# PAPERS FROM THE SEVENTEENTH ANNUAL MEETING
## OF THE
# ATLANTIC PROVINCES LINGUISTIC ASSOCIATION

November 5 & 6, 1993

Saint Mary's University
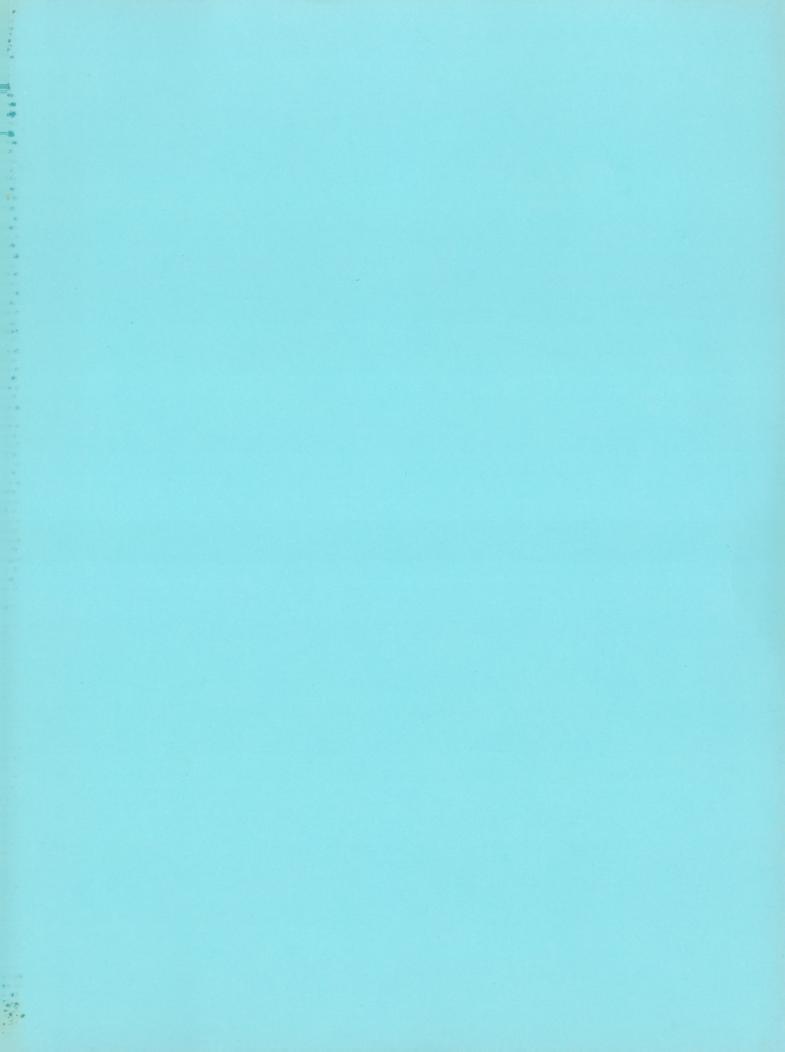Halifax, Nova Scotia

# ACTES DU
# DIX–SEPTIEME COLLOQUE ANNUEL
## DE
# L'ASSOCIATION DE LINGUISTIQUE
# DES PROVINCES ATLANTIQUES

le 5 & 6 novembre 1993

Saint Mary's University
Halifax, Nouvelle–Ecosse

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Edited by / Rédaction

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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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# A PLAN FOR A DICTIONARY OF CAPE BRETON ENGLISH

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## ABSTRACT

Like Newfoundland and Prince Edward Island, Cape Breton has a settlement history, a geography, and occupations that have shaped a regional vocabulary worth collecting and studying. This paper outlines the preliminary planning for a Dictionary of Cape Breton English. The following issues are addressed: the type of dictionary to be constructed, guidelines for the inclusion and exclusion of words, sources for Cape Breton words, methods of collection (published, oral and surveys) of words and citations, and a brief analysis of preliminary collection.

Richard MacKinnon and I are pleased to have the opportunity to present this paper to the Atlantic Provinces Linguistic Association as it allows a forum to announce our plans to others working on Canadian English and to seek advice. Our initial title for this paper is 'A Plan for the Dictionary of Cape Breton English,' believing that good plans result in efficient use of time and resources. Having begun to consider the principles used in other dictionaries, we have discovered that some planning is of course necessary, but we have also learned that many of our initial guidelines are already evolving and changing as we gather material. Thus, a more appropriate title for this paper might be—after Carl Rogers' famous book on non-directive counselling—'On Becoming a Dictionary'. Consequently, we welcome suggestions.

Perhaps an obvious, but none-the-less important question with which to begin is why is a dictionary of Cape Breton English necessary? The simplest answer is that Cape Breton is an island. It is not accidental that the two celebrated regional dictionaries from Atlantic Canada, *Dictionary of Newfoundland English* and *Dictionary of Prince Edward Island English*, have come from island communities. Although the Canso Strait that separates peninsular Nova Scotia from Cape Breton Island is little more than one kilometer wide, the water is deep and the cultural distance is broad. There may never be a Separatist Party on Cape Breton Island, yet a fierce pride and strong sense of island identity are alive and well. For nearly forty years, from 1784 to 1820, Cape Breton was an independent

colony of Britain. For another twenty-five years after 1820 many of the local inhabitants actively protested the decision made by the British Colonial Office to annex the island to Nova Scotia.[1] This loss of political independence is one factor that has encouraged a desire to be distinctive and to preserve language customs and cultural traditions.

The European settlement history of Cape Breton is another factor in creating a regional dialect. Like most of Atlantic Canada, the earliest European settlements were along the coast to exploit the cod fishery. For the first two hundred years of European involvement in Cape Breton (1500 to 1700), an international community used the coves and harbours for a seasonal fishery (Clark 1967:283). In 1713 when Cape Breton became the French colony of Isle Royale, the settlement continued to be along the coast, and transportation was by the sea. Even today, all communities with a population of over two thousand people are within five miles of the ocean or the Bras d'Or Lake. Like Newfoundland, the geography of Cape Breton influenced the settlement patterns as the sea provided an easier access than did the land with its few roads.[2] Although the isolation is not as extreme as the outports of Newfoundland, the combined influence of the island's geography and of this perimeter settlement resulted in a series of small communities that were regional within a region. This settlement pattern fostered language customs that were insular within the island. Again, this is a pattern that is repeated in much of Atlantic Canada, but it is one reason why the region is so interesting linguistically.

Later waves of English-speaking settlers to Cape Breton—the Loyalists, the English, the Irish and the Scots—continued this pattern of settling along the coasts and in ethnic communities. Most of the Scottish settlers, for example, came from the western mainland of Scotland and the western islands. Place names like New Ross, Iona, Barra, Skye Glen, Mull River, Glencoe Mills and Inverness are memorials of this migration pattern. Having left the same general area, these settlers tended to come in family or community groups or to settle in places where friends and relatives were already living.[3] In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the Industrial Area grew rapidly and many of those that moved to the area to find work settled in parts of the cities where friends and family lived. One example of this pattern is the Acadia Street area of New Waterford where the descendants of migrants from Cheticamp still live. Specific areas of Whitney Pier, Sydney, were also home to many of the Newfoundlanders who lived seasonally or moved permanently to work in the steel mill or the mines. Those without family would live in the 'shacks' or company constructed bunkhouses near the steel mill (Crawley 1988:44–45), and oral evidence indicates that those settling in the Pier often lived on or near Broadway Street. Thus, Cape Breton's geography and history have resulted in a series of communities with cultural bonds, loyalties, and identities—the types of communities that encourage regional dialects and are potentially rich sources of distinctive words.

One of the first decisions that any dictionary editor has to make is the type of dictionary needed and the principles to be used for inclusion and exclusion of material.

On the most general level, this dictionary will be monolingual or unilingual, listing and defining the words of English (McArthur 1992:306). Thus, although we will include words from the French, Gaelic, and Mi'kmaq communities on the island, evidence will have to indicate that these words are, in fact, loan words that have been naturalized. For example, the Cheticamp form *suet* is one of these naturalized borrowings. Derived from the standard French form *sud est*, the word describes the fierce winds that blow along the northwestern shore of Cape Breton. These winds reach hurricane force in excess of 117 km per hour several times a year (Stewart 1993:29). That the word has been naturalized is attested by its appearance in a headline in the *Cape Breton Post*, the island's largest English newspaper (Stewart 1993:29). In addition to French loan words, our initial collection indicates some Mi'kmaq loans and a large number of Scotch Gaelic words, many of which will require further research to investigate the frequency of occurrence and the degree of naturalization.

In addition to being monolingual, obviously it will also be a regional dictionary which seeks to record the lexical regionalisms of Cape Breton Island. Within the definition of regional, however, there is a broad range of approaches. At one extreme is the most restrictive type of dictionary that selects only words that were coined or originate in one area. Mitford Mathews' *A Dictionary of Americanisms on Historical Principles* (1951) proposed to take this approach, selecting 'words and meanings of words which have been added to the English language in the United States' (quoted in McArthur 1992:309), although Walter Avis argues that this definition is weakened by Mathews' use of 'a wide variety of Canadian source materials as evidence for a substantial number of "Americanisms"' (Avis 1967:xii). Other dictionaries following this approach are listed by Richard Bailey (in McArthur 1992:858). On the other extreme is the type of dictionary that attempts to record both words in general use as well as words and senses restricted to a specific country or region. Noah Webster's *An American Dictionary of English* (1828) is one such example, and the *Gage Canadian Dictionary* (1983), another. Richard and I, being Canadian—that strangely ambivalent nation that has two official languages, two systems of measurement, and now a federal parliament with some members who support federalism and some that don't—we have decided to find the middle ground between these extremes. Consequently, we have adopted a method described by Robert Bailey as the 'associationist approach':

> This approach parallels the *Dictionary of American English* in admitting entries that have some particular association with the region, even though they also appear in the English of England. *A Dictionary of Canadianisms* (Toronto W. J. Gage, 1967) includes 'words and expressions characteristic of various spheres of Canadian life' without regard to their use elsewhere. The *Dictionary of Newfoundland English* (1982) includes coinages, survivals, and words and senses which have 'a distinctly high or general degree of use' there. . . . (in McArthur 1992:858)

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This approach will allow us to record not only those words that might be called 'original' to the region, but also those that have a distinctive or characteristic association with the area.

With the general type of dictionary and the approach clarified, it is now possible to consider the principles or—perhaps at this stage—the guidelines for inclusion and exclusion. We will collect regional words, phrases, senses and expressions, although as Terry Pratt has done, we will probably save the proverbial expressions and sayings for another study. The data that we seek to collect should qualify under one of the following guidelines for inclusion of words.

First, the word, sense, form, or phrase may have originated in Cape Breton. For example, in some parts of the world, a *caper* identifies a condiment used as a spice in salads, and around Cape Cod it designates a type of one storey beach home, but one of the senses used in Atlantic Canada identifies a person from Cape Breton, usually someone born there. Two other examples that we are researching are *tarabish* (pronounced *tarbish*), a card game popular on the island, and *skooshing*, to designate quick and agile movement on floating chunks of ice.[4]

Second, the word, sense, form, or phrase may also be—to paraphrase Walter Avis—distinctively characteristic of Cape Breton usage, though not necessarily exclusive to Cape Breton (Avis 1967:xiii). To be considered as distinctively characteristic of Cape Breton, there must be evidence (a) that the word, sense, form, or phrase has continued in use in Cape Breton for an extended time (thereby eliminating transient slang and jargon), and (b) has 'acquired a different form or developed a different meaning, or . . . a distinctly higher or more general degree of use' (Story, *et al.* 1990:xii) than elsewhere in Canada, particularly outside of the Atlantic region.

In this second broad category, we will include words and phrases like the so-called *after-perfect*, which according to the *English Dialect Dictionary* originated in Scotch-Irish but which is recorded both in the *Dictionary of Newfoundland English* and also in the *Dictionary of Prince Edward Island English*. We have found the use of *after* to indicate completion is also widespread in the Industrial Area of Cape Breton in both printed and oral sources. So far, however, we have no examples of what Terry Pratt describes as a second sense indicating potentiality (Pratt 1988:4). We need further research to determine its distribution on the island and its frequency of use.

It follows from this discussion that we will exclude words, senses and phrases in general use and listed as such in dictionaries. We are considering Terry Pratt's method of

testing 'borderline cases' in four representative dictionaries, i.e., *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English* (1982), *Webster's New World Dictionary* (1970), *Gage Canadian Dictionary* (1983), and *Funk and Wagnalls Standard College Dictionary* (Canadian Edition) (1976) and excluding words 'found in any two of these dictionaries without a qualifying label' (Pratt 1988:xii). This technique seems to be a just and practical method that would allow the editors to sleep at night and to remain friends.

At present, we have decided to search for citations in published and oral sources, and to supplement this with surveys and selected unpublished material. The published works will be primarily books and magazines which were written by residents or by visitors recording observations or speech of residents. The several local papers and magazines that record community events and concerns are another valuable source for local speech. The best of these magazines is Ronald Caplan's *Cape Breton's Magazine* which he has published since 1972. His practice has been to publish interviews with people from all walks of life and from different ethnic and racial backgrounds, giving a broad perspective of Cape Breton interests and speech. The unpublished works will be taken from selected diaries and letters available in the archives in the Beaton Institute at the University College of Cape Breton and at the Provincial Archives. Some oral sources are available in the archives in the Beaton Institute, and we have begun to make recordings for specific areas of interest, particularly occupations and cultural traditions associated with the island. Finally, following Terry Pratt's practice in the *Dictionary of Prince Edward Island English*, we hope to use surveys (samples of which he has generously given to us) to seek distinctive words and to test the currency of certain words according to area, age, gender, and perhaps socio-economic criteria.

On a practical level, we have received financial assistance for a three-year period to employ student research assistants to help with the reading program and to purchase reference texts and equipment. In addition, we have agreed to exchange material on Cape Breton words with Katherine Barber, Editor-in-Chief, Canadian Dictionaries, Oxford University Press, Canada. We are in the initial stages of investigating computer software used by others working on dictionaries. This is obviously another important aspect of our planning that could make our work more efficient.

Our initial collection began last summer when we hired one research assistant, Patricia Babin, for five weeks. As well as bibliographical work, she completed a pilot reading project for the dictionary. She began with the guidelines used for the volunteer readers program of the 'Canadian Oxford Dictionary Project' of the Oxford University Press, and we discussed the citations in periodic meetings. She read five types of published works: one early text (*Uniacke's Sketches of Cape Breton*, written in 1865), one Cape Breton novel (Margaret MacPhail's *Loch Bras d'Or*), one travel book about Cape Breton (Clara Dennis's *Cape Breton Over*), two diaries of people raised in Cape Breton (A. H.

MacLean's *God and the Devil at Seal Cove* and E. Peach's *Memories of a Cape Breton Childhood*), and the first five years of Ronald Caplan's *Cape Breton's Magazine*.

This reading project resulted in over 600 words and phrases with supporting quotations. About 40% of these citations, however, are inappropriate as they are interesting words and phrases, but they are widely used in English, such as *kettle of fish*, *hard grind*, *kith and kin*, etc. The remaining 380 words will provide data to test and refine our editorial polices for inclusion and exclusion of words. The number of these that will actually become part of the dictionary will undoubtedly be small. To place this collection process in context, the reading program for the *Dictionary of Prince Edward Island English* covered about 900 titles, 'of which 360 yielded one or more quotations' (Pratt 1988:xxii) after passing the editorial restrictions. Like good writing, dictionaries are often improved by what is left out.

With such a small sample, it would be unwise to generalize about the expected patterns in our research. We would, however, offer three tentative observations. First, several words found in our reading have been recorded in both the *Dictionary of Newfoundland English* and the *Dictionary of Prince Edward Island English*. Some of the prominent examples of this are the *after-perfect* mentioned above, *come from away* or *from away* to characterize people not born on the island, *clamper* or *clumper* for one of the chunks of ice along the shore, *tuckamore* for spruce trees bent over by the prevailing wind, and *bake apple* for the amber-coloured berry that grows in boggy areas. Words like these are typically used on Cape Breton Island, but may more accurately be designated as characteristic of the speech of Atlantic Canada. Other words like *mainland(er)* are used with different senses on Cape Breton Island, Newfoundland, and Prince Edward Island. For a Cape Bretoner, the *mainland* is peninsular Nova Scotia, whereas in Newfoundland it has two senses: one referring to one or more of the other Canadian provinces, and the other designating the island of Newfoundland when used by those dwelling on the coastal islands (Story 1990). In the dictionary articles on *across* and on the *other side*, Terry Pratt indicates that the mainland is New Brunswick or Nova Scotia (Pratt 1988). Thus, as well as identifying those words that are distinctively characteristic of Cape Breton, it may also be possible to indicate how Cape Breton speech fits into the distinctive language of Atlantic Canadian.

Secondly, there are a surprising number of loan words in this initial collection, especially from Scotch Gaelic. In addition to the French *suet* mentioned above, we have found several examples of Mi'kmaq loan words. For instance, *kealer* or *keeler* identifies 'shallow tubs for setting milk in' (Caplan Aug. 1977:24), which the Mi'kmaqs both made and sold. In addition, many Gaelic words appear in published sources. *Brogan* meaning shoes appears several times, and the *bocen* meaning something like the 'boogey man' also appears in the *Dictionary of Prince Edward Island English*. Even writers who are not Gaelic speakers themselves record Gaelic expressions and words used in their local communities.

Finally, as might be expected, the words derived from coal mining appear to be a promising source. The *bobtailed pay sheet*, for instance, describes a miner's pay cheque after deductions by the company store where miners were allowed credit against their next pay. Similarly, *to be plucked* is to be in debt to the company store. Other mining terms have extended their original sense and are used by those who have never worked in a colliery. For instance, *pit* is used widely in mining communities to describe the mine shaft or the mine itself, but locally the noun is used adjectivally in phrases such as *pit socks* for any grey work socks, whether used by a miner or not. We are investigating other mining terms to discover if they are generally shared technical terms or distinctive of Cape Breton usage.

Thus, we are encouraged both by the potential for an interesting regional lexicon and by our initial collection. Although changes no doubt will evolve as collection continues, we expect to apply two general principles of inclusion to the words, senses, forms, and phrases of our proposed dictionary. There will be a small group of words, perhaps words like *tarabish*, *caper*, and *skooshing*, that have originated on Cape Breton Island or that have survived on the island but are less prominent elsewhere. The other group will be words that are associated with the island, but not exclusively found on Cape Breton Island. These associated words will reflect its history, industries, and culture, and be either distinctive of Cape Breton speech or characteristic of use in Atlantic Canada.

## FOOTNOTES

[1] 'The reaction [to annexing the island colony to Nova Scotia] on the island varied. In eastern areas, around Sydney and Louisbourg which had been long-settled, vested interests and a sense of island identity led to a persistent separatist movement. Areas far from the former colonial capital at Sydney showed far less concern. In Isle Madame, fishing interests, who felt threatened by mainland competition and office-holders who had lost their jobs, flirted with the idea but the newly-arrived Gaelic-speaking Scots showed little interest, if indeed many of them even knew about it' (Morgan 1985:42).

[2] For instance, an anonymous map dated 1751, nearly forty years after the island became a French colony, shows only four roads on the island, and these are either portages or links between two bodies of water (Dawson 1988:144).

[3] One of the best known and perhaps most extreme examples of this 'community migration' is connected with the Rev. Norman McLeod (1780-1866). He and his followers moved from Sutherlandshire, Scotland, to Pictou, N.S., then to St. Anns in Cape Breton

in the 1820's, and finally in 1851 to New Zealand at his brother's invitation (McPherson 1962, rpt. 1993). Rosemary Ommer's detailed study of the Highland Scots migration to the Broad Cove and Margaree area of Cape Breton (and eventually to the Codroy Valley, Newfoundland) emphasizes that kinship and place of origin were crucial factors in the settlement patterns of this group (Ommer 1977). She also cautions that this pattern of Highland migration was not always followed because of factors such as various places of origin and different methods of recruitment and passage (Ommer 1977:220).

⁴ *Skooshing* may be derived from the dialectal verb *skice* which the *OED* describes as '[of obscure origin] To move quickly; to skip or frisk about, to run'.

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# DO DICTIONARIES HELP ESL/EFL STUDENTS IMPROVE THEIR READING COMPREHENSION SKILLS?

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## ABSTRACT

An analysis of some of the ways in which learners' dictionaries are used in ESL/EFL classes reveals that very little is done by teachers in the way of teaching students dictionary-using strategies to improve their reading comprehension skills. Traditional ways of approaching dictionary use with reference to monolingual and bilingual dictionaries are discussed. Practical suggestions for the use of dictionaries in improving L2 reading skills are then made.[1]

## 1.  *Introduction*

For purposes of this paper, learners' dictionaries will include monolingual dictionaries and bilingual dictionaries which might be used at the high intermediate to advanced levels for classroom purposes. The word list recorded in an ESL/EFL monolingual dictionary for advanced learners usually has a word stock of about 50 000 items (Stein 1989). With a bilingual dictionary where there is generally a much more flexible approach to the word list, the stock could vary from a few thousand most frequent items to coverage as full as that of any monolingual dictionary. It must be remembered, however, that bilingual dictionaries contain not one but two discrete word lists in L1 and L2.

This paper presents an analysis of research related to dictionaries and reading in the ESL/EFL field, it looks at some of the traditional ways in which monolingual and bilingual dictionaries are approached, and ends by making some practical suggestions for the use of dictionaries in improving L2 reading skills.

## 2.  *Research Analysis*

We were interested in finding out the extent of research in this field over the last ten years. To do so two methods were employed. One was to do a computer search employing the ERIC database by identifying the descriptors "English as a Second Language", "Reading", and "Dictionaries", covering the period from 1982 to March 1993. This search revealed that there were only four titles that had any direct reference to dictionaries and

reading: M. Bensoussan *et al.* (1981); M. Bensoussan (1983); M. Bensoussan *et al.* (1984); and M. Tickoo (1989). The other method was to monitor two reputable journals, often consulted by applied linguists, *Language Learning* and *The Modern Language Journal*, which revealed two more very recent additions: Luppescu and Day (1993) and Hulstijn (1993).

An analysis of these titles now follows. In the first place, a series of articles by M. Bensoussan, D. Sim and R. Weiss from Israel (1981) entitled, "The Effect of Dictionary Usage on EFL Test Performance Compared with Student and Teacher Attitudes and Expectations"; M. Bensoussan (1983) entitled, "Dictionaries and Tests of EFL Reading Comprehension"; and M. Bensoussan, D. Sim and R. Weiss (1984) entitled, "The Effect of Dictionary Usage on EFL Test Performance Compared with Student and Teacher Attitudes and Expectations", reveal that these three studies concentrate on dictionaries and ESL test performance, teacher attitudes, and teacher and student expectations. Then there is M. Tickoo's (1989) anthology, launched at the Singapore Regional English Language Centre and entitled *Learners' Dictionaries: State of the Art*, which contains sixteen specially written papers by dictionary makers and linguistic scholars of repute the world over. These articles concentrate on the practical aspects of such dictionaries: how to make dictionaries more user-friendly; how to make their strengths and limitations known to teachers and learners; above all, how to make their use more educative and productive in language classrooms. Finally, we have Luppescu and Day (1993) (from Chicago and Hawaii respectively), in an article entitled, "Reading, Dictionaries, and Vocabulary Learning", and Hulstijn (1993) (from Amsterdam), in the article entitled, "When Do Foreign-Language Readers Look Up the Meaning of Unfamiliar Words?" Luppescu and Day (1993), examined the contribution to vocabulary learning of the use of bilingual dictionaries during reading by a group of 293 Japanese university students studying English as a Foreign Language, and concluded that students who used a dictionary scored significantly better on a vocabulary test than students who did not use a dictionary. Hulstijn (1993), whose study contributes to methodology and level of understanding reading strategies of FL readers' look-up behaviour, concentrated on two objectives:

1) he examined the following variables: the influence of reading goal, word relevance and word inferability;
2) he looked at the relationship between word look-up behaviour on the one hand and two learner variables on the other: readers' FL vocabulary knowledge, and their ability to infer the meaning of unfamiliar words from information contained in the context. The subjects in this case were eighty-two Dutch high school students of EFL from grades ten and eleven who performed three tasks: first a FL reading comprehension task, then an inferring ability test, and finally a FL vocabulary test. There was clear evidence that words deemed relevant by the subjects for their tasks were substantially and significantly more often consulted than were irrelevant words. Hulstijn (1993) continues:

Subjects were capable of reading a FL text in a strategic manner, not looking up all unfamiliar words in an uncritical fashion, but deciding on the relevance, and to a lesser extent the inferability of unfamiliar words in relation to their reading goal before taking or not taking action. (Hulstijn 1993:144)

This cursory analysis, covering the last ten years, thus reveals that with the exception of the last two studies just mentioned, very little research has been done in the field of investigating dictionary-using strategies towards improving reading comprehension skills in ESL/EFL.

## 3. *Monolingual and Bilingual Dictionaries*

Now to turn to traditional ways of looking at monolingual and bilingual dictionaries. On the one hand, monolingual learners' dictionaries such as the *Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (1948), *The Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* (1974), *Chambers Universal Learners' Dictionary* (1980) and the *COBUILD English Language Dictionary* (1987), are a relatively recent development. Names closely associated with lexicographic advances in this field are those of H. Palmer, A. S. Hornby and M. West. A. P. Cowie (1989) states that the significant contribution of Palmer and Hornby lay in their ability to describe and make accessible grammatical forms and patterns which represent major problems for the learner when "encoding". A. S. Hornby's *Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (1948), the first contemporary learners' dictionary, was renowned for its innovation: a systematic and explicit indication of syntactic patterns in which English verbs occur. Unlike Palmer and Hornby, M. West regarded the user as reader; he was therefore very much concerned with intelligibility. Thus, in the *New Method Dictionary* (1935) he devised a restricted defining vocabulary (of 1490 words) for the purpose of explaining meanings. Such a controlled defining vocabulary, as far as he was concerned, was supposed to facilitate understanding of unfamiliar words by defining them in terms of words which the dictionary user already knew.

A monolingual dictionary designed especially for foreign learners will probably say a lot more about what it has than any other dictionary. According to R. Ilson (1983):

> . . . for the items of "core vocabulary" on which it concentrates, the learner's dictionary is likely to provide more examples of usage, more information about collocations, more information about stylistic level and register (in particular, learner's dictionaries pioneered in labelling items *formal* as well as *informal*), and much more information about grammar: whether nouns are *mass*, *count*, or both; whether verbs are followed by the infinitive (*wanted to go*), the *-ing* form (*enjoyed going*) or both (*began going/to go*), and so forth. (Ilson 1983:76)

On the other hand, human beings have had to learn foreign languages for millennia with the help of the bilingual dictionary, one contemporary example of which is the *Collins–Robert French–English English–French Dictionary* (1987). According to Hartmann (1983), bilingual dictionaries are the norm, the most natural kind of dictionary (cited in Piotrowski 1989:72). Piotrowski (1989) reminds us that in a bilingual dictionary meaning is conveyed in a synthetic way. A well–chosen equivalent transmits the part of meaning it has in common with the L2 item all at one time by the powerful mechanism of analogy. The basis for description in the bilingual dictionary is the concrete noun, one of the most difficult of words to describe in a monolingual dictionary. Words in a bilingual dictionary are often described on the basis of their collocability with nouns. Nouns are semantic centres in texts: in any paraphrase of text, for instance, they are words that have to be retained unchanged.

Thus a dictionary is defined through its focus on grammar or through its focus on semantics as a basis for classification.

Classification must also take into account the components of a dictionary. The following is an adaptation from B. T. Atkins (1985). Every dictionary must have one or more of the following items, more or less in this order:

1. the headword, and any variant spellings;
2. an indication of pronunciation;
3. details of word classes (parts of speech) to which the headword belongs;
4. morphology: inflections which may cause difficulties;
5. syntax: the syntactic potential of the headword and any syntactic restrictions it may carry;
6. an explanation of the various senses of the headword;
7. exemplification of usage, including collocating words and fixed or semi–fixed phrases (e.g. idioms);
8. a listing of derived forms of the headword, with or without further explanations;
9. cross references to related entries.

In addition the following metalinguistic information may be provided:

10. semantic (including selectional restrictions): allowing the user to identify the specific sense being treated at any particular point or otherwise clarifying the design and content of the entry;
11. stylistic: indication of style and register, where relevant;
12. usage material for the purpose of further clarification e.g. differentiation from near–synonyms or warning of hidden targets;

13.     etymological: a diachronic view of the headword. (Atkins 1985:16)

Again, there are certain aspects of entries wherein monolingual and bilingual dictionaries offer a choice to the user. B. T. Atkins (1985) reminds us that we might encounter the following differences:

1.     wordlist (usually shortish in monolinguals, often longer in bilinguals);

2.     explanation of senses (L2 definition in monolinguals; L1/L2 equivalents in bilinguals);

3.     exemplification of usage (sometimes glossed in L2 in monolinguals; usually translated in bilinguals);

4.     treatment of fixed and semi-fixed phrases (always glossed or defined in L2 in monolinguals; always translated often by equally idiomatic equivalent expressions, in bilinguals);

5.     semantic and usage information (always in a foreign language in monolinguals; usually in the user's native language in bilinguals). (Atkins 1985:21)

Though both types of dictionaries help in understanding a foreign language, students usually prefer the bilingual to the monolingual dictionary any time. Teachers, of course, fear that the bilingual dictionary simply reinforces the translation barrier, thus preventing the internalization of L2. Whereas the bilingual dictionary makes fewer demands upon the user the monolingual dictionary forces the student to "use" the foreign language in order to "understand" it. Of course there is no guarantee that the definitions, examples or metalanguage notes are comprehensible. In the case of a bilingual dictionary, because target language equivalents are given for headwords, derived forms, and examples, the metalanguage is L1; the student thus uses L1 in order to understand L2. The final word must be given to B. T. Atkins (1985):

Monolinguals are good for you (like wholemeal bread and green vegetables); bilinguals (like alcohol, sugar and fatty foods) are not though you may like them better . . .

and she concludes:

[A] . . . good monolingual must do more than simply convey to the users the meaning of words which they come across in their reading. . . . [A] good bilingual is more than just something to take the sweat out of a translation into L1 or L2. (Atkins 1985:22, 23)

15

*Practical Suggestions*

We now turn to practical suggestions for the use of dictionaries in improving L2 reading skills. In the first place, it is important to build positive teacher/student attitudes towards the use of dictionaries. The student must be made to realize that dictionaries can help with the learning of words by making the student think about words in relation to a passage being used and the dictionary information itself. D. Summers (1988) reminds us that:

> . . . dictionaries present a powerful analytic tool in organizing language. When the definition provides an archetype onto which real-world realizations . . . can be mapped, it does this by restating the concept behind the word, either in simpler terms that are more likely to be understood . . . or by breaking the concept down into constituent parts such as its appearance or typical functions. . . . [The] mental activity involved in unpacking the definition would help to implant the word and its concept into the student's mind, especially when this is backed up by explanatory examples. . . . Examples in dictionaries are . . . absolutely essential both to extend the user's comprehension, and to provide models for students to remember and perhaps eventually produce by putting individual words into a range of typical contexts and appropriate phrases. (Summers 1988:116)

In addition, teachers must be made aware of what is involved in looking up a word. Luppescu and Day (1993) remind us that:

> The possibility that using a dictionary might not always be helpful should not be unexpected, for the task of finding the meaning of a word in a dictionary is a complex process. The process may entail looking for a suitable headword, comprehending the entry, locating the appropriate part of the definition, connecting the right sense to the context and putting the right word within the context of the unknown or difficult word in the text. (Luppescu & Day 1993:274)

And they stress the fact that it is important to realize that learners may have difficulties with all the steps in this process.

But what stands in the way of a fuller exploitation of a dictionary in the classroom? Teachers may not have a clear understanding of the kinds of language awareness that a dictionary may be instrumental in helping learners develop. They may be reluctant to use it because they fear their students will react negatively to the dictionary, since they

themselves don't see the point of it. A. Underhill (1985), in speaking of the monolingual learner's dictionary, comments:

> Often when the teacher does decide to integrate the MLD into general class work a feeling of awkwardness is experienced as when trying to use a new instrument but using it only clumsily. It is here that the teacher needs some practical guidelines so that he [she] is not as so often happens, reduced to introducing the MLD in an apologetic and tentative fashion which is neither integrating nor inspiring for the learners. (Underhill 1985:106)

Underhill (1985) suggests that the solution is to develop in teachers and students a greater awareness of how the dictionary can be exploited through exercises which have a high learning yield. Such exercises must cater to different learning styles and levels while at the same time engage the learners' attention through getting a job done and enjoying it. This can be achieved in two ways. Learners can, in the first place, be engaged in a search for specific information. Four main areas here are those of spelling; word pronunciation and word stress; grammatical information; meanings of words and phrases. In the second place, learners can be engaged in the exploration of incidental awareness. Underhill (1985) continues: "Whatever the entry may say it is certainly not all there is to be said about a word. It is just a starting point for the learner's discovery of the meanings and usages of a word" (p. 112). Such work, according to Underhill (1985), has the additional function of allowing memory the opportunity to find its own memory hooks on which to hang various strands of information relating to the experience of looking up a word.

Learners should also be allowed to play the game of becoming lexicographers. They can be encouraged to note down special, interesting and useful language items in the language they are exposed to; this can be a sentence, for example, but it must have notes on the situation, the speaker or writer, place, purpose and so on. This can be discussed during activity time, set aside for learners to report to the class their "most interesting words or expressions of the week". Such an activity can become a particularly useful exercise if there is a new use or grammatical constraint or an additional spectrum of meaning to that which has been already encountered in class.

Learners must be made aware of the fact that lexical items can fulfil very different functions in different circumstances. There might, for instance, be an emotive overtone to words which can be explored: learners can be asked to assign positive, negative or neutral connotations to lexical items in a text. Such work can be modified for advanced learners through the use of special texts, literary works or poems in which association, connotation and allusion as well as phonological and grammatical qualities of items are thrown into relief. Thus learners may be asked to see what kind of effect the writer is trying to achieve and to be able to judge in their own way how successful it is.

Teachers must also teach students to guess from context. The following procedure, described by Clarke and Nation (1980), involves five steps:

1. Finding the part of speech of the unknown word.

2. Looking at the immediate context of the unknown word and simplifying this context if necessary. [Using the context to answer a question; making use of any relative phrases or clauses; removing *and* or *or* and making two simple sentences; interpreting punctuation clues: italics = the word will be defined; quotation marks = the word has special meaning; dashes = showing apposition; or brackets = enclosing a definition.]

3. Looking at the wider context of the unknown word. That is looking at the relationship between the clause containing the unknown word and surrounding clauses and sentences. [Relationships: cause and effect; contrast; generalization, detail, exclusion, explanation, time and arrangement; making use of other clues like *this*, *that*, *it* and so on; completing any comparison clues; interpreting the appropriate conjunctive relationship between the clause or sentence with the unknown word and the preceding and following clauses or sentences.]

4. Guessing the meaning of the unknown word. [Most guessing strategies try to make the learner aware of the range of information available from context so that there is no need to keep to any rigid guessing procedure. This involves using clues obtained in steps 1–3.]

5. Checking that the guess is correct: [1) the part of speech of the guess must be the same as that of the unknown word; 2) the learner can break the unknown word into parts and see if the meaning of the parts relates to the guess; 3) the learner might substitute the guess for the unknown word to see if it makes sense in context; 4) the learner might look up the word in a dictionary.] (Clarke & Nation 1980, as cited in Nation & Coady 1988:104–5)

Though this at first may be seen as a major interruption to the reading process it does make learners familiar with the range of strategies available at hand when using context clues.

Reading textbooks might also be useful sources for dictionary using strategies. The following exercise (see Appendix) has been taken from *Strategies for Reading*, a textbook prepared during the University of Malaya English for Special Purposes Project (UMESPP), as illustrated by N. Chitravelu (1980:32). Guessing for meaning is encouraged as is asking

for clarification of the teacher and/or other students. In the example, "Using a Dictionary", the student learns how to decide when to look up a word in a dictionary and how to decide which of the meanings given in the dictionary best fits a particular context. Initially the student has to answer a question referring to the passage; that question probably contains some words whose meanings the student does not know. There are eight steps involved: the student reads the question; reads the text and answers the question; if the student cannot answer the question he/she must ask himself/herself why it cannot be done; next if the student cannot answer the question because of the meanings of certain words, the student must note down those words. Such words might even occur in the question; the student looks up the words he/she ought to know in the dictionary; the student tries to answer the question again; this process is repeated for every question there might be in a text; finally, the student discusses his/her answers with the group. The general aims of this exercise as listed on the sample page are: to teach students how to tackle unknown words; to sensitize students to the principles involved in deciding whether or not to look up a word in a dictionary; to give students further practice in using contextual clues; to sensitize students to the principles involved in locating appropriate word meanings in a dictionary.

Finally it is important that students have specific tasks related to their reading goals and dictionary using strategies at all times. J. H. Hulstijn (1993) reminds us that:

> If readers approach a text strategically they will use their reading goal as a yardstick to determine how much attention to pay to the text's individual paragraphs, sentences, and words. Hence we may expect that FL readers are more likely to look up the meaning of words they find relevant (in terms of reaching their reading goal) than of words they find irrelevant. . . . A sound reading pedagogy not only shows students how to infer the meaning of unfamiliar words, but also sees to it that the students verify their references by consulting an authority, such as a dictionary. Poor reading pedagogy makes three errors in this respect. First, it wrongly leads students to believe that the meaning of all unfamiliar words can be inferred on the basis of contextual clues. Second, it encourages students to adapt a wild-guessing behavior rather than a critical inferring behavior. Finally, it fails to teach students to conduct the necessary final step in the inferring procedure, namely to check the correctness of their inference in cases of doubt by consulting a dictionary. (p. 142)

Thus any strategies on using dictionaries towards improving reading comprehension skills, must concentrate on improving teacher/student attitudes towards dictionary use; must set aside specific time and task sessions for dictionaries in the classroom; and must above all consider the use of a dictionary as a regular pedagogic instrument for teaching purposes.

## FOOTNOTES

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# APPENDIX

Adapted from *ELT Documents (1980), The University of Malaya English for Special Purposes Project (UMESPP)* (pp. 32–33).

**Sample II**

**Student's Book**

**Lesson 22  Using a Dictionary**

In several of the earlier lessons you learnt to deduce the meanings of words without a dictionary. You cannot always do without a dictionary, however. In this lesson you will learn how to decide when to look up a word in a dictionary. You will also learn how to decide which of the meanings given in the dictionary best fits the context you are dealing with.

**Activity A**  *Do you need a dictionary? (1)*

Each text below is accompanied by a number of questions. The texts and the questions probably contain some words whose meanings you do not know.

**Decide which words you need to know in order to answer the questions, and underline them.**

Procedure for each text.

**Step 1**  Read Question 1.

**Step 2**  Read the text and answer the question.

**Step 3**  If you cannot answer the question, ask yourself why you cannot.

**Step 4**  If you think you cannot answer the questions because you do not know the meanings of certain words, note down these words. Note that some of these difficult words may occur even in the questions.

**Step 5**  Now look up the words you feel you ought to know in the dictionary.

**Step 6**  Try answering the question again.

**Step 7**  Repeat the process with every question on the text.

**Step 8**  Discuss your answers in your group.

**General Aims**  1  To teach students how to tackle unknown words.

2  To sensitize students to the principles involved in deciding whether or not to look up a word in a dictionary.

3  To give students further practice in using contextual clues.

4  To sensitize students to the principles involved in locating appropriate word meanings in a dictionary.

# WHAT CAN (OR SHOULD) LINGUISTS DO IN THE FACE OF LANGUAGE DECLINE?

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## ABSTRACT

In a recent exchange in *Language*, Michael Krauss and Peter Ladefoged differed over the role of linguists in the face of language decline. Krauss argued that the discipline must not "preside obliviously" over the disappearance of nine-tenths of its field; Ladefoged advocated a more traditional and detached stance, and suggested that linguists ought not to assume that they know best. What are the central issues informing this matter? What facts are relevant to a choice between active involvement and dispassionate study?

This paper will discuss some of the recurring elements in situations of language decline. These elements are remarkably constant, and it is in their particular *combinations* that the uniqueness of different contexts resides. Based upon this, it is suggested that the necessary will to stanch decline is a tenuous quality. Beyond this, the paper will comment upon the ahistorical manner in which modern settings of language decline are treated, and upon the larger language-group identity relationship which is often the heart of the matter.

The paper concludes by proposing that a middle ground between the Krauss and Ladefoged positions is appropriate and that there are, in fact, ways for linguists (and others) to become "involved" without sacrificing disinterested scholarship. We need not, after all, surrender the field to what Dwight Bolinger once called the *shamans* of language.

Linguists, according to the late Dwight Bolinger, have had a traditional reluctance to engage themselves in what might be called the "public life of language". In his 1980 book, *Language: The Loaded Weapon*, Bolinger discusses the public's continuing interest in linguistic prescriptivism and how, given academia's reluctance to prescribe or proscribe, the explanatory vacuum has been filled by those he calls the language *shamans*:

> In language there are no licensed practitioners, but the woods are full of midwives, herbalists, colonic irrigationists, bonesetters, and general-purpose witch doctors, some abysmally ignorant, others with a rich fund of practical knowledge—whom we shall lump together and call shamans. (p. 1)

The study of language, like the study of psychology, has, in our society, evolved from a prescriptivist stance to a descriptive one—and it is an evolution which is fiercely

guarded and cherished. If we look at the development of psychology, at least in the West, we see an historical evolution from prescription to description. Before the discipline became an independent field of enquiry, and when psychological insights were produced by philosophers, theologians and ethicists, many assessments of human nature derived from positions of faith and led to prescriptions for the successful, or healthy, or purposeful conduct of life. After its divorce from philosophy—even allowing for relatively contemporary developments which have, in some areas, led to or at least suggested fruitful reunions—psychology became less prescriptive and more descriptive. This was due to an embrace of natural science methods, a desire to represent psychological life as it exists, an increasing awareness of cross-cultural differences, a growing secularization, and distaste for judgemental stances. While the myth of value-free science and complete objectivity has been highlighted in recent years, and while the emptiness of much of the modern psychological enterprise has prompted moves away from a narrow and anti-philosophical reductionism, no return to prescriptivism is likely within the discipline. Nowadays it exists only in the products of airport-author psychologists.

So it is with linguistics. Earlier writers were prone to prescriptive declamations, and early grammarians and lexicographers (i.e., more 'professional' linguists) produced prescriptive outlines of language in their attempts to codify, systematize and 'improve'; their works are quite understandable, given what were pioneering attempts to impose order where little or none had existed. Even in these efforts, however, one can often detect feelings that, after all, usage is what ultimately counts, and that linguistic stability, variation and change are pushed from below rather than prescribed or proscribed from above. These feelings, in modern linguistics, have become very widespread and, like their psychological colleagues, linguists now see themselves as scholars whose essential remit is one of description. But if pop psychology abounds on station bookstalls and in magazines and other media, then so does an amateur linguistics in which prescriptivism still reigns. Anyone who reads newspapers, for example, knows how frequent are the cries for a return to 'standards', the laments over unwanted linguistic incursions, the complaints about slang and profanity. This, as may be imagined, is as historically constant as is disappointment with the younger generation.

Against this, as it were, is the commitment which many in *applied* linguistics bring to their studies. I'm thinking here of students of topics like bilingualism and bilingual education, language maintenance/shift, the language/identity interface, language and multiculturalism, minority languages and language revival efforts. It is common here to see linguists—and members of allied disciplines—who are *of* the groups themselves, or who would not have entered the field(s) without personal feelings of a quite definite kind.

A good example here is Joshua Fishman, a longtime and respected figure in the area of applied linguistics and the sociology of language. He noted in 1982 that sadness at cultural assimilation and mother-tongue loss among "small and powerless ethnolinguistic

entities" (p. 7)—groups who, he states, "have not capitulated to the massive blandishments of Western materialism, who experience life and nature in deeply poetic and collectively meaningful ways" (p. 8)—was what brought many academics into linguistics, education and anthropology ("in deeply unconscious and prescientific ways" (p. 7)). Thus, linguistics "corresponds to certain pervasive, soul–satisfying, meaning–and–value needs of its 'members'", who frequently (therefore) act as advocates of "the weak and as yet unappreciated peoples and languages" (p. 11). As a self-proclaimed "founding father" of sociolinguistics ("I can still remember when I coined the expression 'language maintenance and language shift'" (Fishman 1992:396)), he later observed:

> most sociolinguists (although, regrettably and inevitably, not all) favor, and seek to foster, a culturally and linguistically heterogeneous world. (1989:3)

It is clear that Fishman's approach to language and ethnicity is one which transcends solely rational and objective dimensions. In his desire to approach the subject "respectfully, even with awe, as one approaches any sanctity of mankind" (p. 700), and in his assessment of ethnic and language matters as a "mystery" which, while requiring and profiting from study and analysis, remains a "supra–rational" concern (like religion), I do not think it would be unfair to suggest that Fishman's view generally is like that of the theologian who, while committed to, and willing to engage in, dispassionate investigation, also retains a bedrock of faith.

And, in a very recent book, Fishman speaks of "reversal–of–language–shift" (RLS) contributing to "local meaning" in the face of "mechanistic and fatalistic" modern life (1991:35) and "market hype and fad" (p. 4). He is concerned about a contemporary "peripheralization of the family" (p. 375), and he bemoans the disregard of the "moral and spiritual dimensions" (p. 387). Throughout, Fishman declares that these concerns are not backward–looking or "past–oriented", and he admits that "there is no turning the clock back" (p. 377). But phrases like those just quoted do rather suggest that he would, after all, like to see the clock run back a bit, that his sympathies lie with some mythical "better" or "small–is–beautiful" past. This is reinforced when he describes RLS as "reversing the tenor, the focus, the qualitative emphases of daily informal life" (p. 8) or, more bluntly, "remaking social reality" (p. 411). The tension between past and present leads Fishman, towards the end of the book, to see RLS advocates as "change–agents on behalf of persistence" (p. 387). What are we to make of this? How should we describe the stance of one who views RLS as a program of "sanctity", which "like all sanctities . . . is an absolute for those who see it and hear it and savour it with inner commitment and faith" (Fishman 1990:33)? Fishman is, at least, to be commended for making his stance clear. He implicitly and explicitly endorses a view of applied linguistics as *both* scholarship and advocacy. I am surely not the only one who sees potential dangers here.

These—for present purposes—take on their most immediate focus in work dealing with language maintenance, decline, shift and revival, and it is here that, very recently, Michael Krauss has entered the debate. Writing in *Language* (1992), Krauss adverts to the fact that a large number of the world's languages are now seriously at risk. He presents various data to support this contention, and notes:

> I consider it a plausible calculation that—at the rate things are going—the coming century will see either the death or the doom of 90% of mankind's languages. (p. 7)

What (he says) "are we linguists doing to prepare for this or to prevent this catastrophic destruction of the linguistic world" (p. 7)? If linguists do not act, Krauss observes, "we should be cursed by future generations for Neronically fiddling while Rome burned" (p. 8). Of course, he says, one urgent need is linguistic documentation, but he also states:

> For those 'unsafe' languages still being learned by children—i.e. those merely 'endangered'—there is an equal need for us to support and promote their survival. Here again, similar criteria would apply: the smaller the number, or especially proportion, of speakers, and/or the more adverse the conditions, the more such involvement is needed. We should not only be documenting these languages, but also working educationally, culturally, and politically to increase their chances of survival. This means working with members of the relevant communities to help produce pedagogical materials and literature and to promote language development in the necessary domains, including television. And it involves working with communities, agencies, and, where possible, governments for supportive language planning. Where necessary, and this may be most often the case, we must learn from biologists and conservationists the techniques of organization, monitoring and lobbying, publicity, and activism. This we must do on local, regional, national, and international scales. (p. 9)

Krauss ends by saying that some rethinking of linguistic priorities is called for "lest linguistics go down in history as the only science that presided obliviously over the disappearance of 90% of the very field to which it is dedicated" (p. 10). Strong words, indeed, and ones which the Fishmans of the world would no doubt applaud.

However, later in the same volume of *Language*, Peter Ladefoged responded with "another view of endangered languages". While endorsing the work that Krauss and his colleagues do, or wish to do, Ladefoged notes that their views "are contrary to those held by many responsible linguists" (p. 809). Drawing upon his own work, Ladefoged points

to the fact that not all groups believe that the preservation of their language is compatible with desired lifestyles. Many of the Toda, for example (speakers of a southern Indian Dravidian language),

> have accepted that, in their view, the cost [of becoming part of modern India] is giving up the use of their language in their daily life. Surely, this is a view to which they are entitled, and it would not be the action of a responsible linguist to persuade them to do otherwise. (p. 810)

Ladefoged touches here upon a point which is surely important: should professionals assume that they know what is best for others?

> One can be a responsible linguist and yet regard the loss of a particular language, or even a whole group of languages, as far from a 'catastrophic destruction'. . . . Statements such as "just as the extinction of any animal species diminishes our world, so does the extinction of any language" are appeals to our emotions, not to our reason. (p. 810)

Actually, I think that we *can* agree with Dr. Johnson, who said in 1773, while on his tour of the Hebrides with Boswell, "I am always sorry when any language is lost, because languages are the pedigree of nations" (well, maybe not *pedigrees*, but it is a shame when we lose *any* window on the world). But this, of course, is not the main point here.

Ladefoged's solution? It involves a more traditional view of linguist-as-disinterested-scientist: "the task of the linguist is to lay out the facts concerning a given linguistic situation" (p. 811).

To complete this exchange, we find Nancy Dorian, in the next volume of *Language* (1993), responding to Ladefoged's comments. She takes up four specific points. First, on Ladefoged's assertion that "we must be wary of arguments [e.g., for supporting endangered languages] based on political considerations" (Ladefoged 1992:810), she says—correctly, I think—that the idea that there exist *apolitical* positions is ill-founded. She talks of the rights of "submerged nations", of peoples who find themselves within borders not of their own creation (as in Africa), of the ill-treatment of minorities by state governments. Second, she remarks on Ladefoged's Toda example, noting that it is common among threatened varieties to have low internal status. Interestingly, for one clearly in favour of language maintenance, Dorian makes a reference to her well-known work in Scotland:

> One can regret, and bitterly, the loss of this unique local dialect of Gaelic. To anyone who cherishes the singular riches of the Celtic cultural heritage preserved in the Gaelic language, it must seem a pity, and an unnecessary and wasteful loss, that Britain has not known how to accommodate its

cultural minorities. But given the social, economic, and linguistic climate of eastern Sutherland in the early decades of the twentieth century, it is surely fortunate that after the collapse of the east coast fisheries it proved possible for the fisherfolk to merge into the general population as they did. For a stigmatized group, the alternatives are likely to be even worse than loss of identity and language. (Dorian 1993:576)

Dorian then talks of the third–generation pursuit of a language lost in earlier times, and the bitterness felt towards those who chose "not to transmit the ancestral language and so [allowed] it to die" (p. 576). Hobson's choice, though? We know, of course, that "Hansen's Law" ("What the son wishes to forget, the grandson wishes to remember") applies more to some ethnic markers than to others; specifically, few 'grandsons' wish to relearn the ancestral variety (Hansen 1952). Ending this point, Dorian makes the observation that

it's unlikely that linguists can ever persuade a group either to give up or not to give up 'the use of their language in their daily life' [citing Ladefoged 1992:810]. Such behaviors come as the result of a confluence of social, economic, and political factors, not as a result of the persuasive powers of linguists. Reporting only on the abandonment phase of a language within a social group can obscure a longer–term dynamic, however, by overlooking reacquisition efforts on the part of members of a later generation within some social settings. (p. 577)

One is reminded here of Kedourie's (1961) observations about professors not being able to do the work of statesmen.

Third, Dorian picks up on Ladefoged's view that language loss need not be "catastrophic". Predictably, she takes the view that loss *is* extremely serious and regrettable, if not catastrophic. We can perhaps agree with her. And fourth, Dorian refers to Ladefoged's suggestion that the task of the linguist is to "lay out the facts". Here, she observes that the sociolinguistic "facts" themselves are rather complex; she returns, in some sense, to the political questions discussed before, implying that politics alters "facts". Dorian concludes on a moderate note:

All linguists are likely to agree on the importance of the descriptive task that Ladefoged as well as . . . Krauss . . . participate in. It's within the realm of possibility that at some point in the past the world's languages experienced a die-off of proportions equal to those of the die-off confronting them now, but the rather young academic discipline of Linguistics certainly has not confronted extinctions on this scale. There can be room for disagreement about the degree to which the salvage

enterprise is political, about the appropriate latitude of the documentation task, and about the professional and personal resonance of the endangerment situation for linguists. But if there is an issue on which linguists' advocacy positions are worth hearing, it might legitimately be taken to be this one of how to respond to the large-scale language endangerment situation. The manifestations of the phenomenon linguists devote their lives to studying seem certain to be reduced by a very substantial number, and that may be reason enough to encourage the airing of opinions as well as the writing of grant proposals. I hope both will proceed energetically. (p. 579)

My own view—in addition to the points I've made along the way—is to endorse Dorian's call for more airing of this matter. In general, I have problems with the extreme "advocacy" position of the Fishmans of the world, find that Krauss's lament is generalized but serves really only to open the debate, and that even the moderate Dorians are to some extent enmeshed in a world-view which traffics in terms like tradition, authenticity, folkways, and so on, and which temperamentally rejects modernity and sees in it only materialism and shallowness. These are the larger issues within which linguists operate.

The tension here is one that has animated nationalists and pluralists for a long time, and I doubt neither their sincerity nor (at many levels) their rather utopian visions in attempting to reconcile conflicting elements. *If* we could have the original language *and* the desired access to modernity, if we could retain all aspects of roots without having to surrender mobility, if we could have the excesses, prejudices and impersonalization of society tempered by a strongly local core . . . well, these are powerful sentiments. There has, unfortunately, always been the greatest difficulty accommodating such features without the imposition of draconian measures unacceptable to many or self-segregation unwanted by most. Much of interest here touches upon broad issues of support for collectivities versus *individual* rights (and our own recent Canadian experience is illustrative; see Edwards, in press).

I think it is possible—immediately—for linguists who are, themselves, strongly committed to the maintenance of diversity—and maybe uncommitted or neutral ones, too—to consider that one of the "facts" to be presented to groups or governments is that very commitment. That is, one might argue that beleaguered language groups could profit from knowing that the issues which affect them so directly are seen as important by people other than in-group activists. This in itself would hardly remove the linguistic and social obstacles but, if any change in fortunes is at all possible, it must surely depend upon a solid grasp of historical and contemporary fact—and why not include here the ecologically-minded awareness which is increasingly evident in linguistics and the allied disciplines?

Let me end, however, on a very broad note. Along the lines of the weak and strong forms of the Sapir–Whorf hypothesis, I think we might usefully consider something like a "weak–strong" or a "hard–soft" continuum for multicultural settings in which language varieties are in contact. I think a very strong case can be made that a determination of optimal points along this continuum would repay our efforts, and might be useful for situations ranging from Canada–Quebec, to Yugoslavia, to the former Soviet Union— and even for those referred to by Krauss and Ladefoged. The issue in the minds of ordinary speakers of given "at–risk" languages is very rarely linguistic alone; it is more commonly one relating to economy and well–being in a dynamic world, where contact and stratification continue to make inroads into existing lifestyles. I cannot elucidate the case further here, but it seems abundantly obvious that investigations of the "middle ground", as it were, are required.

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# A NINETEENTH CENTURY LITERARY REPRESENTATION OF NOVA SCOTIA DIALECT

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## ABSTRACT

In 1895 British novelist and playwright Israel Zangwill (1864–1926) published his third novel *The Master*. The book, which chronicles the career of a Nova Scotian who becomes a successful painter in London, was believed to be based on the life of Halifax-born painter Gilbert Stuart Newton (1794–1835). In describing the hero's early life in Nova Scotia, Zangwill used many dialect forms as well as words and expressions which are now recognized as Canadianisms. Using biographical and lexicographic data the paper tries to discover the sources Zangwill may have used to create the dialect representation in his book. The paper proposes that it was Zangwill's friend, the artist George Hutchinson, rather than Newton, who served as model for the book's hero and was the likely informant regarding Nova Scotia speech.

*The Master* is a sympathetic account of the struggles of Matt Strang, a boy born in a small village on Cobequid Bay, who longs to become a painter. After the death of his father, a sailor who dies in running the Blockade during the American Civil War, Matt leaves home and tries to earn enough money for his journey to London. Once in London he studies art there, but is devastated by hardships and poverty and returns to Nova Scotia. Here he marries the pretty but prosaic daughter of a Halifax merchant, and goes to London again in improved financial circumstances. Now he achieves recognition as a painter, but eventually gives up success and popularity in order to attain personal and artistic integrity.

Israel Zangwill was a prominent figure in London literary circles and his career was watched with interest. That he chose to write a novel about a painter caused no surprise—books about painters were very much in fashion. *The Picture of Dorian Gray* was reissued in the same year. Zangwill's younger brother was an art student and illustrator. Zangwill himself, as journalist and columnist for the *Pall Mall Magazine* was an intimate of the London art circles. Even if his choice of Nova Scotia as the hero's birthplace was thought a trifle extravagant, there was no speculation regarding the identity of the artist on whom

Matt Strang was likely to have been modelled. Nor was there much comment on the fact that Zangwill undertook to describe Nova Scotia without ever having visited North America. In general the book met with a very cool reception. It was proclaimed to be too wordy, heavy-handed, and somewhat flat in character portrayal. The author of *Children of the Ghetto* (1892) was expected to do better than that.

Later biographers also offer scant comment on the choice of setting. Leftwich (1957) compares it to Flaubert's use of Carthage in *Salammbo*, while Wohlgelernter (1964) and Adams (1971) do not show special interest in the Nova Scotia locale.

Understandably, the Nova Scotia setting was destined eventually to arouse greater interest in Nova Scotia than it did elsewhere, and a Government of Canada plaque placed in Halifax in 1952 in honour of Gilbert Stuart Newton R.A. (1794–1835) identifies Newton as the subject of Zangwill's novel. The existence of the plaque was apparently not known to any one of the three biographers, as they make no mention of it.

It is true that Matt's career resembles Newton's in its general outline, yet certain difficulties remain. The action of the novel is placed in Zangwill's own time, not in Newton's, the hero's home is Cobequid Village, not Halifax. As an artist the hero rebels against convention, whereas Newton followed the classical tradition of his time. In addition, even if some impulse did cause Zangwill to become interested in Newton, he would still need material for describing the place, the people, and their speech.

Happily, an explanation has suggested itself in the form of a handwritten note preserved in the Public Archives of Nova Scotia in Halifax. The note, written on the fly-leaf of the Archives' copy of *The Master*, mentions "Hutchinson from Wolfville" as the possible model of Zangwill's hero. Indeed, in the Public Archives there is a record of a talented artist named George Hutchinson. The *History of Great Village, Nova Scotia* (1960), speaks of George Hutchinson as a painter who grew up in Great Village, Colchester County, won a coveted prize for Life drawings from the Royal Academy in London in 1885, and became a successful painter there. It only remains to be mentioned that Zangwill's favourite illustrator was named George Hutchinson, to see that the handwritten note merits serious attention. Zangwill refers to his "old friend George Hutchinson" in the Foreword to *The King of Schnorrers* (1894).

A comparison of dates and signatures on sketches done by Hutchinson in Nova Scotia and in England show them to be by the same person. Hutchinson's career in London is outside the scope of this paper, but his connection with Zangwill can explain the latter's familiarity with village life in Nova Scotia and with local customs and language, for it seems that Zangwill relied in part on literary works and in part on a personal contact in writing the book. Whatever his sources, the presence of words and expressions which would now be considered Canadian or at least North American, is impressive.

It is in describing Matt's young years in Cobequid Village that Zangwill uses regional speech in dialogue and to some extent also in narration. Much of the vocabulary resembles Haliburton's, as do certain other features. Spelling of some words is the same as in *The Clockmaker*: *a'most, arter* (after), *consarn, critter, darter, feller, Marm, perlite, rael, readin'*. The spelling of some other words differs only slightly: *jest* (just), *nater, picters, thet there*, as compared to Haliburton's *jist, natur', pictur's, that 'are*.

A longer quotation may help to illustrate the language of *The Master*. Here young Matt is musing about the 'mudding frolic' of the previous night, at which his mother danced with the unlikeable Deacon Hailey:

> Thunderation! Thet's never her dancin' with ole Hey. My stars, what'll her Elders say? Well, I wow! She *is* backslidin'. Ah, she recollecks! She pulls up; her face is like a beet. Ole Hey is argufyin', but she hangs back in her traces. I reckon she kinder thinks she's kicked over the dashboard this time. . . . I do declare Marm Hailey is looking pesky ugly 'bout it. She's a mighty handsome critter, Marm Hailey. Pity she kin't wear her hat with the black feather indoors—she does look jest spliffin' when she drives her horses through the snow. Whoop! Keep it up! Sling it out, ole Jupe! More rosin! Yankey doodle, keep it up, Yankey doodle dandy! (p. 8)

The text recalls Haliburton in parts—*kinder* and *pesky* are used adverbially, a woman is a *critter*, *ugly* means 'angry', *Jupe* is used as a name of a Black person. This is not to say that the book is a pastiche of Haliburton, however much the author may have relied on *The Clockmaker* as an example of Nova Scotian literary dialect. 'Ole Hey', incidentally, is so nicknamed because he ends all his ponderous pronoucements with 'hey'. 'No wonder the Province is so etarnally behind, hey?' is a typical expression of his, and other characters are clearly differentiated in their speech from one another according to situation and other relevant factors, such as age, occupation, and social position.

The author makes an explicit statement about the difference between Matt's speech and that of his father, and about the language of the region in general:

> "What's in the wind?" [the father] asks. "Is Farmer Wade's barn on fire?"
> "Everythin's on faar," says the boy. . . . His dialect differs a whit from his more-travelled father's. In his little God-forsaken corner of Acadia the variously proportioned mixture of English and American, which, with local variations of Lowland and Highland Scotch, North of Ireland brogue, and French patois, loosely constitutes a Nova Scotian idiom, is further tinged with the specific peculiarities that spring from illiteracy and rusticity. (p. 22)

A dictionary check of selected words from *The Master* shows that apart from words which occur in Haliburton, there are also words which were used by Washington Irving, Mark Twain, Martineau in her travel books, Hawthorne, Longfellow, and Harriet Beecher Stowe. One or two are shared with Charles G. D. Roberts, in a book published a year after *The Master*.

Of special interest is Zangwill's use of words which came to be regarded as Canadianisms and are included in the *Dictionary of Canadianisms*. In the following list quotation marks are used if the words were so marked in the novel. Page numbers refer to *The Master* (1895).

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | alewives  p. 2. | Plural of *alewife*, a fish. |
| 2. | "black-jack"  p. 153. | Strong tobacco, used for chewing. |
| 3. | "Bluenose"  p. 2. | Here used collectively for Nova Scotians. |
| 4. | caribou  p. 2. | Here used as plural. |
| 5. | crooked knife  p. 69. | A wood-working knife. |
| 6. | flats  p. 1. | Here signifies land exposed by receding tide. |
| 7. | frolics  p. 6. | Social gathering with food, music and dancing. |
| 8. | gaspereux [*sic*]  p. 2. | A small fish. |
| 9. | hand-sled  p. 6. | A sled drawn by a person. |
| 10. | ice-cakes  p. 6. | Slabs of floating ice. |
| 11. | "lean-to"  p. 6. | Here a shed attached to the house. |
| 12. | loyalists  p. 1. | Settlers loyal to the British Crown. |
| 13. | musquash  p. 2. | An animal valued for its fur. |
| 14. | pung  p. 29. | A sled usually drawn by one horse |

In addition to the above list, there are colloquial and informal expressions which, although not found in the *DC*, can be said to be Canadian by virtue of occurring in Haliburton. Some of them have already been mentioned. The list then continues as follows:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 15. | arter  p. 8. | After. |
| 16. | by gum  p. 8. | Exclamation of surprise. |
| 17. | everlastin'  p. 46. | An intensifier. Here used with adjective: *everlastin' purty*. |
| 18. | gooney  p. 6. | A fool. |
| 19. | pesky adj. and adv.  pp. 6 and 8. | An expression of disapproval or impatience. |
| 20. | ruinatin'  p. 13. | Causing damage. Here used intransitively. |
| 21. | snuggery  p. 7. | A snug place of rest. |
| 22. | spunk up  p. 75. | To stand up to an opponent. |
| 23. | streaked  p. 124. | Angry, annoyed. |

24. 'tarnal p. 8.          An intensifier expressing disapproval.
25. vamoose  p. 253.     Go, leave.

There are other words which, if not specifically Maritime or Canadian, can be said to be North American. The following words are included in the *Dictionary of American English* (1938–1944) with quotations, among others, from Washington Irving, Thoreau, Hawthorne, Mark Twain and *Harper's Magazine*.

26. argufying  p. 8.          Arguing.
27. bunch  p. 112.           Here refers to children.
28. candy-pulling  p. 6.     A social gathering for the purpose of making candy.
29. cellar  p. 5.             A storage room underneath the house.
30. corndogers.  p. 26       A kind of pancakes.
31. "ell"  p. 111.            An annex to the main house.
32. fandango p. 9.           A dance.  Here a contraption.
33. golden-rod  p. 2.        A flower.
34. hogsheads  p. 2.         Containers for rum.
35. infares  p. 6.           Feasts occurring after a wedding.
36. lan' sakes  p. 7.        An exclamation.
37. mackerel  p. 2.          A common fish.
38. North-wester  p. 29.     Here a wind which brings good weather.
39. "pointers"  p. 142.      Bits of advice.
40. pumpkin-pie  p. 8.       A pie made with pumpkin filling.
41. quilting-party  p. 43.   A social gathering for the purpose of making quilts.
42. scootin'  p. 9.          Moving rapidly.
43. settee  p. 112.          Here a wooden bench standing in the kitchen.
44. spruce-beer  p. 8.       A drink made in part of an extract of spruce needles.
45. "transatlantic"  p. 142. In England:  North American, foreign.
46. weather-boards  p. 5.    Boards used to protect the house from cold temperatures.

A number of other words are identified in the *Oxford English Dictionary* as U.S. or U.S. slang, such as *dough-nuts, flapjacks, griddle-cakes, make a spec, thunderation*.

The range of Zangwill's North American vocabulary points to his familiarity with the writings of Haliburton, Washington Irving and others. Yet he also differs from these writers, especially in spellings, e.g. *slockdologee* (Haliburton: *sockdologer, slock-dolager*), *gaspereux* (not *gaspereaux*), which suggests that his knowledge did not come only from printed sources. Although by all accounts an avid reader of a remarkably wide range of literary genres, he appears to have relied also on an oral account of the languages of Nova Scotia, for he even uses a Micmac phrase '*kogwa pawotumun?*' (what is your wish?) (p. 69), an expression he could not have drawn from the American writers he knew.

But perhaps even more instructive is his use of the unusual exclamation *geewiglets* (p. 9), similar in meaning to *gewhilikins (gee whillikins)* cited in DAE. The word is used by young Matt as he muses about a sleighing accident in which his younger brother sustained a leg injury. "Geewiglets! The rope's give!" is the expression he recalls as he thinks about the accident. This unusual exclamation also occurs in a similar form in a cartoon by George Hutchinson published in the American edition of *The Illustrated London News* (January 1889) where an accident involving an overturned washing-tub is met with the exclamation *"Jewiglets!"*.

Hutchinson's own way of representing dialect varieties in the captions of his published cartoons calls for separate treatment, but the example of *jewiglets/geewiglets* points to an indebtedness of a writer to his illustrator. A converse case of indebtedness can be seen in one of Hutchinson's illustrations for Zangwill's book *The Bachelors' Club* (1891) where Hutchinson painted the word *kosher* in Hebrew characters on a wine-bottle in a scene set in an Eastern city.

*The Master* has long stopped to be of interest to literary critics, and apparently has not attracted attention as a source of historical information about Nova Scotia, the author being known to be a Londoner who had never visited these parts. It is likely, however, that he had obtained a good deal of his knowledge from someone intimately acquainted with Nova Scotia, someone who was capable, observant, and gifted with a sense of humour, and that the book is a product of collaboration between the two friends. The descriptive and linguistic material of *The Master* is probably much more accurate than it has been thought to be in the past. Now that a hundred years have passed since the novel was first serialized in *Harper's Weekly* (1894), it is ready to be looked at again with renewed interest.

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# THE LANGUAGE OF INTIMACY

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## ABSTRACT

How can linguistic minorities retain their mother tongues so as to stop a language shift towards the dominant linguistic majority? One of the answers to the question has been that if minorities keep on using the mother tongue at home and in the sphere of intimacy, a stable bilingualism, or a diglossic situation, can be created and maintained (Fishman 1991).

Research done in Denmark and Germany on the language usage amongst immigrants points to the difficulties of this hypothesis. On the one hand, several studies show that the language of the majority (in this case Danish) becomes the language of communication between not only the second-generation immigrants, but also partly between the first-generation parents and their children. This being the case, the question is if the schools or other agents should and can intervene in this process.

On the other hand, research done on the sexual and emotional lives of young Turks in Germany show that they shift to German when they speak about sexuality, even if their dominant language is Turkish. A close focus on their sexual and emotional lives shows that this very intimate sphere takes place mostly in German.

In this paper I attempt to discuss why the immigrants tend to shift language even at home and in the sphere of intimacy. One of my points is that when Turkish culture and North European societies collide, it is not only a confrontation between Turkish and the local languages, but, maybe even more important, a collision between traditional and modern values and forms of life.

"Around half of the 40 young Turkish men I interviewed felt more comfortable speaking Turkish and the other half German. However, by and large when talking about sexuality they preferred to speak German, if they could speak *some* German". (Salman 1993:75-76)

This is how Ramazan Salman, a bilingual Turkish-German social researcher, himself a second-generation Turk, comments on the choice of language amongst Turkish young men when talking about sexuality. Salman interviewed 40 adolescents between the ages of 16-21, living in the German state of Lower Saxony.

Salman's study is not specifically focused on describing the linguistic situation among young Turks, nor is he linguistically trained, but it is nevertheless an important source of information for further sociolinguistic study.

This study has inspired me to take into account the dimensions of love and sexuality amongst young Turks in my own research, which is based on the ethnic identity and language use of second-generation Turks in Denmark.[1] Up to now I have conducted interviews with 6 young Turks, 3 girls and 3 boys. I asked them, among other things, about their "intimate" lives. Because the number of the people I interviewed is so few, I will base this paper mostly on Salman's findings, but I want to point out *en passant* that my findings seem to confirm his results.

In his report to the Ministry of Social Affairs of the provincial government of Lower Saxony, Salman gives the example of Kemal, an adolescent who grew up in Germany. According to Salman, the Turkish youngster, in the middle of Turkish sentences, uses German words and expressions for everything which impinges remotely on sexuality[2] (p. 75). Kemal, for example, codeswitches between German and Turkish when talking about a girl with whom he was once in love:

> War ich verknallt, ama olmadi. (I had a crush [in German], but it didn't work [in Turkish]).

Salman gives more details and examples of the use of language amongst adolescents, when they talk about sexual matters (p. 75):

> Interviewer: Sence kondomun yan etkileri nedir? (What according to you are the disadvantages of condoms?)
> Hassan: Hm.
> Interviewer: Was sind deiner Meinung nach die Nachteile von Kondomen?
> Hassan: Bozulabilir. (They may tear.)

This is how Salman evaluates this conversation:

> It was clear that he didn't understand the question in Turkish and so I tried in German. He understood the question better in German and answered nevertheless in Turkish. Hassan reacted similarly to other questions which impinged on his sexual life. Although he spoke better Turkish than German, he disposed of no Turkish vocabulary by which he could express sexual matters. The adolescents, who have mastered Turkish better than German, speak nevertheless German, if they did not recall certain words in Turkish.[3]

Salman gives a third example:

> Ünal spoke Turkish as well as German. During the interview, we used both of the languages. I had the feeling that when dealing with emotional topics, for instance talking about falling in love or other feelings, Turkish would be used. German would be used when discussing sexual or AIDS-related topics.

These comments are interesting from a linguistic point of view. First of all, they are the first evidence of codeshifting among immigrants when they talk about sexuality or love in their mother tongue that I have encountered since I began my research. Indeed it is one of the few studies which deal with the theme of love and sexuality amongst immigrants.[4] This aspect of their lives has been ignored by researchers most possibly because sexuality is still seen as a taboo among social researchers, and the sexual life of male immigrants is seen as a politically incorrect issue to focus on, due to the fear of reinforcing the accusations within the anti-immigrant circle that "immigrant men steal our women from us".

Secondly, these findings problematize the essence of the project of Reversing Language Shift of Joshua Fishman, namely that if minorities can retain the mother tongue in the spheres of the home and of intimate circles, a stable bilingualism, or a diglossic situation, can be created and maintained (Fishman 1991). Contrary to his assertions Salman's findings tend to demonstrate the difficulty which the Turkish immigrants have in retaining the mother tongue in the most intimate of all spheres, i.e. the sphere of love and sexuality. My basic point in the paper will be that when traditional Turkish culture and North European societies collide, it is not only a confrontation between Turkish and the local languages but, maybe more important, a clash between traditional and modern values of life.

### Why Do They Choose German?

The question that comes naturally to one's mind is why they prefer German, or, in my six Danish cases, Danish when they talk about love and sexuality. Shouldn't they naturally choose their mother tongue, when expressing the most intimate aspect of their lives? Aren't these findings surprising and paradoxical?[5]

One reason which comes to mind to explain why people codeshift when talking about love and sex is that there might be less emotional attachment to certain sexual or intimate expressions and words when speaking a foreign language. Therefore, it can be claimed that people feel more free and uninhibited to talk about love and sexuality in a foreign language.

But I think more is at play when we are dealing with people coming from traditional areas of rural Turkey and moving to modern North European industrial societies. In order to understand why young Turks shift language when they talk about love and sexuality, we have to look at their sexual lives and we have to take into account the influence tradition has on their sexuality since the majority of Turkish immigrants are of peasant background.

Although there is not much research available on the sexual and intimate lives of Turkish peasants and immigrants, we still have enough compelling evidence which enables us to state the following:

a.     Not only pre-marital sex, but also friendship between Turkish boys and girls after puberty, is strictly forbidden.[6]  However, young male teenagers may go to prostitutes, and they have the possibility of having sex with liberated city girls or female tourists in Turkey and with European girls in Europe.[7]  According to the moral code of Turkish society, there is no problem with such relations as long as a long-term love relationship or unwanted children do not threaten the parents' control over the young man's marriage plans (Mortensen 1991).

For women, the possibilities of pre-marital sex both with Turkish or European men are extremely limited and sanctions are very strict. Two factors which make pre-marital sex extremely difficult for them is their limited spatial mobility and the cult of virginity:  a woman who has willingly "lost" her virginity would be a total outcast and may risk physical punishment. A young man demands that his future wife be a virgin, and if he finds out that she is not, he has the right to give her back to her family, according to the Turkish traditional culture.[8]  Therefore, a young woman whose husband dies or who is raped would not have a great chance of getting married to an elderly man or to a widower who is much older than herself, due to the lack of her "worth" as a non-virgin.

b.     Sexual and intimate relations between persons, as well as marriage, are not seen as belonging to the private and intimate sphere, which basically involves certain individuals. They concern the community and especially the families of the persons involved. Therefore, marriages are either arranged or controlled by the parents and pre-marital romantic love is not necessarily seen as a prerequisite for the establishment of a family. In contrast, marriage in modern societies is supported by a pervasive ideology, the dominant themes of which are romantic love, sexual fulfillment, self-discovery, and self-realization through love and sexuality, and the nuclear family as the social site for these processes (Berger & Kellner 1977).

The modern institutions of romantic love and marriage have their roots in one of the much broader cultural constructs of modern society:  the self. Sexuality plays a

crucial role in the construction of the self and talking about one's inner self is, for the most part, talking about one's sexuality.[9]

c.      Therefore one would expect a different discourse on sexuality in the traditional Turkish society compared to modern societies.  First of all, conversations on sexuality take place mostly among same-sex groups.  Conversations between males and females on sexual matters, even between wife and husband, are unthinkable.[10]

Secondly, conversations on sexual matters take place between peers.  Both younger and older Turks would be afraid of losing the respect of one another, if sexual or other intimate subjects were mentioned.  This means, among other things, that there is no tradition of talking about sexuality or sex-related love between parents and their children, or "in the home front", as Fishman would put it.[11]

Out of 40 adolescents Salman and his associates asked if they could speak with their parents about falling in love, girls, marriage wishes and AIDS/HIV (pp. 95-6):

> — 7 adolescents said they can speak with their parents about at least 3 of the above mentioned 4 topics.

> — 7 adolescents said that they can speak with their parents very cautiously and very seldom about at least 3 of the above mentioned 4 topics.

> — 26 adolescents said that *under no circumstances* could they talk to their parents about sexually relevant topics.  Salman notes that when these adolescents are asked if they speak with their parents of sex-relevant topics, they react with incomprehension.  Many wonder how one even considers talking about girls, falling in love or about AIDS in a Turkish family.

Consequently, 33 of the 40 interviewed adolescents (82%) said that they either very cautiously or under no circumstances speak on sex-relevant topics with their parents.  Furthermore, Salman asked these 33 adolescents the reasons for their reticence.  The most mentioned reasons were "it will only create difficulties" and "because of respect to them" (approximately one fourth of the mentioned reasons).  Maybe the most remarkable answer, which constitutes 15% of all the given reasons, was: Because of language and mutual comprehension problems!  One of the young men explains the "cultural" problem:

> They cannot understand my problems, because they are brought up in a different way. (p. 96)

Salman writes that the adolescents often want to prevent any intervention from their parents in their "love affairs". They avoid confrontation with their parents who are kept in the dark on such matters.

Moreover, not much understanding is expected from them. Under these perplexing conditions, they take the decision of not speaking with them about sexual matters.

One may point out that a similar lack of communication on love and sexuality between parents and children may also be found in modern societies, but that would be missing the point.[12] In modern societies, it is generally accepted as a principle that parents and children should be able to speak "like good friends" and "freely", principles which do not exist in traditional sections of Turkish society, and which would furthermore be seen as outrageous and immoral.

Thirdly, in traditional Turkish society, "talking about sexuality" is not seen as a part of a broader lifelong project of self–discovery, self–realization and self–development, but it is discussed in purely erotic terms or as a matter concerning procreation.

My interviews and conversations with female and male Turkish immigrants lead me to think that Turkish women talk quite freely among themselves about their sexual lives, which are of course restricted to sex with their husbands. Conversely, a man would never speak with his friends about his sexual life *with his wife*. A woman talking about her sexual life would most possibly be in the form of boasting and praising her husband's sexual prowess. It is thus not seen as a means of problematizing herself and her sexuality or seeing this discussion as some kind of therapeutic soul–searching, as is the case in modern society.

Unmarried men speak about their sexual and love affairs with their friends, but not with family members or elders.

Closely related to the general lack of discussion about sexuality and love in the family, Turkish youngsters get no sexual information from family members.[13] Hardly anybody among Salman's interviewees mentioned a family member as a source of sexual information. Only two mentioned they got some information from their brothers. *Not even once were parents mentioned* (p. 134). On the other hand, the majority of the youngsters who grew up in Germany have received information on sex at school in German from their teachers. The fact that 12 of the 40 young men mentioned German television as their primary source of sexual information puts into question the link between the home environment and intimacy (p. 134).

It is evident that a series of cultural and identity problems will arise when people from Turkish villages, still holding to traditional norms and values, end up in modern

North European societies, which are highly individualized and sexualized. The second generation, who at home are expected to adhere to traditional roles, norms and values, and who in the society at large are expected to follow the culture of the dominant modern society, experience the dilemma of being pulled in two different directions in a much more problematic way than their parents, who at least have basically one set of rules to obey.

To clarify the dilemma facing the young people: on the one hand, there is a traditional culture which has strict and restrictive rules about when, how and with whom one may engage in sex, have intimate relations or even talk about sex.

On the other hand, they live in modern societies in which everybody is expected to "talk" about "it", not just for the fun of it, but in order to discover and build up one's identity, i.e. to find the authentic inner self and yearn for self-fulfillment, notions which simply make no sense in a traditional culture (Foucault 1978; Bech 1989a). "Talking" openly about sexuality takes place everywhere: on special TV and radio shows/programs, in newspaper and magazine columns, therapeutic consultation rooms, weekend courses on experiencing the authentic selves, therapy groups, consciousness raising groups, anti-rape groups, male bonding groups, women's groups, classrooms, cafes, bars, living rooms, conferences and scientific articles. Not only do we talk about it, but we are furthermore encouraged to "think" about it all the time. Our daily lives are eroticized through the constant flow of strangers around us in public places, through the visual media, the press, as well as through commercials, films, music videos and pornography, all of which aestheticize and sexualize male and female bodies (Bech 1989b).

This "urge" to speak about self and sexuality creates an elaborate discourse, which has its own vocabulary. Some words that once had negative or vulgar connotations, such as "fuck" and "gay", gradually lose their old connotations and take more positive or neutral meanings.[14]  Furthermore, languages being spoken in modern societies have a positive vocabulary about pre-marital love and sexual relations, such as "dating," "flirting", "being lovers", "living together", etc., which languages spoken in traditional societies, where pre-marital love and sex is forbidden, naturally don't have. Most of the terms and expressions about pre-marital sexuality are related to prostitution and thus have negative or vulgar connotations. Therefore Turks living in the highly urbanized parts of Turkey, where traditional roles and lifeforms are breaking down, and second-generation Turks in Europe are trying to create a positive or neutral Turkish vocabulary about pre-marital relations, either by borrowing foreign words and expressions or by changing the meanings of old words and expressions or by codeshifting.[15]

I am not going to dwell on what kind of problems the different sexual morals and conceptions between traditional and modern societies create for the immigrants. But I want to mention that these differences are indeed a source of conflict for the individual

Turkish immigrant and the sexual discourse in modern societies has a powerful impact on the sexual imagery of partly traditional societies. As Salman writes in his report, according to Turkish men's fantasies, Northern Europe is a "sex paradise" where people indulge freely in sexual activity. Salman says: "in my vacations in Turkey people often ask me if it is really true that 'In Germany everybody goes to bed with everybody'" (p. 42).

What interests me mostly here is not so much the way in which sexuality is regulated in different types of societies, but the sociolinguistic situation amongst the young Turks, which renders problematic the maintenance of their mother tongue.

One evident lingual consequence is that young Turks miss an opportunity to speak Turkish and develop their skills in their mother tongue at home. In a very intimate area like love and sex, due to the traditional Turkish rule about not speaking about such topics with parents or Turks older than themselves, they turn to the language of the majority to express themselves. Thus a European language becomes the language of sexual and emotional intimacy.

The cult of virginity and the ban on pre-marital love relations make it very difficult for Turkish youngsters to have open loving relations with *each other*, in which Turkish might be used as the language of intimacy. Some Turkish youngsters still have loving relationships with other Turks, but these relations are secret and risky. These restrictions lead young Turkish men to have relations mostly with European girls, thus creating a linguistic situation in which their sexual and love lives are expressed in a European language.[16]

Out of 40 young men, 13 did not yet have a girlfriend at the moment of interview. The remaining 27 said they had girlfriends or partners.[17] 12 of the girlfriends are Germans, 11 are Turks and the remaining 4 are of another nationality. This means that most probably exclusively German is being spoken with 16 out of 27 girlfriends. Of course the fact that both partners are Turks does not automatically favor a Turkish lingual environment. In the very few examples I have seen of young Turkish couples, both of whom are brought up in a European country, the language of communication was mostly the language of the European country where they live.

Having German-girlfriends influences Turkish youngsters not only lingually, but probably also culturally. Salman doesn't comment on that aspect of the issue. Yet another German researcher, von Salich (1980)[18] has studied this aspect of the relationships and has concluded that Turkish adolescents, who do not yet have a German girlfriend, are generally more inclined to have traditional values and patterns of attitude. As well, Turkish adolescents, who have a German girlfriend, have about the same level of knowledge about sexuality or have had similar experiences as their German peers. To put it ironically, we

can observe how in these relations the German girls carry out "the white woman's burden" by modernizing the "Turk".

These issues point out the fact that any project of reviving the Turkish language among young Turks, as Fishman understands it, will run into a dilemma, which probably will arise whenever the sexual and love lives of immigrants from traditional societies are studied: either you change radically the fabric of the culture you are trying to save from being taken over by modernity, yet by paradoxically modernizing it; or you leave the whole area of love and sexual intimacy to the "howling wolves", that is the language of the majority. Of course a third option is to advocate that Turkish youngsters should not make use of the aesthetical and erotical possibilities they have in modern societies and thus not have sex or fall in love until they get married to a Muslim Turk, with whom they might speak Turkish.

This brings us to another aspect of the lingual situation: young Turks have a tendency to associate the Turkish language with restrictions on their personal freedoms and with hierarchic relations between the younger and elder generations and between the sexes, and conversely the local European languages with personal freedom, with free sexuality and more egalitarian relations. These associations are not the most helpful for maintaining any minority language.

In sociolinguistic literature, it is stressed that receding minority languages are often associated with poverty, drudgery and penury, and the language of the majority with social and economic success and prestige. This is certainly true, and my own impression is that Turkish immigrants have similar negative associations especially about their own Turkish dialects. But we should broaden our focus by adding associations on the personal and intimate level to the social and economic ones.

## Language Shift among Second-Generation Immigrants in Denmark

The only representative study done on the language use and language shift among immigrants is a by-product of a general comprehensive study on the life situation of the second-generation immigrants.[19] The question posed to a random sample of young immigrants was, "Which language do you speak with your parents, siblings, spouse/ partner and children?" The three answers interviewees could mark were: "The mother tongue, codeshifting and Danish." The categories are not as sophisticated as one would wish, but I will still present the answers, because, as mentioned above, these are the only data we have (Just Jeppesen 1989:131–34).

With *parents*, the large majority speaks the mother tongue. The mother tongue is spoken mostly by Turks and least by the former Yugoslavians. Between 7–19% speak a

mixture of Danish and the mother tongue with parents. Moreover a small number speaks Danish with parents (7% of the Yugoslavians).

The majority doesn't speak the mother tongue with all *siblings*, but either a mixture of the mother tongue and Danish or Danish with some siblings and the mother tongue with other siblings. The adolescents, who came to Denmark in pre-school age, speak Danish more often with all siblings than those who came later. Turkish adolescents who were generally older than Yugoslavian and Pakistani adolescents upon arriving in Denmark are the ones who speak Danish most seldomly with all siblings.

A woman from Turkey said to the researchers:

> I speak Kurdish with my elder sister, but Danish with my brothers, who are younger than me. They were only 3 and 5 years old, when they came to Denmark, therefore they speak Danish better than Kurdish.

The majority of adolescents from Turkey and Pakistan, who are married, speak the mother tongue with the *spouse*, while adolescents from Yugoslavia speak as often as possible Danish or a mixture with the spouse. The fact that they speak the mother tongue with the spouse is related to the fact that the majority are married to a compatriot. If the adolescents are married to a compatriot who grew up in Denmark, they speak Danish more often all the time or sometimes than if they are married to a spouse brought from the original country.

More than half of the Yugoslavians and Pakistanis speak Danish with their *children*, either sometimes or all the time. Turks most often speak the mother tongue with their children (see Appendix for the percentages).

All in all this study documents that there is a language shift going on most clearly among former Yugoslavians, and at a slower pace among Turks (see Appendix).

*Economic Reductionism*

Fishman criticizes others for being economic reductionists (1984; 1991:19, 61) in their analysis of why minorities shift language and change culture. The same critique can be directed at him in spite of all the apparent emphasis he gives to culture, i.e. values and norms and feelings in social development.

Fishman reduces the attractiveness of modernity with immigrants[20] to economic improvement and glosses over the cultural and psychological attractions of modernity. In his writing, the motivation of the majority of immigrants to shift language and change

many aspects of their original cultures is often presented as an unsympathetic quest for cool cash, mass consumerism and material improvement. By ridiculing immigrants' attempts to improve their economic and social situation, Fishman reveals an elitist contempt for the less privileged, the age-old contempt of the well-established towards the newcomer. Fishman writes, for example, that his RLS project is not about

> giving late-comers and losers a leg up in the ongoing race toward new records in popular consumerism, cultural pap and governmental pomp. (Fishman 1991:6)

Furthermore, the immigrants who change culturally are often ridiculed for yearning for these unworthy things rather than holding fast to their enriching and unique ethnocultures. Here is how he comments, with slightly hidden contemptuous irony, on immigrants, who either totally want to assimilate to the majority society or who want to keep their ethnic identity in spite of shifting to the language of the majority:

> . . . in either of these latter instances, the *material advantages* associated with Y-ish [the majority] culture will certainly be available to them, to help them build the kinds of life and the kinds of neighbourhoods that they prefer for themselves and their children, if only because their Y-ishness will be viewed as in the national interest and as contributory to 'the greater general good'. (p. 64, my emphasis)

What is being forgotten here is that the attractions of modernity for immigrants cannot be reduced to economic advancement and social mobility, although it would be naive to belittle the obvious economic and technological attractions of modernity on immigrants. That would be denying exactly why millions of immigrants have emigrated in the first place, in other words, why they "voted with their feet".

Modernity certainly has other attractions and a certain fascination for immigrants other than the sheer economic and material ones: namely cultural and psychological. The most important of these are individual freedom, new possibilities for emotional and sexual expression, the principle of equality of the sexes, political democracy, the feeling of security due to the well developed social welfare systems of some modern societies like the Northern European countries. Modern society is not only seen to be better than the traditional societies immigrants left behind, from an economic and technological point of view, but it is also seen by many immigrants as allowing more freedom to individual aesthetic and sexual expression, as being less hierarchical in gender relations, in relations between generations and between social classes. Immigrants are simply trying to get the best of modernity.

For instance the above mentioned study (Just Jeppesen 1989:140) showed that more than half of the second-generation immigrants from the former Yugoslavia, Turkey and Pakistan in Denmark (i.e. children of foreign born immigrants) preferred the gender relations in Denmark in comparison to the relatively inferior position of women in their original cultures. Surprisingly an equal number of men and women preferred the situation in Denmark. More than half said they like the freedom of the individual in Denmark better than the position of the individual in their ethnic cultures (p. 141). A woman from Turkey said to the researchers during a qualitative interview:

> I find it irritating that my parents still wish to control, although I am grown up. They should learn from Danish parents.

Even on such a touchy issue as divorce, only one fourth of the former Yugoslavians and one third of Turks said they preferred the attitude of their original ethnic culture towards it. Women, not surprisingly, preferred the Danish attitudes more than men (p. 141).

Fishman's economic reductionist attitude to the motivations and attractions of immigrants stems basically from his one sided attitude to modernity. Modernity, in his understanding, only destroys intimacy, family and community (p. 4). Many writers before him had noted these destructive effects of modernity on the traditional family, traditional forms of intimacy and communal solidarity (see, e.g., Tönnies 1963; Nisbet 1962, 1967; Berger, Berger & Kellner 1974). But unlike many other theoreticians of modernity Fishman glosses over the fact that modernity, by individualizing people, at the same time creates the appropriate conditions for new forms of intimacy, opening up new and broader possibilities of loving and sexual relationships. The weakening of the traditional primordial bonds can leave the person lonesome, but may also facilitate intimate relations with people other than relatives, tribe members, and at best members of the ethnic group.

Even the most negative aspect of modernity, the destruction of the communal solidarity which leaves the individual alone against anonymous social forces, can be remedied in modern societies. Many modern societies, especially the Northern European ones, have tried to solve the problem by building up a very elaborate social security system, which can be described as one of the most civilized constructs of western modernity. The attraction of the social solidarity of the welfare states for immigrants, who come from societies where a person has basically the family or the tribe to fall back on, cannot be denied.[21]

*Victimology and Pathologization*

Fishman's approach to language shift and cultural change is a strange mixture of structuralism and voluntarism. On the one side, people are only passive objects of strong and far away social forces. On the other hand, people can at will change any part of their societies and hinder any social process, if they only wish and strive. According to him, it is not very important that history shows a gradual language shift and cultural change in the case of immigrants in modern societies. According to him this historical trend can be reversed by the power of will on the part of ethnopolitically conscious minorities amongst immigrant groups.

When Fishman describes the immigrants who *have* shifted language and who have changed culturally, his universe becomes a universe of hapless victims and pathological types. In this description, there is no place for conscious or semi-conscious choice and free will to adopt new cultural norms on the part of immigrants. If he allows them some limited amount of personal will, he then in the same breath discredits the cultural choice by calling it "unauthentic" (1991:384, 389-90) and ridicules them for being "self-styled" (p. 65).

The immigrants are indeed not seen as active subjects capable of taking responsible decisions about their lives. But—in strictly structuralist spirit—as passive objects, as a herd of victims that are being manipulated by some societal forces in which they have no say whatsoever. Of course, all these characteristics are reserved for the majority of immigrants, who apparently have in fact taken "the wrong" decisions:

> The voluntarism of assimilation is widely assumed . . . to such a degree that minorities themselves become oblivious of the degree to which their slow-but-sure re-ethnicization is a by-product of established social, cultural and economic practices and arrangements. (1991:73)

As a result of his vulgar structuralist and therefore victimologist approach, he furthermore pathologizes immigrants by focusing onesidedly on the negative effects of immigration: the feeling of disorientation, rootlessness and cultural dislocation. The whole vocabulary is not a vocabulary of social and cultural analysis, but the vocabulary of pathology: "Transethnification and translinguification[22] bring with them their own problems and exact their own steep prices, medically (as revealed by elevated and aggravated illness patterns among dislocated assimilating populations), psychologically (as revealed by mental stress patterns among dislocated assimilating populations) and socioculturally (as revealed by crime and violence patterns among dislocated assimilating populations)"[23] (p. 60).

Fishman then continues in a note:

> The deleterious impact of cultural dislocation on physical and mental health is a mainstay and *raison d'être* of [a number of] journals.[24] (p. 73)

Feeling disoriented or uprooted in a totally new society is certainly a part of the immigrant experience, but on the other hand, a onesided focusing on the negative effects of immigration will distort the richness of immigrant experience. Moreover, what is a *problematique* from one point of view, is from another *a field of possibilities*. A series of phenomena, which are seen as negative and nearly catastrophic from a national-romantic or cultural critical point of view are seen as relief, social mobility, increased personal freedom and security from the majority of immigrants' point of view. If we hold on to the vocabulary of pathology, we will not be able to explain why people have immigrated in the first place and why more people still apparently want to immigrate to modern societies.

The vocabulary used in describing the treatment of "democratic" and "open societies" (the quotation marks are Fishman's) of immigrant minorities is also a high-pitched vocabulary of social pathology, which adds up to banalization of terms like genocide, destruction, suicide and warfare:

> We turn our attention directly to the avowedly 'democratic' contexts in which 'white' genocide is practised, more slowly, more discreetly, more or less gently, but, nevertheless, continually and cumulatively. (p. 62)

> Most modern democracies engage in conscious or unconscious cultural genocide. (p. 62)

> Is it inevitable that the stronger will destroy the weaker, either by quickly dispatching him, by wearing him down slowly or by so disorienting or deracinating him that he commits suicide? . . . Thus, it is not completely visionary to strive for arrangements that will make intercultural warfare and attrition (for that is what the ongoing language shift amounts to, even if quietly and democratically conducted) less common than they are today. (p. 66)

If we want to have a more realistic picture of the immigrants' experiences, we must take a critical stance against this kind of vocabulary of victimology and pathology, and be more sensitive to the real experiences and wishes of immigrants themselves. We may find these experiences and wishes to be contrary to our ideologies or tastes. But trying to sell immigrants western "cultural critique", all the while pounding them with it, is indeed problematic.

# FOOTNOTES

[1]    My research is a three-year Ph.D. project being supported by the Danish Council of Social Scientific Research.

[2]    Salman adds: "For contraceptives all of the adolescents, absolutely all, used German concepts, notwithstanding if Turkish was the language of interview or not."

[3]    Salman does not comment on the issue of language interference in the conversation: in Turkish, it is wrong to use the verb "bozul-mak" in this context, when referring to a condom. The right verbs would be "yirtil-mak" (to be torn in pieces), "delin-mak" (to become pierced) or "parcalan-mak" (to be torn in pieces). What Hassan does is to translate directly from German: "Sie können kaputt gehen". The verb "kaputt gehen", which can be translated in Turkish as "bozul-mak", can also be used for machines. But in Turkish the verb "bozul-mak" is used for machines, cars, electrical appliances, etc., not for condoms.

[4]    Salman notes that in the German-speaking area, knowledge about the sexual attitude and behaviour of Turkish male adolescents is generally a by-product in migrant studies, and that there are only a few works which deal with the study of the sexuality of young male immigrants.

According to him, the first larger study which discusses the sexual problems of immigrant male adolescents is the ethnologist Walter Schiffauer's *Die Gewalt der Ehre* (1983).  This was a study of 13 young Turkish men in Berlin.

Salman then mentions the study of von Salich:  "Sexualität und interpersonale Intimität" (1990).  Her study is, according to Salman, a sign of an awakening interest in the sexuality of young male immigrants.  Here are some of the conclusions she stated in her work:

> — the stages of development of sexual activities are similar to those of Germans;
> — the Turkish adolescents have sexual intercourse at about the same age as Germans;
> — Turkish adolescents change sexual partners more frequently than their German peers.

I did some work on the sexual lives of immigrants in my masters thesis *Etnik Kitsch* (1992) in two chapters:  "The Aestheticization of Sexuality and Pre-Modern Society" and "Sex Tourism at Home—'Ethnic Sex Tourism'".

[5]    When I mentioned these findings to a female American linguist I met in Stockholm, she was very skeptical and said, "I speak Swedish, yes, but I can't imagine myself shifting

to Swedish when I talk about sexuality and love if my partner speaks English". Regardless of what she feels or does, there is enough evidence to substantiate that some people who have immigrated when they were adults still prefer to use the second language in certain intimate situations of conversation.

6    A problem for the Turkish youngsters is the notion of the majority of the parents that girls and boys may play together until the age of 11-12, but after that being together should be actively hindered.  90% of the Turkish parents the Iranian-German sexual pedagogue Heidarpur-Ghazwini (1990) spoke with said that girls and boys can play together until they are 11-12 years old without supervision. Many of the parents, according to Heidarpur-Ghazwini, think that children do not have any sexuality until puberty. With the beginning of puberty, the girls are expected not to be inviting and are told to cover their womanly charms.

7    The majority of the young men (21) stated that it is very important to have pre-marital sexual relations.  Around one-quarter of the young men think that pre-marital sex is indeed good, but not necessary.  The reasons they give for finding pre-marital sex desirable have to do with the fear of impotency the first night of marriage and later during marriage.  Only 3 said they want no sexual relation before marriage (p. 105).

8    Salman (p. 108) also asked them what they thought about their future wives' pre-marital sexual experiences.  He puts the answers in 3 categories (4 did not want to answer this question at all):

a.    More than half (24) said it was unacceptable for them that their future wife should have had sexual experiences.  All of the young men grown up in Turkey belong to this category. It is also interesting to note that 7 young men who refused adamantly to speak with their future wives about sexual matters also were strongly against these women having any pre-marital sexual experience. It is only self-evident for the majority of these young men that while they themselves should have pre-marital sex, their future wives should not. One of the youngsters is not against the girls' experiences, but he demands virginity:

> Look.  They may have had as many as 10 friends, but they should be careful not to have lost their virginity.

b.    Six young men could accept that their future wives have had pre-marital sex, but not without reservations.  As one of them puts it:

> If I can rely on her that she will not do it again with others, it is O.K.  But I must believe her.  But if she is still virgin, I would give her my life.  I like it better that way.

c.    Several of the young men who grew up in Germany expressed such a qualification: They would accept that a future German wife be a non-virgin. But they had rather ambivalent feelings if the non-virgin wife was Turkish. For Turkish girls, they tend to have other criteria. For instance, Salman asks Ünal, who was born in Germany, if he would accept that his future wife had sex with another man. Yes, she may have had it, but:

> If and only if she wasn't Turkish, in any case. Actually girls have also that right, but in the Turkish religion there is something called tradition. Turkish girls must be virgins. I can of course imagine that, in Turkey many young girls have done it already with a guy before marriage.

As Salman notes, it seems as if the young men who grew up in Germany expect Turkish girls, but not German girls, to adhere to traditional norms.

9    To modern individuals, the practice of parent-arranged marriages therefore seems a serious violation of one's right to privacy and intimacy. In traditional societies, marriage establishes an alliance between two kinship groups in which the newly joined couple is merely the most conspicuous link. Thus marriage is not just an individual affair, since the bride and groom marry not only each other, but also all their relatives as well (Melville: 1983).

10    Salman asked if the young men would speak with their future wives about sexual matters. He categorizes the answers in 4 groups:

> — 8 out of 40 rejected speaking with their future wives on sexuality. The family is the wrong place to speak about such things. 3 found it unnecessary to speak about such things in a family.

> — 7 said they would with some conditions.

> — 17 said they would. Their reasons were the following: It is better for the marriage, and sexuality can be more pleasant. Sexual problems can be solved by talking about them.

> — Others reacted rather ambivalently. Theoretically they find it indeed right, but doubt if they can do it themselves.

Salman notes that the young men raised in Turkey orient themselves towards the traditional role allocation. They reject speaking about sexuality with women. An adolescent said to him:

It should not be necessary to speak about such things. The most important thing is that the man has enough experience and then everything will go as it should.

Salman has found, on the other hand, that the young men grown up in Germany tend to advocate the position that one has to speak about sexuality with one's wife.

[11]     Many Turkish migrants, whom Iranian-German sexual pedagogue Heidarpur-Ghazwini (1990:130) has spoken with, have put it this way: "Among us one doesn't speak about sexuality" (see also Heidarpur-Ghazwini 1986). He asked Turkish adolescents if they can speak openly with their parents about sexuality, pregnancy and birth. 80% of the male and 65% of the female adolescents have answered that they cannot either with their fathers or mothers. Among the remaining 35% of the girls 5% can speak both with the father and the mother and the remaining 30% only with the mother. The remaining 20% of the males can speak openly about the mentioned themes with both of their parents (p. 192).

To strengthen his findings Heidarpur-Ghazwini cites another study (Eschenbroich/ Müller 1981) where the authors say, "Practically there is no sexual enlightenment in the Turkish family".

Also Lajios & Kaitsiotis (1984) have found similar results, during their study of puberty and bicultural education of the children of the migrants. They have asked altogether 108 youngsters, grown up in Germany. 62% of the Italian children speak about sexual things with parents at home. Among Yugoslavians the percentage was 33%. But only 8% of the Turkish and other Muslim children could speak with their parents about sexuality. A third study (Massholder & Weier 1989) points in the same direction: the Turkish families do not speak about sexuality.

[12]     Two of the results of the above mentioned (see note 3) study of von Salich show the difference between Turkish and German working-class attitudes about speaking about sexuality or sex-related topics:

— on the threat of AIDS/HIV, about the same percentage of Turks and Germans would speak with their fathers. With their mothers, 56% of the Turks would "never" speak, in contrast to 18% among Germans, who neither would do that.

— on sexual relations 80% of the Turks would "never" or "seldom" speak with parents, in contrast to 30% of Germans.

[13]     Salman describes 35 of the 40 young men as "sexually informed", but adds however that he and his associates did not study in detail what exactly they knew and what they

didn't. The remaining 5 adolescents are 15–16 years old and have lived in Germany for a short time. The comment of one of these young men, Cemal, is interesting:

> I did not learn what sex is about before I came to Germany. I learned everything from friends and from German television channels.

To give an idea of the level of his knowledge, this conversation between Salman and Cemal is worth quoting: "I asked him for instance if he knew what menstruation is. He did not understand my question. I used several Turkish and German words to find out what he knew at all. Thereupon, he said: 'Menstruation, what is it? I feel ashamed. I don't know what that is.'"

Of 40 young men, 13 did not yet have a girlfriend at the moment of interview. The remaining 27 said they had girlfriends or partners. Salman and his collaborators tried to find out is these relations were longer term love relations, or if they were just good friendships or only loose acquaintances, but they could not get additional information from their sources.

12 of the girlfriends were Germans, 11 were Turks and the remaining 4 were of other nationalities.

Only 4 of the young men with Turkish girlfriends have spoken with them on sexual themes. However, half of the young men with German girlfriends talked with them about sexual matters.

[14]     A similar process can be observed in other languages, spoken in modern societies. For example, in Danish, the word "at bolle", which corresponds to "to fuck", as well as the word "bøsse", which means "male homosexual" or "gay", now have to a great extent lost their vulgar connotations, and can be used in serious books or TV and radio programs about sexuality. In other words, people get used to using these words in public without feeling embarrassed.

Also the Turkish urban middle class is creating its own register of serious sexual discourse. The last couple of years, several youth journals or soft porn magazines created a neutral sexual register, by normalizing some old words. For instance until recently the word "düzmek", which corresponds to "to fuck" had vulgar connotations. But now even serious weeklies like *Notka* began using it.

[15]     Some examples. Borrowing: "flört etmek" (to flirt). Using an old expression: "Arkadaslik yapmak" (originally: to make friendship; now: to be lovers). Codeshifting: "*Kæresteri*'yi legal etmek icin iki yüzük kafi"—that is: Two wedding rings are enough to legalize the *kæresteri* ("love relationship" in Danish).

I have several times heard Turkish males using the word "dost" for their European lovers, which is an interesting example of using an old expression in a slightly different way. "Dost" in Turkish means "friend", but is also used pejoratively for a married man's mistress or for a prostitute, whom an unmarried men regularly visits. I have always been struck by the negative connotations of the word each time I hear it used for a European female lover.

[16]    Strikingly nearly all the young men who are raised in Turkey indeed have girlfriends, but none of them, except one, have talked with them on sexual matters.

Salman writes that many parents forbid their sons to have a girlfriend: "therefore most of these young men act as if they respect this ban, which is a way of circumventing restrictions. But under such conditions, a deep and intimate relationship is indeed very difficult. Most of the relations with girls take place in an aura of mystery. The parents do not hear about them; this is at least what the young men believe".

[17]    Salman and his collaborators tried to find out whether these relations were longer term love relations or just good friendships or only loose acquaintances, but they could not see the distinctions clearly.

[18]    This study is based on a questionnaire answered by 425 young males between the ages of 15–18 in 1988. Later a sample of 41 adolescents selected at random was compared with a control group of German adolescents, who belonged to the same age group and the same social class, namely the working class.

[19]    This study was carried out by political scientist Kirsten Just Jeppesen for the Danish National Institute of Social Research and covered all Yugoslavians, Turks and Pakistanis between the ages of 18–25, and who had lived in Denmark at least 10 years. This means not all those questioned were born or educated in Denmark. The percentage of people born and educated in Denmark is especially low among Turks.

In Denmark "the second generation" means the children of foreign born parents. Because most of the immigrants to Denmark arrived at the end of the sixties and the beginning of the seventies, not all of the people considered as "the second generation" are born in the country.

[20]    Fishman doesn't only speak about immigrants, but all ethnic minorities in modern societies. But in my critique I will focus only on immigrant minorities.

[21]    An aspect of modern societies which I will dwell on is political democracy. Political democracy is generally not the reason why persons immigrate to modern societies, but that is exactly why political refugees escaping political persecution nearly always choose

modern democratic societies. To give some examples from Europe: Political refugees from different political camps in Turkey after the military coups in 1971 and 1980 always chose to flee to democratic countries like Germany, Sweden, France and Denmark. Even the most prominent leader of Turkish Islamic fundamentalism, who is blacklisted by the Turkish police, lives in Germany, not in an Islamic country.

[22]    The medical pathological approach reflects also on the desire to make new Latin-derived terminology. These two words mean in plain English changing of ethnic identity and language shift.

[23]    After reading these and similar sentences one gets the feeling that millions of first, second, third and successive generation immigrants will soon line up in front of the psychotherapic consultation rooms of New York and crowd into weekend psychotherapy courses in California. Who knows maybe a new fad will rise: ethnic therapy!

[24]    If it is true that the mentioned journals really focus exclusively on the negative effects of immigration, as Fishman suggests, then that means we have a well developed industry: "ethnopathology".

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# APPENDIX

| Which Language Do You Use with? | Yugoslavia | Turkey | Pakistan |
|---|---|---|---|
| **1.  Parents** | | | |
| Mother tongue | 74 | 92 | 83 |
| Codeshifting | 19 | 7 | 17 |
| Danish | 7 | 1 | – |
| | | | |
| Total % | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| | | | |
| Total Persons with Parents | 241 | 299 | 283 |
| **2.  Siblings** | | | |
| Mother tongue | 27 | 43 | 23 |
| Codeshifting | 38 | 44 | 49 |
| Danish | 35 | 13 | 28 |
| | | | |
| Total % | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| | | | |
| Total Persons with Siblings | 228 | 292 | 280 |
| **3.  Spouse/Partner** | | | |
| Mother tongue | 49 | 84 | 71 |
| Codeshifting | 23 | 13 | 19 |
| Danish | 28 | 4 | 10 |
| | | | |
| Total % | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| | | | |
| Total Persons with Spouses/Partners | 110 | 185 | 97 |
| **4.  Children** | | | |
| Mother Tongue | 38 | 58 | 42 |
| Codeshifting | 32 | 39 | 54 |
| Danish | 30 | 3 | 4 |
| | | | |
| Total % | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| | | | |
| Total Persons with Children | 73 | 125 | 50 |

Source:  Just Jeppesen 1989.

# LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

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## ABSTRACT

Edward Sapir and his student Benjamin Whorf suggested that "language is a force in its own right—that it affects how individuals in a society perceive and conceive reality" (Ember & Ember 1988:227). While this is an intriguing hypothesis, it fails to account for the fact that certain groups who speak closely-related languages have vastly different cultural beliefs and practices. Plog and Bates (1980:210) cite as examples of this the southwestern Navaho and the Hupa and Apache. The Navaho, a highly ritualized culture, have little in common with the loosely-organized hunting-and-gathering Hupa or the highly competitive Apache. And yet, all three of these groups speak variants of the same language. The position taken in this paper is that language is a reflection of the beliefs and practices of the people who speak it. An attempt will be made to show how the culture of the Tikar people of Cameroon, West Africa, is reflected in their language.[1]

## I. *Language and World View*

A detailed study of the language of a given society will often provide a key to understanding the world view of that society. Kluckhorn and Leighton (1970:30) give an example of this in the case of the Navaho. "The Navahos do not say, 'I am hungry' or 'I have hunger'. They always put it as 'hunger is killing me' and 'thirst is killing me'. . . . To [them], hunger is not something which comes from within but something to which the individual is subjected by an outside force". The same is true for the Tikar. They say, for example:

| (1) | ǹjè | tà | mun | kwènni | | "*I am hungry*" (Lit.: "*Hunger is* |
| | hunger | ASP | me | hurt | | *hurting me*"). |

| (2) | ǹjè | mla' | tà | mun | kwènni | "*I am thirsty*" (Lit.: "*Thirst is hurting* |
| | hunger | water | ASP | me | hurt | *me*"). |

| (3) | ɗye | ta | mun | kwènni | | "*I am sleepy*" (Lit.: "*Sleepiness is* |
| | sleepiness | ASP | me | hurt | | *hurting me*"). |

The Tikar also attribute this power of acting on an individual to physical ailments or conditions.

(4)  ngwɛ'    ɓæn-nâ       mùn     kwù          *"I have a cramp in my foot"* (Lit.: "[A]
      cramp    grab-ASP     me      foot         *cramp grabbed me [in the] foot"*).

(5)  kimkim   ci-â         mùn                  *"I am sterile"* (Lit.: "*Sterility did
      sterility do-ASP       me                   [something to] me"*).

(6)  ŋgwènŋgwèn  ɗu-â-n     nun     nywi         *"He became very ill"* (Lit.: "*Sickness
      sickness    enter-ASP   him     body         entered his body"*).

(7)  kwuli    ta      mun     ci           *"I have a cough"* (Lit.: "[A] *cough is
      cough    ASP     me      do           doing [something to] me"*).

(8)  sɔɗyin   nɛ      ci      mùn ,  mun    twu    kan *"It is smallness that caused me
      smallness TOP     do      me ,   I      grow   NEG *not to grow"* (Lit.: "*It is
                                                          smallness that did [something to]
                                                          me. . ."*).

Another domain in which the world view of the Tikar is reflected in their language is in the noun class system. Every noun in Tikar belongs to one of six classes. Normally, a noun denoting a human being is found in Class 1. However, there are several nouns which from a Western point of view clearly denote human beings, but which are found in another class. Such is the case of ɗyimmi "*a fool*"; ci-gà' "*someone who is capricious*"; pwi' "*an albino*". When asked why fools are not in the class of human beings, a Tikar responded: "Of course they aren't, because they sleep in the forest at night". No "normal" human being would ever think of doing such a thing. The Tikar have a great fear of the forest, especially after dark. They believe that there are evil spirits roaming around in the forest. Even in broad daylight they avoid what they call "the heart of the forest", because that is where those spirits supposedly live.

The Tikar tend to value group participation, rather than individual initiative. For example, one would rarely find Tikars who are willing to start a new business or try a new type of agricultural enterprise on their own. In most cases, it would need to be a community decision, or at least, involve a significant group of individuals. This attitude of group participation as opposed to individual endeavour is reflected in Tikar proverbs, such as:

— One person alone cannot crush the grass in the savannah.
— One finger cannot crush head lice all alone.
— One finger cannot pick up sauce in a dish by itself.
— It is good to be numerous.
— One bracelet cannot make music by itself.


## II. *Time*

People who have had the opportunity to live in a non-Western culture undoubtedly come face to face with a different concept of time. A society's concept of time is part of its world view. As Westerners we look at time almost as if it were a resource. Thus, we talk about *saving/wasting time*; we can have *time on our hands*; we can't *find the time for . .* ; we don't have *a minute to lose*, etc. For us, time is money. But these views are foreign to many other cultures. Since the Tikar, for example, do not look at time as a resource, they see no need to use every bit of it in some way, nor does a particular task *have* to be finished today. It can always be put off until tomorrow. After all, as the Tikar proverb asks rhetorically: "*Can the fox steal tomorrow?*"

For the Tikar, the day is not divided into hours (and certainly not into minutes and seconds). They talk instead of:

| (9) | moan<br>beside | shikpon<br>morning | | | *"just before dawn"* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (10) | shikpon | | | | *"morning"* |
| (11) | nywɔ'<br>sun | nlwinni *or*<br>full | nywɔ'<br>sun | mwu<br>head | *"noon"* |
| (12) | nywɔ'<br>sun | ɓyìt-â<br>break–ASP | mwù<br>head | | *"early afternoon"* |
| (13) | nywɔ'<br>sun | kwæbbi<br>evening | | | *"late afternoon"* |
| (14) | kwæbbi | | | | *"early evening"* (*before dark*) |
| (15) | kpòn | | | | *"evening"* (*after dark*) |
| (16) | nlim<br>heart | kpòn<br>night | | | *"middle of the night"* |

They also have no separate vocabulary item for "*day*" or for "*month*". The word nywɔ' which they translate as "*day*" simply means "*sun*", and **nywi**, although used for "*month*" is the word for "*moon*".

## III. *Vocabulary*

One way a society's language may reflect its corresponding culture is in lexical content, or vocabulary. The events, experiences, relationships, or objects which are singled out and given names reflect the relative importance that society places on those things.

"Something that is adaptively unimportant to members of a given society may have no separate name in that society's language—or it may have one general name, covering that phenomenon and a number of related phenomena. But what is adaptively important to a society will not only have a name; it will often have numerous names, to specify its many subtle variations that the language speakers perceive and feel the need to distinguish" (Plog & Bates 1980:209). The classic example repeatedly cited is that of the Nuer people, nomadic pastoralists in southern Sudan, whose language is extremely rich in words and expressions having to do with cattle. According to Haviland (1989:314), "not only are there more than 400 words used to describe cattle, but Nuer boys actually take their names from them". Haviland goes on to suggest that "by studying the language we can determine the importance of cattle to Nuer culture, attitudes to cattle, and the whole etiquette of human and cattle relationships". The staple starch in the Tikar diet is a dish made of corn flour, therefore corn is one of their main food crops. As a result, they have a much larger number of words and expressions referring to the various stages in the development of the corn plant than we do in English, where corn is only one of many food items. The Tikar say for instance:

(17)    gwè    ɓwum    kifɛ'            "*The corn is not yet visible*".
       corn    appear    not yet

(18)    gwè    ti          lè n̂    zòà      "*The corn already has flowers*".
       corn    is already    with    flowers

(19)    gwè    kɛ        mbætæ'    seansean    "*All the corn still only has*
       corn    is still    immature ears    completely    *immature ears*".

(20)    gwè    pan       kifɛ'         "*The corn is still not ripe*".
       corn    ripen    not yet

(21)    gwè    kim       kifɛ'        "*The corn is still not dry*" (Lit.: "*hard*").
       corn    harden    not yet

In the preparation of the dish made with corn flour there are also a variety of verbs used to describe the stirring, depending on what stage the cooking process is at and also what direction the stick used for stirring is turned in. The women insist that the dish will not taste right if the stirring is not done as it should be.

(22) mgbìtì    *"to stir in a circular motion"*

(23) nànnzì    *"to stir with an upwards motion"*

(24) fyòn    *"to stir rapidly and with a back and forth motion after the cooking pot is removed from the fire"*

Another lexical domain in which the vocabulary varies greatly from language to language is in colour terms. The number of terms may be as few as two, or as extensive as in English where fine distinctions are made by the use of such terms as *salmon, mauve, cranberry, dusty rose,* and *slate blue.* Many of these terms, however, are probably not part of the active vocabulary of most North American males. And, many of these modern colour terms were not in the lexicons of North American females fifty years ago. These lexical changes reflect changes in our economy, society and culture. Colour terms and distinctions have increased with the growth of fashion and cosmetic industries. Berlin and Kay (1969:104) suggested that the number of basic colour terms in a language increases with cultural complexity. More complex societies may require a larger number of basic colour terms because they have more decorated objects than can be effectively distinguished by colour, or a more complex system of dyes and plants. This is true of the Tikar culture, which is not a complex one, and has only three basic colour terms: lo *"black"*, pwɛbbi *"white"* (the term also means *"clean"*), and pèan *"red"*.

A look at the kinship terminology of a given society will also provide insight into its perception of and behaviour toward kin. In general, people classify together those relatives whom they view as being quite similar and toward whom they are expected to behave in a similar manner. And they assign separate terms to relatives whom they perceive as dissimilar and toward whom they are expected to behave somewhat differently (Plog & Bates 1980:247). The Tikar are a matrilineal group, and their kinship terminology reveals quite clearly their perception of their kin. One's mother's sisters are all referred to as mon *"mother"*, either mon ndwun *"big mother"* or mon sɔ' *"little mother"*, depending upon their age relative to that of one's mother. Parallel to these are the terms ce ndwun *"big father"* and ce sɔ' *"little father"* to refer to the brothers of one's father. It is not uncommon for a child to go to live, either permanently, or temporarily, with one of his/ her *"other"* mothers. If a man's brother dies, custom dictates that he take his brother's widow as his wife, and raise the children of his deceased brother. It is not surprising then that all of one's parallel cousins are referred to as *"brothers"* and *"sisters"*. The cross-cousins are generally referred to as the *"child of my aunt/uncle"*; *"aunt"* and *"uncle"* being

the terms used to refer to the father's sister, and the mother's brother respectively. The close-knit nuclear family such as we know it is not universal, and is certainly not the case among the Tikar. Each Tikar has many "*mothers*" and "*fathers*", and many "*sisters*" and "*brothers*".

## IV. *Gender*

In some languages, such as the Finno-Ugrian group, the sex of participants in the language event is never significant at all. In others (the Semitic languages, for example), however, the sex of the participants becomes an important factor in determining selection of grammatical forms. In English, the sex-gender distinction is confined to the third person singular. In Hebrew, however, second person pronouns are also differentiated by gender and this distinction in both the second and third person forms also extends to the plural. It is marked not only in the pronoun system, but also on the verb forms. In English, while there is a person and number distinction on verb forms (am-is-are; was-were; sing-sings), there is no sex-gender differentiation at the verb level. Tikar totally lacks grammatically-marked gender. In addition, there is no formal marking of person or number at the verb level.

| (25) | mùn | ji-â | "*I have eaten*". |
| | I | eat-ASP | |
| | | | |
| | wù | ji-â | "*You* (sg.) *have eaten*". |
| | à | ji-â | "*He/she/it has eaten*". |
| | ɓwi' | ji-â | "*We have eaten*". |
| | ɓyin | ji-â | "*You* (pl.) *have eaten*". |
| | ɓɛ | ji-â | "*They have eaten*". |

In the case of the possessive adjectives (my, your, etc.), again Hebrew (as is the case of Semitic languages in general) differentiates according to gender in second and third person forms, both in the singular and in the plural. English has a *his/her* distinction, but otherwise makes no distinction on the basis of gender. Tikar lacks gender differentiation even at the third person singular level.

(26) ji        nyon            "*his/her/its food*"
     food      his/her/its

(27) nye       nyon            "*his/her/its home*"
     home

It is also interesting that the Tikar do not have separate vocabulary items for "*boy*" and "*girl*", or for "*son*" and "*daughter*". There is the general term **mwɛn** "*child*", but if one wishes to specify the gender of the child, a qualifying term must be added.

(28)    mwɛn       ndwɛb         "*boy*", "*son*"
        child      man

        mwɛn       mlib          "*girl*", "*daughter*"
        child      woman

Generally speaking, the term **mwɛn** refers to an infant, or small child. Once a child reaches puberty, another term tends to be used. However, this term **mwɔ'** is also a gender-neutral term, and must be qualified if one wishes to indicate the sex.

(29)    mwɔ'       ndwɛb         "*boy*"
        child      man

        mwɔ'       mlib          "*girl*"
        child      woman

The question is how does this use of gender-neutral terms reflect the Tikar culture. There does not seem to be a clear-cut answer to this question. One possible suggestion is that there are not culturally-defined roles for young female, as opposed to male, children. One often sees a young boy carrying a smaller sibling on his back—that role is not relegated to the girls. Both boys and girls are expected to participate at various times in the food-production process—chasing away the birds and the monkeys from the tender young shoots at the onset of planting season, "babysitting" younger siblings while the mother works in the garden, and helping with the corn harvest. It is only as the girls reach puberty that they begin to learn how to cook a meal, and even then it is only on an informal basis. Their main tasks still consist of carrying water, husking dried corn, taking the corn to be ground, etc. And, these tasks are carried out just as frequently by the boys. Adults in the Tikar culture, on the other hand, tend to have very well-defined roles, but the language also has specific words to designate a man (**ndwɛb**) and a woman (**mlib**).

## V. *Conclusion*

This paper has attempted to show how the beliefs and practices of the Tikar people of Cameroon are reflected in their language. An in-depth examination of their rich vocabulary, and the way they express certain concepts, not only reveals how they view the world around them, but also provides insight into the events, experiences, relationships and objects they consider important. Further study of the Tikar language would undoubtedly reveal even more areas where the world view of the Tikar, and their culture in general, are reflected in the way they express themselves. To suggest that the opposite is true, and that the Tikar culture has been shaped by the language, according to the tenets of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis is, in our opinion, putting "the cart before the horse".

## FOOTNOTES

[1]    The examples in this paper are drawn from data collected over a 14 year period (1974–1988) that the author spent living among the Tikar people of Cameroon.

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