity of all languages.

In TEACHER EDUCATION, a corresponding shift of emphasis will be required, from the endeavour to get trainees to become as near-native as possible to an understanding of English as a lingua franca, and a conscious recognition and discussion of the EDUCATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE of foreign language learning. This shift of emphasis has implications too for the accountability of academic study to the practical world, for it is also likely to require a reconsideration of the academic subjects which constitute the teacher education programme (language study, linguistics, literature, cultural studies, pedagogy) with a view to making *explicit* in what way they are currently relevant to teacher formation. I do not wish to suggest revolution here, but evolution: to return briefly to the medical analogy at the beginning, I would not want teachers to shed all 'canonical' knowledge any more than I would want my doctors to completely forget everything they know about orthodox medicine. But a wider horizon, an increased repertoire, and an adjustment of perspective are called for in both cases.

---

[4] I am grateful to three anonymous reviewers of a research proposal I recently submitted for driving home to me the need to concentrate, in my own research, on one of these areas.

A major reorientation in the teaching of English as an international language is certain to happen as an intellectual climate is developing which recognizes the emergence of local conditions of relevance. It would seem desirable that in keeping with this recognition, the changes to come should be given momentum and direction from within the very contexts where they will be effective, and this is what I shall attempt to contribute to in my own research. To echo Christiane Dalton-Puffer's concluding exhortation in VIEWS 6/1: Watch this space. Better still, fill this space with your contribution!

References

Bausch, K.-R., **H. Christ** & **H.-J. Krumm** (eds.) (1995) *Handbuch Fremdsprachenunterricht*. 3rd edn. Tübingen: Francke.

Beaugrande, R. de (1997) *New Foundations for a Science of Text and Discoure: Cognition, Communication, and the Freedom of Access to Knowledge and Society*. Norwood, N.J.: Ablex.

Brumfit, C. & **K. Johnson** (eds.) (1979) *The Communicative Approach to Language Teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Canale, M. & **M. Swain** (1980) Theoretical bases of communicative approaches to second language teaching and testing. *Applied Linguistics* 1/1: 1-47.

Candlin, C. (ed.) (1981) *The Communicative Teaching of English: Principles and an Exercise Typology*. London:Longman.

Crystal, D. (1997) *English as a Global Language.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Holliday, A. (1994) *Appropriate Methodology and Social Context*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Kachru, B. (ed.) (1992) *The Other Tongue*. 2nd edn. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press.

Knapp, K. (1987) English as an International *lingua franca* and the Teaching of Intercultural Communication. In Lörscher, W. & R. Schulze (eds.) *Perspectives on Language in Performance*, vol 2. Tübingen.

Kramsch, C. & **P. Sullivan** (1996) Appropriate pedagogy. *ELT Journal* 50/3: 199-212.

Munby, J. (1978) *Communicative Syllabus Design*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Pennycook, A. (1994) *The Cultural Politics of English as an International Language*. London: Longman.

Phillipson, R. (1992) *Linguistic Imperialism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Richards, J. & Rodgers, T. (1986) *Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Ringbom, H. (1987) *The Role of the First Language in Foreign Language Learning*. Clevedon, Avon: Multilingual Matters.

Seidlhofer, B. (in press) Double standards: teacher education in the Expanding Circle. *World Englishes* 18.

Swales, J. (1988) *Episodes in ESP*. Hemel Hempstead: Prentice Hall International.

Van Ek, J. & **J. Trim** (1990) *The Threshold Level.* Strasbourg: Council of Europe.

Widdowson, H.G. (1990) *Aspects of Language Teaching.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Widdowson H. G. (1994). Pragmatics and the Pedagogic Competence of Language Teachers. *Proceedings of the Fourth International NELLE Conference*. Edited by Sue and Tim Sebbage. Hamburg: NELLE.

Translation: Partial Meaning and Pragmatic Correspondence[1]

H G Widdowson

I want to talk about aspects of translating with reference to written texts. I should acknowledge from the outset that I cannot claim to speak with any authority on this subject. I have no credentials as a translator and I am unfamiliar with the literature on the theory and practice of translation. In this respect, I am an impostor, a fool rushing in. But perhaps I might be allowed the role of **licensed** fool: a character, as in Shakespeare's plays, whose comments are tolerated, even if uninformed, because their very eccentricity has the effect of disrupting the established order and provoking a reappraisal of established ideas.

In this provocative role, I venture the suggestion that the process of translation is commonly misrepresented because it is seen too exclusively as a matter of transference of meaning across languages. Translation is, of course, concerned with encoding from one language into another: that is what the word **means,** and I do not want to be so eccentric as to deny established semantic convention. All the same, it seems to me that it is a mistake to emphasise this bilingual aspect as writers on the subject tend to do. Thus Catford begins his book with the following definition:

> Translation is an operation performed on languages: a process of substituting a text in one language for a text in another. (Catford 1965: 1)

Bell, too, though claiming that his enquiry into translation is innovative in that it is located within a broader linguistic context, remains traditional in seeing it, as Catford does, only in specifically bilingual terms:

> There are several crucial points of difference between monolingual communication and bilingual communication involving translation...:there are two codes, two signals (or utterances or texts) and...two sets of content (i.e., more than one message) (Bell 1991:19)

I would suggest, on the contrary, that there is nothing especially crucial about these points of difference. In so-called monolingual communication too we are routinely called upon to deal with two signals, two sets of content,

---

[1] Revised version of a paper which originally appeared in Pantaleoni, L. & L. S. Kovarski (eds) 1995. *Sapere Linguistico e Sapere Enciclopedico.* Bologna: CLUEB. 332-334.

even, in a sense, two codes. In sociolinguistic circles it is generally recognized that style-shifting within one language is basically the same phenomenon as code-switching across languages. In the same way, I would suggest that we are concerned with establishing pragmatic correspondences, whether we are doing it by shifting meaning **within** a language or switching it **across** languages.

What I want to argue, then, is that translation is really only a special case of a much more general pragmatic process, and that there is really nothing essentially distinctive about the theory and practice of translation as such.

Let me begin the argument by stating the obvious. Translating must involve two phases: interpretation and rendering. In the first phase, the process is one of intake: the translator is in the role of reader, second person recipient. In the second phase the process is one of output, the translator is in the role of writer, first person producer, designing a text for other readers. Now taken separately, there is surely nothing about these processes that is peculiar to translation. The interpretation of meaning in reading, and the rendering of meaning in writing are general pragmatic processes. What, however, could be taken as peculiar to translation is the **relationship** between these processes, the way they mutually constrain each other: translation in reading and writing are interdependent, for the purpose in interpreting a text is circumscribed by the requirement that it is to be cast into another. Thus, what translators interpret is bound to some degree to be affected by what they can render.

And this, of course, is related to the fact that translators assume the role of second person reader at one remove, for they interpret on behalf of others; and they assume the role of first person writer at one remove, for they render not their own meanings but those of somebody else. Translators act vicariously as go-betweens, mediators of messages, dealers in second hand texts. They do not speak in their own voice.

But then who does? Much of communication, written and spoken, involves the relaying of other people's meanings. No doubt we like to think that when we produce a text we are expressing our own ideas in our own words, but it is of the nature of social life, and of language itself indeed, that what we say is only a version of what others have said. Much of language use, as is clear from the concordances based on corpus analysis, consists of what Nattinger and DeCarrico refer to as lexical phrases (Nattinger & DeCarrico 1992): formulaic expressions, conventionalised idiomatic composites, more or less ready made, and needing only relatively minor adjustments to make a contextual fit. It has been pointed out (by Pawley and Syder 1983 among others) that it is this command of the composites, this idiomaticity, which marks the mastery of a language. That is to say, your ability in a language is a matter of how far you

conform to the social conventions of its use, the extent to which you do **not** exercise your individuality and express yourself in your own words.

But it is not always the case either that you are expressing **yourself**. Just as we routinely use language which is not exclusively our own, so we often express thoughts, ideas, values which are not our own either. Here we are concerned not with the linguistic constraints on what is textually expressible, but with the kind of discourses we engage in, the roles we assume as receivers and producers of language use. Erving Goffman has pointed out (Goffman 1981) that communication is not a simple dyadic affair with a first person sending a text and a second person receiving it. He distinguishes three possible roles which the first person might adopt. One is what he calls the **animator**: this is the person who actually produces the text, puts pen to paper, finger to keyboard. This role is to be distinguished from that of **author,** the person responsible for the composition of the message. Thus, for example, when I dictate a letter to my secretary, I am the author, she the animator. Goffman distinguishes a third role, that of **principal**: this refers to the beliefs, values, ideas, ideologies which affect what it is that the author composes. Thus I might transfer the responsibility of authorship to my secretary and ask her to compose an appropriate form of words in response to someone applying for registration as a research student, but her composition would be in conformity with Departmental policy, or with what she knows to be my opinions. So she would be author, but not principal, in Goffman's terms. Like the translator, she (or he) is acting vicariously, producing a text by proxy, an author on somebody else's authority.

So second hand rendering is not exclusive to translation. In fact, a good deal of language use can be characterised by reference to the way these different first person roles are variously activated.

So, for example, if I write something **down**, I act as animator. If I write something **up**, I act as author. Or consider the role of messengers. They are meant to be animators with no responsibility for the message they convey. This is not always recognised by the recipients. Cleopatra does not recognise it in Shakespeare's play *Antony and Cleopatra*: when the messenger brings her the unwelcome news of Antony's marriage to Octavia, she treats him as if he were not only author but principal as well, and attacks him for his trouble.

> Gracious madam (he protests)
> I that do bring the news made not the match.

But to no avail. He is whipped all the same.

Or consider a different queen and a different occasion, one in which it is in effect the queen who acts as messenger. There is a British tradition whereby

the government's policy and programme are expressed in the Queen's Speech, which is delivered from the throne at the state opening of the British Parliament. It is the Queen who delivers the speech, who animates it. She has had no hand in the authoring of it, however: that is the business of the speech writers. But they in turn are only giving expression to policies of the Government, the principal, the power behind the throne. The same is true of the speeches of members of parliament, of course: they may, or may not, be responsible as authors, but they do not necessarily express their individual views, but those in conformity with the collective policy of the party. They may appear to speak as individuals, but they too are whipped – whipped into line. And this is done by people who are the custodians of the principal role, and who, appropriately enough, are indeed called whips.

Or consider the similar situation of barristers in a court of law: they animate what they have themselves authored, but their authorship is at the service of their clients' interests, not their own, and it is designed with a particular set of recipients in mind, namely the judge and jury. And the barrister's responsibility is to represent the client, that is to say the principal, and not themselves, so they are less concerned with truth than with conviction – in both senses of that term. The barrister reformulates the client's statement into an alternative text, designed to be effective for other parties. In this sense, the barrister is in the business of translation.

But the enactment, and possible confusion, of these different roles is not confined to the use of language in the houses of parliament and courts of law. It is evident in discourse generally. So much of what we read in newspapers is a reformulation of other texts. The official transcripts of proceedings in parliament (Hansard) can be said to be an animation, a written **record** of speeches. But that which appears in newspaper articles are **reports**, authored versions, renderings which are designed to express the position of the writer and to appeal to a particular readership. They might seek to give the impression of simple animation, that they are presenting what was actually said, but the speech is very commonly reported speech, not infrequently distorted speech. On closer scrutiny, one notices the modality of authorship: the agentless passive: *it was said that*, the indefinite and untraceable agent: *according to a spokesperson, an informed source*, and so on.

To adopt the role of animator is to record a text: to produce what is traditionally known as direct speech. **Reporting** a text engages the role of author: to produce what is traditionally known as indirect or reported speech. Now the crucial point about animation is that there is no interpretation involved: the text is simply manifested. Interpretation, on the other hand, necessarily implies authorial intervention. When you report a text you reformulate its meaning in

one way or another. A text could only be made meaningful by animation if meanings were complete and self-contained in the language of the text itself, and directly recoverable from it. But it is a pragmatic commonplace that meanings are not fixed to linguistic forms. The reader assigns the forms indexical values by referring them to a context of familiar schematic knowledge, to frames of reference, values, beliefs, assumptions.

Interpretation, then, brings author and principal roles into play. It does so because it necessarily involves the assignment of indexical value. Let me outline briefly what I mean by this (for more comprehensive accounts see Widdowson 1983, 1990). When I talk of the assignment of indexical value, I mean quite simply that when we process text we use linguistic signs as directions to point us to features of reality with which we are familiar. Unless we can realize the indexical function of linguistic signs, we cannot interpret them. We may, by virtue of our linguistic competence, be able to assign semantic meaning to them as symbols, and we can consult dictionaries and grammars of the language to supply any deficiency in our competence, but that is a different matter. Just how different a matter can easily be demonstrated. Here is a headline from a British newspaper:

THE RATS ARE READY

This is a perfectly well-formed English sentence and by applying my linguistic competence I can decode it, and give it a semantic reading. So can anybody else linguistically competent in the language. In that sense, we can be said to know what the expression means. But at the same time, we might have little inkling about what is meant **by** the expression. We might draw a complete pragmatic blank: the words may provide us with no indexical directions to follow, in that we cannot connect it with any reality we are familiar with. The words may make no contact with the world. The definite article points us towards something assumed to be shared knowledge: **the** rats. But which rats? If you had been following current events at the time the newspaper appeared, these would have provided you with the necessary point of reference and you would have realised that the word rats refers not to rodents but to a regiment in the British Army – known as the Desert Rats. And you would also have realized, given that this is December 1990, the time of the Gulf crisis, what the rats are ready for. But these meanings are not of course intrinsic to the language. They are not **semantically signed** meanings, but **pragmatically assigned** meanings.

One kind of indexical value, then, has to do with pragmatic **reference** (as distinct from semantic denotation). But there is a second kind of value. We

may know what the writer of this headline is referring to, but fail to recognise what kind of illocutionary act is intended. In other words, we may not be able to assign a **force** to the expression. Is it meant to be a threat, an assurance, simply a statement of fact? Is it to be interpreted as the writer's own view, or that of somebody else?

And then there is a third kind of indexical value: one which I shall call **effect.** For many people in Britain, reference to the Desert Rats will have a particular resonance: it will be associated with all the affective glow of patriotic feeling, will call to mind Monty's men and the defeat of Rommel in the Western Desert. The rats are ready: indomitable as always. Rule Britannia. Other people will hear something quite different: for them it will sound a discordant jingoistic note of misplaced chauvinism, and the effect will not be the stirring of patriotic fervour but something closer akin to shame. And for others there will be no resonance at all. It all depends on how you can relate the text to the world outside it, and this is obviously a cultural and not a linguistic matter. More of this later.

For the present, let us note that although we may talk rather loosely about what a text means, the text itself actually means nothing until it is, interpreted, related to reader reality, activated, as I would say, as discourse. What a text means is shorthand for what can be indexically inferred from it, what it means to the reader. When you report a text, therefore, you report not what it means, but what it means to you. You cannot do otherwise. And this must be true of any transposition of meaning in a textual rendering, whether it is within one language or, as with translation proper, across two languages.

But what a text means to the reader may not be at all the same as what the writer meant by the text. In designing a text, the writer assigns a role to the reader, a role which the reader may not be willing, or may not be able to ratify. In the case of the headline about the rats, we may recognize an intention to stir patriotic feeling but feel the opposite effect of disgust. Or, being unfamiliar with the British version of history, we may feel no stirrings at all.

Let us consider another example. A text this time not about rats but dingoes. What does this text mean to you?

> The Chamberlains were Seventh Day Adventists (which, by normal Bruce rules, was peculiar), and Lindy, a rather spiky, intense individual, failed to act out in court the required sub-Neighbours version of the innocent grieving mother. In more than one way, she suffered from cultural insensitivity. Aborigines at Ayers Rock did not seem surprised that a dingo might have taken a baby, but who gave a XXXX what the Abos thought?

As before, assumptions are made about shared knowledge, which would enable the reader to recognise reference. Who are these people the Chamberlains, and is Lindy one of them, and what is all this about a baby and a dingo? These

questions are, fairly straightforwardly, about knowledge of **contemporary** events in the news, current at the time. But other questions have to do with **cultural** knowledge: Bruce rules refers to the attitudes of stereotypical Australian men, Neighbours is a Television soap opera about Australian life, XXXX makes an intertextual allusion to a popular advertisement for Australian beer. And these references are associated with a certain intended **effect.** Those readers who are in the know about this world are invited not only to make reference to it, but also to identify with the writer's attitude to it, to appreciate, for example, the mocking mimicry of "who cared a XXXX what the Abos thought" and the ironic ridicule implied in phrases "normal Bruce rules" "the required sub-Neighbours version". There is thus a kind of conspiratorial solidarity established between reader and writer: they are both insiders, in the know, like-minded people sharing the same set of cultural assumptions.

Now it will perhaps have been noticed that in discussing both of these newspaper extracts I have slyly smuggled in, without comment, a further factor which complicates the interpretation (and therefore the translation) of texts. I made a contrast earlier between what the text means, and what the text means to the reader. The further factor I mentioned was: what the writer means by the text. We come to the tricky issue of the relationship between first person intention and second person interpretation.

Writer intention is, of course, itself a function of interpretation: it is read into the text. But it cannot be read into the text if the reader cannot ratify the position of insider, cannot recognize the intended indexical value of the signals. And no matter how closely convergent the worlds of writer and reader, no matter how like-minded they are, there is always likely to be some disparity. There is always, therefore, likely to be some indeterminacy of meaning. If the worlds of people converged completely, there would, indeed, be no purpose in communicating at all. But equally since there is no complete convergence, communication is bound to be partial in some degree. This does not mean that it cannot be effective, for the partiality is related to purpose, and relates to the three aspects of indexical meaning that I have identified.

So it is that there are some kinds of written text where the correspondence of intention and interpretation is easy to achieve. Consider, for example, the single word texts of public notices. If I see the word TOILETS written on a door, I have no difficulty recognising its reference or its force, and I assume that these indexical values are those intended. The effect of such a notice, from passing interest to intense relief, will vary, but this is irrelevant to the purpose of the notice. Similarly, I can be fairly confident that texts like fire instructions, or cooking recipes, will have fairly straightforward reference and force and that

I am likely to interpret them as intended. Again, the effect of such texts may be quite individual and unpredictable, but irrelevant to their purpose. Whether or not my mouth waters and I remember my last visit to Toscana at the mention of garlic does not affect my interpretation of the recipe for Spaghetti sauce. And I assume that what is straightforward to interpret is relatively straightforward to translate.

There are, however, some kinds of text where effect is a crucial indexical feature. But effect will, as I have argued, always be elusive, since it will depend on a particularly close convergence of first and second person worlds. It will so often be specific to particular associations, and culturally marked. It follows that seeking to retain effect will often be at the expense of the other values of reference and force. You may establish a pragmatic correspondence in respect to one value, but only by denying correspondence in respect to the others.

Anthony Burgess, in a lecture on translation given just before his death, has relevant things to say on this matter:

> What has been happening to the Bible recently? There is a conviction on the part of the translators that it must be intelligible, yet some of the strength and music of the bible as it was translated in the 1611 version precisely lies in its strangeness.
>
> So many of its phrases have stuck themselves into our language they can't be uprooted. They are part of us. TS Eliot protested at the rendering of a line in the Gospel according to St.Matthew, where "neither cast ye your pearls before swine" is turned into "do not feed your pearls to pigs". Well no fool would ever feed pearls to pigs, but they might throw them, and the pigs might sniff at them. The word "swine" still exists, so why not use it? The weakness is part of our scared timorous age, and even when we come to the marriage ceremony we no longer have, "thereto I plight thee my troth", and "with all my worldly goods I thee endow". We have, "this is my solemn vow" and "all that I have I share with you". These sound as if they're not going to last, but when you say "I plight thee my troth" it sounds like the stamping of a seal.
>
> (from an abridged version of the inaugural 'European Lecture' delivered by Anthony Burgess at the Cheltenham Festival of Literature. The Independent. 27.11.93)

When Burgess speaks of the strength, the music, the strangeness of language, he is referring to effect, and he implies that intelligibility is not necessarily the quality to be most highly prized. Intelligibility, of course, has to do with reference and force. Thus if you use the expression "this is my solemn vow" it will be clear what you are talking about, and the force of your utterance is explicitly signalled. But it lacks the effect of "I plight thee my troth". This has additional resonances: it sounds, says Burgess, like the stamping of a seal. It sounds like that **to him,** let us note, to him and to like-minded people, insiders who share the same linguistic and cultural experience. To outsiders, it sounds like nothing of the kind. They catch no such resonance. Burgess talks of certain phrases

being "part of us". Who are "us" then? A relatively small group of native-speakers, a cultural coterie.

One point to be made about effect, then, is that it is dependent on a common set of cultural values and so invokes a sense of communal solidarity, even of conspiracy, shared between writer and reader. It is a kind of insider dealing. If you are an outsider, and cannot fill the role of communal membership that the writer has assigned to the reader, you will fail to appreciate the effect intended. In this respect, communication and community are as closely related as their morphology would suggest.

A second point to be made is that effect may be achieved at the expense of the other indexical values of reference and force. Somebody might use an expression which reverberates with associations (pleasurable or otherwise), but you may not know what they are actually talking about. In the case of ceremonial or ritual uses of language, as in a marriage service, this may not matter. You know when uttering the fateful words "I plight thee my troth" what you are letting yourself in for anyway. But in the case of more mundane communicative transactions, reference or force may be crucial and effect irrelevant. When I receive a letter from my bank manager, for example, I need to know what he is talking about, and recognise that he is giving me a warning about my overdraft. If our correspondence does not pragmatically correspond at this level, it fails.

Anthony Burgess's lecture is on translation and in other parts of it he gives examples of different English translations of the Hebrew of the Bible. But in the quotation we have been considering, the comparison is between different versions in English with no mention of another language. "All that I have I share with you" is an alternative rendering of "with all my worldly goods I thee endow": it is not an alternative rendering of a text in Hebrew or Latin or whatever. And here I return to the point I made at the beginning. The problems of interpretation and the appropriate formulation of meaning are the same in each case, whether we are dealing with texts in one language or in two. Translation is applied pragmatics. Let me then now try to reformulate my own text and do so in more explicit reference to translation as such.

I have argued that the interpretation of texts cannot just be the animation of meaning encoded **in** the text, since meaning is not linguistically contained but a matter of indexical inference. What a text means is essentially what it means to the reader, how far it can key in with what is familiar. To the extent that the world presupposed by the writer matches up with that of the reader, there will be a mutual convergence on meaning. In this case what a text means to the reader will approximate to what the writer means by the text. But this **will** only

be an approximation, so meanings will always be partial. There might be a correspondence of reference but not force, of force but not reference, of both reference and force but not effect. I have argued that it is with effect that correspondence is generally most difficult to achieve since it depends on a particularly close convergence of assumptions, beliefs, values: it is so much a matter of cultural fine-tuning.

What then, more specifically, of translation. First, since you cannot interpret a text by animation, there can be no such thing as literal translation, since that implies that one can think of what a text means in dissociation from what it means to the reader. But the reader is always implicated.

Literalness has to do with what a text means. Fidelity, on the other hand, seems to be concerned with what the writer means by the text. A faithful translation is one, I assume, which captures intention. But the recognition of intention depends on degrees of convergence, and this, as I have argued, will always be partial. You may recognise the reference but not the force or effect intended. You may be faithful to one indexical value but not the others, and where you feel the obligation to fidelity lies will, of course, depend on the text and its communicative purpose. So it is that where the purpose is the relatively straightforward transactional matter of the giving of instructions or the providing of information, it is referential fidelity which is likely to be at a premium. If we are dealing with poetry, then our fidelity will be focused on the effect of the original, even if this runs the risk of being referentially unfaithful.

Fidelity has to do with the interpretation of intention. Burgess, you will recall, mentioned another factor in translation, namely intelligibility. Here we come to the second phase: that of rendering, when the translator shifts from the role of second person recipient to first person producer, and is required to write a text of his (or her) own. But this cannot just be the textualization of interpretation: it has to be designed to take the new reader's world into account. A translation may be faithful, for example, but unintelligible, and translators may have to compromise and produce a reduced version of their own understanding. They may read for themselves, but they are rendering for others; others whose worlds may be more remote from that of the writer of the original text. Now in translation proper, "the process" as Catford puts it "of substituting a text in one language for a text in another", the assumption is that the readers of the rendering will not share the language of the original writer. But they may not share much of the culture either, the customary, taken-for-granted assumptions, beliefs, values and so on, upon which, as we have seen the inferring of indexical value so crucially depends. So the translator has to render in such a way that the text keys in with the readers' world. If the translated text is unintelligible, one might argue, it is not actually a translation. By the same token, a

translation may be valued to the extent that it does key in with the readers' world. Burgess makes the comment that the Germans

> ...consider that Schlegel's version of Shakespeare is better than the original, and in some ways it is. It was written in a kind of 19th Century romantic German, rendering it far more intelligible to the Germans than the original Elizabethan is to us.

The rendering of Shakespeare into current English would also, of course, make it more intelligible. And one thinks of productions of Shakespeare in modern dress – which are also translations in their way. Nor is it only, of course, a question of intelligibility, which is a matter of reference and force: it is also a question of effect. One thinks this time of the occasion when, so it is said, a French woman remarked to the American humorist James Thurber: Mr Thurber, I have read all your work in English and in translation, and do you know you are even funnier in French. To which Thurber replied: Yes, Madam, I do lose a little in the original.

But really, this should not be surprising. If the translation were designed to key into the French readers' reality, if it were culturally tuned in this way, then the chances are that it **would** indeed be funnier in French. It is common to talk about features of meaning which are lost in translation. But lost for whom? The meaning is not lost for the readers of the translated version, for they never had it in the first place. They only stand to gain.

But Shakespeare and Thurber are, you may object, **literary** texts, and literary texts are notoriously difficult to translate. Much translation, however, is concerned with more humdrum workaday texts: texts of straightforward transactional purpose and practical import where the capturing of elusive effects is not a major problem. Scientific texts would be an example, or other texts in commerce, accountancy, computing and so on, which are similarly established and stable in their frames of reference, and where cultural subtleties do not figure.

But it is not the case that cultural considerations are irrelevant to such texts. It is only that they can be more readily dealt with, on condition that they are kept within the community concerned. For these frames of reference define different cultures, the accepted modes of thought and action of the different discourse communities of scientists, accountants, business people and so on. For outsiders, the texts can be just as culturally subtle, and indeed as incomprehensible, as Shakespeare. Consider this text, for example:

> Leading industrials recorded a majority of falls in the 2p to 8p range. Gilts also kept a low profile, with conventionals down a quarter and index-linked three-eighths lower. Quiet builders provided a firm spot in Ward Holdings, up 17p to 177p following a 63 per cent upsurge in pre-tax profits. Golds relinquished 50 cents to a dollar.

This text is in English. But it is Greek to me. It is lexically in an alien code, outside my competence, and it deals in matters of which I have no understanding. I could not reformulate it in other terms intralinguistically in English because I cannot realize either reference or force. The effect is bafflement. I am an outsider. Those familiar with this world of financial dealings, this culture, and with the conventional use of language associated with it, its code, will have no such problem. They are insiders. The text refers them to a culturally familiar world, so they can interpret it, and render it for like-minded people without too much trouble.

It is for this reason that translation of culturally marked, or communally specific, texts of this kind into a different language is likely to pose fewer problems than their reformulation within the same language. Thus translation across languages but within the same cultural community is likely to be easier than simplification within the same language across cultural communities. This would seem to indicate, as I suggested at the beginning of this paper, that problems in translating are a special case of the more general pragmatic question of how meaning is indexically achieved in discourse. In our everyday uses of language we are continually having to **find terms** which will establish some pragmatic correspondence, and having at the same time to **come to terms** with the reality of partial meaning. Translators are, in this respect, no different from the rest of us.

Partial meaning and pragmatic correspondence. These terms apply also, of course, to the text of this present paper. As I said at the start, the world of translation is unfamiliar to me: I belong to a linguistic community, with frames of references, assumptions, a culture, in short, which readers of VIEWS are likely to share. But not completely of course. In the process of reading this, you (hypocrite lecteur, mon semblable, mon frère) have no doubt, and quite naturally, been reformulating my text in your own terms, translating it so that it corresponds as closely as possible to your reality. I hope that the process has led to some convergence and that we can, therefore, agree to some extent about what I have said. Whether you agree **with** what I have said is, of course, an entirely different matter.

References:

Bell, R. T. 1991. *Translation and Translating*. Longman.

Catford, J. C. 1965. *A Linguistic Theory of Translation.* Oxford University Press.

Goffman, E. 1981. *Forms of Talk***.** Basil Blackwell.

Nattinger, J. R. & J. S. DeCarrico. 1992. *Lexical Phrases and Language Teaching.* Oxford University Press.

Pawley, A. & F. Syder. 1983. Two puzzles for linguistic theory: nativelike selection and nativelike fluency. In: Richards, J. & R. Schmidt (eds) *Language and Communication.* Longman.

Widdowson, H. G. 1983. *Learning Purpose and Language Use***.** Oxford University Press.

Widdowson, H. G. 1990. *Aspects of Language Teaching.* Oxford University Press.

IMPRESSUM:

EIGENTÜMER, HERAUSGEBER & VERLEGER: VIEWS, c/o Institut für Anglistik & Amerikanistik der Universität Wien, Universitätscampus AAKH, Spitalgasse 2-4, A - 1090 Wien, Austria. **FÜR DEN INHALT VERANTWORTLICH:** Ute Smit. **Redaktion**: Christiane Dalton-Puffer, Bryan Jenner, Arthur Mettinger, Nikolaus Ritt, Herbert Schendl, Barbara Seidlhofer, Ute Smit, H.G. Widdowson. Alle: c/o Institut für Anglistik & Amerikanistik der Universität Wien, Universitätscampus AAKH, Spitalgasse 2-4, A - 1090 Wien. **HERSTELLUNG**: VIEWS.