

# REVERSING LANGUAGE SHIFT



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# Author's Preface

My first sociolinguistic monograph was *Yiddish in America* (1965); my first sociolinguistic book: *Language Loyalty in the United States* (1966). It is clear to me now, that I was writing the present book even then.

Although I have struggled to approach language maintenance and language shift as fields of dispassionate scientific inquiry, I have never tried to hide (neither from myself nor from the careful reader) the value positions in support of cultural pluralism and cultural self-determination to which I personally subscribe. Indeed, my work of the 60s began as a quest for any possibly overlooked successes, amidst all of the clearly obvious failures, in the efforts to secure minority language maintenance in the United States. The intellectualization of this quest has led me to a constant review of the circumstances of modern life, even under democratic and multicultural auspices, which lead overwhelmingly in the direction of language shift. That intellectualization has helped me realize that every failed societal effort on behalf of greater ethnolinguistic self-regulation nevertheless hides, within itself, many minor successes (first and foremost, the community-fostering experience of a common struggle on behalf of a shared verity) and some memorable 'near misses' that reveal the direction in which 'success' might lie.

I deeply regret that I did not react to those realizations more quickly. Perhaps as a result of the initial language shift momentum that I provided for this field of study, and my negligence with respect to offering more focused insight into the few cases of actual language maintenance success and near-success that I had come across, the entire positive side of the ledger is far less represented in the intellectual economy of the macro-sociolinguistic enterprise than it could and should be. In a sense, therefore, this book not only represents the continuation of a long felt interest, but, also, the payment (or, at least, the partial payment) of a long regretted debt.

In 1963–64, when Einar Haugen and I were both at the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences, that great sociolinguist, some 20 years my senior, inquired whether I did not find my work to be full of sadness, dealing as it did with a topic as sad as language shift. I replied that doctors always realize that all of their patients will ultimately die and that they are

powerless to do anything to counteract that unhappy fact. On the other hand, they can still derive considerable satisfaction from understanding the causes of various illnesses and, accordingly, attempting to avoid or overcome those causes and, thereby, to delay the inevitable as long as possible.

In 1980 I began to teach a graduate course in medical anthropology at Yeshiva University's Ferkauf Graduate School of Psychology (Albert Einstein College of Medicine Campus), for students majoring in health psychology and clinical psychology. As a result of a decade of involvement in that connection, I became increasingly aware that my reply to Haugen had been inadequate. The practice and the sciences of modern medicine attempt not only to combat illness, but to cultivate 'wellness' and, in doing so, they have come to recognize that health care which does not correspond to the patient's culture and that does not prescribe accordingly is both less just and less effective than optimal health care requires. The same is true in the sociology of language. It too must arrive at understandings and develop practices which address themselves explicitly to 'wellness' and which recognize that ethnolinguistic 'wellness' is unattainable without theoretical knowledge and applied efforts that correspond to the ethnolinguistic and ethnocultural preferences and commitments of specific speech networks and speech communities.

The problems of maintenance are particularly severe for speech communities which are undergoing language shift that is already so advanced that they cannot even control informal intergenerational usage within the confines of the home, family, neighborhood and face-to-face community. This certainly becomes the initial desideratum of language maintenance, although it does not free the speech community from a constant barrage of outside ethnolinguistic influences. Once the former goal (immediate protection of the intimate intergenerational language transmission context) is attended to, the latter too can be successively attempted. However, both of these goals are exceptionally difficult ones to realize, particularly in modern interactive society. Therefore, to attempt the latter, via stylish efforts to control the language of education, the workplace, the mass media and governmental services, without having sufficiently safeguarded the former, is equivalent to constantly blowing air into a tire that still has a puncture. It is very difficult to achieve a steady state merely based upon the incoming air, because of losses due to the unmended puncture. I have attempted to explicate this truism both by addressing it theoretically as well as by returning to it via twelve case studies derived from both the Old World and the New.

Although my cases are drawn primarily from speech communities that I have visited many times in the course of more than a quarter century, and that I have continued to read about as exhaustively as is humanly possible throughout

this same period of time, nevertheless, I could never have reached the necessary degree of detailed and integrated understanding with respect to most of them without the substantial assistance of local specialists, many of them scholars of great renown. I have thanked them in person, I have thanked them in the notes to the particular chapters in which their individual aid and guidance was most vital, and I now thank them again as a definable cluster of truly devoted friends and colleagues. Our collective dedication to the welfare of the world's threatened languages, in general (as well as our more intimate concern for a certain one or another 'most favorite threatened [or recently threatened] language', in particular), have made this volume possible. They must be held blameless, however, with respect to the interpretations that I have made of the data they provided or helped me obtain.

If one of the benefits of being a sociolinguist in a psychology department on a medical campus is the necessary development of broader, less traditional theoretical and methodological interests than is common when one works primarily within a more usual mono-disciplinary context, one of the prices that one pays for that benefit is the absence of real library depth in areas outside of psychology and medicine. Four individuals have made it possible for me to have long-term access to just that depth at the Stanford University and University of California (Berkeley) graduate libraries well before, during and after the time that this book was being conceptualized, written and rewritten. It is, therefore, both my pleasure and my duty to acknowledge the silent but major contributions of Charles A. Ferguson, Shirley B. Heath, Sonia Moss, Michelle Murray, Gina Wien and John Rawlings, all of Stanford University, to this volume. But for them, the endless quiet and the equally endless bibliographic depth that such a book requires could never have been even approximated and I would like my gratitude to them to be a matter of public record. As always, however, my greatest thanks go to Gella, to whom this book is dedicated.

# **1 What This Book is About and Why It is Needed**

At one level this book is about exactly what its title implies: the theory and practice of assistance to speech communities whose native languages are threatened because their intergenerational continuity is proceeding negatively, with fewer and fewer users (speakers, readers, writers and even understanders) or uses every generation. The world is full of languages like this. Many are demographically rather small, with only a few hundred thousand (and, frequently, far, far fewer) users, whereas some are still demographically quite sizeable, with a million or more users, but the process of outflow exceeding inflow for three generations or more has applied to them as well. In most cases, these languages have a small band of conscientious (and often contentious) advocates, and, not infrequently, even some token governmental support. Nevertheless, the efforts expended on behalf of these languages often usually produce few, if any, positive intergenerational results, the tides that they are battling are not reversed, and their situations proceed from bad to worse.

In the main, this book is about why most efforts to reverse language shift are only indifferently successful, at best, and outright failures or even contraindicated and harmful undertakings, at worst. It attempts to diagnose such difficulties and to prescribe ameliorative and restorative efforts in a sociolinguistically informed way, i.e. in a way that combines more narrowly ethnolinguistic with more broadly sociocultural and econotechnical considerations. It draws upon the experience of past and current practitioners of language restoration, it reviews pertinent sociolinguistic research and theory, it examines a fairly large number of cases of attempted reversals of language shift on several continents, and it seeks to suggest a more rational, systematic approach to what has often hitherto been a primarily emotion-laden, 'let's try everything we possibly can and perhaps something will work', type of dedication.

## **Are Reversing Language Shift Efforts Outmoded, Provincial or Trivial 'in the Larger Scheme of Things'?**

One of the first problems tackled is the problem of whether reversing language shift (hereafter: RLS) efforts *should* be undertaken at all. Such efforts are often denigrated as 'revealing romantic fixations with the early to mid-nineteenth century', at a time when the problems of the late twentieth century are already out of hand and the coming problems of the twenty-first century promise to be even more intractable. Is this the time to worry about 'sickly languages', of whatever size? When some nations are still at each others' throats while others are belatedly preoccupied with the major headaches of working out their own approaches to pluralism in government and in production, when cities the world over are crumbling due to crime and industrial pollution, when drugs are decimating the young, when poverty and incurable illnesses are ravaging hundreds of millions throughout the world, when natural resources are being destroyed or depleted at an awesome rate, when serious climatic disturbances due to environmental abuse are foreseeable but, nevertheless, probably unavoidable, when totalitarianism, of the left and of the right, both secular and religious, still dominates such sizeable proportions of mankind, when basic moral values and the very institution of the family are under siege, when new mass media of communication and new means of mass production and international trade arrangements can finally foster one 'global village' out of the endless variety of estranged and cantankerous peoples in the world ... is this the time to worry about, much less try to do anything on behalf of, threatened languages (mostly, small threatened languages to boot) whom history and the majority of their own former speakers 'have [apparently] consigned to the dustbin'?

What can one say in response to the above litany of 'more serious illnesses' and 'more encompassing concerns and possibilities'? Perhaps only that different peoples ache in different places and at different times. The fact that we need to concentrate more resources on the war against cancer and AIDS does not make either patients or doctors unconcerned about a huge variety of other, still recalcitrantly extant physical and mental disorders. On the one hand, even earaches, sore throats, toothaches or warts can be greatly disconcerting and disabling to those who suffer from them and, on the other hand, one must be particularly careful about classifying as 'merely minor or imaginary' the problems that are of concern to others. Moreover, speech communities that realize that they are in danger of dying are certainly not complaining about a 'mere' toothache, but, rather, about a very painful and dangerous disorder within their sociocultural realm. Thus, this book does not advocate overlooking or down-playing other, perhaps equally or even more serious societal aches and pains. Rather, it addresses itself to a societal issue which is often overlooked and which deserves

attention, if only because it represents a hurt that more people feel than is commonly recognized, and because this hurt (and the lack of recognition for it) is indicative not only of social disorganization but of social injustice as well, the latter being a malady which must not be sloughed off as merely being of interest to the provincial or the antiquarian.

## **Will the 'Global Village' Render RLS Unnecessary?**

Yes, Western European integration is advancing on several fronts ('1992' is drawing nigh and the new problems that it will generate while solving old ones will be with us for a long time) and, yes, as these words are being written, there is considerable hope and concern for the success of industrial and political democratization and pluralization in Eastern Europe. Nevertheless, the European Community itself has called several times for increased use of, respect for and assistance to the non-state minority languages of that continent,' out of a deep recognition that a united Europe does not mean a centrally organized, regulated or uniformized Europe. A significantly more unified, integrated Europe (a goal which will not be reached tomorrow, by the way) is not necessarily in contradiction to the local identities, loyalties and behaviors that predate and undergird the pan-European counterparts (but not substitutes) that may now be arising as supplementary to them.

Although the age of the 'global village' may have arrived in some very few parts of the globe, even there people will continue to live their daily lives, to raise their children and to transmit their linguistic and non-linguistic heritages largely in terms of more particularistic, co-existing villages. Furthermore, the apparent victory of the pluralistic political model and of the competitive economic model throughout much of Europe does not mean that cultural pluralism *within the nation states* of that part (and of other parts) of the world is either assured or self-evident.

Unfortunately, democratic regimes can be just as blind to cultural pluralism and to the needs of minorities for cultural recognition and support, as are autocratic regimes. Unfortunately, too, most of the world remains unsafe for and generally unsympathetic to or unaware of the need for pluralistic cultural democracy. It is quite obvious, therefore, that there will long be a need for reversing language shift efforts to continue to be carried on, and that, as heretofore, they will need to be carried on primarily by the minorities themselves, rather than by any of the 'big brothers' or international integrative frameworks that exist today or are likely to come into existence in the foreseeable future. These efforts are easily overlooked by those whose gaze is directed elsewhere.

They do not usually get headline treatment, but that does not make their quiet, often desperate struggles any less justified or any less related to the basic human dignity of those involved in them.

## **The Destruction of a Language is the Destruction of a Rooted Identity**

Which brings us to what this book is about at a second or deeper level. The destruction of languages is an abstraction which is concretely mirrored in the concomitant destruction of intimacy, family and community, via national and international involvements and intrusions, the destruction of local life by mass-market hype and fad, of the weak by the strong, of the unique and traditional by the uniformizing, purportedly 'stylish' and purposely ephemeral. Once more, this book is not a denial of the legitimacy of the national and international spheres of responsibility, involvement and concern, nor does it constitute an attack upon modern life and its technological and intellectual advances and advantages. However, this book does claim that the foregoing do not constitute the sum total or the essence of social life and of language transmission, and that societally based RLS cannot be accomplished at all if it is not accomplished at the intimate family and local community levels.

Indeed, for RLS to 'take hold' these 'lower levels' constituting face-to-face, small-scale social life must be pursued in their own right and focused upon directly, rather than merely being thought of as obvious and inevitable by-products of 'higher level' (more complex, more encompassing, more power-related) processes and institutions. Which is not to say that no such by-product effect occurs at all, but, rather, that initial focusing on RLS-efforts *per se* is crucial, particularly on such efforts as can be engaged in by local communities and by their constituent families by means of their own efforts, resources and dedication. It counsels greater sociocultural self-sufficiency, self-help, self-regulation and initiative at the 'lower level', so to speak, before seriously pursuing such 'higher level' arenas, almost always conducted in a contextually stronger, established rival language, as secondary or even more advanced education, the extra-communal work sphere, the national mass media and other governmentally controlled services and operations.

This book does not question the importance of the latter arenas, particularly their importance *vis-à-vis* access to power in modern, urban life, but it does question the need or the ability of all languages to function in these particular spheres, as well as the advisability of *such* goals when the more foundational spheres — more foundational insofar as intergenerational

mother tongue transmission is concerned — of family and community have not yet been safeguarded. Particularly, it rejects the view that intimate 'language-in-culture' concerns are 'merely folkloric romanticism' in comparison to purportedly worthier interests of power and conflict. There cannot be any secure RLS without both the one and the other, and the issue that must preoccupy us is *when to pursue which* and the true nature of the relationships between them both and intergenerational mother tongue transmission.

What hope or purpose is there for a community's sociocultural, econotechnical and political self-regulation if the upper societal spheres are dominated by another language? Well, there is still the opportunity to function in these latter spheres via societal bilingualism, i.e. via the co-mastery of the generally employed language of those spheres, by means of exposure to institutions of education and work and to other life experiences that go beyond intimacy, family and local community. Would not such exposure then proceed once more to undermine the language of intimacy, family and community? Not necessarily; not if the latter are protected by hallowed and conscious sociocultural boundaries: values, rituals, traditions, belief-systems and a unifying and encompassing vision of 'being an Xman-via-Xish', i.e. of using the traditional own-ethnicity-associated language for purposes of ethnic self-definition and association. Indeed, intimacy, family, community, identity and affiliation are the essences of ethnocultural creativity and continuity and by *initially* disengaging them from the confrontation with the pursuit of power (at least until such time as there is a sufficiently firm primary base from which this pursuit can take its point of departure) they are rendered *more*, rather than *less*, viable and are ever more strongly related to some of the very processes and pursuits that humans value most. Is this mere romanticism? Can the weak have no other alternatives than the hobson's choice of either 'dreaming the impossible dream' and perishing culturally due to inaction, on the one hand, or engaging in a totally hopeless struggle, and perishing culturally due to erroneous actions, on the other hand?

This book counsels a third alternative, namely, *initial* conflict avoidance (but not, by any means, the avoidance of the voluntary struggle for ethnolinguistic existence), emphasizing the advocacy of cultural democracy and the attainment of diglossic bilingualism, demographic concentration, and the studied strengthening of ethnocultural boundaries in connection with friendship, family and community, rather than premature and risky functional confrontations with the powers that be. It does not counsel the postponement of overt promotion of RLS, but in that connection it advises patient and diligent concentration on the 'home front', before serious attention and scarce resources are devoted to the higher order spheres. Those spheres extend significantly beyond the minority community, and the attainment of basic control over them, and successes in con-

nection with them, is much more problematic and must depend on basic changes in the demographic, juridical and, therefore, political realities surrounding RLS-efforts, if they are to be attained in a lasting fashion.

By attending to the emphases, phases and rationales suggested here, it is hoped that RLS will be more successfully attained and, at the same time, that the very ethnocultural purposes for which RLS is desired will be fostered rather than lost in the process of ever expanding and prematurely competitive aspirations for political power and economic success. It is not enough, it will be argued, to 'be like everyone else, but in Xish', for if that were enough then Xish really would be no more than a culturally redundant and cliquishly self-serving flourish. It is identity, rather than power, and *Gemeinschaft* (intimate community), rather than *Gesellschaft* (impersonal society), that Xish must fundamentally and studiously pursue at the outset, since power spheres are always embedded in and manipulated by even greater power spheres, whereas cultural spheres can be both ethnoculturally self-protective and econotechnically syncretistic at the same time. More than anything else, pro-RLS-efforts must take pains not to confuse and compromise their goals via the means that they pursue, in order to better attain and preserve these goals. The priorities at various points in the RLS struggle must vary but they must, nevertheless, derive from a single, integrated theory of language-in-society processes that places intergenerational mother tongue transmission at the very center and that makes sure to defend that center before setting out to conquer societal processes that are more distant, dubious and tenuous *vis-à-vis* such transmission.

### **Fostering 'Small-Scale Community Life' is Difficult but Crucial for RLS, particularly in the More Weakened Cases**

Thus, it is the twentieth and the twenty-first century that this book is about: about efforts to make the post-modern present and the future more meaningful and more comforting for ordinary folk, more creative and humanistically nurturing for all, rather than merely about giving late-comers and losers a leg up in the ongoing race toward new records in popular consumerism, cultural pap and governmental pomp. 'Good problems' may be defined as problems whose solutions contribute to the solutions of related problems rather than to their exacerbation. Language shift is a by-product of unequal rates of social change and of growth in econotechnical power and, therefore, of self-regulation, i.e. the very same processes that also contribute to the widespread anomie and alienation that typify so much of modern life among the culturally dominant and the culturally recessive alike. Reversing language shift deals with a 'good problem' because it

is itself a potential contribution to overcoming some of the endemic sociocultural dislocation of modernity. In this sense, then, RLS is potentially a contribution to the solution of problems that are greater than the one that is first on its own agenda. Indeed, RLS is a contribution to many of the central problems that eat away at modern life, at modern man and at modern society. As such, it deserves the serious attention and the heartfelt cooperation of one and all, regardless of whether our own favorite language is involved or implicated in the efforts that it requires. It is not a problem restricted to the provincial, peripheral boondocks, but, rather, a problem that relates to the very heartland and the cutting edge of worldwide modernity in all of its assets and in all of its debits. It is a problem whose solution deserves our collective understanding and involvement.

The study and practice of RLS proceeds from the theoretically informed study of cases<sup>2</sup> to the fostering of intergenerational mother tongue transmission viewed as a cultural right and a societal resource. The cases that we will examine are either fundamentally Western or, at the very least, substantially impacted by longer exposure to Western-derived values, processes and dislocations. This is necessarily so because it is precisely in such Western or Western-impacted contexts that RLS is both most necessary practically and best justified and most fully preceded philosophically. The even larger number of RLS problems now brewing in localities that have only more recently been seriously impacted by the West (in the past 25–50 years) will require separate and additional treatment in the future.

## **Language as a Resource that Can Be Augmented, Developed and Modified**

The fundamental point of departure for RLS-efforts is the view that language is a resource at the level of societal integration and social identification. This point of departure does not imply the reification of ethnocultural identity nor the assumption that such identity can ever be ‘preserved’ in some pure and unaltered state. It does assume that every human aggregate defines its history and works toward a desired model of its future in accord with that definition. Majorities do so as well as minorities and it is no more reprehensible for the latter to engage in such a quest than it is for the former. A preferred, historically associated mother tongue has a role in this process of individual and aggregative self-definition and self-realization, not merely as a myth (i.e. as a verity whose objective truth is less important than its subjective truth) but also as a genuine identificational and motivational desideratum in the ethnocultural realm. While it is true that culture is a construct rather than a ‘thing’ to be molded, fashioned,

changed or pointed in a particular direction, the same is also true of other targets of organized societal efforts, e.g. education, mass communications, public health, justice and their various related societal institutions and goals. Thus, it is by no means inherently ludicrous, wicked or stupid to plan or seek to influence or to modify the ongoing interaction between language and culture, even though one must grant that such planning and modification, like all social planning and modification, is sometimes done ludicrously, wickedly and stupidly<sup>1</sup>.

Nor is it at all necessary to be a primordialist oneself in order to recognize the emotional strength of the common linkage of language with formative ties to family, community and history. The fact that these ties can come asunder does not negate the right of those who are so inclined to combat the sundering of the very ties that mean so very much to them. However, and this is more to the point, the fact that these ties are often so strongly and directly experienced does not mean that those who seek to foster them can successfully do so in a spontaneous and untutored way. Indeed, weakened and endangered languages pertain to cultures that no longer significantly regulate the daily lives of their members. That is also why RLS is so difficult to attain.

RLS requires reversing the tenor, the focus, the qualitative emphases of daily informal life — always the most difficult arenas in which to intervene. Indeed, RLS resists being programmed or planned, not only because its would-be planners and programmers are frequently poor in resources and weak in numbers, but because it is initially necessary for the weak in numbers and poor in resources to tackle some of the most elusive behaviors and interactions of social and communal life. Nevertheless, it is my hope and conviction that a sense of priorities can be conveyed in this connection, a sense that is derived from a theory of intergenerational mother tongue transmission and the particular circumstances in which a particular threatened speech community finds itself. That too, then, is what this book is about and why it is needed.

## Notes

1. For analyses of the pro-minority-language concerns and pronouncements of the European Community Parliament and the implications of '1992' for these languages, as well as for the state languages that are not considered official for EC purposes, see Coulmas, 1989. A briefer treatment is provided by O'Riagáin, 1989.
2. The most immediate predecessor of the current volume is Ellis and mac a' Ghobhainn, 1971. It too attempts to derive its conclusions and recommendations from a detailed examination of cases. All in all it examines 20 cases (17 European and three Asian), the majority of which are by now so well established that some may find it difficult to imagine that they were 'threatened' at some point in the past. There is only one case in common between that book and this one (Hebrew) and the

theoretical emphases of the two volumes are quite different. The former book stresses the 'will to survive' while this one stresses a theory that incorporates ideology (motivating and activating belief) and concrete applications of the right step at the right time. (I am greatly indebted to Nancy Dorian for calling this out-of-print book to my attention and for making a copy of it for me. It is a book which not only deserves to be better known but to be reprinted as well.)

3. For a recent exposé of many of the conceptual errors involved in treating constructs such as culture and language as if they were tangible physical entities that can be fixed, molded or manipulated at will, see Handler, 1988. Although his treatment is quite telling, it, nevertheless, somehow overlooks a very important fact, namely, that different languages do, after all, relate to different cultural identities and that these identities serve to orient and to mobilize human aggregates. One does not have to be a 'believer' to be able to appreciate the similar role of religion; one should not have to be a language nationalist in order to appreciate the crucial role of specific languages and of preferences for a specific language in the fashioning of both political and ethnocultural agendas.

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## **2 Why Try to Reverse Language Shift and Is It Really Possible to Do So?**

Before a task can be undertaken, it is desirable that those involved in the undertaking be maximally clear in their minds and united in their hearts as to why that task *should* be undertaken. This is particularly true with respect to a collective task undertaken by those purporting to labor not only on behalf of themselves, but on behalf of an ethnocultural entity. Individuals can sometimes afford to be less than fully conscious and less than maximally unconflicted about their individual actions, i.e. to hope to attain consciousness and inner unconflictedness as they go along. Even so, a lack of clarity *vis-à-vis* goals and means at the individual level often exacts a price in that many things that are done subsequently need to be undone, repaired, discarded or redone. 'That's life', we say, shaking our heads sadly; 'Live and learn!' Collective undertakings, however, just cannot afford to proceed in this fashion, both because their goals are typically more complex to begin with than are the goals of individuals, and because collective action inevitably elicits a degree of collective counter-action as well. Therefore, the success of collective action is limited, at best, by the extent to which at least the individuals whom such action attracts are able to work in concert rather than at cross-purposes.

Of course, there is no sure way to predict the future and all our collective efforts are constantly exposed to unanticipated side-effects and to co-occurrences beyond our control. In addition, there are *always* more things that it would be good to know *before* one undertakes a collective task, but we are always limited in time, talent and wherewithal, and most tasks must, inevitably and unfortunately, be undertaken under less than fully optimal circumstances, if they are to be undertaken at all.

True though all these observations may be, their truth only makes it particularly and all the more desirable for collective tasks, tasks involving many people on behalf of an ethnocultural goal such as 'reversing language shift' (RLS), to be undertaken only after careful consideration of the goals, prospects and circumstances of the prospective undertaking. Language issues in society

are usually fraught with emotions, values, ideals and loyalties and, as with most 'matters of the heart', they seem so compelling that to pause for clarification may seem, to many who favor reversing language shift (pro-RLSers we will call them from now on), to be not only unnecessary but unfeeling, uncaring and rigid. However, without such prior clarification and deliberation, there is a very substantial risk that a disparity of goals and a diversity of levels of commitment will remain hidden, only to erupt later in the form of schisms, defections, animosities and other disturbances that will do far greater damage to 'the language cause' than could have been brought about by a modicum of delay for clarification and possible unification originally (McPherson, 1973). Some such disruptive problems are likely to arise anyway, because collective action is always exposed to an irreducible minimum of rivalry for leadership and difference of opinion, interpretation and prioritization. However, without prior, honest clarification of both goals and doubts, circumstances and possibilities, the likelihood of future ruptures and difficulties is literally built-in into societal reform efforts (and attempts to reverse language shift must be understood to constitute just such an effort) from their very outset. While it is irksome it is nevertheless inescapable: the established sociocultural order often requires no reason, no conscious rationale or justification, while its reversal or modification is usually beset with just such requirements.

## Why Bother?

Obviously, not all members of any endangered ethnocultural entity can be united *vis-à-vis* the desirability of reversing language shift, i.e. not all of them will favor more frequent and more functionally diversified use of Xish [pronounced: Ex-ish] (Xish will stand for the name of any language, since so many language names in English are formed on this model, e.g. Swedish, Spanish, Danish, Polish, Yiddish, etc.) by the members of the community (let us call them Xmen [pronounced: Ex-men], on the model of Englishmen, Frenchmen, Irishmen, etc.) with which that language has been historically associated. Were that not the case, then the problem itself, language shift away from Xish and the resulting need to consider how to reverse this process (whether in general or in specific pursuits), probably would not exist. Indeed, not only do many Xmen seem oblivious to the need for reversing language shift, but some may actually deny the need for pro-RSL efforts and oppose efforts along those lines. What are the rationales and what are the motives of anti-RLSers [are-el-esers]? These rationales and motivations must be well known and understood by the advocates of reversing language shift, not only because without such familiarity it will be more difficult to cope with the arguments of those who deny the desirability of

reversing language shift, but because some of these arguments may also be subconsciously accepted, at least in part, by some pro-RLSers too.

### **'It Is Too Late; Nothing Can Be Done About It Anymore!'**

The most defeatist claim by anti-RLSers is that RLS cannot succeed because it is 'too late', i.e. because the speakers and supporters of Xish are already too few in number and/or too weak in social influence or power for their efforts to be crowned with success. This charge must be carefully considered. It is true, unfortunately, that some irremediable language shift situations may exist insofar as certain RLS goals are concerned and that some languages and their associated cultures have already been so eroded that they can no longer be returned to their former statuses, let alone promoted beyond those statuses. However, even for them something can be done. Therefore, the question of success must not be approached in absolute terms (achieving full success vs. doing nothing at all) but, rather, in functional, contextual or situational terms as well as in terms of Time 1 vs. Time 2 vs. Time 3, i.e. in terms of immediate vs. longer-range goals. *There is no language for which nothing at all can be done*, and, therefore, the crux of any RLS solution is to decide what is the best that can be done for Xish in a particular context and in a given time-frame, and then to go on from there. Just as a physician faced by a patient with many different complications must decide which ailments to leave for later (if they are to be tackled at all) and which to tackle first (since not all ailments are similarly critical) and with which cures (since some cures of ailment A may engender 'complications' with respect to ailment B), so RLS advocates must decide which *functions* (i.e. which ethnolinguistic contexts) to tackle first, because they are the most critical, and which specific steps to take in order to (re)gain those functions *among specific target populations*. Over and over again pro-RLSers must remind themselves that it is intergenerational mother tongue transmission that they are after, rather than merely 'good things (or impressive symbolic splashes) for Xish'.

Much language policy is discussed in terms of the nationwide level only; however, that is not the only or even necessarily the optimal level for RLS and for language status planning more generally. Indeed, the more disadvantaged a particular language is the less productive (and the less feasible) macro-level (nationwide, regionwide) policies may actually be. Under such circumstances, more pinpointed goals must be focused upon first, goals that are oriented toward much smaller societal units such as families, clubs or neighborhoods, or to speaking (rather than writing), or to schools (rather than businesses), or to kindergartens (rather than high schools), etc.

## Example 1: Differentiating Between Functional Alternatives in RLS-Efforts

In the late nineteenth/early twentieth century 'revival' (actually, revernacularization) of Hebrew, priority was given to speaking the language over writing it. In addition, in preparing new terminologies so that speakers could cope with the exigencies of modern daily life, the Hebrew Language Academy started with carpentry and 'kitchenry' (artifacts and activities of the modern kitchen), rather than with terminologies for the natural sciences.

RLS-efforts recently undertaken on behalf of Maori have concentrated on childcare/nursery schools more than on other societal institutions, such as mass media or government. This is a frequent decision of RLS movements, because early childhood schools afford an organized and long-term opportunity to reach and influence the young. An RLS movement on behalf of a language spoken primarily by individuals already past school-age might best start elsewhere.

Some Amerindian languages are already in such disarray, and have been neglected for such a length of time, that it is necessary to piece their grammars and vocabularies together first, from various oral and written sources, before any efforts on behalf of active spoken use, by either adults or children, can be undertaken.

Thus, the general conclusion that 'nothing can be done about it anymore' is likely to be correct only if totally inappropriate goals are being entertained. The strongest adherents of inappropriate goals are likely to be some of the pro-RLSers themselves. It may be hard for true and complete believers to settle for less than the full demographic and functional pie. But this is as defeatist a position as is the taunt of anti-RLSers that anything less than full and exclusive dominion is unworthy and demeaning, and, therefore, nothing at all can or should be done for the language. A more realistic counsel is to realize that 'a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush'. A few well-chosen smaller victories earlier on will do much more for the eventual larger-scale and longer-term success of pro-RLS efforts than will lack of success *vis-à-vis* more grandiose but impossible goals.

The argument between those who want everything for Xish (and, presumably, right away too) and those who say that *that* is impossible to attain and, therefore, nothing at all should be tried, is ultimately easier for judicious RLSers to resolve than is the argument between those who advocate *certain* immediate measures and those who advocate others. Both of these latter folks are in the pro-RLS camp and yet they may disagree profoundly; so profoundly, indeed, that some of the purportedly pro-RLS steps advocated by those in one sub-camp

will strike those in another as being useless or even contraindicated, i.e. damaging *vis-à-vis* the RLS goal. Obviously, it is almost as bad to settle for less when more could be gained, than to aspire to more than can be gained and, therefore, by over-reaching, to suffer further reverses, such as loss of motivation, time, funds and supporters. This then, rather than the argument with anti-RLSers who believe in the 'nothing can be done about it anyway' position, is the area on which pro-RLS forces should concentrate their analytic, persuasive and ameliorative talents. Those who claim that 'nothing can be done about it' because it is already too late, because even to try to do anything is a public admission of and an intensification of the terrible straits in which Xish finds itself, should be answered that the problem is not '*whether to do anything?*' but '*what to do?; when to do it?; where to do it?; and how to do it?*' *That is a good problem* (actually, a problem-series), one that deserves an answer and one that requires much study. We will return to *this* problem (it is a 'good problem') in Chapter 4 (and in several subsequent chapters), below.

### **Nothing Should be Done about It Because RLS Is Unnecessary or even Undesirable**

Defeatism is still fundamentally an empirical position. It implies agreement with respect to the desirability of the RLS goal in principle, but pessimism, often very profound pessimism, with respect to the attainability of one or another type of RLS goal or practice. As we have already pointed out, differences between optimists and pessimists may be difficult to resolve, but not nearly as difficult as it is to resolve differences pertaining to the desirability of RLS *per se*. The latter differences are differences *vis-à-vis ends*. They are profoundly philosophical/ideological/value-related and are generally not as bridgeable via empirical analysis and rational discussion as are differences with respect to *means*.

The first thing to realize, in connection with differences with respect to whether RLS is or is not even 'theoretically' desirable, is that *any* answer to this question is based on philosophical premises. This is important to recognize, because, frequently, one side will view itself as 'entirely realistic' while viewing the other side as 'hopelessly ideological'. The maintenance and advancement of disadvantaged languages, these being the ultimate goals of RLS, do not need to be justified *any more* than does the position that such languages deserve no special attention and that they should be permitted to sink into oblivion if they cannot make it on their own. Of course, the maintenance and advancement of disadvantaged languages requires *no less* justification than does its opposite. Furthermore, since the adherents of RLS are likely to be fewer in number and with less access to the media, the schools, the church, the government and the

various other opinion-forming institutions of society, their views are *less* likely to be known to others at the same time as they themselves are more likely to be exposed to the views of their opponents. Accordingly, it is of special importance that the pro-RLS views be well and unembarrassedly put, not only so that others may be influenced by them (after all, there are usually many folks who are neither decidedly pro- nor anti-, and some of these can still be influenced in the pro-direction), but so that pro-RLSers themselves can be reassured that their minority position is well taken.

Views about the desirability of RLS are, in essence, views as to the relationship between language and culture. It is very hard to tell the truth about the relationship between language and culture; it is even harder to tell the whole truth and nothing but the truth in this connection. It is hard to tell the truth about language and culture because anything that one says about the relationship between them is likely to be perspectival, that is, it is likely to be strongly influenced by the 'teller's' involvement in the very relationship that he or she is discussing. Most cultures, and minority or threatened cultures in particular, have very definite views of the relationship between languages and cultures in general and, most specifically, about the relationship between their own language and their own culture. To some extent, scientific methods of experimental design and of cross-cultural comparison help safeguard against such sources of bias, but it is impossible to escape from them entirely, precisely because they are both unconscious and pervasive.

In addition, 'the whole truth' about the relationship between language and culture may be too complex and too subtle, as well as too subjective and self-fulfilling to be fully told. In all realms of cultural behavior, those factors that are believed to be true have very definite consequences, whether or not they were initially or demonstrably true above and beyond the beliefs about them. Thus, beliefs about the relationship between language and culture are part of any culture itself and they are culturally transmitted from one generation to the next. Such beliefs have definite consequences for child socialization and education, for second language learning and intergroup relations, for cultural borrowing and culture planning. The consequences of the beliefs, therefore, need to be examined in any consideration of the 'whole truth' about the relationship between language and culture. Cultures are feedback systems and they tend to produce those very results which they take to be inevitable, regardless of whether or not they are truly inevitable.

As a result of all of the foregoing, no claim can be made to tell 'the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth' about the desirability or advisability of RLS. What follows is inevitably and admittedly a perspectival effort in that direction. Clearly, however, contrary views would be equally perspectival.

## **We Can Be Xmen without Xish (i.e. We Can Be Xmen via Yish [Y-ish] or via Zish [Z-ish])**

The longer the process of language shift away from Xish has gone on, the longer the phenomenon of Xmen who do not speak or even understand Xish has existed. Jews who do not speak Hebrew have existed for millennia, Irishmen who do not speak Irish have existed for centuries, and Puerto Ricans who do not speak Spanish (usually these are third generation, American mainland-born individuals of 'insular' Puerto Rican 'grandparentage') have existed for only about a quarter century at most. In all cases, however, they have become powerful examples of the detachability of a traditionally and historically associated language with respect to the continuity of individual and collective ethnocultural identity. If Yish is a language of greater power and opportunity than is Xish, and if Yish speakers of Xish parentage or ancestry continue to believe that they can still be Xmen (or Xmen in addition too, i.e. they believe that they can be Xmen and Ymen simultaneously and entirely in Yish), then the need for Xish for the purposes of Xishness (Swedishness, Danishness, Spanishness) will seem to many to be greatly decreased, if not eclipsed entirely.'

While it is important to grant the reality of the phenomenon 'Xmen who know no, or hardly any, Xish', it is even more important to examine this reality. The traditionally associated language of any ethnocultural collectivity is associated with the total ethnocultural pattern of that collectivity at a particular time and place. Jews who have lost their familiarity with Hebrew have lived a different daily life-pattern (a different Jewishness) than have Jews who did not, regardless of whether both groups continued to call themselves Jews and to be so called by others. The discontinuance of Hebrew in daily life was often lamented by rabbis and other Jewish community leaders (rabbis are not merely religious spokesmen; they are often community leaders in all other respects as well), because this discontinuance was associated with other profound changes as well: with a greater incidence of leaving the historic homeland, with a greater incidence of non-observance of then-current traditions, with a greater incidence of intermarriage, with a greater incidence of new customs (not hallowed as were the original ones), with a greater incidence of mispronunciation of hallowed ritual texts — all in all, therefore, with a greater incidence of culture change.

An examination of the Irish and the Puerto Rican cases (and countless others, yet to be discussed) will reveal counterparts to the Jewish case among them as well. Language shift generally and basically involves culture change as well indeed, initially, quite devastating and profound culture change, all the more so in cases where the ethnocultural collectivity does not also represent a

distinctive religious tradition dissimilar from and discontinuous with those religious traditions surrounding it and where the vernacular traditionally and historically associated with this tradition is, therefore, not also sanctified.

Thus, while ethnocultural label-maintenance and self-concept-maintenance may long outlast language-maintenance, the detailed pattern of culture, and any community's ability to maximize self-regulation of culture change and the regulation of culture contact, is invariably different when the historically associated language is present than when it is absent. Of course, the language alone will not be either the sole and sufficient cause or the guarantor of all the cultural patterns associated with it. Anthropologists are quite capable of finding small peoples who retained their 'identity' because they retained their traditional agricultural system, or their traditional kinship system, even though they lost their languages. However, given the ambiguity of 'identity' under such circumstances, it is necessary to add that most cultures reveal the 'domino principle' in operation and when any of their main props, such as language, are lost, most other props are seriously weakened and are far more likely to be altered and lost as well. Ultimately, therefore, RLS and language maintenance are not about language *per se*; they are about language-in-culture. RLS is an attempt to foster, to fashion, to attain and to assist a particular language-in-culture content and pattern.

A call for RLS must, therefore, also be seen and explained as a call for cultural reconstruction and for greater cultural-self-regulation. If this is not understood then RLS-efforts must, inevitably, fail, as all ethnocultural planning that lacks a central and crucial integrative component must fail. RLS is an indication of dissatisfaction with ethnocultural (and, often, also with ethnopolitical and ethno-economic) life as it currently is, and of a resolve to undertake planned ethnocultural reconstruction. This change does not need to be backward-looking in its thrust, regardless of the historical metaphors that it may utilize (because of their recognized symbolic and emotional significance). Indeed, most RLS-efforts are actually syncretistic and modernistic with respect to their cultural implications and goals. If that is the case, then what is the exact difference between their ethnocultural goals and the goals pursued by those who maintain that 'one can be a good Xman without knowing Xish'? Normally, it is a difference in precise self-definitions, in the minutiae of cultural implementations and in self-regulatory preferences and capacity *vis-à-vis* outside influences. These differences are felt to be representative of a different ethnocultural pattern, symbol-system and value-system, but it is exactly these differences that must be explained and detailed in order to convey 'the RLS idea'.

## **Example 2: Successful RLS is Invariably Part of a Larger Ethnocultural Goal**

Since the restoration of post-Franco democracy in Spain, RLS-efforts on behalf of Basque have been an aspect of a broader movement seeking greater cultural autonomy for 'the Basque community'. Thus far, Spain has granted 'the Basque community' only a modicum of self-regulatory authority, exercised by a 'Basque Government', particularly in matters of local cultural concern. The exact limits of this authority continue to be jointly explored and is of concern to more than RLSers, since many non-Basques and non-Basquephone Basques now live in the Basque provinces.

The movement on behalf of French in Quebec has been part and parcel of a movement to become 'masters in our own house'. Although the pursuit of independence from Canada has (thus far) been rejected by the Quebecois electorate, the furtherance of French has gone hand in hand with the Francization of industrial, commercial and provincial- governmental operations.

The recovery and reintroduction of Amerindian languages on many Indian reservations has been accompanied by the recovery and reintroduction of traditional dances, songs, handicrafts and a strengthening of traditional worship and curative rituals.

Sore Shenirer's movement of Orthodox Day Schools for Jewish girls in interwar Poland argued that genuine Orthodoxy in daily practices and values was not possible without the use of Yiddish, 'the language of traditional Orthodoxy', just as Yiddish without Orthodoxy was decried as a senseless parroting of Gentile secular nationalisms. Laborite and left-wing secular nationalists also fostered Yiddish (as 'a' or even 'the' Jewish national tongue), but did so as part of a platform that viewed Jews as a modern, secular nationality, with its own schools (in Yiddish), its own theaters (in Yiddish), its own books, journals and publishing houses (in Yiddish), and with its own governmentally recognized local courts (in Yiddish).

RLS is rarely, if ever, pursued 'for its own sake'. Only linguists, translators, some language teachers and a few other clearly atypical individuals are interested in languages 'for their own sake'. However, pro-RLS partisans often make the impression that this *is* so, i.e. that language *is* their exclusive concern. As a frequently embattled and sometimes besieged minority, they often become so accustomed to speaking only to each other that they forget how to speak effectively to others. What they no longer need to explain to each other they often no longer know how to explain to others. They often need to remind themselves

and to make themselves more conscious of their own RLS 'basic principles', so that they can then make others more conscious of these principles as well. RLSers should not be embarrassed about the fact that theirs is *basically a value position* (a position relative to the ethnocultural saliency, content and regulation of their lives), because the position of their opponents is also no more than a value position. On the other hand, they must become more adept at explaining what this position is, because in doing so they will be able to better design the steps that are needed in order to implement it, whether at the macro-level or at the micro-level. They must realize that RLS is, essentially, a societal reform-effort that involves both the *abandonment* of widely accepted (but ideologically contra-indicated) cultural patterns and the attainment of their stipulated replacements. To realize this is to realize why RLS is so difficult to attain; not to realize it is to forgo the slim chances that exist for the success of RLS-efforts.

RLS essentially entails a critique of Xish society (and probably also of Yish society) as it is and, therefore, a resolve to pursue specific revisions in ethnocultural content, process and self-regulation. Sometimes this involves political and economic revisions as well, but the latter need not imply power aspirations of a seditious, separatist or social strife nature. All sociocultural efforts (including all anti-RLS-efforts as well) involve leadership (and, therefore, political and power aspirations at the organizational level) and wherewithal (and, therefore, economic concerns at the organizational level, as well as individuals whose own economic success will be bolstered by 'the cause'). The levels of political and economic preoccupation, and the existence of leadership with self-focused goals in addition to the collectively shared ones, these do not define the differences between pro- or anti-RLS-programs and philosophies. Such preoccupations, when they obtain, are not necessarily evil and exploitative when found among pro-RLSers and innocuous, benign or salutary when encountered among anti-RLSers<sup>2</sup>.

The entire intellectually fashionable attempt to reduce all ethnocultural movements to problems of 'who attains power' and 'who gets money' is exactly that: reductionistic. It reduces human values, emotions, loyalties and philosophies to little more than hard cash and brute force. These misguided attempts, regardless of the great names associated with them and the pseudo-intellectual fashionableness that they occasionally enjoy because of their purported 'realism', inevitably impoverish rather than enrich our understanding of the complexity of human nature and of sociocultural reality. They cannot help us grasp the intensity of ideals and idealism, of commitments and altruism, that are at the very heart of much social behavior in general and of RLS behavior in particular.

And it is not the flea but the elephant that is being overlooked by such reductionist schools of thought. Human beings individually and collectively,

when functioning in groups and in historically defined collectivities, often champion causes that are unpopular and that cannot be calculated to bring them nearly as much gain nor as much power as would any of various concurrently 'more likely to succeed' causes, movements or undertakings. Irrational? Perhaps, but cultures, unlike computers, are fundamentally irrational. Their function is to be integratively 'different' ('authentic', 'unique', 'themselves'), both in values or *Weltanschauungen* and in their prescriptions for daily life, rather than to be efficient — a task that can be left to cost, time and motion specialists and to other well paid representatives of efficiency and rationality 'for their own sake'. Cultures and cultural differences are inherently irrational, but it is this same irrationality (or is it super-rationality?) that is at the heart of religion, love, emotion, altruism, creativity, art, music and individuality, rather than only being at the heart of conflict, competition and various forms of self-aggrandizement (as anti-RLSers sometimes charge, conveniently overlooking thereby both the irrationality and the conflict that accompany their own views). Just as it is not the power and self-interest focus of RLS-efforts that differentiate them from any and all other social efforts (including anti-RLS-efforts which necessarily have their own carefully hidden power and self-interest agendas), so it is not the basic irrationality of RLS-efforts that differentiates them from other socio-cultural efforts (definitely including anti-RLS-efforts). Rather, it is the particular content and direction of RLS — its focus on a particular language-and-ethnoculture link expressed via a particular cultural content, cultural process and cultural self-regulatory pursuit — that is differentiating, and it is this content, process and direction that RLSers must have firmly and unembarrassedly in mind. RLSers are implicitly saying: 'We want a different kind of Xman from that which is currently ascendant and from that which is predictable without the particular language-in-culture linkage we espouse'. It is this 'different kind' and that kind's *link to Xish* that must be spelled out if those who are not yet convinced are to become persuaded to mend their ways.

### **A language is indexically related to its culture**

Languages are linked to particular ethnocultures in three major ways: indexically, symbolically and in a part/whole fashion. That language which has traditionally been linked with a given ethnoculture is, at any time during which that linkage is still intact, best able to name the artifacts and to formulate or express the interests, values and world-views of that culture. Since the two, the language and the ethnoculture (if we may permit ourselves to separate them for a moment), have 'grown up together' over an extensive period of time, they are better attuned to each other, at any time when the linkage between them is generally intact, than is any other language to that culture at that time. That is not to

say that the traditionally associated language is a perfect or isomorphic road-map to its traditionally related culture. The two, language and culture, change at related but not at identical rates. For a while, languages may preserve terms and expressions appropriate to cultural artifacts and reflecting cultural interests that are no longer available or implemented. Nevertheless, they do not long lack for consensual terms for those that are currently available and implemented. This is usually well known to all RLS advocates and they will boast to each other (or to any opponents who will listen) that there is no way of saying *x* in Yish whereas 'in Xish it is so easy, so natural and so lovely to say ...'. What pro-RLSers are less likely to admit, or even to realize, is that Yish or Zish could, in time, come to achieve comparable felicity of expression were they to remain associated with the culture that has *x*'s or is concerned with them. The 'necessary but lacking' word could be borrowed directly from Xish, or a translation-loan (a Yish word translated from Xish) or a neologism (a newly created Yish word) could be created to cope with the hitherto 'missing' word or concept. After all, in the long run, all languages are equally capable of expressing any and all sociocultural realities. However, no one lives in the long run; we all live in the short run, in the here and now, and in the short run the pro-RLSers are right: in the short run (which is to say, at any particular point in time) no language but the one that has been most historically and intimately associated with a given culture is as well able to express the artifacts and the concerns of that culture.<sup>3</sup>

### **Example 3: Languages are Lexically 'Most Appropriate' for their Traditionally Associated Cultures**

Eskimo has several words for various different types of snow (wet and dry, thick and thin) and Beduin Arabic, for different types of horses and camels, precisely because their associated cultures are crucially concerned with the distinctions between these types. Other cultures, in which snow, horses or camels play little if any important role, can get by with only one or two words subsuming all of them.

Kinship terminologies pertain to culture-specific kinship systems. Yiddish has a word for the relationship between the parents of the bride and the parents of the groom: this relationship is called *mekheto'nemshaft*. The two fathers address each other as *mekhu'tn* and the two mothers, as *mekhetey'neste*. Both sets of parents have rights and obligations toward the young couple (e.g. arranging and paying for the wedding) and toward each other (e.g. sharing the latter expense in ways that they agree upon).

Japanese and Indonesian/Malaysian have had (and to a more minor degree still have) a variety of pronouns that relate to the status differences

that are recognized (or politely implied) to exist between interlocutors. When post-World War II Indonesian required a second person pronoun that would not have such status implications, it went outside of its traditional system to borrow such a term (*U*, from Dutch).

American English has sports terminology unknown to British English, and vice versa. Australian English has terms for animal life that have no counterparts in either American or British English. The same is true for typically regional foods, articles of apparel and aspects of material culture within each of these three English varieties. Increased contact between speakers of various varieties of English has erased many of these differences, but others remain and new differences are constantly being generated between them.

However, true though the lexical link between language and culture may be, it is both an ephemeral and a peripheral truth. It is ephemeral because ethnocultures are changing all of the time and receding languages may actually come to be *less* attuned to many of the most recent changes that have occurred than are their competitors. (As we will discuss at length in Chapter 11, below, if this anomaly is to be avoided it is crucial that a modicum of corpus planning — the authoritative creation of new terms, at least for the purposes of daily life, including daily technology, as RLSers actually live it and advocate that it be lived — be conducted throughout the course of RLS-efforts, regardless of how well RLSers believe they already know the language). It is peripheral because felicity of expression is not, in and of itself, either the central goal of RLS or an important ideal for most ordinary members of an ethnoculture (although humanities professors and literary folk are apt to forget that). The indexical superiority of Xish, if any, must pertain to the particular brand and content of Xish culture (Xishness) that RLSers advocate and, accordingly, it is the cultural advocacy that is crucial, rather than the lexical/semantic felicity *per se*.

### **A language is symbolically linked to its culture**

A more germane argument on behalf of the traditionally associated language championed by RLS-efforts is that language and culture are linked symbolically. By dint of long-term association, the two are not only well attuned to each other, but they stand for each other in the minds of insiders and of outsiders too. During World Wars I and II, German-Americans (and even Swiss-German-Americans) were careful not to speak German in public in the USA. This was not because America was at war with the German language, but because the German language 'stood for' (i.e. it had become symbolic of) the German nation and America was at war with the latter. When RLSers tell us that

the language is a major (even, in their eyes, 'the' major) component of their (ethnocultural) identity, what they mean, feel and believe (and what they would like others to mean, feel and believe) is that the language stands for being an Xman, 'a true Xman', one who lives, breathes and implements a particular Xish-enriched-Xishness with his/her whole being. The language, for RLSers, stands for their ideal Xishness and their ideal Xman. This ethnoculturally symbolic role of language is not a strange phenomenon. After all, language is the major symbol-system of our species. The word 'table' is not a table itself, as General Semanticists never tire of telling us, but it consensually 'stands for' a table, so that all who understand the word know what to buy, set, fix, move, fold or paint when the word is heard or read. Little wonder then, that almost all of the languages of the world have also come to stand for the particular ethnic collectivities that speak them, for the ethnocultures that traditionally utilize them and, where we are dealing with official languages of nations or regions, for the polities that implement them. Speakers of English (and other languages used across national boundaries) sometimes tend to forget this. English is so omnipresent in the world (at least, in the world of native English speakers) that it is easy to begin to think that it is simply neutral and natural everywhere. Speakers of languages that are regionally competitive with or conflicted with English have an understandably different view. They know that English is symbolic of Anglo-American might, money and life-styles, not all of which may be congenial to their own interests, views and goals.<sup>4</sup>

Unfortunately, the symbolic link between a language and its traditionally associated ethnoculture is a sword that cuts both ways. For receding languages, the language also is symbolic of the process of receding, of the disadvantages popularly ascribed to a receding language, of the atypicality of the life-style of those who hang on to a receding language after most others have shifted to a language of greater currency and, therefore, also to a language of seemingly greater advantage in status, income, social acceptance and social participation. RLSers are often loath to admit that their dearly beloved language could be symbolic of anything else than what *they* feel it to be symbolic of and what *they* want it to be symbolic of. However, where a mass re-ethnization process has gone on for a long time, that is, where Xmen in droves have come to be primarily (or solely) speakers of Yish instead, Yish may also stand for (may also be symbolic of, at least in their own eyes) remaining an Xman-of-a-certain-kind,-saliency-and-intensity, while, at the same time, benefiting from many typically Yish/Yishness advantages as well. 'But what are all of these other payoffs worth in comparison with being fully and truly Xmen by speaking Xish?', the RLSers may ask. Perhaps they are right, but this ('fully and truly') is an appeal, ultimately, to more than symbolism alone. It is an appeal to the implementation of a certain kind (a certain content) of Xishness, a certain priority for that content

and a certain degree of commitment to it even when its material rewards may not be in accord with its 'real [moral, spiritual, ethical and, therefore, core-cultural] worth'. Once again, therefore, we conclude that it is cultural content and outlook, the cultural style or way of life, the *raison d'être*, rather than language alone, that differentiates pro-, non- and anti-RLSers and it is this content and outlook that RLSers need to spell out and exemplify in order that others may be attracted to it.

### **A language is linked to its culture in part-whole fashion**

The above two discussions of how language is linked to culture bring us to the realization that there must be yet another link between an ethnoculture and its traditionally associated language: the link that is due to the fact that there is a partial identity between the two, i.e. that parts of every culture are expressed, implemented and realized via the language with which that culture has been most intimately associated. So much of any culture is primarily verbally constituted: its songs and its prayers, its laws and its proverbs, its tales and its greetings, its curses and its blessings, its philosophy, its history and its teachings, and on and on, encompassing almost all of non-material culture. All of the foregoing are conventionally and consensually expressed via the culture's traditionally associated language, to such a degree that, at least for those who learned them in the original language, they do not have the same 'flavor', the same 'charm', the same 'magic', not to mention the same 'associations and memories', when translated into any other language. It is in this fashion, via the part-whole relationship (that is, via the partial identity and extensive interdependence) that exists between an ethnolanguage and its traditionally associated ethnoculture, that child socialization patterns come to be associated with a particular language, that cultural styles of interpersonal relations come to be associated with a particular language, that the ethical principles that undergird everyday life come to be associated with a particular language and that even material culture and aesthetic sensibilities come to be conventionally discussed and evaluated via figures of speech that are merely culturally (i.e. locally) rather than universally applicable.

### **Example 4: Every Language Utilizes Figures of Speech that are Specific to the Specific Content of its Associated Culture**

Because of its fascination with baseball, American English uses the expression 'to take a seventh inning stretch' to indicate a pause for relaxation, somewhere past the midpoint of any undertaking. Whether individually or

in groups, a seventh inning stretch may be taken, requested or offered ('Coffee time, folks! Let's take our seventh inning stretch now!') in the midst of non-urgent pursuits that have nothing at all to do with baseball. Perhaps the habit of such a 'break', rather than merely the expression referring to it, was also borrowed from baseball.

Spanish speakers both in the USA and in Spain itself (and perhaps those in Latin America as well), refer to speaking Spanish as '*hablar cristiano*' (speaking Christian). This goes back to the historic period, more than half a millennium ago, when Spain was partially controlled by the Arabic-speaking Moors and also had a substantial Hebrew-praying and Judezmo- (Judeo-Spanish) speaking Jewish population (both in the Christian and in the Islamic parts of the Peninsula). Since Spanish was the unifying language of Christians (Basque, Catalan and other regional languages were also spoken, of course), to speak Spanish was to speak as a Christian.

Things that are done often are referred to in Yiddish as being done 'every Monday and Thursday', regardless of whether they are done on these particular days or not. Mondays and Thursdays are the weekdays on which the Torah is taken out and part of the weekly lection is read (in Orthodox synagogues). Because of the week in, week out and year in, year out nature of this practice, it came to be acceptably applied to (i.e. to be the cultural figure of speech for designating) any frequently and regularly occurring event.

The part-whole relationship between traditionally associated languages and cultures is also a two-way relationship, of course. Not only are most cultural acts and events linguistically encoded and linguistically suffused, but the languages themselves become replete with figures of speech that are by-products of frequent hearings, sayings, recitations and (in literate cultures) readings. Untranslatable figures of speech are often of this nature. It is not so much that they are completely untranslatable as that any translation requires a host of explanatory phrases (footnotes, so to speak). In order to render such sayings intelligible and to convey their vivid cultural appropriateness, explanations and footnotes must, at least initially, be resorted to. These rob the translations of spontaneous impact and are totally unnecessary for native members of the language's traditionally associated culture. Ethnosemantics and ethnotypologies constitute fields of academic inquiry that have attempted to analyze the cultural specificity of any language, but these fields have only begun to scratch the surface of the complete cultural specificity that is part and parcel of each and every natural language. They are interested primarily in tight-knit systems (such as the traditional kinship terminology, the traditional body-parts terminology or the traditional pronoun system). Such

systems are often quite strikingly and literally unavoidably culture-specific. However, they do not begin to exhaust all that which is culture-specific in any language. To really know any language well, one must know its associated culture (indeed, even the history of that culture), every bit as much as it is necessary to know the associated language if one wants to know a culture well. This truism brings us back to RLS and culture and to the general cultural outlook, as well as to the cultural specifics and behavioral goals that RLSers favor.

## **RLS and Its Preferred Model of Xish Culture**

Many ethnic identities have managed to survive wholesale language shifts in connection with their historically associated languages. The Irish, the Jews, the Afro-Americans and many Amerindian peoples have been pointed to again and again as evidence that ethnic identity can survive language shift, although many of the conclusions along such lines may well overlook the differential contributions of internal pull and external push factors in arriving at this purported continuity of identity.

The critics of Xmen-via-Yish claims, however, are also quick to point out that identity continuity and ethnocultural continuity proper are often two quite different phenomena, with the latter being greater than and encompassing of the former. If it is ethnocultural continuity proper that is the desideratum, then linguistic discontinuity must be recognized as always (and at least initially) accompanied by and resulting in great cultural disruption and dislocation. While it is true that the substantial relinguification of a culture is theoretically possible (and that it has, indeed, occurred in some few cases), it is also true, however, that such relinguification-plus-continuity exacts a very substantial cost in time, effort and attrition before fully adequate new lexical associations, fully adequate new verbal-cultural replacements or substitutions, and fully adequate ethnolinguistic symbolic structures and identities are fashioned. In the end, the new ethnocultural system may be experienced by some as fully adequate but it is not really isomorphically the same as the old one that it replaced.

Thus, the champions of the Xmen-via-Xish point of view quite rightly point out, if ethnic identity *is* retained, notwithstanding all of the dislocation and disruption that an ethnic group undergoing relinguification must experience, that identity does not really pertain to the same culture that was initially associated with that identity. The ritualized High Culture may make the transition from Language<sub>1</sub> to Language<sub>2</sub>, and so may snatches of the Low Culture, but the ethnoculture as a whole, the very texture of daily life and its daily rounds,

responsibilities and relationships between traditional roles, places and topics, is no longer the same when Yish replaces Xish.

While it must be granted that the content of any ethnoculture will inevitably change over time, even without wholesale disruption and language shift, such change is also likely to be more internally regulated, screened and evaluated, resulting in more continuity (or, at least, the sense of continuity) than discontinuity in the finely patterned and intermeshed outlooks, goals, behaviors and relationships that constitute any culture. Furthermore, the Xmen-via-Xish goal has a particular version of Xishness in mind and it cannot, therefore, lightly accept the view that this particular version (including Xish as its vehicle and symbol) is just as easily attained via Yish, because that is not, indeed, the case at some level of the total *Gestalt* or 'feel' of what Xishness and Xish culture 'really are' or 'really should be'. Ultimately, the advocates of Xish and of Yish have different definitions of Xishness in mind, particularly at the transitional stage when some Xmen are shifting from Xish to Yish, and although these differences may ultimately come to be regarded as minimal, they are very likely to be regarded as much more than merely minimal during some fairly extensive period of dislocation. Some differences in the two brands of Xishness are likely to remain on a long-term basis, if only due to the fact that the two expressions of Xishness will be subject to different degrees and types of change, as well as to different degrees and types of fidelity to earlier stages in the development of Xishness.

Therefore, to answer the oft-encountered taunt that 'I can be just as good an Xman without understanding and speaking Xish', RLSers need to clarify the cultural life-style and ethnocultural ideal that they stand for. Is it only 'to be modern, like all the others, but in our own language'? This was the slogan of many nineteenth century nationalist movements (and, indeed, of many twentieth century ones as well), but most RLS-efforts arise at a much more enfeebled stage of ethnocultural coherence and solidarity than do nationalist movements. Of course, some nationalist movements involve RLS-efforts too, but the overlap between the two is not nearly as great nor as important as the differences between them. Most RLS movements, particularly those that have been most active since World War II, are not as basically motivated by political aspirations such as political separatism or even political autonomy. They generally seek not so much an impact on the general body politic, as, rather, a focus on 'those of their own kind' and on their internal cultural order. Indeed, an RLS movement that has a surrounding nationalist movement to fall back upon already has an advanced organizational and ideological thrust, a clientele and a definition of its desired future. However, even such movements often find that independence is not enough to guarantee ethnocultural and ethnolinguistic distinctiveness and find it necessary, therefore, to institute

'cultural policies' and 'language policies' (viz. policies on behalf of French in Quebec, Flemish in Belgium, Irish in Ireland, even after the attainment of cultural autonomy or even political independence) calculated to provide the ethnolinguistic breathing space that small cultures always require for their co-existence in a world dominated by ethnolinguistic behemoths. Those RLS movements that cannot and do not aspire to political separatism, that cannot and do not place their hopes in political boundaries as their ultimate safeguards against foreign ethnolinguistic domination, who envision a future that will permanently leave them relatively exposed to a more powerful culturally different environment, such movements are, therefore, all the more in need of a definition of their cultural norms, practices and goals with respect to the content and saliency of their own ethnocultural distinctiveness.

Such definitions are not easy to come by (and once attained, they must be re-examined and revised periodically), but they are essential. The usual RLS claim is that Xish is needed in order 'to be a better, a more authentic, a more loyal, a more committed, Xman'. However, such superlatives do not constitute a programmatic definition, as is clear from the usual response by non-RLSers: 'Nowadays, I can be all that in Yish and without any (or without much) Xish at all'. The two most common ingredients of programmatic definitions of the cultural goals of RLS movements are (i) mining the past for inspiration to meet the challenges of the future and (ii) strengthening cultural boundaries so as to foster greater intergenerational cultural continuity. The ethnocultural past (more precisely, an interpretation of the ethnocultural past) is of major importance to RLS movements, because ethnocultural values, ethnocultural differences and the ethno-language itself are all derived from and linked with the past. Some RLS movements may actually be associated with 'return to the past', 'nativization' or 'revitalization' philosophies, but this is very unusual. The past is generally merely a treasure-trove to be utilized in the solution of problems of today and tomorrow. It is a *useful* past that RLS movements define, in order to extract from it implications for current practices, current beliefs, current challenges, current attitudes and current commitments defining their image of the real, authentic, proud and responsible Xman.

RLS movements and efforts necessarily imply a dissatisfaction with things as they are now, just as they imply a quest for solutions with respect to a better future. This better future necessarily includes greater ethnocultural (and, of course, ethnolinguistic) continuity, distinctiveness and creativity. All of this, in turn, implies our point (ii) above, namely, the desirability of maintaining cultural boundaries. In our modern, interactive and interdependent world, where re-ethnization into obviously more powerful, purportedly more rewarding and more encompassing ethnocultural and ethnolinguistic categories is a prevalent, worldwide phenomenon, the very desirability of minority (and particularly of

weakened minority) ethnocultural continuity must be defended. Many modern intellectuals (including the popular Solomonic wisdom of the *New York Times*) are basically integrationists or assimilationists insofar as minority cultures are concerned, many of them still throwing off the imaginary 'shackles' of their own minority ethnicity, believing firmly that larger, wealthier cultures are obviously better (more forward-looking, more progressive, more in tune with the times, indeed, the wave of the future) and that it is sheer folly (and the result of being brainwashed by a self-serving ethnic leadership) to remain aloof from them, particularly when they hold out explicit or implicit 'welcome' signs to one and all. In response, it is not enough for RLSers to point to the cultural invidiousness and unacknowledged ethnocentrism of such 'enlightened' and 'liberated' anti-RLS views ('racist', many members of the modern younger generation would properly call them). It is not enough to point to the fact that anti-RLSers and assimilationists also have *their* leaders who benefit directly from the success of their own movements. Rather, it is necessary to delineate the specific tune of the 'different drummer' that pro-RLSers wish to march to, in the hope that they can thereby more nearly approximate the concept of cultural fidelity that motivates them.

## **Why Should I Be so Concerned about Being or Remaining an Xman?**

Our argument began with whether RLS is possible. Once an opponent of RLS grants that some degree of reversal is always possible, he or she may then shift to the topic of whether it is really necessary to know Xish in order to be a good Xman. If, thanks to the success of an RLS movement's educational efforts, any hitherto anti-RLSers become unable to deny this claim (or to do so as adamantly as was previously the case), then they may still withdraw to the inevitable fall-back position which claims that it is not really all that necessary or desirable to be an Xman or 'just an Xman'. Re-ethnization in the direction of greater rewards has gone on throughout history, so why not now? In addition, isn't there something wrong about the insistent preservation of a smaller identity when a larger one is in the offing? Finally, wouldn't the whole world be better off if there were just one universal culture and one universal language, and we were all simply 'citizens of the world', rather than members of mutually exclusive and necessarily parochial and mutually non-comprehensible local cultures? Clearly, these are serious questions involving fundamental philosophical and value-laden considerations and RLS movements need to have serious and well thought-out answers to them.

### **Is the maintenance of ethnocultural and ethnolinguistic differences a 'parochial' and harmful pursuit?**

A preference for one's own ethnolinguistic group has been called ethnocentric and even racist. Perhaps it is best to admit that this may, at times, be so, but then an avoidance of one's own original ethnolinguistic group has been referred to as self-hatred and identity-insecurity. Clearly, none of the above designations *need* be true and whether or not they are true in any particular case must be determined, rather than assumed in advance.

Almost all animal species naturally live primarily among their own. Among humans, this is appreciably a by-product of socialization and enculturation, that is, of being raised in a particular society and culture and taught to behave in accord with its norms (which includes: to 'value' and to 'believe' along culturally rewarded lines). It is only natural, therefore, to come to prefer one's kith and kin, to feel more comfortable in their company, to appeal to them for help and to help them, in turn, when they are in need, to be concerned for their welfare and for the continuity of the practices and values that are shared with them. Members of any reasonably functional culture value it (consciously or not, consciousness of one's cultural values being a stage that is crucial for and heightened by collective organization on behalf of that culture and its values), for it is their guide to life, and when it is threatened they tend to come to its defence or assistance. Culture becomes hallowed, not only because religion is a part of culture but because cultural norms and expectations have about them the aura of right and wrong, of morality, decency and propriety. These beliefs, convictions and attitudes may vary somewhat from person to person and from period to period, within a culture, but without their consistency and coherence the culture itself can have no intergenerational continuity.

Whether ethnocultural concerns and preferences are ethnocentric or racist depends on what their concurrent views and behaviors toward outsiders are. If outsiders are looked down upon as biologically inferior, then racism is involved. If outsiders are not respected and valued in their own right, not presumed to have their own legitimate ways and customs, if the rhyme and reason for the whole world is attributed only and completely to one's own ethnocultural group, then ethnocentrism is clearly involved. Note, however, that strong and dominant cultures are at least as likely to hold such views as small and threatened ones. Those who throw stones at RLSers often live in glass houses (indeed, in gilded ghettos) themselves, ghettos of such power that their parochiality is conveniently ignored. Indeed, the negation of RLS 'in principle' is part of the majority establishment's 'rhetoric of futility' which begins by actively undercutting the minority's survival chances and then follows up this injury with the additional insult of projecting its own biases upon minority efforts on behalf of cultural survival.

Without a doubt, RLSers may become ethnocentric, but so may non-RLSers. Those who transethnify into broader group memberships may be just as ethnocentric (or even more so) relative to their new ('broader') membership as RLSers may be to their traditional (and 'narrower') ones. Either group may adopt exclusionary practices and may be prejudiced against 'others' and 'outsiders'. It is not unheard of for majorities to be unfair, nor for world-cultures to be self-seeking, defamatory and altogether too taken with their own concerns, their own needs and their own gratifications. Essentially, then, RLS has nothing particularly to do with either racism or ethnocentrism and may well be accompanied by the view that although all peoples are created equal and deserve to live in happiness, charity begins at home. Indeed, an accepting and unconflicted view of one's own culture may be a building block of and a pre-condition for accepting unconflicted views of other cultures. Security begets security.

### **Wouldn't it be better if we could all be Ymen, or, better yet, Citizens of the World?**

It may be possible for 'broader' (supra-local) and 'narrower' (primarily local) self-definitions to co-occur. Such possibilities depend on intercultural views and definitions that can be collectively arrived at only after years of mutually positive experience. Being French does not need to keep one from being European too, and being a Pennsylvanian does not need to keep one from being American, or Jewish, or Republican at the same time. However, just one and the same broader loyalty and identity for everyone is not really possible and may not even be desirable. Local identities stem from the preponderance of local experiences throughout our most formative years and the continued comfort of such experiences even after maturity. These identities and experiences add color and diversity to the human landscape, which would otherwise be merely irrelevant and unrelated to local conditions, local institutions and local opportunities. Uniformation is never an optimal *human* solution. It necessarily involves subjugation of the weak by the strong, of the few by the many: in short, the law of the jungle. It represents an impatience with the most human qualities and the imposition of a 'mass market' or 'efficiency' model in intergroup and interpersonal relations. Thus, while it is true that the world is slowly also tending toward higher order identities, the lower order ones (the family, the friendship network, the ethnic bond) still have many functions to fulfill and many satisfactions to provide.<sup>3</sup> The triumph of science has not killed off religion and the triumph of internationalism will not kill off local identities nor local socialization goals. The modern and the traditional coexist, each fulfilling different needs in society and in personality.

When intergroup relations are not negatively charged, many multiple memberships are viewed as commensurable, particularly if they are viewed as pertaining to different dimensions or levels of identity. Thus, while one cannot normally be both a Baptist and a Catholic simultaneously, there is usually no reason why one cannot be both a daughter and a Republican. Similarly, both broader and narrower ethnicities are sometimes simultaneously possible (e.g. Flemish and Belgian), where the one is not viewed as invalidating the other, but, rather, as complementing it. The availability of such complementary definitions depends on the local acceptance of culturally-based theories of ethnicity that are compatible with complementary definitions, on historical experiences of positive intergroup cooperation and interdependence, and on the long-term interaction of the one (the culturally based theories of ethnicity) with the other (the historical experiences of positive intergroup relations). If it is recognized by Western academics that it may be difficult to teach college freshmen Western and Non-Western Civilization in a single, integrated course and to do so in a mutually accepting and appreciating fashion (see *New York Times*, January 19, 1988, p. A12), then it should not be too difficult for these same academics and assorted man-in-the-street intellectuals to realize that the working out of simultaneous and non-conflictual ethnolinguistic identities may be no easy matter to arrive at and that such syncretism is definitely not helped along by a triumphalist, Western intellectual stance claiming cognitive and moral superiority. It may not be easy to attain this goal of reciprocally accepted multiple ethnocultural identities but it is a goal that is possible of attainment.

However, to 'trade in' narrower memberships, merely because broader ones have also become available, may be exploitative, self-seeking, opportunistic as well as self-impoverishing. To abandon one's own because they are few or weak, and to do so in their time of need, is hardly considered the height either of responsibility or of humanity. There is no reason why one cannot be both Basque and human too, both Basque and European too, both an advocate of RLS (on behalf of Basque) and an advocate of UNESCO too. Indeed, it is the European Community, looking forward to 1992, that has recently paid most attention to assisting and defending the continued and increased use of its 'lesser used' languages (Coulmas, in press). Whether one can be both Basque and Spanish too, however, is a question of sensitivities of time and place. If the two are not considered to be displacive, antagonistic or competitive then they are more likely to be viewed as possible co-occurrences rather than as incommensurables. Even as commensurables they require cultural consensus as to 'which comes first', i.e. which is more fundamental in socialization and intergenerational identity. Is one a Finno-Swede or a Swedo-Finn? They are not the same thing. One part of the identity is adjectival,

implying 'added color'; the other part is substantive, implying origins. Finally, 'commensurists' too can fully support RLS, if they take both parts of their identity seriously. Even those who prefer to transethnify must grant that those who do not are neither necessarily narrow-minded nor provincial. Many of them are simply more capable of preserving old loyalties and combining them with new ones than are the majority of those who have opted out of their original identities entirely. At any rate, the 'why bother' knee-jerk response to RLS-efforts is hardly a completely rational one. It is replete with biases of its own and, ultimately, implies a competitive world-view in which human intelligence and loyalty are not to be 'wasted' on smaller or struggling ethnocultural entities.

### **Is RLS Desirable? A Value Issue**

The desirability of RLS is a value issue of great complexity and many ramifications. It involves a view of humanity and of the legitimacy and necessity of humanity's manifold cultural constituents. RLSers should view local cultures (all local cultures, not only their own) as things of beauty, as encapsulations of human values which deserve to be fostered and assisted (not merely 'preserved' in a mummifying sense). They should view such planned assistance to language-in-culture as being no more reprehensible than is agricultural planning (rather than just letting things grow 'naturally', as they would without organized planning and human intervention), or than are educational planning, economic planning or family planning as expressions of social policy. Indeed, RLS-efforts are a type of language status planning, an involvement in language-in-culture that is no way unprecedented (much less 'necessarily contraindicated, reprehensible or undesirable') and RLSers need not feel embarrassed, defensive or unsure of themselves for engaging in or advocating such efforts. They should, however, fully realize the complexity, the subtlety and, therefore, the potential for mismanagement of such efforts due to ignorance and arrogance. Such efforts involve philosophical commitments that are just as defensible as those of anti-RLSers and that are just as commensurable with progress, humanity and greater mutual acceptance between peoples. But RLS is hard to achieve, because it entails an effort of the weak to rebuild and defend their cultures at the very times that these cultures are under the domination or influence of stronger outside forces. Accordingly, RLS-efforts must at least be admired for their temerity and devotion, rather than merely dismissed out of hand or caricatured for either practical or philosophical reasons.

## General Conclusions

Cultural continuity and cultural change are always and inevitably intertwined with each other.<sup>6</sup> Indeed, by their co-presence they define each other, as do the half empty and the half full glass of water. Those who cling to Xish and who accept the challenge of overcoming all difficulties (the empty half of the glass of water) in order to foster the Xmen-via-Xish model, are bound by the same relationships between language and culture as are those who pursue the new Xmen-via-Yish goal and who, like Whorf's Hopi informants, do not see that part of the glass that has no water as 'empty' at all, but, rather, as full of a different and quite useful content. The indexical relationship between language X and Xish culture can be undone and a new relationship can be established between language Y and some version of Xish culture. The fact that this can be done, given sufficient time and effort, does not mean that it should be undertaken or that 'Xish culture' will be identical at all under the two sets of linguistic circumstances. The traditional implementation of Xish culture via Xish acts, events and texts can be undone and new or translated replacements can be implemented via Yish. The fact that this can ultimately be done does not mean that it should be done or that the cultural significance of these acts, events or texts will be identical under both sets of linguistic circumstances. The fact that the traditional symbolic relationship between Xish and Xishness can ultimately be replaced by a new symbolic relationship between Yish and Xishness merely indicates that in the fullness of time such transformations are possible and they have, indeed, occurred throughout human history. This does not mean that such symbolic redefinitions and self-redefinitions are either desirable or easily attained, or that Xishness is the same under both sets of linguistic circumstances. Only linguistic determinism claims that the above dissociations and recompositions of Xishness without Xish are theoretically impossible *ab initio*, and it has not been able to support the heavy burden of proof that its own convictions require.

The differences between Xishness (or Xish culture) under traditional circumstances of association with Xish and under revised circumstances of association with Yish may be great or small, depending on the rapidity and extent of ongoing social change and social dislocation that occurs *pari passu* to the replacement of Xish by Yish. Any detailed ethnographic analysis will reveal, however, that there is inevitably some difference in Xishness (i.e. in Xish culture) under these two sets of circumstances, but the question still remains as to whether the degree of difference that obtains also 'makes any difference' phenomenologically, i.e. in terms of intracultural interpretation. Small differences, objectively noted by disinterested parties, can be magnified and become *causes célèbres* phenomenologically, just as large differences, objectively noted, can

come to be intraculturally disregarded and made light of. The role of vested elites and of rebellious counter-elites in the interpretation of such differences is a crucial one and the role of self-interest is as appreciable in this connection as it is in all other social behavior, and on both sides of the fence rather than on one side of it only. The one thing that is certain is that both RLS-efforts and anti-RLS-efforts are essentially value-based. They are philosophically and ideologically determined and are neither confirmable nor disconfirmable on a purely objective basis alone.

RLS appeals to many because it is part of the process of re-establishing local options, local control, local hope and local meaning to life. It basically reveals a humanistic and positive outlook *vis-à-vis* intragroup life, rather than a mechanistic and fatalistic one. It espouses the right and the ability of small cultures to live and to inform life for their own members as well as to contribute thereby to the enrichment of humankind as a whole.

## Notes

1. I originally documented the detachability of languages from their traditional language-in-ethnoculture contexts in my *Language Loyalty in the United States* (1966), which is also replete with examples of the extent to which the continuity of ethnic labels may survive after the language-in-ethnoculture link has come undone. Such survival of ethnic labels should not be confused, however, with the implementational continuity of ethnocultures. The 'after' stage (after substantial language shift has occurred) is only nominally (denominally) continuous with the 'before' stage. This is so, first of all, because the 'before' identity too was necessarily in a state of ongoing change before the linkage to its customarily associated language began to come undone, and, second, because the 'after' identity (without the traditional language linkage) was necessarily exposed to different influences, both conceptually and implementationally, than was the identity of those who retained the linkage. These considerations are discussed at length in my *Rise and Fall of the Ethnic Revival* (1985). Three different identity phenomena are involved (and it is, unfortunately, both common and easy to gloss over the differences between them due to the fact that they are each referred to by the single term, 'identity'): continuity of label, continuity of self-concept and continuity of cultural implementation (overt observances and the acceptance and implementation of cultural values and attitudes). Generally speaking, the last (continuity of cultural implementation) changes more quickly than either of the others when the original language-in-ethnoculture linkage is substantially weakened as culture change occurs. In the long run, the loss of the linkage sometimes leads to re-ethnization into another contextually co-existing primordial (deeply historical and essentially already formed) ethnicity, sometimes to ethnogenesis or to the (co-)formation of a new and still relatively open-ended ethnicity (sometimes a 'broader' one: 'American', 'Amerindian', 'Soviet', 'Yugoslav', 'Black' [in South Africa], and sometimes a 'narrower' one: 'Anglo-Chinese', 'Dutch-Indonesian', 'Franco-Algerian'), and sometimes to the continuation of the 'same' identity on a vastly altered implementational basis (Jewish, Irish, Scots, Breton). Which of these

three courses will obtain in any particular case is largely governed by contextually available cultural definitions, intergroup experiences and material opportunities. In each instance, however, the loss of the linkage results in a profound disturbance of the original language-in-culture model among those populations undergoing relinguification (and, on occasion, also among the remaining and numerically fewer 'true believers'). Therefore, to conclude that their 'identity' has remained the same even though their culture and language-in-culture has undergone profound changes is to confuse continuity of label with continuity of the phenomenon to which the label originally applied (see Sookdeo, 1987; Roosens, 1989).

2. I initially pointed to the differences that may exist between the leaders of ethnocultural reconstitutive movements and their rank-and-files in my *Language and Nationalism* (1972). Such differences, e.g. in mastery of the traditionally associated language and in personal knowledge of and implementation of ethnocultural observances, have sometimes been seized upon by anti-RLSers, charging that the RLS leadership is (i) self-seeking (which means, not really committed to the language-in-ethnoculture 'cause', but, rather, exploiting it for its [the leadership's] own material and power goals) and (ii) non-representative of those whom they seek to mobilize and on behalf of whom they speak (which also translates into a charge of lack of commitment or dishonesty). Those who make such blanket charges overlook several pertinent facts: (1) leaders must be different from their rank-and-file, by definition, or they would lack the drive, the personality and the vision to lead; and (2) the more recent personal 'return' to the language-in-ethnoculture link, which characterizes some RLS leaders who had previously lost or abandoned this link (not all RLS leaders in any case), is a type of conversion experience that often results in a more altruistic and less self-interested leadership than is otherwise and more generally the case. All in all, the charge that the RLS leadership (and ethnic leadership more generally) is corrupt, and that it leads its followers astray out of self-interest, can just as justifiably be turned against the anti-RLS leadership (or against any leadership whatsoever, for that matter). This charge is basically unfair. It places the rank-and-file membership in a two-way bind. If the leadership is supported, this confirms the charge of 'brainwashing by a self-interest-governed leadership', and if the leadership is abandoned, this weakens and potentially defeats the movement. Such hypotheses tend to obfuscate rather than clarify the basic differences in goals, values and opinions that should be under discussion by introducing a separate variable (nature of the leadership) which could be studied comparatively in both pro-RLS and anti-RLS contexts but which is rarely really studied in either.
3. The indexical appropriateness of any language to its traditionally associated culture has contributed to, but is distinct from, another facet of the Whorfian hypothesis, a facet which I have called  $W_2$ , which claims that languages are *causal or determining* (hence: linguistic determinism) *vis-à-vis* the culturally specific behaviors and world-views of their speakers (see Culjak, 1968 for evidence of the Euroasian antiquity of this view; and also Fishman, 1960, 1980, 1982). What I have described here, in connection with the indexical relationship between a language and its traditionally associated culture, is a much weaker relationship, one which I have called  $W_1$ . This view maintains that the traditionally associated language reflects or conveys its culture and, moreover, does so more felicitously and succinctly than do other languages, for as long as the language-in-culture linkage remains generally intact. Most RLS-efforts are  $W_1$  related and  $W_2$  views are quite rare in literature intended for educated readers. It should be mentioned that  $W_2$ -type views can also be found in the linguistically secure mainstream, rather than in RLS circles alone.



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### **3 'Where' and 'Why' Does Language Shift Occur and How Can It Be Reversed?**

#### **Locating Language Shift in Social Space and in Societal Dynamics**

When a patient is sick, there are several crucial preliminaries before a successful cure can be undertaken. First of all, it is necessary for those who would be curers to *believe that finding a cure is worthwhile*. This is a profoundly subjective and culturally embedded decision, as medical anthropology has thoroughly demonstrated. Not all cultures, nor all individuals within the same culture, will necessarily agree that a given patient, particularly if he or she be very old and ill, without funds, family or other advantageous material and psychological support systems and without any particularly meritorious accomplishments in life, is 'worth' the attention and the costs in time, effort and funds that the available cures entail. When the patient is someone we love and respect, however, we become extremely annoyed at 'nit-picking' and 'heartless' questions about the advisability of attempting all possible cures while the patient's life hangs in the balance. On the other hand, doctors become similarly annoyed and 'burned out' when they spend year after year saving the lives of individuals who are then returned to the same hapless and hopeless social neglect that occasioned or contributed to the original life-threatening conditions that doctors were called in to reverse. For a cure to 'take', there needs to be, at the very least, a resolve that 'yes', it is 'worth' trying to cure the patient and, therefore, 'yes' it is worth trying to find out what his/her illness is due to, so that its cure can be attempted and *so that the patient's life circumstances afterwards can be altered* in order that a relapse need not be a foregone conclusion.

After considering Chapter 2, we have presumably passed beyond at least the first point in the above metaphor in connection with assisting threatened languages to reverse the language shift that engulfs them. Of course, there are many differences between an individual patient and a language-in-culture nexus (one major difference being that cultures have no 'natural life-span', as do human beings,' and, therefore, the very notion of 'it's too late to do anything



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away and that every day is witness to a further erosion of the 'health' of their language. Not only is this often so, but, to make a bad case worse, the establishment authorities often utilize 'studies' and 'research' precisely for the purpose of delay. Weak languages have literally been studied to the point of exhaustion, if not extinction, in recent years and many pro-RLSers have come to suspect the worst, accordingly, of any study, particularly if it is not under their own control insofar as staff, schedule and focus are concerned. Where a study is felt to be both desirable and possible, some combination of a large-scale (and, therefore, less intensive) self-report study (usually called a survey) and one or more small-scale (and, therefore, more intensive or detailed) observational studies is probably optimal, with the latter coming after the former and following them up so as to elicit further detailed information relative to particularly crucial or striking large-scale findings.<sup>4</sup>

However, pro-RLSers rarely can afford the optimal and usually have to settle for the minimal, however unsatisfactory that may be. Minimally, what can be hoped for is an opportunity for trusted informants, drawn from various social and geographic segments of the speech community, to get together in order to compare their judicious impressions. For these impressions to be commensurable (i.e. for them to be expressed in the same terms or units so that impressions can be compared, combined, or partitioned), a jointly accepted outline may be helpful by detailing in advance the areas of language-life that each informant should think about and report upon, relative to any particular population with which he or she is expertly familiar.

## **The dimensionality of LS**

### *1. Media of possible LS*

The first differentiation that needs to be made, in order to arrive at a consensus as to whether LS has occurred and, if so, *where* in the entire language-use arena it has occurred, is the differentiation between speaking, reading and writing. This distinction is obviously of great importance *vis-à-vis* any remedial steps that may be suggested subsequently. If fewer people now have any understanding of the language at all, then this is commonly regarded as a limiting factor with respect to the number that can speak it, and if fewer are speaking the language at all, then this is commonly regarded (except in the case of religious classical tongues) as a limiting factor with respect to its use in reading and writing. Similarly, writing itself almost always presupposes reading. Thus, in modern society, these four 'media', understanding, speaking, reading and writing, constitute an 'implicational scale', such that those whose highest attainments come later in the list can be assumed to be in control of the earlier



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EXAMPLE 1 (Counting individuals): Mother-tongue claiming of the native parentage in the USA, 1940-1970, for 25 languages, with percent increase (decrease) 1940-1970 and 1960-1970

Mother Tongue	1940	(Estim) 1960	1970	Change 1940-1970	% Increase (Decrease) 1949-1970	Change 1960-1970	% Increase (Decrease) 1960-1970
Total	84,124,840	145,275,265	169,634,926	85,510,086	101.65	24,359,661	16.77
English	78,352,180	—	149,312,435	70,960,255	90.57	—	—
Norwegian	81,160	40,000	204,822	123,662	152.37	164,822	412.06
Swedish	33,660	17,000	113,119	79,459	236.06	96,119	565.41
Danish	9,100	6,000	29,089	19,989	219.66	23,089	384.82
Dutch	65,800	74,000	102,777	36,977	56.20	28,777	38.89
French	518,780	383,000	1,460,130	941,350	181.45	1,077,130	281.23
German	925,040	588,000	2,488,394	1,563,354	169.00	1,900,394	323.70
Polish	185,820	87,000	670,335	484,515	260.74	583,335	670.50
Czech	81,760	34,000	148,944	67,184	82.18	114,944	338.07
Slovak	29,260	10,000	86,950	57,690	197.16	76,950	769.50
Magyar (Hungarian)	13,180	16,000	52,156	38,976	295.72	6,156	225.98
Serbo-Croatian	5,200	7,000	24,095	18,895	363.37	17,095	244.21
Slovenian	5,780	3,000	9,040	3,260	56.40	6,040	201.33
Russian	13,980	18,000	30,665	16,685	119.35	12,665	70.36
Ukrainian	2,780	10,000	22,662	19,882	715.18	12,662	126.62
Armenian	1,880	—	13,785	11,905	633.24	—	—
Lithuanian	9,400	8,000	34,744	25,344	269.62	26,744	334.30
Finnish	14,880	4,000	58,124	43,244	290.62	54,124	1353.10
Rumanian	2,060	2,000	5,166	3,106	150.78	3,166	158.30
Yiddish	52,980	39,000	170,174	117,194	221.20	131,174	336.34
Greek	6,160	12,000	56,839	50,679	822.71	44,839	373.66
Italian	125,040	147,000	605,626	480,585	384.35	458,625	311.99
Spanish	718,980	1,291,000	4,171,050	3,452,070	480.13	2,880,050	233.09
Portuguese	11,380	7,000	62,252	50,872	447.03	55,252	789.31
Arabic	3,720	4,000	25,765	22,045	592.61	21,765	544.13
Total Non-English	2,917,780	2,807,000	10,646,701	7,728,922	64.89	7,826,017	278.80
Total Non-English minus Spanish	2,198,800	1,516,000	6,475,652	4,276,852	194.51	4,945,867	328.41

Source: Fishman *et al.* (1985) pp. 139-40



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8. What caused revival? INTERNAL FORCES?	NB	72.7	52.6	63.4	78.6	100.0	77.8	80.0	87.5	73.2
	FB	100.0	00.0	33.3	75.0	75.0	80.0	76.7	57.1	70.0
	T	73.9	47.6	61.4	77.2	77.3	79.2	77.9	73.3	71.8
9. local group?	NB	68.2	31.6	51.2	78.6	00.0	11.1	48.0	6.2	41.5
	FB	00.0	50.0	33.3	75.0	40.0	13.3	37.2	7.1	30.0
	T	65.2	33.3	50.0	77.3	36.4	12.5	41.2	6.7	36.6
10. local person?	NB	40.9	00.0	22.0	14.3	00.0	11.1	12.0	18.8	18.3
	FB	00.0	00.0	00.0	25.0	10.0	6.7	11.6	00.0	8.3
	T	39.1	00.0	20.4	18.2	9.1	8.3	11.8	10.0	14.1
11. national group?	NB	00.0	00.0	00.0	14.3	00.0	11.1	12.0	6.2	4.9
	FB	00.0	00.0	00.0	50.0	15.0	33.3	27.9	14.3	21.7
	T	00.0	00.0	00.0	27.3	9.1	25.0	20.6	10.0	12.0
12. national figure?	NB	4.6	00.0	2.4	42.9	00.0	00.0	24.0	00.0	8.5
	FB	00.0	00.0	00.0	50.0	10.0	6.7	16.3	7.1	13.3
	T	4.4	00.0	2.3	45.4	9.1	4.2	19.1	3.3	10.6
13. What caused revival? EXTERNAL FORCES?	NB	00.0	21.0	9.8	00.0	00.0	44.4	16.0	31.2	15.8
	FB	00.0	00.0	00.0	12.5	30.0	53.3	34.9	28.6	31.7
	T	00.0	19.0	2.3	4.6	27.3	50.0	27.9	30.0	22.5
14. government program?	NB	9.1	5.3	7.3	7.1	00.0	11.1	8.0	00.0	6.1
	FB	00.0	00.0	00.0	12.5	15.0	6.7	11.6	00.0	8.3
	T	8.7	4.8	6.8	9.1	13.6	8.3	10.3	00.0	7.0
15. other ethnic movement?	NB	9.1	31.6	19.5	92.9	100.0	55.6	80.0	25.0	39.0
	FB	00.0	00.0	00.0	87.5	70.0	73.3	74.4	14.3	56.7
	T	8.7	28.6	18.2	90.9	72.7	70.8	76.5	20.0	46.5
16. legislation?	NB	45.4	10.5	29.3	64.3	50.0	88.9	72.0	00.0	36.6
	FB	00.0	00.0	00.0	12.5	90.0	60.0	65.1	00.0	46.7
	T	43.5	9.5	27.3	45.4	86.4	70.8	67.6	00.0	40.8

Source: Fishman *et al.* (1986), pp. 288-9



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EXAMPLE 5: A minimal evaluation of 'predominant patterns re speaking Basque in urban Gipuzcoa, 1957 and 1987  
(B = Basque; S = Spanish)

Media	Overtness	Domain	Role relations	1957	1987
Speaking Production		Family	Husband–wife	B	B/S
			Parent–child	B/S	S
			Grandparent–grandchild	B	B/S
			Siblings (at home)	S/B	S
			Others (parent's generation)	B	B/S
			Others (children's generation)	S/B	S
		Neighborhood	Friends	B/S	S
			Acquaintances	S/B	S
		Sports/ Entertainment	Others in attendance	S	S/B
		Education	Pupil–teacher	S	S/B
			Pupil–pupil	S	S/B
		Work	Employer/Employee	S	S/B
		Government	Officer (Civil Servant)/citizen	S	S/B

Source: A Basque activist attending the Second Basque World Congress, San Sebastian, September 1987.

Why Does Language Shift Occur?

The *where* and *why* of language shift are necessarily intimately related, particularly so at earlier stages of the shift process. The location of shift in the total 'sociocultural space' of a speech community is an indication of just where the stresses and strains of cross-cultural contact have eroded the ability of the smaller and weaker to withstand the stronger and larger. However, social processes transpire along a time continuum, and both historical time and current time must be of concern to those who wish to fully understand language shift in order to counteract it. Immediate sore-points must be treated immediately, of course, but unless their relationship to more ultimate causes is understood, the immediate



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self-regulation that seek to counteract the physical dislocation that minority life is so commonly afflicted with.

Will such efforts at physical 'normalization' lead to self-ghettoization? Unlikely. The bulk of minority life is still exposed to and dependent upon interactions with others and with other-dominated societies, economies, cultures and governments. Physical 'normalization' merely represents an effort at minimal balance, at boundary maintenance and demographic preponderance in at least a few areas of basic, normal daily interaction, so that Xish can have some space to call its own, some space in which it is the normal and self-evident channel, expression and accompaniment of at least some crucial cultural transmission and maintenance processes. We will attend at greater length to possible 'solutions' to dispersion later; at this point, we are merely trying to point out a problem area that is so self-evident that, like the air we breathe, it has often been overlooked: LS occurs because interacting languages-in-cultures are of unequal power and, therefore, the weaker ones become physically and demographically dislocated.

### **Social dislocation**

'Of unequal power' also means that members of minority ethnolinguistic groups are frequently (but not inevitably) socially disadvantaged, i.e. less educationally and economically fortunate than the average of the population surrounding them. This disadvantage is a by-product of their frequent relative powerlessness numerically, politically and in terms of resource control of almost every kind. This is quite obviously so in terms of unselected immigrants to a more advantaged host-context, particularly in the early years after their arrival. However, it is also true of minoritized indigenous populations who have been peripheralized (some would say 'colonized') even while remaining in some of their traditional areas of residence. They too are commonly characterized by briefer school attendance and by lower income, by lower literacy in any language and by poverty, by lack of social graces as defined by the majority population and by lack of the conveniences of everyday life that are so common among the majority population. If such is the picture of the bulk of the remaining speakers of Xish, then it becomes part of what Xish stands for or symbolizes, both in the eyes of most Ymen and in the eyes of many Xmen too. This is a problem for pro-RLSers, because many — including many who consider themselves Xmen — will oppose RLS on the grounds that such efforts will lead to prolonging disadvantage, rather than to counteracting it.

The obvious solutions to ignorance, coarseness and poverty consist of providing opportunities for education, refinement and better jobs, but since all or most of the latter are controlled or under the auspices of Ymen and Yish society,



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and political processes, that LS is so common and that RLS is so difficult to attain and so heartbreaking to pursue. This is particularly so, because all that is highly desirable, in the general interest and 'sauce for the (majority) goose', frequently turns out to be dislocative for the (disadvantaged minority) gander, unless special self-regulatory safeguards and precautions are available and implemented.

At a superficial level of analysis, modernization and democratization themselves constitute cultural dislocation risks as far as RLS is concerned. Modernization and democratization lead to increased interaction between individuals from different cultures (in the neighborhood, in the playground, in education, at work, in worship, in governmental service, etc.) and, therefore, to increased impact of the strong on the weak. Modernization and democratization erode 'parochial' cultural differences, even religious differences, and lead to universal dependence on the same media, political parties, educational institutions and programs, and economic endeavors, which, although they may be ideologically fractionated, are, nevertheless, not segmented along ethnocultural lines but along highly generalized socioeconomic and sociopolitical lines, such that substantial proportions of Xmen and Ymen are on both sides of every issue.

The result of such nominally 'free access of everyone to everything and everywhere' is that the majority culture, Yish culture, is endemic and omnipresent; and minority cultures, having very little, if any, public legitimization and private space, thereby constantly decline in survival potential, the more their members participate in 'the greater general good'. For ethnocultural minorities, the predictable outcome of such untrammelled participation in 'the greater general good' is dependency interaction, intermarriage, de-ethnification and re-ethnification. On the basis of a scenario such as the above, it is easy to argue that modernization and democratization themselves are the enemies of RLS because *they undercut the very cultural and identity distinctions on which minority language maintenance must be based*. However, such a conclusion is misguided. It is based on the half-truths that inevitably derive from either-or thinking, since underlying such a misanalysis is a Hobson's choice. This is the choice of 'either' parochial language-in-culture maintenance and withdrawal from benefiting in 'the greater general good' and the latter's maximization of the intellectual and material promise of modernization and democratization, on the one hand, 'or' abandoning purportedly primordial and primeval sentiments and wholeheartedly joining the forward march of humanity 'under the leadership of the united Yish front' locally and, who knows, perhaps even regionally and internationally as well, on the other hand.



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are, with cultural ideals, with cultural values and with cultural identities, all of which are at a sufficiently high level of consciousness and of focused technical capability to locally compensate for and be in a state of balance with the stronger forces of the larger, surrounding society by which they had previously been outflanked. The initial, basic problem of RLS boils down to attaining a greater demographic concentration of the faithful, on the one hand, and judicious decisions as to which intercommunal boundary maintaining or reviving institutions to give priority to, on the other hand.

Judicious decisions as to *what* to do and *when* are at the very heart of successful RLS-efforts. Unsuccessful efforts are often characterized by undertaking less, but even more often by undertaking more, than can be effectively sustained. But why is it, one may ask, that language shift often comes about without sustained planning, whereas RLS requires so much thought, effort and conviction? Perhaps it is because the very heart of mother tongue transmission (the usual but not the inescapable goal of RLS) involves precisely those natural collective processes (home, family, neighborhood) which are not easily accessible to or influenced by social planning. As a result of the relative inaccessibility of the very core processes on which intergenerational mother tongue transmission depends, RLS-efforts are often lured or goaded into concentrating their resources on measures that are more easily plannable and manipulable (like schools or mass media). The latter, however, operate at too great a distance from the nexus of intergenerational mother tongue transmission and, therefore, instead of contributing parsimoniously (directly and quickly) to such transmission they contribute largely to 'atmosphere building' which is further away from the heart of the matter. Planning effective RLS is difficult, therefore, because, as we will soon see in case after case, RLS (particularly for the most weakened cases) requires a constant process of goal approximation, of inching in closer and closer to hard-to-reach natural social processes, in order to get them going again in a self-priming fashion, rather than focusing on more easily influenced aspects of language-in-society that are simultaneously more distant from the intergenerational nexus of mother tongue transmission.

## Notes

1. The 'life' and 'death' metaphor with respect to cultural phenomena is difficult to avoid entirely, and is obviously and intuitively instructive up to a point, but it is good to remember that it is, after all, no more than a metaphor, a figure of speech based upon certain superficial similarities. In addition to the absence of a natural life-span for cultural phenomena, as mentioned above, it is also necessary to recognize the 'gray area' with respect to the boundary between 'life' and 'death' even in connection with individual phenomena, a 'gray area' which modern medical ethics and religious



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Austria, that, nevertheless, focuses entirely on the problems of ethnolinguistic minorities in Europe. This journal publishes official notices of the Föderalistischen Union Europäischer Volksgruppen (FUEV) and of the Internationalen Instituts für Nationalitätenrecht und Regionalismus (INTEREG). More specifically Western European in focus is The European Bureau for Lesser Used Languages which 'seeks to preserve and promote the lesser used autochthonous languages [of Western Europe] ... together with their associated cultures'. The Bureau is an independent body that works in close cooperation with the Commission of the European Communities and the European Parliament, its member state institutions, the Council of Europe and other bodies. It publishes a quarterly, *Contact Bulletin*, and maintains its Secretariat at 7 Cearnog Mhuirfean, Baile Atha Cliath [= Dublin] 2, Ireland. The Bureau's primary emphases are devoted to (a) providing consultation to language movements as to how to attain their local and immediate goals and (b) fostering positive resolutions and supportive actions *vis-à-vis* the lesser used European languages on the part of the various intergovernmental groups with which it is in ongoing contact. Although the Bureau and its periodical publication do protest the LS efforts and processes underway in Western Europe, both are more oriented toward long-term education and persuasion within democratic contexts, rather than toward the rapid redress of grievances or priority assistance in the face of rapid deterioration.

Most of the above-mentioned publications bring extensive reviews of books, journals and films dealing with efforts for and against language-in-culture maintenance, but, unfortunately, they all reach a rather small, previously sympathetic and primarily academic, lay intellectual and international civil service audience, thereby still leaving the RLS cause without media that are suitable for and capable of reaching the more ordinary reading public and local decision makers everywhere. As a result, RLS advocates certainly cannot rely substantially on outside media and must engage all the more in both local and broader informational, educational and, where possible, court-centered efforts of their own or in coalition with other aggrieved parties. The organization that comes closest to reaching the general media, including educational units and authorities, on a worldwide basis, is the Minority Rights Group, 29 Craven Street, London WC2N 5NT, England (with branches in Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, France, West Germany, India, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland), which publishes and distributes to the world press five *MRG Reports* a year and continually revises and updates its earlier issues. To date, some 80 such reports have been published and further investigations are financed from the sales of these reports. Note, however, that MRG is concerned with all types of oppressed minorities, e.g. women and children, migrant workers, religious groups, the mentally ill, etc., rather than with disadvantaged ethnolinguistic groups alone.

Regrettably inaccessible to the English-encapsulated world are the publications and conferences of the Gesellschaft für bedrohte Völker, with offices in West Germany, Switzerland, Luxembourg and France. Its journal, *program!* (sic) has featured abrogations of ethnolinguistic rights in all parts of the world and is both well-informed and written in a non-technical fashion that is easily understandable by laymen. The Gesellschaft also publishes brochures, organizes demonstrations and letter-writing campaigns, issues press releases and raises and contributes funds on behalf of populations suffering from persecution and discrimination. Its headquarters are currently at Postfach 2024, 3400 Gottingen, West Germany.

Aiming even more directly at RLS is the Association Internationale pour la Défense des Langues et Cultures Menacées. Founded in 1964 by 50 Scandinavian



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damage to the cause of abolition; previously disadvantaged RLSers who become cultural imperialists themselves, within their newly dominated networks, do great damage to the RLS cause, not only locally or regionally but internationally as well. Francophone Quebec's restriction of the public use of English on store and street signs, now that French has unmistakably come to the fore there, has harmed the moral and political position of francophone minorities outside of Quebec<sup>2</sup> as well as the position of a variety of RLS-efforts far outside the borders of Canada. Somewhat similar events have occurred in Israel (re Hebrew vs. Yiddish) and, to a far lesser degree, in Catalonia (re Catalan vs. Spanish). It is a problem that must not be overlooked by pro-RLSers if they are to satisfactorily answer the accusation that they merely represent the window-dressing for a *sub rosa* power play.

**3. Bilingualism is a benefit for all, for Xmen and for Ymen alike.** Many people are afraid of bilingualism. Some pro-RLSers accept it as a temporary strategy, secretly longing for a completely monolingual Xish society at the end of the rainbow, a society in which the disruptive and destructive influences and blandishments of Yish will be politically beyond the pale. Many Xmen-via-Yish oppose bilingualism because it always reminds them that they too could have retained Xish or could even now regain Xish rather than opt for Yish alone. Some Ymen oppose bilingualism because it implies questions about their undisputed 'mastery in their own home', and because they have been wrongly taught to associate it with disadvantaged status socially and culturally, with civil strife politically and with lower productivity economically. However, bilingualism should be neither a temporary strategy nor an implicit threat, but rather an enriching concomitant to the multicultural reality of the modern world. Bilingualism represents the potentiality for a mutually advantageous bridge between co-polity neighbors as well as between cross-polity neighbors. Good things as well as bad things can cross that bridge and it is the potential for good (economically, culturally and diplomatically) that makes bilingualism such a worthwhile investment.

Populations experiencing language shift have no alternative, by and large, but to be bilingual. They need not bemoan this price of their weaker status, for it is a price that at least has the potential of adding perspective, opportunity, variety and nuancing to their lives. Some say that 'something is lost' when there is no completely monolingual Xish society anywhere, and, of course that is true in the trite sense that the eclipse of any cultural pattern (even a monolingual one) is a loss. However, a return to Xish monolingualism may be neither practically possible nor philosophically desirable. RLS-efforts along such lines will quickly exhaust the political, economic, physical and emotional resources available to Xmen and will elicit the early opposition of



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However, if the informal interaction between the elderly, the social gatherings, concerts, lectures, prizes, performances, periodic publications and manifold other activist efforts that are the hallmark of stage 7 *are so focused as to bring about and foster intergenerational continuity* then, and only then, have they re-established a link, the missing link, to the future, to the world of young folks, rather than merely being what they otherwise are, no more than *means of social interaction and social expression for the gratification of 'old folks' per se*. If no such further contribution is envisaged or directly confirmable, then the fading generation of Xish speakers is merely engaging in self-gratification rather than in RLS-efforts. Instead of progressing from step 7 to step 6 on the GIDS the next stage will inevitably be a regression to the documentation/reconstruction and dispersed (a-societal) learning phenomena which stage 8 represents.

### **Stage 6 on the GIDS: the attainment of intergenerational informal orality and its demographic concentration and institutional reinforcement**

Stage 6 is concerned with the reappearance of the intergenerational family. It is an extremely crucial stage for Xish because *the lion's share of the world's intergenerationally continuous languages are at this very stage and they continue to survive and, in most cases, even to thrive, without going on to subsequent ('higher') stages*. At this stage, Xish is the normal language of informal, spoken interaction between and within all three generations of the family, with Yish being reserved for matters of greater formality and technicality than those that are the common fare of daily family life. The major problems with respect to achieving stage 6, given that stage 7 has been achieved, are that the younger generation that has been targeted in stage 7 must somehow (a) leave behind an already ongoing sociolinguistic *modus vivendi* and (b) create another that is demographically concentrated and intergenerationally continuous. These goals need not be attained via the extreme form of esoteric experimental communities established for RLS purposes, although in such specially established communities even a relatively tiny population can most easily attain the new critical mass that metamorphoses them from a minuscule minority into a local majority (note the discussion of pioneering Jewish settlements in late nineteenth and early twentieth century Palestine, Chapter 10, below). Other, more common forms of demographic concentration can more easily be attained and can serve roughly the same purposes, e.g. planned concentration in particular neighborhoods where stage 7 institutions are located or locatable, or, at least, frequently scheduled, and cognitively/emotionally gripping, briefer concentrations for outings and vacations. All of these approaches provide Xish-speaking young folks with additional vital opportunities for the formation of new 'families of procreation' and for informal interaction outside of the confines



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the oral realization of Xish by providing it with at least a somewhat broadened functional periphery and, furthermore, by doing so in such a way as to still depend overwhelmingly on intragroup resources and processes, i.e. by focusing on Xish literacy primarily under intragroup sponsorship, with respect to both its acquisition, its content and its control.

There are various reasons for advocating a modicum of literacy ('guided literacy' some might call it) for languages that basically function in their spoken form. The most vital of these, insofar as RLS is concerned, is that literacy facilitates interindividual, internetwork and intercommunal communication and goal attainment and, therefore, also the attainment of RLS goals, particularly so when Xish-speaking families are not overwhelmingly clustered into communities. Xish literacy provides entry to ties that themselves become the sinews of community. A farflung community of interest, made up of relatively isolated families and 'settlements' (neighborhoods, quarters, etc.), can be tied together psychologically and integrated culturally via RLS-related correspondence, newsletters, magazines, brochures and books.

The written and printed Xish word, and the RLS message brought in via print and writing, become welcome guests, frequent messengers and reminders, as well as visible symbols of the RLS goal and of the entire image of Xishness that the fostering and promoting of Xish represents. Since, in modern contexts, Yish literacy is almost assuredly present and active (given the centrally instituted requirements of compulsory schooling with which Yish is associated), Xish literacy frees pro-RLSers from complete dependence on Yish print media insofar as informational, attitudinal, ideological/philosophical and recreational communications are concerned. This is an important 'liberation', since without it pro-RLSers are likely to become convinced that there is no way in which *their* views can receive the widespread, informed and elegantly impassioned expression that is needed for Xish to compete with and counteract the pro-Yish views with which even pro-RLSers themselves are so frequently bombarded.

Many sociolinguists and all professional educationists are greatly enamoured of literacy as a key to social mobility and to competitiveness in the modern work sphere. Benefits such as these are not to be sneezed at, but, at this stage, they are not yet directly RLS-related. Indeed, since the lion's share of social mobility and work sphere competitiveness may well require Yish literacy and since such literacy may well undercut RLS-efforts, these particular arguments are problematic when it is RLS that is our primary goal. It is also not particularly convincing to claim, as some do, that without a literacy option at all the 'prestige' of Xish will never measure up to the 'prestige' of Yish, since this is an overly global way of sizing up the relative power potential of the two.



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pursue the vision of a particular type of Xmen-via-Xish, for they must accept major Yish authority and input in the ultimate decision as to what is minimally adequate and desirable for Xish children. The polity's permission to conduct part of the education of Xish children in Xish is revokable and is dependent, at any rate, on the Xish community's willingness to pay most of the costs of such education itself. Thus, the risks for Xmen are twofold: the permission of the Yish authorities may be revoked, on the one hand, an inescapable risk precisely because the legitimization of 'majority rule' is employed; and, on the other hand, there is the risk of having to raise substantial amounts of money so that appreciably Yish views of what is a minimally adequate and desirable education can be implemented. These views may, indeed, conflict with Xish philosophy/ideology and manifest needs in conjunction with such matters. We will refer to such schools, that meet compulsory education requirements but that are largely maintained by the Xish community itself (out of recognition of the truth that schools represent Xish 'cultural space' *per se*, rather than merely agencies for the transmission of neutral knowledge, skills and attitudes), as 'schools of type 4a'.

An even more fundamental compromise on the part of the Yish polity and its educational authorities is involved in an agreement for schools teaching partially in Xish, and utilizing a partially Xish definition of what is adequate and desirable in education, *to be conducted and paid for out of general tax funds*. Such self-limiting compromises, in which the strong have limited their own power to force the weak to follow the educational pattern so substantially dictated and controlled by the strong, have been made in the name of cultural democracy on several occasions and in various polities, but they require the same twofold compromise on the part of RLSers, even though the latter have obviously been strong enough to elicit a self-limiting compromise on the part of the Yish authorities. Yish authorities must give (and periodically renew or confirm) permission for such education and must agree to (and approve) Xish preferences in connection with at least part of the definition of what is minimally adequate and desirable in publicly funded education. We will call such schools, that provide an Xish component in the definition of minimally adequate and desirable education, but that are entirely funded from general tax funds, 'schools of type 4b'.

Clearly, the major factor in the effectiveness of the types of schooling that also seek to attain the goal of Xmen-via-Xish, above and beyond the more general educational goals of optimal cognitive, social and emotional development, is the effectiveness of the curriculum, of the pedagogic materials and of the teachers, and, in the final analysis, on the dedication of the latter and their ability to effect a mutual compact with the parents whose children they teach. Clearly, there can be effective schools of type 4a and ineffective schools of type 4b, and vice versa, and there is no *a priori* reason why pro-RLSers



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the one hand, Xish-controlled and staffed enterprises and services seek to meet the needs of the Yish market; on the other hand, Yish-controlled enterprises and services seek to meet the needs of the Xish market. In each case, we are still restricting ourselves to the lower work sphere outside of the Xish neighborhood and to enterprises of a relatively small scale. Nevertheless, the RLS challenge is quite different in each of these two contexts.

Where Xmen are serving Ymen from the point of departure of an Xish enterprise the RLS emphasis must be on differentiating inter-Xmen interaction from Xmen-Ymen interaction. In an Xish-controlled enterprise that serves Ymen it is still possible for Xmen to interact with each other in Xish, to keep their business records (where permitted by law) in Xish and, more generally, to make the work sphere as Xish as possible in numerous little ways (such as remaining closed on Xish ethnocultural holidays, providing Xish background music, providing on-the-job time for Xish entertainment, discussion, listening to tapes, etc.). The goal of this effort is Xish ethnolinguistic boundary maintenance. Going to work outside of the Xish neighborhood does not necessarily have to mean changing entirely to Yish at work, not even when one's work entails serving the Yish market, and particularly not when the business/workplace itself is in Xish hands (see the discussion of Hasidic efforts at stage 3, in Chapter 7, below). On the other hand, when Yish businessmen are serving the local Xish public, RLS efforts must be oriented to requesting that this service be in Xish. 'Service should be in the language preferred by those served', is a general RLS principle at this stage (akin to the American slogan that 'the customer is always right'), and, accordingly, not only local Yish businesses serving Xish communities but even local governmental or quasi-governmental offices (banks, post offices, registry offices, small claims courts, neighborhood health clinics, etc.) can sometimes be influenced to move in this direction. Pressure on local governmental units is outside the limits of stage 3 and we will turn to it in conjunction with stage 2. The importance of lower work sphere RLS-efforts, however, cannot be doubted, not even in the absence of stage 2 successes.

As in the case of schooling, RLS successes in the realm of work represent the efforts to carry RLS outside of the immediate Xish community itself and into those more general, Yish-controlled, pursuits that nevertheless impinge quite unavoidably upon the daily well-being of the Xish family and neighborhood. If no success is experienced here then stages 5 and below always undergo stress and will always be exposed to unavoidable and uncontrollable influences that tend to counteract their own vision of Xmen-via-Xish. If stages 4 and 3 too can be reached, then a first and second layer of outer defense have been established for the inner defenses (stages 8-5) that are the *sine qua non* of RLS.



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official and ethno-national language of the region, perhaps because there are still many Xmen living outside of the region whose acquisition and maintenance of Xish is still far from certain (and may actually deteriorate there, as more and more Xish-speaking Xmen from peripheral regions move to the Xish regional center in order to enjoy 'daily living among one's own and in one's own language and culture'), or perhaps because even in the 'heartland' and even with cultural autonomy the pressures from Yish may still be omnipresent.

It is unwise to disregard the pessimism of the pessimists, the alarms of those who constantly 'view with alarm' the state of health of Xish language-in-culture. Yish, the constant competitor, is always part of the local 'heartland' scene too, not to mention that its undisputed domination in all other parts of the polity and its role as lingua franca between the regions and the national center usually also remains inviolate. There are also dangers from international languages, English often being first and foremost among them, whose pressure upon higher education, industry and technology and the media is felt even by Yish and, therefore, all the more by Xish. Thus, there is no justification in deriding or dismissing the dire prophecies of the pessimists. 'Eternal watchfulness is the price of RLS' and that price must be paid at stage 1 too. Indeed, some such price must even be paid by the supporters of the languages of smaller, politically independent units;<sup>12</sup> and even larger polities throughout the world, for example France itself, often feel the need of engaging in defensive RLS actions on behalf of their own national languages in order to dispel the spectre of English. The more the speakers of Xish and other smaller languages are drawn into the international orbit the more difficult it becomes for them to completely be 'the masters of their own homes' and the more painful to them is their realization of their relative smallness and unimportance in the overall, international econotechnical and political scheme of things, with or without independence. The proof of the pudding is the immediacy of feedback between stage 1 and stage 6, i.e. the nexus of daily life in general and intergenerational mother tongue transmission in particular. If this feedback is sluggish or questionable in demonstrable empirical terms, then stage 1 is a luxury rather than a necessity insofar as the attainment of RLS goals are concerned. It is a goal that can be tackled later rather than sooner.

Indeed, at the very stage at which cultural autonomy is finally attained, after a struggle that has often taken generations, it is not unusual for the 'victory' to feel unexpectedly hollow, insignificant and useless. 'What is the sense of it all', some may ask, 'if we are now merely moderns, like all other moderns, but in Xish?' This is an existential question of course, i.e. a question of deeply philosophical dimensions, and its answers inevitably reflect more basic answers as to the meaning of life in general and to the meaning or nature of Xishness in particular. There will certainly be those who will reply, as did



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fortunate RLS movements that have come into being while Xish society was still relatively intact and in control of its basic intergenerational mother tongue transmission processes (see Chapter 10 re the cases of francophone Quebec, on the one hand, and Catalonia, on the other hand). But the majority of RLS movements have come into being at far more advanced stages of sociocultural dislocation and, therefore, the remedial efforts that they needed to focus upon were far different from those that were rightfully available to the more fortunate cases. Reluctance to recognize this state of affairs and its necessary consequences underlies the common lack of success of most RLS movements. The premature rush of many such movements to stress goals at stages 4–1 (or even 3–1) has proven to be debilitating to them both emotionally and materially, even more so than would have been the fate of the 'success cases' had they remained fixated at stages 8–5.

For those RLS-efforts that correspond to seriously dislocated language-in-culture realities (earmarked above all by the demographic scattering or thinning out — rather than merely the numerical diminution — of the remaining Xish speakers), nothing can substitute for the rebuilding of society at the level of pockets of basic, everyday, informal life. This is among the hardest language planning goals to accomplish, and for several reasons. First of all, it requires the detachment or withdrawal of pro-RLSers from the ongoing social life dominated by Yish and, in its stead, the establishment of emotionally, attitudinally, ideologically and overtly independent counterpart networks operating via Xish. Secondly, the informality and spontaneity of everyday life does not lend itself to excessive planning, and efforts to impose such planning upon it easily divest it of the bonds of emotionality and intimacy that are the very essence of its being and of mother tongue bonding in particular. It remains to be seen whether the greater awareness of the centrality of stage 6 which this chapter has stressed (and which this volume will stress again and again in the chapters to come) will really help RLS movements approach their tasks with the sense of priorities as well as the gingerliness that stage 6 requires. It is not unlike the weaving of a new gossamer web out of an old one, while the old one is constantly being buffeted by the relentless tides and torrents of social change.

It is much easier, of course, to concentrate on the upper stages (4 or 3–1) immediately and rather exclusively. However, these stages are characterized by two overriding minuses insofar as RLS-efforts on behalf of seriously dislocated language-in-culture constellations are concerned: (a) they do not lead directly to intergenerational mother tongue transmission, being removed, as they are, from the actual nexus of such transmission, and (b) they do lead directly to increased dependence upon, confrontation with or rivalry with the dominant language-in-culture, Yish, at a time when Xish is ill-prepared to



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monolingualism for Quebec, thereby increasingly abandoning francophones outside of Quebec or any strong claim upon a nationwide policy that might be of assistance to them. Obviously, bilingualism within Quebec is viewed by its authorities as a greater danger to the 'heartland' than the loss of French outside of Quebec. The future may hopefully see a reversal of this confrontational approach to one that is more mutually accommodating. For a more extensive discussion of the success of pro-French efforts and events in Quebec, see Chapter 10, below.

3. Haugen (1987) provides a fine restatement of the 'Blessings of Babel'. Other serious work in this vein, and useful bibliography for its further elucidation, can be found in my papers on Whorf, Herder and Kallen (Fishman, 1978, 1982) and in the very sizeable recent literature on enrichment bilingual education, i.e., the type of bilingual education that removes it from its minority mainstreaming vs. minority maintenance polemics. Siguan and Mackey's monograph (1987) in UNESCO's (International Bureau of Education) 'Educational Sciences' series is a useful introduction to this entire area and also provides a preliminary international directory of centers for the study and promotion of bilingualism and bilingual education.
4. 'Linguistic vitality' is the crux of much recent work by researchers such as Bourhis, Giles and Rosenthal (1981), Johnson, Giles and Bourhis (1983), Labrie (1984), Landry and Allard (1984), Allard and Landry (1986), Cartwright (1987), Young *et al.* (1988) and others. An entire issue of the *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* is scheduled to appear on this topic in 1992. Most of this admirable work focuses on language attitudes and their relationship to other attitudes, values and commitments. There is much in this work that is of value to RLS-efforts, notwithstanding the fact that it is more social psychological than sociological, more oriented toward measuring and describing individual behavior than toward measuring, describing and activating societal processes on behalf of RLS. The most noteworthy exception to the foregoing trend is McConnell (1988), whose work is macrodimensional and range-of-functions oriented to such an extent that a safe and secure oral community would appear to have far less vitality than would a community undergoing considerable duress and disarray across a wide array of functions.
5. 'Implicationality' is a concept borrowed from social and psychological measurement. It connotes a series such that all later occurrences in the series imply or subsume all those that have occurred earlier in the series. This notion was initially advanced by Louis Guttman (1944, 1947a, 1947b) in conjunction with attitude measurement, but it has earlier and ongoing counterparts in object assembly tasks that are ordered by complexity and in criterion-referenced testing in which the criteria have an underlying rationale such that more advanced criteria build upon (depend upon) mastery of less advanced criteria. In Guttman attitude scaling items are selected so as to maximize their overall implicationality (sometimes also referred to as 'scaleability'), those items that do not scale (do not stand in an implicational relationship with each other) being omitted at the item-analysis stage of scale construction. To the extent that the maximalization of implicationality leads to a subset of all possible items that is either (a) atypical of the entire attitudinal domain, (b) too short to be reliable, or (c) insufficiently predictive of the phenomena ('criteria') that we want these items to predict or explain, there is not much to be gained by its pursuit.

Many linguistic considerations are genuinely implicational, e.g., those that depend on phonological space or on order of acquisition (Rickford, 1987 and in press). Thus, among native speakers, formal phonological and morphosyntactic realizations imply the prior acquisition of their informal counterparts whereas among



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The one thing that the populations in the Gaeltacht and in the East had in common was a huge preponderance of positive attitudes toward Irish. Large majorities of both populations have reported themselves as having positive attitudes toward the language itself as a symbol of Irish independence and authenticity, as supporting government policies on behalf of the language, as vastly favoring the continuation (at least the elective continuation) of Irish in the schools and in other major social institutions of Irish life. However, as soon as we leave the attitudinal sphere and turn to actual language use and to RSL policies on its behalf, the differences between the Gaeltacht and the rest of Ireland become manifold.

### **(a) The Gaeltacht**

Although the Gaeltacht now constitutes only 2.3% of Ireland's population it still accounts for 7.4% of all Irish speakers and 45% of all Irish-speaking families. Further evidence of the continued disproportionate importance of the Gaeltacht for the vitality of Irish is the fact that its 58,026 Irish speakers over three years of age (in 1981, as recorded in the Census of that year) constitute 77.4% of the total population of that age living in the Gaeltacht, whereas in the country as a whole only 31.6% of the population over three claims to be Irish-speaking. Unfortunately, however, the ability of the Gaeltacht to materially influence the fortunes of Irish are seriously weakened by the fact that it is now a discontinuous or fragmented region whose inhabitants are substantially isolated from each other and cannot, therefore, easily pool their efforts to realize the full potential of their numbers (see map). Furthermore, the ongoing modernization, urbanization and industrialization of the Gaeltacht, intended to improve the lives of its inhabitants and to keep them from moving to the predominantly English East, has often also dramatically resulted in the accelerated anglicization of its native population and in a growing influx of English speakers from outside the region. As a result, the proportion of Irish speakers in the Gaeltacht has been continuously and precipitously falling during the past quarter century (86.5% in 1961, 82.9% in 1971 and, as mentioned before, 77.4% in 1981).

Even more ominous, from the point of view of RLS, is the fact that the number of Gaeltacht residents actually using Irish as their habitual language of *daily* life (as distinct from rarer use) has been estimated as being only 29,000, i.e. only about half of those claiming ability to speak it and the majority of Irish-speaking parents there have lately begun to rear their newly born children in English ('so they can be like all other Irish children'), doing so to such an extent that a family still rearing its children in Irish is now often an object of comment and curiosity in many Gaeltacht areas. Some qualified observers now estimate



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15- to 19-year-olds claim to be Irish speakers (practically the same as in 1961) and 30% of 35- to 44-year-olds claim to be Irish speakers (up from 26.2% in 1961). Clearly, it is the high-school years in which Irish speaking is most claimed, and the freer access to secondary education since the 60s has certainly contributed to this. Equally clear is the attrition thereafter. Those who were 15-19-year-old in 1961 are a significant sub-group within the cohort of the 35- to 44-year-olds in 1981. The attrition between these two reference points is roughly 20%. But the decline does not stop at that point. The non-transmissibility of the acquired language is so great, particularly in the East, that only a very tiny proportion of the minority that learns to speak the language in high school then hands it on, a decade later, to its own children.

Two glaring faults appear from further analyses of the adolescent-adult-infant data reported above, namely, the general failure, in the past, to teach Irish to working-class youths who do not attend the good academic high schools in which Irish is most frequently and best taught, on the one hand; and, above all, the failure to follow up the well-educated middle-class youths who have mastered Irish during their high school attendance, on the other hand, so that they could more easily form Irish-speaking (or, at least, bilingual) *speech communities* in their post-school years and, thereby, transmit the Irish which they have acquired to a successive generation.

Obviously, a quarter million or so fluent speakers of Irish, in a time of already growing Europeanization of outlook, of industry and of economic prospects as a whole, cannot be considered a total failure by any means. However, neither Bord na Gaeilge, the government's coordinating body for its vast variety of language efforts (spanning education, the Gaeltacht, communications and public service), nor Comhdháil Náisiúnta na Gaeilge, the coordinating body for voluntary language organizations, appear to be pleased at all with what has been accomplished to date. The appreciable sums expended during the past half century (a relatively small proportion of the total governmental budget every year, but an apparently enormous total sum when tallied across all of these years, although even this total comes to well under 10% of all governmental expenditures during this same period) make the results appear meager indeed, and the glowing rhetoric of many language nationalists of an earlier time, when new sacrifices had to be called for and when the long awaited independent State was finally born amid much travail, make today's reality seem paltry indeed. Other endangered languages might be satisfied with a quarter million fluent speakers, three-quarters of a million semi-speakers, and well over a million more language supporters and well-wishers, but the Irish, living in their own country and apparently the masters of their own fates, expected more from themselves. Two questions often arise: (a) what went wrong? and (b) is the effort and expense of RLS worth it, relative to the more painless approach of pursuing



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overall winner also receives the Glór na nGael Trophy (designed by a well-known artist, with the living language symbolized by chirping birds) and a cash award. Prize-giving is normally on the third Sunday of May and is hosted by the national winner. The assistance offered by Glór headquarters includes professional advice pertaining to publicity, implementation, and so on. Glór is obviously a great help in keeping the struggle for Irish before the public and in converting that struggle into something in which the public itself is directly and actively involved, rather than having the language generally remain the passive beneficiary of the efforts of governmental agencies or of the atypical citizens who are members of voluntary organizations<sup>6</sup>.

### **A variety of other small-scale community efforts**

A common characteristic of the Glór projects, as of the Éigse project discussed before, is that their carry-over to and their influence upon the totality of normal, everyday 'post-event' community life is uncertain at best. They are projects of a more partial nature, of a more circumscribed duration and of a more institutionalized sponsorship than normal life typically is for the average speech network of any 'real life' speech community. Various other community-based attempts on behalf of Irish also suffer from most of these same limitations, but make a contribution, however small and non-cumulative, to the Irish-language side-stream of mainstream (English-language) daily life in Ireland. Some churches (both in the Gaeltacht and in Eastern cities) have sensitively introduced a regular service in Irish and these give the language a function and a sponsorship formerly generally unavailable to it. The Feachtas youth clubs, choral groups and the annual festival for youth that has spread from the Gaeltacht throughout the country, all have their limited beneficial effects. The Gaeltacht seminars on the use and development of local natural resources also include attention to language and culture as among the resources to be attended to and cultivated. (A small negative example, in this connection, is the decision of the national authorities not to post highway signs completely in Irish only unless the Irish and English names of localities are sufficiently similar as to be easily recognizable by monolingual anglophones). All in all, these are efforts that constitute motivational and ideological straws in the wind, rather than major determinants of the informal home, family, neighborhood and community life upon which the intergenerational transmissability of a language rests.

Two additional projects of the stage 6 type are somewhat more ambitious and original and deserve to be discussed separately and at somewhat greater length. In County Tipperary, North Riding (a non-Gaeltacht district), eight



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being in the Gaeltacht. These pre-school play-groups do not involve direct teaching. They were initially begun on a voluntary basis by interested parents, concerned with the early introduction of their children to Irish or with the amelioration of their too early immersion in English. There were enough of these groups in 1974 that a voluntary coordinating committee for them was set up (Na Naíonraí Gaelacha) and by 1978 a state-funded coordinating committee (An Comhchoiste Réamhscolaíochta) was established to provide training for the group-leaders and various types of back-up assistance for the supervisors of these groups.

The approach of the group-leaders aims at providing a rich language acquisition environment, largely through informal (but carefully sequenced) play and natural communicative situations, utilizing several ancillary teaching aids (cassettes, videos) that have been specifically developed for this purpose. This approach obviously demands a high level of linguistic competence from the group-leaders, about 40% of whom (in 1986) were native speakers, and 10% 'highly competent' non-native speakers, the rest being rated as of 'good competence'. Since so many prior promising efforts pertaining to the revival of Irish have petered out after a number of years, after routinization sets in and the initial glow of innovative efforts has passed, some of the supporters of the Naíonraí are hesitant about over-claiming in connection with the impact of these play-groups. It is true that their 'graduates' acquire proficiency in both comprehension and expression, often go on to (and therefore foster the growth of) all-Irish primary schools, acquire strongly positive attitudes toward the language and reinforce or gratify such attitudes in their parents as well. The play-groups certainly provide clear evidence of great dedication and concern for the future of the Irish language in an active and resourceful segment of the adult community. Unfortunately, however, the Naíonraí are not, in themselves, a solution to the problem of cumulative transmissibility because a fateful score of years pass between the time of 'graduation' from the Naíonraí and the time when the children of these 'graduates' begin to be born. During that score of years the manifold influences of 'Irishness through English' (and of de-ethnization) are generally much stronger than are the influences that foster transmissibility, even though many Naíonraí-attendees do influence current home use of Irish both during and after their attendance. Finally, of course, the Naíonraí are not in themselves meant to be a solution to the problem of literacy acquisition and, accordingly, other agencies must activate the reading-readiness that the play-groups impart to those that attend them (and, of course, to their parents as well).<sup>9</sup>

Somewhat closer to the goal of literacy acquisition that is independent of the public school system are the all-Irish summer language courses *for* young people, and conducted *by* young people, known as Coláiste na bhFiann. The founder of these particular courses was, once again, Domhnall O'Lúbhlaí, to



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Gaeltacht and its inhabitants (and their language) as hopeless and endless 'charity cases', have also frequently been mentioned. On the other hand, no serious plans for Irish in the work sphere, whether with Irish speakers working among other Irish speakers or among English speakers, are currently underway outside of the Gaeltacht. Perhaps this is only to be expected, given the greater consolidation and development that are still urgently needed in connection with stages 6, 5 and 4a, above.<sup>12</sup>

### *Stage 2: Local governmental services and media*

A few of the Gaeltacht areas operate administratively entirely in Irish (e.g. all of the committees and institutions of the Parish of Cnoc in Cois Fharraige) but this is not generally the case, neither there nor in the Eastern counties. Elsewhere, the Civil Service has units that voluntarily operate in Irish (i.e. in Irish also) and Irish competence exams have long been given to Civil Service employees with promotions and raises as rewards to those scoring well on them. A special agency, Gaeleagras, was founded in 1971, in the Department of Finance, to promote Irish in the Civil Service. Gaeleagras offers day and evening Irish courses, conducted in Irish, throughout the year, and also organizes social and cultural events that are conducted in Irish, in order to create an environment in which Irish is spoken naturally among civil servants. However, the distinction might well be made between civil servants learning Irish for their own personal use and appreciation, and civil servants learning Irish in order to serve the public in Irish. There may well be more of the former than of the latter and, at the same time, there are inevitably some pro-RLSers who want to be served in Irish at their local governmental offices but who cannot be accommodated in that connection because the local civil servants do not always happen to include any Irish speakers in their ranks.

Radio na Gaeltachta, which began regular broadcasts in 1972, provides programs in Irish for the country as a whole and for the Gaeltacht in particular. It has been able to 'introduce' the scattered Gaeltachts to each other, on the one hand, and to enable various accomplished speakers of Irish, from wherever they may hail and wherever they may live, to be recognized far and wide for their 'rare skill'. The Irish radio programs are also a resource for language learners, although their efficacy in this connection really remains to be demonstrated. All in all, it is quite possible that more Irish speakers are anglicized via the ocean of English radio than English speakers are strengthened in their Irish via the single existing channel of Irish radio. This suspicion is multiplied in connection with television. Quite recently, an all-Irish television station has been announced (initially serving the Gaeltacht) and it is current policy to expand Irish language programs and to transmit them within a designated time band so that those who want them will be less likely to miss them. There is also a new effort to translate



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near future. Having made the 'voluntary' RLS organizations fully dependent on governmental financing, on the one hand, and having become more and more withdrawn from any genuine concern for furthering spoken Irish on a country-wide basis, on the other hand, there may be much to be said for publicly admitting that all that one can hope for in the foreseeable future is focused on stages 7 and 4. Indeed, such an admission would not change very much in practice.

By focusing most of its attention on stages 4a and above, and by limiting its efforts on behalf of stage 6 to episodic experiences, Ireland has achieved most of what schools can be expected to achieve—an intergenerationally transmitted second language primarily associated with late adolescence — and that achievement seems to have been fairly successfully stabilized. That in itself is no mean achievement — indeed, it is an unrecognized (even if non-maximalist) RLS success story. Perhaps the gaze of RLSers should be directed to it more acceptingly (it too would not have been attained without their major input), rather than at the empty half of the glass which cannot be filled by efforts that are so removed from the real nexus of intergenerational mother tongue transmission. Perhaps the RLS tradition of not addressing the real problem is now too well-established to be overcome on any large-scale basis in Ireland. The time for thanking God for minor blessings (or, in more secular terms, to 'either fish or cut bait') may be at hand. This is an issue that now genuinely belongs on the RLS agenda, both tactically and ideologically.

What the revivalists have accomplished against great odds, and their current levels of devotion, achievement and involvement, all border on the miraculous; but the time may have come to realize that these attainments and characteristics cannot set the norm for Ireland as a whole and that future RLS policy may require separate approaches and standards of evaluation for different segments of Irish society. RLSers might do well to realize that not having swept the field or completely reversed the tide is not a sign of defeat but, rather, a level of accomplishment that must be evaluated against what would most probably have obtained had they not entered the fray at all; in the Irish case, this is not only very considerable but enough to safeguard the continuation of Xmen-via-Xish for the foreseeable future. The lack of attainment at the level of mother-tongue acquisition and transmission, particularly when measured at the nationwide level, does not mean that other types of transmission are similarly unlikely (see Chapter 12, below) nor that some reasonable and judicious growth in intergenerational mother tongue transmission *per se* is out of the question. Indeed, many threatened languages in Europe and elsewhere would consider themselves fortunate to achieve during the coming century the level of RLS that Irish has achieved during the past century.<sup>17</sup>



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Throughout the centuries of Basque history prior to 1979 the Basque language had rarely been effectively nurtured at a dependably continuous societal level, whether for governmental, literary or scholarly purposes. Instead, for centuries, many of the Basques who learned Spanish gave up Basque (with the notable exception of certain Church jurisdictions) and even joined the ranks of those who heaped abuse upon it, as if it were a comical (at best) and barbaric (at worst) monstrosity. Most of those who retained their command of Basque, with the exception of regrettably few churchmen, other intellectuals and outspoken nationalists over a span of centuries, largely lived in isolated rural, agricultural and pastoral districts and learned little or no Spanish. When commercial and industrial centers began to develop in the Basque region, Basque society and culture generally acquired and retained only a relatively small Basque-speaking urban middle class. Finally, as a result of all of the above processes, the Spanish-speaking newcomers to the Basque region — particularly those coming to its more urban areas — typically found it neither possible, desirable nor even imaginable that they learn Basque. This is the heritage that the Basque government must overcome — as evidenced today by the fact that probably only about a quarter (or even less) of the roughly 3 million inhabitants of the BAC can speak Basque reasonably well and only 21% of 15- to 17-year-olds in the region believe that it is even necessary to speak Basque in order to be Basque. There is some small consolation in the fact that the latter percentage is even as high as it is. It falls to only 15% among 25- to 27-year-olds, that is, among young people who were already almost out of school when the new Basquization efforts got underway<sup>2</sup> and, therefore, there is good reason to claim that RLS matters have improved somewhat in quite recent years and that they have done so precisely in the age group most likely soon to begin families of their own.

The efforts of the Basque government on behalf of Basque are guided by the 'Basic Law on the Standardization of the Basque Language (Euskara)' adopted in 1982. Indeed, this law entrusts to the public authorities not only the strengthening of the use of Basque and the standardization of its written form but also its 'normalization', given that it is not only 'part of the cultural heritage of the Basque people' and 'the most viable and objective sign of our Community', but, also, 'together with Spanish, an *official language within the Autonomous Community*'. 'Normalization' may not be an entirely appropriate word for what the Basque government has undertaken in this connection, since what is involved is not really the intra-language task of returning to all the usual ('normal') H-functions (high culture and power functions) which it once discharged. As we have noted above, Basque rarely discharged any such functions in the past. Rather, the task of 'normalization' in the Basque context pertains to acquiring new functions, hitherto ('normally') discharged by Spanish, at the very same time that Spanish remains co-official and very often even dominant in



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From the early 1970s onward sizeable numbers of non-Frisians have moved into Friesland, most of them coming from other parts of The Netherlands, while, on the other hand, many Frisians have moved out of Friesland. It is estimated that only one out of ten young Frisians who leave for university study in other parts of the Netherlands (there are no universities in Friesland itself, as we will see later on) ever returns, and former Frisians who return to the 'homeland' upon retirement are usually thoroughly Dutchified by then. Every one of the above types of migration involves a loss for Frisian and, all in all, about a quarter of the current population of Friesland was born outside of the Province. This figure corresponds exactly to the proportion of people considering themselves 'entirely Dutch' insofar as ethnic identity is concerned, with an additional 36% considering themselves 'primarily Dutch'. Thus, although three quarters of the population of Friesland claims that it can speak Frisian, a much higher percentage than pertains to Basque in the BAC, the proportion who consider themselves to be 'primarily Frisian' is approximately the same as the proportion in the BAC considering itself to be 'primarily Basque'. Indeed, the situation is even somewhat more precarious for Frisian since there are no longer any societally organized monolingual speakers of Frisian whereas there are still some elderly Basque monolinguals living in their ancestral homes and villages.

The extensive erosion that characterizes Frisian as a mother tongue and primary language today is due to a small number of interrelated reasons. First of all, the prevalence of mixed marriages between Frisian and Dutch (or other non-Frisian) speakers has increased greatly in the past century, from 37% in 1850-79 to 59% since 1940. The proportion of young adults who continue speaking (or who acquire) Frisian is very low in such marriages and lower yet among their children, particularly if the mother is Dutch, even in comparison with other young adults among whom the proportion of shifters to Dutch is also generally high. The shift to Dutch is also a concomitant of the movement of young people from rural, predominantly Frisian-speaking environments to predominantly Dutch-speaking urban environments. Whereas in former years urban environments were able to maintain a stable diglossic pattern, this pattern has substantially crumbled in recent years, leaving all of informal life exposed to Dutchification and leaving Frisian with no safe redoubt of its own. This youth-related phenomenon is well exemplified in a small municipality such as It Hearrenfean (Dutch: Heerenveen). In the countryside around the town, where over 95% of the population was Frisian-speaking in the 1950s, 71% of the population is now Frisian-speaking. In the older parts of town that were settled generations ago, 53% are Frisian-speaking. In the newer parts of town into which young adults (including many in-migrants from elsewhere in The Netherlands) have moved, only 42% are Frisian-speaking and only



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courses which are so obviously required in the Basque/Spanish context. In the Frisian case, as in the Basque, the language is also certainly still well and naturally spoken by many rural and by some urban speech networks and both of these engage in a large number and variety of adult speech activities. At the oral level there is Frisian theater (e.g. *Tryater*, a professional group that regularly attracts large audiences) and the popular Frisian Festival of the *Fryske Kultuerried* (Frisian Culture Council) which is held roughly every five years. It was at the 1985 Festival at which the only full length Frisian feature film to date, *De Dream*, was first screened and viewed by some 150,000 viewers (35,000 within the borders of Friesland and 115,000 in other provinces of The Netherlands). It was subsequently shown on a nationwide TV channel and attracted an estimated two and a half million viewers. There are 'evenings' at which beginning authors read from their still unpublished works. There are musical evenings, evenings of folksongs and folksinging, and literary evenings. There is even something as modern as '*Operaasje Fers*' ('Operation Verse' or, more colloquially, 'Dial-a-Poem'), a telephone number that one can call at any hour in order to listen to a different Frisian poem every week.

There is also quite a literary scene in Frisian, and one that reaches somewhat beyond the most dedicated and conscious or conscientious RLSers alone. Frisian literature reaches beyond the small circle of adults who have received any formal education in Frisian, the latter experience representing, in the main, a rather recent RLS-related accomplishment and, therefore, one that has primarily influenced only young people. Because of the basic similarity between Frisian and Dutch, many adults have little difficulty reading Frisian, based on their Dutch education, provided their attitudes toward Frisian are sufficiently positive, a situation that has no counterpart at all in the Basque country. As a result, Frisian literary production is quite varied, particularly in connection with a plethora of small-circulation journals. Books, which inescapably cost more than journals, are helped to find readers and purchasers by the annual '*De Sutelaksje*'. This is an effort conducted by volunteers who undertake to bring literally wheelbarrows full of Frisian books, door-to-door, to about a hundred different Frisian villages and neighborhoods. This type of activity has not, by any means, overcome the usual dissociation between Frisian and modern literacy, but it has been able to put to good use some of the local goodwill that exists for Frisian, goodwill that is actually easier to activate in connection with the written word (that can be patiently perused) than it can in connection with the spoken word that is not only more fleeting but that often appears to be more dialectally distant than its written counterpart.

Unfortunately, however, when all is said and done, most of the stage 7 activity on behalf of Frisian reaches only those who are already committed to Frisian. This may not be true of one particular effort or another which may



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repair the linguistic damage to the very foundations of the transmission of Frisian engendered by widespread mixed marriages and heterogeneous neighborhoods. Even the more noteworthy recent developments in connection with Frisian in the religious domain are probably not sufficiently intensive, interesting though they undeniably are, to stem the gathering tide.

Since the late 70s, an ecumenical (Protestant and Catholic) revised Frisian translation of the Bible has appeared as well as a revised hymnal, initially intended for Protestant churches but also used by Roman Catholic churches in their occasional Frisian services. Whereas generally only about 20 churches in Friesland will offer Frisian services on any particular Sunday, on the special 'Frisian Sunday' set aside once a year for this very purpose some 50, 60 or even more may do so. By now 6% of Frisian churchgoers (who comprise some 60% of the population of Friesland) attend Frisian church services regularly and a whopping 57% do so occasionally. Indeed, until recently many Frisians doubted that so many clergymen really could give sermons in Frisian as are now evidently doing so without much difficulty. '*Lieteboekdagen*' ('Days of the Hymnal'), organized in 1985 and 1987, attracted so many hundreds of people to the collective singing of Frisian songs that the annual number of such programs was increased from two to five in 1988. All in all, the generations-old (even centuries-old) resistance against Frisian in religion has crumbled and young people, particularly urban young people, are quite accepting of prayers in Frisian. The question still remains, however, whether this represents anything more than a 'liturgicalization' of Frisian, something much different from its vernacularization. Although church and religion more generally can be powerful home and neighborhood forces (perhaps less so in modern Christianity than in more easterly religions, but powerful nevertheless) it still remains true that in modern urban life the church as an institution is usually too marginal to guarantee intergenerational continuity (even the continuity of religious practices *per se*) and shares and reflects the weakness of the family institution, rather than being able to repair that weakness. Since the transmission of Frisian apparently cannot be guaranteed within the family, and since neither Basque nor Frisian (especially not Frisian) have been able to follow the most recent Irish example of directly focusing on neighborhood and family building for RLS purposes, it is no wonder, then, that the next most intensive institution in the lives of children, the school, has come to be depended upon in that connection to an inordinate degree. We turn now, therefore, to a consideration of its contributions to RLS."

*Stage 5: Schools for children (that do not meet the requirements of compulsory education) and courses in language and literacy acquisition for adults*

There was a time in the Basque Country, not too many years ago, when Basque was forbidden and when children could be taught this language only



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respect to positions with Basque prerequisites. However, after all is said and done, the task remains a herculean one and to this very day there are many teachers, particularly among those in the older generation, who are not really fully competent or comfortable in Basque. Some of the latter individuals are invariably required to teach Basque at a level beyond their current capacity (even though all Basque medium and Basque subject teachers are required to have attained the EGA level. This is particularly so since more and more schools are constantly required that teach more Basque (or in Basque) than has been the case heretofore.

Turning now to the teaching of Basque to children in the BAC, our stage 4a corresponds most clearly to the *ikastolas*, on the one hand, and to other public and private schools also following models D and B, on the other hand. All of these types of schools and models pertain to both elementary and secondary education. In the type D schools, Basque is the virtually exclusive medium of instruction, Spanish being used only to teach Spanish as a subject. In type B schools there is greater parity between Basque and Spanish, each language being used as a medium for half of the schoolday. The attainment of competence in Basque and its use as the medium or co-medium of education has absorbed the lion's share of the government's human and financial resources *vis-à-vis* language since 1978. Indeed, it is clear that other aspects of language policy may have been neglected, relatively speaking, in order to make sure that type B and D schools might have every possible chance of succeeding at the widest possible revernacularization of Basque among the younger generation. It has been a slow uphill battle against substantial odds. Among those who were 25–29 years old in 1986 only 1% had studied in type B or D schools. This proportion was already 14% among those who were then 15–17 years old. Of all those still attending public schools in that year the corresponding proportion was 24% and among kindergarten pupils alone it was already 54%. None of these figures include the *ikastola* pupils who constituted another 66,000 (or 20% of the total school enrollment) in 1986.

It is clear that the proportion of all students who learn Basque to EGA level continues to climb, and may well pass the 50% point quite soon and will continue to climb upward thereafter (with corresponding decreases in the less maximalistic school types, yet to be discussed, below). It is also clear that the level of Spanish mastery of students in schools of the B, D and *ikastola* types has in no way suffered, primarily because Spanish is the mother tongue of most students and the dominant language in their home and neighborhood environments. The question that remains is whether the Basque competence that the schools of these types achieve can subsequently be maintained in out-of-school and in after-school life, to the point that the general environment too can ultimately be Basquized thereby and this Basquization intergenerationally transmitted rather



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from such backgrounds who do not go to type B schools will be able to maintain a smattering of type A school-derived 'emergency Basque' throughout their adult lives, primarily on the basis of their inevitable exposure to the growing Basquization of public life more generally.

Meanwhile, type A schools are subject to a few conventions of the educational system which do tend to bring a little more Basque into their daily functioning. As in all schools in the BAC, new bilingual signs are being put up with the Basque version coming on top and in somewhat bigger and bolder lettering. This has already been done in slightly more than half of all schools and the remaining ones (mostly secondary schools) should all be reached by this policy within a few years. Similarly, type A schools are included in the Department of Education's policy to send general communications (i.e. communications being sent to 10 or more schools) bilingually. Only type D schools receive all such communications in Basque. Nevertheless, the overwhelming majority of all Department of Education communications with schools (indeed, 94% of all communications) are *not* 'general communications' and, therefore, these are still more frequently being sent in Spanish because of the lack of sufficient numbers of Basque-literate personnel in the Department itself to be able to send all communications bilingually.

The very situation which is considered the undesirable *exception* in the Basque country namely: type 4b schooling in which the weakened regional language is given so little attention that it is not really possible to learn it, has become the undesirable *rule* in Friesland. Only in nursery schools/kindergartens in rural areas, where most of the children are still Frisian-speaking and where most of the teachers have Frisian as their mother tongue, is Frisian the normal, daily language of instruction and communication. At the other extreme is a rather sizeable number of elementary schools in which Frisian is taught for the usual 30–45 minutes per week but where the writing of Frisian is not taught at all and, furthermore, where there are some grades in which no Frisian at all is taught. At the secondary school level, no legal obligation to teach Frisian was ever instituted. At that level it is possible, therefore, to offer Frisian as a subject only if at least 20 students request it. As a result, only some 5% of secondary school students in Friesland are studying Frisian at any particular time. Even in the teacher training 'Normal Schools' the time devoted to Frisian is extremely minimal and the availability of the subject may soon be discontinued entirely, or virtually so, as financial cutbacks continue to dominate the entire Dutch educational scene.

Clearly, the efforts to provide 'a little bit of Frisian' have not succeeded in reversing the attrition of the language nor even in becoming 'self-perpetuating minor appendages' to the total public educational processes. On the other hand,



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very rarely broadcasts anything at all in Frisian, even counting news items involving verbatim comments by Frisian speakers. There was something known as 'teleboard' up to 1984, an inexpensive method of transmitting somewhat fuzzy images via radio waves, that was used for teaching Frisian to children at school but that was obviously also watched at home by a number of adults. In 1984 it was replaced by the educational TV programs mentioned above. The prospects for additional Frisian programs on radio are quite meager. As far as TV is concerned, there is a clear prospect of 22 hours more *per year*, as of 1989. At that time there will be a new 'grand total', of 52 hours per year of Frisian TV, the equivalent of one hour per week, half of it during the school day and half during 'prime time' for adult programming.

The official (rather than merely the voluntary and 'off the record') use of Frisian in municipal government and administrative affairs is a matter of considerable current interest to Frisian language activists. It is also an area of longstanding contention. As far back as 1951 it was the basis of '*Kneppelfreed*' (= Cudgel Friday), a street riot in Ljouwert (Leeuwarden) protesting against the inadmissibility of Frisian before the courts. A compromise reached in 1956 permitted oral Frisian (the oath, testimony) in the courts but no written use of Frisian. Written documents were later ruled to be admissible, but only as accompaniments to or translations of the official and obligatory Dutch records and documents. Strictly speaking, a similar situation currently pertains to the records of municipalities and other administrative offices. Operationally, however, as long as Dutch speakers (regardless of the length of time that they have lived in Friesland) can obtain free translations of documents written in Frisian, the validity of Frisian documents is generally not challenged (even though from time to time one challenge or another will escalate to the stage of media notoriety). In this makeshift fashion, without any formal legal recognition of Frisian by the central authorities, municipalities flexibly opt for alternating Dutch or Frisian operations, as topic and target group dictate, and provide translations only on request. This is referred to as the principle of 'equal validity and equal right' and its biggest limitation, aside from the fact that it merely represents a *modus vivendi* rather than any official acceptance of Frisian, is the fact that only a minority of officials are sufficiently comfortable with written Frisian to employ it very frequently or freely.

In the Provincial Assembly, members make their presentations either in Frisian or in Dutch, without translation. Most members regularly utilize Frisian. The provincial government has also begun to announce all of its job vacancies in Frisian, this notwithstanding the fact that only 17% of those whose mother tongue is Frisian (and almost none of those whose second language is Frisian) ever use Frisian in any governmental or administrative context. In some ways this entire area of RLS-effort is very similar to that of



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## Concluding Remarks

All the major drawbacks to Basque RLS are stubbornly lingering residues of the past: erosion of the hinterland due to continuing urbanization and the unprofitability of small rural holdings, demographic weakness within the BAC itself due to the high proportion of Spanish speakers and hispanicized Basques, and the lack of a well-known, productive and widespread literacy tradition. In view of the above circumstances (and the psychological counterparts which they engender) realistic Basque RLS-efforts would be forced to accept the long-term inevitability of bilingualism, even if there were no central state requirements in that connection. Given these circumstances, it is clear that there is still an ever-present danger of 'Irelandization' in the long run, because of the lack of secure home, family and neighborhood foundations for converting the vast variety of RLS-efforts that are underway into a safe intergenerational transmission process.

There can be no doubt, however, that short-run time has been gained, whether one compares youngsters with their parents or older youngsters with younger ones. Among those who are 15-17 years old 36% claim to be able to write Basque, whereas only 23% of those 25-29 years old can make this claim. Some 17% of the younger group reports using Basque with their priest whereas only 9% of the older group does so.<sup>18</sup> Relative to their parents, 14- to 18-year-olds are strikingly ahead in claiming to know some Basque (50% vs 13%). In comparison with the inhabitants of the other Autonomous Communities in Spain (Catalonia, Galicia, Valencian, etc.) young Basques (12- to 18-year-olds) are among the most favorable toward the use of their regional language and in identifying with their region. In these two respects they have caught up with and even outdistanced the Catalans, although the latter are still far ahead with respect to actually speaking their own language. A supradialectal standard has gained increased acceptance and the corpus of the language has been dramatically expanded. Most dramatic of all is the explosion in urban and governmental use, thin facades, it is true, over the underlying Spanish, but a growing 'sign of the times'. All in all, progress has been made, a new generation will certainly have been deeply influenced, and the true dimensions of the continuing struggle are now better recognized than before. With proper priorities ( more directly focusing on fostering and propagating stage 6) the future of Basque can be much, much safer than the recent past has been.

Things do not appear to be nearly so rosy for Frisian, but even here they are not entirely bleak. There is much passive goodwill for Frisian, even among those who do not understand it, and even much understanding of Frisian merely due to its similarity to Dutch. The basic problem seems to be in activating this goodwill, along both personal and societal lines. Unfortunately, there are few if any pervasive Frisianizing factors that can be counted upon to really make a difference.



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- Gorter and Zondag. Useful publications in this connection are those by Boelens (1987), Gorter (1982 and 1988), Khleif (1982), Meestringa (1987), van der Plank (1987) and Anon (1988b), Azurmendi (1986), Cobarrubias and Lasa (1987), Gardner (ms) and Secretariat of Language Policy (1986a and c).
17. My discussion in this section depends substantially on my own fieldwork, in both the Basque Autonomous Community and in Friesland, on several recent occasions. The only additional sources utilized beyond those previously mentioned is Secretariat of Language Policy (1986b).
  18. One of the major predictors of Basque use and of pro-Basque attitudes are Catholic (and even 'Very Catholic') involvements and practices. Other powerful predictors are affiliation with nationalist and left-wing parties, and female gender. Cumulative multiple prediction is urgently needed to determine just how much of the variance in Basque use, is accounted for by each of these and other relevant respondent characteristics taken one at a time, as well as how much they account for when taken all together.
  19. Beyond those references already cited, I have found the following items to be useful and provocative in fostering my familiarity with the BAC and its RLS-efforts: Anon. (1988b), Anon. (1989), Clark (1980), Etxebarria (unpublished 1988), EIFE-2 (1989), Gardner (1986, 1988, 1989), Labayen (1965), Lasa (1968), Zalbide (personal communication).
  20. Beyond those references already cited, I have found the following items to be helpful and stimulating in fostering my familiarity with RLS-efforts in Friesland: Gorter (unpublished 1988), Gorter *et al.* (1984), Keppley Mahmood (1989), Ytsma (1986), Zondag (undated) and Zondag (personal communication).
  21. None of those whom I have cited or whose help I have acknowledged throughout this chapter are in any way responsible for (or, necessarily, even in agreement with) the interpretations and conclusions that I have arrived at on the basis of their invaluable assistance. This chapter was completed during the first quarter of 1990.

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indicative of the powerful and basically similar societal influences associated with and dominated by the anglo mainstream, similarities which overcome all of the above differences and which point almost all minority ethnolinguistic development in the same direction. Their implications for minorities elsewhere, whether indigenous or immigrant, should be evident.

## **The Current State of Navajo**

The Navajos are over 200,000 in number and more than half of them are concentrated in Arizona alone. Almost all of the others are in New Mexico, with more minor numbers being in Utah and Colorado. These four states are contiguous, meeting at right angles with each other ('Four Corners'), and the Navajo Reservation itself is either within or borders upon them all. Although specific treaties presumably regulate the relations between the United States and the Navajo Nation, the Navajos are far from being a free and independent people as the existence of such treaties seemingly implies. Both much of American law in general and of Bureau of Indian Affairs regulations in particular, apply to the Navajos (i.e. have been imposed upon them) and have consequences for their self-government, their economic development and well-being and their relations with their Amerindian and anglo neighbors. They have been forced to engage in livestock reduction (1930s), relocation (50s and 60s) and propelled into hostilities and arbitration with neighboring tribes (40s and to this very day), all of these processes contributing, on the one hand, to a loss of Navajoness and, on the other hand, to the growth of the 'Xmen-via-Yish' phenomenon.

While the Navajos clearly constitute the largest intact Amerindian ethnocultural entity in the USA today, and although they are primarily concentrated in a relatively inaccessible and inhospitable reservation, it is, nevertheless, already the case that roughly half of their number are no longer Navajo-speaking, particularly those who have relocated in Navajo Reservation towns or off the Reservation entirely, as well as those who have more recently returned to the Reservation (often with non-Navajo spouses and minimally Navajo-enculturated children), after extended periods of off-Reservation work, education and personal contacts. Life on the Reservation provides all the rewards of living among one's own and participating in one's own ethnocultural traditions. On the other hand, it is a relatively hard life and one which is supported largely by sheep-raising and by government-financed work (or 'make-work') of various kinds (including work at government-financed Navajo Community Schools, see below).

Both unemployment and underemployment are high (indeed, among the very highest in the USA) and in the midst of seemingly affluent America the



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school-aged Hispanic children are active speakers of Spanish. On the negative side of the ledger, however, is the fact that over 30% of these children are already English monolinguals, this percentage rising to 55% where both parents are native-born and primarily English-speaking, and to 80% where the mother is native-born and monolingually English-speaking. Except where one parent is still a Spanish monolingual (regardless of place of birth), the vast majority of Hispanic children of school age are primarily English speakers, even though, as can be deduced from the information provided above, nearly 70% of them still speak Spanish on occasions.

The occasional use of Spanish is itself currently structured in a fashion which is more indicative of language shift than of language maintenance. The younger generations more frequently speak Spanish to those who are older than they are (their parents, grandparents and other members of these two older generations) than they do to those who are of their own or of a younger generation.<sup>7</sup> This pattern has been documented for Texas, California and New York, as has the growing tendency among adults and children alike to mix the two languages, particularly when speaking Spanish amongst themselves, and to do so by means of entire English phrases, on the one hand, and by English phrasal calques (i.e. entire phrases translated word for word from English) within their Spanish, on the other hand.<sup>8</sup> Putting all of these pieces of the puzzle together, imperfectly though they may fit, and adding to them other signs of galloping social change among Hispanics on the USA mainland (e.g. their increasing Protestantization, co-option into anti-bilingual education efforts and co-option into the pro-‘English Official’ movement), leaves one with the definite impression of a major language shift tidal wave underway under the surface, masked as yet by the large number of monolingually Spanish recent arrivals. Although Spanish on the USA mainland is certainly not faced by any danger of total attrition, huge portions of it are faced by serious weakening and by an unfortunately implied relationship with such negative factors as illegal status, foreign nativity, unwillingness to Americanize and poverty. Accordingly, language maintenance and RLS-efforts have recently come to be of interest even in connection with this giant of the non-English language scene in the USA. As Table 7.1 reveals, without further immigration, both the total number of Hispanics and the proportion of Spanish-only or Spanish-dominant Hispanics will shrink dramatically during the next century.

## **The Current State of Yiddish, Secular and Ultra-Orthodox**

On the whole, the situation of Yiddish is much weaker than that of either of the two languages discussed above. It generally lacks both the mainstream



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established Yiddish-derived phraseological calques,<sup>14</sup> active use or facility in the language has long since been lost by most of them and, in the lion's share of cases, may never have existed to begin with (given that the definition of 'mother tongue' utilized by the United States Census pertains to the language of the household during one's infancy rather than to one's own first language). The roughly 300,000 speakers of Yiddish in the USA today are not a negligible number, but of this number fully 50% are aged 65 and over while only some 20% are aged 20 and under. Of these almost all are active members of ultra-Orthodox communities. The virtually overwhelming language shift process *vis-à-vis* Yiddish in America since the beginning of this century is doubtlessly one of the most rapid and far-going in the annals of major immigrant languages throughout all of American history. RLS-efforts are obviously urgently needed, and very carefully focused efforts at that, if Yiddish is to be more than a passive vestige of the past, on the one hand, or an active indicator of one branch of extreme orthodoxy, on the other.

### **'Current State' Summary**

The nature of the respective threats facing Navajo, Spanish and Yiddish are in some ways quite different. Navajo is faced by the threat of growing economic, demographic and cultural encroachment of the outside anglo world, and not only into its territory but even into its most intimate cultural processes. Spanish is faced by the threat of increasing curtailment of immigration and a growing demographic diffusion and socioeconomic mobility, such that the language will leave behind its current centers of preponderant and traditional concentration for relocation in a large variety of less Hispanic urban centers throughout America. Yiddish is threatened by the inability of Yiddish secularist modernity to maintain itself *vis-à-vis* the competing modernities (Jewish and non-Jewish) via English and, therefore, by the further peripheralization of Yiddish into the status of an ultra-Orthodox marker alone in the future, regardless of how multifaceted and central its past may have been. The phenomenon of Xmen-via-Yish (in this chapter, the reader will need to exercise care not to confuse 'Yish' with 'Yiddish') already represents the overwhelming mainstream in the American Jewish case. It constitutes a rapidly growing precedent in the Spanish case and a worrisome new one in the Navajo case. In each instance, the precedents result from the difficulties faced by all American minorities (and by American immigrant minorities in particular) to substantially regulate or moderate the ethnolinguistic influences stemming from the Anglo-American culture that surrounds them and to which they not only *have* but also commonly *seek* easy access. RLS-efforts, therefore, face the difficult balancing act of re-establishing and



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easily work at adult literacy in addition than can schools that serve in lieu of compulsory education. Type 5 schools can more easily become active forces on behalf of fostering a supra-local 'community of interest' at the adult level, with RLS as an avowed (rather than as a disguised or muted) aspect of such unity. The contrived routines that parents of pupils in type 4a schools went (and currently go) through in order to get the pupils to exercise their Navajo literacy (at a time when the parents themselves have no such literacy at their own command) — such as asking their youngsters to make reminder-notes concerning things the parents should remember, or concerning shopping needs — would become unnecessary, and would be replaced by societally more meaningful and appropriate literacy if such literacy were intergenerationally shared via type 5 schooling for parents (or for parents and children alike).<sup>22</sup>

The ultra-Orthodox Yiddish-speaking world prizes literacy very highly, but this relates almost completely to Hebrew literacy (for which type 4a schools are carefully maintained). A modicum of formal and even more informal Yiddish-literacy exposure is provided for girls (usually on a family or neighborhood basis), but, by and large, both boys and girls are expected to transfer their school-based Hebrew-reading and writing skills to Yiddish without much formal attention being devoted to this process (due to the common alphabet and roughly similar orthographic conventions utilized by both languages). Although Yiddish literacy is not particularly prized or highlighted, the fact that the language has become an ultra-Orthodox marker, and the existence of a small but significant body of ultra-Orthodox Yiddish literature (periodicals, story-books, holiday readings, pamphlets reporting recent talks by leading rabbis and such staples, some of them over a century old, as accounts of the lives of famous rabbis, popular histories and moralistic readings, translations of the prayer-book and of the Old Testament), gives Yiddish literacy a recognized if limited ethnocultural role alongside of the more prestigious and sanctified role of Hebrew literacy. As a result, there is probably nearly universal adult literacy in Yiddish among the ultra-Orthodox, even though there are few neighborhood schools especially for this purpose (and these few are for girls alone) and little directed attention is devoted to such literacy even in type 4a schools. This is not to be taken as a sign that stage 5 is generally unimportant but, rather, that within ultra-Orthodox circles its goals, as far as children are concerned, are accomplished by other appropriate cultural means, particularly by the large, intensive and constantly growing number of type 4a schools.

On the other hand, separate male and female adult groups for study and for fellowship are plentifully available in ultra-Orthodox neighborhoods, and adult literacy in Yiddish (both reading and writing), were it to be added to their programs, would be particularly useful for the growing contingents of recent Jewish 'converts' to ultra-Orthodoxy (known as *baley-tshuve*, literally 'returnees'). The



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schools serving Navajo pupils. The 'contract schools' became veritable community centers. They represented the return of education to community control and, in addition, they provided major sources of employment and major avenues of supervision of the growing generation. Last but not least, some of the schools also taught English more successfully and became national models of effective locally controlled bilingual/bicultural education. Their only weak spot was their utter dependence on governmental funding and more recently, since severe cutbacks in such funding became government policy, these schools too have become weaker in most respects. While their future may or may not be entirely at risk (only some 10% of all Navajo children now attend such schools, roughly two-thirds of all Navajo children attending public schools, and about one quarter attending type 4b Bureau of Indian Affairs schools), it is now doubtful whether their impact can once again be as strong and as stimulating, even in their own rural communities, as was formerly the case. Obviously, this is a type 4a school which is not entirely the master of its own fate, in the model of true type 4a schools elsewhere. Its dependence on others may lead to its downfall, unless Navajo funding can be found for it, when and if other local resources come sufficiently under tribal control. The real control, rather than merely the BIA sub-contracted operation, of Navajo type 4a schools must become an important goal for Navajos, building such control upon prior, solid stage 6 foundations.

Ultra-Orthodox youngsters invariably study in type 4a schools that are organized, maintained and conducted by their own parents and community leaders. There are approximately 120 such Yiddish medium day schools (known as *yeshi'ves*) today, elementary and secondary, almost all of them in the Greater New York Metropolitan Area. Boys and girls almost always study in separate schools and their respective curricula differ appreciably after the first few years of instruction. The Judaic curriculum of the boys is increasingly focused on the study of Hebrew/Aramaic Talmud,<sup>27</sup> while that of the girls ultimately stresses home and family life. In either case, the medium of instruction is primarily Yiddish for the Judaic courses to which as many as five or six hours a day may be devoted during six days of the week (i.e. on every day but the Saturday sabbath). English is taught (usually as a second language) and used as the language of instruction for two or three hours per day, in accord with the requirements of the State Education Department of New York. The traditional curricular pattern calls for the Judaic courses to be taught in the morning and the English (i.e. secular) courses to be taught in the afternoon. The level of English proficiency that is aimed at is no more than that which may be required in offices and businesses serving the general public. Post-secondary general education is not encouraged but intellectually outstanding boys are encouraged to continue in post-secondary Judaic



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still struggling Navajo Community College in Tsaile, Arizona. It offers a small number of courses, conferences, symposia and meetings on Navajo concerns, most of these being conducted in Navajo, by Navajos and for Navajos, but it has relatively few students, a very limited array of courses (not all of them yielding college credit) and increasingly uncertain prospects as Federal funding for higher education is cut back. It has obviously not reached the level of effectiveness that some had initially expected.

Although Yiddish is taught as a foreign language in some 50–60 American colleges and universities, there are no more than a handful where more than an elementary course is available. The YIVO Institute for Jewish Research (once named the Yiddish Scientific Institute but renamed in the 60s in order to 'reach a wider audience') and Columbia University jointly offer an intensive summer program in Yiddish, with courses at various levels. Columbia University alone offered a graduate major in Yiddish (in the Linguistics Department; the discontinuation of this department now makes the continuation of the full Yiddish program more dubious), in addition to undergraduate courses at various levels. The YIVO also offers a number of graduate courses in Eastern European and American Jewish history, sociology and folklore, among them frequent courses in Yiddish literature.

Very few of the foregoing courses are offered in Yiddish and the nationwide total number of all students involved in these courses, whatever their medium of instruction, can hardly be more than a thousand per year. Few students attending these courses achieve fluency in the language, although the level of knowledge attained 'about Yiddish', and the degree of 'Yiddish appreciation' that is developed in particular, resulting from such courses are often noteworthy. The students and faculty involved in these efforts are primarily from the secular or religiously uncommitted sectors and the concurrent and subsequent demographic dispersion of these individuals makes it difficult for their courses to have either RLS goals or consequences of any societal significance whatsoever. Similarly, although the National Yiddish Book Exchange (Amherst, Mass.; see note 17) makes out-of-print Yiddish books available to these students at a mere fraction (25%) of their regular price, the resulting acquisition of small libraries may foster individual literacy but does nothing to foster societal RLS.

Spanish too enjoys hardly any RLS prospects at the college level. There are two colleges that offer Spanish medium course work, one a public junior college (Eugenio Maria de Hostos, a unit within the City University of New York system) and the other a private four-year college (Boricua). Neither of them plays a significant intellectual or societal role in Hispanic community life in New York City and they are both almost literally unheard of elsewhere. There is also a modicum of Spanish medium higher education in Texas and in California, none



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11. On Yiddish secularism see Goldsmith (1976). For further contextualization of the development of conscious and Jewishly creative secularism within the broader field of Jewish modernization see Goodman (1967, 1972, and 1976), Lehrer (1966), Fishman (1954, 1986), Simon (1954, 1970) and Golumb (1962, 1968).
12. 'Ultra-Orthodox' is itself a relative term, used here to denote more punctilious, extensive and exclusive observance of rituals and customs than that current among 'mainstream', 'modern' or 'centrist' Orthodox, rather than a designation of a totally fixed set of timeless beliefs and observances. The two major subdivisions of the ultra-Orthodox are the Hasidim (also spelled khasidim or khasidem) and the Misna'gdim (Israeli pronunciation: Mitnagdi'm), with the former characterized by emphases on mysticism, zeal, joy and allegiance to particular rabbis regarded as having special powers of intercession with God, and the latter characterized by a stress on exacting observance and in-depth study of traditional sources, rather than on emotion and motivation. The overlap of beliefs and observances between the two camps is very considerable. For a recent introduction to the world of the Hasidim see Rabinowicz, 1988.
13. Although historical sources reveal a number of ultra-Orthodox calls to the defense of Yiddish (see Weinreich, 1980: 283-4; Fishman, 1987b: 78-80) such conscious calls are, nevertheless, few and far between given the ultra-Orthodox focus on the traditionally sanctified and rabbinically elaborated commandments. For the most recent ultra-Orthodox call to advocate, defend and use Yiddish as the vernacular of everyday life, see the entire issue of *B'darkey hatoyre* (1985/1986, No. 4) devoted to this matter, as well as my analysis of this issue in *Afn shvel* (1987, No. 266, pp. 3-6). For recent ultra-Orthodox doubts about the need to retain Yiddish in their type 4a schools see the exchange of rabbinic views and parental opinions in the *Jewish Observer* May 1988, June 1988 and March 1989, specifically Fryshman (1988 and 1989) and Bender (1988). My analysis of this protracted discussion can be found in Fishman (1989). For the quasi-sanctified nature of Yiddish in a significant sector of the ultra-Orthodox community see Glinert and Shilhav (in press).
14. For extensive (even though non-scholarly) examples and discussions of the influence of Yiddish on American English slang and humor, business usage, entertainment media usage, advertising, etc., see Rosten (1968, 1982 and 1989). Rosten also provides a few references to the scholarly literature on this topic. For a more reflective and analytic labor of love along these lines, see Samuel (1971). For the contrasted topic of how Jewish cultural specificity (including the influences of Yiddish and Hebrew) has resulted in a 'Jewish English' see Gold (1981).
15. There is obviously no need to document the existence of an ample and varied set of dictionaries and grammars for Spanish (even including New World Spanish in general and United States Mainland Spanish, and various regional varieties thereof, more particularly). The major Navajo effort along these lines is Young and Morgan (1987). For examples of recent Yiddish dictionaries and grammars see U. Weinreich (1968), Birnbaum (1979), Mark *et al.* (1961-1980) and Mark (1978), Schaechter (1986a, 1986b) and Katz (1988). For a brief review of major Yiddish dictionaries during the past four centuries see Fishman (in press [1991]). Work on Yiddish linguistics more generally is fully inventoried in Bratkowsky (1988). See Fishman (1990) for a selection of papers on Yiddish sociolinguistic topics and Peltz (1987) for an example of ongoing fieldwork of this kind within the American Yiddish context.
16. Hispanic Pentecostals in New York, as well as elsewhere in the USA, are currently more likely to be exposed to and engaged in Spanish-speaking services and church



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also on record), thus representing a considerable presence, both in absolute and in relative terms.

However, the physical resurgence, dramatic though it has been, has by no means been accompanied by a parallel social, cultural or ethnolinguistic resurgence. Quite the contrary: until very recently it seemed to be the case that the more Maori living and health standards improved, the more their traditions and their language languished. Those who spoke Maori either natively or fluently became an increasingly smaller proportion of all Maoris (perhaps no more than some 50,000 (maximally 70,000) today), while those who even still understood it (but could not employ it overtly) were no more than 100,000 and both of these sub-populations, particularly the population of fluent native speakers, were overwhelmingly beyond 40 years of age (indeed, even beyond 50 years of age) and, therefore, well beyond child-bearing age as well. Even today, when some new and important improvements have occurred in RLS-efforts on behalf of Maori, it is still true that 'there are more fluent speakers passing away each day than there are speakers of comparable ability coming up to take their place'.<sup>1</sup> Not only were next to none of the Maori children growing up in the cities of New Zealand being raised as native speakers of Maori, but even the steadily decreasing rural minority among Maoris was also overwhelmingly raising its little ones as English speakers. Indeed, Maori speaking *communities* had almost disappeared from the scene and those youngsters who were learning Maori as a second language had practically no natural sociocultural milieu in which to utilize it or from which to derive ordinary communicative support for it.

## The Aftermath of Demographic Resurgence

The physical resurgence of the Maoris not only provided an opportunity for organized cultural re-examination among Maoris themselves, but it also made it inevitable that the New Zealand anglo mainstream would also engage in some re-examination of its policies and attitudes toward the Maori people, Maori culture and Maori language. Much of this re-examination produced mere tokenism, particularly in the earlier years. Thus, the Maori Social and Economic Advancement Act of 1945 established a body of Maori Tribal Executives, one of whose functions was 'To preserve, revive and maintain the teaching of Maori arts, crafts, language, genealogy and history in order to perpetuate Maori culture. [12 (a) (v)]', without providing any means whatsoever whereby these particular functions might be carried out, in contrast to the Act's very explicit procedures for 'preventing and abating [Maori]



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A very natural, and vastly popular, outgrowth of the *whanau* program have been the *kohanga reos* (= language nests), which, since 1982, have begun to fulfill in urban life many of the educative functions of the increasingly vanishing rural *marae*. Many of the same grandparents who are active in the *kohanga reo* would, in former years, have been involved in analogous language-in-culture socialization of the very young in pre-urban Maori settings. At the primarily urban *kohanga reos*, Maori-speaking grandparents (and any parents or other adults, varying in age from 16 to 96, who care to offer their services and who can do so in fluent Maori, all of whom are referred to as *Kaiawhi* ['embracers']) typically provide 4–8 hours of daily childcare (the interschool range varying from two to as many as 10 hours per day) to pre-schoolers, most of whom have absolutely no speaking knowledge (and very little if any comprehension either) of Maori. What is additionally significant is that this care is not only provided entirely in Maori but that it is provided at a time in children's language socialization when English-speaking society and culture have not yet strongly impacted their lives. However, what is really involved is not only child language-in-culture socialization but community building and good childcare as well. Not only are elders recognized as rich resources of language-in-culture knowledge (thereby adding to their self-esteem as well as to their societal usefulness), not only is an adult-child ratio maintained which is often better (when all the volunteer teachers show up to render their volunteer service) than that required by New Zealand childcare regulations, not only is the problem of language maintenance attacked at its core (i.e. at the intergenerational transmission nexus), but the Maoris themselves have accepted the responsibility of transmitting the language, rather than waiting for the government to do 'something' on its behalf, and have hit upon a way of doing so that is linked to a distinct vision of being 'Maori-via-Maori', namely the *whanau* (family) and *iwi* (tribal) affiliation,<sup>6</sup> and were recognized and complimented precisely for doing so by the Waitangi Tribunal itself.

Having acknowledged the powerful potential of the *kohanga reos*, particularly for a language that was almost literally without child-speakers, and noting their rapid growth, from four in 1982 to roughly 520 in 1988 with a total enrollment of some 8,000 children, we must also be careful not to exaggerate their current effectiveness or their carry-over into the future. Not all of them, by any means, are pedagogically effective, nor is their nearly total reliance on an untrained, volunteer staff a completely unmixed blessing, neither in the educative connection nor even in connection with childcare *per se*. While a large proportion of Maori pre-schoolers now attend these centers, there are probably even more who still do not do so. Finally, the growing dependence of these centers on funding by the Department of Maori Affairs<sup>7</sup> may ultimately turn out to be a fatal flaw, not only because government priorities are subject to change,



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Except for a very few general newspapers that deign to publish Maori notices and messages on a few days out of the week, there is no Maori periodic press. There is a Maori medium high school and a Maori medium junior college, the latter still curricularly quite truncated. Radio is doing somewhat more in Maori, particularly the still weak and intermittent local and private radio efforts which have gained quite a following. The national networks, on the other hand, give no more than 15 (!) minutes per day of news in Maori, and Maori on television was still quite unheard of until 1980.<sup>11</sup> In that year, a one-minute Maori comment in observance of Maori Language Week elicited so many racist reactions and negative comments that nothing of consequence has been attempted in Maori on television thereafter, and even the brief news report in Maori has been shifted to an inconvenient viewing time, thereby losing most of its audience. Nevertheless, the number and the insistence of the requests on behalf of radio and television in Maori (some of them being legal briefs related to Waitangi Treaty interpretations) are both increasing and some greater symbolic recognition of Maori may soon be forthcoming as a result.

However, the pakeha establishment can afford to play games with issues such as these. At the same time that the Maori Language Commission (established 'to foster the Maori language', in accord with one of the Waitangi Tribunal's more nebulous recommendations) and various Maori activists are advocating 'demographically proportionate' government services and mass media in Maori, there is actually some sentiment in government circles for the 'devolution' of the Department of Maori Affairs, one of the oldest governmental departments in all New Zealand, and for turning over its funds and responsibilities to the largely defunct and disorganized Maori tribes. This is patently a thinly disguised attempt to cripple Maori RLS, rather than to help it.

All in all, the resistance to Maori goals at these upper levels is quite unreconstructed, leading some Maori spokesmen to focus on them all the more. While such reactions are quite understandable, the pursuit of these stages at this time may represent little more than the pursuit of a will-o'-the-wisp, i.e. a pursuit that is 'of no consequence to language survival and growth if the fundamental process of [intergenerational] transmission is cut off'.<sup>12</sup> The 'fundamental process' is exactly where an intelligent concentration of scarce resources belongs, if only because Maori TV, should it ever come into being on a 'demographically proportionate' basis, would hardly be able to compete successfully (as an RLS thrust) with the mammoth English programming with which it would obviously be compared. Some encouraging progress has recently been made via the *kohanga reo* and *kura kaupapa* Maori schools, which provide the major opportunities for developing home-family-neighborhood RLS-efforts capable of further judicious grass-roots expansion into stages 5 and 6.



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*Stage 8: Reassembling the language*

None of the European or other immigrant languages are at an advanced state of disrepair and, even were that to be the case in connection with the oldest and smallest among them, the necessary 'repairs' would probably be undertaken elsewhere, in their respective home countries, rather than in Australia. In connection with the continent's Aboriginal languages, however, there are hundreds of languages and dialects (yes, hundreds) that require such repair and Australia proper is obviously the main location in which such repairs are and must be undertaken.

The exact number of Aboriginal languages and dialects that were spoken when Europeans first came to Australia is difficult to ascertain. The recently published *Language Atlas: Pacific*<sup>2</sup> lists over 700 languages and dialects but other specialists (e.g. Black, 1983) usually refer to a lower figure, namely, 'nearly 270 distinct languages'. If the former estimate is accepted it becomes clear that 80% of this number are either already extinct or have so few remaining speakers (less than 100) that their early demise is virtually a foregone conclusion. If the latter estimate is preferred, the results are nearly the same. Only some 50 languages remain that are relatively widely spoken (and often written) and of these only 18 have at least 500 speakers and, taken together, account for 25,000 of the approximately 30,000 remaining speakers of Aboriginal languages in Australia today.<sup>3</sup> Pessimistic observers conclude that only some two or three of these will retain any substantial vitality into the twenty-first century. Clearly, modern Australia has been a veritable graveyard of indigenous languages and the study of dying languages as well as the reassembly of dead and momentarily expiring ones has become a major linguistic occupation and preoccupation. Although such efforts add considerably to scholarly (and, ultimately, to the intelligent layman's) appreciation of human diversity, ingenuity and, in more recent days (since 'last living speakers' have also begun to be more intensively studied) cultural dedication as well, they provide scant comfort for the Aboriginal RLS advocate. Unfortunately, this is all the comfort that there can be in many cases.

*Stage 7: The elderly among themselves: learning, relearning and use without intergenerational family or integrated community functions*

At this stage several of the older immigration-based languages (and some of the newer ones too, where the most rapid sociocultural change has occurred) enter our story. Particularly in small immigrant communities in the more rural hinterlands, outside of the major urban areas, but in some of the old ethnic neighborhoods of the latter as well, it is not an uncommon occurrence for 'old-timers' to get together with each other and to use the 'old language' when they do. There are innumerable small gatherings full of good fellowship and quiet camaraderie, programs of considerable cultural (literary, musical, educational)



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such programs on a small scale are the one-week and two-week adult courses in Alyawarre (400–500 speakers), Warumungu (? speakers), Warlmanpa (? speakers) and Warlpiri (2,800 speakers) conducted in and around Tennant Creek, Northern Territory, by the Barkly Region Aboriginal Language Center. There are also a few tertiary level institutions located in areas near Aboriginal concentrations (e.g. the Institute for Aboriginal Development in Alice Springs, N.T.) that offer vernacular literacy courses at a non-degree adult education level, often, but not always, as preliminary to their more focused efforts to foster English reading and writing. In addition, there are also missionary groups that offer vernacular literacy courses to adult Aborigines (and to younger Aborigines as well) in conjunction with their more basic Christianizing and Bible study emphases. All in all, however, the disparity between Australian governmental assistance to ethnic community stage 5 schools for immigrants and their children and its thinly disguised lack of interest in the establishment of networks of such schools for Aborigines is quite marked, notwithstanding the support for a few Aboriginal community schools under the program providing grants for ethnic community schools more generally. The first constituency is being helped to pass into an 'Xmen-via-Yish' (English) stage by means of generously subsidized cooption into the Yish system; the other, by a surfeit of what is, at best, a variant of benign neglect.

*Stage 4a: Xish-sponsored and conducted schools that are attended in lieu of meeting compulsory education requirements*

There seems to be no complete census of the all-day schools teaching ethnic 'community languages' and sponsored primarily by the various immigrant-based ethnic groups in Australia. I would estimate that there are no more than 50 such schools, all in all, and probably fewer than that, all but a few handfuls of them being at the elementary school level, with approximately 10,000 students. The lion's share of these schools are under religious auspices, Hebrew (and, much more rarely, Yiddish too) being taught in the Jewish ones, Greek in most of the Orthodox ones and Italian, German, Polish, Spanish, Portuguese, Vietnamese and perhaps a very few other languages too in the multi-ethnic Catholic ones. All of these schools receive direct and indirect governmental funds which cover a very sizeable proportion of their costs, the remaining costs being covered by tuition fees and community fund-raising efforts. The amount of time devoted to ethnic community language acquisition and, subsequently, to ethnic community language use in the study of other ethnic subjects varies tremendously, from no more than a few hours per week (and as an elective subject to boot) and only in certain years of study, to approximately half of the entire school day in all years of instruction. The results also vary greatly, from little more than passive language appreciation all the way through to fluent speech and creative writing.



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culture (including language and work) are intergenerationally integrated. When such integration between language and culture is not possible in the work sphere, all is not lost. But it becomes even more crucial to achieve that integration in the more foundational and self-regulated domains of the total interaction between language and culture.

*Stage 2: Local mass media and governmental services*

As will be evident from our previous chapters, local mass media and governmental services can make positive contributions to RLS only to the extent that they are directly related to and connected to fundamental family-neighborhood-community functioning. They may well extend the vocabulary and help foster the 'modernity' images of the languages associated with them, thereby improving the attitudes toward these languages among their speakers. But the impact of this attitudinal improvement is soon lost insofar as RLS is concerned, unless that impact is explicitly and quickly fed back to the establishment, functioning and protection of the families, neighborhoods and communities in which these languages can be intergenerationally transmitted as mother tongues. Such 'feedback' contributions of the mass media and governmental services must be specifically planned and kept in mind. This is not merely because threatened languages cannot easily wait for generations until indirect effects may possibly build up sufficient 'atmosphere effect' to influence intergenerational mother tongue transmission. The need for positive feedback to stage 6 is also crucial because, if left to their own devices, local mass media and governmental services easily become negative RLS factors, because even when conducted partially in Xish they tend to tie their clienteles into larger, Yish-centered listening and viewing patterns too, indeed, into larger frames of reference than Xish or Xmen-via-Xish *per se*.

The Australian Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs estimated that there were about 100 immigrant-based ethnic newspapers in Australia in 1984, modally weeklies, with a combined readership (including both subscribers and pass-along readers) of approximately half a million. Even now, however, when the period of mass immigration is still relatively recent history, these periodical publications typically have a rather meager second generation readership (even when they introduce special youth sections in English or undertake to publish in both Xish and English in each of their sections). Apparently, second generation literacy in Xish is too weak and its commitments to Xish (or even to Xishness) too peripheral to require an Xish press, in whatever language, for their satisfaction. Accordingly, as is also the case in the USA, most Xish periodicals never make the transitions either to bilingual or to all-English formats. Such transitions assume an Xmen-via-Yish market and there is either no such market out there or it doesn't require a press of its own for its functioning. In either



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However, when all is said and done, the RLS outlook in Australia is far bleaker than the sheer amount of RLS activity currently ongoing might seem to imply. Aboriginal languages are dying at the rate of one or more a year and language shift continues unabated in the immigrant-based 'community languages' fold. This is a tremendous attrition for a country that recognizes, as few others do, its own dire need for languages other than English and that has shown as much admiration, recognition and support as Australia has for the languages still spoken within its borders. Unfortunately, as we have noted so many times before, good intentions are not enough and the steps taken or about to be taken are either largely unrelated, non-productive or even counter-productive as far as intergenerational RLS-payoff is concerned.

Something (although not much) can still be saved, but it will probably be up to the language communities themselves, more than up to the Government, to point to the required family-home-neighborhood-community foundations of such possible salvation. When the right way is finally recognized, the Aboriginal willingness to withdraw to 'outstations' will be understood in all of its metaphorical power. Self-help and self-regulation in everyday intergenerational mother tongue transmission contexts, safeguarded by boundary setting and boundary preservation, are the *sine qua non* of RLS. Money and planning along such lines by national authorities are unlikely, given the ethos of shared participationism that dominates both democratic and authoritarian regimes today. Small-scale self-regulation and self-help at the local level is the inevitable only way out for the saving remnant that really takes RLS seriously. For the others, 'language appreciation' and Xmen-via-Yish may be the rewards and the consolations of widest currency.<sup>18</sup>

Australian policies and processes constitute a positive but ineffective approach to RLS on behalf of recent immigrant languages and a negative but potentially effective approach to RLS on behalf of Aboriginal languages. Because of its relative proximity to and ultimate commercial connectedness with South and Southeast Asia Australia may well be the first anglo-establishment country to break out of the prison of English monolingualism. However, few of its immigrant language communities and none of its Aboriginal language communities will benefit directly from this self-liberation. Indeed, over the long run (during the next fifty years or so), a few Aboriginal languages associated with 'outstations' and genuine community schools may be far more successful on the RLS scene than any of the recently proliferated immigrant languages currently marked by social mobility and urban demographic dispersion, on the one hand, and by a luxuriant growth of language courses, radio programs and television broadcasts, on the other hand. This will come about because a very few, fortunate (i.e. governmentally benignly neglected) Aboriginal languages are genuinely linked to the intergenerational mother tongue transmission process



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## **10 Three Success Stories (More or Less): Modern Hebrew, French in Quebec and Catalan in Spain**

The nine problematic cases that we have reviewed in previous chapters are by no means all at the same stage of endangerment; indeed, one or two may yet pull out of the endangered category rather completely by the end of the next century (ultra-Orthodox Yiddish and Spanish in particular parts of the USA being the ones that seem most likely to do so, with Navajo, on the one hand, and Basque or Frisian, on the other hand, being rather close behind). Nevertheless, it is fitting to bring our examination of cases to a close by considering three language-and-culture settings which have already done just that: they have traversed the most sensitive and dangerous sections of the difficult path from 'essentially problematic' to 'essentially non-problematic' within the lifetimes of individuals still alive today, sometimes doing so within the course of only one or two generations.

As has been our practice thus far, in our discussion of problematic cases, we will pick our success cases from different parts of the world, one from the Near East (Hebrew), one from the Americas (French in Quebec) and one from Europe (Catalan), although as we will soon see, all three cases have been strongly influenced by European thinking, values, methods and developments. This is an inevitable state of affairs, to the extent that RLS-efforts are often a reflection of late or reactive nationalism and modernization, worldwide processes that are overwhelmingly characterized by dynamics that have their origins and their mainsprings in Europe. Even the return to ultra-Orthodoxy can be partially characterized in this fashion, overtly and consciously rejective of modernization though it be, since it too has learned that the modern world can be held at bay and an essentially authentic minority ethnicity can be maintained with respect to its language-and-culture nexus, only if some of modernity's techniques and methods are selectively and carefully borrowed and even more carefully controlled.

However, similar though these three cases may be in several respects, two errors must be guarded against in discussing their successful RLS-efforts. One is



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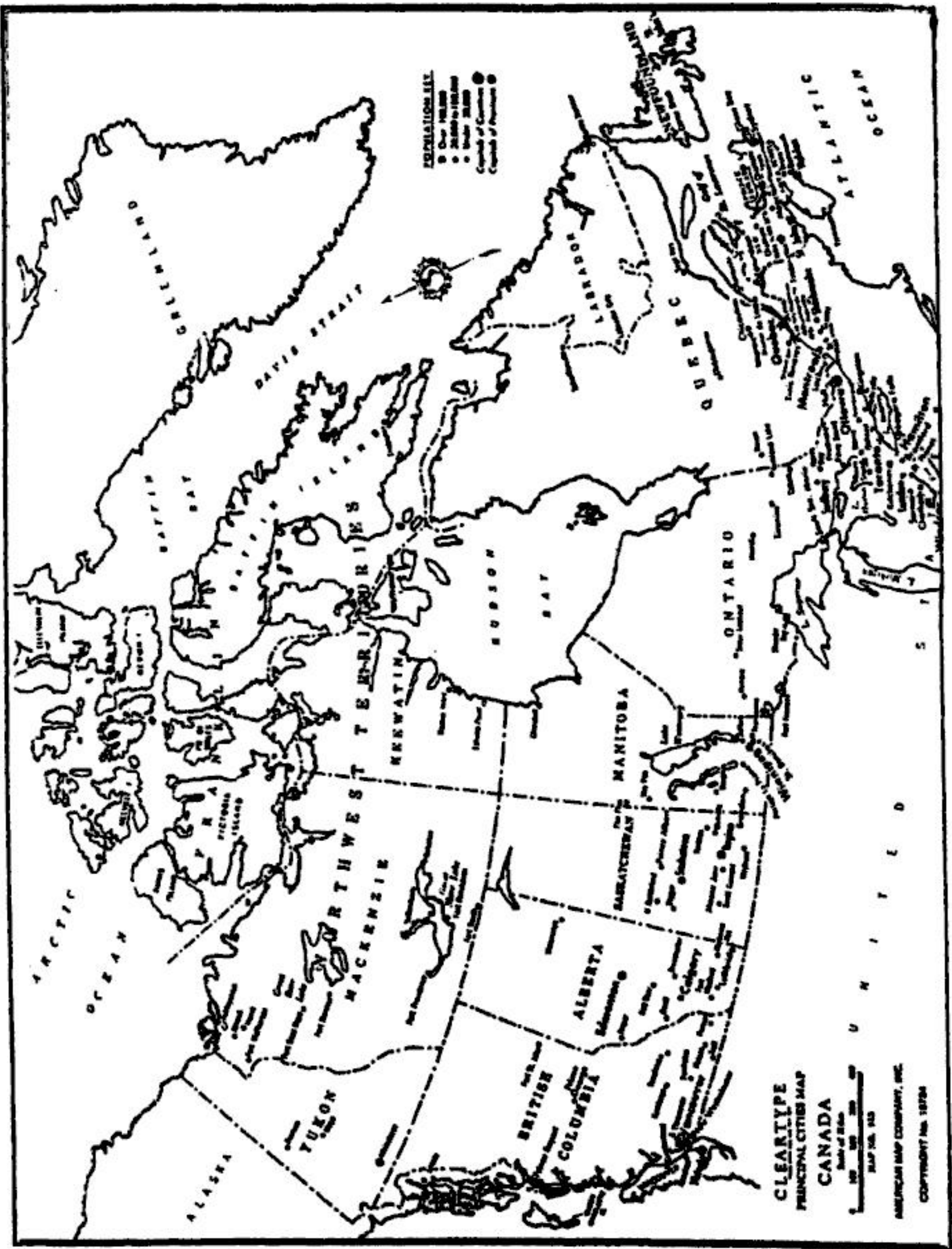


FIGURE 10.2 Quebec in the Canadian Confederation.



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often bitter one. However, by the late teens or mid-twenties of this century at the very latest, the revernacularization of Hebrew in the settlements was generally completed (except among the very oldest residents, some of whom never acquired fluency in Hebrew) and the more difficult and far slower task of vernacularizing Hebrew among Jewish Palestine's *urban* population began to come to the fore.

## French in Quebec

The (Quebec) Liberal Party that was swept into power in 1960 was the standard-bearer of a 'Quiet Revolution' pursuing modernization, secularization, industrialization and urbanization. These goals aimed at overcoming the economic backwardness of French Quebec and its entrenched sense of grievance and powerlessness over not being taken seriously or handled fairly by the nine English-speaking provinces of Canada. The 'Quiet Revolution' accomplished much along objective lines, but still left most francophone intellectuals and many ordinary laymen distinctly uneasy and dissatisfied on many fronts. Most of industry and real power in Montreal was still English-controlled. Furthermore, and most crucially insofar as RLS is concerned, the very processes championed by the 'Quiet Revolution' tended to weaken and undermine the distinctive cultural character of French Quebecois life and threatened to make it indistinguishable from the anglophone society which dominated it. Immigrants from Europe and the Third World, sensing the underlying anglophone control of the local opportunity system and its links to the USA (and, therefore, to the language of the USA), elected English as the language of their own social mobility and of their children's education. De Gaulle's provocative salutation, during his 1967 visit to Montreal world's fair, '*Vive le Quebec libre*', elicited an enthusiastic response from the crowd that had come to greet him, but it was far from clear what '*libre*' might imply or how to go about achieving that status. The crisis of a hitherto largely rural-based and traditionally religious French culture in confrontation with a galloping modernization, a process which was not under appreciable francophone direction or control, inevitably highlighted language as the flexible, all-encompassing symbol of the combined authenticity, modernization and self-direction that appeared to be necessary for the crisis to be solved.

Although Italian immigrants in Montreal were among the most francized 'new Canadians' in Montreal, they nevertheless overwhelmingly elected English or bilingual (English and French) education for their children. When the trustees of the Saint Leonard School Board tried to reverse this trend by adopting a resolution making French the only language of schooling within its district (1968), a serious riot developed in the streets of Montreal between



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and most urgently of the latter (the internal) kind. For Hebrew, there had always been such competitors, even when Jews were still primarily concentrated in ancient Palestine, 'a bridge between continents', part of the fertile crescent, the royal road between Africa and Asia. If this was true even in pre-diaspora Palestine (viz. the foreign influences against which the prophets preached and the Aramaization, Hellenization and Romanization of the court, the nobility and much of the intelligentsia during the Second Commonwealth), it was all the more so in the diaspora, both before and after the destruction of the Second Temple.

Not only has Jewish multilingualism been the rule, rather than the exception, during all of Jewish history, but in this process, a large number of new Jewish vernaculars were created, born out of the superposition of Jewish cultural imperatives and gentile persecution and expulsion upon the co-territorial languages that Jews learned in the various countries of exile in which they found themselves at different periods of their painful, pariah history. While Hebrew (actually Hebrew/Judeo-Aramaic or *leshon ha-kodesh*) was almost always retained for ritual, worship and the study of sacred texts and rabbinic commentaries, Jewish communities in the diaspora commonly utilized a vernacular of their own for internal daily communication and a non-Jewish vernacular for external contacts. Thus, triglossia was the norm for at least many adult males, and women and children approached this norm as closely as their roles, age and personal history permitted. Had modern Zionism been an outgrowth of Jewish traditional life, it might or might not have revernacularized Hebrew, but, even had it done so, it would have almost certainly viewed Hebrew as an intercommunal lingua franca, rather than as the one and only legitimate mother tongue and language of daily life of an independent Jewish Palestine.<sup>20</sup>

However, modern ('political') Zionism was not a direct outgrowth from traditional life, but, rather, on the one hand, sprang from substantially assimilated Western European Jewish exasperation with continued post-emancipation anti-semitism, and, on the other hand, from strident Eastern European Jewish secular nationalism, under the strong influence of the other late nationalisms and nation-state aspirations of that part of the world. Like these others, therefore, modern Zionism generally envisaged an internally unified, culturally modernized and homogenized, 'reborn' people, in its old homeland and not only speaking its old language but speaking *only* its old language, insofar as its internal life was concerned. Leading Western Zionists were somewhat slow to adopt this view (even Herzl initially foresaw a Jewish State in which the elite spoke Russian or German and the 'masses', primarily Yiddish), and some Eastern European Zionist groupings also interceded for 'Yiddish too', whether on a temporary or on a more permanent basis, but the monolingual Hebrew bias of most Eastern European Zionists was adamant and only tactically compromising (in line with



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formality behavior is still too frequently in Spanish, as is their interaction with non-Catalans), and the active use of conversational Catalan by the bulk of immigrants and their children is far too low. While there has been progress in both of these connections, it has been slow progress at best.

Setting aside the constitutional issue, there are a number of reasons why the struggle against Spanish cannot be conducted more aggressively in Catalonia. Attempts to discredit Spanish among Catalans would have negative repercussions with respect to fostering both the sense of being accepted and a Catalan self-concept among the very considerable Spanish-speaking 'minority' (which, in some demographic and function contexts, actually constitutes a local majority). It is difficult to oppose Spanish, on the one hand, and to appear accepting and attractive to the Spanish-speaking, on the other hand. It is even difficult to foster a Catalan identity among the resident Spanish speakers and, at the same time, to agitate among native Catalans that only someone who uses Catalan in all communications and with everyone is a true and loyal Catalan. Compromises obviously have to be made and the time for maximalist solutions has not (or not yet) arrived.

Catalans who are familiar with the French Quebecois case often point out the Quebecois objections to bilingual education in that context. A well known Catalan language activist has recently featured the Quebecois view that 'Bilingual education can function in an environment where the mother tongue is not threatened. If the mother tongue is in a position of weakness, then bilingual schooling will deliver the final coup de grace.' This is a worrisome realization in a setting where most schools are bilingual and where Catalan immersion schools are still relatively few and far between. Where only slow progress is the best that can be hoped for, particularly in connection with Catalanizing the huge mass of Spanish-speaking immigrants and their children, the ultimate goal of a 'territorial solution' in which Catalonia, like every 'normal nation', will have its own language as the clearly dominant one in its own region and where Spanish will merely be a second language, used for interactions with other regions of Spain, seems far-off indeed. No wonder, then, that there are some who feel disheartened and who, looking excessively at the empty half of the glass, feel that 'the linguistic situation has deteriorated too far for such a goal [the 'normal' goal of the territorial principle, as realized, e.g. in Quebec] to be reached'.<sup>25</sup>

This is probably an overly pessimistic conclusion, particularly since some progress toward Catalanization is being made constantly, both with the immigrant and with the native Catalan population. Perhaps, however, before the ultimate goal can be attained, a new 'reverse diglossia' will have to be at least transitionally attained, with Catalan H and Spanish L.



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courses in Catalan and all those outside of Barcelona being almost entirely Catalnized. The university picture is bleakest in connection with textbooks and mimeographed notes, in general, and with science and technology, in particular, although there are, of course, some scientific journals in Catalan as well as an interuniversity effort to prepare Catalan textbooks at least in the introductory liberal arts subjects that nearly all students study. There can be no doubt that, all in all, education is making some contribution to the overall RLS goals.

The mass media are currently still somewhat more problematic, but there too noteworthy progress has been made during the past few years. Barcelona, still a worldwide center of Spanish book publication, now publishes many thousands of Catalan books annually on virtually all topics and in all genres. The daily Barcelona press, on the other hand, as well as the region-wide press circulated throughout Catalonia are both very largely Spanish (commanding over three quarters of the total circulation), although there are two smallish Catalan dailies in Barcelona, as well as weekly supplements or columns in Catalan in the local editions of two of the largest national Spanish dailies. The Catalan press clearly predominates only in connections with distinctly local and regional publications. The government has a program of subsidies for publications in Catalan, but it is clear that the road ahead will be a long and difficult one due to the undiminished power of the national print media.

The radio situation is somewhat better than that of the press, given that there are some 220 radio stations that broadcast mainly or entirely in Catalan. Most of these are local (municipal) stations and, in general, most stations are of the FM variety and are devoted mainly to music. Although the large commercial stations (some 15 in all) are mainly Spanish-using, there is certainly ample Catalan on the radio. The TV situation is not quite as good, but it has lately shown signs of significant improvement, with one (out of three) channels now being Catalan Government-sponsored and completely in Catalan, and with two new such channels, one sponsored by the Catalan Government and the other by the Spanish authorities, scheduled for the near future. Many programs of foreign language provenance (e.g. 'Dallas', 'Sesame Street', 'Batman') are regularly dubbed in Catalan, but this is not yet done for Spanish programs and that, of course, is where the bulk of the competition is located.<sup>32</sup>

Nevertheless, as we have argued throughout this volume, the institutional arenas are not good measures of RLS progress for languages in which the intergenerational transmission system is still in need of the most serious attention. It is in this subtle but crucial area that the picture *vis-à-vis* Catalan is clearly changing for the better, both because Catalan speakers increasingly feel that they have the right to express themselves in Catalan, even in 'mixed



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about corpus planning later. At this juncture, however, let us turn to a number of status planning issues that cut across all of the above-mentioned functions. Indeed, it is precisely their cross-functional applicability that makes these issues the most appropriate ones to begin with from an RLS point of view.

### **Dialect status planning**

Many of the languages on behalf of which RLS-efforts are undertaken have, generally, not previously been appreciably utilized in high status functions. Even if such functions have, at times, been discharged in these languages, it remains true that many of their speakers may not have received any of their formal education in schools (nor attended services in churches) in which these languages were the media (or even the co-media) of instruction (or ritualized prayer). Accordingly, most of the constantly shrinking number of mother tongue speakers of threatened languages do very little reading and almost no writing whatsoever in these languages. This functional characterization leaves these languages almost entirely restricted to informal and intimate conversational functions, functions which pertain to life on a small scale. However, this is precisely the functional characterization which corresponds to dialectal (rather than standard) language use. Accordingly, many languages that are in need of and are the recipients of RLS-efforts are designated as 'mere dialects' (with the implication that they are not full-fledged 'languages' at all). This is a demeaning charge, and a potentially damaging one too, particularly since some of the languages in question may actually have no corresponding standard variety and, even if they do have such a variety, it may be one which most speakers do not control, precisely because they have never received either formal education or literacy exposure in these languages.

The above-mentioned lacks, some of them being the lacks of the speakers, others, the lacks of their societies, and still others, the lacks of their languages reflecting their recent and generally current sociocultural functions, are very often associated with attitudinally negative images of Xish among Xmen *per se*, images that must be rectified and overcome if RLS-efforts are to succeed. Dialects often have 'a bad press' among the public at large (even if not among linguists) and their negative social image must be combated, among Xmen and Ymen alike (but particularly among Xmen), as part of the ideological clarification which is a foundational *sine qua non* for all those subsequent RLS functional goals that are more statusful and diverse, above and beyond 'mere orality'.

There is a difference, however, as far as RLS is concerned, between a community made up almost exclusively of non-standard 'dialect users' and a community viewed (or self-viewed) as 'using a mere dialect'. The former is often



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very existence. Under such circumstances, when children come home from school speaking, reading and writing a dialect other than that of their home, neighborhood and community, this may well constitute an additional psychological burden for the already weak and fading intergenerational transmission capacity of local Xish. Parents who get the impression that their local Xish is 'not real Xish' or 'not proper Xish' may choose to give up Xish entirely rather than continue their halting efforts on its behalf.

This problem can be best handled by making sure that RLS-efforts recognize, utilize and dignify the local dialect (certainly in early elementary schooling and even in other formal agencies and functions), alongside or even in preference to the incipient standard. This is exactly what Basque educational authorities have done *vis-à-vis* their major non-standard dialect (which some few adherents regard to be the basis of a separate and rival standard), going so far, indeed, as to publish textbooks for the early elementary years in that variety. Ireland too has adopted a similarly permissive dialectal approach, recognizing thereby both non-native 'revivalist' Irish and the various still spoken Gaeltacht dialects. Pre-World War II Germany also essentially followed such a dialectally permissive approach, as did (and does) Italy, even though their languages are by no means threatened or without long-recognized standard varieties (see Fishman and Salmon, 1972; Zuanelli-Sonino, 1989).

*Teachers must always be situationally acceptive of dialect speech in the elementary classroom*, whether RLS is involved or not, and they must cultivate dialect acceptance among their pupils, regardless of whether one, two or many dialects are present in the classroom. This same kind of tolerance toward spoken dialects must also be cultivated among adults. The standard comes not to displace or replace the dialects, but to complement them in functions which they do not generally discharge and, therefore, in functions that do not compete with their own. Given this type of genuine admiration for and cultivation of dialect speech, RLS-efforts should be able to rally and foster the local supporters of Xish in various localities, leaving the acquisition of the standard variety for later, when local sensitivities are sufficiently satisfied so that repertoire-building can become both feasible and acceptable.<sup>2</sup> RLS must come to realize that most adults who have already completed their schooling may never acquire the 'new' standard, whether written or spoken, and that, whether old or new, most of them may also never need more than a passive command of the standard at any rate.

### **If no standard can be agreed upon**

Circumstances may arise such that no written standard can be agreed upon, either due to the severity of the interregional rivalries, or due to the very



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bygone days, when it was simply assumed that the language somehow 'belonged to the planners' (were they not the authorities as to what was linguistically good, bad or possible?) and that the speech community would ultimately and necessarily 'fall into line' with whatever it was that the planners suggested.

A favorable climate of opinion is necessary for corpus planning to succeed in a marketing or usage sense, rather than to be merely an intra-linguistic game. The neologisms must be such as to be maximally acceptable to their intended clienteles, or, at least, such as to elicit a minimum of fuss and discord. Generally speaking, corpus planning products are quickly adopted only by a small segment of their intended 'consumers', namely, by 'captive audiences' dependent upon the planners and their associated authorities for their livelihoods or for their ranks and privileges (e.g. armed forces personnel, government officers and their staffs, applicants or prospective applicants for authority- or government-controlled positions, perquisites, permits or licenses). Unfortunately, there are few if any such 'captive audiences' in connection with threatened languages, since threatened languages, almost by self-evident definition, have few authorities who can dispense with or withhold widely meaningful sanctions or rewards. Thus, the use and utility of Xish corpus planning neologisms may be rather restricted at best, realistically speaking, to the inner circle of 'true believers', and it is this inner circle that must remain solidary rather than fractionated or turned off by corpus planning. Xish cannot afford to lose any of those who are most committed to it and must attempt to expand its lexicon (or revise its orthography or engage in any other kind of corpus planning) gingerly and carefully, by means of judicious and relatively risk-free modifications or innovations.<sup>1</sup>

Finally, to tie back to our previous discussion of dialects, it should be remembered that a multiplicity of contending, viable dialects is a problem for RLS-oriented corpus planning and, should such contenders exist, every effort is required to draw upon their respective lexical stocks too, whenever possible, in connection with neologism formation. By doing so the standard may be able to both call upon and attract the loyalists of various dialects and upon their clienteles as well, in the ongoing effort to modernize 'threatened Xish', rather than to allow it to become merely a jumble of antiquated as well as discordant dialects.

## **Language Planning that Helps and Language Planning that Hinders**

The dialect/standard issue is initially a status-planning issue within Xish rather than between Xish and Yish. It is potentially strengthening for RLS to explain that Xish dialects are not shameful things at all but, rather, totally



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these languages normally do continue to experience seemingly effortless inter-generational continuity and that they are not voluntarily replaced by those very languages of wider communication that the mother tongue speakers of smaller national languages so regularly master in their ongoing search for both the inter-regional and international advantages that their own mother tongues cannot provide. Why English is *generally not* handed on by English-speaking parents among Netherlands to their children, and why, therefore, it has to be learned anew by those children after Dutch has already been acquired, while the so much 'less useful' Dutch is handed on by these same parents to their children, is a riddle worth pondering for all those interested in RLS. Why isn't Dutch a threatened language, given that almost all middle-class Netherlands past elementary school age speak English too and, indeed, do so rather well at that?

## Intergenerational Continuity of Minority Mother Tongues

Some light on the above questions has been shed by research and theoretical formulations pertaining to the intergenerational transmission of minority (or sub-national) languages. In this context, intergenerational mother tongue continuity is very frequently not only endangered but largely or entirely unattained (even in the democratic Netherlands). The basic issue can now be understood as being one of boundary maintenance and control, both *between ethnocultures* as well as between domains *within ethnocultures*. National languages, even small national languages, are substantially protected by political boundaries and by social boundaries and social institutions that are politically protected. These help separate populations into insiders and outsiders and they define the cultural desiderata — including language — which are required for inside membership. Where minority cultures are sufficiently intact to protect their cultural boundaries (and, of course, interested in doing so), they institute counterpart ethnocultural defenses for *their* mother tongues. Where such socio-cultural counterparts to political boundaries are in place, even small minorities can attain intergenerational mother tongue continuity (viz. the Old Order Amish and the Hasidic Jews in the USA); lacking them, even large ones cannot do so (viz. the experience of millions of German Americans, Polish Americans, Franco-Americans, Italian Americans, etc. [Fishman *et al.*, 1985]) who have lost their ethnic mother tongues.

Boundaries, political or ethnocultural, imply separation of populations, the control of boundary crossings, the regulation of imports, the definition of desirable and undesirable cross-boundary relations. Minority ethnocultures, whether indigenous or immigrant, are often prohibited from or incapable of exercising such controls. They are required/compelled to use outside institutions, personnel, norms and procedures for sensitive functions in connection with familial,



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instrumentally reinforce the school's efforts so that each of these subjects 'takes hold' in the lives of at least a few individuals, although even then these consequences rarely attain the intergenerational transmissibility which is synonymous with the mother tongue role) they *cannot* do with respect to converting a non-mother tongue into a mother tongue or co-mother tongue. Schools simply come insufficiently early in individual development and are generally also insufficiently undisputed, affect-laden, intimacy- and identity-focused or societally binding for such purposes.

This does not mean, however, that school-media-work sphere-government cannot contribute at all to converting a non-mother tongue into a mother tongue or a co-mother tongue. However, all that the latter 'higher order agencies' can do ('higher order' not by virtue of intrinsic importance for intergenerational transmission but by virtue of their distance from the very crux of such transmission) is to constructively focus societal resources (attention, funds, manpower, intelligence and dedication) on the family-neighborhood-community complex and on the problems and opportunities that it and it alone presents for the attainment of the mother tongue role. In particular, the schools, media, work sphere and government can underscore the fact that successful mother tongue fostering requires fostering the *idea of the language*, the total language and culture complex of Xmen-via-Xish, rather than merely the language alone or first and foremost. And certainly the activization of this complex among the parents of the next generation requires and entails more than the school alone.

## The Increasing Weakness of the Direct Home-School Link

A further vitiating factor which undermines the role of the school in the total RLS enterprise, a factor which simultaneously makes it more difficult for the school to strengthen the family's efforts on behalf of Xish, just as it also makes it more difficult for the family to strengthen the school's efforts on behalf of Xish or any other subject or medium of instruction, is the increasing interposition of the many new child-socialization agencies required by modern, urban life. Indeed, modern, urban life is characterized by the growing peripheralization of the family *vis-à-vis* the total child-socialization process, on the one hand, and by the bureaucratic fragmentation of the agencies that have arisen to complement the family in connection with this process, on the other hand. RLS-efforts in general and mother tongue transmission and stabilization efforts in particular are rendered much more complex and problematic by such modern, urban developments as the shrinking proportion of children being



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The most general reason for the neglect of RLS is probably the fact that RLS is an activity of minorities, frequently powerless, unpopular with outsiders and querulous amongst themselves; it is an activity that is very often unsuccessful and that strikes many intelligent laymen and otherwise intelligent social scientists as 'unnatural', i.e. as counter to some supposedly 'natural' drift of historical events or the 'obvious' direction of social change. It is hard for self-serving mainstream intellectual spokesmen and institutions to be sympathetic to the lingering, cantankerous, neither fully alive nor fully dead quality of many (perhaps most) efforts on behalf of receding minority languages (and the majority of sidestream scholars too are ultimately dependent on the mainstream for their perspectives, if not for their very livelihoods). Indeed, RLS-efforts are often like the 'gomers' or 'crocks' that constantly reappear in the emergency rooms of major metropolitan hospitals: elderly, complaining individuals who neither die nor get better and for whom nothing effective can seemingly ever be done. Most young doctors, like most majority spokesmen in other fields, learn to 'meet 'em, greet 'em and street 'em', i.e. to make light of the complaints of these embarrassing unfortunates and to turn to other, more tractable cases as expeditiously as possible. 'Crocks' take up scarce resources (staff time, energy, funds, supplies, equipment) and contribute disproportionately to staff burn-out. They are no more than obviously 'suspect' and unpopular reminders of the failure of modern medicine to be able to cope with chronic social and individual health problems, particularly those that are characterized by a goodly overlay of social pathology, on the one hand, and that are seemingly irreversible, on the other. Minority cultures that are struggling for their very lives, for dignity, attention and affirmative action are also inevitably suspect and unpopular. Both RLS-efforts and 'gomers' are unwelcome testimony to shortcomings of the mainstream and to the tremendous will of the neglected and the 'different' to lead their own lives and to find their own satisfactions, regardless of outside pronouncements that nothing can or should be done for them.

### **RLS among the 'Social Movements'**

RLS-efforts may very well consist of the efforts of individuals, even, on occasion, of the activity of an isolated individual, but they are much more characteristically socially patterned and organized activities of the type that sociologists refer to as 'social movements'. But where, exactly, do RLS-efforts belong in the long array of types of social movements studied by social scientists? RLS movements not only differ in many respects from the 'collective behavior' phenomena (crowds, mobs, panic scenes, riots, etc.) that sociologists and social psychologists of an earlier generation so frequently studied, but they also differ



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those of the latter societies being organizationally, institutionally, materially and conceptually more advanced and, therefore, more capable of accepting the inevitability of cultural change and able to influence its outcome via political and economic means. Champagne's analysis should once and for all remove the penumbra of backwardness and irrationality from efforts of the RLS type. Such efforts may fail or prevail, depending on rationally analyzable factors (i.e. they do so on the basis of means and circumstances totally like those that govern the success and failure of the other social movements with which they must compete), differing from their contemporary competitors more with respect to ends than to means. Indeed, given the scarcity of means that most RLS-efforts have at their disposition, a good case can be made that they often *attempt to be more rational* with respect to their deployment than is frequently the case for movements that are socially ascendant.<sup>2</sup> All in all, attempts to convince the modern mind of the rationality of ethnocultural behavior-and-identity reintensification movements have experienced some success during the past half century, but much greater impact in this direction is still necessary before RLS-efforts will be commonly viewed as the natural, thoughtful and constructive undertakings that their participants take them to be.

## **RLS, 'Backward Looking' Resistance to Change, and Cultural Conservatism**

Another oft-repeated stereotypic charge is that RLS and related re-ethnification or ethnic re-intensification movements are backward looking ('past-oriented'), conservative, change-resistant dinosaurs. Of course, most basic philosophical values tend to have their origins in the past and small cultures that are now in particular danger of erosion naturally recognize a past when that was not (or not as much) the case. RLS-efforts are very sensitive, due to their very goal-consciousness *per se*, to the constant diminution in the numbers or proportions of speakers/users of the language-in-culture on behalf of which they struggle, to the incursions of time, to the fact that things were better 'then' than they are 'now'. But this does not need to make them more 'backward looking' (if by that we mean: seriously pursuing a return to and a preservation of the past) than are most other opponents of present evils, injustices and dislocations. Shall we designate as 'backward looking' all those who remember when urban neighborhoods were much safer, cleaner and far less polluted than they are today, merely because they strive toward a closer approximation to past superior standards in these respects? Many others, besides RLSers, yearn for social and cultural arrangements that will foster stronger family bonds of affection, mutual care and concern, respect, ethical



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The ability of universality and particularism to develop and co-exist simultaneously within the very same populations was a rude awakening for both Marxist and non-Marxist theorists who had assumed that industrialization, urbanization, modernization and the spread of education would inevitably reduce ethnic consciousness and lead to the demise of narrower loyalties in favor of broader ones. This prediction was not confirmed, narrower and broader loyalties being far more syncretistic than theory-conscious intellectuals had imagined, and the post-industrial Left was forced to identify with rather than continue to reject the cultural self-regulatory aspirations of ethnic minorities in the West itself. Bourgeois thinkers too went through much soul-searching and reformulation in the light of the evident significance of ethnicity within mainstream academia itself. Ethnicity efforts came to be viewed as reformist of mainstream insensitivity, much like pro-environmental, anti-sexist and anti-bigness or anti-industrial-growth efforts. However, even this is not the entire story, since ethnicity efforts *are* sometimes allied with conservative political, religious and moral reform efforts as well. Ultimately, however, although much has changed in mainstream thought concerning ethnicity since Lord Acton, most recent developments in ethnicity theory still treat ethnicity as *reactive to* or as *transformational of* other, more basic material circumstances and aspirations.

This evident disinclination (even after 150 years of painful and reluctant theoretical change) toward accepting ethnicity in its own right, as a permeable, changeable but ultimately also quite robust and recurring identity-values-behavior complex, a complex that situationally influences aspects of mainstream as well as sidestream life, even under the most modern circumstances, remains a blindspot in social theory that only further 'rethinking' can overcome. The ultimate theoretical contribution of RLS research and theory to general social science theory is not only their assistance in developing a sociology of RLS-efforts *per se* but, in addition, their rich potential for providing further empirical and theoretical perspective contributory toward the rethinking of ethnicity as such.<sup>7</sup> Rather than being viewed as threats to the state or as by-products of split labor markets or even of boundary maintenance processes *per se*<sup>8</sup> (none of which, by the way, give signs of disappearing from the horizon in the foreseeable future), ethnicity and ethnicity movements must come to be appreciated more ethnographically and phenomenologically, i.e. more from the point of view of the insider who experiences them rather than from the point of view of the outsider who views them, telescopically or microscopically, from afar without appreciating, therefore, their affective significance. So terrified are most Western thinkers of the charge of 'primordialism' that they refuse to understand the recurring appeal of primordialism to common folk the world over. Like physicians who refuse to appreciate the common man's dread of cancer or AIDS, they therefore,



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from the Jewish life round about them in Palestine as well as from the Jewish life, primarily Yiddish-speaking Eastern European, from which most of the revivers of spoken Hebrew and their followers had come. That they could make a virtue out of this double alienation is merely a testimony to the self-sufficient life-style that they were able to establish and the robustness of the sociocultural boundaries that they long maintained between themselves and other Jews (whom they obviously viewed as 'Xmen-via-Yish'). Even so, many of the Hebrew-revernacularizing townlets and kibbutzim failed, as have almost all of the experimental communities established too expressly for language maintenance or RLS purposes.

We will examine some of the difficulties and solutions that pertain to this stage below, after we have reviewed all of the stages. At this point, it must suffice to say that *if this stage is not satisfied, all else can amount to little more than biding time*, at best generation by generation, without a natural, self-priming social mechanism having been engendered thereby. For a language that has shrunk to 10% of its former 'realm', remaining at 10% may seem like an accomplishment of sorts, but it is also a confirmation to 90% of the population that the ideal of 'Xmen-via-Yish' is really the more viable alternative. That is why simply maintaining the stage 7 *status-quo-ante* is an undesirable long-term 'solution' for endangered languages. Attaining stage 6 is a necessary, even if not a sufficient, desideratum of RLS. Unlike other stages, when stage 6 is transcended it is not merely 'left behind'; quite the contrary: all subsequent stages must be diligently tied back to and connected with stage 6 if they too are to contribute to the living reality of RLS rather than merely to its propagandistic hoopla, one-upmanship or hype. It is here that the revolutionary link-up between Xish and 'childhood through youth' is accomplished and retained (Levitt and Rubenstein, 1972).

Stage 5 entails formal linguistic socialization. Although such socialization does not need to be restricted to literacy and literacy alone, that indeed is by far the lion's share of what this stage entails in modern settings. Whether restricted to literacy or not, this stage adds additional varieties to the learner's repertoire, above and beyond those that can be acquired in the largely oral and familiar interaction within most family, neighborhood and community intergenerational situations. The availability of more formal varieties (and, in modern life, reading/writing essentially involves more formal varieties than does most of speech) gives Xish a range which enables it to be more comfortable *vis-à-vis* the predictably greater ranges that are normally available in Yish and Zish, due to the intergroup, governmental and econotechnical functions of the latter. Xish religious, legal and oral traditions can all be tapped for the elaboration of such more formal varieties and the attainment of literacy in one or another of these varieties contributes to the attainment and solidification of wider intracommunal bonds



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The Yish mainstream itself has failed at correcting the very neighborhood and family problems that RLS must face if it is to succeed. Certainly RLS should distance itself from the Orwellian vision of a war-ravaged world in which the functions of the family have been taken over by stultifying and impersonal child-rearing institutions. Quite the contrary! RLS should be at the forefront of returning communities, neighborhoods and families to the values, norms and behaviors that have preferential and historical validity for them. Many of the problems of Yish society itself are due to the very fact that most larger societal systems will not work without important input from the family. Although it is far from clear that RLS-efforts will be more successful than others that have attempted to influence family patterns, its inevitably smaller scale and its greater focus on the young, the old, the sick, the poor and the neglected are its greatest safeguards and its basic strengths. The small successes that it can attain (small in the light of the enormity of the problems that it must tackle) will be beacons of promise for others who are willing to be involved in an ennobling struggle even though it is a struggle that they may not fully win.<sup>14</sup>

The basic dilemma of RLS-efforts everywhere is that their success requires overcoming the very problems of modern life that the strongest societies and cultures have not been able to overcome. The basic strength of RLS-efforts is that they can afford to take a less ponderous, more grass-roots approach to these problems and, thereby, seek to come to the attention of and become more identified with those whose lives they aim to influence.

### **The School: The Bridge between 'The Weak Side' and 'The Strong Side' Approaches to RLS**

For maximal RLS success some type of school must be an integral part of the family-neighborhood axis of child socialization and identity-commitment formation. Schools cannot succeed, whether their goal be RLS or merely history or mathematics instruction, if the relationship between teachers, parents and students is distant and if these parties are estranged from each other, from the curriculum and from self and community actualizing experience. 'Schools are the children of the community', it has been wisely said, but this adage is little more than novel verbiage, 'educationese', because the state of affairs that it describes has become an impossible dream, purely 'pie in the sky' as far as most education is concerned. On the one hand, mainstream parents and communities have little to say about what goes on in the school that their children attend. On the other hand, mainstream schools themselves do not seem to comprehend the extent to which the schools had been challenged, every bit as much as has the



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On the basis of detailed analyses of ten threatened language-in-society constellations and of three formerly endangered but now secure constellations, Professor Fishman not only develops a closely argued theory of worldwide efforts on behalf of 'reversing language shift' (RLS), but also applies this same line of reasoning to the problems of maintaining the intergenerational continuity of second languages, ethnic heritage languages and religious classical languages. The cases discussed are indigenous and immigrant languages drawn from several continents and are presented in considerable detail, focusing on the period since 1975, after the collapse of the ethnic revival. Combining quantitative and qualitative data and attending to both the theoretical and applied dimensions of RLS, Professor Fishman argues for the fundamental distinction between the need to attain diglossic arrangements, when RLS efforts are still weak and in need of within-group stabilisation, and the need to go beyond such arrangements in order to attain local cultural and political autonomy when circumstances permit. The necessary, but not sufficient, stage for all RLS success, whether of the first or of the second kind, is the attainment of home-family-neighbourhood language-in-culture self-regulation. The modernistic tendency to gravitate prematurely toward higher order RLS pursuits (e.g. schools in lieu of compulsory education, the mass media and the worksphere) is revealed to be debilitating rather than facilitating if home-family-neighbourhood control has not previously been attained. Popular (but premature) reliance on schools and on corpus planning on behalf of RLS are revealed to be instances of uninformed and wasteful mimicry, unrelated to the actual dynamics of intergenerational disadvantaged mother tongue (or other non-mainstream language) transmission. Many maps, tables and figures enhance the effectiveness of the entire presentation.

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