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LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

Here it is at last: the winter issue of VIEWS 1998 ... slightly delayed, but nonetheless - so we hope - full of interesting VIEWS. New VIEWS for the New Year, so to speak.

As usual, this issue of VIEWS would not have been possible without your generous support - financial and otherwise. Again, many thanks! And we know you won't forget your donations for the new year ...

The present issue of VIEWS does full justice to its first two letters, as all contributions are from Vienna, written by members of our department and a future guest professor (with co-authors). All of the contributions represent original papers rather than reactions to previous contributions, but we do hope to include your responses to these papers in the next issue (nudge-nudge, wink-wink ...).

The five different VIEWS presented here are all - for a change - predominantly concerned with aspects of modern English and cover a wide range of topics: Ute Smit discusses a lexical field study for South African English, while Brian Jenner calls for a tidying up of terminology in phonetics and phonology. Stephen Nagle, Margaret Fain and Sara Sanders stake out the linguistic territory of the political correctness movement. Helmut Klingler and Niki Ritt, on the other hand, venture into the field of literary translation giving us their thoughts on a poetry translation exercise carried out in our department last autumn.

If you would like to give us YOUR VIEWS on any of these papers in whatever format (see our policy outlined in VIEWS 4/2), or send us other contributions, the address is, as usual.

The Editors

P.S: As usual, please send contributions of the reactive and/or proactive type to:



c/o

Institut für Anglistik & Amerikanistik der Universität Wien

Universitätscampus AAKH, Spitalgasse 2, Hof 8

A – 1090 Vienna; Austria

fax

(intern.) 43 1 4277 9424

eMail

nikolaus.ritt@univie.ac.at

w³

<http://www.univie.ac.at/Anglistik>

Terminological confusion in phonetics and phonology

Bryan Jenner

1. Premises

Teaching an introductory course sometimes forces one to question orthodoxy and look for learnable generalisations. One such generalisation concerns the differing traditions in phonetics and phonology. It might be said, for example, that traditional approaches to phonetics and phonology can be divided into three broad categories. First, there is the British School (deriving originally from Sweet 1877, and pursued by Jones 1962, Gimson 1970 and Wells 1982) which might be characterised as 'phonetics without phonology', or 'phonology/phonemics as a subset of phonetics'. This approach has tended to exclude any contrastive dimension between languages, but has nonetheless dominated the study and teaching of the English language throughout the world. Secondly, there is the American School (cf Hockett 1955, Jakobson 1957, Chomsky & Halle 1968), which we might characterise as 'phonology without phonetics', or even as 'phonology in defiance of phonetics'. This has also tended to exclude any notions of contrasts between languages and has been heavily preoccupied with English. And finally, we may distinguish a Central European tradition, deriving from Trubetzkoy (1938) and the Prague School, which tends to keep phonetics and phonology apart, but allows the two disciplines to influence and complement each other. This approach, from its earliest days, has been fundamentally concerned with differences between languages, and it is this contrastive dimension which underlies much of the following discussion.

2. Definitions

Phonetics and phonology are frequently grouped together as a single discipline in introductory courses and textbooks. Roach (1983, 1991), in both title and content, is a clear example of an excellent introductory textbook written for situations where this policy is followed. Other texts (such as Jones 1962, Gimson, 1970, etc.) have been less successful in distinguishing the

separate goals and methodologies of the two disciplines. This paper is an attempt to sort out some of the confusion that arises, in the minds of both teachers and students, as a result of a general failure to keep the terminologies of the two disciplines separate. It is substantially based on many years' experience, in Britain, Japan and two Central European countries, of trying to clarify the different goals and procedures of phonetics and phonology to successive generations of students. It is offered, in this outline form, to start some discussion of how a redefinition of terminology might improve the teaching of these disciplines in introductory courses and make them appear more relevant to other branches of linguistic study.

To motivate a terminological separation of the two disciplines it is, I feel, essential to define and restate their goals. This will enable us both to identify the common ground and, at the same time, provide a rationale for maintaining separate identities.

The most obvious problem in recent years has been that phonetics no longer seems to be taken very seriously within mainstream linguistics. It has, at best, been treated as a parasite discipline whose role is merely to provide some kind of physical or instrumental justification for the systemic generalisations made by phonologists. A further problem has been that phonetics itself seems to have moved away from its own historical position - as a practical partner to language teaching - to take up residence in a hi-tech ivory tower, serving only those who can understand its complex instrumental and methodological procedures.

For the language teacher, the speech therapist, the voice teacher and also for many researchers in phonetics, phonology, historical linguistics and sociolinguistics, these developments are highly regrettable since they have led not only to terminological confusion but also to a lack of clarity about goals in a range of disciplines.

According to Laver (1994) "A primary task of phonetics is (...) to provide an objective description of speech". (p.4) Elsewhere he argues that phonetics, in the pursuit of this goal, uses "concepts not only from linguistics, but also from sociology, anthropology, philosophy, psychology, anatomy, physiology, medicine, pathology, acoustics, cybernetics, electronic engineering, computer science and artificial intelligence". (p.2) The key word here - at least in my understanding - is "speech", which I take to mean the physical output (or 'product') of the articulatory organs. Speech is one mode - but by no means the only mode - of communicating through language.

The role of phonology, on the other hand, as a branch of linguistic science, is to provide an account of human linguistic knowledge as manifest in the mental representations of particular languages. Hawkins (1984) defines

phonology very simply as "the study of sound *patterns* in language" (p.7) (my emphasis)

To limit the scope of phonetics to serving the needs of linguistics is therefore to reject many important sources of data, and to misinterpret the main focus of its interest. Phonetics is concerned with speech from every point of view, whereas phonology is concerned with that part of linguistic knowledge which underlies the act of speaking.

Phonetics is therefore preoccupied with the activity of speaking or with the production of linguistic sound, while phonology is principally interested in what makes possible the perception and production of the sounds and sound patterns which characterise particular languages.

Against that background - which may seem unnecessary or simplistic to some readers - I would now like to reconsider some of the common terms that are used - and in my opinion frequently abused - in either phonetics or phonology.

3. Terms

My interest in this problem began with a paper by Nádasy (published in *Views* 1993), which made proposals for a reclassification of the vowel system of English under the categories of 'tense' and 'lax'. This would replace the current grouping of English vowels into the two broad categories of 'long' (including simple vowels and diphthongs) and 'short', which includes those vowels whose distribution is normally confined to 'closed' syllables.

I had long been sceptical of the value of the terms *tense* and *lax* for the phonological classification of the vowels of any particular language, for the simple reason that they imply some physiological activity on the part of the speaker: a tense vowel is, therefore, a vowel produced with greater muscular tension, and a lax vowel with corresponding less tension. This, it seems to me, is misleading on two grounds: a) it is a demonstrably untrue generalisation, even if we limit our interest to a single language. Some 'tense' vowels are actually laxer than some 'lax' vowels; and b) as soon as we begin to compare languages (say English and Italian), it is nonsense to say that any of the vowels of English is tense compared to any of the vowels of Italian. To put this another way, all the vowels of English are lax compared to all the vowels of Italian.

The problem that I had with Nádasy's paper, therefore, had little or nothing to do with the way in which he grouped the vowels of English, and everything to do with the two labels he used. The terms 'tense' and 'lax', it

seemed to me, are absolute terms of physiological description which belong to articulatory phonetics and ought not to figure in a phonological representation. Anything else would be preferable: *unchecked* and *checked*, *open* and *closed*, *syllable-central/final* and *syllable-central only*. If I have a personal preference it would be for the last-mentioned pair, despite their wordiness, because they locate vowel phonemes clearly within a phonological hierarchy by relating them to some higher order category.

The same approach may be extended to many other dual-purpose terms in common use in both phonetics and phonology. The term 'vowel', for instance, ought also to be restricted to either phonetics or phonology, and might even be replaced in both. Pike (1943) proposed the term *vocoid* for any phonetic event or segment produced with a completely open articulation. This would account not only for the 'vowels' but also for segments such as /j/ and /w/ which, in English at least, function as 'consonants'.

Conversely, the term *contoid* was proposed for any event articulated with some obstruction or stricture in the airstream. This would include not only the 'consonants' which typically occur at the margins of syllables but also events such as 'syllabic' /l/ and /n/ in English and German, and syllabic /r/ in Czech and Slovak.

We might, therefore, propose that in phonetics we use only the terms *vocoid* and *contoid* (to describe what actually happens) and restrict the terms *vowel* and *consonant* to phonology. In fact we might go even further and identify the two classes of phonemes simply as 'syllabics' (covering vowels and syllabic 'consonants') and 'non-syllabics' (which would include consonants and the marginal 'vocoids' referred to above).

'Diphthong' is another specific example of a term which has been rendered almost meaningless through long abuse. I have written elsewhere (Jenner 1996) of the fictions of the English diphthong inventory and proposed that clearer phonological thinking (at the most abstract level) would enable us to reduce that inventory, at least for British English, to 5 or even 3. If we consider, for example, the so-called diphthongs in *here*, *there* and *poor*, it is perfectly possible to postulate that the schwa element in these words is no more than a contextual, or realisational allophone of /r/. They consist, therefore – at least from a phonological point of view – of a short vowel + /r/. In British English this is sometimes realised as schwa, and sometimes as /r/, whereas in American (and Scots) it is always realised as /r/.

No-one, so far as I know, has claimed that the vocalic sequences in the standard pronunciation of the German words *hier*, *wer* and *nur* actually constitute **phonological** diphthongs. (Some writers may indeed have called them 'diphthongal', but I take this to be a **phonetic** term, referring to physical

or realisational events rather than to the underlying system.) I would claim that they are simply locally conditioned realisations of an underlying vowel + consonant sequence. The /r/ element, moreover, retains 'true' consonant status in a number of varieties of German.

Now I believe that this confusion would not have arisen but for the mixing of terms and ideas in (British and American) phonetics and phonology. If we had kept the two disciplines in more clearly demarcated territories we would have reserved the word 'diphthong' for the 3 true phonological diphthongs (/ai/, /oi/ and /au/) which do not form pairs with any of the syllable-central (=short) vowels of English. The 'gliding' events which we perceive in /ei/ and /ou/, and which form pairs with short /e/ and /o/, (cf. Giegerich 1992: 48ff), would have been grouped with other gliding long vowels such as /i:/ and /u:/. Conversely, the vocalisations of /r/ in *here*, *there* and *poor*¹ we would have dealt with under realisational 'allophones'. What is needed, surely, is a separate phonetic term (such as 'glide' or 'di-phone') to enable us to distinguish physical 'double vocoids' from **functional** diphthongs.

Current interest in *Estuary English*, which seems to be emerging as a new British standard, will require us to take a similar decision over vocalised /l/ in words such as *feel*, *fell*, *hold*, *pull*. Will these l-vocalisations be described as new 'diphthongs' (which would yield as many as 5 or 6 more phonemes in the English inventory!)? Or will they remain locally conditioned members of a single /l/ phoneme? If we could agree now, in a principled way, that not all double-vocoid sequences constitute phonological diphthongs, we would be able to avoid this difficulty. The simplest way to do that would be to reserve the term 'diphthong' for phonology and to remove it altogether from the repertoire of phonetics.

4. Activity and perception

If we believe that the job of phonetics is to describe speech production we may propose a whole set of terms clearly suited to that task **and no other**.

¹ It has been pointed out to me that there are a few instances of the /i/ or /e/ plus schwa sequence which are indeed followed by a phonological /r/. (e.g. *Mary* and *query*. There are two ways out of this dilemma. The Prague school approach (of Vachek and others) would be to postulate that these phenomena are simply 'outside the system' – which in no way diminishes the system. My personal preference would be either to say the schwa element is an 'off-glide' in the direction of the following /r/, or that it still represents an underlying /r/ which is vocalised by a separate rule which does not allow geminate /r/ in English.

This set would need to be potentially applicable to any human language and would include terms such as the following:

segment
vocoid
contoid
tense
lax
double vocoid/di-phone
stress
frequency
intensity

Phonology, on the other hand, needs to be able to characterise the systematic use of these physical events and activities as they figure in the sound systems of particular languages. For each of these phonetic terms, therefore, there would be - for English and German at least - a phonological (perceptual or referential?) counterpart, as in the following list:

phoneme
syllabic
non-syllabic
long (or potentially open)
short (or closed)
diphthong
accent
prominence
loudness

Some of these pairs are already widely used and accepted, but others would require further consideration, discussion and evaluation. In this connection I would welcome views and reactions from readers, particularly - but not only - from those involved in teaching introductory courses in these disciplines.

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What is political correctness doing to the English language?

Stephen J. Nagle, Margaret A. Fain, Sara L. Sanders

1. Introduction

Political correctness has become over the past two decades a cover term for a range of prescribed and proscribed verbal behaviors both written and spoken. Growing out of the movements for ethnic and gender equality, the drive to encourage or mandate linguistic sensitivity toward diversity has come to influence not only what may be considered a proper topic of comment or discussion, but also the type of terminology and, as we shall show, phrasal structure used to describe occupations, ethnic groups, sexual orientation, physical features, religion and various perceived physical and mental "challenges". The often virulent indignation and certainty of proponents of political correctness has led Rees (1991:xii) to dub the bulk of the recent neologisms as "euphemisms with attitude".

The linguistic effects are especially pronounced in the United States, which for forty years has legislatively defined and guaranteed the rights of members of minority groups in an increasingly broad fashion. The concept of what constitutes a "minority group" has redefined itself as well, with women—who represent over fifty percent of the population of the United States—now being recognized as a minority group of sorts. Adherents of the underlying socio-political movement which has championed the rights of minorities have sometimes been intolerant of critical discussion of issues and concern over individual pieces of legislation or judicial rulings. Thus, the term *political correctness* reflects critics' frustration with the apparent self-righteousness of the minority-rights movement, in which the particulars of various legislative and legal proposals are not to be called into question because the cause is right. The animosity is so widespread that we, in our research on the linguistic influences of political correctness, risk pre-judgment and criticism from both sides. Further, simply by using the term *political correctness*, which has no transparent neutral synonym, we raise eyebrows in both the liberal and conservative camps of our university colleagues, since it is in the intellectual community where the rancor is most bitter.

Political correctness originally had a very different meaning from its current one. The origins are in some dispute. Most observers agree that it came from the political left and may be several decades old. However, Bush (1995: 42) claims that it was a "term of disparagement towards radicals and extremists"; Losey and Kurthen (1995: 228) state that leftists in the 1960s used *not politically correct* to criticize other leftists who "did something that was not consistent with their professed political belief"; and Miles (1995: 16) says that it came from the Communist Party "where it referred to the party's practice of deciding matters of policy and even of fact not on the merits but in its own interest". Allen (1995: 112) argues that starting in the 1930s it was "used by liberals...to criticize Marxist orthodoxy", then used later by the New Left to affirmatively refer to the thoughts in Chairman Mao's *Little Red Book*, and now has regained its critical sense, this time toward the left in general.

As a rightist twist on a leftist term, *political correctness* was not used in its current sense until the 1980s, although the first prescriptive surge of the incipient movement now dubbed as "political correctness" came in the 1970s against gender-biased language. Targets included the generic use of masculine *he* as in "Everyone must bring his book", the use of *man* in terms for professions (e.g., *businessman*) and the use of masculine anaphoric pronouns that presumably indicate bias in certain professions toward or by males (e.g., "A manager should set his priorities"). Certainly, the social climate of and since the 1970s has accelerated interest in a substitute for generic *he*. Interestingly, while proponents of these types of proposals often, and erroneously, indict eighteenth century prescriptivists for creating generic *he* and hence, the problem, they implicitly appear to agree with early prescriptivists by preferring neologisms to singular *they*, which has been in the language since Late Middle English (cf. Wales' [1996:126] references to discussions in the OED and Jespersen 1914).

Many of the attempts in the 1970s to draw attention to and eliminate gender bias in language were polemical writings which had such an effect in educational, professional and media circles that by 1980 one could seek guidance in Miller and Swift's *The Handbook of Nonsexist Writing*, which appeared in a second edition in 1988 followed by the arrival of Maggio's *The Nonsexist Word Finder: A Dictionary of Gender-Free Usage* (1989), each with extensive bibliographies. By the 1990s public reaction to the pervasiveness of political correctness motivated a popular book-length spoof (Beard 1993) and Rees' more empirical if still humorous *The Politically Correct Phrasebook: What They Say You Can and Cannot Say in the 1990s* (1991). The popular columnist and author William Safire, ever a satirical

observer of language, has written several columns and articles in the past two decades on the linguistic offerings of what he has dubbed the "vocabulary vigilantes" (1991). Deborah Cameron devotes a quarter of *Verbal Hygiene* (1995) to examining the social history and context of political correctness, the grounding of assent and dissent to it, and the questionable validity of individual politically correct neologisms as euphemisms. As she points out, the cause for the gains of gender-neutral usage is itself in dispute: Crystal (1984) has credited prescriptivism, while Cheshire (1984) calls it a case of natural change due to societal developments. Beyond purely linguistic concerns, Bush's brief history (1995) of political correctness and selected annotated bibliography cites one hundred and sixty-three articles and books, some of the latter anthologies of essays, and mentions that his surveys of indexes have found hundreds of references.

Part of the reasoning underlying the linguistic prescriptivism associated with political correctness is that if people are taught to avoid what some perceive as disparaging, insensitive, or biased language, societal attitudes will in turn become less disparaging, insensitive, and biased. This prescriptive twist on Whorf's view (e.g., Whorf 1956) that language shapes cultural perceptions may or may not be validated in the behavior of future generations. What is certain now is that in public and professional life and the scholarly community, there is considerable pressure to use politically correct language. In these sectors of society, political correctness has to a significant degree accomplished much of its linguistic mission. It remains to be seen whether over the course of time the linguistic influence of political correctness will affect society as a whole, entering the vernacular mainstream. Certainly, some of its output has made the transition from self-conscious editing to everyday professional usage.

In the sections that follow we examine specific changes in progress in neologisms, derivation and phrase structure, as well as general prescriptive recommendations for less biased usage. Our sources include journalistic writing, introductory social science texts, a database of scholarly abstracts (Wilson 1997), and communications manuals and texts for aspiring professionals. Our intent is to assess the extent to which prescription is becoming practice in an increasingly wider swath of American society and the English-language community in general.

2. Language revision in the academic trenches: undergraduate training

Political correctness has been most influential in the intellectual community, and scholarly texts and instructional materials illustrate the increasing effects of the movement. Sometimes, efforts to avoid generic *he* result in considerable differences in sequential editions of the same book. For example, in the first four editions of *Child Development and Personality* (Mussen—Conger—Kagan) generic *he* is common. As shown in (1) below, generic *he* in (1a) from the 1974 fourth edition is avoided in the fifth edition (1979) by various strategies (1b-c) such as pluralizing the nominal or pronominal subject agent ("infants") or avoiding referring to an agent ("One of the earliest smiles"). The stiff, clinical tone of "One of the earliest smiles" in (1b) or "The social smile" in (1d) almost seems to announce the absence of a pronoun. In the seventh edition (1990), impersonal *it* appears in the section on smiling and the more clinical "the social smile" is gone:

(1)

- a. When the young infant has acquired a schema for a face, he is likely to smile. (1974: 195)
- b. One of the earliest smiles appears around 3-4 months of age... (1979: 158)
- c. Four-month-old infants from varied cultural environments are likely to show a smile... (1979: 158)
- d. The social smile appears at 7 or 8 weeks of age... (1984: 126)
- e. The 3-month-old may smile in response to most human faces because it recognizes... (1990: 145)

In the first and second editions of *Conditions of Learning* (Gagne 1965, 1970), generic *he* is prevalent. In the third edition (Gagne 1977), *he* and *she* sometimes alternate by paragraph. Yet if there is an extended case isolated from other generic examples and generic *he* is employed, the passage such as (2a) viewed in isolation makes the text look like it might use generic *he* throughout (2a). This may be why in the next edition (Gagne 1985) the pronoun is sometimes replaced by repetition of the formerly antecedent noun and deletion of the possessive where possible as in (2b):

- (2)
- a. For example, the speaker might begin with the high cost of oil, imagining that this idea is located at the left of the doorway to the room. Then, proceeding clockwise, he might locate his next point (say, the scarcity of food supplies) as the closet door along the lefthand wall. If his next point concerns the incidence of starvation, this might be located in the left corner of the room. He would then continue this process until he had completed the main parts of his speech. (1977: 36)
 - b. Then, proceeding clockwise, the speaker [he] might locate the [his] next point. (1985: 56)

One of the most recent fields for linguistic revision has been in the description of people who have disabilities. Certain students described as "handicapped" in early editions of Good and Brophy's *Educational Psychology* are called in the fifth edition (1995: 585, 700) "students with disabilities" and "students with special needs". A similar development is found in the labeling of Down's Syndrome. Replacement of the terms *mongolism* and, especially, *mongoloid* began somewhat before broad attention was directed to the language of disabilities in general, possibly because describing people with this condition as having oriental features raises ethnic sensitivities, an area of social concern which preceded concern with rights of the disabled. The 1963 second edition of *Child Development and Personality* (Mussen—Conger—Kagan 1963) discusses "Mongolism, a condition of severe mental retardation." and "the mongoloid". In the third edition (Mussen—Conger—Kagan 1969) the only term used is *Down's Syndrome*, but the condition is only briefly mentioned. Interestingly, however, in 1974 we find in the fourth edition "mongolism, which is also called Down's Syndrome" but not the term *mongoloid*. This description is repeated in the fifth (1979) edition. In the sixth edition (Mussen et al. 1984) we find "Down's Syndrome (mongolism)".

While language use in textbook discourse reflects concerns about bias and may in turn influence the usage of students, prescriptions of unbiased usage found in communications texts may be even more influential. In the US much of the college population will take a course in communications, especially students in various subject areas under the rubric of business administration. This potentially provides an avenue for diffusion into the larger working population. Once again, there has been a gradual shift in communications manuals toward recommending unbiased language and a similar progression from gender issues to the other principal areas of concern.

In the first of three editions of *Business Communications* (Harcourt—Krizan—Merrier 1987), over six pages are devoted to "assuring unbiased language" with only gender bias considered. The second edition (1991) also

deals only with gender issues. The third edition (1996) devotes only three pages to the topic but briefly discusses race, religion and physical/mental condition. Ober's *Contemporary Business Communication* (1992) offers over four pages (95-99) of specific recommendations for "nondiscriminatory language" ranging from now common gender-neutral replacements such as *chair* for *chairman* to suggestions for representing disabilities such as "Mary, who has epilepsy" instead of "Mary, an epileptic". In ten volumes of communications texts dating from 1961 written by William C. Himstreet with a variety of co-authors, publishers and title changes, the first prominent discussion of gender issues and recommendations to avoid "sex-biased language" appears in *Business Communications: A Guide to Effective Writing, Speaking, and Listening* (Himstreet—Maxwell—Onorato 1982). The focus on gender continues in subsequent works until in Himstreet—Baty—Lehman (1993) there are between four and five pages on "bias-free language" touching on various categories, including a recommendation that *typical* should be used in place of *normal*, since the latter may imply that others are abnormal. Whether such substitutions are much of a solution to the issue is certainly questionable and points to the particular difficulty of finding neutral terms for physical and mental conditions. This has become of considerable importance within the disability rights movement. *Crippled* decades ago gave way to *handicapped* and *disabled*; *physically challenged* has gained currency in the last decade and now *differently abled* has been suggested. The integral concern with language within the movement is further indicated in the discussion at the 1997 conference of the Society for Disability Studies on the lack of a single cover term for a person's physical and mental status similar to those for other personal aspects such as race, gender, ethnicity, religion, and nationality. *Physicality* was proposed but not favored by some discussants, and *embodiment* was subsequently proposed.¹

The recency of the linguistic prescriptivism now associated with political correctness is evident in the variety of terms for the type of usage that is being recommended: *nondiscriminatory*, *bias-free* and *unbiased* are all in use. It is curious that so influential a trend has no cover term other than "political correctness", which pejoratively denotes the movement. As recent and diverse as the movement is, however, its effect on the lexicon has been accompanied by some morphological and syntactic ramifications as well.

¹ We would like to thank Anne Swanson of Sonoma State University for this information.

3. Change in progress: from the lexicon to derivation and phrase formation

3.1. An expanding lexicon of political correctness

As our preceding discussion might suggest, the lexicon is the area that has been most extensively affected by attempts to mandate sensitivity to diversity in society and culture. Even before the political correctness movement had its, for better or worse, current name and before the rise of the term *multiculturalism* in the 1980s, *undeveloped* referring to the economic condition of a country gave way to *underdeveloped* by 1949 (first OED citation) and it in turn to euphemistic *developing* by 1964 (first OED citation). We noted above a similar shift from *crippled* to *handicapped* and *disabled*, and the recent rise of *physically challenged*. The latter is the prescribed term of choice in the intellectual community, and *challenged* with a preceding adverbial has become the canonical adjectival descriptor for physical, mental or social differences. Various, one may be "physically challenged", "visually challenged", "financially challenged", and so on. The intent is to avoid words such as *disabled*, *blind* or *bankrupt*.² In the case of physical condition, it has been argued that using *handicapped* or *disabled* suggests a permanent lessening of ability whereas using *challenged* puts the given ailment in the context of the myriad possibilities of things, "challenges", that people have to deal with in their daily lives. Terms with *challenged* have become for many people, whether friend or foe of the broader political correctness movement, symbolic of the associated linguistic editing and prescription to the extent that constructing such terms has become something of a joke as in (3):

(3)

Examples of facetious *challenged*:

metabolically challenged	=	dead (Davies 1993)
generationally challenged	=	old, young [depending on the age of the user]
conversationally challenged	=	boring

It is sometimes a stylistic "challenge" to tell whether a writer or speaker is being serious or attempting humor when using a term such as *vertically*

² A guest commentator on the Cable News Network recently described a young woman who abandoned her newborn baby in a bathroom trash can at a school dance (after just giving birth) as "morally challenged", an unintentionally humorous if legally useful strategy in the litigious United States, especially since she had not yet come to trial.

challenged instead of *short* or *folically challenged* for *bald* or *balding*. Similarly, while *intellectually challenged* or *cognitively challenged* might be used in place of, say, *mentally retarded* or *brain damaged*, similar to Singapore Airlines' use of *intellectually disabled* in a 1997 advertisement mentioning its charitable contributions, they could also be used informally for comic effect in place of *stupid*. However, just as extensive use of a certain metaphor may ultimately render it a cliché, the use of a euphemism whether for intentional evasion or for transparent levity may ultimately lead it into common usage, without a euphemistic or satirical sense. Two syndicated articles on professional football appearing in the Somerville, New Jersey *Courier News* on October 19, 1997 respectively referred to a certain stadium as "acoustically challenged" (Palladino 1997) and to a team as "pass-rush challenged" (Corbett 1997). The articles were not editorials, in which journalists often try to impress each other as well as their broader readership. Nor, should we point out, were they strictly local journalism, since they were distributed by the national Gannett News Service. Yet, if the primarily middle-class readership of such newspapers continues to see neologisms with *challenged* in the daily press, the still self-conscious *challenged* pattern may become an everyday, non-self-conscious derivational form.

3.2. Derivational *-centric* and *-ism/-ist*

With the rise of multiculturalism as a social and educational movement in the United States, it has been fashionable to criticize fields such as history for having focused primarily on Europe and the West and, therefore, to have contributed inadvertently or intentionally to historical inaccuracy, incompleteness and societal bias in favor of the West. Thus, *ethnocentric* is now more often used pejoratively than not, as are derivatives such as *Eurocentric*, *Anglocentric* and numerous others. The suffix itself has not clearly become pejorative, however. *Afrocentric* studies and accounts of history abound and are promoted as alternatives to purely Western-based histories of civilization. In science, technology and business, *-centric* is generally neutral and assumes any favorable or unfavorable connotation in context.³ For example, in the 62 examples of *-centric* which we gathered from *General Science Abstracts*, *client-centric*, *document-centric*, *network-centric* (in computing), *info-centric*, *Web-centric*, and *user-centric* were used affirmatively, while *PC-centric* and *hospital-centric* were used negatively, and still others such as *host-centric* (in

³ Hyphens are sometimes used with *-centric* but often are not.

computing) and *process-centric* (in database research) were apparently neutral. In social and political discussion, however, we find that *-centric* derivatives quite often appear in a negative context: "adult-centric biases and ideologies", "hetero-centric bias", "a less media-centric way", "WASP-centric views". Yet in contrast with the latter examples from the abstracting data, *Afro-centric* (curriculum), *Hindu-centric*, and *China-centric* ranged from neutral to affirmative sense, again in context. What we may conclude is that *-centric*, though still denotatively neutral, has become in many fields at least semantically heavy and polemic, and in today's intellectual climate, pejorative (e.g., *phallocentric* in Rees 1991: 41).

If the core sense of *-centric* has increasingly polemic undertones, derivative *-ist* and *-ism* are even more polemic, semantically heavy, and potentially negative in sense. According to the OED (XIII: 74-76) *racism* first meant "the theory that distinctive human characteristics and abilities are determined by race", but the sense of *racism* and *racist* evolved by the 1940s, a decade after the OED's first citations, to encompass the sense of earlier *racialism* (first cited for 1907), "belief in the superiority of a particular race leading to prejudice and antagonism toward people of other races.". The earlier, less pejorative sense of *racism* has disappeared, and *racism/racist* has undoubtedly been responsible for analogous *-ist* coinages such as *sexist/sexism*, first cited by the OED for 1965 and *ageist/ageism*, first cited for 1970 (as *agist*).

Earlier in the century, especially in the United States, Cold War hysteria enhanced the newer, negative sense for *socialist* and *communist*, while from the political left *militarist* and *militaristic* became primarily negative. With the notable exception of *rapist*, first cited by the OED for 1883, *-ist* and *-ism* once denoted primarily a professional or personal interest without an implied negative sense. However, it is difficult to imagine a neutral professional term such as *economist* or *dentist* gaining currency in today's usage, where neologisms with *-ist* or *-ism* denote bias toward or against the referent of the stem. These now prevalent senses are not new, however. *Feminist* is first cited by the OED for the 1890s, and *racism* acquired the bias sense of *racialism* by the 1940s. More recent examples of *-ist* in its "bias against" sense include the four citations from the late 1980s provided by Rees (1991) for *fatist* and *fattism* (bias against those traditionally called fat), and one from 1989 for *heterosexist/heterosexism* (bias against homosexuals). On the model of *feminist* and, in its contemporary sense, *environmentalist* (which until fifty years ago meant one who believes in the preeminence of environment over heredity or other factors in shaping individuals and cultures), Rees cites two 1980s examples of *animalist*, and Siegenthaler (1993) pokes fun at Smith

College's disdain of *lookism*, "belief that appearance is an indicator of a person's value".

3.3. The demise of generic *he*?

Although the assault on impersonal generic *he* has gathered new strength in the last three decades, proposals for eliminating it are by no means new. Baron (1986) states that more than eighty bisexual pronouns have been promoted since the eighteenth century. Among these, nominative/objective *thon* (with genitive *thons*) was widely discussed and has appeared at times in dictionaries since it was first proposed by Converse (1884). In the last thirty years, competitors have proliferated. In her proposal of *heesh*, *hiser(s)*, and *herm* as (respectively) nominative, possessive, and objective third-person-singular personal pronouns, Timm (1978) cites no fewer than six other paradigmatic proposals in the 1970s (Orovan 1972, Densmore 1970, Miller—Swift 1972, Darnell—Brockride 1976, Mackay 1978, Longwell 1978).

In contrast with these largely failed offerings, many writers now use one or more of a variety of alternatives such as *he or she*, *one* and *s/he*. As we saw in Section 2, a stilted or detached tone is often a product of using these forms, especially in extended discourse, which may be amplified when paradigmatically extended to possessive *his or her* and objective *him or her*. Plural *they* is often prescribed in manuals as one strategy for avoiding biased language, as is eliminating personal pronouns where possible. In some academic discourse, writers alternate between the *he* paradigm in one sentence, paragraph, or chapter and the *she* paradigm in another, but this has little currency outside of academia.

The attempts of the early prescriptivists to eradicate singular *they* have proven futile, despite two centuries of presence in virtually every handbook of English. The argument against singular *they* continues to be that a pronoun cannot or should not have two grammatical senses, here, singular and plural. Despite the new prescriptivists' tacit conformity with this long-standing proscription if perhaps not the reasoning behind it, singular *they* persists and may survive its proscription. Singular/plural *they* is certainly no more or less logical or illogical than, for example, standard singular/plural second-person *you* or the use of third-person-singular verb forms as second-person-singular forms in formal registers in Spanish as in (4):

(4)

<i>Habl</i>	-a	<i>espanol?</i>
Speak	3s/2s (formal)	Spanish
'Does he/she speak Spanish?' and 'Do you speak Spanish?'		

In a study concluding that generic *he* has been a successful target of efforts for nonsexist language, Prögler-Rössler (1997) finds that in the responses of the 121 teenage British participants in her elicitation experiment *they* was used 59.7% of the time and generic *he* only 11.7%. Although measures were taken to obscure the purpose of the survey and to minimize attention to form, perhaps this figure would have been even higher if the students had completed their survey outside of their English class. For whatever reason, users of English apparently want a third-person-singular generic pronoun without the attendant awkwardness of *he or she* and, worse, *his or her*. Singular *they* may prove to be the successful candidate.

3.4. The internal structure of noun phrases

The collocation of adverbials with *challenged* and to a lesser degree with other past participles is an attempt at euphemism through lexical choice and complex adjective phrase formation. Similar attempts at semantic lenition have led to revision of noun modification from preposed to postposed modifiers. Since English does not allow adjectives normally to occur after the nouns that they modify, the switch to postposed modifiers entails the use of prepositional phrases and relative clauses as in (5):

- (5)
- a. disabled people > people with disabilities/people who have disabilities
 - b. poor people > people in the lower income bracket
 - c. colored people > people of color

Example (5c) is particularly interesting in that *colored* was once discouraged as a racist term, superceded by *Negro*; then *Negro* in turn was superceded by *black*; and, most recently in the United States, *African-American* has gained ground against *black*. *People of color* is sometimes used as an inclusive, dignified cover term for all non-whites by both members and non-members of various ethnic communities and has a long history (cf. Safire's 1988 discussion and references). Even though the term may have been in use since the late eighteenth century, it would be purely speculative to propose that *people of color* was a model for the new trend toward postmodification. Whatever the origin of this trend, so-called "people-first language" is often prescribed to focus on people and not their physical or mental features (cf. Himstreet—Baty—Lehman 1993: 211, following Taylor 1990). The trend is further illustrated in the title of the *Americans with Disabilities Act* (1990), by which the United States Congress legislated equality for disabled people in areas ranging from employment to physical access to and within hotel facilities.

4. Conclusions

Unless there is some radical social shift away from promoting the acceptance of diversity, the linguistic influence of so-called "political correctness" will continue, especially in the United States, where litigation and legislation continue to prescribe methods of equitable treatment of various segments of the population designated as minorities. However, the trends toward linguistic innovation based on sensitivity toward diversity are apparently limited largely to the intellectual community. Therefore, at this point we are hesitant to conjecture that a wide swath of changes in the English language such as those we have discussed will ever reach the non-self-conscious vernacular of the broad English-speaking population. Singular *they* is well established in vernacular English, but generic *he* also is at home in non-self-conscious colloquial usage. The *challenged* pattern is spreading but still retains its satirical effect in many cases.⁵ As for the distribution of new and old terms for disabilities and the disabled, our survey of the 1997 hotel guide to facilities at over two thousand Holiday Inns hotels in the United States turned up over one hundred instances of *handicap* or *handicapped* (e.g., *handicap rooms*) but only three instances of *physically challenged*, although we found twenty-two instances of collocations with *wheelchair* (e.g., *wheelchair accessible*) and eight instances of *ADA* or *Americans With Disabilities Act*. Clearly, diffusion of the new terms and structures has a long way to go to reach common usage.

The phenomenon that we have explored in this study is wide open to further and more extensive research. Written and spoken texts and larger corpora should be quantitatively examined in a broad spectrum of disciplines, occupations and registers. The snapshots that we have presented of textual revisions would appear to offer enticing prospects for future investigation. The specific changes that we have examined could in the future turn out to have been tenuous, and could later seem to be curious artifacts of a passing linguistic trend. Even if they persist, diffuse somewhat, and are accompanied by continued innovations, they may remain limited primarily to the intellectual realm. We feel that they will persist because of the prevailing legal and legislative climates in many English-speaking countries. We look forward to future studies of this new prescriptivism in English and its parallels in other languages as well.

⁵ Even as or perhaps especially as detached investigators, we appreciated the wit (while not concurring with the judgment) of sports columnist Jay Mariotti's (*Chicago Sun Times*, 6 December 1998) reference to our home state of South Carolina as "glitter challenged".

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*... but they, to make me grieve,
parts steal, let parts abide, ...
and even add parts, not to speak of all the
things they turn around, change,
misrepresent and utterly distort!*

Reflections on a poetic translation exercise

Niki Ritt, Vienna

Introduction

Over lunch at the beginning of last summer a few members of Vienna University's English Department found themselves talking about possible ways of presenting their common academic subject to a general public on the upcoming occasion of the official opening of new faculty buildings. Taking up an idea of Douglas R. Hofstadter, who, in his latest book *Le ton beau de Marot*, arranges his ideas and arguments around a collection of translations of the French occasional poem *À une demoiselle malade* by Jean Marot, which he had asked a large number of his friends and colleagues to do, we asked ourselves what would happen if we, in turn, decided to invite interested colleagues, students and friends to produce translations of a randomly chosen English poem. What we hoped was that a sufficient number of people would indeed feel tempted to participate in that exercise and that the results would be interesting enough to turn them into a little display and, possibly, to organise a public panel discussion on questions that, we hoped, would arise from the process.

The poem which came to be chosen was Thomas Hardy's *I look into my glass*. It goes like this:

*I look into my glass,
And view my wasting skin,
And say, 'Would God it came to pass
My heart had shrunk so thin!'*

*For then, I, undistrest
By hearts grown cold to me,
Could lonely wait my endless rest
With equanimity.*

*But Time, to make me grieve,
Part steals, lets part abide;
And shakes this fragile frame at eve
With throbbings of noontide.*

The choice was more accidental than carefully reflected. But that didn't really matter, we felt. All we looked for was a poem which was short, rhymed, metrically regular and fairly easy to understand. Hardy's poem happened to be the first to meet these requirements, so it was more or less accepted as soon as it was proposed. Emails were exchanged, posters put up and people talked to, and then everybody left Vienna for the usual things that academics spend their summers with. It was still a big open question at the time how many of us would really have a go at the poem and return their translations in the autumn.

In the course of September the first versions were dropping in and by the middle of October forty-two translations had been returned. Everybody was pleasantly surprised by such a large response, and the collected texts, which were made available in the common room of our department, were soon being read and studied with great interest.

And that's when the fun began. For each of us it had been quite challenging to produce one, two – or in some cases more – translations with which we dared to go public, so when we saw all the versions produced by others we were amazed to find that they were not only all strikingly different from one another but that a quite a decent number of them were really nice tries. It soon became obvious that where each of us had only seen and followed a few narrow paths towards a solution there were in fact a surprising variety of routes, all of which seemed to lead to Rome, so to speak, even though 'Rome' looked quite different depending on the particular side from which it was approached. The discussions that followed were highly stimulating and produced exhilarating insights into the complex system of choices one is confronted with by such an apparently straightforward task as translating a little poem from English into German.

This is not to say that we had not expected diversity, of course. Being professional linguists or literary scholars we were all aware, for example, that each of us commanded both English and German in their own idiosyncratic ways, so that it would have been a miracle if this had not shown up in the translations. Also, we knew that poetic translation would be particularly challenging in that there was not only meaning to be transferred into a new medium but in that the formal qualities of the original would have to be considered as well. Furthermore we recognised that poetic texts often convey their meaning on more than just a straightforwardly 'literal level' and that this would also complicate the translators' task.¹ In short, we were all well aware that transferring a possibly comprehensive mix of the formal and semantic qualities of the English original into a different medium would involve a large number of decisions, each of them with consequences for all the others, so that no two people were likely to end with identical results. However, vaguely anticipating what is likely to happen and actually seeing it happen with one's own eyes are two very different things. So, reading all the finished products in their flabbergasting variety was still a real eye opener.

So much about the background. In what follows, I would like to present a couple of the versions that were returned and briefly talk about the ways in which I found the exercise to give me new insights and increase my awareness of issues involved in understanding such issues as translation, poetry, literary form and linguistic meaning. Since, by training and profession, I am a historical phonologist, whose exposure to literary studies dates back some fifteen years, I can of course claim neither authority nor originality for the arguments I shall propose or the questions I shall raise. But that isn't really my intention. Instead I offer my personal thoughts merely to illustrate the insights that even an amateur may derive from a poetic translation exercise that is carried out in parallel by a group of interested students. Also, I have to add, my way of thinking about literary translation at the time of writing is inspired by Douglas Hofstadter's *Le ton beau de Marot* to such an extent that many of the ideas brought up in what follows may actually be his coming up in a different guise.

¹ Furthermore, participants had received only very vague instructions about the type of translation they were supposed to produce. In fact, when some of them had asked about that, they were informally told that any type of rendering they might think of would be welcomed. Thus they were implicitly encouraged to search for less obvious approaches to the problem, and this produced a couple of versions which quite deliberately seemed to re-interpret, parody or comment on the original, or expressed some of its themes in profoundly independent ways.

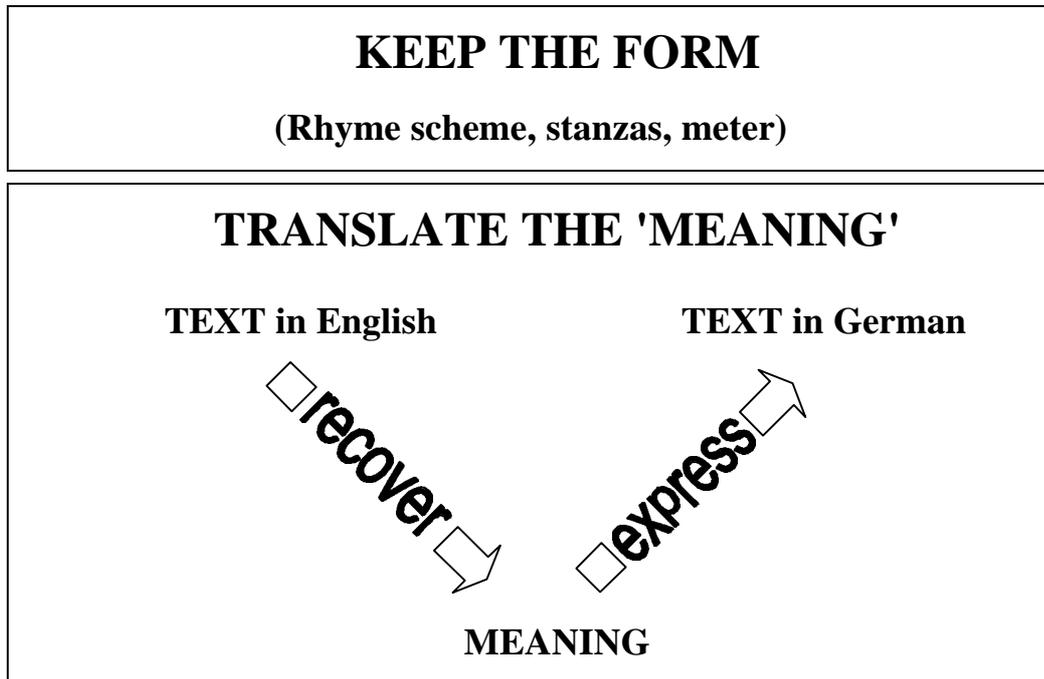
At this point, by the way, it might be a good idea to attempt a translation of your own, if you feel like it. While this is not strictly necessary in order to appreciate the following arguments, it may both enhance your awareness of the problems involved and help you to relate to them on a more personal level. Also, you may find it fun, of course.

1. A first approach: translate the meaning, obey the form

Going about my own translation, I first thought of the task roughly like this: on the one hand, there was the poem's meaning, expressed in English, and basically recoverable by anybody who knows the words and the grammar. It was this meaning, I thought, that I would have to recover and then re-express in German. That was all, I thought, that I would actually have to 'translate'. On the other hand, there were the formal properties of the poem: it consists of three stanzas, each of them containing four lines. In all of them, lines one, two and four contain six syllables, grouped into three iambs | - ' |, while line three has eight syllables or four iambs. Lines 1 and 3, and 2 and 4 form rhyming couplets, so that each stanza has the rhyme scheme ABAB. All rhymes are male. These formal properties, I thought, were not to be translated, but simply taken over, because their pattern can be appreciated quite independently of the language in which they happen to be realised. So, when I had my first go, I tried to say in German what Hardy had said in English while obeying the same formal constraints that he had followed. Schematically, my approach looked roughly like in (1) (see next page).

Needless to say, I found this rather difficult. First, I often found German words to be longer than the English ones to which they corresponded (E *look* - G *sehe, blicke, schaue*; E *glass* - G *Spiegel*; E *say* - G *sage*; E *would* - G *wollte*; E *eve* - G *Abend*; E *noontide* - G *Mittagszeit*; and so on), so that they wouldn't fit into the formal schema of the original, which I was determined to maintain. Therefore, I soon gave up the hope that I would manage to produce a German version that would follow Hardy's wording closely. I decided to look for alternative strategies of getting what I thought was the original's 'message' across. I soon discovered, for example, that I could afford to leave out any explicit mention of a *glass* or *mirror*, because when a man views his facial skin it is somehow self-evident that he is not just looking down his nose but making use of a technical device such as, typically, a mirror. My decision to take certain liberties with regard to the exact wording of the poem was soon reinforced by the fact that the German counterparts of some phrases sounded possible but rather inadequate to me. For example, while I somehow –

(1)



possibly uncritically –, assumed that for Hardy and his readership there will have been nothing strange in the concept of 'a heart growing thin', the German expression 'Mein Herz ist dünn geworden' struck me as rather silly, suggesting a heart that had slimmed rather than a heart that has become weak. Since the original had nothing ridiculous about it, I thought that its translation shouldn't have either, and therefore decided to sacrifice faithfulness on the word level to faithfulness on the level of ...well, what? Connotations? Tone? Overall impression? Anyway, after having given up all ambitions of translating the exact lexical content of the poem, I found it easier – though not really easy – to respect the formal constraints on the original. After considerable struggle I came up with this version:

Version 1

*Mein Herz schlägt noch zu laut.
 Warum hat's Gott denn nicht
 So ausgedörret wie meine Haut?
 Die welkt mir im Gesicht.

 Dann fühlte ich nichts mehr
 Und andre wär'n mir gleich.
 Ich wartete, die Seele leer,
 Ganz ruhig auf's Totenreich.*

*Doch setzt zu meinem Schmerz
Die Zeit von außen an,
Daß meine schwache Brust mein Herz
Nun nicht mehr fassen kann.*

2. Where and how does style come in?

I must admit that I was quite pleased with the result, even deluding myself into thinking that none of my colleagues would be able to do much better. As can be seen, however the liberties I had taken in the way I rendered the poem's contents were considerable and maybe questionable. I certainly had reshuffled them quite freely while often changing Hardy's imagery as well. For example, instead of a 'heart' that was 'not yet thin', I have a 'heart' that still 'beat (too) loudly'. My 'skin' is not 'wasting', but 'withering'. In stanza 2 I have 'soul' instead of 'heart', and the 'realm of the dead' instead of 'endless rest'; and my own stanza 3 employs a set of metaphors completely different from those in Hardy's original. Instead of noontide emotions throbbing within a body weakened and fragile at the evening of its life, I introduced the image of time eating up a person, starting from the outside (=body) and leaving the inside (=emotions, soul) for last, with the consequence that there necessarily comes an unbalanced state in which the eroded container becomes too weak or thin to hold its contents and nearly bursts under the pressure from within. If I was going to defend such a product as a proper translation, like I had informally defined it for myself at the outset, I would have to argue that the meaning of the poem was not contained straightforwardly within its words and the way they were arranged, but somehow at a deeper conceptual level, more autonomous of the poem's wording. Also, I had realised that apart from the poem's meaning and its metrical form, there was another level that had to be taken into account by a translator. Above, I vaguely described it as the poem's tone, or overall impression, but on reflection, 'style' might have been the term I was looking for. On that level, Hardy's poem struck me as elevated or solemn. Also I found it to be serious, melancholic and, in a way, bitterly ironical. Just like its metrical form, I had come to decide, the poem's style should not be altered in the translation.

3. Rethinking the roles of form, meaning and style in translation

Becoming aware of the role of this stylistic level in my translation, I was a bit puzzled by the fact that I somehow intuitively put it on a par with the poem's

metrical form. After all, the way I described it to myself as 'serious', 'solemn' or 'melancholic' suggested that there was something decidedly more semantic about it than about the poem's rhyme scheme or meter. Yet, like the metrical form I somehow didn't think that style or tone had to be 'translated' at all. Like the poem's meter, I somehow felt that its style was something that was not language-specific, was not, in other words closely associated with the language of the original at all and therefore did not require particular translation strategies. It could simply be taken as it was in the original and kept in the translation - I felt. But then again, it occurred to me that the poem's style was probably as much created by the language of the original as its meaning was, and so were, as a matter of fact, its straightforwardly formal qualities, when I came to think about it. My original conception of translation as something that was essentially done to the meaning of a text, while the formal constraints on it didn't have to be 'translated' but were merely to be 'respected', now suddenly struck me as completely unwarranted. Couldn't one think of poetic translation just as well as the recreation of a formal pattern within another language under certain semantic and stylistic constraints? Or as the rendering of certain stylistic effects with the additional task of reproducing a certain pattern of concepts and certain metrical regularities? Semantic, formal, and stylistic faithfulness all represent constraints on the output of a translation process, which takes some 'original text' as its input. In practice, all of them are always violated to varying degrees, but their relative importance ought probably not to be considered as axiomatic. To a relevant degree it may often be influenced by tacit cultural conventions on various levels, but in each individual case the challenge to weigh the constraints lies with the translators themselves.

Of course, all these rather abstract considerations may be sophistry of sorts and deserve to remain implicit in actual translation practice, yet on me they somehow had the very practical effect of making me feel better about the freedom I had taken in rendering the poem's meaning in the version reproduced above. I had done well on the formal side, I thought. As far as the tone of the poem and the overall stylistic impression it had made on me were concerned, I thought I had not done too badly either. So what, if I had been a bit sketchy on the meaning front. I was looking forward to seeing the attempts of others and what I might learn from them.

4. First alternatives

Take, then, the following two:

Version 2

*Wenn ich in den Spiegel sehe
 Und meine vertrocknende Haut betrachte,
 Denke ich: "Wollte Gott es gehe
 Daß mein Herz es ebenso machte!"
 Gleichgültig zu anderen Herzen,
 Die gegen mich erstarrten,
 Könnte ich einsam, ohne Schmerzen
 Auf die ewige Ruhe warten.
 Doch das Alter, trotz meiner Klage,
 Läßt manches unberührt,
 Daß die Sehnsucht der strahlenden Tage
 Noch der hilflose Abend verspürt.*

Version 3

*Verwelkt ist das Gesicht:
 Mein Spiegel stellt es bloß.
 Gott, wäre doch mein altes Herz
 Auch so empfindungslos!
 Dann könnte ich, ganz unbeirrt
 Durch anderer Herzen Schlagen
 Einsames Warten auf den Tod
 In Gleichmut still ertragen.
 Die Zeit erduldet's nicht:
 Sie sucht sich aus, was sterben soll, was leben.
 Und schmerzlich läßt sie meinen abendmüden Leib
 In mittagsmächtigem Gefühl erbeben.*

My first impression was that both of them had beaten me on the meaning side. Particularly in stanza three they seem to be more faithful to the original and manage to render the 'noon' – 'evening' image, which I had replaced completely. The first two stanzas of version 2 are particularly impressive in the way in which their wording follows Hardy's original very, very closely indeed. Version 3 does more rearranging there, but doesn't add or omit much either. Yet they both do take their semantic liberties as well. None of them gets across, for example, that Time is conceived of as being purposefully mean in Hardy's original. There, it does what it does, 'to make [the persona] grieve'. This, none of us had been able to reproduce. In my own first version and in version three, the persona's grief comes across merely as a necessary spin-off of Time's ways, but no purpose is suggested. In version two 'grief' is

even replaced by 'complaint'. So, while I had to realise that it was possible to do better than I had done with respect to semantic faithfulness, I was at the same time relieved to see that it seemed impossible to be perfect in this regard. While I had sinned a bit more, I definitely wasn't the only sinner, and there were no saints in sight.

How do versions 2 and 3 fare on the other levels, then? Fortunately, I found that they had made more compromises there than I had made. But they had each made them in different ways.

Take version 3. It follows the original's form relatively loosely. It has three stanzas, and it is also rhymed - but less so than the original. In each stanza it has only verses 2 and 4 rhyme, while verses 1 and 3 are unbound in this respect. Metrically, it follows the original only in the first stanza, and already there verse 4 is a bit problematic in that one has to put a possible but still slightly awkward lift on *so*, the second word in the line. Afterwards the metrical deviations from the original become gradually bigger, although a strict alternation is largely observed. The lines in the second stanza have four, three, four and again three lifts rather than three, three, four and three as the original. And the final stanza, with exception of its first verse, seems to have got completely out of shape: lines two and three have six beats each, and the last line five. Clearly, the resulting formal pattern of the translation does not appear to have been deliberately designed. Rather, one gets the impression that the translator attempted to be faithful to the formal patterns in the original at first but, as the translation grew, found himself forced to diverge from it. Forced, I would argue, by the translator's apparent decision to put meaning before form in his personal constraint ranking. The last stanza contains a clue. Its first line goes: *Die Zeit erduldet's nicht*, which reproduces the meter of the original exactly. At the same time, however, what it says, namely that *time does not tolerate it*, or *won't have it* has no literal counterpart in the original, which goes: *But time, to make me grieve*. Thus, the translation substitutes a statement about time's intolerance for a statement about the painful effects that time's actions have on the lyrical persona. In order not to lose this part of the content, the translator then adds the adverb *schmerzlich* to his versions of lines 3 and 4 of the last stanza. They go *Und schmerzlich läßt sie meinen abendmüden Leib/ In mittagsmächtigem Gefühl erbeben*, and are much longer than the corresponding verses in the original. Clearly, the translator was preoccupied that none of the lexical meaning of the original should be lost in the translation and preferred to sacrifice formal faithfulness instead. There can hardly be a better illustration, it seems to me, that formal and semantic constraints on poetic translation are in conflict with each other and challenge the translator to weigh them sensibly.

Look, in contrast, at version 2 now. Like version 3, it has also made its sacrifices on the formal level, but in a very systematic way. It follows the rhyme scheme of the original exactly. It also has three stanzas of four lines each. Prosodically, however, it is so irregular as to count as vaguely rhythmical prose rather than metrically bound speech. Nearly every single line contains more syllables than the original, and there are frequent deviations from its strictly alternating meter.

Version 2	Original
' - ' - ' - ' -	- ' - ' - ' -
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' - - ' - ' - ' -	- ' - ' - ' - ' -
' - ' - ' - ' -	- ' - ' - ' -
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- ' - ' - ' -	- ' - ' - ' -
' - ' - - ' - - ' -	- ' - ' - ' - ' -
' - ' - - ' - - ' -	- ' - ' - ' -

Thus, where version 3 makes little sacrifices on many formal sub-levels, gradually loosening constraints as it progresses, version 2 concentrates all its sacrifices on the prosodic level. To me, this has a rather strange effect. In the absence of any metrical patterning, the strict rhyme scheme seems to gain in relative prominence, and sticks out, somehow, as a somewhat contrived adornment of an otherwise rather prosaic text.

Stylistically, version 3 beats both my own version and version 2. As in the original its language is stylistically elevated. The effect is achieved through the use of slightly archaic words such as *Gleichmut*, impressive composites such as *mittagsmächtig* or *abendmüde*, specially coined it seems for the occasion, or syntactic parallelisms as in the line *Sie sucht sich aus, was sterben soll, was leben*. The tone of the translation impresses me as just as solemnly melancholic as that of the original. The only difference I appear to sense is that it is slightly less bitter than the original, and lacks its ironic touch, while at the same time coming across as slightly more dignified in a way. In comparison, the tone of my own translation strikes me as unduly

detached and analytically self-ironic, thus losing much of the solemn, slightly pompous melancholy of the original. Version 2, on the other hand, catches neither the solemnity nor the bitterly ironical melancholy of the original. Maybe because of the everyday vocabulary used in it, the lack of any rhetorical ornamentation and the complex hypotactical syntax, its style strikes me as rather dryly academic, a quality I did not sense in the original at all.

5. Level interaction and combinatory effects

Comparing versions 2 and 3 makes one aware of an aspect, however, which I have so far overlooked, namely that the semantic, the formal and the stylistic levels somehow hang together and should maybe not be regarded in isolation. Thus, it is obvious that the adornments of rhyme and meter have different effects in a text which otherwise is elevated in style and solemn in tone than in a text which is stylistically neutral and academic in tone. In the former case style and form mutually enhance each other to create a unified impression, while in the latter they contrast and make each other more obvious. For translators this means that they do not only have to try and be faithful to form, style and meaning individually, but that they might need to be faithful to the effects emerging from specific constellations of these three aspects as well. Taking this into account further increases my respect for version 3, because, one could argue, its stylistic pathos makes up, in a way, for the relative looseness of its rhyme scheme and meter, so that when one sums up the effects created on the two levels they come to match the original fairly well.

This theme brings up an issue which is often central in discussions of poetic quality and the possibility of poetic translation and which probably underlies such *topoi* as the one attributed to Robert Frost who allegedly defined poetry as the quality that 'disappears in translation'. It is the idea that in a good poem the metrical, the stylistic and the semantic levels ought to be so highly integrated that it should not contain a single word which is not conceptually necessary, stylistically adequate and perfectly adapted to the formal design of the poem at the same time. Personally, I think that the question of literary quality is not one which translators necessarily have to address, but what they still need to be aware of is the degree to which the involved levels interact in a specific text, because - quite apart from whether it is constitutive of poetic quality or not - the pattern of such interaction might represent a factor to be taken account in translation, as I have argued in the preceding paragraph.

Incidentally, there was one version among those that we received which seems to have ranked faithfulness to the form-meaning relationship more

highly than all other constraints. Apparently, its author shared Helmut Klingler's opinion that Hardy had often sacrificed conceptual well-formedness to considerations of rhythm and rhyme and decided to get this across in his translation. Here is what it looks like, then:

Version 4

*Ich schau in meinen Spiegel
Auf meine welkende Haut
Und sag, "Wollt' Gott, es hätt hingiegel
Mein Herz so abgebaut!"*

*Dann könnt' ich, ungeschmarten
Von Herzen mir erkalt',
Einsam auf meine Endlosschleife warten
Mit Gleichmut (halt).*

*Aber die Zeit, mich kummernd nur,
Teils stiehlt, teils läßt mich habends;
Und schüttelt dieses wacklige Gestell abends
Mit dem Summerton 12 Uhr.*

Being fairly true to the original's content and its poetic form, this version even goes as far as employing nonce-word formations like *hingiegel*, *ungeschmarten* or *habends* so as to make the lines rhyme. If in Hardy's poem sense is indeed sacrificed to aesthetic effect, then there can be hardly a more radical way of getting this across in translation.

Although it can be described in similar terms to versions 1 to 3, however, version 4 appears to belong to a different category of translations. Rather obviously, it highlights, exaggerates and thus parodies an aspect of Hardy's poem which arguably is there in the original but which its author, one assumes, would prefer to see overlooked rather than highlighted by his readers. What the translator of version 4 rendered, one might feel tempted to argue, was more his or her own personal reading of the text than the text itself. But what else can one render? As the contribution by Helmut Klingler makes clear, the question if the text is actually characterised by an awkward tension between formal and semantic considerations is anything but trivial, and diverse readers may easily arrive at diverse judgements about this. Could one not argue that versions 1 to 3, neglecting to highlight the arguable mismatch between content and form, had (mis-)interpreted the original text in a kind way, just as the author of version 4 had done in a mean way? It appears to me that one can indeed plausibly do so, and this brings up a whole series of related questions.

6. Multiplying meaning

One of them is obvious and relates to the 'meaning' of the text itself. So far, I have been pretending to assume that the poem's meaning could almost algorithmically be recovered through 'mere' knowledge of the words in it and the grammatical rules by which their arrangement is governed. But of course, this is not so. As is well known, meanings are time bound and subject to variation and change. And not only that. In fact, words and texts carry different connotations and meanings almost for each individual speaker and in each individual context. This reflects

the basic pragmatic principle that texts can only be interpreted in relation to the reality of the interpreter, that we do not read meanings from texts but into texts.

(Widdowson & Seidlhofer 1996: 125)

That understanding among speakers is possible at all depends crucially on the fact that we have learnt, to a satisfactory but definitely sub-optimal degree, to make allowance for all this variability, and that we keep constantly adjusting our hypotheses about what words, texts and utterances are likely to 'mean' for our partners in communication. And we do that with varying degrees of 'kindness' or co-operativeness. When we say that a certain text means something, we simply express our intuition that a particular text is normally intended to establish a certain common meaning among members of a specific group, and we typically (but definitely not always) include the author, the addressee(s) and ourselves in that group. As Henry Widdowson put it, the effect of a text

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.

(1997: 72)

In the context of translation, however, this condition does not hold anymore. By definition, the author of the original text belongs to a different cultural and linguistic community than the ultimate addressees of the translation. And the translator must have some access to both social groups and therefore belongs to neither in the same way as author and addressees do. The situation is complicated further if one takes the diachronic aspect into account. Thus, Hardy's community of addressees were, after all, Victorian speakers of English and not our contemporaries, and cultural conventions and values have definitely changed. What kind of 'meaning' should a translator of Hardy into German render, then? The reading that she thinks a Victorian reader would have given to the poem? Or the reading a contemporary English speaking reader would give to it? Even this could make a great difference. Take the common conception, for example, that it was unthinkable in Victorian times

to speak about sexual matters openly and directly. If this is true, one might interpret Hardy's poem as an attempt to express them metaphorically. The 'wasting skin' one might argue, might stand for the persona's loss of physical attractiveness, or sex-appeal. His 'heart', not having grown 'thin' yet, might represent his undiminished sexual desire. The following 'feminist reading', which was one of the versions returned in our common translation exercise clearly takes this view:

Version 5

1

*The poem's cant should not
befuddle your good sense:
it's not about the human lot,
it mourns his impotence.*

2

*Of hearts he talks a deal
but what he means is trite:
he's old and lost his sex-appeal
though not his appetite.*

3

*It's sheer hypocrisy
to promise unconcern
and stoic equanimity
could he but cease to yearn.*

4

*Pathetic fallacy
and mawkish pessimism
are Hardy's speciality
but warrant scepticism.*

5

*It is the tendency
Of every Tom or Mick
to blame the cruel Gods if he
cannot get up his ****.*

If this 'meaning' is to be rendered to a post-sexual revolution German-speaking audience, would one then not necessarily have to call spades spades, as version 6 (one of my later versions, I am ashamed to admit) does?

Version 6

*Mein Sex-Appeal ist weg.
Da hilft kein Leugnen mehr.
Doch noch ist Sex mein Lebenszweck,
Drum hab ich's leider schwer.*

*Denn ohne diesen Drang,
mir ständig einen Fick
zu suchen, wär' der Tod kein Zwang
Mehr, nur ein letzter Kick.*

*Doch leider hat die Zeit
Mir dieses Glück verpatzt.
Schon fehlt's mir an Gelegenheit,
Und meine Hose platzt.*

Or, leaving cultural and temporal considerations aside, what if Hardy was 'really' preoccupied with his wasting poetic creativity while not wanting to let go of his self-conception as a powerful artist? He may not have been able to admit such worries even to himself and therefore had to express them metaphorically in a forced attempt to produce a convincing poem. Would the translator then not have the right, or even the obligation to express this 'hidden meaning', as version 7 does?

Version 7

Trust me. The old chap's posing

A rendering of the deep structure of 'I look into my glass'
(with thanks to ***, for her inspiring commentary)

*Du starrst auf das Papier
und weißt da kommt nichts mehr.
Da reimt es nur noch "kalt" auf "bald"
Und innen bist Du leer.*

*Noch gibst du dich nicht auf
Noch tust Du so als ob
tief drin die Flamme loderte -
Die Hülle nur halb tot.*

*Doch bist du schon durchschaut
Ein trauriger Poseur.
Alt ist nicht nur die welke Haut
Dein Feuer brennt nicht mehr.*

Or what if you were translating Hardy's poem not within the context of an academic translation exercise at all, but for private purposes, to give to a group of friends, for example. What if you wanted your friends to read the text as a personal statement about yourself, in the same way as you might think that Hardy's friends could have read it as a personal statement about his 'self'? What then, if your skin has not withered yet in the same way as Hardy's might have done? What if your hair had grown thin instead? Would then the adequate translation of *I look into my glass and view my wasting skin.* not have to be something like *Ich greif mir an die Stirn, und merk' da wächst nichts mehr?*

I am aware, of course, that it would run against most people's intuitions to call versions 4 to 7 proper translations of Hardy's poem, but they do show that there is more than just one meaning to any text. Although the same would certainly also become clear in a comparison of attempts to render Hardy's text more 'literally', I find that the three (re-)interpretations just introduced make this essential point beautifully obvious and at the same time do so in a rather amusing way.

7. ... and form

What is true of meaning, however, may also be true of form. After all, poetic conventions, and cultural attitudes towards them change from period to period and from culture to culture. One translator, for example, complained to me, that the meter of Hardy's poem reminded him of a popular Austrian children's verse, so that taking it over would radically alter the effect of the text. The German version of a Victorian text ought to indicate, he suggested, its nineteenth century origin also on the formal level. What about a classical version then?

Version 8

*Saget, ihr Götter, mir an, warum ihr mein Herz nicht
Gleich der Haut mir verdorrt, welche der Spiegel mir zeigt?*

*Unempfindsam geworden für anderer Herzen Empfindung
wartet' ich, einsam und ruhig, bald auch schon ewig zu ruh'n.*

*Grausam und wenig gerecht ist die Zeit in der Wahl ihrer Beute,
Quält mit des Mittags Leid abends den schwächlichen Greis.*

Another contributor argued that, since metrically bound poetry has all but vanished from highbrow literary production in contemporary German speaking culture, while still thriving in folk literature, the obvious German counterpart would have to be written in a local dialect, because a standard version would strike contemporary readers as embarrassingly old-fashioned, an effect which Hardy's text probably did not have on *his* readers. Apparently, other translators shared this view, and we received one standard prose text, one metrically bound Carinthian and two Viennese versions. The latter are reproduced below.

Version 9

*I schau mi aun
Und volla foitn is mei gsicht
I woit mei heaz wa gonz genau
So gschrumpft doss ma fost scho bricht*

*Woi i gonz cool dann kennt
Wonn olle zu mia koit gworn san
Alanich woatn auf mei ewichs end
So ruhich ois wiar a stan*

*Owa de zeit de mocht ma schmeazn
De stüht ma wos und losst ma do no mear ois gnua
Und beittl mi wonns mia scho obnd wiad im heazn
Ois was no mittog und i no a bua*

Version 10

*I hâb in Spiagl g'schaut,
schiach und verlebt, und schrei:
Hergott, warum kânn ned wia'd Haut
mei Herz verschrumpelt sei'?*

*Dann warad's wurscht mir nur,
daß's nimma stehn auf mi',
alloan auf'd endlos lânge Rua
gânz lessig woatad i'.*

*Doch d'Zeit, die's schwer mir mâcht,
ans laßt, ans wegarâfft;
und beidelt, wech, mi' no' auf'd Nâcht
mit Mittâgsleidenschâft.*

8. Conclusion? You bet

As you can see, I have come a long way from the simple assumption that poetic translation was simply a task of transferring a particular meaning from one language into another, while paying attention to stanzas, rhyme and rhythm. Instead, the task involves a stunning variety of choices: one needs to weigh formal against stylistic and conceptual faithfulness, one needs to become aware of the relations among form, content and style in the original and decide to what degree they ought to be reproduced, one needs to select a target audience, define the cultural setting from which one is translating, choose from a large number of meanings that a text may be given, select the most suitable of poetic designs for the target text, choose among a number of

varieties in the target language. To attempt and answer the question by what principles these choices should be governed appears to be a daunting task, which is certainly beyond me. So, instead of going on about how all I actually intended to do was raise awareness of the issues involved and stimulate further reflection, I will finish this report by recommending Douglas R. Hofstadter's *Le ton beau de Marot* to all of you who think that poetic translation deserves a deeper treatment, and by giving, as a last example of the products that we received, a version which, although I find it powerful and moving, I would never ever have recognised as translation of Hardy's *I look into my glass*, had it not been for all the others.

Version 11

In Kürze:

*Steinige Halde und Schilfrohr
am Teich; drin fröstelnd ein Mond: ein Frosch
quakt.*

Dasselbe, (post-)Eliotisch, oder, Was der Frosch quakt

*Was fröstelt dich, reizender Jüngling, oh!
Jüngling nicht mehr, an des Teiches Rand:
so unvollkommen dein früher Tod, gehst du gleichwohl
untot einher?*

*Gaukler, gespenstisch dein Spiel! Der Weg, den du weist,
du verwarfst ihn um eines Bildes willen,
warfst mich in Ödland, gabst mich erneut preis
dem Tod.*

*Reut dich dein rascher Schritt, die Erinnerung
früherer Tage, was war und nicht ist ein Windschlag
durchs Herz, - Herz, untot mein Herz,
ach, wärst du tot.*

Index of translators

Version 1:	Nikolaus Ritt	Version 6:	Nikolaus Ritt
Version 2:	Helmut Klingler	Version 7:	Barbara Olsson
Version 3:	Ernst Ritt	Version 8:	Nikolaus Ritt
Version 4:	Michael Draxlbauer	Version 9:	Harald Mittermann
Versions 5 & 10:	Margarete Rubik	Version 11:	Brigitta Tranker

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The original is unfaithful to the translation.¹ Thoughts on translating a poem by Thomas Hardy

Helmut Klingler, Vienna

It is more or less accepted that Robert Frost's² contention that "poetry is what is lost in translation" must be true; the essay by Niki Ritt can be taken as a good exposition of some of its implications. However, what struck me most in reading the many versions elicited by the project was how little seemed to be lost in many, and what actually was gained in some of them—pointing rather to the situation expressed in the provocative statement that serves as my title. Since the reasons for this impression have some bearing on approaches to poetry, it seems worthwhile to try and put them into a coherent order.

First of all, in considering the surprising variety of translations and versions, I think it is necessary to put my cards on the table and state what I think really happened. To my mind it was not basically the poem *qua* poem that elicited this response but the *challenge* to produce something/anything. This forced whoever wanted to participate to ponder what had been put in front of him or her and to produce some reaction caused by it. The crucial point is that almost anything with which a responsive human being is forced to concern herself/himself will cause a personal reaction according to the disposition of the one who reacts, and this is not necessarily based on the quality of the original stimulus. The inkblots of a Rorschach test provide a convenient illustration of this.

Now what was it that essentially the Hardy poem presented for a reaction? It was, stripped of its details, the (sad) thought of the discrepancy between the decay of ageing and the persistence of desires that could no longer be fulfilled. I think it can be demonstrated that what was provoked by this was actually very often strictly personal.

¹ "El original es infiel a la traducción" J.L.Borges, "Sobre el 'Vathek' de William Beckford", quoted in *The Oxford Dictionary of Modern Quotations*.

² *The Oxford Dictionary of Modern Quotations* gives as its source Louis Untermeyer's *Robert Frost: a Backward Look* (1961), p.18. The quotation continues with the warning "It is also what is lost in interpretation".

A striking example of this seems to me the expression of irritation at what was considered to be characteristically male posturing. Except for the name of the author, I do not find anything in the poem that is exclusively male. As a mere man myself, I personally should have thought that concern with ageing skin, of all features, would actually point to a feminine attitude,³ seeing that male stars quite severely challenged in the smoothness aspect have succeeded in remaining or even becoming sex symbols. Also the "throbbings" shaking a "fragile frame" would seem to indicate rather a cliché of feminine behaviour in the bodice-ripper school of women's fiction. It appears to me that what annoyed many women about the poem must have been the impression that it was a typically male reaction to claim things to which they have no right (and that, speaking of a "shrunken" heart, the poet would symbolize some other physical organ rather than an emotional state).

Whatever may or may not be acceptable about this contention, I think it was the content of the poem that was mainly responsible for a reaction, and not its form. The thought of inevitable ageing and loss, and dissatisfaction with or protest against it, is one "to which every bosom returns an echo", as Dr. Johnson put it with regard to Gray's *Elegy* (and as, surprisingly to me, even most of the entries by younger colleagues proved). Unlike Gray, however, I do not think that Hardy succeeded in finding an expression for the universal thought or emotion that is in itself so convincing that it becomes inevitably associated with it and, more importantly, that any change would be perceived as a loss. I would further suggest that it was precisely this weakness, which I shall try to demonstrate in the following, that made it possible to produce so many translations or versions that are satisfactory and/or challenging in themselves and possibly improvements.

The term 'improvement' inevitably implies the assumption of standards against which the quality of a poem can be measured, and claiming such standards unfortunately seems to carry with it more than a hint of discredited neoclassical rigour. Nevertheless, I venture to assert that certain principles are not constricting rules but constituent elements of a successful poem. Among them, I would put first that images should be, if not coherent, at least not contradictory of the thought which they are intended to express. To my mind, this is a fault which the very first stanza does not avoid:

I look into my glass
And view my wasting skin,
And say, "Would God it came to pass
My heart had shrunk so *thin!*"

³ *Vide* one (male) version where the physical failing is transposed to loss of hair—something to which several scalps, alas, "return an echo".

As the following stanza points out, the wish is for the heart to have grown so thin because then it would have become callous and undisturbed by feelings. Now I do not think that it is possible to defend the use of "thin" in this context. Far from being more acceptable in English than in German, as Niki Ritt suggested, in connection with "skin" it is in fact impossible to prevent the association with "thin-skinned" (the plain sense is after all, "I wish my heart had shrunk as thin as my skin"), and this comparison evidently is not merely not contributing to the intended sense but flatly contradicting it. This can be shown by a replacement of the inappropriate word:

I look into my glass
 And see skin old and rough,
 And say, "Would God it came to pass
 My heart had grown so tough!"

It can be objected that this replacement does not in itself produce a good or arresting image but merely an unexceptional exposition of a hackneyed thought. However, the original phrase is not a contradiction of the kind which would arrest the reader's attention as a deeper and less hackneyed insight, but on any examination stands out as a fault. In another well-worn phrase, it is not enough for a poet to merely surprise the reader by an unexpected word; he must be able to surprise convincingly⁴.

Moreover, it is impossible to avoid the damaging conclusion that the author, having started out with a terse statement, then found that he needed a rhyme and instead of producing one that added to the sense (or at least did not contradict it) was content to use the very first adjective that fitted the sound, more or less regardless of its meaning — in fact reproducing exactly the procedure of the average translator, who also has to cast about for words fitting a rhyme in reproducing the form of a poem in a foreign language.⁵

⁴ Compare an unexpected use of images, which at first seems a simple mistake by displacement, but on consideration reveals an unexpected possibility of a (rather cynical) alternative meaning:

*Before the beginning of years
 There came to the making of man
 Time, with a gift of tears,
 And grief, with a glass that ran.* (A.C. Swinburne, *Atalanta in Calydon*)

⁵ Compare the way in which A.E. Housman, a poet slightly younger than Hardy, but belonging to the same period, manages to make the rhyme words appropriate to the meaning and in fact inevitable regardless of the rhyme:

*The thoughts of others
 Were light and fleeting,
 Of lovers meeting
 Or luck or fame.*

Less damaging, but at least to my mind also unsuccessful is the image in the final stanza:

But Time, to make me grieve,
Part steals, lets part abide;
And shakes this fragile frame at eve
With throbbings of noontide.

I would argue that this is not in itself a powerful image in that "throbbings" are not associated with noon in such a way that they would be impossible or inappropriate in the evening. It is rather that the discrepancy between actual age and youthful desires is expressed, conventionally enough, by the opposition of noon and evening, and that the comparison is merely a convenient counter rather than a valid 'objective correlative' permitting of a special insight when associated with (heart-)throbs. Again I think it would be possible to rephrase the thought with greater coherence and no significant loss:

But Time, to make me grieve,
Part steals, lets part abide;
Scorching this fragile frame at eve
With fires of noontide.

Readers of these 'improvements' have suggested that they make a more positive figure of the presumed speaker of the poem, or at least a more energetic one. I think that this may be another fallacy, and it ought not to be assumed that weakness of character can be adequately expressed by 'weak' (in the sense of 'defective') expression, or clumsiness by clumsy phrasing — one only has to think of Jane Austen presenting stupid or boring persons in ways that are neither the one nor the other.

I would further argue that the phrasing of the poem as a whole is perfunctory rather than felicitous or impressive, as if the author, having set

*Mine were of trouble,
And mine were steady,
So I was ready*

When trouble came. (More Poems, VI)

In this case, the expected pairing of ready:steady is not a constraint, because being ready for trouble is what the poem is about, and being able to think steadily of trouble is the necessary opposite to having merely fleeting thoughts of ephemeral things, such as "lovers meeting", or fame, seen as impermanent compared to certain trouble in quite a number of poems, including Gray's *Elegy* and Johnson's *Vanity of Human Wishes*. This, of course, both validates the stresses put on these words and gives the impression of inevitability and rightness, rather than perfunctoriness, to the other rhymes (fleeting:meeting and fame:came). I do not, by the way, make any great claims for the profundity of Housman's poem, but merely argue that at least it finds a memorable way of expressing its possibly facile and/or sentimental skepticism and pessimism.

himself a task, had not bothered too much about how to fulfil it. In this connection I would point to the rather incongruously biblical tone of "would God it came to pass" and to the suggestion inherent in the archaic and quasi-religious "abide". The latter inevitably recalls the famous hymn "Abide with me"⁶ and with it a positive connotation that does not very well fit into the context.

Even the versification as such does not strike me as contributing in a significant way to the effect of the poem. On the contrary, I perceive an underlying suggestion of doggerel, which comes out quite strongly by another rearrangement:

I look into my glass,
And view my wasting skin,
And wish it came to pass
My heart had shrunk so thin.

For then I, undistrest
By hearts grown cold to me,
Could wait my endless rest
With equanimity.

But Time, to make me grieve,
Part steals, lets part abide;
And shakes this frame at eve
With throbbings of noontide.

What this rearrangement highlights is an effect which persists in the original, namely the total and at least in my impression mechanically rigid regularity in the distribution of stressed and unstressed syllables: there is not even a hint of rhythmical variation, such as can be found in almost all English poetry (including the heroic couplets of the greater neoclassical poets). The resulting barrel-organ movement is totally inappropriate to the elegiac/negative mood (and the plodding rhythm cannot be taken as providing a quite deliberate contrast, as does the jaunty movement in the Swinburne poem referred to in footnote 4). I would further suggest that the danger of monotony was something that the poet consciously perceived and tried to counter by lengthening the third line, as the syllables added hardly contribute to the meaning — the effect introduced by making the poem's speaker 'say' what he would wish (in line 3) instead of silently 'wishing' (or 'thinking') it could in

⁶ The *Oxford Dictionary of Quotations* suggestively quotes "abide", apart from the *Book of Common Prayer* (with 3 instances) only once each from this hymn by H.F. Lyte, from Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra*, (significantly) from Matthew Arnold's *Sonnet on Shakespeare* — and from Hardy's poem.

fact be counted as another inadvertent clumsiness. Here, too, changes made by a translator could be seen as improvements rather than blemishes.

To sum up, I think the poem is a comparatively weak production with discernibly perfunctory and mechanical elements — in fact, rather like a set task, or an ordinary translator's procedure in attempting to reproduce a poem from another language. And it is precisely these weaknesses that make it possible for a gifted writer taking Hardy's framework as a starting point to produce a better realisation of its central idea. It is perhaps significant that (at least in my judgement) this should have happened above all in two of the versions in dialect (I have ventured to regularize their 'orthography' by consistently applying the spelling principles of H.C. Artmann).

i hob in schbiagl gschaut,
 schiach und valebt, und schrei:
 hergod, warum kaun ned wiad haut
 mei heaz vaschrumpet sei?

daun warads wuaschd mia nua,
 das nimma schden auf mi;
 allan aufd endlos launge Rua
 gaunz lessich woated i.

doch d zeit, des schwea ma mocht,
 losst ans, ans weggaroft,
 und beidlt, wech, mi no aufd nocht
 mit mittogsleidnschoft.

Here, not only the coherent imagery but also the more varied rhythm at least in stanza one does seem to help the meaning: inversions in lines 2 and 3 express the sense of outrage versus resignation more vividly.

i schau mi au
 und volla foitn is mei gsicht
 i woit mei heaz wa gaunz genau
 so gschrumpet das ma fost scho bricht.

wäu i gaunz kuul daun kennt
 waun olle zu mia koit wuan san
 allanich woatn auf mei ewichs end
 so ruhich ois wia r a stan.

Owa de zeit de mocht ma schmeazn
 de stüüt ma wos und losst ma do no mea wia gnua
 und beidlt mi wauns mia scho obnd wiad im heazn
 ois wars no mittoch und i no a bua.

This poem seems to me to have produced images in stanzas two and three that are much stronger than anything found in the original, thus effectively proving it 'unfaithful to its translation'.

"People" in South African English – a lexical barometer of general socio-historical trends¹

Ute Smit

In its 200-year history, English has been used in South Africa as national lingua franca as well as language of intragroup communication by members of all population groups. In this article an investigation of the lexical field "people" in South African English is presented, which is based on the *Dictionary of South African English on Historical Principles* (1996). The analysis of the findings reveals the categorisations and criteria relevant to this lexical field. At the same time, it clearly reflects the close link to be found between the linguistic development of South African English and more general socio-historical trends.

1. Introduction

As in all other British ex-colonies, public life in South Africa today would be unthinkable without English; not because of the international status this language holds but because of its local socio-historical standing. English has become a carrier of societal hierarchies and, at the same time, reflects how dynamically these hierarchies have been changing over time in response to wider socio-political developments. That this social function of English is not only generally true, but also observable in specific linguistic items, will be illustrated in this paper. By analysing the lexical items denoting "people" in South African English I will focus on the socio-historical relevance of existing and changing semantic patterns and criteria.

In order to imbed the lexical field study proper, the analysis (see 4.) is preceded by a brief socio-historical overview of English in South Africa (see

1 I am grateful for the critical comments I received on two related papers: "Ethno-linguistic identity as common denominator – a socio-historical investigation of the lexical items for 'people' in South African English" (presented at the conference "The History of English in its Social Context", Sept. 1997); and "South African English lexemes for South Africans – a case in point for a developing multicultural standard of English" (presented at the conference "Major Varieties of English", Nov. 1997), both of which are to appear in the respective conference proceedings.

2.) and a discussion of the relevant theoretical and methodological considerations (see 3.).

2. English in South Africa

The history of English in South Africa started in 1806 when the English seized the Cape from the Dutch and has continued uninterrupted until today.²

(a) Colonial era (–1880): From the beginning, English was seen and placed in direct competition with Cape Dutch/Afrikaans and actively supported with the aim to replace the latter. This meant that the first local, South African variety to start developing was an L2 amongst the Afrikaans-speaking groups, comprising white and, the already then socially distinct, coloured people.³ With the first wave of settlers in the 1820s the seeds for the first local L1 were sowed in the Eastern Cape and led to a dialect which merged the different features of the imported English varieties (lower class speech of London and home counties) and incorporated many features from the neighbouring Cape Dutch/Afrikaans-speaking farmers. Another L2 variety started to emerge in the various mission schools, where a handful of black Africans were educated (together with white children). Due to their low numbers it is, however, a bit difficult to speak of a fully-fledged Black South African English variety at that time. A second L1 variety developed in Natal where, between 1848 and 1862, middle and upper class families from predominantly Northern England settled. This socio-linguistically very different group had little contact with Afrikaans speakers. Their original English dialects, social standing, continuing contact with England and local connections led, not unexpectedly, to a very different variety of L1 South African English than the earlier one in the Eastern Cape. For manual labour they relied on Indian indentured labourers from 1860 onwards, who subsequently formed a further L2-speaking group.

(b) Era of the new society (–1948): The discovery of gold and diamonds in the second half of the 19th century led to intensive industrialisation and urbanisation in until-then internationally unattractive parts of the Boer Republics. Sociolinguistically, this meant that, on the one hand, English

2 The following categorisation and presentation is based on Lanham (1996:20). For more detailed accounts see e.g. de Klerk (ed.) 1996, the many publications by Lanham, e.g. 1985; Lass 1995; Mesthrie 1992.

3 In South Africa "coloured" refers to people of racially mixed descent. Like all other racial terms, it is not uncontroversial. While some reject it for its discriminatory usage during apartheid times, others accept it since it reflects an actual social situation.

became firmly established as the only language of economic and social advancement and, on the other, that its varieties started to stratify socially. This continued into the 20th century despite, and partly because of, changing political constellations.⁴

(c) Apartheid era (–1994): With apartheid, Afrikaans was installed as the main political and administrative language. This had immediate effects on English. Together with the strict separation of the "racial groups" (e.g. no L1 teachers in non-white L2 classrooms), it led to a remarkable drop in standard of L2 proficiency, but, as a counter reaction to the enforced use of Afrikaans, to an even more fervent support for English amongst L2 speakers (with the exception of the ruling white minority, of course). Besides very positive attitudes to English, this also meant a wide-spread use of English in these communities.

(d) Era of the new South Africa: The 1990s have brought unprecedented socio-political changes, which on the "language front" have led to the first multilingual language policy for the nation. While this seems to point to a more even distribution of functions amongst the 11 official languages in the future, at present English still holds an unassailable, yet not uncontroversial, position as major political, economic, public and also educational language (cf. e.g. Branford 1996).

The historical events that have made South African English what it is today can be interpreted from two points of view, the linguistic and the extralinguistic ones. With regard to the latter, the language's history illustrates the society's century-old social divisions along racial, or more generally, ethnical lines.⁵ Despite the clearly established separation, however, communication between the groups has always been necessary – English soon took over the function of lingua franca. At the same time, all groups wanted to play an active part in national public life. English could, therefore, not only be

⁴ A linguistically very interesting development in this period is the language shift that took place in the Indian community, from their various Indian L1s to English. For a detailed description of the language shift in this community cf. Mesthrie 1992; for the South African Indian English lexis cf. Mesthrie 1990.

⁵ While race relates to "physical variations singled out by the members of a community or society as socially significant" (Giddens 1997:212), ethnicity is described more broadly as "the cultural practices and outlooks of a given community of people that set them apart from others. Members of ethnic groups see themselves as culturally distinct from other groups in a society, and are seen by those other groups to be so in return. Different characteristics may serve to distinguish ethnic groups from one another, but the most usual are language, history or ancestry (real or imagined), religion and styles of dress or adornment." (Giddens 1997:210)

used for clearly marked ideational purposes but needed to also be appropriated for interpersonal ones, expressing, amongst others, different social identities. From a linguistic point of view, the overview has not only shown that South African English is, due to the various language contact situations, a distinct variety of English, but also that it has developed a range of local varieties spoken by speakers of the different (originally) L1 and L2 groups. In sum, the extralinguistic and linguistic aspects cannot be dealt with separately, but must be seen as two sides of the same coin, as both taken together make up the typical features of South African English as a nativised and acculturated language, i.e. a language with its own linguistic and cultural identity (cf. Kachru 1994:240). Consequently, any analysis that aims at giving a rounded description of (an aspect of) South African English cannot satisfactorily deal with one aspect only and ignore the other.

One aspect of language which can be used to describe the high degree of localisation of South African English is the lexicon,⁶ as simple etymological investigations already reveal: the common South African English words contained in *The South African Pocket Oxford Dictionary* (1987) consist of loanwords from Dutch/Afrikaans (52%), calques and independent coinages in English (18%), and loans from Bantu languages (11%) (summarised in Görlach 1996:429). This high sensitivity to local circumstances and needs can be made use of for more in-depth analyses of the South African English lexicon.

3. The project

Instead of trying the impossible, namely to describe the whole lexicon at once, the present project has been more modest in settling for a specific lexical field, which, at the same time, should allow a detailed description of the South African society. Therefore, it seemed to be the most promising to concentrate on the lexical terms for citizens or inhabitants of South Africa.

The aim of this study is then to establish the criteria for group differentiation as found in the South African English lexicon and, if possible, to trace the development of these criteria during the language's 200 year history. The ulterior motive—and final goal—is finally to find out in which ways the lexical realisations of South African social groupings reveal people's conceptualisations of their societal structure and dynamics.

6 This importance of the continuously changing and diversifying lexicon is also reflected in the long-standing tradition of South African English lexicography (for an overview cf. Silva 1996:196–208).

Seeing that South African English is so diverse and constantly developing in various communities, my endeavour has been to focus on that part of the entirety of the South African English lexicon which is sufficiently established in a major and generally accepted dictionary. This should ensure that it is shared by a high percentage of South African English speakers and results based on it reflect generally held structuring categories.

The most useful dictionary of South African English for such purposes is presently the *Dictionary of South African English on Historical Principles* (1996; henceforth *DSAE*). This dictionary is the latest and most comprehensive product of an experienced dictionary-making team, whose aim it was "to map and illustrate the complex landscape of that variety of English which is particular to South Africans" (*DSAE*, preface). This has to be seen in connection with the editors' basic understanding that

South African English is the property not only of South Africa's relatively small number of English-speakers (about 10% of the population), but also of the much greater number of people who use English as a second or third language. All varieties of English are represented in this dictionary, and the provenance of regional or 'group' vocabulary is provided wherever a word is not widely familiar to South Africans. (*DSAE*, preface)

Similar to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, the dictionary includes etymologies and citations and, furthermore, indicates connections to international or other varieties of English, where applicable. Based on an extensive collection of written and spoken texts, the approximately 8500 entries were researched in great detail and only fully included when a reliable amount of citations was found. When less clear-cut cases were included, they are marked as not fully integrated ("||"). In sum, this dictionary adheres to theoretically sound and strictly applied criteria, which guarantee reliability.

While this dictionary can be described as a trustworthy source for the normal dictionary user, it might not necessarily be as helpful in a linguistic investigation since any dictionary undoubtedly holds methodological weaknesses when used as data basis. Most importantly, it presents de-contextualised, "pre-digested" information. This means that the procedure of collecting instances (in texts), selecting and deciding on which ones to include, and of analysing their meaning has already been undertaken. While this cuts down on research time, it also means that the dictionary editors' denotations, sense differentiations and general categorising have to be accepted without questioning. At the same time, however, the dictionary as source is promising. The entries represent an extensive selection of texts, which allow a good insight into the lexical breadth of South African English. *DSAE* in particular was collated with the explicit idea to represent all varieties

of South African English, but only by those lexemes sufficiently substantiated in usage. So, the items extracted from it seem to be particularly well placed for an investigation such as the present one. To sum up, while the dictionary as data source might not allow for a fully-fledged description of all the lexemes for "citizens or inhabitants of South Africa", it offers a good overview of the lexical range, on the basis of which the research aim of this study can be tackled.

From a theoretical point of view, the investigation falls into the fairly well established area of semantic or lexical field studies. Traditionally, such studies stand in the structuralist tradition (cf. e.g. Coseriu 1970, Coseriu & Geckeler 1981; Kastovsky 1982), which offers a well-founded theory and methodology, provided that one's semantic field belongs to the "functional language", i.e. it does not show any diachronic, diaphasic, diastratic or diatopic variation (cf. Dupuy-Engelhardt 1993:24). Resulting from this prerequisite it is not recommendable to concentrate on fields that are structured extralinguistically (cf. Dupuy-Engelhardt 1993:25–6).

In contrast to that approach, which clearly differentiates linguistic from extralinguistic, conceptual semantics regards language as a cognitive entity and builds on the close connection of the extralinguistic and the linguistic; if not for any other reasons than the psychological reality both entities share.⁷ For fields of a more encyclopedic nature, such as the present one, it is thus the more appropriate approach to follow (cf. Dörschner 1996:21-2).

Besides its extralinguistic nature, the semantic field chosen here has another peculiarity: it is meant to be characteristic of the local part of a variety of English only. The concern here is to look at that part of the South African English lexicon that has been established in and is unique to South Africa, and not the one it has in common with other varieties of English world-wide. This entails that meanings shared with other Englishes are excluded and, at the same time, all South African English meanings are included that relate to citizens or inhabitants of South Africa, irrespective of their diachronic, -phasic, -stratic, and -topic status. The structuralist prerequisite of "functional language" thus cannot be complied with. Instead, the conceptual approach, as applied by e.g. Lutzeier (1993), Müller (1993), has been adopted in this study of all the lexemes recorded in the *DSAE* which describe citizens or inhabitants of South Africa.

7 For more detailed discussions of lexical field research and its recent developments cf. e.g. Dörschner (1996), Lutzeier, ed. (1993).

4. Analysis

4.1. Data

As preliminary step the core of the field needed to be defined, and, since no lexical realisation could be found, the paraphrasis "people (individuals and groups) originating from or living in South Africa" was chosen.⁸ At the same time, this description allows for a very broad field and subsumes a number of more specific fields, such as individuals vs. groups; general vs. specified terms (e.g. by type of work; family status); and functional differentiation (e.g. terms of address and reference vs. terms of reference). In order not to mix apples with oranges, I will focus on the first aspect – "general" terms – in the following.

With the exception of proper names (i.e. political parties, church denominations, tribal names), this category contains all those words which, according to the dictionary definition, denote a person/people living in or originating from South Africa (male and/or female) without giving further sociological and psychological specifications as to age, family status, social status (including economic, professional or educational status), personality traits, psychological states, and social circumstances. This has led to the 102 items listed alphabetically in Table 1. A basic functional analysis can be done based on the labels used in the dictionary. These reflect the existing diachronic, diaphasic and diatopic heterogeneity, which divides the items into 3 groups: the ones without any labels; those marked as connoting offense ("derog", "off"); and the rest marked as no longer in "normal" use ("hist", "obs").

Table 1. "General" terms, in alphabetical order (102 items)

abalumbi // <i>obs?</i>	crunchie <i>slang, derog,</i>	Maburu // <i>rare</i>
African	<i>off</i>	Malay
Afrikander <i>obs</i>	Dutch <i>hist</i>	Mardyker <i>hist</i>
Afrikaner	Dutchman <i>obs, then</i>	Masarwa <i>derog</i>
amabhulu // <i>derog</i>	<i>derog</i>	mealie (-muncher)
amabhunu // <i>derog</i>	Engels	<i>derog, rare</i>
amakula // <i>derog</i>	Engelsman	Meraai <i>derog, off</i>

8 The DSAE entry for the most likely lexical candidate, "South African", reveals the semantic changes this term has undergone in this century and thus rules it out as prototypical object.

amangesi // <i>obs</i>	English	mlungu
anderskleuriges //	Englishman	munt <i>derog, off, slang</i>
Arab	Eurafrican <i>obs?</i>	muntu
Asian <i>hist</i>	European <i>obs</i>	national unit <i>hist</i>
Asiatic <i>off, hist</i>	free black <i>hist</i>	native <i>obs, off</i>
Bantu (<i>off</i>)	g/Gammat <i>derog, off</i>	nie-blanke //
bastard <i>hist</i>	gattes // <i>derog</i>	non-black <i>obs?</i>
black	geelbek <i>obs</i>	non-European <i>obs</i>
blanke //	goffel <i>derog, off, slang</i>	non-white
boer	hairy-back <i>slang,</i>	other coloured
boerevolk	<i>derog, off</i>	outlander // <i>hist</i>
Boesman // <i>derog, off</i>	Hindoo <i>obs</i>	pekkie <i>derog, off</i>
Boschman Hottentot	Hoggenheimer <i>derog,</i>	Peruvian <i>derog, hist</i>
<i>obs</i>	<i>off</i>	redneck <i>obs, derog</i>
British Indian <i>hist</i>	Hotnot <i>obs derog (for</i>	rooinek <i>derog</i>
brown	<i>coloured)</i>	sammy <i>off</i>
Bushman <i>hist</i>	Hottentot	San
bushy <i>derog, off</i>	Hottie <i>off?, colloq</i>	South African Dutch
C/Kockney	igxagxa //	<i>hist?</i>
Cape Coloured	Indian	soutie <i>derog</i>
Cape Dutch <i>obs</i>	japie <i>derog</i>	soutpiel <i>derog</i>
Cape Malay	Jim <i>obs, off</i>	Strandloper
Capeboy <i>obs, off</i>	John <i>off</i>	tottie <i>obs, off, colloq</i>
Capey <i>colloq</i>	kaffermeid // <i>off</i>	uitlander
Chinese (Hottentot) <i>hist</i>	kaffir <i>off, derog</i>	Vaalpens <i>colloq, derog</i>
Christenmensch // <i>hist</i>	khaki <i>hist, then derog</i>	Van der Merwe
coloured	Khoi(khoi)	white
coolie <i>off, derog</i>	Khoisan	wit ou <i>coll</i>
	Kleurling //	witmense <i>coll</i>
	knobnose <i>obs, off?</i>	
	kroeskop <i>off, obs?</i>	
	Lekgoa //	

Labels: hist(orical), obs(olute), off(ensive), derog(atory), coll(ocual), slang, rare;
 // = not fully integrated

As a next step it would be very rewarding to analyse the functional differences between these items and thus establish their specific language use characteristics. Unfortunately, the data used here does not allow such an analysis: the dictionary distinction between attitudinally neutral items and those attitudinally marked as "derogatory" is, while helpful as a basic yardstick, too coarse for a linguistic investigation. Attitudes can only be

expressed, and thus interpreted in their full meaning potential, in context; de-contextualised they automatically lose in specificity. A similar problem arises with the diachronic distinction drawn in *DSAE*. The dichotomy established between "historical" items and those presently still in use is too simplistic for a detailed diachronic analysis. Such a clear-cut split into two categories can only be achieved by ignoring a lot of historical information. The distinction in Table 1, for example, is solely based on whether the items are still used nowadays or not, but it totally ignores for how long they have been in use in South African English. So, a good many items would not count as "historical", although they were used in previous centuries too. In other words, with regard to both functional aspects, the clear dichotomies that the dictionary provides are not useful for a linguistic analysis. This is, however, not a weakness of the dictionary, but simply reveals the limits of using dictionary entries for linguistic analyses.

4.2. Categorisation

In contrast to the functional and diachronic aspects, the dictionary data allows a more in-depth analysis with regard to the items' semantic categorisation. By comparing the definitions (and quotations) given in the *DSAE*, more general semantic groupings could be established (see Table 2). Due to the large number of items, it is impossible to present all of them here in detail. Instead, the general distinctions will first be described and then looked at more critically by focusing on a few, select cases (see 4.3).

Table 2. "General" terms (according to categorisation)

WHITE	WHITE– AFRIKAANS	WHITE–ENGLISH
abalumbi <i>obs?</i>	Afrikaner	amangesi <i>obs</i>
blanke	boer	Engels
European <i>obs</i>	boerevolk	Engelsman
igxagxa <i>derog</i>	Cape Dutch <i>obs</i>	English
Lekgoa	crunchie <i>slang, derog,</i> <i>off</i>	Englishman
mlungu	Dutch <i>hist</i>	Hoggenheimer <i>derog,</i> <i>off</i>
non-black <i>obs?</i>	Dutchman <i>obs, then</i> <i>derog</i>	khaki <i>hist, then derog</i>
white	gattes <i>derog</i>	outlander <i>hist</i>
wit ou <i>coll</i>	hairy-back <i>slang, derog,</i> <i>off</i>	Peruvian <i>derog, hist</i>
witmense <i>coll</i>	japie <i>derog</i>	redneck <i>obs, derog</i>
	Maburu <i>rare</i>	rooinek <i>derog</i>
	mealie (-muncher) <i>derog, rare</i>	soutie <i>derog</i>
	South African Dutch <i>hist?</i>	soutpiel <i>derog</i>
	Vaalpens <i>coll, derog</i>	uitlander
	Van der Merwe	
	amabhulu <i>derog</i>	
	amabhunu <i>derog</i>	
	Christenmensch <i>hist</i>	
		<i>exception (see 4.3): Afrikaner obs</i>

NON-WHITE	BLACK AFRICAN	KHOISAN	COLOURED	INDIAN
anderskleuriges 	Bantu (<i>off</i>)	Boschman	bastard <i>hist</i>	amakula <i>derog</i>
	free black <i>hist</i>	Hottentot <i>obs</i>	Cape Coloured	Arab
	Jim <i>obs, off</i>		Cape Malay	Asian <i>hist</i>
nie-blanke	John <i>off</i>	Bushman <i>hist</i>	Capeboy <i>obs,</i> <i>off</i>	Asiatic <i>off,</i> <i>hist</i>
	kaffermeid <i>off</i>		coloured	British Indian <i>hist</i>
non-European <i>obs</i>	kaffir <i>off,</i> <i>derog</i>	Khoi(khoi)	Eurafrican <i>obs?</i>	C/Kockney
	knobnose		g/Gammat <i>derog, off</i>	coolie <i>off,</i> <i>derog</i>

non-white	<i>obs, off?</i> Mardyker <i>hist</i>	Khoisan	geelbek <i>obs</i> goffel <i>derog,</i> <i>off, slang</i>	Hindoo <i>obs</i> Indian sammy <i>off</i>
<i>excluding</i> INDIAN: kroeskop <i>off,</i> <i>obs?</i>	munt <i>derog,</i> <i>off, slang</i> muntu national unit <i>hist</i> native <i>obs,</i> <i>off</i> pekkie <i>derog,</i> <i>off</i>	Masarwa <i>derog</i> South African Strandloper <i>hist</i>	Kleurling Malay Meraai <i>derog,</i> <i>off</i> other coloured	
African black		Boesman <i>derog, off</i> brown bushy <i>derog, off</i> Chinese (Hottentot) <i>hist</i> Hotnot <i>obs, derog</i> Hottie <i>off?, coll</i> tottie <i>obs, off, coll</i>		<i>exception</i> (<i>see 4.3</i>): Capey <i>coll</i>

Labels: hist(orical), obs(olete), off(ensive), derog(atory), coll(oquial), slang, rare;
|| = not fully integrated

Table 2 illustrates clearly that, on semantic grounds, most of the items could be assigned unambiguously to one of the eight groups:⁹

WHITE (i.e. people of European descent),

WHITE–ENGLISH (i.e. white English L1 speakers),

WHITE–AFRIKAANS (i.e. white Afrikaans L1 speakers),

NON-WHITE (i.e. people of any descent other than European),

BLACK AFRICAN (i.e. "non-white" L1 speakers of Bantu languages),

INDIAN (i.e. people of Indian descent),

KHOISAN (i.e. people descending from the original inhabitants of what is now Namibia and the Western and Northern Cape, South Africa),

COLOURED (i.e. people of racially mixed descent).

The sense definitions of a few items make clear that they need to be grouped with more than one of these labels (visualised as merging lists in Table 2). Three such overlaps occur between WHITE and WHITE–AFRIKAANS, two between NON-WHITE and BLACK AFRICAN, and the highest number,

⁹ In the following, groups are printed in small capitals, criteria for categorisation in capitals, and lexical items in italics.

namely seven, between KHOISAN and COLOURED. This third overlap is, however, not only different in quantity, but also quality. The former two overlaps take place between one of the two superordinate groups – WHITE and NON-WHITE – and one of the respective subordinate ones, WHITE–AFRIKAANS and BLACK AFRICAN, and thus reveal the hierarchical dependency between them. The third overlap, on the other hand, occurs between two groups at the lower of the two levels of the hierarchy established here. Their interdependency can thus not be one of generality vs. specificity, but must be of a different kind, which in this case is clearly a historical one. Because of ethnic mixing, the Khoisan peoples decreased in number and at the same time the Coloured group developed (cf. Davenport 1991:29). KHOISAN can thus be seen as first preceding and then, when this group got smaller and smaller in number, basically merging into COLOURED.

In sum, while the first two overlaps illustrate superordinate–hyponym relationships, the third one reflects the particularly close relationship between two groups that appear lexically as co-hyponyms (cf. Lipka 1992:144). In all three cases, the linguistic dependency structures cannot be separated from the extralinguistic ones.

4.3. Criteria for categorisation

With the exception of the three overlapping areas, the analysis has established eight clearly separate groups. While this already gives a clearer picture of the structure of this field, there is still a more abstract level at which these items can be analysed – the one of criteria for categorisation. Not totally unexpectedly, considering South African social history (cp. 2.), the eight categories can be reduced to the interplay of two basic criteria, namely RACE (i.e. skin colour and a few other selected features, e.g. hair) and LANGUAGE, and one non-basic one resulting out of those two, namely WHITE—NON-WHITE. The eight groups reflect the intersection of these three criteria: the two criteria RACE and LANGUAGE result in WHITE–ENGLISH, WHITE–AFRIKAANS, COLOURED, KHOISAN, BLACK AFRICAN and INDIAN. The third criterion is apparent in the WHITE vs. NON-WHITE groups. In other words, the results support the extralinguistic South African reality: each of the lexical items clearly denotes a specific ethnic group.

In general it can be stated that RACE and LANGUAGE interact to create an "ethnolinguistic" grid of classification, i.e. of the possible features that can be chosen to mark ethnicity, language is the most prominent one here (cp. Giddens's definition of ethnicity, fn. 5). Furthermore, these two criteria relate to a more abstract one, the, in South Africa so infamous but deeply ingrained,

WHITE—NON-WHITE distinction. It might be assumed that the ethnolinguistic grid equals this distinction, but the historical development proves that this is not so. While the first two criteria seem to have been relevant to South African English in all of its 200 years, the third is a more recent one, a 20th century "invention", as I will show in the following.

If the third criterion had always been fundamental to South African English, it would mean that violations of it could not be found. This is almost so, but not completely. Of the 102 items described here *Afrikander* and *Capey* (labelled as exceptions in Table 2) contradict the WHITE—NON-WHITE distinction. The *DSAE* definitions of both items reveal that their meanings extend over the WHITE vs. NON-WHITE distinction ("qu" = quotation):

Afrikander

1. obs. variant of "Afrikaner" (a Dutch / Afrikaans speaking white inhabitant of South Africa)
2. obs. of mixed ethnic origin
qu: 1823 - 1917 (last qu: taken from a Coloured writer)

Capey coll.

1. Cape Coloured
qu: 1940 - 1990
2. an inhabitant of the Western Cape or the city of Cape Town
qu: 1970 - 1989 (1994)

When *Afrikander* was used during the 19th century, it referred to white and non-white Afrikaans speakers. This could be seen as evidence of the, then still, joint identity of Afrikaans speakers (maybe in opposition to the English-speaking ruling class?). *Capey*, again denoting Afrikaans speakers, started off as designating Cape Coloureds (i.e. Christian Coloureds from the Western Cape). It began then, most likely in the late 1960s, to undergo meaning extension to include all inhabitants of that area, also white ones. In other words, these two items provide evidence for overarching meaning for the time up to the legally enforced politics of racial separation and, then again, for the time when the end of apartheid was announced. The decades of strict separation in-between, however, lack such data, which can thus be taken as negative evidence of the fundamental relevance of the 20th century WHITE—NON-WHITE distinction. In the following analysis of the (changing) meaning potentials of the relevant general items this will be supplemented by positive data.

Five lexical items are relevant for the fundamental nature of the WHITE—NON-WHITE distinction: *European* and its counterpart *non-European* were

in wide-spread use until the 1960s when they were replaced by *white* and *non-white*. The fifth item is the semantic antonym to *white*, i.e. *black*.

European (obs) a white person; for a period, the official term used for a white person.

qu: 1696-1960s (*qu.* from 1964 and 1980 questioning the use of "European" for South Africans)

non-European (obs) non-white

qu: 1925 (1918 for *adj.*) - late 1960s (later *qu* seem to be *hist.*)

white (*hist*) one of European descent, during apartheid: one classified as belonging to the white group

qu: 1966 (1950 for *adj.*) - 1970 (late 1980s for *adj.*)

non-white (obs, off) one whose racial ancestry is not predominantly European [term was used extensively in the past as a blanket term referring to those groups disadvantaged under apartheid]

qu: 1934 - 1991 (last *non-hist.* *qu:* 1970s)

black

1. a member of any of the darker-skinned peoples of South Africa

qu: 1616 - 1915 (last *non-hist.* one in 1852)

2. a dark-skinned person of African origin, belonging to a people whose home language is of the Sintu group; during apartheid: one classified as a "black"

[Black has replaced African as the presently most widely accepted term]

qu: 1696 - 1983

3. a member of a people or group which was disadvantaged by apartheid laws, i.e. of any but the white group

qu: 1953 - 1989

While *European*, *white*, *black* (and also *coloured*, *Khoisan* and *Indian*) were already in use in previous centuries, the negations *non-European* and *non-white* are 20th century coinages. In other words the South African English ethnic group terminology underwent a fundamental change around the turn of the century by creating such dichotomies as EUROPEAN vs. NON-EUROPEAN and later WHITE vs. NON-WHITE, and thereby installing a new, superordinate distinction between WHITE and the others.¹⁰ The fundamental distinction of the apartheid era into "(slegs vir) blankes" and "nie-blankes" was thus already lexicalised in the 1910s.

¹⁰ Before that time, the other groups could not be referred to by a single collective: native referred to either speakers of a Sintu language or, more generally, black Africans only; and, up to about 1920, black referred to Khoisan and black African, but not coloured (cf. DSAE).

When looking at the collective items *non-European*, its follower *non-white*, and the ensuing meaning extension of *black* (see sense 3, given above) again, a note-worthy development becomes apparent. In contrast to previously used group labels, the first group-categorisation refers to a group of people by what they are not, namely European and then white. This group is thus not described by what the members share, but by what makes them different when looked at from outside. Therefore, it seems that this group label did not develop because of an ingroup need (i.e. by those identifying with this group), but because of an outgroup necessity. In other words, it was a white creation; an expression of "us against them", with "them" referring to all those who lack the attribute "white". But such a characteristic can only have been group-forming from a white perspective. For the heterogeneous "others" different groups of identification were relevant,¹¹ as can be witnessed by the absence of an ingroup term until the 1950s. Then, however, apartheid legislation enforced a uniting group identity on everybody non-white by heavily discriminating against all of them in all aspects of public and private life. Such treatment necessarily leads to bonding and, from a linguistic point of view, asks for ingroup lexicalisation. The existing negated terms, however, did not seem acceptable to express this growing group awareness, and a new term had to, and finally also was, found – the meaning extension of *black* to denote "a member of a people or group which was disadvantaged by apartheid laws, i.e. a member of any but the white group" gives credit to that.

In sum, the analysis of the underlying criteria lends itself to an interpretation of the established criteria with regard to the development of the South African understanding of essential group distinctions of its society. The criteria RACE and LANGUAGE illustrate very clearly how deeply ingrained ethnolinguistic groupings have always been in that nation. The distinction into WHITE—NON-WHITE, on the other hand, allows diachronic, developmental observations: it seems to have started off as an outgroup "invention" and, due to socio-historical and -psychological developments, gained ingroup relevance (revealed in *black*). As, since 1994, the social setup in South Africa has turned around again, this might already be changing again.

¹¹ For instance, coloureds seem to have seen themselves as "Afrikanders", i.e. as Afrikaans speakers. "Natives" might rather have identified with their own tribes than this white-imposed notion.

5. Conclusion

With regard to the research aim to establish the (development of the) categorisation and criteria for group differentiation as found in the South African English lexicon, the analysis of the "general" terms has led to the following three results:

The lexical set "people (individuals and groups) originating from or living in South Africa", consisting of 102 items and covering the 200-year history of English in that country, could be clearly subdivided into the eight groups WHITE, WHITE-ENGLISH, WHITE-AFRIKAANS; NON-WHITE, BLACK AFRICAN, INDIAN, KHOISAN, and COLOURED.

The distinction into these eight groups is based on the three criteria RACE, LANGUAGE and WHITE—NON-WHITE. The semantic development of individual lexical items has shown that the WHITE—NON-WHITE distinction played a fundamental role for the major part of the 20th century, from about 1920 until the early 1990s.

In conclusion, the lexical field study presented in this paper can be seen as a case in point for not excluding the extralinguistic from a linguistic analysis as the holistic view adopted here has clearly illustrated the changing nature of the South African English lexicon, which, in its 200 year history, seems to have responded sensitively to ongoing inner- but also extralinguistic changes. Whether the recent socio-political changes have already had a similar impact on the linguistic developments can only be hypothesised at the moment, but would definitely need to be substantiated by further studies, based on more recent data.

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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:** Christiane Dalton-Puffer. **REDAKTION:** Christiane Dalton-Puffer, Bryan Jenner, Gunther Kaltenböck, Arthur Mettinger, Hans Platzer, 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, Hof 8, A - 1090 Wien. **HERSTELLUNG:** VIEWS.