

PROBLEMS AND PERSPECTIVES OF CONTACT LINGUISTICS FROM A ROMANCE SCHOLAR'S POINT OF VIEW.

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0. Introduction

In the following paper I shall outline one or two facts, problems and desiderata which I consider of importance for the questions currently being discussed in the realm of *contact linguistics*. As my own competence is limited to the study of Romance languages, this will be done purely from a Romance scholars's point of view. I shall be considering problems concerning the history of science and at the same time I shall show briefly in what respects the study of Romance languages was in a way bound from the very start to depend on *contact linguistics*. Then I shall consider the function of the roofing language (*Dachsprache*) in the formation of the various Romance languages. Here I shall be using the terminology of Heinz Kloss, who is well known for his work in this field. And I should then like to consider some deficiencies in the method and methodology in linguistics, especially in the areas of classification and pattern recognition. I shall call for the re-examination of certain terms such as *describe*, *explain* and *causality*, which are often used very carelessly. Finally, I shall mention one or two ethical problems, for we know that every language contact involves a language conflict, and there is often a rather strong temptation, to follow consciously or unconsciously, the example of LITTERATURE ENGAGEE by carrying out LINGUISTIQUE ENGAGEE.

1. Romance Philology: an Eldorado of *Contact Linguistics*

If I avoid giving a definition of *contact linguistics* and simply say that Uriel Weinrich's book Languages in Contact (1953) most nearly approaches contact linguistics as it ought to be, then that should suffice for the moment to soothe my conscience as a Romance scholar interested in contact linguistic research.

Dante's treatise De vulgari eloquentia (1303) and the numerous voices of the Italian, French and Spanish humanists, who all see the Romance languages as arising from processes of blending and barbarisation (see Schmitt 1982), show that the first conceptions of the nature and structure of the Romance languages which can be regarded as properly scientific, tend to be heterogeneous and open rather than homogeneous and closed. I should like to recall Ascoli's catchphrases "materia romana e spirito tedesco" and "materia tedesca e forma romana" during his work on Rhaeto-Romanic, when he realised the far-reaching influence of more than a thousand years of contact with German. This influence is seen in phenomena of *superstratum* and *adstratum* which can be represented both by the borrowing of single lexemes and more radically by contaminations of grammatical structure. Just two examples will serve to show the vast range of phenomena in this domain. It stretches from very old loan words like the Surselvan *tšadún* "spoon", which is derived from Gothic *skaiþo* (with the same meaning), to semantic Germanisms like Surselvan *udir* (from Latin AUDĪRE) which, following the Alemannic German pattern, has not only the inherited Latin meaning "hear" but also "belong" or "be fitting" (DECĒRE). Both of these examples of contact linguistic influence also apply to the Ladin spoken in South Tyrol.

A further example from yet another area of the Romance-speaking countries is provided by Gerhard Rohlfs, who in 1947 in a similar vein to Ascoli speaks of "the linguistic spirit of Greek in Southern Italy". He means by this the contact phenomena between Greek and Southern Italic Romance in the autochthonous dialects of Calabria and Apulia. For example, both the Greek spoken in Greece and that of the Greek speech enclaves in Calabria lack the direct infinitive construction, as do some other Balkan languages including Rumanian. This syntactic characteristic is also found in Calabrian Romance. In the Greek of Bova (in Calabria) "you (pl.) want to come" is *thélite na ertite*, where *na* corresponds to Ancient Greek *hína* (ἵνα); in Calabrian the same phrase is *voliti mu veniti*. The Italian construction *volete venire* is unknown in Calabrian. The number of such examples to be found in the Romance languages, of every

possible date and origin, is almost unlimited.

In addition to Ascoli, we must also mention Hugo Schuchardt, Karl Jaberg, and Jakob Jud, who all dealt with the problem of substratum and interference within the framework of the Romance languages. As part of the preparation for the 5th International Congress of Linguists in Brussels in 1939, a questionnaire was sent out, and the answers revealed the high standard of *contact linguistic* research being carried out in the Romance languages (Réponses (...) 1939). At that time the terms *superstratum* and *adstratum* had already been coined (in 1939) by Walter von Wartburg and Marius Valkhoff respectively, and the problems concerning languages in contact had already been dealt with in terms of the 3-way division *superstratum, substratum, adstratum*. Among the answers received to the questionnaire, those of the Romance scholars Gino Bottiglioni, Vittore Pisani, Ernst Gamillscheg, Guy de Poerck, Walther von Wartburg, Giovanni Alessio, Benvenuto Terracini and Giandomenico Serra are of particular note. Yet even at that time it was clear that French researchers, for example, were not showing much interest in the question of language contact, so that the grandiose voice of Antoine Meillet remained more or less isolated. This was certainly in part due to the fact that the various languages in Iberia, Italy and Rumania were not shrouded in such profound politico-cultural and aesthetic taboos as they were in France. It seems reasonable to assume that the «Défense et Illustration de la Langue Française» by Joachim Du Bellay, which was published in 1549, worked both directly and indirectly towards preventing the full development of contact linguistic research in its various aspects for a long time.

Namely, it was as a result of this book that the interest and energy of French linguists was concentrated on examining the high and state language of France exclusively. This in turn accounts for the high level of French research in the areas of style and grammar from the 17th century on. In Germany at the beginning of the 19th century when an ethnic and national resurgence went hand in hand with the blossoming of Indo-Germanic and Germanic philology, a figure such as J.A. Schmeller (1785-1852) was more or less a natural occurrence, to which

however there was no counterpart in the parts of France where the cultural and political climate was controlled by Paris. François Raynouard (1761-1836), a Frenchman from the South, who in the history of Romance linguistics is often referred to as the predecessor of Friedrich Diez (1794-1876), cannot be compared to Schmeller with respect to either his distinction as a scholar or his cultural and political influence within France.

On Diez and Raynouard see Vârvaro 1968, 53 sq. and 33 sq, as well as Jordan 1962: 1-22, on Schmeller see also the recent publication by Knoop 1982: 13-16.

Further it should be noted that certain fringe regions of the Francophone area - I am thinking here of Wallonia (Belgium) and the Suisse Romande (West Switzerland) were far ahead of metropolitan France in the scientific exploration of their own highly heterogeneous linguistic legacy. As an example I may mention the outstanding scholar Jules Gilliéron, the creator of the French language atlas - ALF, who was from West Switzerland (cf. Pop & Pop 1959).

Finally I must mention two lines of research which have become very active of late - *Catalonian* and *Occitanian* sociolinguistics. The concern of the Catalonian and Occitanian sociolinguists is not only to gain scientific knowledge - which is of course free from value-judgements - but also to go beyond this in effecting a *Sprachausbau* (*linguistic upgrading*) of Catalan and Occitanian and also the linguistic emancipation of these peoples. In both cases, the sociolinguistics is carried out entirely within the framework of the well-known and universally accepted complementary set of concepts: *contact* and *conflict*, while at the same time paying particular attention to social-psychological aspects.

See on this point for example Lafont 1974, Bec 1967, Nelli 1973, Bayle 1975, Rivière 1980 and Bonnaud 1983. In this case Lafont and Bec represent a language ideology which originated in Languedoc, while Bayle and Rivière came from Provence and Bonnaud, for example, stands for an extreme regionalism (in this case restricted to the Auvergne).

One can see that in the domain of Romance studies, *contact linguistics* has a rich supply of data and there is no lack of

material regarding methodology and the history of research. I regard this fact as particularly important because although *contact linguistics* is a so-called "new" paradigm, from the point of view of Romance studies it is much more a case of *sub specie continuitatis* than *sub specie revolutionis scientificae*. Thus in the programme of the 17th International Congress of Romance Studies in Aix-en-Provence (Summer 1983) a separate section on *Language Contact* is planned. The inclusion of this section in the programme of the congress is probably due to the *genius loci* (Aix-en-Provence!) and the involvement with *contact linguistics* apparent in the overall paradigm of Romance studies rather than to an international trend to language contact studies.

2. The Significance of Writing as a Fundamental Regulator in Cultures where the Written Word predominates: Written Language - Roofing Language (*Dachsprache*)

I now wish to turn to the problem of *roofing language* in connection with the development of the Romance languages. There is no explicit use of this term in Heinz Kloss's writings; he speaks rather of "roofless dialects", that is, dialects without a homogeneous written language roof. Nevertheless, as far as its meaning is concerned I should like the term *roofing language* (*Dachsprache*) to be understood as having been coined by Kloss.

In this connection I refer to the following titles by Heinz Kloss: 1976 and 1978. The views of L. Weisgerber on this topic seem to me to still be of major importance. See Weisgerber 1955 and 1967.

What is a *roofing language* and how does it work? According to Western European cultural understanding, every *roofing language* has a written form consisting of a more or less standardised orthography and a spoken form, taught in schools, consisting of an orthoepy which is controlled by the orthography on the basis of a set of rules. Everyone who goes to school and learns to read and write possesses a special typological feeling for the juxtaposition of "correct" writing and "correct" speaking (i.e. "speaking as is written").

The written forms of *roofing languages* are usually homogeneous with the dialects which they "roof", but this need not be the case. In earlier times the instances of heterogeneous "roofing" of dialectal diasystems were more frequent: in the Middle Ages as a result of the widespread use of Medieval Latin in the Roman Catholic parts of Europe this was virtually the rule. Further it should be noted that a given dialectal diasystem may have only one written *roofing language*. But alternatively it may have several written *roofing languages* alongside each other, which in turn stand in relation to each other in a corresponding sociolinguistic hierarchy. Thus the German dialects of Germany, Austria and German Switzerland have one historical (homogeneous) *roofing language*, while the German dialects of the South Tyrol have had a double *roofing language* ever since the First World War: today they have a main *homogeneous* roof in German and a secondary *heterogeneous* roof in Italian, both of which are taught in the schools.

The German dialects of Alsace-Lorraine, on the other hand, have nowadays in principle only a heterogeneous main *roofing language*, i.e. French. This relative unimportance of the High German standard language (in written and spoken form) in Alsace-Lorraine might just provide sufficient grounds for referring to High German as the secondary or auxiliary *roofing language* of Alsace-Lorraine. Speakers of both a *roofing language* and roofed dialects, who are thus *per definitionem* multilingual (one could say they have both a *dialectal* competence and an *orthoepic* competence), make ingenuous typological connections between the *roofing language* and the roofed dialects. These ingenuous connections can in some cases have profound effects both upon the form of the dialect and upon the sociopsychological assessment of the *roofing language*. For example, in Alsace, the native German dialects are beset to such an extent by the spoken French derived from the French standard *roofing language*, that their inner grammatical structure is becoming constantly more and more contaminated and the social or sociolinguistic context in which they are used more and more limited.

On the problem of the internal language influences between German and French (French \leftrightarrow German) see Matzen 1973. On questions

of the sociolinguistic stratification of German (dialects and High German) and French I refer the reader to Ladin 1982. In Alsace there exists only *High French*. An indigenous Romance *dialect* does not exist for historical reasons. But there is a "français régional" which is typical for Alsace.

The ideology of the *roofing language* as it is taught in European schools both today and in the past normally presupposes a regular and thus invariable correspondence between orthography and orthoepy. This means that speakers may often develop an ingenuous opinion about the typological categorisation of the written *roofing language* and everyday dialect which is not scientifically substantiated. This means that in the local cultural and political scene the points of view generally held on the genealogy, classification and stratification of the idioms in contact can often vary considerable from the opinions held among genuine scholars. At this point I would like to draw particular attention to this juxtaposition of two levels of classification which are often completely different in their teleology. Many speakers of a language and many linguists are often not aware of this basic duplication when two diverging points of view conflict with each other. A classic example of this is South Carinthia with its Windish-Slovenian problem. On this see Daim 1976, Veiter 1980 and Kronsteiner 1974.

Many natives of Alsace no longer see a plausible linguistic connection of the kind *dialect - roofing language* between the *Elsässerdeutsch* they speak and the *High German* they (eventually) write. For them *Elsässerdeutsch* and *High German* are two typologically distinct and thus separate systems. On the other hand many Occitanians would say on the basis of their ingenuous linguistic instinct that it is "better" and more "natural" to regard High French as the *roofing language* of their everyday dialect (which we would call *francitan* or *français régional occitan*) than to regard one of the many modern Occitanian written language forms as the *roofing language* of their spoken Occitanian dialect.

The various discussions about codification, particularly in areas in which Occitanian, Catalan and Romansh are spoken, make it clear that the problem of the *linguistic upgrading* of

the correct, i.e. linguistically best-adapted and socially highest-ranking written *roofing language*, is of extreme importance for the language community. The various endeavours in this direction are indicative of its importance. So too are the conflicts about the normalisation of certain standard written *roofing language* and about the standardisation of the contexts in which they are used - conflicts which are often both profound and of long duration.

Conflicts of this sort also exist in Graubünden, about the question as to whether it is sensible to have a large Bündner-Romansh standard written *roofing language* alongside the various dialects or instead of five small regional ones. A working group has been just recently established at the University of Zürich headed by the well-known Zürich Romance scholar Heinrich Schmid with the aim of making new suggestions for a solution to this problem which has such a long tradition in Graubünden.

The new Romansh standard written language is called Rumantsch Grischun. Its main use would be in communication between the regions of Graubünden and between other parts of Switzerland and Graubünden where Romansh would be the appropriate means of communication (e.g. the administration in Romansh-speaking parts of Graubünden writing to the central Swiss government in Berne, an outsider sending an advertisement to be printed in Romansh Graubünden newspaper etc.) On this view see Schmid 1982. From a negative point of view, the consequences of the ban imposed on the Catalan written standard *roofing language* after the end of the Spanish Civil War in 1939 show how the continued presence of a standardised written *roofing language* controls the regional and sociolectal variants of speakers both linguistically and metalinguistically. If this controlling influence of the standard *Dachsprache* disappears as happened overnight after 1939, then an important standard of reference is withdrawn from the language community and with it both its direct and indirect effects. As regards its direct influence, the normative role of the *roofing language* is missing on the orthographic, orthoepic, morphological, syntactic, lexical and semantic levels. Generally speaking, the language community is semiotically disorientated owing to the fact that the normative

function of the Dachsprache with its connected metalinguistic hierarchies of value is no longer available. When in 1939 in Catalonia written Catalan was banned, henceforth to be replaced by written Spanish, this led to psycholinguistic processes which had an unfavourable effect on the Catalonian language community. These negative effects could only be slowed down or - in some cases - almost completely reversed in the late 70s after General Franco's death. This can be seen in the present-day battle in Catalonia over the unity of the Catalan language or rather over the independence of Valencian as a language quite separate from Barcelonian Catalan.

The literature on this topic is very rich (in particular that of Catalan origin). As typical examples I refer to articles or surveys by Badia i Margarit 1977, Kremnitz 1979, *Linguistique catalane* 1973, Ninyoles 1975, Sanchis Guarner 1980, *Treballs de Sociolingüística* (1977-1980) and Vallverdú 1973.

It is quite possible to interpret the development of the Romance languages as a result of the gradual change in the written standard *roofing languages* of the Romance-speaking countries. It is a well documented fact that under classical Latin as *roofing language*, a very lively and both regionally and socially very varied spoken Latin existed. Nevertheless, many researchers both today and in the past have been hesitant to admit that this "vulgar Latin" possessed such variety and have preferred to hang on to the idea of vulgar Latin as being largely unified both regionally and sociolectally. In this connection vol. I of Günter Reichenkrons *Historische latein-altromanische Grammatik* (1965) provides a survey from the point of view of the history of science which is most interesting in this connection. There existed for example- as the researches of Josef Schrijnen (1939), Christine Mohrmann (1955) and the Finnish School of Latin scholars have shown - not only a heathen Latin *roofing language* but also a special Christian Latin which was the decisive *roofing language* for certain parts of the population particularly in the later years of the Roman Empire. The fall of the Roman Empire brought with it a reduction, division and reorganisation in the position of the *roofing language* and peoples' awareness of it, in particular in those

classes who were the upholders of civilisation in Romance-speaking countries. This is to be seen particularly in the testimony of the grammarians, in the large amount of literature in the form of glosses and antibarbari and also in the gradual development of new names for languages (based above all on the roots ROMANUS, ROMANICUS and ROMANICE).

On this point I refer for a survey of the literature to Tagliavini 1964: 119-134, Koll 1964 and Paris 1909.

I ignore here information which the linguist can gain directly about the question of the *roofing language* from philological analysis of preserved linguistic documents. As regards the later history of vulgar or popular *roofing languages* in Romance-speaking lands, the high and late Middle Ages are of particular importance. At this time the various Romance *roofing languages* appeared in the form we know them today and in addition a linguistic attitude which was collectively felt came into being. This consisted of a socio-psychological awareness of the *roofing language*, to be seen very clearly for example in France in the royal language decrees of the 15th and 16th centuries and in the various treatises of the humanists, which were concerned with questions of language-aesthetics, norms and language-planning. A parallel to this, this time in the southern part of France, can be seen in the *dying-out* of an Occitanian standard written language, with both its linguistic and metalinguistic aspects. This is a process which is still continuing to this day and which is nowadays generally called patoisement.

It is interesting that the majority of Romance *roofing languages* are closely connected with specific places (Paris and the Ile-de-France in France, Florence and Tuscany in Italy and Madrid and Castile in Spain) so that, figuratively speaking, the typological embedding of the various *Dachsprachen* of France, Italy and Spain within specific dialectal regions can be studied today by a journey through the places in question. In contrast to this, the New High German *Dachsprache* arose from a process of interregional mixing, so that it is today not possible to go to a particular place in which, so to speak, the New High German standard written *roofing language* is to be found.

I would particularly emphasise here that while it is true that one hears popular views as to where the "best German" (in the sense of a spoken *roofing language*) is spoken (this is supposed to be the case, for example in Hannover, in Prague, in Trient/Trento (Italy) etc. - whereby the view that it is to be found in the last two places was previously widely held in Austria and Southern Germany), these views can in no way be justified or confirmed by scientific criteria. Here we are clearly dealing with two different ways of considering the question.

Just as is the case in many other areas of Western European cultural and intellectual life, the Romance tendency is toward centralistic organisation in linguistic and cultural phenomena, the Germanic more toward decentralism. In recent times both in Romance-speaking countries and elsewhere, it has often been possible to observe how the situation of the *roofing language* has been more or less abruptly changed by political occurrences. I would mention here the slow dying-out of Catalan since the 15th century, the parallel death of Occitanian, and also fairly recent processes like the decline of the High French *roofing language* in the Val d'Aosta since 1860, but especially since the time of Mussolini. In addition, there is the dismantling of the High German roof in the South Tyrol, also since the time of Mussolini, and the progressive removal of the heterogeneous French standard written *roofing language* in Flanders, which came to a temporary end with the Netherlandisation of the University of Ghent in 1930. Recent modifications in *roofing languages* have been accompanied by profound and well-documented upheavals both sociolinguistically and psycholinguistically in the affected language-communities. Unfortunately we know much too little, apart from anecdotal information, about the internal mechanism of these things. If contact linguists were aware of the enormous resources of data and methods from Romance-speaking lands and Romance studies in this area, they could benefit greatly from them.

3. Comparing, Ordering, Structuring

I shall now turn to problems of *classification, pattern recognition* and *typology*. I should like to say first of all that it is always somewhat embarrassing to be asked straight out "how many" Romance "languages" exist and "which" they are. Quite honestly, I do not know, though it might be better to say that I can not give a proper answer because the question has not been put properly. In fact, from a scientific point of view, the problem as a whole cannot be dealt with in the form of an imprecisely put question. The canon of Romance languages accepted as such by Romance studies has its own involved history. In 1934, in an essay on Die Entstehung der Sprachgrenzen im Inneren der Romania, Walter von Wartburg could still give the following light-hearted judgement: "Statt einer Sprache stehen heute deren 9 da: rumänisch, italienisch, sardisch, rätoromanisch, französisch, provenzalisch, katalanisch, spanisch, portugiesisch." (Wartburg 1934: 211). It used to be that simple, and that was more or less how I learned it as a student. I may remind you that Friedrich Diez, the founder of Romance philology, saw this canon as follows: (I quote from Vol. I of his Grammatik der romanischen Sprachen, 3rd edition, Bonn, 1870: 3): "Zwei östliche, die italienische und walachische zwei südwestliche, die spanische und portugiesische; zwei nordwestliche, die provenzalische und französische." In addition, Diez mentions Churwälisch, in other words the Rhaeto-Romance of Graubünden and the Tyrol, which he places typologically close to Provençal and French. And Wilhelm Meyer-Lübke, one of the greatest of all Romance scholars, in his Einführung in das Studium der romanischen Sprachwissenschaft (3rd edition, Heidelberg: 1920: 17) gave the following list, mentioning, though, that it was only to be regarded as provisional: (...) "von Osten nach Westen: 1. Rumänisch, 2. Dalmatinisch (the last speaker of which apparently died in 1898), 3. Rätoromanisch, 4. Italienisch, 5. Sardisch, 6. Provenzalisch, 7. Französisch, 8. Spanisch, 9. Portugiesisch."

What is immediately striking is that both Diez and Meyer-Lübke omit Catalan. Since for these authors a "language" is defined on the basis of the existence of corresponding literature, a degree of astonishment at this omission is certainly justified. In view of what can be read in any Catalonian literary history,

we must today conclude that between 1836 and 1870, that is, between the first and third editions of the first volume of his Grammatik der romanischen Sprachen, Friedrich Diez was ignorant of the whole of the Catalan *linguistic upgrading*. Apparently he knew nothing of famous names in contemporary Catalonian literature such as Carles Aribau, Victor Balaguer, Jacint Verdaguer, Angel Guimerà or Joan Maragall. And for a long time Wilhelm Meyer-Lübke knew nothing of the re-introduction of the *Jocs florals* in Barcelona in 1859, nor of the founding of the *Institut d'Estudis Catalans* in 1911 in Barcelona, nor - which is worse - of Pompeu FABRA, the gifted, and best language planner in the whole of Europe who had published the Gramática de la lengua catalana in 1912, Normes ortogràfiques in 1913, Diccionari ortogràfic in 1917 and so on. One stands aghast, therefore, before the following judgement on Catalan in the 3rd edition of Meyer-Lübke's Einführung in 1920 (p. 26): "Das Katalanische ist ein mit dem Zurückweichen der Araber vordringender provenzalischer Dialekt, der außer der Mittelmeerküste mit Valencia und Barcelona auch die Balearen und Pithyusen umfaßt und ferner in Alghero in Sardinien gesprochen wird." Still, it is to Meyer-Lübke's credit that he recognised his mistake and after a stay in Catalonia in 1923 - a visit which proved to be of great personal value to him - offered a contrite apology with his little book Das Katalanische, which appeared two years later (1925). And very pleased the Catalonians were about it too; they are grateful to him to this day (see Badia i Margarit 1977: 93-109).

In view of the fact that great names like Diez and Meyer-Lübke were able to overlook such a striking *linguistic upgrading* as Catalan, I cannot help wondering, with some consternation, which analogous phenomena we *contact linguists* are overlooking at the present time without realising it. From a methodological point of view, it must be emphasised that every classification, in addition to being dependent on innumerable conditions, is above all a means to an end. Anyone who looks at the multiplicity of Romance-speaking lands and finds therein a certain order, has imposed what he hopes to find on what he sees.

Theoretically, there is an unlimited number of classifications

possible for one and the same reality. It is possible though to distinguish roughly the following aims of a classification:

1. classifications for *scientists*
2. classifications for *politico-cultural scholars*
3. classifications for *speakers of certain idioms*

Wartburg's list of languages cited above, and those of Diez and Meyer-Lübke, are a mixture of these three types. Taking France as an example: for French politico-cultural scholars there are the following "languages" in France:- One *langue nationale*, i.e. French and three *langues allogènes* or *étrangères* i.e. Dutch (which many French prefer to call Flemish- a case of glottotomy, see Goebel 1979), German and Catalan, which are called *allogène* and not *autochtone* or *nationale* because the main area in which they are spoken is in other, non-French, countries. Finally the term *langue régionale* is used here and there, to refer to the 4 idioms Basque, Breton, Occitanian and Corsican or to their upgraded forms.

The speakers of these *langues allogènes* and *régionales*, however, keep the number of idioms which are allowed the honourable title of languages (*langues*) open on principle. So these people consider High French as only one of the languages (*langues*) of France (*le français: une des langues de France*). And they reject the distinction between *langue nationale* (always single), *langue régionale*, *langue allogène*, and so on. In these regionalist circles one refers to single cases only as *langue*, a word always used in the singular with a local predicate attached. In addition to the 7 non-French languages which have long been on the scene of the French cultural battle, idioms like Picard, Norman, Gallo (the French term for the language of Romance Brittany) or Walloon have recently been demanding the right to be called *langues*, both by the in-group (that is, the users themselves) and the out-group (all other French citizens). If one were to try and do the same thing for Spain, Italy or the whole of Romance Creole, even for the twentieth century alone, one would have a very long list indeed of such *linguistic upgrading*. The result would be a book with a content on the scale of Heinz Kloss's splendid synthesis (Kloss 1978; 1st edition 1950) Die Entwicklung

neuer germanischer Kultursprachen seit 1800.

But what about classification for purely *scientific* reasons? On the basis of long years of theoretical and practical concern with such problems I should be inclined to say that things look far from promising. This becomes immediately clear when one compares the linguist's attempts at classification with those of the sociologist, the psychologist, the geographer, the economist - not to mention the biologist. It is no exaggeration to say that it is really a little like looking from the Middle Ages into modern times.

To justify my opinion I invite the reader to compare Y. Malkiel's research report on the efforts to set up a system of classification in Romance languages with what has been achieved in the areas of sociometry, psychometry, econometrics or biometrics. In the case of the latter disciplines I refer to the large-scale handbooks by Sneath/Sokal 1973, Bock 1974 and Chandon/Pinson 1981 and to any handbook on applied statistics, numerical taxonomy or operations research.

It seems to me that this is one of those areas in which modern *contact linguistics* must work intensively in order to find the possible solution to the problem of a universal DISTINGUO. Contact linguists need to be in a position to bring together the highly disparate data available, to summarise and simplify them, and to find structuring patterns in them, in order either to do away with or to substantiate old hypotheses, or to form new ones. I shall now give very briefly the main requirements which every classification should meet.

The starting point should be a trinity of cognitive concepts: *operational taxonomical unit (OTU)*, *character* (in the sense of characteristic or feature), and *relation*. *OTUs* are the smallest units of language, such as idiolects, local dialects, narrow sociolects, all of which are characterised by a very large number of linguistic features, or *characters*. These *characters* correspond in turn to language-internal and -external features of the *OTUs* under consideration and must be measured appropriately.

The pre-sorting of contact linguistic data according to *OTUs* and *features* is not difficult to carry out using the tools of

historical grammar (phonology, morphology, syntax and the lexicon), of structural and generative linguistics or of sociolinguistics. Thus in their time the Romance and Germanic language geographers succeeded very well in isolating minimal units of dialect languages in the form of local dialects and in characterising them by means of a relatively large number of features. The isolation of the features was even done in a way that can stand comparison with presentday metrologic standards. Nowadays calling on the vocabulary of *measurement theory (metrology)* and empirical social research we can see that the *reliability* and *validity* of the measurement in this survey of features were very high. Moreover the procedures for the isolation of features can now be so precisely formulated that they can be carried out using computers. The more recent work in sociolinguistics following, for example, the direction of W. Labov has acted in a completely analogous way. However one must remember that measurements with quantities of data which are *geographically* determined are much easier than measurements of data which are *psychological* or *sociological* in origin. To this degree the task of sociolinguistics is a good deal more difficult than, for example, that of classical linguistic geography.

The *OTUs* and *characters* render necessary the construction of an at least *two-dimensional matrix*, whose existence as a formal underlying scheme is the precondition for the use of the *relations*. As I have mentioned above, the analysis into *OTUs* and *characters* is quite possible using the means available to modern linguistics. In this area there is a general operational clarity, especially since the national and regional linguistic atlases or sociolinguistic field studies after the pattern of those by William Labov are available. There is, however, no clarity at all in linguistics about the concept of the *relation* and, in connection with this, about the concept of the *typological space*. These two concepts are of course mathematical in nature and it is well known how reluctant linguists are to have anything to do with things mathematical.

I should like to add that *space* as a *structure of relations* is a concept that has been known for a very long time. It was discovered by the mathematician and philosopher Gottfried

Wilhelm Leibniz, who in 1715 in his work Initia rerum mathematicarum metaphysica defined it as follows "Spatium est ordo coexistendi seu ordo existendi inter ea quae sunt simul". The *relations* tell us in what way certain languages can be seen as connected with one another. This problem is extremely complex, for there are an almost unlimited number of possible ways of defining relatedness.

Here too it is necessary to distinguish between two clearly different ways of viewing a problem. Namely one can attempt to define the *relations* between the *vectors* of *OTU's* (whereby each element vector is characterised by a large number of *features*) in a *speculative* way, so to say, for the general purpose of examining the structure of the data. However, one can also proceed by attempting to create a *model* by undertaking an *experiment* and trying to create a *mathematical* model of the interrelationship between the speakers of one or several languages, which quite certainly exists in some form in empirical reality. Theoretically an infinite number of relations are available for this purpose.

Certainly, when large areas which are linguistically related come into being, only certain of these innumerable possibilities are really used, mostly unconsciously, by the *speakers*. And when one considers these areas from a classificatory point of view, those relations which seem important to the *linguist* for the discovery of connections will be other ones again.

In the case of typological spaces, things are similarly complex. One could, for example, set oneself the problem of depicting all the Romance *roofing languages* as points on a straight line. That would be a classification on a *one-dimensional* scale. Since like pearls on a chain, the points can only be closer or less close to each other and in addition each point can only have a maximum of two neighbours, the pattern which can be generated in such a way can only be very inexact. The quality of the illustration is increased if one decides in favour of a classification on a *two-dimensional* scale. In this way it will be possible to create a model which is much closer to empirical reality. Since humans are capable of grasping things in *three* dimensions (i.e. *Euclidian* space), every classifier should aim to

present the section of empirical reality which he is examining in *three-dimensional* typological space.

With respect to these methods I would like to draw attention especially to my work on dialectometry as a result of which it is possible to gain completely new insights into the structure and function of dialectal networks: See on this Goebel 1981-1983a.

The normal assumption is of a *three-dimensional* space (*OTUs* by *characters* by *relational values*), i.e. one can apply a Euclidian conception of things to the classification process. And this three-dimensional construction represents enormous progress over the *one-dimensionality* of Wartburg's classification of the Romance languages. However, newer methods of classification work on the basis of typological spaces in more than three dimensions, and thus go beyond normal human understanding of space. Neither should one forget that typological spaces are *artificially* generated dimensions and are not on the level of reality. They have, so to speak, the function of a *telescope* held in front of the landscape being looked at. And finally, there is still the lesser problem that, before starting on any classification, one must decide whether the number of classes aimed for is to be fixed beforehand - this is called a *partition* - or whether one leaves the number of classes open. Approaching the question of the number of Romance languages in this way is enough for it to lose its meaning. If *contact linguistics* wants to get at least the same use out of the research instruments of modern numerical classification which the other humanities and the biological sciences have done for about the last 30 or 40 years, then the gap I have just indicated must be closed *quickly* and *decisively*. In any case, the skills and methods which need to be learned are more or less those which are usual in empirical sociological research. And in addition, a type of *contact linguistics* which is methodologically mature in this sense is in a much better position than before to take up interdisciplinary contacts in all directions (for example to anthropology, ethnology, politology, geography, sociology, and so on).

4. A Warning against Wrong Concepts and Badly Defined Terminology

I shall now consider briefly a further question of method. Many linguists are rather careless in their use of concepts like *describe*, *explain* or *causality*. In view of the complex processes which *contact linguists* must deal with, it would also be a good idea if they were to avail themselves of the epistemological experience of other process-orientated sciences in this connection. These also include the natural sciences. We know that modern theory of science has orientated itself largely toward to the problems of natural science. But there are a number of connections between modern theory of science and the humanities which a *contact linguist* should not ignore.

In the concepts *describe*, *explain* and *causality* there are a number of snares and pitfalls connected with both colloquial usage and the history of science, which can be avoided through a sharpened awareness of scientific theory. I should like to point explicitly here to the philosophical teaching of the "*Vienna Circle*" (around R.v. Carnap, M. Schlick, O. Neurath etc.) and the *criticism of language* which they advance. Here the teachings of Ludwig Wittgenstein seem to me particularly important. In his *Tractatus logico-philosophicus* (1921) in point 5.6 he states the following: "Die Grenzen meiner Sprache bedeuten die Grenzen meiner Welt" (The limits of my language are the limits of my world). As a *contact linguist* one should conclude from this that by means of a scientific language, which is chosen and employed with care, it would be possible to broaden considerably the borders of the world of *contact linguistics*.

5. The Problem of Scientific Ethics and Value Judgements in the Area of Contact Linguistics

Finally I shall turn to the problems of scientific ethics. If you know that there is such a thing as *Littérature Engagée*, you may assume that there is also *Linguistique Engagée*. Previously I mentioned that a typical case of *Linguistique Engagée* is to be found in the area of Catalanian and Occitanian sociolinguistics. The Catalanian and Occitanian scholars carry on their sociolinguistic research with a definite partisanship whereby they distort the scientific processes of perception for speakers of Catalan and Occitanian. For German linguists there is a strong

temptation to be as committed as the Catalonians and Occitanians in research into small languages like Catalan, Occitanian and others. In this context I must mention two dangers, though. Firstly, for researchers of culture A, who are looking at culture B, there is always the danger, whether they realise it or not, of what in anthropology is called *ethnocentrism*. And besides this, there are so many possibilities of using knowledge which has been gained using *purely scientific* methods, in the realm of *applied* contact linguistics. Thus we naturally come to problems which also fall in the area of *language policy* and *language planning*. In the light of what is called a Christian-European hierarchy of values, one should here always be aware of the fact that with *language* we are also dealing with the *dignity* of human beings. It is possible to hurt human beings greatly by expressing contempt for and denigrating their *actions*. Now every *speech act* is also an *action* and everyone knows that both - *speech* and *action* - are bound into a quite specific hierarchy of values.

There were periods when it was usual that the ruler dictated that his religion should be that of his subjects: *cuius regio, eius religio*. Parallel to this, the principle of *cuius regio, eius lingua* is today still completely valid. From a linguistic point of view the same subject is not represented by *cuius* and *eius*. In this way an *undemocratic* element of the *heteronomy* of the individual speaker came into existence.

Many linguists, mostly thinking in good faith that they are thereby serving a good cause, permitted and let themselves be persuaded by some *cuius-regio-eius-lingua* ideologies to put their knowledge of *contact linguistic* phenomena into *political* or *language political* practise and in doing so they often interfere with the finely balanced machinery of language in a quite *problematical* fashion. Indeed this is often an entirely illusionary undertaking. However political constellations can come to pass in which a great degree of power is available in order to make such interference possible.

For example in World War II German linguists tried to apply their knowledge to produce a linguistic ecology of the Ukraine and other East European areas for the National Socialists which

was designed to serve the interests of a 'Greater Germany': cf. Simon 1979, 153-206. However they enjoyed little success in that their suggestions were not taken seriously at a higher level of the National Socialist administration. A number of Soviet linguists had a quite different experience. For the purpose of the programme against illiteracy for numerous minority peoples in the Soviet Union they planned the respective *roofing languages* in a way which suited the language policy of the rulers in Moscow very well. See on this Liesz 1972 and Mende 1938.

Many more examples of this kind can be cited and continue to occur right up to the present day. Thus, for example, in France in 1982 after a change of government (from conservative to socialist) a semi-official survey of the sociolinguistic situation of the *langues régionales* which I previously mentioned was carried out whereby the intention behind it was to *improve* the situation of these *langues régionales* - an *absolute innovation* for France (cf. Giordan 1982).

However cases are also conceivable where linguistic knowledge is applied on the basis of the problems of the "internal linguistic situation". Thus I have recently been asked by linguists from València to support them in their demonstration of the *internal typological unity* of the area in which Catalan is spoken, with the help of my *dialectometry*. The help they request can be given, but in the long run it is a *double-edged sword*, simply because classifications, independent of their numerical diversity, must always be interpreted by their users.

In situations like this it would be a good idea to have recourse to a sort of *Hippocratic oath* for contact linguists: above all, do not cause injury - *primum nihil nocere*. In the vast majority of cases we simply know too little to be able to estimate accurately the degree of *injury* or *advantage* within the complicated network of *contact linguistic phenomena*.

Since the beginning of this century, the Romance-speaking countries have offered a considerable number of examples of very questionable *Linguistique Engagée*, usually connected with a *centralistic* ideology of *unity*. I should recommend that the *non-native contact linguist* turn the tables and make all these endeavours the object of his scientific search for knowledge and

avoid all direct application of his findings for as long as possible. Research into metalinguistic ideology is a very attractive and up to now extremely neglected topic. In addition for the non-native Romance scholar it provides an additional contrastive perspective, which should not be overlooked.

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