



From language shift to language revitalization and sustainability

A complexity approach
to linguistic ecology

Albert Bastardas-Boada

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revitalization and
sustainability

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To William Francis Mackey, *in memoriam*

Il piacere più nobile è la gioia di comprendere.
(The noblest pleasure is the joy of understanding.)

LEONARDO DA VINCI

*A doctor's knowledge of the human body,
that can heal, is not ideology.
Why should one not be in a position to produce
non-ideological knowledge of human society?*

NORBERT ELIAS

La ciencia es tanteo.
(Science is trial and error.)

JORGE WAGENSBERG

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Foreword

*Language is alive like a great tree
that has roots in the subsoil of social life
and the lives of brains,
and its foliage extends into the noosphere.¹*

EDGAR MORIN

*Nothing is as provocative for theory
as practical problems and efforts.*

JOSHUA A. FISHMAN

1.

This book comprises the English translation, with minor updates, of a volume I published in Catalan in 1996 under the title *Ecologia de les llengües. Medi, contactes i dinàmica Sociolingüística* (“Language ecology. Sociolinguistic environment, contacts and dynamics”), plus some articles and excerpts written later. The aim, then as now, has been to attain a deeper understanding of the sociolinguistic phenomena that arise out of contact between languages, especially inspired by the Catalan-speaking area. Despite the time that has passed, I believe that most of the works’ contents, fundamentally the theoretical elements, are today not only still valid, but also timely. My esteemed professor William F. Mackey, who is sadly no longer with us, always encouraged me to publish the book in English so that it could reach a wider audience. Today, his wish is fulfilled, and as you can see, I dedicate the book to his memory.

The book was originally conceived from an ecological and holistic viewpoint, which we prefer nowadays to call a *complexity* or *complexical* approach, and this perspective, which I think has continued to gain adherents with the

1 Free translation from the French: “ La langue vit comme un grand arbre dont les racines sont aux tréfonds de la vie sociale et des vies cérébrales, et dont les frondaisons s’épanouissent dans la noosphère ” (*La Méthode. 4. Les idées. Leur habitat, leur vie, leurs moeurs, leur organisation*).

advent of a new century, is now seeing extraordinary developments. In addition, the number of phenomena related to language contact, be they the result of political or economic (dis)integrations or migrations or for technological reasons, has not stopped growing. So, I hope that the reader will find inspiration in the text, even though most of the bibliographical references date back to the time of the original book's writing in Catalan. Similarly, while the content referring specifically to the Catalan case was the most pertinent at the time of writing, it would likely be different if the book had been written now, given the changes that have occurred in Catalan society in the meantime. Nevertheless, many of the structural phenomena that were then occurring are still present today and there remains, therefore, a need to understand and address them.

My hope is that the reader will think that it is fitting for this work to appear now in English, despite the passage of time since its initial publication in Catalan. I believe the fundamental ideas that it contains can help us to gain a better understanding of processes of language contact—especially those involving minoritization and revitalization or normalization—and be useful for human communities aspiring to reverse language shift.

2.

In the field of linguistic ecology, the past twenty years have certainly witnessed new contributions that do not figure in the body of the text, but deserve to be given recognition now. For example, if we think of languages as cultural 'species' that live in ecosystems that have a crucial influence on how they evolve, we can find an interesting line of study. While remaining cognizant of the differing properties of biological and linguistic entities, this strategy has been used by a number of authors with heuristic aims and to help push forward with the theorization of complex sociolinguistic phenomena (see Mufwene & Vigouroux, 2012; Bastardas-Boada, 2017b). For instance, Mufwene (2001), drawing inspiration from population genetics, used the analogy of a parasitic, Lamarckian species to indicate that languages depend on their speakers, just as a parasite depends on its carrier, and he stressed the importance of the environment in relation to the changes that the species may undergo. From this perspective, he applied a competition-and-selection model of language forms to understand the evolution of contacts between different languages (Mufwene, 2008). In this way, the context is what gives competitive advantage to some languages and takes it away from others. The context causes a 'natural selection' of languages, like biological evolution. Similarly, though not drawing

inspiration from the parasite analogy but rather from an analogy of species in general, I also suggested a research programme in linguistic ecology to address the formation of language diversity, or speciation, and to examine language continuity, change and extinction, as well as language preservation or recovery (Bastardas-Boada, 2002, and in this book). Like Pennycook (2004) and Edwards (2008), however, I cautioned against paying excessive heed to analogies between biological and linguistic species and, therefore, I underscored the need not to apply the metaphor uncritically.

However, the temporal—and, frequently, spatial—coincidence between the crises of biodiversity and of language diversity (Maffi, 2001) further encouraged the metaphoric borrowing of approaches and concepts from biology in linguistics, particularly in the case of endangered language varieties. Concern to preserve the diversity of language systems created by humans has given rise to a need for an in-depth understanding of the mechanisms that lead to language shift and, ultimately, to the total abandonment of minoritised languages (Junyent, 1989). An awareness of the severity of the crisis has led to the development of what might be called a ‘linguistic environmentalism’, that clearly encourages activism and the constitution of a ‘political’ ecolinguistics able to propose changes in the socio-economic and cultural organization of human societies. From this perspective, the equality of the rights of languages is advocated, as well as the need to fight for their preservation and give support for a relation of non-subordination and non-hierarchy among different human language groups (Junyent, 1998; Skutnabb-Kangas & Phillipson, 2008).

Drawing on the perspectives more inspired by systems thinking and complexity and yet obviously not ignoring advances in bio-ecology itself, authors like Mackey (1979) clearly argued that biological facts differ from facts at the sociocultural level: “The study of a society [...] is not analogous to the study of the physical world [...] [n]or is analogous to the study of life” (p. 455).² This is probably what led authors like Haarmann (1986), Mackey (1980, 1994) and myself (1996 and in this book, 2017a) to conceive of an ecology of language contact grounded in a psycho-sociologico-political approach that is multidimensional and dynamic and can give an account of the intertwinings and interdependencies of levels and factors that influence and/or co-determine the language forms and varieties involved. This interdisciplinary collaboration was also followed by Mühlhäusler (1996), who was equally supportive of a

2 In the beginning of the field, Haugen also sketched out a programme of research, always situating the ecology of languages within the framework of a general sociology (1971).

general, holistic approach as the only way of being able to grasp the phenomena arising in the evolution of situations of language contact. Calvet (1999) sets out a useful ‘gravitational’ image for the world’s ecosystemic organization of languages, which are also clustered into constellations (De Swaan, 2001). Terborg (2006) and Terborg and García Landa (2013) have also directly postulated a sociocultural ecology of languages, which draws on the ‘pressures’ that speakers feel in their environment to use one language variety or another. This approach, like the constitution of a general (bio)ecology, steers clear of fragmentation and specialization by taking the opposite road, integrating elements from vastly different sociocultural disciplines that are nevertheless useful and necessary to understand human sociolinguistic ecosystems and their whole-part interrelations. In the end, the different ecological perspectives to language contact lead to contributions that are not so very different, but rather cast light upon one another, and a variety of authors do move back and forth between the approaches.³

Following in the footsteps of bio-ecology, Bastardas (2007 and this book) proposed adopting the concept of ‘sustainability’ within the field of sociolinguistics in order to respond to the escalating rise in language contact, pushed strongly by the spread of English and other major languages in the context of globalization. The goal was to rethink the linguistic organization of humanity—and, therefore, to make language continuity possible—in a frame marked by a clear increase in human polyglotism. How to make compatible the maintenance and development of most of human language communities and the individual plurilingualism that can enable their inter-communication—this is the big question. From this approach, a *sustainable* linguistic contact will be that which does not produce linguistic exposure or linguistic use in allochthonous language at a speed and/or pressure so high as to make impossible the stable continuity of the autochthonous languages of human groups.

3.

The complexity approach of the subtitle refers to the perspective that I strove to apply in the book when I first wrote it in 1996. At the time, the label ‘complexity’ was not yet in wide use internationally and it seemed more fitting to go with ‘ecology’, which already had a tradition of applying systems theory to

3 Cf. Fill & Mühlhäusler, 2001.

the understanding of biological and environmental phenomena.⁴ Today, the term ‘complexity’ is used much more widely and I think, therefore, that it can better characterise the approach that inspired this book.⁵

However, it should be noted that, in 1996, complexity perspectives *per se* referred fundamentally to ideas with a philosophical grounding that did not yet have a very concrete methodological basis. By contrast, the ‘complexity sciences’ have now been developed to an extraordinary extent, particularly thanks to the impetus given by many physicists, mathematicians and computational scientists who are using computer tools to offer us new opportunities for investigation *in silico* in order to better grasp phenomena.⁶

The 1996 complexity approach did not yet take these new developments into account, but it did seek to apply a multi-dimensional, integrated and dynamic perspective to the understanding of sociolinguistic facts that was appropriate for a complex vision of reality. As the reader will see, I drew my principal inspiration at the time from authors such as Norbert Elias, Edgar Morin, Ramon Margalef and Fritjof Capra, who were then already postulating this type of vision. It must be said that I think their perspective remains fully valid today and, moreover, will likely become prevalent in the research of the twenty-first century.⁷ The approach that is applied here, therefore, belongs rather to ‘general complexity’ than to ‘restricted complexity’—using the words of Ed-

4 Levin (2010) believes that there is indeed a clear continuity between the ecological approach and that of complexity: “Ecology views biological systems as wholes, not as independent parts, while seeking to elucidate how the wholes emerge from and affect the parts. Increasingly, such a holistic perspective, rechristened at places like the Santa Fe Institute as ‘the theory of complex adaptive systems’, has informed understanding and improved management of economic and financial systems, social systems, complex materials, and even physiology and medicine. Essentially, that means little more than taking an ecological approach to such systems”.

5 “There is complexity when the various components that make up a whole (be they economic, political, sociological, psychological, affective or mythological) are inseparable and there is an interwoven fabric that is interdependent, interactive and inter-retroactive between the parts and the whole, the whole and the parts” (Morin, 1999: 14).

6 Several authors have been constructing this perspective: Morin, 1977, 1982, 1986, 1991, 1992, 1999, 2005; Wagensberg, 1994; Gell-Mann, 1994; Heylighen *et al.*, 2007; Roggero, 2008; Gershenson, 2008; Castellani & Hafferty, 2009; Jörg, 2011; Malaina, 2012; Wells, 2013; Ruiz Ballesteros & Solana, 2013; and Byrne & Callaghan (2014), for example. Other thinkers have also contributed even though they have used other names or tags, like, among others, ‘ecology’ (Margalef, 1991; Allen & Hoekstra, 2014), ‘systemics’ (Von Bertalanffy, 1969) ‘emergentism’ (Holland, 1998), or ‘networks science’ (Newman, Barabási & Watz, 2006; Solé, 2009), and also ‘complex systems’ (Holland, 1995; Wolfram, 2002; Solé & Bascompte, 2006; San Miguel *et al.*, 2012; Díaz-Guilera, 2012). It has also been applied to linguistics by Larsen-Freeman (1997, 2015), The ‘Five Graces’ Group (2009), and Massip-Bonet *et al.* (2013, 2019), among others.

7 See, for example, Capra & Luisi, 2014.

gar Morin (2005)⁸—and it also follows the main ideas of Elias’ figurational sociology (1990).

The application of metaphors or theoretical images from ecology, complexity and figurational or processual sociology in understanding language and sociocommunication phenomena is of great use. By visualizing, for instance, the different levels of linguistic structure not as separate entities but rather as united and integrated within the same theoretical frame, by seeing their functional interdependencies, by situating them in a greater multidimensionality that includes what for a long time was considered ‘external’—the individual and his mind-brain, the sociocultural system, the physical world, etc.—and expanding in this way our classical view, we should be able to make important, if not essential, theoretical and practical advances.

4.

To the same end, I have included five more texts in part II to represent later contributions that develop the book’s initial ideas from 1996. Since I wanted to maintain the texts here in their original published version, the reader might find that some of the thoughts are also expressed in the first part of the book. I wish to apologize to those of you who might find a few fragments of this second part somehow redundant. The first chapter seeks to explore heuristically the comparison between studies addressing biological diversity and linguistic diversity. It traces the major lines of research of an ecology of languages in contact whose inspiration has come from biological ecology, while taking into account, obviously, the differences between the two objects of study. The second text addresses the linguistic organization of the planet within the context of the process of globalization. The aim is to find principles that would permit the peaceful coexistence of human groups, general intercommunication and yet also the maintenance and development of the many languages in existence. It draws on the complexity or “complexical” perspective, seeking to avoid sterile dichotomising while pushing for a polyglotism that would have an adequate distribution of functions to permit both the continuation of human diversity and intercomprehension.

The next two texts continue in the same vein, drawing inspiration from metaphors or analogies taken from biological diversity and exploring the rela-

8 See also Bastardas-Boada, 2019.

tionships between language and identities in the new century. The first one puts forward ideas for the linguistic organization of humankind drawing on the paradigm of sustainability, taking the perspective of thinking “and/both” rather than “either/or”. The second one offers excerpts from the online book *Language and Identity Policies in the ‘Glocal’ Age* in order to explore issues concerning the relationships between majority and minority languages and the organization of supranational political and economic bodies. The text concludes by proposing four key elements for language and identity policies: recognition, communicability, sustainability and integration. I believe that these dimensions, if adequately developed and combined, can help to achieve a more dignified and just linguistic organization for humankind, enhancing the coexistence of diversity in the present century.

Below is a synthesis of my proposal for building a complexical-figurational approach to social science and to general sociolinguistics in particular (Bastardas, 2014a).

Traditional perspective	Complexical-figurational perspective
conceptual reification	there is no science without an observer (centrality of brain/mind)
territory	maps (we see by means of concepts and words)
scientific truth	provisional theories
elements	elements-and-contexts, interweaving, figurations, interdependences, networks
objects	events and processes
steady-state	dynamic flux, change, evolution, development
classical logic	fuzzy logic
linear causality	circular, retroactive and nonlinear causality
either/or dichotomies	and/both; integration and complementarity
planned creation	self-organization and emergence
unidimensionality	inter-influential multidimensionality
‘explicate order’ (things are unfolded and each thing lies only in its own particular region of space)	‘implicate order’ (everything is folded into everything; a hologram: the parts contain information on the entire object)
fragmentation of disciplines	inter- and transdisciplinarity
structure, code	meaningful and emotional interaction

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PART I

**LANGUAGE ECOLOGY. SOCIOLINGUISTIC ENVIRONMENT,
CONTACTS AND DYNAMICS**

Translation, with some minor updates, of *Ecologia de les llengües. Medi, contactes i dinàmica sociolingüística*. Barcelona: Proa, 1996 (Enciclopèdia Catalana's prize to humanities research).

Introduction

The nature of language cannot be properly explored by a type of psychology which is centred on the individual. Nor does it fit into the main stream of sociology which so far neglects the paradigmatic information which the complex 'knowledge, language, memory and thought' requires. Sooner or later it will become necessary to examine critically the presently ruling division of labour among human or social sciences.

NORBERT ELIAS

The main aim of this study is to broaden our understanding of the processes of language contact¹ as they have emerged inside Western Europe, the result above all of political decisions and of migration between the various linguistic areas. These are clearly the two main causes of the complex sociolinguistic situation we find today in the areas where, for example, Catalan has been spoken, and they are also macrofactors present in many other similar cases. In the last 150 years in particular, either on their own or in combination (as in the case of Catalan), official policy on language use on the one hand and migration on the other have given rise to situations of language contact. Some of these situations have been particularly conflictive, and have had a decisive impact on the fate of the planet's linguistic diversity.

Understanding this phenomenon is often no easy task, due to the range of elements involved and because the human linguistic phenomenon is *at one and the same time* an individual, social and political fact. As such, its study should bear in mind these complex interrelations, produced inside the framework of the sociocultural and historical ecosystem of each human community.

1 Following Aracil (1982: 24), I prefer the term 'language contact' to 'bilingualism'. The term 'bilingualism' has become a confusing label, and at the same time a static one. 'Language contact' is a broad concept inside which there is room for dynamic phenomena as interrelated as language standardization and shift, even though they are generally treated separately.

The absence of valid, clearly developed paradigms adds to the problem and means that the theoretical conclusions that emerge may be unclear on certain points. Certainly, in the last 60 years sociolinguistic studies have advanced considerably, and today we have access to an impressive set of data and a wide variety of theoretical reflections. But as a discipline sociolinguistics does not yet have unified, powerful theoretical models able to account rigorously and clearly for the phenomena it studies.² Sociolinguistic studies are today a diverse set of contributions in which certain theoretical schools and lines of research have emerged; but as is to be expected in a relatively new social science field, there is not enough communication between the various schools and they cannot yet be said to be integrated in terms of their conceptual and theoretical postulates.

Against this background, this study aims to contribute to the overall, integrated understanding of the processes of language contact mentioned above. Via an interdisciplinary, eclectic approach, it also aims to aid the theoretical grounding and integration of a unified, common sociolinguistic paradigm. Our strategy will not be merely to combine the contributions from ongoing research lines, but to address the question from a more global viewpoint which, together with the more innovative contemporary scientific disciplines, permits a harmonious integration of the various sociolinguistic perspectives in a broad, deep and unitary approach to reality. The materials used to construct this unified, integrated approach are taken from many sources: theoretical physics, ecology, the philosophy of science and mind, anthropology, phenomenological and process sociology, cognitive sciences, political science, pragmatics, history, systems theory, approaches to complexity and, obviously, sociolinguistics.

Unlike the traditional perspective that separates linguistic varieties from their bio-psycho-socio-politico-cultural contexts and makes of them specialised objects existing in a vacuum, the ecological sociolinguistic perspective is based on the fact that linguistic structures do not live in isolation from their social functions—*the existence of matter is indissoluble from its activity*, says Einstein. Equally, linguistic structures must be situated in relation to the sub- and supra-systems that determine their existence if we are to understand their fortunes.³

2 In this aspect it resembles the situation of ecology as Ramon Margalef describes it: “there are few general principles, the science appears to be divided into different areas, and each one formulates unconnected principles. A great deal of information is accumulated, but perhaps less progress is made in terms of tying together the set. [...] We should insist on the search for general principles” (*Comunicaciones* (UB) December 15, 1992, p. 13).

3 I agree on Haugen’s view: “The true environment of a language is the society that uses it as one of its codes. Language exists only in the minds of its users, and it only functions in relating these users

The unit of survival is the organism-in-its-environment, says Gregory Bateson. Therefore, our proposal aims to provide the basis of an integrative focus, from the perspective of theoretical general complexity—*distinguer sans disjoindre* (Morin)—which draws on the contributions of traditional approaches to the study of language systems, but goes beyond them to establish a vision that is more interrelated with the other coexisting sociocultural factors, thus permitting a better understanding of the linguistic phenomenon as a whole.

One of the main questions underlying the study is the interrelation between the linguistic forms used in colloquial oral communication—*individualised forms*, to use J. C. Corbeil's term—and those used in formal, written contexts—which we term *institutionalised forms*. No convincing explanation has been found for the fact that while in some contexts forms used historically in individualised communications are gradually being replaced by institutionalised forms; in others, individualised and institutionalised forms coexist with a clear distribution of functions. So, I will try to identify, to the best of my ability, the (inter)influences of the various intervening elements and the different types of evolutions and processes at work.

The existence of linguistic varieties is conceived from the point of view of the ecosystem.⁴ The assumption of the ecosystem is that the fate of a particular linguistic variety—that is, its survival, its alteration, or its replacement—depends on the evolution of the sociocultural factors that are involved in its production. Its structure, then, is governed by the social functions that it is required to perform. As Lieberman notes, “Each societal change may be viewed as directing a new influence on the state of the languages in contact that would lead to a new linguistic equilibrium if no further changes occurred” (1970: 11). Speaking is thus seen as a subset of human action, susceptible to adaptation to the changing needs of the sociocultural ecosystem in which the individuals live. But these individuals may also intervene in the evolution of their environment by modifying it to their advantage.

This approach sees contact between linguistic groups as a three-way phenomenon rather than a two-way one. In conceiving the relation between, for

to one another and to nature, i.e. their social and natural environment. Part of its ecology is therefore psychological: its interaction with other languages in the minds of bi- and multilingual speakers. Another part of its ecology is sociological: its interaction with the society in which it functions as a medium of communication. The ecology of a language is determined primarily by the people who learn it, use it, and transmit it to others” (1971 [2001: 57]).

4 Margalef (1991) calls an *ecosystem* “a level of reference formed by individuals together with the materials that are produced by their activity [...] and the matrix or physical surroundings in which they are included and in which they act”.

example, two species, the ecological perspective bears in mind at all times the *milieu* in which the relation develops. This perspective, for example, is vitally important for understanding the impact of migration on language contact, as it underlines the need to take into account the structure of the environment as well as the two or more groups in question. The structure of the social and political environment is a decisive factor.⁵

Readers have before them a study that assumes from the beginning that the observer is inseparable from what is observed. The first chapter briefly discusses a set of ideas and principles concerning the provisional nature of scientific knowledge, and the ecosystemic and contextual approach. Underlying this approach is the idea that to understand the workings of a particular phenomenon we must see the connections with its surroundings. There are two basic contexts of the human systems of linguistic communication, or linguistic varieties: the brain/mind on the one hand, and the sociocultural order on the other. The aim of the study, then, is to explore some of the relations of linguistic varieties with these two contexts, seeking always to contribute to the understanding of the macrodynamic phenomena of language contact.

Another principle on which this study is based is the consideration that the different orders and phenomena of the reality make up an interrelated whole, in which there are not only circular, mutual influences between two variables but a set of dynamic interactions that make up the reality. Thus, mental, interactional, collective, political, and linguistic phenomena coexist in such a way that one constitutes the other and vice versa. To express the image, I have used the metaphor of music and the orchestral score which enables us to visualize different planes of the same unitary phenomenon and which exists sequentially, that is, in time.

After this minimal but multi-layered portrayal of the mental and sociocultural contexts, our attention turns to the great dynamic processes in which the most habitual phenomena of language contact take place: the political standardization of linguistic communication, and migratory movements. In the first case, we will describe its various stages and consider the important historical effects of this process, such as dialect levelling, diglossia, and language shift.

5 In 1996 I was by no means the first to suggest an ecological, global and multidimensional approach to contacts between languages. Authors such as Lluís V. Aracil, Stanley Lieberman, Einar Haugen, William F. Mackey, Rafael L. Ninyoles, J. M. Sánchez Carrión, Colin Williams, and others did so, either implicitly or explicitly. Carme Junyent also proposed an ecolinguistics, though perhaps of a slightly different kind to the one outlined here. Indeed, the ecological perspective can produce a great variety of studies of the field of language, like, as I said, the approaches of Peter Mühlhäusler, Salikoko Mufwene, Louis-Jean Calvet, or Roland Terborg, for example.

As far as migration is concerned, we examine movements of populations between linguistic areas globally, and identify the features that distinguish them from cases of linguistic minoritization due to political subordination, frequent in processes of political integration. We examine separately the situations in which the migrant population is linguistically dominant due to the fact that they belong to the ethnic-linguistic group that controls the main institutions of the state; this situation has an evolution of its own.

The processes of linguistic revitalization or *normalization*—in the Catalan sense close to Fishman’s ‘reversing language shift’ (1991)⁶—are then analysed from a global perspective, including cases in which the population of the sociopolitical community that undertakes the process is homogeneous—even though levels of internal language shift may be high—and those in which sudden migrations have broken the previously existing cultural homogeneity.

The next chapter focuses on the case of Catalan, distinguishing the different processes of language contact that have emerged in an interrelated manner: the standardization and extension of the use of the autochthonous language, the process of bilingualization—both formal and informal—of the population of Catalan L1 and Spanish L1 in the other language, and the evolution of intergroup relations, which may lead to cases of language shift in either

6 I have again had to struggle with doubts over using, in English, the label ‘normalization’, which has a long tradition in Catalan sociolinguistics. As this name, in English, did not seem to elicit the same meaning that we have agreed to give it in Catalan—at least not on the sociolinguistic level—there have always been doubts over how best to convey the idea internationally. Thus, for example, we have used language ‘revival’, ‘reviving’, ‘revitalization’, and even sometimes the Catalan word *normalització* in English texts. I don’t believe that any of these solutions are satisfactory to Catalan sociolinguists. Language ‘normalization’, in its Catalan equivalent, goes beyond the ‘revival’ of the languages mentioned. Catalan, while it has had and continues to have areas and social segments marked by language shift toward Spanish, remains a language that has clearly never stopped being spoken. Nor, in a large part of its territory, has it lost its everyday oral social functions. This is not, therefore, about resuscitating the dead. Rather, it is a question of building the social and political conditions needed to halt language shift, gain new speakers, carry out public language planning, use Catalan in the formal and institutionalised communications of a contemporary society and, ultimately, ensure that Catalan has a normalised future like that which other medium-sized language communities of Europe can claim. From this point of view, ‘normalization’ best embraces the breadth of sociolinguistic phenomena taking place in the Catalan case. In opting for using this choice, I had help from the three definitions for ‘normalize’ that I found in the Merriam-Webster Dictionary (with US spelling): “1. to make conform to or reduce to a norm or standard, 2. to make normal (as by a transformation of variables), 3. to bring or restore (as relations between countries) to a normal condition”. All three refer to aspects that are clearly present in normalization processes like that of Catalan and others that have occurred or may occur, and they treat the concept broadly and comprehensively. Together with ‘revitalization’ or other labels, let us use too, therefore, ‘normalization’. It is, as Lluís V. Aracil (1965) first suggested, the flip side of language shift macroprocesses.

group. As I mentioned above, in the Catalan situation, there have historically been two causes of language contact, which in the twentieth century coincided: the spread of an official dominant language in minority language areas, and large-scale migration from the politically dominant, majority language area. If anything, the current Catalan process of linguistic normalization increases the complexity of the situation.

The case of Catalan is also situated contextually in the levels of Spain, Europe, and the world, since it is exposed to, and to a large extent governed by, events at these levels. In the framework of attempts to prioritize Catalan in public functions in Catalonia, I conclude that the only way to safeguard the process of the linguistic normalization of Catalan (or of any other small or medium-sized linguistic community), and at the same time to respond successfully to the challenges posed by the increasing interdependence with other communities, is to ensure a functional and non-asymmetric distribution of functions.

1.1. SCIENCE TODAY: THE UPDATING OF PARADIGMS

*Everywhere, the subject is reintroduced into the object [...],
Everywhere each thing, each being asks
to be reinserted in its surroundings. [...] Everywhere,
one is engaged to consider not enclosed and isolated objects,
but systems organized in a co-organizing relation
with their surrounding environment.*⁷

EDGAR MORIN

Given that sociolinguistics—like any other discipline worthy of study—considers itself to be ‘scientific’, we have no alternative but to start our exploration with an appraisal of its theoretical foundations. What does it mean today to try to provide elements for a theory that sets out to be ‘scientific’? On what basis is it possible to explain the contact between languages ‘scientifically’—or, for that matter, any other sociolinguistic phenomenon? After so much epistemological upheaval, how should the scientific perspective be considered today? How should we set about establishing a well-founded, rigorous sociocultural science?

For someone like me, with a background in philology (albeit compensated later by my own incursion into sociocultural sciences),—the encounter with the contemporary metaknowledge of science was enormously enriching. I was influenced initially by theoretical physicists, and their work introduced me to a set of findings and conclusions that I felt no member of the university community at the end of the twentieth century could afford to ignore. One of my first surprises was to learn that empirical research was not able, in all circumstances, to

⁷ French original: “ Partout, le sujet se réintroduit dans l’objet [...], partout, chaque chose, chaque être demande à être réinséré dans son environnement. [...] Partout, on est poussé à considérer non des objets clos et isolés, mais des systèmes organisés en relation co-organisatrice avec leur environnement ”.

establish scientific ‘truth’. Since Einstein’s presentation of the theory of general relativity and its later confirmation—which raised such fundamental questions about the enduring validity of the traditional, tried-and-tested theory of Newton—science could no longer claim to offer an unassailable explanation of the configuration of reality. Two theories could both be empirically confirmed. The theories and models of scientists were now *attempts* to reflect reality—but not the same reality. Indeed, for Einstein, concepts and theoretical laws are *fictitious* in character (1986: 157). The state of provisionality and the potential for new theoretical proposals even in domains in which explanations had been accepted and proven now became part and parcel of the scientific world. It was now possible to rethink reality, to find new images and new concepts which, without rejecting out of hand the findings of earlier observations, allowed students and researchers to understand them in different ways. Science was more interesting than ever! Creativity is more necessary than ever before.⁸

The story of Einstein’s theoretical challenge to Newton led to a reassessment and a new awareness of the role of the individual in science. Theoretical physics could make us reflect on the conscious subject. The observer-participant—to use the terminology of traditional qualitative research—is the starting point of any knowledge. After the Einsteinian revolution, the physical sciences now incorporated the observer in their theories: they insisted that the observer forms part of the system.⁹ That is to say, there is no knowledge without human beings, and more specifically there is no knowledge without the human brain/mind. This may seem obvious today; but, at a certain stage in its development, ‘science’ had become so reified that we had all but forgotten the basis that made possible the existence of knowledge: the human being. We tended to see only the exterior nature of what we had learnt, and neglected the nature that made possible—and to a large extent determined—this learning. So, in much of the social sciences that had most claimed to be ‘scientific’ in the traditional manner of the physical sciences, the problem of the observer was ignored; but quantum physics pointed out the importance of the role of the subject in the process of observation and did away with the idea of an objective description of nature (see Capra, 1985). This was another great surprise.

8 “A theory”, says the physicist David Bohm, “is primarily a form of insight, i.e. a way of looking at the world, and not a form of knowledge of how the world is. [...] All theories are insights, which are neither true nor false but, rather, clear in certain domains, and unclear when extended beyond these domains” (1987: 22 and 24).

9 Heisenberg stated that the “natural laws that are formulated mathematically in quantum theory do not refer to elementary particles per se, but to our knowledge of these particles. [...] Natural science always presupposes man” (1986: 14).

If physics takes account of the brain/mind, how can we ignore it in the sciences of social and cultural behaviour, in which two minds, or sets of minds, intervene—that of the individual who researches, and those of the individuals who are studied?

So, this is the era of the mind. Physicists know that they construct their knowledge in their minds—with the properties determined by this system. Chomsky directed linguistics towards the mind, and cognitive sciences have made giant steps forward, though much is still to be done if we are to understand the organization and the workings of this complex that neurolinguists prefer to term the ‘brain/mind’, emphasizing the biological basis of the phenomenon. But in my view the other important aspect of this recovery of the mind is an awareness of the arbitrariness of conceptual models with which we seek to describe reality. Going back to what we said about the provisionality of theories, we should say also that we can imagine new ways of seeing the world, new images of reality. For example, we may think that, as they can be distinguished and named, particular elements exist on their own, without any relation to other elements; alternatively, we may imagine that this is most probably not the case and that units of reality are likely to be *interrelated*. I say this because I am extremely interested in the attempts by theoretical physicists to research new forms of *perceiving* the world, in the conviction that the still predominant method of analysing the various component parts of the world in isolation is not the most appropriate (see Bohm, 1987; Capra, 1985).¹⁰

The search for the best model for understanding the relations between the ‘whole’ and the ‘parts’ of reality is one of today’s great scientific debates. Many authors are aware of the need to go beyond the traditional scientific approach based on analysis—that is, based on the breakdown of the data and the search for the *ultimate* components of phenomena—and to move towards more holistic images (e.g. Capra, 1985). The aim is therefore to bring together an approach based on the belief that it is by reducing reality into its ultimate, fundamental components that we will find the central explanations, and another that believes that many of the basic factors are likely to be found more in the organised interrelations between elements of reality. At the level of language, an example of the first approach is the prioritization of the study of sounds and their breakdown into smaller units in order to understand the phenomenon of human language. An example of the second is one that starts the other way

10 Do not be surprised by my referring so often to theoretical physics. Physicists also deal with linguistic or even social questions: see by these authors “The rheomode, an experiment with language and thought”, in Bohm (1987), pp. 53-79, or the chapters on psychology and economics in Capra (1985).

round, and goes from top to bottom: the application of the general cognitive-communicative phenomenon to languages and their levels.

These two modes of thought appear to be characteristic of two civilizations which have traditionally been in opposition: the Western mode, analytical and reductionist; and the Eastern mode, based on global, integrated thought (think, for example, of Chinese medicine). It is no surprise, then, that leading contemporary theoretical physicists have turned to Eastern philosophies in their search for models of reality, leaving behind the traditional reductionist vision (see Capra, 1984). Like the Chinese professor Ji Xianlin, they believe that Western thought ‘cannot see the wood for the trees’, and that the attention paid to the analysis of details and the division into the smallest particles is excessive, given that the “theory of unlimited division has no foundation either in philosophy or in science”.¹¹

I think that we should reject the dichotomous thinking that is so characteristic today and should seek out a path midway between the Western and Eastern positions, acknowledging what is good and interesting in each approach. It would probably be wrong to abandon the analytical method in the belief that the holistic vision can provide us with all the solutions.¹² The possibilities for worldwide communication today are likely to lead to a (more or less) harmonious integration of the two great positions. This is all to the good. Thoughts which we have heard so often such as “the whole is more than the sum of the parts” should not be interpreted as imposing the perspective of globality but as underlining the complementarity of the two fundamental elements of the idea—the whole *and* the parts. Perhaps the author I find most idea-provoking in this regard is Edgar Morin, through his works on *La méthode* and their studies of the complexity of reality. Morin goes further in his formulation: *the whole is in the part that is in the whole*. Indeed, the whole and the part are merely distinctions created by us to try to explain the world—*the world doesn’t yield to us directly, the description of the world stands in between*, says Carlos Castaneda.¹³ But reality is complex and interrelated. Morin rejects polarization be-

11 *El País*, 15-8-91.

12 Bandura (1987), for example, speaks of the triangle of relations ‘brain/mind - conduct - environment’, stating that “since the triadic factors do not act simultaneously like a holistic entity, we can identify the form in which the different segments of two-directional causality act without having to make the titanic effort of studying every possible interactive element [...] [I]t is the subsystems and their interrelations that we should study, not their totality. James’ (1884) critique of holistic concepts—either this global system as it is, or nothing at all—shows their limitations” (p. 46).

13 Quoted in Talbot (1986), p. 16: “el mundo no se nos da directamente; está por medio la descripción del mundo”.

tween the analytical and global extremes and proposes a holistic perspective actively aware of the relative autonomy of the units that it contains in order to be able to *distinguish without separating* and to *associate without identifying or reducing* (1992: 23).¹⁴

But as Morin himself asks, how are we to account for the complexity and the dynamic interrelatedness of reality? With our awareness that our own brain/mind is at the basis of the images we believe we perceive, what are the most appropriate images of the reality? What should we change in our habitual images?

One of the aspects on which there appears to be most consensus in the new science is in the need to do away with the conception of objects of reality as entities that are isolated and described inwards, internally. The new perspective emphasises the importance of the study of the *contexts* of objects and phenomena, that is, of their external relations. So, for example, in physics, “The atom emerges as a new object, the organised object or system whose explanation can no longer be found solely in the nature of its basic constituents, but also in its organizational and systemic nature, which transforms the character of the components” (Morin, 1977: 98).¹⁵ The step to be taken, then, is towards a conception of the elements of reality—and, in particular, of living elements—as open systems in constant interaction with the ecosystem of which they are part. The *unit of survival is the organism plus its surroundings*, said Bateson (1972: 483). The old linear causality is replaced by a circular, retroactive one. Also abandoned is the vision of non-integrated levels of analysis; now we have models of systemic, multi-level interrelation in which each subsystem is a relatively autonomous unit, even though it is a component of a larger entity. So, this is an ecological complexification of thought that is aware of the involvement of the mind: “Any object of observation or study must now be conceived in terms of its organization, its environment, and its observer” (Morin, 1977: 379).¹⁶

The static image of reality is also challenged. Against the traditional approach, time is an essential, continually present variable. Apparent stability is always the result of a dynamic equilibrium that allows the conservation of the

14 “Distinguer sans disjoindre. [...] Associer sans identifier ou réduire”.

15 “L’atome surgit comme objet nouveau, l’objet organisé ou système dont l’explication ne peut plus être trouvée uniquement dans la nature de ses constituants élémentaires, mais se trouve aussi dans sa nature organisationnelle et systémique, qui elle-même transforme les caractères des composants”.

16 “Tout objet d’observation ou d’étude doit désormais être conçu en fonction de son organisation, de son environnement, de son observateur”.

identity of the units even if their elements are changed. More than as a structure, reality should be seen as a set of events, or, to quote Bohm, as *a universal flux of events and processes* (1987: 31).

From this perspective the fragmentation into disciplines is also questioned. As reality is multidimensional, an interdisciplinary focus is necessary—especially in the sociocultural sciences. The new conceptual landscapes must then allow the integration of perspectives of the different approaches in a global theorization which considers simultaneously all the necessary dimensions of human beings in an integrated, coordinated way.

This conceptual change seems to call also for even more fundamental modifications of our habitual assumptions about reality. Unlike the standard approach, in which each object is seen in its own particular region of space and time and in which the elements are outside each other, the new physics proposes that we conceive reality from an *implicate* order based on the holographic metaphor ‘all is inside all’. So, as in the hologram, we can conceive models in which each of their parts contains information relating to *all the object* (Bohm, 1987: 247). Conceptions of this kind can clarify the relation between the individual and the society or other antinomies which have hampered our understanding of many relations in the sociocultural world.

In their own ways, all these changes in contemporary science affect the methodological aspects of the practice of researchers. For example, attitudes towards data are inevitably different. Since Einstein, physics has been characterised by a strong anti-inductivism and by firm encouragement of creation and theoretical innovation—“There is no inductive method that can lead us to the fundamental concepts of physics”, said the creator of relativity (1936: 65). A sociocultural science that laid its emphasis on data alone would be obsolete today. Attributing greater importance, for example, to a small idea that has been proven time and again than to a large idea that cannot be proved using traditional methods may constitute a major error in a particular discipline. So we should probably not be alarmed when Searle says that we should lose our fear of no longer being ‘scientific’ in the most traditional sense of the term (1985).

At the centre of these changes is, as we said before, the mind—the mind of the researcher and the minds of the subjects of the research. It is in the mind of the scientist that the images that are key to the conception of reality are to be produced, as well as the changes in the initial assumptions and perspectives which make theoretical creativity possible. Iconic intuition and imagination have proved decisive in contemporary scientific progress. Theory, therefore, should not depend directly on data. Einstein urged us to be bold—reckless, even—as we take the momentous step from data to theory.

1.2. SOCIOCULTURAL SCIENCES

The objects of cultural science are concept-dependent; they do not exist independently of what we (or somebody) think they are.

TREVOR PATEMAN

Clearly, then, all these innovations in twentieth century science can, and should, have important repercussions for the study of the psycho-socio-cultural domain. Indeed, perhaps never before have the physical sciences and the human sciences been in such close contact. Now that physics and other 'hard' disciplines are ready to accept their own subjectivity, scientific knowledge can progress towards a broader integration and collaboration between all its branches, precisely by accepting the central role of the brain/mind—which is an objective biological fact—in knowledge and in human actions. Acceptance of the role of the mind in scientific research presents difficulties which highlight the extreme complexity of the object of study in the sociocultural sciences. Unlike the physical sciences, at the level of human phenomena it is not only the mind of the observer that we should take into account, but the minds of the subjects of the observation as well. We should take account of the mind not merely because of its intrinsic importance, but because it is inside the mind that the great majority of human courses of action are determined. This fact distinguishes our object of study from those that are habitually dealt with by the physical sciences. Thus, very often the elements that intervene in social relations are intangible: principles, beliefs, norms, values, representations, ideas... making it even more difficult to apply the parameters generally used for scientific proof.

So, the mind is accepted by physics; paradoxically, the discipline that still needs to take the definitive step is sociology, except in minority schools,¹⁷ with respect to the role of the mind. For the most part, sociology is still anchored in reductionist theoretical and analytical frameworks inspired by the thinking of

¹⁷ It is a pity that mainstream sociology has turned towards an 'objectivist' vision, thus neglecting the mind. Authors such as Max Weber, Alfred Schutz, and W. I. Thomas postulated a comprehensive approach, aware, as Natanson (1974) says, "that his objects are not only objects for his observation but beings who have their own preinterpreted world, who do their own observing; they are fellow men caught up in social reality (p. 23). As a result, the social researcher's task is to rebuild the mode in which humans interpret, in their everyday life, their own world" (p. 32).

nineteenth-century physics.¹⁸ A sociology without a mind is absurd, and must inevitably be out of touch with the reality it is seeking to understand. As Morin says, “Sociology could not be envisaged as a conception that excludes the individual, or strictly speaking only tolerated the individual. It is a conception that must involve and explain the individual” (1991: 75).¹⁹ An excessive belief in objectivist postulates has led much of sociology and of linguistics to become disciplines that centre exclusively on ‘forms’, forgetting an undeniable element of human existence: the sense and signification that account for, and guide, the actions and organizations of individuals in society.

Evidently, the inclusion of the brain/mind complex in sociocultural sciences challenges traditional scientific theories by including ‘unobservable’ elements—awareness, intention, subjectivity of mental states—in the domain of research. The question is, then, should reality adapt to our postulates and methods, or vice versa? Clearly, the onus is on the researchers. It would be a huge error to suppose that a definition of reality should exclude the mind. As Searle says, “If the fact of subjectivity runs counter to a certain definition of ‘science’, then it is the definition and not the fact which we will have to abandon” (1985: 30). Indeed, the sociocultural domain is never extraordinarily regular and determined, à la Newtonian physics, even when the mind is excluded. The vast range of variables that intervene in the social reality, rapid and continuous changes in society, the interdependence of these variables, the original nature of the responses of individuals to events and situations, the blurred limits between social groups, the qualitative and non-quantifiable character of many of the aspects present, the difficulty of applying experimental techniques, and the problems of reproduction and repetition of research make the discipline one of vast complexity and difficulty. Ignoring the role of the mind solves nothing; on the contrary, it provides us with an image that is inaccurate and mistaken.

18 The words of Norbert Elias are illustrative: “Multi-dimensional models of human societies are needed in order to come to grips with the empirical evidence. The difficulty is that social scientists and sociologists in particular are still captives of a philosophical science theory which started with Descartes and took its cue from physics at that early stage of development. [...] Theoretical models of the type we call universal laws or generalisations were sufficient and sufficiently reality-congruent to serve the requirements of physicists at that stage. [...] But for some time now they have been supplemented even in the physical sciences themselves by theoretical models which, unlike laws, are multi-dimensional and which make it possible to handle experimentally data about objects such as large molecules, genes and chromosomes with several levels of integration acting and reacting upon each other” (1991: 142).

19 “ La sociologie ne saurait être conçue comme une conception qui exclut l’individu, ou qui à la rigueur le tolérerait. C’est une conception qui doit l’impliquer et l’expliciter ”.

The incorporation of the mind is not the only innovation of twentieth-century scientific thought that has had a vast impact on the sociocultural sciences. We would be equally mistaken if we believed that the lives of human beings can be described and studied from a perspective of isolation and fragmentation, centred on the subject alone. Accepting the mind as an essential element for the understanding of human behaviours, we must also emphasize the elements that make minds possible. Inevitably, mind and context shape reality. The contexts of minds, the sociocultural ecosystems that minds constitute and of which minds form part must also be incorporated into research. It is vital that we understand the fact that individual minds exist socially. Inevitably, again, human behaviour will be determined *at one and the same time* by the interpretation of the circumstances that individuals may create and by the circumstances themselves. Mind and context form an indissoluble unit in the determination of social acts and cultural forms. So multidimensional and inter-relational perspectives such as those adopted by ecology and developed by systems theory or by complexity approaches must be included in any contemporary theoretical paradigm. By analysing the contexts of sociocultural phenomena from global, holistic views we may gain a clearer understanding of the situations and events in these areas of reality.

In fact, the inspiration for this essay does not come only from outside the sociocultural sciences; it comes from inside as well. According to Bastide (1971: 8), Auguste Comte himself seemed to suggest as much in an era which lacked the conceptual instruments required for an ecological or holistic approach: “In the natural sciences”, he said, “the elements exist before the whole; in the human sciences the whole precedes the parts”²⁰ (contemporary physicists make the same claim for quantum physics). Twentieth century authors, such as Norbert Elias, Kurt Lewin and Walter Buckley, declare their support for an approach of this kind: Lewin in his *field theory*, and Buckley in his study of the relations between sociology and systems theory. From the realm of interdisciplinary anthropology, Edgar Morin argues for what he terms the ‘perspective of complexity’ and defends the integrated, complementary nature of the various approaches to sociocultural phenomena: “A noology views the things of the mind as objective entities. This does not stand in the way, however, of considering these ‘things’ equally from the perspective of the minds/brains that produce them [...] and from the perspective of the cultural conditions of

20 “ Dans les sciences de la nature les éléments existent avant le tout; dans les sciences humaines, le tout est antérieur aux parties ”.

their production [...]. As both perspectives remain irreducible and they may become antagonistic if either tries to be the main perspective, they are completely complementary for us” (1991: 110).²¹

It is from this complementary, ecologically integrated point of view that I feel we should formulate a paradigm that can bring together not only the various research lines of sociolinguistics, but also those of linguistics in the strict sense and those of psycholinguistics. Starting from the tripartite conception proposed by Morin (1991: 121)—the *psychosphere* relative to individual brains/minds, the *sociosphere* relating to the cultural products of the interactions of brains/minds, and the *noosphere* which embraces language, knowledge and logical and paradigmatic rules—it should be possible, even preserving the necessary degree of autonomy, to progress towards a theoretical unification of what we have traditionally termed linguistics, psycholinguistics, and sociolinguistics/pragmatics (see Bastardas, 1995a, 1995b).

This paradigm would allow us to progress towards the resolution of unresolved or unclearly presented aspects such as the *locus* of language, the place of the individual in linguistic theory, the meaning of forms, the relation of verbal and non-verbal elements, the phenomenon of intercomprehension, linguistic behaviour, the interrelation of language, the individual and society, social symbols, and the process of development.

As for more specifically sociolinguistic problems, the new scientific paradigms are also extremely useful. The holistic and ecological focus enables us to study the forms and systems of linguistic communication in their macro-micro-socio-cultural context and to understand their determinations and dynamics. We can thus conceive language contact from the perspective of the relation between the organism and the ecosystem and see the phenomenon as a process in which the organism can make changes, either in its own behaviour or in the environment. It can adapt to the context, or adapt the context to itself (Bateson, 1972: 445). In the case of language use, adaptation to an extremely inhospitable context may lead to language shift and extinction. On the other hand, human beings who decide to transform the context to their own advantage, are setting in motion, for example, the macroprocesses of linguistic revitalization or normalization, the success of which will depend on the degree of change

21 “ Une noologie considère les choses de l’esprit comme des entités objectives. Mais cela n’exclut nullement de considérer également ces ‘choses’ du point de vue des esprits/cerveaux humains qui les produisent [...] et du point des conditions culturelles de leur production [...]. Tout en demeurant irréductibles les uns aux autres, et tout en risquant de devenir antagonistes si chacun prétend être le point de vue central, sont pour nous absolument complémentaires ”.

that can be achieved in the environment. Planned intervention, as we will see, will also inevitably require a complex approach, since, as Lewin says: “In order to decide the best way to bring about real change, it is not enough to consider a property. The entire circumstances must be examined. To shift a social equilibrium, the whole social field needs to be considered: the groups and sub-groups involved, their relations, their value systems, etc.” (1978: 209). The eco-socio-phenomenological paradigm which we will outline and apply to sociolinguistic events can help us in our attempt to do so.

1.3. DIVERSITY AND LANGUAGE CONTACTS

Languages do not differ among themselves in their inherent power, but the users of languages do.

STANLEY LIEBERSON

1.3.1. Diversity

The different forms of speech that have evolved in humans are the results of our efforts and those of our ancestors to make ourselves understood and to cooperate. They are, though, a subset—albeit a very important one—of the set of systems of action-meaning that humans have gradually negotiated to make our interactions mutually intelligible. Each human group living in continued coexistence has established a series of codes—that is, standard behaviours linked to a particular sense—that have made it possible to express to others their thoughts and ideas or information regarding the elements and processes of action relevant to their joint existence. This whole mass of conventions—the conventions that constitute human cultures—have a significant influence, for example, on our gestures, our choice of clothes for particular occasions, the form of our interactions—conversation, ceremonies, or rituals—and our possible reactions to specific acts of others. Humans lead socioculturally organised lives in a world of meaning.

We humans have usually organized ourselves in groups as the basic units of survival. To be able to communicate via speech, we have created a complex socio-symbolic system that uses phonetic or graphic means to represent our mind’s ideas on a multitude of objects, events, functions, sensations, and many other data. This system can be perceived and understood in more or less the

same way by any other individual who shares the code.²² Continuously added to and modified to meet the historical needs of populations, these socio-cognitive communication systems constitute today a fundamental element in the configuration of the species all over the planet and play a crucial role in the transmission of culture, in the existence of thought, and in everyday relationships of all the human societies of which we have records.²³

Unlike other animal species, our forms of communication are not genetically established, but are created, maintained or changed and eliminated inside the framework of sociocultural experience. Human groups have generated an extraordinary number of linguistic communication systems with an astonishing variety of structures. Though all members of the species share a set of bio-psychological attributes, human linguistic communication has taken on a multitude of forms used (originally at least) at a local or regional level, and differing from one place to the next, along a continuum. The diversity of language systems is therefore a social fact that has gone hand in hand—at least until today—with the existence of the human faculty of language.

This diversity in the systems of linguistic communication that humans have gradually created varies according to the terms of the comparison. At one extreme, we find systems that differ only minimally—for example, at the phonetic or merely lexical level. At the other, there are systems that are totally

22 Language systems thus belong to Popper's 'world 3' or to Teilhard de Chardin's 'noosphere', alongside ideas, cultural products, other languages, notions, theories, etc., which, in spite of being produced, dependent elements, acquire an objective reality and autonomy (see Morin, 1991: 107-8). As Bourdieu (1987) states, "Language is not, strictly speaking, a code: it becomes one only through grammar, which is a quasi-legal codification of a system of formative schemas. To speak of language as a code is to commit the fallacy par excellence of placing in the mind of the people being studied that which one must have in one's own mind to understand what they do [French original: La langue n'est pas un code à proprement parler: elle ne le devient que par la grammaire, qui est une codification quasi juridique d'un système de schèmes informationnels. Parler de code à propos de la langue, c'est commettre la *fallacy* par excellence, celle qui consiste à mettre dans la conscience des gens qu'on étudie ce qu'on doit avoir dans la conscience pour comprendre ce qu'ils font]". In the framework of structuralist linguistics particularly we should bear in mind, as Auer & di Luzio note, that "a more radical rethinking of the notion of system is necessary. [...] Gumperz points out that the notion of 'system' itself cannot be a theoretical 'prime' in linguistics. Instead, linguistic systems ('varieties', 'codes', 'languages', 'dialects', or whatever) are the *result* of a speech community's more or less focused (categorical) use of linguistic structures and processes" (1988: 2). For my part, throughout the book I will use the term *system* in the classical sense of Von Bertalanffy: "A set of elements interrelated with each other and with the environment" (1981: 263).

23 "The whole is contained in language, but language itself is a part contained in the whole that it contains. Language is in us and we are in language. We make the language that makes us [Tout se trouve contenu dans le langage, mais lui-même est une partie contenue dans le tout qu'il contient. Le langage est en nous et nous sommes dans le langage. Nous faisons le langage qui nous fait]" (Morin, 1991: 172).

different at all the levels of their structure. The diversity of forms is also palpable at the written level; in addition to the structural differences of oral systems, written forms use different codes of graphical representation which also vary widely according to their distance in space and time.

These systems of linguistic communication are thus the responses of human groups to their need to communicate and survive. They correspond to the division of humanity into different sets of varying size, and with varying degrees of intracommunication. The continuum of existing forms of speech varies according to the historical fortunes of the human groups or communities and to the degree of contact between them. Very probably, the higher the level of historical contact, the greater the process of linguistic coordination and convergence in an attempt to achieve effective social communication. However, not all groups that live close to others have created identical ways of speaking. Though a significant degree of mutual linguistic adaptation is established, the historical organization of each human unit of survival—sub-ethnic groups, ethnic groups, nations, etc.—seems to have left a fairly wide margin of difference between the linguistic varieties of each group or location, either due to prevailing factors or merely due to decisions taken by each specific community. However, each human subgroup in a specific geo-social setting will tend to maintain communicative cohesion and maximum linguistic coordination—unless the relations are broken—with the other human subgroups with which they have regular contact. Over time, in a socially spontaneous and often unreflecting way, each collective unit of survival will come to observe the same or similar norms of communication. These means of communication may have slight internal differences, but above all they differ substantially from those adopted by other social groups in far off places with which no forms of communication exist.

Not surprisingly, this separation of humanity into different groups of maximum internal relation and minimum external relation has not produced a universal common language system but a plethora of alternative systems, all functionally valid and adapted to the general sociocultural needs of their groups of producers/users. The vagaries of history—wars, annexations, economic misfortunes, natural disasters, migrations, political associations—have influenced the extension, fragmentation and association of the units of survival in which humans have organised themselves. The result is today's linguistic mosaic—inside the framework of the dynamic interrelations of the sociocultural order—in constant movement and change, and in permanent adaptation or balance, depending on the degree of isolation or contact between the respective human groups.

The more intense the contact between populations which have previously used different systems of linguistic communication, the more intense will be the processes of adaptation and change, always in search of mutual comprehension. The degree of adaptation of one or other group will depend on the relative power of the forces involved. Over a series of stages, the demography, economics, culture, and politics of each of the groups with respect to the other will gradually determine the new linguistic result of each interrelation, inside the framework of a complex system of dynamic mutual influences.

The awareness of human beings of the existence of linguistic diversity and of the ramifications of this recognition has depended on their exposure to this diversity. Given that without distinction there is no perception it is very likely that a human community with a homogenous, widely accepted form of speaking and which has no contact with people from other communities might be totally unaware of the existence of linguistic diversity. After all, the fish is the last creature to become aware of the existence of water. But since in many cases human communities—at least those close to each other—may often have had sporadic or habitual contact, it is to be expected that some recognition of the differences in speech may have developed. So how do they interpret this perception? Cognitively speaking, what can be derived from this discovery? How are different ways of speaking and speakers conceptualised and categorised?

The first consequence of this recognition of the diversity of speech is *identification*: there are people in the world who do not speak in the same way as my people do. Inevitably, when we become aware of the existence of other ways of speaking, individuals who use the non-autochthonous variety can be categorised, identified and evaluated as outsiders and/or members of a specific group. The evaluation assigned to that group will probably be transferred to the evaluation of their form of speech, which thus becomes an element of the identification of individuals as members of a group.

Almost always the awareness of linguistic difference means an awareness of one's own way of speaking and therefore the need to refer to it and name it. In the traditional, popular representation, one's own way of speaking is very often given a name derived from the place of origin, as a category to designate how people speak in that particular place. So people may claim to speak varieties with local names. These names may be replaced by, or alternate with, other categorizations which aim to relate the local way of speaking to a supralocal set of language forms. The supralocal label, however, is not always the spontaneous, widely-accepted product of the different local groups; it may be the result of the influence at the individual cognitive level of the policies of

official institutions that set out to ‘define’ the language spoken by the individuals in a particular geo-socio-political area.

The upshot of this is the fact that very often the name (and all the other categorizations that depend on it) that individuals give to their linguistic varieties does not derive from an examination of the forms of communication by the speakers themselves but from the fortunes of external contacts and the influences of the institutions that take decisions on linguistic matters. It is therefore perfectly possible to speak without having to know *how* one speaks or *what* one speaks. A consciousness of the organization and characteristics of one’s own language forms and the name of the ‘language’ category to which one’s speech belongs, or in which it may be included, does not derive directly from the fact of one’s possessing or using that code; these elements belong to the level of consciousness, and they come from informational and operational activities of a social nature that lie outside the code itself and quite often outside the local community as well.

1.3.2. Language systems as sociopolitical facts

Literacy and education are obligatory in many parts of the world today, and education tends to be organized around a centralized system which is dependent on the state—the arbiter of public life. This situation has had profound consequences for the linguistic domain. Numerous human communities which speak only their own local or regional historical variety—their vernacular—are taught in another linguistic system, which may be similar to their own or very different from it, but is usually categorized as the correct and legitimate *language*²⁴ with a clearly established name. As a result of this process, which occurs inside the macrophenomenon that sociologists term ‘modernization’, many individuals who have always referred to their way of speaking by means of a local name and have never thought of considering it as correct or incorrect, or better or worse than any other, may now think that their system of linguistic communication is merely a corrupt, spurious way of speaking language ‘x’. Language ‘x’, used by those charged with its practical and ideological diffusion in the school system and in all forms of communication, plays an ever greater role in the life of the community and obliges individuals to take certain

24 The term *language* is often used polysemically. It can mean the varied ways of speaking that are characteristic of a group of the population in a specific territorial area, or it can be strictly the *standard* variety disseminated and sanctioned by politicians, schools and universities, and the media.

decisions regarding their linguistic behaviour and their evaluation of forms of verbal communication. Fully and collectively aware of the difference between the vernacular and public ‘official standard’ varieties, many speakers of ‘non-standard’ forms have to decide whether to change their linguistic behaviour or to conserve it, thus accepting the possible negative social evaluations of their speech as the diffusion of the new variety and the new ideology advances. In this situation, a community with languages that do not present great differences, are mutually comprehensible, and clearly belong to the same linguistic suprasystem may be divided by the political frontiers and with time may become fully convinced that they are groups that speak two different *languages* with names of their own. The famous saying “a language is a dialect with an army behind it” appears particularly apt, even if only metaphorically.

From the perspective of the states and political powers with a vested interest in promoting a coded and regulated linguistic form, the ‘language’—as they invariably call it—will guarantee general communication among the citizens inside the ambit of sovereignty and will contribute to ‘national’ identification, as a symbolic form that gives substance to the collective ‘identity’. All new states today tend to equip themselves with a flag, an anthem, and—if it has the differentiating elements required—a national language. Whatever decision the political power adopts vis-à-vis the language or languages inside its territory, the ideology of the national ‘language’ as a symbol both of internal unification and of distinctiveness from other territories seems to have been present for at least the whole of the twentieth century. Thus, ‘languages’—in this sociopolitical sense—can become the source of conflict between populations who demand official recognition for their codes and whose feeling of collective acknowledgement depends on the status awarded to their language system.

As fully conscious cognitive objects—no longer, therefore, as linguistic *habitus*, to use Bourdieu’s expression²⁵—language systems can now be evaluated according to their social significance; they can be associated with identities—personal and collective—emotions, sentiments, and, via the phenomenology of each individual and group, can generate positions in favour of or against their social use.²⁶ In the minds of the individuals involved, all contacts between languages, then, will tend to produce an awareness, evaluation and behavioural response—i.e., to continue to use the linguistic forms in all or in certain so-

25 See Bourdieu (1982: 28).

26 “Speakers as subjects have beliefs about language [...]. These beliefs can motivate linguistic practices, more or less self-conscious, but in principle accessible to introspection, which are causally effective in modifying speech output and which have to be referred to in explaining it” (Pateman, 1987: 99).

cially significant functions or to change to another one—and will influence their resulting communicative competence. The historical consequence of this complexity will be continuity, changes of different kinds, or the disappearance of hundreds of language systems produced and reproduced by humanity.

1.3.3. An ecodynamic landscape for language contact

Bearing in mind what I have said so far, what is the best theoretical framework for understanding the fate of the linguistic varieties of humans? What basic conceptual skeleton should form the basis for a contemporary sociology of culture—in this case, centred on language? How can we best explain the life, development and death of the sets of language forms used by humans in their intercommunication, bearing in mind the intrinsic fact of their diversity?

To be able to provide adequate responses to these questions we will probably have to change our perspective again, now inside the linguistic field itself. Linguistic varieties do not exist as such, but in the minds and actions of members of society. They are second-degree abstractions, which we build on the basis of the observation of the behaviours of humans. Their existence, reproduction and change does not depend on the languages themselves but on individuals and their behaviours and ideas. To understand the life of linguistic varieties we must attain a global understanding of sociocultural life.

How can we best represent the sociocultural phenomenon, seeking to follow the recommendations of holism and integration that I described above? A possible image that we may use as an initial hypothesis, which would enable us to understand the whole while also acknowledging the role and properties of each of the parts, is that of an orchestra or chorus. The score of an orchestral or polyphonic ensemble can make visible the evolution of each instrument or voice and of the whole that results from the superimposition of one on the other in the performed sequence of the work; this is what the composer wished to create, and what the perceiver hears. The behaviour of each instrument has no meaning on its own, but only as a participant in a global, orchestral or polyphonic agreement, in all meanings of the term. If one of the participating instruments or voices changes its contribution systematically the overall musical agreement will disappear, but it can be reconstructed—even though perhaps not in the way the composer foresaw, as in the case of improvisations—by making other instruments or voices adapt to the discordant voice, achieving a new harmonic consensus which will be pleasing to the hearer. Of course, the score is not music until someone performs it and the whole act is not complete

until someone listens to it and mentally experiences the set of sounds or voices. The events of reality, then, can be described as independent tunes or as harmonic accords between various melodies. Seen linearly, they may appear to us as individual, isolated melodies.²⁷ But seen as harmonic accords, each fragment of the tune performed by each instrument or voice, for example, is determined by its relations with the other sounds that coexist with it *simultaneously*. So, we must be careful not to think of something that in fact exists as a harmony merely as a melody.

This metaphor—which obviously does not aim to be an exact copy of the social reality but a mere heuristic tool to be improved on—may allow us to understand and to organize in a separate and interrelated way the elements which I believe are most relevant to their intervention in the determination of the linguistic behaviour of humans in situations of diversity and contact. So we will construct a score for each of the voices or instruments without forgetting their interrelation with the other scores among which relations of harmonic interdependence are created. If we like, this is no more than applying the vision of systems, where each level—in spite of its individuality—forms part of an interrelated whole of multiple levels, the cooperation of all of which produces a specific behaviour or global product able to be perceived by and to influence another human being. For the moment, our big score will comprise the various parts: the minds, social interaction, human groups and political power, at all times presupposing that it is perceived and listened to by human beings who alone can confer existence on it, justify it, and act—for instance, by dancing in one way or another according to the rhythm—in accordance with the harmonic or disharmonic developments that derive from the whole.

Underlying this musical metaphor is the fundamental idea that diversity and language contacts and their effects must be explained within the framework of ecosystemic relations between the phenomenon of language and other factors of reality. Speech, therefore, is seen as a subset of general social action, with characteristics of its own but which are governed by the general determinations of any social behaviour. The use of language is conceptualised as an eco-dependent activity that is regulated socio-cognitively. It is precisely this that explains its changing character in accordance with the events that human

²⁷ This is often the case in the study of human languages: “[They] are often studied as specialised items divorced from human beings” (Elias, 1991: 41).

groups experience.²⁸ The linguistic behaviours can live in stability and in harmonious agreement with other sociocultural levels but they have to adapt to the changes that may occur in the rest of the musical scores:²⁹ changes, for example, in social representations and values, in ways of relating to others, in the group composition of society, in economic and technological aspects, in media communication, and in political organization, will have repercussions for language and will oblige humans to readapt their communicative forms or undergo periods of tension until a new balance is achieved that avoids traumatic or radical readaptation to the existing order. In conflicts with substantial repercussions for language use, the codes are not only means of communication but accentuate their character as *means of communion* (Le Page, 1964), and may become highly sensitive, conscious symbolic objects, exerting a profound influence on behaviour.

28 This can also be understood via the metaphor of the hologram, which establishes that each part contains in a way the other. The linguistic dimension contains the other dimensions. In fact, no reality can be understood one-dimensionally (see Morin, 1992: 92).

29 So, as Lieberman says, “Language behavior is viewed as a form of adaptation to a set of institutional and demographic conditions in the society, namely, population composition, both linguistic and ethnic, the degree of segregation, the occupational forces generated by the industrial structure of the society, and age” (1970: 14). Lieberman does not include school as one of the basic forces because he considers this factor as partially influenced by the other factors listed, an opinion that I would challenge in light of the cases of political subordination in which none of the variables mentioned can explain, for example, the absence of the code in the educational system.

2.1. THE BRAIN/MIND COMPLEX

The mental world—the mind [...]—is not limited by the skin.

GREGORY BATESON

We are like fishes swimming in the sea of sense.

WILLIAM JAMES

2.1.1. Basic concepts

Little can be understood about human behaviour if we do not begin our examination of the social orchestral score by looking at the ‘brain/mind complex’, since it is at this level that the ultimate control over human action and understanding lies. Yet, while this element is vital in explaining sociocultural phenomena, we cannot fail to recognize just how inadequate our current knowledge of this complex is. While acknowledging the great lack of understanding that we currently have of this element which is so central to an explanation of sociocultural phenomena, we must risk taking our first steps based on the rudimentary ideas that do exist, if we are to reach a coherent explanation of other levels of human experience. Let us understand, therefore, the human being as a biosocial product capable of developing a brain/mind that will make possible and regulate the individual’s relationship with the world. From this perspective we can rid ourselves of the ‘body-mind problem’ by assuming the biological nature of mental phenomena, given that, as Searle rightly points out, the latter are caused by the workings of the brain and carried out in the cerebral structure. He expresses this quite clearly when he states, for example, “Conscience and intentionality are as much a part of human biology as digestion or the circulation of the blood” (1983: IX).

Unlike these non-cultural physiological systems, however, the ordinary development of the neuro-cognitive complex occurs—and out of necessity must

occur—in close interrelation with the sociocultural context, in other words, through interaction with other human predecessors and their products. Without this requisite activation, during the optimum phase, of the genetic programming by the stimuli of social activity, no brain can develop properly or have any chance of recovery during its lifetime. In all probability, the interrelationship between the developing brain/mind and the sociocultural phenomenon can be seen more accurately in terms of self-organizing systems rather than in terms of the computer metaphor, with its traditional ‘inputs’ and ‘outputs’ (Varela *et al.*, 1992: 157). Fruit of this functional autonomy, the brain/mind will construct itself from the perceived cultural artefacts derived from social interactions, so that, as Morin suggests, it is a complex phenomenon formed from inseparable elements—the brain/mind, the individual, and the society-culture—each of which, in its own way, contains the others (1986: 84). This approach also helps to advance our anthropological understanding, given that our cultural knowledge is to be found—as it would appear to be in reality—at the interface of these elements rather than in one or in all of them (Varela *et al.*, 1992: 178), and as Jean Piaget claims, “Man is one and all his mentalized functions are equally socialized” (1983: 22).

In terms of understanding linguistic behaviour, there are two main inter-related functions of the brain/mind complex that would appear to be of particular relevance: cognitive representation of reality and control over behaviour. It is in the brain/mind complex where we construct and sustain ideas about the reality that we experience, and from where we activate our motor organs to carry out specific actions—determined in accordance with the representations and interpretations of the reality that we make. And this we can do, as we shall see, either from consciousness or subconsciousness. We can hold certain definitions of reality without being conscious of so doing, and similarly we can undertake certain actions without having been conscious before, or at the time, of having done so. Consciousness, therefore, is not all of the mind. Many of our mental acts are not directly accessible from consciousness.³⁰

30 In fact, as Popper & Lorenz (1992: 30) point out, learning includes the effort of consigning what one has just learnt to subconsciousness. Thus, a large part of our behavioural and cognitive activity is subconscious. The high degree of consciousness that we maintain over each action when learning to drive a car becomes part of a routine and our subconsciousness when we have some experience and we wish to centre our attention on the road. We must conclude, therefore, that the phenomenon also affects linguistic behaviour and all other human activities. Indeed, Bateson believes that the conscience “must always be limited to a rather small fraction of mental process. [...] The unconsciousness associated with habit is an economy both of thought and of consciousness; and the same is true of the inaccessibility of

2.1.2. The cognitive representation of reality

If we take the first of these two aspects—the representation of reality—the human being is characterized by the fact of his being able to perceive and, above all, to construct a meaningful reality. The individual draws on his socio-cerebral capacity in order to be able to apprehend and interpret the perceptions which, based on their differences, he can capture using his sensors. The forms that the elements of this reality take, those our attention turns to, are unavoidably categorised and typified, and internalised in the *stock of knowledge*—according to the terminology used by Schutz (1974)—which the memory allows us to maintain. It is from this cognitive depository that we build and rebuild, depending on our experiences, our socio-mental representations of reality. As Husserl explains, “What has been experienced in the actual perception of one object is apperceptively transferred to any other similar object, perceived merely as to its type. Actual experience will or will not confirm our anticipation of the typical conformity of these other objects” (Schutz, 1974: 39). Thus, the individual is conceived as an intelligent being who maintains internally, and in a constant manner, a symbolic level of reality in the framework of which he can define his world—we see from the signified, says Marina (1993)—and his role in this world.

At the heart of this conception of the human being as a cognitive-interpretive being is, as maintained by the perspective of symbolic interactionism, that “the meaning does not emanate from the intrinsic makeup of the thing that has meaning but rather from and through the defining activities of people as they interact” (Blumer, 1982: 4). Contrary, therefore, to long-held beliefs, things do not have meaning on their own; rather, it is human beings that attribute meaning to things, be they physical objects, words or actions, through the cognitive processing of apprehended information and internalized interpretive procedures. Indeed, we might say, to modify slightly a well-known saying of Gregory Bateson, that *we cannot avoid interpreting*. Facing any perception and, frequently, from our subconsciousness, the world is processed and understood drawing on the available cognitive stock. Any perception that cannot be recognized and interpreted from the knowledge available at that time will activate consciousness to produce a hypothesis that makes sense, that might explain what it is that we are perceiving, how it relates to our other perceptions, what

the processes of perception. The conscious organism does not require (for pragmatic purposes) to know *how* it perceives—only to know *what* it perceives” (1972: 136).

function it performs, for whom, etc. As Schutz said, “I cannot understand a cultural object without referring it to the human activity in which it originates. For example, I do not understand a tool without knowing the purpose for which it was designed, a sign or symbol without knowing what it stands for in the mind of the person who uses it, an institution without understanding what it means for the individuals who orient their behaviour with regard to its existence” (1974: 41). Thus, any element might acquire a significance for a given human group or person that is not shared by, or that is even very different and quite the contrary to that held by, another group or another person. The ignorance, therefore, of the fact of signification as a mental phenomenon over the globality of things—and not just as a linguistic phenomenon—very often leads to problems and conflicts that are not easily resolved as the interlocutors hold different meanings of the same or similar perceptions. So even if there is dialogue, this might be hindered by the different interpretations that each participant has internalized—very often, subconsciously. Succeeding in consciously identifying the differences in interpretations of phenomena and constructing bridges of mutual understanding is, therefore, essential for the solving of many personal and social problems.

The fact, therefore, of the ‘signification’ of reality is central to human existence. No explanation of the experience of individuals or societies can ignore it. The way the individual represents his world, his place in that world, the values and aims of his existence and that of other beings, his personal and social experiences, etc., will have a profound influence on the individual’s motivations, sentiments and emotions and, therefore, on his behaviour.

Thus, as human beings develop referential interpretive capacities in relation to the linguistic structures perceived in their social interactions, similarly they develop evaluative interpretations of these same linguistic structures, in particular in situations of diverse ways of talking. Speaking in one or other variety—or, as is frequent, using one or other linguistic form—might, therefore, be socially significant, and have major repercussions on the interaction that develops. In the same way, for example, that we might assign meanings according to the social status of the clothes that we put on to wear, the linguistic varieties used can also be interpreted from the same or from similar points of view. Thus, as Giribone says, “Ways of speaking also belong to that which is spoken” (1988: 58).³¹ When we interpret our perceptions, we do so polyphonically, multi-dimensionally. Never—or virtually never—do we consider one

31 “ Les façons de dire, elles aussi, appartient au dit ”.

level of meaning in isolation but rather in an integrated way with the rest of our pertinent perceptions and/or information, and, what's more, from within a hierarchical organization. Thus, the social meanings attributed to certain perceptions can act as a contextual 'framework' that is greater than other perceived elements and, in turn, determine the interpretation which, as a whole, we might give to the apprehended set. As Bateson clearly demonstrates, the 'frame' of a picture, for example, is metacommunicative in the sense that it acts as an instruction that the perceiver knows how to interpret, that is, he will not consider the wallpaper as being a continuation of the painting or the photograph that is hung there (1972: 189). In the same way, linguistic varieties can be considered as a framework of the individual and of the linguistic messages that we perceive and which influence the global appraisal of what the latter is saying. Just as we might not take seriously something said by an individual whom we consider to be badly dressed or of scruffy appearance, we may also look negatively on all that an individual says or does when that person speaks using a variety that is attributed to a stigmatized or unvalued social group, or also for the simple fact of using, on a more or less regular basis, words or expressions considered 'vulgar' or inappropriate for a formal serious exchange.

The social meanings of linguistic forms are part of the individual's cognitive-interpretative depository and can, as a result, influence the action both of the potential user and their interlocutor. The latter might, for example, not offer a room to someone who speaks in a way that is considered socially to be negative—in all likelihood because a negative opinion is held of the group with which it is associated. Similarly, the individual that is held in such light by others might decide, for example, to abandon—he himself, if he can, or if not his children—the linguistic variety that has such disadvantages and which is so criticised in the society in which he lives. Needless to say, the negative social meanings of linguistic forms are at the root of any process of language shift, as we shall see in more detail at a later juncture.

2.1.3. The control of behaviour

The second function—control over behaviour—has, it should be stressed, a very close link with the first function. Thus, human action always occurs in the framework of a universe of senses which determines it and makes it intelligible. "In acting", Searle points out, "what I am doing depends in large part on what I think I am doing" (1985: 67). And the action that I think I am carrying out is the fruit of the indications that I have given myself in accordance with

the interpretive schema that I have internalised in my stock of knowledge and which are the fruit of my prior experiences (Blumer, 1982). In order to understand the action—as Max Weber reminded us some time ago—it is necessary to understand the interpretation that the subject gives of his own actions.

In the framework, therefore, of his global interpretation of reality—in which, he himself is included—the individual formulates intentions of actions that constitute a mental anticipation of future behaviour, and he will imagine the consequences and effects of these and decide whether or not to execute them depending on whether he considers such behaviour as being personally and socially significant or pertinent. Not always, however, are actions planned out beforehand as we have just described. Often, as Searle suggests, we do not reflect consciously on what we shall do or say, rather we simply do it or say it—as in a conversation, for example. In such cases there is certainly an intention, but not an intention formulated prior to the carrying out of the action (Searle, 1985: 75). Actions of this type, therefore, cannot be inspected by the individual while they are being executed but the person must wait until they have been undertaken.

Many daily, repetitive actions are directed from the human subconsciousness drawing on an individual's experience accumulated in his cognitive stock: if things work in such a way, he will act in such and such a way. If the internalized routines of behaviour are successful they become habitual 'recipes' of behaviour (Schutz & Luckmann, 1977: 35). This subconscious routine understanding of many actions—and representations—seems to be so important in the life of human subjects and societies that it led the French sociologist, Pierre Bourdieu, to create the concept of *habitus* and to make it a central category in his explanation of the social persistence of behaviour. In accordance with the existing contextual conditions, therefore, individuals develop "durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles which generate and organize practices and representations that can be objectively adapted to their outcomes without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operations necessary in order to attain them". The *habitus*, therefore, furnishes "actions objectively 'regulated' and 'regular' without being in any way the product of obedience to rules", he continues, "collectively orchestrated without being the product of the organizing action of a conductor" (Bourdieu, 1980: 88-89).

2.1.4. The sociocultural formation of minds

But how does the formation of these representations, these skills and these norms of behaviour, that is, of the mind, take place? Contrary to what the individual character of the brain/mind might lead us to believe, the construction of the mind is at once both biological and sociocultural, formed as the result of a dynamic, inseparable process. The dichotomy or polarization that existed not so many years ago between those that emphasized the importance of the biopsychological aspects—the “innatists”—in the development of the mental capacities—in particular in the case of language—and those that attached greater weight to social exposure, has today been overtaken by this global integrated vision of two inescapable phenomena, the biological and the sociocultural. It is clear that without one or the other no formation process of the mind would be possible. A genetically well-formed individual who, however, never receives the necessary social exposure at the right time will never develop a mind like that of other humans. And similarly, an individual who finds himself in a suitable social context, but lamentably suffers a malformation of the brain, is very unlikely to ever have an adequately developed mind.

Applying, therefore, the ecological and non-dichotomous vision to the discussion above, it becomes necessary to consider the mind as a product that is both individual and social. Through a process of exposure and trial and error, the human being begins to develop his skills, adopting behaviours and constructing through dialogue his own representation of reality *based on the materials apprehended in the external reality that surrounds him*.³² Thus, for example,

32 This would appear to be the point of view that most closely reflects reality. The individual is not simply a mirror of his sociocultural environment but rather an active being who self-constructs his environment, drawing on, and in connection with, his perceptions of the ‘outside’ world. As Piaget said: “Between an organic process of maturing that provides mental potentialities, but without a complete psychological structuring, and a social transmission that supplies the elements and the model of a possible construction, but without imposing the latter as a finished block, there exists an operating system that translates the potentialities offered by the nervous system into mental structures; but it only carries out this translation in function of the interactions between individuals and consequently under the accelerating or inhibiting influence of the different modes of these social interactions” (1983: 28). Equally in contemporary cognitive thinking, the mind is seen as an emerging autonomous network, an idea that breaks, therefore, with the input/output idea as if it were a computer. It is recognized as having a considerable degree of autonomy: “In general [...], the meaning of this or that interaction for a living system is not prescribed from outside but is the result of the organization and history of the system itself” (Var-ela *et al.*, 1992: 157). Schutz, on the other hand, emphasizes the other angle, no less correct, albeit drawing some distinctions: “Only a very small part of my knowledge of the world originates within my personal experience. The greater part is socially derived, handed down to me by my friends, my parents, my teachers and the teachers of my teachers” (1974: 44). Elias (1991: 12), like Morin, highlights the

he will develop an understanding of the physical and linguistic elements, gestures, etc., of his environment, he will undertake various actions with respect to these elements—manipulate them, play with them, repeat sequences, try to talk, etc.—and gradually he will infer and internalize the senses that have been socially granted—by his predecessors—to the various elements and actions of reality, both material and social, and, together with his peers, he will, thus, constitute the meanings and the behaviours which, in part, might be idiosyncratic and specific to his generation.

So it is this characteristic, therefore, of the indissoluble social existence of human brains/minds—*culture is in the mind which is in the culture*, as Morin would say (1986: 234)—that removes the mystery and allows us to understand why the individual nature of the brain does not impede the existence of common visions of reality and of socially agreed meanings, those shared by many individuals. It is this which explains the paradox of human inter-comprehension. In other words, if we postulate individualized brains/minds and, for example, that not even words signify on their own, how is it possible to reach agreements in the mutual interpretation of our actions as human beings? The reply lies in the sociocultural fact of the formation of the mind, in its rising out of the sea of meaningful interactions entered into by individuals in society. And with the formation of the mind, Mead's *self* (1934) will gradually emerge, the conscious self-image of the person, after and as a consequence of having conceived of others. In the words of Vygotsky:

[...] we are conscious of ourselves because we are conscious of others, and equally, we are conscious of others because in our relationship with ourselves we are the same as the others in their relationship with us (Vila, I., 1987: 58).

The individual—formed in the framework of his relatively autonomous relation with other beings and their cultural products, but open at all times to socio-cognitive changes if his experience so requires—is a depository/actor of a large part of the cultural contents of the society in which he has developed. Humanly socialized, therefore, he will not only experience the 'nature' of his surroundings but also the sociocultural world in which he lives. Thus, the individual will possess "all the meaning-strata which transform natural things in cultural objects, human bodies into fellow-men and the movements of fellow-

inseparability of the process: "Languages, thoughts, memories and all the other aspects of knowledge complexes are not [...] either individual or social. They are always [...] potentially and actually both, social and individual at the same time".

men into acts, gestures and communications” (Schutz & Luckmann, 1977: 27). Together with the other individuals with whom he cohabits, he will help to maintain—or modify—the socio-cultural ecosystem of which he forms a part. In holographic relation, one phenomenon contains the other. This interpretive and intelligent faculty of the human being is that which provides him with the social existence of what we have come to call *culture*—“the symbolic-expressive basis of human behaviour, or, to quote Peter Berger, ‘the totality of man’s products’, not only as material artefacts and non-material socio-cultural formations that guide human behaviour (what we call society is a segment of culture), but the *reflection* of this world as it is contained within human consciousness” (Wuthnow *et al.*, 1984: 3 and 35). Beliefs and attitudes, ideologies, verbal expressions, gestures, religions, philosophical systems, feelings, values, thoughts, emotions, meanings, interactions, group dynamics, relations of inequality, etc., the usual contents of the study of human societies, find in the socio-neuro-mental plain—in the societies of minds—their habitat and their possibility of existence.

Mention should be made once more of the importance that certain factors in the biological programme can have in the process of socialization and, therefore, in the development of the mental capacities and the existence of cultural elements. The age factor, for example, seems to play a fairly important role in the transformations that the subject might undergo in his relation with the elements of his sociocultural environment. Thus, the ability of the individual to develop formative skills in given areas seems to depend heavily on the existence of what have been termed ‘critical periods’. Once these have been passed, without the individual having been exposed to the necessary conditions for development, the optimum and normal constitution of certain mental capacities is much more difficult or even impossible (see Dulay *et al.*, 1982; Pulvermuller & Schumann, 1994). And linguistic competence seems to be just one of these capacities. Thus, as with the visual sense of cats—where if in the first few days of their lives they are made to wear a blindfold, they will never develop the sense of sight—humans will not be able to develop their linguistic and, in general, cognitive-communicative, capacities normally if the child does not maintain regular social relations in the first months and years of his life. Although researchers fail to agree as to the limits of this critical period of linguistic development, in the case of humans it seems that the further beyond puberty an individual passes (around 12-13 years of age) without being exposed socially to a given way of speaking, the more difficult it will be for him to have a normal and native linguistic competence in that code. This seems to be confirmed by research, in particular that carried out in the acquisition of

second languages, and, above all, as regards the phonetics of that code. If an individual—in general—does not speak a given linguistic variety before or not much beyond puberty it is highly unlikely that he will subsequently be able to speak that variety without a foreign ‘accent’, that is, without the phonetic features of his first linguistic code, the one in which he became socialized at the bio-socially optimum age. By contrast, if he has been exposed to, and has spoken, this linguistic variety frequently before this ‘critical period’ has finished, the individual can come to dominate this variety perfectly or nearly perfectly at all levels, so that, although it might be his second or third language, he will be considered a native speaker by his interlocutors. The potential influence of this factor is therefore clear on the linguistic behaviour of individuals and the reactions that their manner of speaking might have socially.

As was the case with linguistic competence, the individual’s biological age must also be taken into account as a relevant factor in the formation of the different subsets of elements grouped in the block of mental representations and which will tend, therefore, to influence and determine the individual’s actions. Thus, for example, the sociocultural content present in the environment can exert one or other degree of influence depending on the age of the individual. The actual context, therefore, will exert a very considerable influence over individuals who are still at the basic stages of socialization while the influence will be much smaller in the case of adults who are already socialized, inheritors to a great extent of their sociocultural context of socialization. And this is what accounts for the greater intra-generational homogeneity and, by contrast, the inter-generational conflicts regarding ideologies, values, norms, etc., tensions which, although experienced simultaneously by their protagonists in the same context, originate not so much from the differences in the present but from the differences in the contexts of socialization of the individuals coexistent in a given socio-historical period.

2.1.5. The development of competences

As I have been at pains to stress, together with the biological elements, the contents of the sociocultural context play a major role in the auto-eco-construction of the socio-mental skills. As far as the strictly cognitive-linguistic aspects of the individual are concerned, it is clear that the process of personal socialization is configured on the basis of his physical-socio-linguistic perceptions of the environment. Stimulated by sensory activity, the brain/mind will begin its self-development of the perception and the comprehension of reality.

Gradually, and what would appear to be in concentric circles, the individual will build his representation of the world and develop and organize the fundamental information and significance with respect to what he perceives globally. He will see the shapes and colours of objects, their social uses, the feelings and emotions that are generated in humans, the actions and movements of his fellow beings, he will capture smells and receive tactile information, etc., and he will perceive at the same time its denomination: a 'noise' that he will gradually and innately associate with the other information that simultaneously occupy his perceptive capacities. Indeed, in the individual's earliest infancy, he is exposed to a form of adult speech that is particularly appropriate for developing comprehension: this will typically have a particular intonation as well as other paralinguistic differences, it will be more clearly articulated, with a greater number of repetitions, with grammatical simplifications, and with the habitual use of the third person to refer to the infant—as if we wished to help him develop the concept of 'self' which we discussed above (1. the boy/the girl, 2. that boy/that girl is 'me'). Whatever the case, the linguistic flux will accompany the child throughout his perceptive existence and he will know how to interpret it in connection with the rest of the sensory information that he receives and with that previously accumulated in the cognitive depository that he will build and continue to fill throughout his life. Thus, through his perceptive experience, both of the acts addressed to him and those simply observed,³³ he will develop his general adult perceptive and interpretive capacity, an important subset of which, as we have seen, will be dedicated to the linguistic elements of his environment, be they from one or more languages.³⁴

He will, therefore, become competent in the comprehension of one or more codes. However, he will not transfer directly and exactly those capacities to the area of expression, an aspect that has to be put into practice actively in social relations if the individual wishes to have comfortable and automatic control. Contrary to what is often thought, the development of language comprehen-

33 The importance that the individual's activity as an observer has for his socialization should be highlighted. The capacity to learn by observation—said Bandura—enables people to acquire large, integrated patterns of behaviour without having to form them gradually by tedious trial and error (1987: 40).

34 As pointed out earlier, it should always be borne in mind that the individual self-co-constructs his reality and his behaviour and competence. In being much more than a reflection of the material perceived, the human being can be a potential factor of linguistic change. Children, therefore, "do not simply abduce or reinvent existing rules in the process of their linguistic development; they quite clearly invent new rules, the output of which becomes input to the speech of the community to which they belong" (Pateman, 1987: 67). See, for example, the case of the creoles, where no evidence is found in the preceding generation for the forms that they adopt.

sion is an earlier and partially independent process of the sender capacity and corresponds to different mechanisms³⁵ (see Bastardas, 1986). Thus, to 'practice' comprehension it is sufficient to observe linguistic interactions as a spectator, seeking to infer the meaning of the emissions produced, while to develop competence in expression it is necessary to participate in the interactions and actually use the code that is still in the process of being mastered. This situation of having to express oneself in a code that has only been practiced a little, is experienced very differently by young children and adults. While the former would seem to have no problem in emitting any phrase whatsoever—whether it be correctly constructed or not—the latter is liable to feel tense in such a situation due to his awareness of the poor control of expression and the limitations that this places on the agility and precision of his communication, and also because of the fear, real or simply imagined, of appearing ridiculous or other social consequences.

We should also notice that the fact of having to put into practice this emitting capacity of a given language poses the problem of the availability of spaces and social conditions that might facilitate this practice. As the case of Catalan demonstrates, often, even where there exists the will—and even the need—to express oneself in Catalan, it is not easy for the speaker of Spanish, given the behaviour of adaptation to this language by the vast majority of Catalan speakers who perceive that their interlocutor has problems when speaking Catalan. This also occurs with English-speakers in Sweden and other cases, where the conditions of the sociocultural context might exert a considerable influence on the degree of potential development of productive linguistic competence. Receptive competence, by contrast, can be much more easily developed: there are many more opportunities to practice it, it has no 'accent' once it has been reasonably developed and, therefore, does not lead to ridicule or social stigma.

The linguistic skills corresponding to writing and reading are closely linked to what I have just said about oral language, but clearly there are major differences too. Thus, while oral skills belong—in particular those of basic socialization in infancy—to the category of informal or natural skills—often acquired by observation, practice or subconscious inference—the acquisition of writing skills are usually transmitted through formal learning in compulsory education

35 This was highlighted by Weinreich (1979: 86). Oksaar is critical of contemporary linguistics for not having considered this important distinction. An awareness of the difference between the development of comprehension and expression is basic to an understanding of the processes of linguistic socialization (1983: 134).

systems, and at a stage following that of the development of oral skills. For thousands of years the world population has been essentially illiterate but, by contrast, it has communicated orally, in all likelihood with considerable ease and fluency. Knowledge of writing depends, as we shall see later, on being able to be exposed to an organized system of social diffusion of that knowledge.

The development of reading and writing skills is similar to those of oral comprehension and expression. First we learn to read, and much later we learn to write. Note that the same social conditions as those described for orality are repeated: it will be much easier socially to practice reading—individual and silent—than writing, which has always to be addressed to someone, and which, therefore, is public in nature. As a result, writing is much more likely to place the individual in a difficult position and is much less frequent for the large number of people who do not have to use it on a regular basis. What is more, reading skills cannot be directly transferred en bloc to the writing domain, but rather only partially. Learning to write well requires spaces in which to practice—typically schools—on a regular basis and with a certain constancy over a number of years.

In the socialization stage, the structure of the sociocultural contexts represents a factor of considerable influence on the final results of this process. Thus, variables like the linguistic varieties to which the infant is exposed, the communicative characteristics and behaviours of the speakers, the composition and the socio-economic status of family and the area of residence, etc., might influence in general the rhythm and the intensity of the linguistic and cognitive development of the infant. This is especially important in the case of linguistic diversity in the individual's environment. If the latter comes across different ways of speaking in the set of contexts in which he lives, the degree and quality of development in each of these linguistic varieties might differ according to the type and the intensity of exposure and/or use. The variety or varieties used in the family setting—in particular that of the mother or person or persons who spend most time with the child in the first years of his life—will supply the initial elements for the development of comprehension and expression and will tend to become the code or codes that will form the base for the conceptual structuring of reality, for the development of the collective identity of the individual and—if the social context does not impede it—for the informal linguistic communication of the person. The first language or languages (L1) of the individual will tend to be, therefore, a basic factor in determining the linguistic behaviour of the now socialized person.

If the remaining social contexts—neighbours, networks of friends, pupils at school, teachers, the mass media, etc.—confirm the way of speaking the indi-

vidual has acquired in the family—and/or in the kindergarten, which these days acts in part to substitute these contexts—the individual will gradually expand his competence in this code, he will acquire the registers corresponding to the different functions and situations, and then he will use it as a matter of course in his daily communicative acts with no problem whatsoever. If, on the other hand, the individual finds other distinct varieties outside the initial context of socialization, then he will be presented with a problem of a different nature with complex causes and consequences. Thus, if, for example, it is the case that in *all* the other contexts the variety developed in the family setting is neither spoken nor understood, the individual will be obliged to acquire, as quickly as possible, the other way or ways of speaking and he will become bilingual—or ‘bi-dialectal’ if they are varieties that belong to one linguistic set.³⁶ In this type of situation, the individual might finally develop a greater degree of competence in his second variety than in his first—in particular, if exposure to the latter occurs during the optimum biological period and, if, in addition to the informal contexts the new variety is also that of the formal public contexts—the vehicular language at school, the general street signs, the media, and so on.

This extreme case is, in fact, a situation that resembles quite closely that experienced by individuals who move to another country where a different language is spoken and, what’s more, they have few opportunities to come into contact with people of a similar origin. In the case of immigrants that form stable networks of relationships with persons of the same origin and, above all, are sufficiently numerous to form a majority in their schools, bilingualization might not be as rapid, effective or absolute as in the former case, given that in their daily informal relations they can continue to use—with differing degrees of interference from the other language—their code of origin. However, if there is a sufficient degree of social contact with the population that speaks the other variety and if the latter is predominant, as we have said, in the other more formal contexts, effective bilingualization will tend to occur in the framework of a distribution of functions for each of the varieties or codes that the individuals dominate: to speak with persons of the same origin they will use X, while to speak with other individuals and in formal acts and when writing they will use Y.

36 Individuals might also find two (or more) systems of linguistic communication within the family domain. The most typical case is that which occurs where each progenitor uses a different language to address the child. In such situations, and if the person-language norm is consistent, the child should be able to develop more or less equally the bases of ‘two maternal languages’, as Weinreich called them (1979: 77), and will use them appropriately according to the situation (Fantini, 1982: 63).

Note that this last description could also correspond to the cognitive and behavioural situations of those populations that without moving from their territories find themselves linguistically subordinated by political decisions and, moreover, suffer large influxes of people from the subordinating group. In this case, as in the previous one, bilingualization is usually asymmetrical, since for one of these codes the written and standardized form is taught in schools, while for the other only the colloquial oral variety is used, unless the latter is also granted official status and/or is used in education.³⁷

2.2. THE INTERACTIONAL LEVEL

*Not, then, men and their moments.
Rather moments and their men.*

ERVING GOFFMAN

2.2.1. The social interaction of minds

Turning from the first and most basic level of the environment in which language varieties exist, the brain/mind complex, we now focus on another line of our orchestral score: the social interaction of minds. As in systems theory, we propose that new properties *emerge* from the social interaction of minds that cannot be derived directly from the first level of the subsystem under analysis. While this new level retains all the significant elements originating in the mind, the emphasis shifts to how human interaction is organized. It takes into account that interaction occurs within a much broader social context in which relationships of power and social inequality play an enormous role.

Our focus here is not directed at the private action of the subject, but rather at public action. After all, speech, which is the target of our enquiry, is

³⁷ The individual's competence in each code will reflect the sociocultural context, since the degree of development "depends on [the language's] function, that is, on the uses to which the bilingual puts that language and the conditions under which he uses it [dépend de la fonction de la langue, c'est-à-dire des usages que le bilingue fait de la langue et des conditions dans lesquelles il l'utilise]" (Mackey, 1976: 375). In fact, the problem of the relationship between competence, behaviour and context appears to be better understood if we work from the hypothesis, as described above, of an inseparable complex where each component—brain/mind, individual and culture/society—in its own way, contains the others (Morin, 1986: 84). (Cf. Bastardas, 1986).

not commonly a private, individual act, but a public and social act *per se*. For this reason, an understanding of the social organization of interpersonal relations becomes crucial to understanding enormously important aspects of language behaviour. We will look at speech, therefore, as a subset of the broader phenomenon of social interaction.

Social interaction must be viewed as an inextricably socio-mental relation and therefore cognitive and interpretive in nature. If, in normal circumstances, human action is given meaning by a subject who can actively form interpretations through observation and perception, then any interaction is necessarily mutually significant. Actions, movements, gestures, verbalizations, paraverbal elements, the situations in which these occur, the biographical precedents of the relation, expected intentions and other factors will be a constant source of conscious or unconscious interpretations processed holistically between interacting individuals.

It should not be forgotten that the interpretive faculty is always present in the act of perception. That is, whenever we observe the action of another human being, we tend to interpret the individual's action, trying to guess what the individual is doing, what his or her objective or motivation is, and so forth. In this context, it is common for us to perceive and, therefore, give meaning to the actions of others that are not explicitly intended to serve as communication with others. In other words, we can be interpreted even when we do not wish to communicate something. This sort of situation, therefore, cannot be viewed as 'interaction' because there is a lack of awareness or communicative intention on the part of the one of the participants, for example, the individual who is observed and interpreted without knowing it. As a result, the interactive phenomenon begins when the individual feels or knows he is being observed and, therefore, subject to being interpreted by another human being, regardless of whether this sense of being observed is correct. After all, the simple possibility of *thinking* we might be the focus of another human being's perceptions can have significant consequences on our behaviour. In our mind, the action is no longer a purely private, individual action. Instead, the action is viewed as a public, social action and handled accordingly.

The awareness of being observed—or of the possibility of being observed in any, unforeseen moment—implies an awareness of being *interpreted* and, as a consequence, of being socially *evaluated*. We also know that social evaluation can have positive or negative effects of great importance on the individual and/or social experience of a person. But interpreted or evaluated with respect to what? With respect to how well our behaviour adapts to customs that we believe are socially accepted as canonical or appropriate for each situation or

set of circumstances and factors that operate in interpersonal encounters. We know, therefore, that the minds of other individuals with whom we may interact contain preconceptions about behaviour, about what is considered appropriate or inappropriate according to the circumstance and moment, and we know that negative judgments may readily be levelled against our behaviour, if it is found to be wanting. It is left to us to choose or refuse to adopt the behaviour that is considered socially most acceptable and appropriate.³⁸ Often, we may prefer to risk a socially negative judgment, and avoid a behaviour with which we personally disagree or which makes us uncomfortable or clashes with the value system that we have individually decided to accept, even though it is the most socially expected one. In spite of social pressure to follow the established norms, the decision to act in one way or another remains, in the end, irreducibly personal.

Once adopted and established socio-cognitively, the most daily, regular and repetitive norms of action generally become subconscious and are followed routinely, almost automatically in most cases. Such actions include how to greet someone, what to say and what to do when departing a place, how to structure a conversation, what language or variety to use when speaking with a particular person. These actions can become deeply habitual and, therefore, subconscious. They free up our cerebro-mental attention so that we can focus on other aspects of behaviour and reality.

Whether we are aware of them or not, human interactions are not at all chaotic, unstructured or meaningless. On the contrary, they are organized, quite often predictable within given limits, and meaningful. Daily encounters unfold according to socially established rituals that coordinate social life so that we do not have to improvise behaviour each time we come into contact with another human being and so that we can adequately interpret our interaction.³⁹ When individuals meet and follow patterns of behaviour that are typically considered 'correct' or appropriate, they have no need to be fearful of

38 Here, I adopt the perspective of symbolic interactionism which, according to the initial postulates of the theoretical framework, conceives of the individual as a being that is mentally active in relation to his actions, although routine can lead to social behaviours that are regulated by the subconscious (cf. Blumer, 1982).

39 The existence of norms or patterns of social action appears to arise because, as human beings, "it is in our interest [...] to be able to guide our actions routinely. The explicit formulas embedded in our stock of knowledge work like guidelines for action: if things proceed in such and such a manner, I will act in such and such a way. [...] Their continuous success ensures me of their reliability and they turn into norms of habit, taking the form of prescriptions" (Schutz & Luckmann, 1977: 35). Social norms can be accompanied by a strong sense of obligation that, if overstepped in specific situations, can trigger penalties or even ostracism by the group or community.

one another. The relation can develop in harmony, without tension. By contrast, a situation characterised by a behaviour viewed as inappropriate by one of the participants creates uncertainty and tension. The uncertain individual will not know how to interpret or how to act in light of the ‘abnormal’ behaviour of the other. In this respect, social patterns of behaviour make living together possible. They enable mutual interpretations of communication among human beings.⁴⁰

The significant organization of interaction is constantly present in daily life, but it is not a simple fact or easy to describe in detail. Humans confer significance to interactions at many different levels of perception. For example, what is significant in an interaction is not only its strictly verbal behaviour, but also the simultaneous way in which meaning is given by body language, e.g., body movements, posture and facial expressions, as well as by clothes and hairstyle. At the same time, an interaction occurs within a situational framework, e.g., a university classroom, a workshop in a company, a bar or club, and it also occurs within the broader context of the history of the relationship between the interacting individuals.⁴¹ The entire complex of behaviours will be interpreted holistically by the interlocutors in terms of the instructions of ‘scripts’ for various social settings, which determine the extent to which the behaviours fit socially habitual expectations. If the ‘script’ for a given ceremony calls for a given level of formality of apparel, for example, a person wearing clothing categorised by the social majority as ‘informal’ may be judged negatively. This negative assessment, however, will be attenuated or even changed if other significant aspects of the same person are valued positively, such as his or her way of talking, gestures or accessories, or if the person has a convincing reason for dressing in this way.

2.2.2. Speaking as social interaction

Social interaction provides the context in which people speak. It is a ritualised, organised setting in which the language activity of individuals, with every-

40 According to Schutz & Luckmann, “The behaviour of my peers becomes intelligible to me by means of my interpretation of the stock of knowledge that I have of their body language, their expressive movements and so forth, and I simply accept as a given that their behaviour will be meaningful. I also know that my behaviour can be given explicit meaning by my peer through his acts of interpretation, and ‘I know that he knows that I know’” (1977: 36).

41 For an in-depth study of language and/or communicative interaction, see, for example, Serrano (1980, 1984 and 1993), Payrató (1988) and Cots *et al.* (1990).

thing that that entails, takes place. Speech, therefore, is not an isolated, independent behaviour without a setting. To the contrary, it is a fully integrated subset of social life that registers the same sociocultural influences and constraints as, for example, rules for what to wear or how to eat. The use and selection of a language form or variety are strongly affected at an interactional level. Just as other elements of social interaction are organized and structured, speech is also organized and structured. The selection of language forms used by human beings depends on how these forms are related to the elements in the interactional setting. Just as it is not the same to speak to a person with an informal 'tu' or formal 'vostè' ('you' in Catalan), the use of one language or another cannot be neutral. Language variation, too, is regulated.

A relation between individuals typically tends to establish fixed patterns of behaviour between the two participants. For example, if at some time we adopt the custom of kissing at each meeting and we repeat this behaviour for a certain number of days, it is highly likely to become a norm and, therefore, an expectation that must be satisfied at each meeting in the future. Similarly, we establish through negotiation what we will regularly do in other respects, e.g., giving or not giving birthday presents, eating out on Tuesdays or sharing confidences, and we establish the language or variety we will customarily speak to one another. Once we have mutually adopted a given language behaviour and more or less confirmed it by periodic repetition, the selection of the variety or language becomes subconscious and routine and it will tend to be perpetuated. Indeed, at some point, changing variety or language will become difficult.

Selecting the variety or language to use is not a quick or easy action. This is particularly the case in social situations involving language diversity. An initial factor that can influence this selection is the language competence of the individuals involved. If two individuals can only understand and speak one variety, they will use it in all likelihood. However, if they also understand and speak another one, the choice is more complicated. They may prefer the same one or different ones. In the latter case, the two individuals are likely to negotiate the variety to be used, because it is common in communicative relations to prefer the use of one and only one variety by both of the individuals, provided that their mastery is sufficient to make this possible. Presumably, if there is a discrepancy, the negotiation is won by the interlocutor who is more persuasive about his position and the use of only one of the language varieties is selected. If each interlocutor remains firm in his own position, the ensuing interactions will involve the two interlocutors speaking different languages—known as 'bilingual conversation'—or the interlocutors will tend to avoid interactions so as not to reproduce the conflict each time they communicate.

If the language competences of the two participants are unequal, selecting a language for the interaction may lead to other solutions. If, for example, one interlocutor has more competence in a given code than the other participant, the most common outcome is that the former adapts to the needs of the latter in order to spare the latter the difficulty of expressing himself in a code that he does not dominate well (assuming that the former has sufficient mastery of the code more commonly used by the latter). Whichever interlocutor has greater competence, therefore, will also be the one willing to adapt more to the interlocutor with less competence. In this respect, the degree of practical knowledge of the codes is an extremely important variable in the choice of language varieties in social interactions. Indeed, the issue can be summarised by saying that the common language variety of an interaction, out of all possible candidates for use, will tend to be the one that reflects the greatest sum of the competence of the two interlocutors.

However, language competence is not the only factor that can affect the selection of the language variety in which a human interaction develops. The variety that is best known by the two interlocutors, for example, may be ruled out in their communication in favour of the less shared variety for ideological reasons, because of the assumption of a previously existing, commonly used norm, or as an outgrowth of other factors belonging to the sphere of the representation of reality. In the case of human groups that wish to emerge or have been able to emerge from a state of political subordination that has left them bilingual, for example, the rule of the sum of the interlocutors' competences may not apply in given cases because it is considered an illegitimate and, therefore, undesired effect of history. In these kinds of situations, the bilingual interlocutors may want *not* to speak the language of generally monolingual participants belonging to the dominant ethnic-linguistic group. It may also be the case that individuals in situations of subordination or recent emergence from subordination—and despite equal initial levels of competence—may collectively continue to show a clear preference for using the language that has been dominant up to that point as a result of the widespread custom already existing in the society, an outgrowth of the earlier prevailing sociopolitical ecosystem.

Indeed, although language behaviour tends to become subconscious and routine, the possibility always exists to bring it back to the conscious level and control it directly and reflectively by the individual, overcoming the constraints of competence and habitual behaviour, if desired. Of course, that would also entail the social consequences, negative and positive, that may arise from the individual's decision. For example, individuals may decide that

it is better for them to change their manner of speaking with specific people or in general, using individual words or constructions, a variety of the same language or a different language, rather than to continue speaking as they have always done. By taking this decision, an individual, who may have little competence or skill in the new manner of speaking, may well be choosing to acquire competence through social practice. In this case, therefore, the choice of a way of speaking is made precisely because there is a lack of sufficient competence. Competence does not always come first, followed by the selection as a function of competence. The opposite may occur: first selection and then competence, or at least a greater development of competence.

2.3. SOCIAL GROUPS

Linguistic exchanges are also relations of symbolic power in which the power relations between speakers or their respective groups are actualized.

PIERRE BOURDIEU⁴²

2.3.1. The group phenomenon

The forms, scripts and rituals used and followed by individuals in their interactions are obviously not universal, but differ according to the culture diversity of the human species. A gesture of greeting in one culture may be seen as a sign of aggression in another; a normal volume of voice in one country may be considered inappropriate or raucous in another; words and other linguistic elements may have negative or taboo connotations in a given society, while they are quite normal and have no connotations in another. Culture is convention. It is an arbitrary agreement that is socially established in diverse human communities. We make it signify what we want it to signify.

Such an agreement on the elements and forms of culture may be shared by only two individuals or by millions of individuals, albeit with a greater degree

42 “ Les échanges linguistiques sont aussi des rapports de pouvoir symbolique où s’actualisent les rapports de force entre les locuteurs ou leurs groupes respectifs ” (1982).

of difference.⁴³ For example, words and gestures given similar interpretations through an established complicity between only two individuals may be completely unknown by others following other cultural and linguistic forms used and understood commonly among a vast number of people. The most common case is to find individuals who have cultural forms that are shared with a limited number of people, i.e., their regular social groups or networks, as well as having other forms shared with all or a large part of the society to which their groups or networks belong. This latter feature may arise out of the continuum of communication between different groups through history or because of the action of political power and/or the influence of the media in recent periods.

Be that as it may, the reality of groups is undeniable. From the smallest collectives of two, three, four or more people to vast socio-economic and ethnic-linguistic groupings, human beings have typically organized into defined sociocultural groups or networks. To a greater or less extent depending on the circumstances, these groups or networks give rise to a sense of belonging and emotional identification with specific cultural traits. An essential characterization of such groups, particularly the smallest ones, is the high degree of internal interaction that sustains them and the norms that emerge over time and become established as the collective's own norms and, therefore, as expectations that must be followed by members of the collective.⁴⁴ If established customs and ideas are not adhered to, that may trigger sanctioning mechanisms (Fraser, 1984a).

Groups act as mechanisms to coordinate and organize individuals in society and they very often foster the continuity of cultural forms, even those adopted in some cases under the pressure of concurrent forms originating from

43 Nisbet (1982) notes that any social aggregate, small or large, has its own culture in the sociological sense of the word, because it is impossible for human beings to maintain continuous association and interaction over the long term without the emergence of such a culture (p. 219).

44 In keeping with our active criteria of the mind, however, Bourdieu (1987) cites Weber and recalls that "social agents obey the rule when it is more in their interest to obey it than to disobey it [les agents sociaux obéissent à la règle quand l'intérêt à lui obéir l'emporte sur l'intérêt à lui désobéir]". We must take into account, therefore, that "rules cannot be automatically invoked to explain social relations and it obliges the analyst to examine the conditions under which the rule operates [la règle n'est pas automatiquement efficace par soi seule et qu'elle oblige à se demander à quelle condition une règle peut agir]" (p. 94). We must also not forget the ambiguity of terms like norms, rules and patterns that are often used to designate "observed regularities" in the behaviours of a group as well as "shared expectations about behaviours" (Fraser, 1984b: 200). As a result, we always need to distinguish adequately between "how people think they ought to behave, how they say they behave, and how they are observed to behave" (Le Page & Tabouret, 1985: 207).

public institutions.⁴⁵ Social groups or networks fulfil the intrinsic needs of individuals for emotional connection and solidarity, and this gives them a degree of influence that should not be underestimated. Within themselves and through their socio-cognitive exchanges, individuals elaborate their interpretation of reality and forms of conduct which, in turn, tend to attract greater support and confirmation and even to foster a quality of emotional attachment as they gain greater support and confirmation within the group. However, the strong emotional attachment of individuals to their groups may equally become a mechanism for change (Lewin, 1978). A group may be influenced by its most listened to leaders or respond to a significant subgroup's change of opinion and then decide to adopt a new interpretation of reality or a new pattern of behaviour. When changing the forms assumed by the collective, the individual must also consider his own decision and assess the consequences that may arise from not changing. In this way, many initially reticent individuals eventually change with the group, ensuring their peers' continued support and their own socio-affective stability.

However, human groups, particularly primary ones based on voluntary and affective ties, are not static, fixed structures. They have functional objectives and practical aims that can vary. They can dissolve, recover, expand and so forth, with the result that individuals can belong to different primary structures in their lifetime and at the same time, particularly in contemporary urban societies. Changing groups or networks of relation, therefore, is *per se* a factor of social change, given the opportunity that it offers individuals to adapt and integrate themselves to collectives with representations and behaviours that differ from the groups to which they previously belonged or, as we have noted, now simultaneously belong. Quite often, many individuals who are captive to a given set of behavioural standards of the group to which they belong, for example, change their language behaviour when they are in a new collective and they feel free to adopt new norms of behaviour that they had not considered before, or that had even been prohibited or viewed negatively within their former environment.

In short, language behaviour is affected by the influence of social groups and networks.⁴⁶ Depending on the composition and evolution of these struc-

45 This is how, for instance, Baugh (1983) can state that "the 'standard' for nonstandard speech is shaped through day-to-day conversations—and not by teachers or grammarians" (p. 12).

46 "If, as a hypothesis, the language behaviour of the individual were free of any constraint, left entirely to himself, personal variations would add up and they would become consolidated over the years and eventually cut off communication with other individuals: the language community would

tures of basic relation, the individual tends to adopt given norms of language use that will contribute to producing a given result in competence. According to the stage of development in which this occurs, the adopted norms may persist for a great length of time. Primary groups that account for the socialization of the individual can, therefore, have a great and lasting influence, given their role in basic cerebro-mental *imprinting* (cf. 4.4 and 4.5). However, later groups of belonging, as we have seen, can also have a significant influence and subsequently change the language behaviour of the individual.

2.3.2. Intergroup relations

The existence of groups and limited networks of intense interaction gives rise to the possibility of cultural diversity. Each network can autonomously create representations and establish forms and norms of conduct that differ to varying degrees from those adopted by other collectives. More specifically, groups differ in the degree of importance they give to specific elements of daily life, in the behaviours they deem appropriate in various situations, in the language forms they use and/or prefer to use, and so on. Cultural and linguistic diversity is a real, well-established fact. Nonetheless, human groups—particularly small-scale groups—can quite frequently face a situation of regular contact with individuals reared in other sociocultural groups that are also autonomous. They may have to confront the experience of diversity in cognition and action.

One of the fundamental consequences driven by the perception of this difference is the emergence or reinforcement of an awareness of an individual's own sociocultural traits. What had not previously been significant for the individual, what had never or almost never been examined consciously, is turned by contact with diversity into a subject for attention and awareness, a sign of sociocultural differentiation. The individual may endow these differential traits with significance and even make them the centre of his or her own group identification and, by opposition, of the group identification of the others with whom he or she comes into relation. What had gone unnoticed, although always present, is now vivid and fully active in the individual's consciousness.

shatter [Si, par hypothèse, le comportement linguistique de l'individu était libre de toutes contraintes, laissé totalement à lui-même, les variations personnelles s'additionnant et se consolidant au fil des ans finiraient par rompre la communication avec les autres individus: la communauté linguistique éclaterait]" (Corbeil, 1983: 287).

Difference has aroused attention. And attention calls for interpretation, which draws into action socio-cognitive categorization.

Sociocultural differences give rise to mutual group categorization. Each group in relation becomes aware of the existence of the other and can examine and define itself overall in relation to the other. In some cases, what stands out is the difference in clothing. In others, it is hairstyles, skin colour, the loudness of speaking voices or different ways of speaking. Any difference can take on significance, permit identification and, therefore, be used in sociocultural categorization.

Sociocultural categorization can, as cognitive content, play a significant role in the decisions of individuals to take joint action. As we know, neither things nor people have meaning in and of themselves. Rather, we are individuals who bestow meaning on things. As a result, the mental configuration of group reality will be an element of the first order in situations of contact. As members of socially, economically and culturally stratified urban societies, we always interpret others as members of some social group or category that is the same as or different from our own, with the ensuing normative and evaluative associations, and we make decisions about our actions based on such associations. We operate on a continuum ranging from one extreme that is purely interpersonal to another at which *all* behaviour is determined by belonging to different social groups or categories. Indeed, as the social psychology of Tajfel and Fraser points out, any social encounter brings into play the interrelationship between three implicit 'theories' that all of us have about others: 1) a theory of the general social behaviour expected of anyone, 2) a theory of the special behaviour expected of members of certain social categories, e.g., national, racial, professional, religious, gender and age categories or a combination of these, and 3) the social behaviour that we expect of a person in function of our specific knowledge of the person as an individual (1984: 30). In all likelihood, the more problematic the relationship between two groups, the greater the weight of the group's categorization becomes, and the less the weight of the other levels. For example, what someone may view as poorly done by an individual as a *person*, he may view as right and proper for an individual in *group X*. However, a person whom we know quite well may be valued as a specific individual despite belonging to group X. If we wish, we may help this individual, even though the collective to which we belong is in sharp conflict with the collective associated with the sociocultural traits of the individual in question.

Some categories differentiating groups have become more active and more prone to strife in the contemporary world, particularly categories related to

socio-economic class, which appear to be declining in virulence, at least as a single factor; categories of religious belief, which are worsening in some countries; ethnic-linguistic categories, which are acquiring new vigour in some places; and the state (or 'national') factor, which is hugely present in the contemporary world through the formation and transformation of the political map of the planet. These four great macro-factors all give rise to or are associated with other differentiating aspects, secondary but also pertinent, and may produce a strong feeling of collective identity in individuals, sparking potent emotional connotations and high levels of motivation to change the conflict situation in many cases. Identification with the group can move so far in the group direction on the above continuum that each and every daily event is seen through the lens of group conflict, even to the point of producing a total or near-total eclipse of personal identity and justifying the very existence of the individual in terms of the collective with which the individual identifies.

In ethnic-linguistic conflicts,⁴⁷ it is crucial to distinguish conflicts characterised by political subordination from conflicts produced by territorial co-existence. In the first case, the conflict is typically based on the expansionism of a demographically or militarily strong group into neighbouring territory inhabited historically by other collectives of different cultures. In the second case, groups cohabit or come to cohabit regularly in the same territory and some discord arises as a result of some reason that comes from within or outside the groups. Both cases can generate a high level of awareness of ethnic identity within the collectives in conflict, and this awareness can have an effect on any possible inter-group behaviours, because ethnic identity, according to Barth, "is similar to sex and rank, in that it constrains the incumbent in all his activities, not only in some defined social situations" (1976: 18).

In intergroup relations, the system of linguistic communication that is used may become highly significant. It may come to act as an ethnic identifier, with the consequences that that identification entails. Similarly, the overall configuration of ethnicity and intergroup relations may have an effect at the level of language. For subordinate groups, a positive ethnic consciousness can be the reason for maintaining their language, while a negative one is the most common cause for them to abandon their language.

47 Like Claudi Esteva, I will treat 'ethnic group' as "a cultural community with a physical location and an awareness of its uniqueness and, therefore, its differentiation as a culture with respect to one or more other communities" (1984: 5). In this work, the term 'ethnic' carries no pejorative sense and is used solely as a concept drawn from cultural anthropology.

In the contemporary world, however, we find not only individuals who identify with one collective, but also individuals with multi-group identifications, who have differing degrees of personal involvement in these groups. Just as an individual may be a member simultaneously of several primary groups, e.g., the family group, groups of friends and other potential networks, and of secondary groups that correspond to higher categories of inclusion, e.g., ethnic group, nation and state, the individual can also have a multiple awareness and feeling of belonging. Indeed, this multiplicity is increasingly common in light of superimposed areas of organization and identity.

Needless to say, the individual may experience these attachments to multiple identities problematically, depending on cases and historical changes, particularly where there is a practical or symbolic conflict between concurrent identity categories. For example, many groups undergo internal division with respect to what stance should be adopted in relation to other identifications that can be added to the identity baggage of individuals. Quite often, these internal group conflicts produced by external causes are not simply tied to changing or additional symbolic memberships. Rather, the adoption of this condition can have important practical and behavioural repercussions. Many ethnic-linguistic groups that have been incorporated in vaster political units, often forced by historical events, are typically structured according to the environment of another ethnic-linguistic group which can control and patrimonialize the state by virtue of its demographic or some other strength. These groups wind up accepting or rejecting their involvement at the level of identity in a larger body of which they form part, to which they depend economically and politically, and yet which they perceive as alien to their own self-defined cultural characteristics. A more or less significant segment of the population may move toward full acceptance of the superordinate identity, accepting it as basic, while the original ethnic identity comes to be viewed as a second-order one. At the other extreme, another segment may see the matter in the opposite manner: native cultural traits are fundamental and primary and, given that these traits are typically in decline in the face of traits associated with the polity in which the ethnic group is found, the cultural forms represented by the state and the state itself are rejected and lose legitimacy. A third position may also arise in which individuals contrive a combination of identities in concentric circles and find greater compatibility between the group categories in conflict. According to this position, for example, an individual may be both a Californian and a US citizen. There is no contradiction in being both German and European. In the same way, no conflict would be necessary between an ethnic-linguistic group and a superordinate state organiza-

tion, provided that the autochthonous group can exercise broad self-government and its decisions do not face constant interference from the state. Indeed, these positions do not need to be rigid. Individuals may even swing between one position and another, particularly between positions that are close to one another on the continuum, in the face of changing historical events and the overall circumstances of the community.

2.3.3. Groups and macrosocial order

As we have seen, the categorization of human groups has led us to the issue of identity, which is closely related to the issue of power relations among human collectives. Indeed, the dimension of ‘power’, like the dimension of ‘social category’, is constantly present in social life. Whether they are symmetrical or asymmetrical, the relation of power and the correlation of strength are absolutely central elements in the changing fortunes of groups. The groups that make up human societies are typically not identical in their distribution of economic, informational, demographic and/or political resources. An awareness of this difference often comes with intergroup comparisons. Examining the sociocultural traits of an individual standing before me, do I interpret these traits, which come from a given group or social category, as superior, equal or inferior to my own? In all likelihood, the differential interpretation of sociocultural traits will be related to the presentation of overall power of the groups to which each individual belongs. A habitual way of speaking that belongs to a group of high socio-economic status, for example, may tend to be admired or rejected according to the relational view taken by other coexisting groups. Certain ways of speaking among the upper classes can be ridiculed by members of other social groups and vice versa. In other situations, members of social groups on the lower end of the social scale can have self-negating representations that spur in them the desire to adopt the language traits of economically higher social groups in order to raise their own personal prestige and improve their self-image. Indeed, as Pierre Bourdieu has pointed out very effectively in his work, social *positions* are closely related to the *predispositions*—the representational and behavioural *habits*—of the individuals who occupy those positions, and such predispositions will tend to control the positions they take amid conflict and sociocultural change.

Human societies can present important asymmetries of resources among different component groups. As we have shown, this can have an impact on the nearly inevitable perception and awareness of their difference and, conse-

quently, in the evaluation and use of concurrent language forms. The appropriation of economic and technological resources is one of the most important factors of this differentiation and activity, particularly in contemporary urban, non-ascriptive societies where there is a more or less real possibility of social mobility and, therefore, of moving from one socio-economic group to another. Societies following a capitalist model, which tend to dominate much of the planet, intrinsically entail the socio-economic differentiation of the population, while also opening up the possibility of change and social advancement, which can often be the cause of more or less large-scale shifts in the language behaviour of individuals aiming to emulate the language forms that are more closely identified across the entirety of the society as belonging to affluent, socially dominant groups (*cf.* Ninyoles, 1978).

In today's information society, the greater or lesser possession of cultural or symbolic goods, e.g., academic training, skills in the arts and/or high technology or specialised knowledge of diverse types, is also a factor of social differentiation that is not purely economic in nature. Intellectual elites, too, can constitute social groups that are perceived and evaluated as having prestige by a large part of the population, particularly by the middle and working classes. As a result, they can have a significant influence on the evaluation and use of specific language forms. Indeed, as we shall see, much of the process of disseminating varieties recognized as 'standard' occurs through these social layers whose capital is basically informational or cultural. Through institutionalized roles occupied by virtue of political power or social structure, they convey to the population which forms shall be considered legitimate and valuable in public discourse.

Another variable that may have a great impact on inter-group social life is geo-demographics. Obviously, this would occur in interrelation with other differential aspects that can arise. The numerical ratios between groups in a given society can be an absolutely critical element in understanding the processes and degrees of mutual influence. The constitution and evolution of the relation between two different groups, for example, can differ vastly if the ratio is 50/50 or 20/80. If the sizes of the populations in contact are similar, the role of other intervening factors, e.g., economic, ideological or political, will be crucial. By contrast, if the relation is highly unequal, the demographic factor will tend to have a greater weight unless the differences in other factors can largely counter-balance or diminish its importance. If we set aside these other factors, it is clear that, in the case of groups of highly unequal sizes, the majority group will tend to show a much lower degree of development and use of the language variety of the minority group, both quantitatively and qualitatively,

than vice versa. The simple statistical probability that the minority group may have much greater interaction—assuming an identical, non-segregated geo-residential distribution—with individuals of the majority than with individuals of their own group leads to a much greater bilingualization of the less numerous group than the majority group, which will have many fewer opportunities to establish contacts with the former. Over time, as more individuals in the minority group gain familiarity with the language variety of the majority, the more this variety will be available for use in interactions, and the less need and opportunity will arise for members of the majority group to acquire and use the language variety of the minority.

However, all of these considerations about demographic differences can be neutralized if the residential distribution and, especially, the pattern governing the social relations of the individuals involve the segregation or separation of the different groups. Although they may co-exist within the boundaries of a territory viewed as a given unit, two or more human groups can live without much need and/or opportunity for social contact, if they happen to reside in separate areas and experience their socio-economic life in differentiated groups, even when this differentiation is only partial. For example, the structure and dynamics of the situation may differ greatly if the group that represents only 20% of a society lives either wholly within the other 80% or outside it. In the case of the latter possibility, the demolingistic influence may be very limited if the minority group is quite self-sufficient in its social, economic and informational-cultural organization. By contrast, the opposite case with the 20% living totally dispersed within the 80% will most likely result in an inevitable bilingualization by social osmosis and eventually even lead to assimilation by the majority group, bearing in mind only the purely demographic aspects. In real practice, it is impossible to find human groups in contact where the only active variable is demographic in nature. The result of these situations will always depend on the interrelationships of different factors in the overall social ecosystem in which the relation occurs.

An important demographic aspect that we cannot ignore is that population ratios are not set in stone. On the contrary, they are dynamic and can vary according to birth rates in the respective populations in contact. For example, while the initial ratios of two peer groups may be 60/40, the passage of time may reverse the situation, creating a new ratio of 40/60, if the first group declines and/or the second group grows in relative terms. As a result, we could find cases in which an immigrant population is smaller than the native population in the beginning, but then, within a generation, has registered spectacular growth in contrast with a low birth rate among the native population. In this

way, the demographic equilibrium of a given territory can change to a great extent, making demographics—which is, in turn, influenced by economic, ideological, technological and other factors—a piece of data of the first magnitude in the evolution of sociolinguistic processes.

The macrosocial order shows us the common reality of inequality and asymmetry among human groups. The causes may be economic, cultural or demographic—or political-military, as we will shortly see. The disparity between the resources and opportunities of each human group ineluctably gives rise to socially dominant and socially subordinate groups. While the category of 'social class' is more strictly socio-economic in origin and less directly refers to the psychosocial properties of the concept of 'group', the existence of collectives usually called 'minority groups' seems to be an undeniable, conceptualisable reality. Such groups may be characterised, according to Tajfel, in the following ways: 1) they are subordinate segments in complex state societies; 2) they have special physical or cultural traits that are held in disdain by the dominant segments of the society; 3) they are self-aware units joined by special traits shared among their members and by special disadvantages arising from these traits; 4) membership in a minority group is inherited from parent to child, forming connections across successive generations even in the absence of easily identifiable special physical and cultural traits, and 5) the members of a minority, by choice or necessity, tend to inter-marry (1984: 349). Depending on the society and situation, groups that share all or some of the traits listed above may undergo different kinds of historical evolution in light of their conditions of existence and their representation of reality. These collectives will commonly activate their own consciousness as a minority if they have found that their group categorization leads to discriminatory treatment by other majority collectives and if the latter hold negative attitudes about their autochthonous cultural traits. In some cases, this will actually tend to cause or strengthen the internal cohesion of the subordinate group, particularly in the stages when they reject subordination. In stages of resistance against exo-group pressure, individuals belonging to minority groups may experience the impossibility or difficulty of abandoning their own group basically as a result not only of external conditions, but also of sanctions that may originate in their own group. Over time, however, the pressures against abandoning the minority group tend to weaken and cultural desertion and the adoption of outside forms and behaviours can increase rapidly from a certain moment. In any event, the generational substitution of the population is a mechanism of great importance to sociocultural change, given the arrival of new individuals who will be socialized in a context that differs greatly from their parents, with the

corresponding consequences on behaviours and representations. However, generational change can lead either toward assimilation with the dominant group or, to the contrary, toward renewed claims in support of native cultural traits and forms, previously viewed negatively within the subordinate collective itself.

To conclude, the minority condition—i.e., intergroup inequality—is a factor of cultural change that is enormously active in all periods of history, particularly in non-dominant groups, as we have seen. Asymmetry usually accompanies sociocultural change. Individuals want to get closer to the forms and values of more powerful groups or change their unequal situation. If the perception of the situation held by the minority group is that the system of inequality is stable, i.e., no cognitive alternatives exist, or that it is legitimate, or both stable and legitimate at once, its actions will tend toward conformity and at least some adaptation to the dominant collective. If, however, objections to this reality emerge from within the group, the situation can develop differently. “A system perceived as illegitimate”, says Tajfel, “contains the seeds of instability” (1984: 358). Quite often, because we depend on others to gain an idea of how we should see and value ourselves, minority groups are unable to respond autonomously to external images created by dominant groups. This can lead them increasingly to interiorize—and even justify and defend—the discourse of the dominant group to the point of causing blacks, for example, to believe in their own inferiority. “Dominated people are *also* dominated in their brain” (Bourdieu, 1987: 55). In other cases, subordinate groups can opt to maintain a certain status quo if they have a sufficiently autonomous social network that protects the self-esteem of their members. This can result in the conservation of their own cultural traits, despite co-existence with members of exogenous groups. In yet other situations, minoritized groups that are sufficiently conscious and organized can attempt to improve their position or even invert the situation by means of social mobilization capable of forcing dominant groups to accept important structural changes that can make way for a new, more egalitarian intergroup relation.

2.4. POLITICAL POWER

*Although cynical, the immortal phrase
'Language always accompanied the empire'
has a heuristic value that cannot be denied.*

LLUÍS V. ARACIL⁴⁸

2.4.1. The modern state

Since time immemorial, human beings appear to have organized themselves into societies based implicitly or explicitly on an authority that regulates aspects of public life and even private life, making it possible for the group unit to overcome the existence of individual minds. By force or spontaneously, an individual who says what needs to be done or decides among possible alternatives is an inherent fact of human social organization. An individual or individuals can come to exercise great influence over the group and achieve the social honours and recognition that are typically associated with high rank. This may adequately serve to explain why the attainment of political authority can be the source of conflict—often extremely violent conflict—between individuals and social groups who struggle to gain power. Throughout history, conceptions of political power have undergone fundamental changes and there have even been ideologies explicitly opposed to power, but the fact remains that the contemporary state—the form in which this phenomenon largely occurs today—intervenes more than ever in the life of human communities and it exercises an enormous influence. As we shall see, the level of language not only fails to escape its influence but rather, contrary to what one may think, can be highly controlled and determined by political power.

Although they are not exclusive, the phenomenon of *power*, which Max Weber defines as “the chance that an individual in a social relationship can achieve his or her own will even against the resistance of others”, and the phenomenon of *domination*, which Weber defines as “the probability that certain specific commands (or all commands) will be obeyed by a given group of persons”, are intrinsically tied to politics (Freund, 1986: 198). Along these lines,

⁴⁸ Free translation from Catalan and Spanish: “Encara que cínica, la màxima lapidària ‘Siempre la lengua fue compañera del imperio’ té un valor heurístic que no sabríem negar”.

“a state is a human community that successfully claims the monopoly on the legitimate use of physical force within a given territory” and “the right to use physical force is ascribed to other institutions or individuals only to the extent to which the state permits it” (Weber, 1985: 10). In other words, as a social institution, the state appears to wield an extraordinary ability to influence the lives of human beings. Its regulations must be fulfilled and disobedience calls into play a system of punishments that can, as we know, extend even as far as loss of life for some lawbreakers.

The conceptions of the state held by different social groups and, particularly, by individuals explicitly occupying positions of power can have an extraordinary impact on the life of entire societies. Political power—in principle, a neutral mechanism—can lead societies in dramatically different directions, depending on the ideologies and mindsets of their leaders at any given time. They may lead society toward social harmony or social conflict within and/or between groups. They may support one system of economic organization or another, one way of distributing power or another, the establishment of a coercive organization or participation in the exercise of their power, and so forth. Historically, we have moved from an authoritarian conception of divine legitimacy to a democratic conception based on the rule of law and the legal equality of citizens. We have also moved from more local political institutions to supra-local political institutions that exercise authority over human groups that are geographically distant and different from one another in sociocultural terms. Today, it is an undeniable reality that human beings are organized in states of many different dimensions, but with exclusive authority over the territories and populations within their borders. Typically, this reality has a tremendous impact on the cognitive representations and behaviours of the individuals governed by them. Political borders, which may be arbitrary and merely the product of changing historical fortunes, can easily become mental borders and serve as a foundation for the differentiation of the identities of millions of people, who may finally come to see themselves as different even from other individuals of the same cultural origin who live in another sovereign territory.

The state’s opportunities to exert influence on social life have grown in parallel with the process of modernization. From an ideological standpoint, rationalism led to the idea of the ‘citizen’ and the creation of a system of uniform rights across an entire territory. This made it possible to gain the loyalty of social groups that were no longer merely local. In many places, it also enabled the creation of a single language of intercommunication spread by homogeneous systems of education across an entire area of sovereignty. Similarly,

unified bureaucracies and armed forces came into existence. This programme of building the so-called nation-state drew increasingly on the assistance of technological innovations. New systems of transport facilitated communication between areas that had previously been largely or entirely unrelated and the centralized power of the state grew stronger. The later appearance of new tools for transmitting information over long distances further helped the state to exercise power homogeneously across societies. In parallel, populations around the world moved from the countryside into urban centres, breaking down societies and reducing the influence of traditional social conventions. In many cases, this change enhanced the state's influence as a moulder of value systems and representations of reality.

2.4.2. The social intervention of the state

The state has increased its functions and areas of social intervention in keeping with this view of it as a body theoretically at the service of the community that it represents, whether it is democratic or authoritarian in nature. To varying degrees, the modern state regulates and intervenes in the economy, education, health care, transport, audio-visual communication, the environment, arts and culture, scientific research, housing and more. Indeed, no area of public life is theoretically excluded from possible state intervention and/or regulation. Specifically in the area of language, the impact of political power is both direct and indirect. Because the state can require the compulsory fulfilment of its provisions, the explicit or implicit declaration of an 'official language' will result in the codification of the selected variety or varieties, assuming they were not previously codified. It will also extend their knowledge and use to public functions across the entire territory where they are named. Naming a variety as an 'official language' generally involves its employment as the language of common use in political institutions, the state's administrative apparatus, the general system of compulsory education for the population as a whole, and the media directly dependent on the state. Typically, however, even without explicit regulation, the variety selected as an 'official language' will also tend to be adopted in the remainder of public communication that is not dependent on the state. Quite often, it will be the only variety that citizens consciously and reflectively learn and the only one readily available for them to use in formal speaking and writing. As a result, it will *de facto* become the language variety that can be used comprehensively in institutionalized communications within the area over which the state exercises sovereignty and it may even be

used in private writing to a great extent. Moreover, as we shall soon see, the linguistic characteristics of the ‘official’ variety may eventually be adopted even in informal spoken communication, particularly in cities, where the process of urbanization also entails both the destruction of local sociocultural ecosystems and the need to adopt new norms of communication in the complex urban environment.

This extraordinary increase in the direct and indirect influence of political power on language can, at least to a large extent, explain many of the ethnic-linguistic conflicts that have emerged across the planet over past centuries. Given that the vast majority of today’s states have populations with significant language differences, the equation ‘one state = one language’ has become a potential source of serious civil conflict that may be difficult to resolve in some cases. These situations of conflict can be particularly violent when the ethnic-linguistic composition features one group that is demographically much larger than the others. Even with democratic forms, the majority group can patrimonialize the state and use it consciously or unconsciously to expand its domain, provoking a sensation of subordination from which there is no way out for smaller demolinguisic groups.⁴⁹ In this configuration of ethnic-linguistic asymmetry, those states that once contained a clear majority group providing the bulk of the population—e.g., a *Staatsvolk* like the English, Castilians or Russians (Hobsbawm, 1995: 10)—were able to move from the Ancien Régime characterised by divine legitimacy to modern political systems, while still maintaining the official fiction of a ‘nation’ that was culturally and linguistically homogeneous. More than ever, these states, viewed from the perspective of collective cognitive categorization, advanced and deepened their use of political power to unify populations in linguistic and ‘national’ terms.

Since the nineteenth century, many states have tended in particular to adopt ideologies of ‘national’ unification, i.e., linguistic and symbolic unification. Using all the means at their disposal, they have promoted language uniformity amid actual diversity and fostered ‘state patriotism’ against traditional group loyalties. This patriotism is associated with given symbolic forms—the flag, anthem, institutions—as well as the state’s instrument of communication,

49 A fundamental question is who benefits and who is hurt by the state’s monopoly of legitimate violence. We need to stay alert to domination produced *through* the state (cf. Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992: 93). Along the same lines, Wallner (1980) cites Dahrendorf: “In reality, ‘the state’ is not the hypostatized abstraction of law, but rather an institution directed by authentic social groups. The state’s power to make decisions that are not subject to appeal means that given groups are claiming a right to assign other groups to their positions in society” (p. 232 [free translation from Spanish]).

the official language variety, i.e., the *langue* or the *lingua*, which is, in most cases, singular and exclusive of other varieties within the same state. The category ‘state’—often masked under banners like ‘patria’ or ‘nation’—is the basis for a new and in many cases effective group categorization and identification. Regardless of their wishes, human beings are assigned to the state institutions that have spread over the planet. Side by side with the widespread dissemination of the official definition of the categorization of reality, elements such as wars, sporting competitions and territorial conflicts foster identification with the state in the area of sovereignty in which they live their lives, and these elements can generate hatred or sympathy toward other people according to the unfolding relations between respective state institutions. “The simple fact of existing for a few decades”, writes Hobsbawm, “less than the lifetime of an individual, may be enough to establish at least a passive identification with a new nation-state” (1991: 86).

As noted earlier, when a state with a multinational composition identifies itself solely with one of its ethnic-linguistic nations, the situation is a source of potential conflict between the state and the majority ethnic-linguistic group, on the one hand, and smaller ethnic-linguistic groups, on the other hand. The political will of the state to unify its citizens linguistically and ethnically—Massimo d’Azeglio said, “We have made Italy, now we need to make Italians”—can crash head on into communities that are often users of their own language varieties, varieties that differ sharply in their structures from the ‘official language’ and have a historical awareness of collective differentiation. Such communities may not show a readiness to accept a policy aimed at overall uniformity. As Hobsbawm notes, “Mixing state patriotism with non-state nationalism was a political risk, because the criteria of the former were comprehensive—i.e., all the citizens of the French Republic—while the criteria of the second were exclusive—only those citizens of the French Republic who spoke French” (1991: 93). If the story also has aspects of forced annexation in a new state, economic or religious differentiation, and a policy of national uniformity pursued in clear detriment to the language and cultural forms of smaller groups, the conflict can be prolonged and acute. In these circumstances, the politicization of the ethnic-linguistic reality is inevitable, because the state is the instrument needed by a ‘nationality’ wishing to become a ‘nation’ or even simply wishing to protect itself from assimilation. Indeed, as we have seen in previous chapters, the state’s political subordination of some of its constituent populations is the fundamental cause of many processes of language shift, which are nothing more, in such cases, than the displacement of the traditional language varieties of smaller groups toward disuse, privileging the

official standard sponsored by the state.⁵⁰ If attempts to oppose this process gain sufficient strength among subordinate groups, we may find processes of ‘language normalization’, which seek to establish the dignity of autochthonous language elements through their standardization and their adoption as fully official in all the community’s communications.

2.4.3. The political organization of multilingualism

As a consequence, language normalization entails the recovery of a significant degree of self-government by previously subordinate groups. This may involve complete political independence and the creation of a new state. It may also arise from the granting of a statute of autonomy or the federal or confederal restructuring of the former state, enabling a sufficient level of self-control over a group’s sociocultural ecosystem. In the latter case, with language normalization in a state shared with other groups, the issue becomes how to organize multilingualism in political terms. This is complex and hard to achieve in many cases, but it provides a more or less dignified and stable solution to the issue between states and ethnic-linguistic communities posed by the numerical difference.

For the purposes of analysis, states that recognize a certain degree of official multilingualism can be put on a continuum ranging from, at one end, maximum recognition of the official equality of languages spoken by their populations to, at the other end, no official provisions at all in support of any language variety that is not the one adopted exclusively by the state. The first extreme, egalitarian multilingualism, includes, for example, Switzerland, Belgium and Canada. These countries recognize more than one official language in their constitutions. Nonetheless, the organization of official multilingualism differs among these countries in striking ways. For example, Switzerland and present-day Belgium embody examples of an organization based on the principle of *territoriality*, whereas Canada exemplifies a system based more on the principle of *personality*.

Prior to examining the organizational differences arising from these two distinct principles in the conception of official multilingualism, the basic or-

⁵⁰ Through the state, elites “influence evaluation by means of status planning and distribution by means of acquisition planning. Status planning influences the evaluation of a language variety by assigning it to the functions from which its evaluation derives. [...] Status planning is an effort to regulate the *demand* for given verbal resources whereas acquisition planning is an effort to regulate the *distribution* of those resources” (Cooper, 1989: 119).

ganizational structure of political power in complex states must be kept in mind. For instance, one possible model of the state is the absolutely centralized state that held sway in Spain during the period 1939-1975, with its single source of power from which all other power was derived, while a radically different model would be the one in use in federal states, with their different levels of government. At a minimum, it is necessary to distinguish three levels: the local level, with its democratically elected authority and its clear political jurisdictions; the intermediate level, e.g., Canadian 'provinces' or the 'cantons' of Switzerland, with elected bodies of government and competences within the respective territory, and the federal level, which takes responsibility for the shared government and is elected by all citizens, regardless of their territorial or cultural community. This multi-level distribution of political power makes it possible in many cases, as we shall now see, to apply differentiated language policies at the various intermediate and local levels, according to the distribution of sociolinguistic populations or realities in each territory.

At the federal level, the three states offered as examples—Switzerland, Belgium and Canada—share the same official equality of multiple languages in the general political and administrative sphere. This contrasts with other cases where only one language receives official recognition in that sphere. More specifically, within the Swiss Confederation, German, French and Italian are the official languages at the federal level.⁵¹ This recognition involves their free use in all federal institutions, such as a deputy speaking in parliament or a citizen addressing a ministry. Similarly, in the Canadian case, French and English are languages with the same official status at the federal level. Federal signage, documentation and administration legally function in all official languages. The differences posed by the principles of 'territoriality' and 'personality' appear to crop up at intermediate levels. In Switzerland and in present-day Belgium, with the exception of a few cantons and Brussels, each territory has a single declared official language that is the vehicle for all official communications and, to a large extent, all non-official communications, as a guarantor of peace and language stability. As an example, this means that a French-speaking Swiss citizen has no right to be attended in French or to require that his or her children receive public education in French if resident in a canton where German is the only official language of the territory. Changing canton involves no crossing of state borders, but it does involve the crossing of a language bor-

⁵¹ The constitution was amended in 1996 so as to grant the status of official language to Romansh, thus allowing Romansh-speakers to communicate in their language with the government.

der. Equality stems from the fact that the same situation applies to a German speaker moving to a canton where French is the official language. In practice, Switzerland juxtaposes official territorial monolingualism in many cases with multilingual central institutions. By contrast, in the Canadian case, the constitutional federal option is to safeguard the free use of the state's two languages across the entire country, independently of province. In principle, Anglophones in Quebec must have the right to education in English, while Francophones in Ontario must have the right to education in French. In practice, however, the situation in Canada is much more complex and federal constitutional provisions sometimes clash with political decisions taken in the provinces in their spheres of jurisdiction. Indeed, the Canadian case must be studied province by province, because the disparities in language regulations can be highly significant between, for example, British Columbia, Quebec and New Brunswick.

In addition to the states with official egalitarian multilingualism, other states recognize varying degrees of official status for their multiple languages. These states officially declare themselves monolingual as states and their recognition of other languages is restricted to strict territories. This group would appear to include, for example, present-day Spain as well as Italy, in specific border areas. Today, Spain grants official status to Catalan, Galician and Basque, but only within the strict territory of their respective autonomous communities. This legally affects (at least theoretically) their regional administrations and the so-called 'local administration' of the state. Under this model, unlike models based on egalitarian multilingualism, non-Castilian-speaking citizens cannot address central state institutions in their own language. Rather, the citizens must adapt to the institutions. In the Spanish case, where the language of the largest demolingualistic group is considered official everywhere without territorial distinctions, no principle of territoriality exists for non-Castilian languages, which have no monolingual spaces of their own, with the resulting uncertainty and instability about the future of these language communities. However, the regional governments do have the ability to regulate specific areas within their competence, if not wholly as they wish. These areas include education and intermediate administration, for which they can declare the native code as a principal and priority language, albeit not the only one.

Toward the other end of the continuum that spans how multilingualism may be variously organised, we find states with scant or almost no recognition of any language other than the official one. Contemporary France poses one example of this extreme. These cases typically show only a very limited tolerance for minority uses, such as in private schools or voluntary extracurricular classes, or for local uses, for example, in folkloric activities or traditional cel-

ibrations. Indeed, these uses frequently correspond to ethnic-linguistic groups in a terminal phase as such. That is, they have largely abandoned their native language varieties even in interpersonal spoken usage. France is a clear example. Finally, at the farthest end of this continuum, there are states that not only fail to recognise the public use of non-official language varieties, but explicitly prosecute and punish them. This has been the case, for example, in specific periods in the French and Spanish cases.

2.5. INTERRELATIONS, PERMANENCE AND CHANGE

*If data observable only as changing,
as happenings in a condition of flux,
are presented in scientific symbolization
as totally unalterable, as wholly non-processual,
one is confronted with phantom problems
which admit of no solution.*

NORBERT ELIAS

2.5.1. Ecosystem equilibrium

Even though we now have our heuristic score with various staves that capture the principal levels or subsystems in our conception of the sociocultural ecosystem, we still have not said much about the relations and influences that exist between them. We do not yet have a musical reality that is fully arranged and balanced and in continuous movement—an aspect that is fundamental to the very existence of music. How is the basic arrangement of different voices or instruments established? How is balance achieved again among the different parts when one or more of them falls into significant discord? Turning specifically to aspects of language, how does one exert influence over another, and vice versa, so as to give rise to the sociocultural whole that exists as well? What are the mutual influences among the different levels of the language phenomenon? As these interrelations are admittedly among the least well known to us, perhaps we can only attempt to approximate them.

An initial response must perhaps start from the simultaneous and enmeshed existence of the described levels. Just as a work of music does not exist without its instruments, the sociocultural reality does not exist without the entirety of its components. The mind does not exist independently of the social context in

which individuals live. Nor is this social context possible without minds. The different levels shape one another and exist in interrelation. That is, in a general sense, existing language behaviours are the result of these mutual influences. Their maintenance and their continuity depend on the persistence of the structure of contexts that produce their existence. Excessively radical changes in this structure may well cause the destruction or modification of behaviour, leading to another configuration by means of stages characterized by unstable equilibria.

The brain/mind, as the foremost control centre for behaviour, appears to register the influence of two beats that are harmonized to differing extents depending on the case. On the one hand, it initially receives direct stimuli from the levels of interactions and groups and, particularly in contemporary developed societies, only shortly afterwards, also the levels located beneath the direct or indirect control of political power. For example, while an individual is socialized in a specific way of speaking within the family and within the group, he or she can encounter another way of speaking in nursery school, in the rest of the official educational system, the media and advertising. Moreover, these may also appear in written form. At the core of the issue is how reality is given meaningful categorization. What seems to be a general or highly general constant is the clear distinction of these two dimensions in how social life is represented, at least in economically advanced societies. Opposing tags like *status* and *solidarity* or *normative* and *normal* appear to express a distinct sense of social action and social circumstance in the definition of the individual. This would also concur with the distinctions made by Corbeil between ‘institutionalized’ communications and ‘individualized’ communications. The functions covered by status or what is normative correspond to the application of an “ideal defined by value judgments and by the presence of an element of conscious reflection on the part of the people affected” (Aléong, 1983: 257),⁵² while the functions of solidarity and what is normal correspond to covert norms that are typically implicit and subconscious in informal situations.⁵³ Social existence occurs in the context of this basic distinction and it is in the equilibrium or dise-

52 “ Idéal défini par des jugements de valeur et par la présence d’un élément de réflexion consciente de la part des gens concernés ”.

53 The distinction between the *formal* and *informal* categorizations of social actions and situations appears to be highly consistent and widespread in many societies. In 1960, Carl Voegelin was already using the labels *casual* and *noncasual utterances* (cf. Hudson, 1994). It appears that the distribution of functions commonly made between a standard variety and dialects in situations of typical diglossia or situations of language subordination tend to correspond to this basic configuration.

equilibrium between these two large dimensions that the continuity or change of human language varieties appears to play out.

2.5.2. Permanence and subconsciousness

Inevitably, all of these phenomena of interrelation, equilibrium and/or evolution take place within the context of a variable that is inherent in human existence: time. Just as music is unthinkable without the succession of different notes receiving their 'meaning' in relation to the syntagmatic and paradigmatic axes, in Saussurian terms, so reality does not exist without movement and sequence and in the dynamic mutual influence of all its elements. Seen as an ecosystem, reality—and particularly language—is at once dynamic, in equilibrium and changing. Permanence and change occur simultaneously. They are entwined and indivisible. Although it may seem a paradox, one can only be understood with the other and vice versa (*cf.* Watzlawick *et al.*, 1975).

The phenomena of sociocultural permanence and change are closely tied to the properties of human beings. The duration and penetration of early socio-mental imprinting at the level of representations of reality, norms of behaviour and competences are highly likely to contribute to cultural continuity, unless significant events throw into question their appropriateness to the context. On the level of language behaviour, for example, enormous groups of human beings have maintained norms and forms for centuries, which, despite their gradual evolution, can be identified as a single fundamental system. Generation after generation, individuals socialized within the same sociocultural framework have basically reproduced the traits of a culture perfectly adapted to the essential environment of their existence. The creative potential of each individual new brain/mind has been shackled, broadly speaking, by the rigidity and uniformity of a social context with little technological and ideological evolution, a social context prone to maintain the continuity of forms and behaviours of all kinds.

Despite the pronounced correspondence between mind and context, however, humanity has collectively made changes in many basic aspects. The stability of existing socio-mental structures has been shaken by military, political, economic, technological, demographic, environmental, ideological and cultural events. Against the strong conservative tendency of human groups, these events have led to new configurations never before envisioned or imagined. Social change, says Nisbet, cannot be understood except through the effect on social behaviour of crises created by events, because according to historical

data no substantial change occurs in a social group or organization, or in the structure of any form of social behaviour, except under the impact of events that cause crisis (1982: 314 and 319).⁵⁴

The significant tendency of human behaviour to persist may be due to several aspects, both individual and social in origin. First acquired or interiorized elements often seem to persist and these elements include a first language and early value systems. As we have seen, a force of persistence also appears to lie in the subconscious habituation of behaviours. Individuals appear to possess an automatic mechanism that makes habitual behaviours routine. Once proven adequate to necessary occasions and objectives, such behaviours become subconscious, establishing a new order.⁵⁵ They will only resurface for conscious reflection if some important event demands it, as, for example, when they no longer suit a new reality or an individual may gain knowledge of ideas that put their validity into doubt. Indeed, even when an individual does subject behaviour to re-examination, the cognitive programme, or *habitus* in Bourdieu's terms, installed within the individual will tend to favour the maintenance of the existing behaviour as long as the *habitus* "leads at the same time to the exclusion 'sans violence, sans art, sans argument' of all 'madness' [...], that is, of all conduct intended to be punished as incompatible with the objective conditions".⁵⁶

In addition to causes belonging to the strictly mental plane, other factors also appear to participate in this tendency to persistence, such as the preference for a known and tested behaviour over a behaviour that may have unknown and uncertain results. Because a change may be favourable in some

54 Nisbet understands 'crisis' here in the sense given by W. I. Thomas: "Crisis is a relation between the human being and the environment precipitated by the inability of the human being (or of the group or social organization) to keep following a given mode of behaviour. Crisis is a form of attention, or heightened awareness, that wells up in us at times of emergency when a clear breakdown occurs in our modes of behaviour" (Nisbet, 1982: 307 [Free translation from Spanish]). By contrast, an 'event' for Nisbet is an external thing that does not emerge from the structure (p. 314). He points to examples such as the appearance and development of the industrial system, the birth of technology and its spread to all areas of life, the effects of mass education—a fundamental factor in language contact, as we have seen—and war, all constitutional, political and administrative actions, the appearance of the television, and so on (p. 319).

55 "Habitualized actions", note Berger & Luckmann, "of course, retain their meaningful character for the individual although the meanings involved become embedded as routines in his general stock of knowledge, taken for granted by him and at hand for his projects into the future" (1983: 74). Cf. Bastardas, 1995c.

56 " L'habitus tend du même coup à exclure 'sans violence, sans art, sans argument' toutes les 'folies' ('ce n'est pas pour nous'), c'est-à-dire toutes les conduites vouées à être négativement sanctionnées parce qu'incompatibles avec les conditions objectives " (Bourdieu, 1980: 93).

respects and counterproductive in others, individuals understandably tend to act with caution when making such changes (*cf.* Bandura, 1987). The slowness of change also appears to be influenced by the conformity imposed by the group to which an individual belongs. The failure to follow established behaviours calls up the fear of punishment and social isolation. In this case, it is often “as if the opinion or will of the group imposes itself on the individual”, and this is caused in all likelihood because “individuals are particularly sensitive to the opinions of others and much of an individual’s activity is modelled according to the possible opinions of others” (Ogburn, 1979: 69). In periods of change, however, the same pressure of social conformity can have an influence on changing behaviour in favour of adopting an innovation, if its acceptance spreads widely and it reaches a certain threshold.

In general, the ‘subconscious’ existence of cultural forms adopted by humans for living in society explains why specific behaviours can survive even after the disappearance of the contextual structure that gave rise to them. Once established in socio-mental *habitus*, norms and behaviours of all kinds can reproduce themselves automatically without anyone seeing their incongruence or demanding their modification. This has led some sociologists to say metaphorically that behavioural norms take on a ‘life of their own’. What is certain is that many cultural elements will persist in absolute general ignorance of their origin or the situation in which they were shaped, as long as they remain functional and their maintenance is not undesirable. In Catalonia, for example, intergroup behaviours are an example of the continuity of a norm—the language adaptation of the L1 Catalan-speakers to L1 non-Catalan-speakers. The norm is increasingly obsolete in the context, but continues to perform fully in functional terms, even in a large portion of the new generations, who are able to adopt it mimetically (*cf.* Bastardas, 1991).⁵⁷ What we are seeing is the apparent paradox of the survival of behaviour patterns, while constant change occurs in the individuals who sustain them and in the context that caused them.⁵⁸

57 As Lieberman correctly points out, “Once established, the existing pattern of language usage will tend to perpetuate itself in situations which, had they existed earlier, would never have generated the same language pattern” (1981: 351).

58 As Schutz & Luckmann note, “The deficient agreement of the components of my stock of knowledge does not fundamentally compromise its self-evidency, its validity ‘until further notice’. [...] I only become aware of the deficient tone of my stock of knowledge if a novel experience does not fit into what has up until now been taken as the taken-for-granted valid reference schema” (1977: 29).

2.5.3. Generational change and succession

Nevertheless, it is unlikely that the entire cultural universe of a generation will be adopted by the succeeding generation. In contemporary developed societies, in fact, such adoption may occur to a much smaller degree. As the population is replaced by each new generation, new minds entering into society can also be a potential factor of cultural change and renewal, particularly in the current Western mode of life, where pressure from outside the family and the group is much stronger and where innovation and creativity appear to be much higher values than in past societies. With increasing rapidity, the circulation of new ideas, images and products, the reduction in the value of family culture and the opinions and beliefs of older people, and the continuum of techno-cultural change shape environments of socialization that are considerably different for each new generation, which can practice differentiated behaviours and hold definitions of reality that are far removed from earlier ones. The vast majority of the population now lives in urban society where relations tend to be more impersonal, more ‘institutional’—i.e., based on roles or categories—and more anonymous. Behaviours tend to be guided more by the latest trends than by traditions inherited from preceding generations and this type of context has repercussions on today’s culture, particularly on language behaviour. Generational change partly makes it possible for sociocultural change to occur without any change on the individual level, and this can sharply weaken the socio-mental factors of persistence and continuity.

This structure of generational change must serve as the foundation for any broader understanding of the phenomena of sociocultural change and permanence. For example, a specific innovation received by a generation that is now adult may have minimal effects on it. However, on the generation currently being socialized—i.e., at the optimal time when the brain/mind is constituted—the impact can be of great importance. The overall effects of the appearance of the Internet, for example, may not exactly be the same for the adult generation than for their children, who are exposed to it in their initial stage of imprinting. Ideas and forms that may be rejected by adult generations can be adopted and spread among members of the new human group being educated. It is important to see, therefore, that a single context can have vastly different effects on individuals depending on their age, even though they live in the same period together.

Change typically spreads through society following this intergenerational path. It is very common for the old and the new, the ancient and the modern,

to coexist simultaneously.⁵⁹ In the course of this social metabolism—the internal substitution of the population—changes become more visible. What at first appears only a localized, minority fact can spread widely and become adopted more generally. Obviously, the speed of change will not be the same depending on the properties of the elements being modified. With respect to language behaviour, for instance, change will not only need to overcome all the forces of social persistence—and possibly also resistance—but it will also encounter difficulty posed by the considerable delay in developing personal language competence. As with other behavioural or ideological change, language behaviour may more readily be adopted individually once the desirability of change is apparent and everything that could contribute to delaying the decision to change is overcome. At the same time, changes in language behaviour frequently present the difficulty posed by developing the ability needed to adopt them. When speaking a given language is clearly seen as desirable, the actual adoption of the behaviour may be subject to serious delays or never occur, because it requires considerable effort to become competent in the broad set of grammatical and lexical rules that configure it.⁶⁰ Clearly, if the need becomes urgent, the individual will go to great lengths to use whatever language resources he has to make himself understood and to understand others. Once an individual has achieved the necessary minimal level that is crucial to communication, however, his motivation may relax. Particularly in the case of adults, this may stop at a highly incomplete state of competence.⁶¹ By contrast, the same or similar contextual situation for a young child, e.g., the children of the adult described, may lead to a practically native or quasi-native level of competence.

2.5.4. Linguistic systems

Languages occur within this context of more or less permanently balanced and/or changing systems. As sociocultural elements, they depend on the chang-

59 As we shall see, innovative and traditional behaviours often not only exist in differentiated social groups but also in a single individual, who may vary behaviour according to several social variables (the other individuals in the interaction, occasions, areas, functions, etc.).

60 The individual tends to avoid subjecting himself to the tedious process of developing new habits. In that process, all of the individual's insecurities about his competences are reactivated. The adoption of innovations involving complex skills that cannot easily be taught is slow (Bandura, 1987: 180).

61 This phenomenon, which occurs when the development of a second language present in the daily social context is definitively interrupted because it has become sufficient for the subject's communication needs, is called 'fossilization' (*cf.* Dittmar, 1983).

ing fortunes of individuals, but they can also survive them and persist, perhaps with some modifications, over generations. The perpetuation of language codes, however, is not a clear problem. Rather, it is obscure and it remains poorly understood, especially when we take into account the individuality of minds and their creative capacity. As Ogburn acknowledges, “It is not well known why language changes so slowly, but one could say that no strictly cultural explanation is entirely satisfactory. The psychological usefulness of order”, Ogburn continues, “could explain a great deal of the stability of language” (1979: 70).

Over the course of time, language modifications introduced by speakers to grammar or lexis never stray far from the previous grammar or lexis so that the possibility of mutual understanding is not lost. That does not imply, however, that each generation or sociocultural group does not have a wide latitude for variation and innovation in language learning and language use, according to their desires and historical events. Language systems probably live in a state of unstable equilibrium, because they are ‘open’ systems exchanging information and energy with the surrounding environment,⁶² and not closed within themselves. This is because, according to Pateman, “grammars and languages are only reproduced and transformed in and through the speech and writing of their users, human subjects constituted as speakers, who are not only acted upon by both natural and cultural causal mechanisms but are themselves agents in the real world” (1987: 21).

By virtue of being open systems capable of modification according to the experiences of speakers, language codes are often affected by intergroup contacts between individuals of differentiated languages or varieties. The sudden appearance of a considerable number of individuals from other language areas or groups, for instance, can become a source of phonetic change, as Labov (1980) demonstrates, and this change can spread subconsciously across the group and between generations⁶³ until it becomes predominant or present in a

62 Cf. Von Bertalanffy (1981).

63 No clear answer exists yet to whether language change is conscious or subconscious. Although Labov describes the issue as a process that takes place at a conscious level (cf. Milroy, 1987: 187), it is not certain that the individual, at least in specific moments, is aware of the existing language difference or makes a rapid evaluation of the social consequences of adopting the innovation or maintaining an existing behaviour, if he or she is a member of the group bringing the change. In any case, it is also true that the close, unitary relation between the mind and the sociocultural context can be conceived as similar to an inspiration-expiration mechanism in which elements present in the context are adopted—absorbed—subconsciously by the individual mind, which then returns them to the context and correspondingly influences other minds.

significant portion of the society. Ultimately, human beings have responsibility for the conservation or change of language codes and this is most apparent in the contacts between different languages and especially in the phenomena of code-switching and language shift, which we shall soon address in greater detail. Within the context of their socio-cultural ecosystem, the permanence or change of the norms followed by individuals in their language behaviour will determine whether a specific sociolinguistic situation is durable and stable or, by contrast, it undergoes significant change. The phenomenon of language contact, precisely because it is a new element in a dynamically functional reality, will frequently activate the attention of individuals and define them amid the reality facing them. However small or great, language contact is a factor in the changes that occur in communication forms and/or behaviours. In whichever group or code, the resulting situation will not be same as it was before. As a result, the structures that support the persistence of behaviours can start to fracture and the behaviours can begin to evolve toward initially unforeseen states.

3.1. THE POLITICAL REGULATION OF LANGUAGE STANDARDIZATION

*Languages multiply with states;
not the other way round.*

ERIC J. HOBSBAWM

3.1.1. Introduction

For human minds to be mutually able to interpret their communicative intentions efficiently and with a minimum of error, it becomes necessary to establish social agreements over which forms they will adopt to express different meanings. Since time immemorial, humans in habitual communication with one another have had to coordinate their language forms and, when such groups engage in greater ongoing social interaction, they have tended to adopt common language ‘standards’, which each subsequent generation has then, in part, ratified and, in part, modified. Spontaneously and acentrically or polycentrically, each human community engaged in stable, daily relations proceeds to shape its way of speaking and reaching mutual understandings in a particular way.⁶⁴ According to experts, our planet has a continuum of spoken vernaculars whose gradually increasing differences make it often quite difficult to know—when classifying and categorising them in broader discrete units—whether to put a particular way of speaking on this side of a line or on that side, following criteria that may be objective but, in the final analysis, are arbitrary as well.

⁶⁴ As a “conventional solution to a co-ordination problem” (Pateman, 1987: 36), “a language is a web of human-produced sound-patterns which have developed in a particular human group and have come to be standardized there”—spontaneously in daily speech—“mainly by its use itself, by the need to avoid misunderstandings, as symbols of specific topics of communication” (Elias, 1991: 49).

Amid this sea of spoken vernacular varieties, the struggle to endow communicative acts with permanence, i.e., through the achievement of writing, has resulted in the use of a number of media—e.g., stone, copper, papyrus, parchment, paper and digital media—and in the production of systems of writing—e.g., based on ideographic script or alphabets—that are capable of reproducing what was already occurring at the level of speech, if not fully so. Written communication, therefore, enabled the transmission of meaning without the physical presence of the interlocutors. This considerably expanded the radius of communication. At the same time, it also facilitated the step toward objectivization of language forms, which moved from having a purely oral and ephemeral social existence to a written characterization that was, therefore, outside the individual and also more permanent, raising the possibility of becoming an object of study and reflection. Small numbers of people of the different cultures on our planet succeeded in developing the ability to write, making possible the existence of written codes of linguistic communication, which were described and later prescribed by grammarians and used by writers and public servants. This gave birth to a new form of language regulation.⁶⁵ Over time, decisions affecting the forms of linguistic communication in the area of writing arose out of reflection, as a consequence of debate and amid the existence of authorities—e.g., influential figures, monasteries, royal chanceries, etc.—that defined forms of communication for more general, unified use.

The appearance of the printing press (circa 1450) served to bring this entire process to a head, expanding access to literary output to a broad swath of the population, although it was not until the contemporary period that it fully reached the mainstream of society. The ease of reproducing written texts and the possibility of publishers, therefore, to reach increasingly far-flung areas with their products also contributed to heightening the need for written forms of supralocal comprehension. Gradually, in pursuit of their own interests, printers defined more stable, more widely agreed-upon language models⁶⁶ that

65 In Corbeil's words, "we understand *linguistic regulation* to be the phenomenon by which the language behaviours of each member of a given group or subgroup operate on the basis of a certain way of acting under the influence of social forces that emanate from the group or its subgroups [nous entendons par *régulation linguistique* le phénomène par lequel les comportements linguistiques de chaque membre d'un groupe ou d'un infragroupe donné sont façonnés dans le respect d'une certaine manière de faire sous l'influence de forces sociales émanant du groupe ou de ses infragroupes]" (1983: 283).

66 For example, the first English printer, William Caxton, was already voicing complaints in 1490 that the language was too variable and that "people from different places could hardly understand one another" (Milroy & Milroy, 1985: 32). In the case of German, according to Raynaud, "Around 1600 all printers came to accept a language and lettering that were nearly uniform [Autour de 1600 tous les imprimeurs ont fini par accepter une langue et une graphie à peu près uniformes]" (1982: 92).

individuals who had access to them would acquire in addition to the differentiated spoken varieties that they used customarily. Slowly, the tendency arose for individuals to broaden their language repertoires, at least through the incorporation of a written variety, and this trend would later become widespread in the developed world.

The unification of the form of written varieties took an important step forward with the emergence of academies and other institutions specifically put in charge of this task (e.g., Accademia della Crusca, founded in Florence in 1582; Académie Française in Paris, in 1635; Real Academia Española in Madrid, in 1713). It is through these institutions, particularly as shown by the example of the latter two cases, that political power has taken part in modern times in the regulation of the forms of linguistic communication. These academies were either set up directly by the political authorities themselves or they received recognition and support from these authorities, which wielded the ultimate power of legitimation. The academies⁶⁷ carried out a unitary codification of the written system of communication that, in the context of the systems of values and ideologies of their membership, enshrined some forms as correct and acceptable, while stigmatising as unacceptable and vulgar those forms that were not chosen. The spread of an ‘ideology of the standard’⁶⁸—which claims basically that only a single language variety is legitimate and that this one variety is precisely the codified written variety—leads in many cases to the shaming of speakers whose ostensible differences are greater with respect to the standards approved by academy members, and gradually they—or their children—abandon forms that are socially disparaged or discredited.

The spread of liberal and democratic ideas and the concept of the nation-state in the wake of the American and French revolutions, together with the modernization of state bureaucracies and the implementation of compulsory education, brought to every corner knowledge of the written code and its legitimating ideology, which now drew on the deeper rationale of the ‘nation’.⁶⁹

67 In the English case, despite proposals of this nature, no academic institution has ever been created to codify language forms. Nonetheless, the task has been carried out by private individuals, such as Dr. Samuel Johnson and his dictionary, of 1755. These individuals became *de facto* language authorities with effects similar to those found in the other cases.

68 More precisely, in the words of Lodge, the emergence of standard varieties has had the result that “it has come to be widely accepted [...] that the ideal state of language is one of homogeneity and uniformity (rather than diversity), that its ideal form is to be found in writing (rather than speech), and that the ideal distribution of languages is for there to be a separate language for every separate ‘nation’ [...]. This nexus of ideas was not present in pre-modern Europe” (1993: 2).

69 “Thus, only when the making of the ‘nation’ [...] creates new usages and functions does it become indispensable to forge a standard language, impersonal and anonymous like the official uses it has

For the first time, at least in states with widespread literacy programmes, the entire populace experienced a centralized form of language regulation that was superimposed on the interrelationships between the traditional forms of language arrangements in human communities.⁷⁰ Against a backdrop of industrialization and critical technological innovations that greatly facilitated social communication and mobility, with consequences such as the critical phenomena of urbanization and mass communication, the existence of standard forms of linguistic communication became even more justified and encouraged by the practical needs of the new situation. In the new cities where speakers of different vernaculars converged, the existence of knowledge of a unified written variety tended naturally to make this variety into a model or foundation towards which new social arrangements would tend for the language forms of daily and informal oral communication. Similarly, radio and television broadcasters covering far-ranging territories with a large variety of vernaculars have posed the problem of a unified establishment of some oral standard, which would also tend to be formulated around the already available written codification. Once again, the decision on standard oral forms can serve to legitimate some forms and stigmatize others, particularly in accordance with the ideological discourses prevailing at the time.⁷¹ Today, we are witnessing the appearance of standards of language use transmitted centrally and followed and accepted en masse by huge numbers of the populace whose language behaviour is being homogenized to a degree and to an extent unthinkable in the nineteenth century. This vast process of standardization⁷² does not occur with-

to serve [C'est donc seulement lorsque apparaissent les usages et les fonctions inédits que implique la constitution de la nation [...] que deviennent indispensables la langue standard, impersonnelle et anonyme comme les usages officielles qu'elle doit servir]" (Bourdieu, 1982: 31).

70 As Bourdieu remarks, "In the absence of the *objectification* in writing and particularly in the quasi-legal *codification* that is correlative to the constitution of an official language, languages only exist in their practical state, that is, in the form of linguistic *habitus* that are at least partly orchestrated and the oral productions of these *habitus* [En l'absence de l'*objectivation* dans l'écriture et surtout de la *codification* quasi juridique qui est correlative de la constitution d'une langue officielle, les langues n'existent qu'à l'état pratique, c'est-à-dire sous la forme d'*habitus* linguistiques au moins partiellement orchestrés et de productions orales de ces *habitus*]"

71 "People have come to believe that the standard language is the only authentic form of the language and that all non-standard varieties are merely failed attempts to express oneself properly" (Lodge, 1993: 6).

72 In accordance with Xavier Lamuela, we have drawn a distinction between 'codified language' and 'standardized language', defining the latter "in terms that involve the language form in functionality: it can be said that a language has gone through a process of standardization when it has a recognized variety with general use value that is endowed with a referential character, that is, it can resolve any problems of concurrence of forms in its own favour [en uns termes que impliquen la forma lingüística en la funcionalitat: es podrà dir que una llengua ha passat per un procés d'estandardització quan disposi d'una varietat

out tension or an unstable and complex dynamic between the two great sources of production and legitimation of language behaviour—the group/social and the political/institutional. This is particularly the case in human collectives that, because of historical circumstances, have experienced the superimposition of structurally distant codified varieties perceived by them as foreign and antagonistic to their own.

3.1.2. Dynamics of the process

3.1.2.1. *The selection of basic varieties*

The system of centralized regulation that we have looked at in broad terms in the previous section was not made possible as a result of a simple historical process. Nor is it even today a straightforward and immediate process. Successfully extending and bringing about the adoption in practice of a standard modality of linguistic communication in a given territory—one typically defined by political and administrative boundaries—involves the mobilization of a great number of people and the completion of numerous legislative and academic actions aimed at consciously exerting influence over the population at large. The best-known basic blueprint for action is the one put forward by the Norwegian-American Einar Haugen. Based on his study of different historical and contemporary cases, Haugen discerned four major stages in the process of language planning and these stages are not necessarily always sequential: 1) selection (decision on the basic variety/ies), 2) codification (regulation of the form), 3) spread of knowledge and use through society,⁷³ and 4) elaboration (functional development).

While standard varieties of linguistic communication reflect a greater or lesser degree of artificiality, they are not languages created out of nothing.

reconeguda amb valor d'ús general i dotada de caràcter referencial, és a dir, que resolgui a favor seu els problemes de concurrència de formes]" (1987: 67). Similarly, Charles Ferguson defines 'language standardization' as "the process of one variety of a language becoming widely accepted throughout the speech community as a supradialectal norm—the 'best' form of the language—rated above regional and social dialects although these may be felt to be appropriate in some domains" (1988: 119). To expand on this subject see Lamuela (1994) and Lamuela & Murgades (1984), on the Catalan case.

⁷³ Here I adopt the terminology most commonly used in the Catalan sociolinguistics tradition in order to convey Haugen's label 'implementation' for the third stage (*cf.* Haugen, 1983). In this way, we include two distinct basic aspects of the social existence of the standard, competence and use, which are also separated analytically by R. L. Cooper (1989) in his own postulation of the concept of 'acquisition planning' when he tackles the traditional concepts of 'status planning' and 'corpus planning', as proposed by Heinz Kloss.

Rather, they are typically based on forms of speech already in existence as part of the vernacular continuum mentioned earlier. Which forms of speech constitute the foundation for what we will later come to know as standards—or simply as ‘languages’—depends on the historical circumstances of each case and, especially, on the ideologies of those who possess the opportunity to influence and/or make such a decision. In the case of languages or countries that have undergone a long and already consolidated historical process of standardization, such as French, English and Castilian/Spanish, the language varieties associated with royal power are very important to the origins of their written codification. These varieties, which correspond to what we would today call the sociolects of a given regiolect (Mackey, 1991), were able to serve later as a foundation for the constitution of the written modalities that writers circulated with the appearance of the printing press, and, subsequently, of the rules and regulations adopted by the academies entrusted with setting unitary, general norms for the written standard, norms that tended to be followed in formal speech as well. Quite often, the impetus toward a unified, regulated literary variety came in pre-modern periods from renowned writers and scholars, such as Dante in the case of Italian, Du Bellay for French and Alfonso X the Wise for Castilian/Spanish. They wished to replace Latin with a written variety that better approximated their authentic vernaculars and wrote their works based on their spoken languages. Highly motivated by the constitution of a system of linguistic communication based on the oral forms of the day, writers and intellectuals in favour of such a system very often sought and generally obtained royal or government support for their projects (Mackey, 1991). In cases in which history has permitted the near-uninterrupted use of a written variety in public communication, the variety’s norms have evolved to a greater or lesser extent through a series of adaptive reforms. As Marcos Marín (1979) points out in the case of Castilian/Spanish, for example, the codification has been intentionally overhauled at four great moments or periods in time: in the thirteenth century, when Alfonso X the Wise set the orthographic system; in the sixteenth century, when the idea of the imperial and universal vulgar language triumphed; in the eighteenth century, when the Spanish Royal Academy was created and undertook orthographic reforms in 1726, 1741, 1763 and 1815; and, lastly, during the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, when new technical terms were adapted.⁷⁴ Indeed this evolution quite clearly underscores

⁷⁴ Marcos Marín also notes that political power always plays a key role in the socio-historical processes that have made the phenomenon of language standardization possible. Thus, in the Castilian/Spanish case, the codification of the thirteenth century was prompted by the king himself, while the

the fact that standard-setting activities concerning the written standard fall sharply as the code becomes clearly regulated and prescriptive and, even more so, accepted and used habitually in the corresponding socio-communicative functions. As a matter of fact, all societies with well-implemented standards live in a timeless situation, as if social communication had always been as it now is, ‘naturally’ and without historical change.

In cases of standardization processes that have basically been carried out more recently—especially in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries—the mechanism for selecting a basic variety in order to lay the foundations for a written standard has seen some variations. The evolution toward more democratic, more egalitarian frameworks, coupled with greater systematic study of different geolectal varieties, has weakened the automatic identification of *cuius regio, eius lingua* and brought about different forms of selection. Now, in addition to the persistent formula of choosing a single dialectal variety as a central and fundamental backdrop or canvas—because it is the one used by great writers, groups with the highest level of social prestige, or groups that are demographically greater in number and, therefore, considered the most legitimate historically—we have also witnessed the construction of syncretic regulatory proposals based on diverse aspects of the distinct vernaculars present within a politico-linguistic area, a development clearly illustrated in the Basque case (*cf.* Rotaetxe, 1987). In contemporary processes of language planning, the selection of a basic variety or varieties can typically be more thoughtful and conscientious. In return, the level of debate and conflict can rise at this stage of the process.

3.1.2.2. *Codification*

Once agreement is reached on the choice of a basic variety, decisions on standards or norms need to be made on three broad aspects: the writing system, the grammar (morphosyntax), and the lexis. In the first case, it is necessary to address the problem of how to represent in writing what may have been only spoken language forms. If the decision is to use alphabetic representation rather than ideographic or semi-ideographic representation, then we need to choose which alphabet to adopt for writing words. The choice of an alphabet

leitmotif in the sixteenth century was of “the language as the partner of empire” in the New World and, in the eighteenth century, the Bourbon king acted as the first great champion of the Spanish Royal Academy (Marcos Marín, 1979).

can never be symbolically neutral. As we shall see, the selected alphabets very often correspond to particular areas of civilization and/or religion. An Islamic state typically chooses Arabic characters, while a Slavic area plumps for Cyrillic characters.⁷⁵ In the present day, however, the Latin alphabet—with convenient adaptations—appears to be the most accepted alternative for representing new standards, particularly in secular states or states based on African or Asian belief systems.

Once the written characters of a new public standard are determined, the next task is to fix the written forms of each word. Once again, a diversity of opinions may emerge with respect to the principles to be adopted. Should priority be given to phonetics or to etymology? This issue and others, such as simple discrepancies over very specific decisions—for example, historically in Catalan, should the conjunction ‘and’ be represented as *i* or as *y*—can give rise to pitched disagreements between individuals grappling with codification. Indeed, even this product will not be symbolically neutral. If phonetic differences are significant between vernaculars within a territory in which a standardized variety is to be used, the decisions on the written form—considered as authentic and as the most legitimate and prestigious one by speakers—can have an impact on the degree to which that standard comes to be accepted or contested, particularly in cases in which the identity-based unity of the population is weak. In these cases, the planners must not abstract themselves from the social context in which the standard is to be used. They need to try to make decisions that respond as effectively as possible to all the varieties and cognitive situations of the individuals involved. Another factor that can play a role in the selection of spelling conventions is the desire to create solutions that are distinct from or similar to solutions adopted by other neighbouring languages. This is a factor that is often closely bound up with significant ideological and symbolic meanings.⁷⁶

⁷⁵ Sharing or not sharing the same alphabet can have a not inconsiderable influence on identity. In the Serbo-Croatian case, for example, the two languages are viewed structurally as members of a single language system, but they have written standards corresponding to two different alphabets: the Serbians, who are Orthodox, use the Cyrillic alphabet, while the Croatians, who are Catholics, use the Latin alphabet. There are languages, too, that have been written in different alphabets as a result of historical circumstances. For instance, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, founder of the modern Turkish state, decreed that Turkish abandon the use of Arabic characters and adopt Latin characters instead, as part of a process of Europeanization and secularization of the state. Similarly, Romanian nationalists in the nineteenth century replaced the Cyrillic alphabet with the Latin alphabet, guided by the desire to relieve their origins and differentiate themselves from the Slavs and Magyars.

⁷⁶ In the Galician case, for example, note the discrepancies between a more Portuguese orientation and an approach more in favour of Spanish solutions. Similarly, in efforts to create a standard

Now that we have a given orthography to prescribe the form of words, we need to address the morphology of these words—their inflection, derivation, composition, etc.—and the norms governing their combination in the formation of sentences, i.e., their syntax. The codifier will have to decide which rules need to govern different types of sentences. Although the basic criterion may have been to build the standard from a given dialectal variety, at this morpho-syntactical level we cannot rule out the adoption of solutions originating from other dialectal varieties, if these solutions offer clear advantages to solutions coming out of the adopted basic one. Nor can we rule out solutions suggested by ancient forms that are no longer current or solutions created *ex novo*. The standard grammar, which is perhaps the most complex part of codification, sets the language formulas that will be considered appropriate for instances of communication typical of the standard. These formulas then become the subject of dissemination and practice, particularly through the school system and appropriate educational books.

To finalize codification, it is necessary to prescribe lexis. Along with lexicographical inventories that can gather a large number of forms coming from various vernaculars, the language authorities will need to furnish a standard dictionary to establish the words of the standard and fix their meaning. At this level, the controversy sparked by possible decisions can also become heated and resonate widely in the society in contrast to the grammar issues raised previously, which pose greater technical complexity for the public at large. Coming down in favour of or against specific words will be a quite common phenomenon, particularly in cases in which current processes of standardization are not yet very consolidated. For many speakers, the standard dictionary will become a touchstone of absolute authority with respect to the language forms that can be employed, even for more colloquial and informal uses. Indeed, according to a far-ranging and deep-rooted conception, Lluís Payrató notes pointedly that this will produce “the metonymy of container and contents: at first the language is *in the dictionary*, and in the end the language is *the dictionary*” (1993: 10).

Typically, in traditional historical processes, codification basically comes to an end at this point, after the compilation of the standard dictionary. Nowadays,

‘Valencian’, emphasis was put on its spelling discrepancies with generally established and accepted Catalan solutions. In the case of Norwegian, the issue of its orthography being more or less akin to Danish was also an important factor within the overall conflict between their two standards (cf. Haugen, 1966). Lastly, US English has historically made considerable symbolic hay out of its undoubtedly tiny spelling differences with British English.

the importance of mass communication of an audio-visual nature—e.g., radio, television and video—has also led those responsible for codifying languages to take an interest in orthology and in the establishment of certain standards of pronunciation. If the task of the prescriptive authorities can be complicated by the considerable diversity present in earlier steps of codification—i.e., orthography, grammar and lexicology—because of the vernaculars for which the standard must serve as a unified interdialectal variety, the difficulty is no less serious at the level of phonetics.⁷⁷ Given the diverse sound systems of different dialects, the aim of defining a single orthological standard that can be practicable across the entire linguistic territory of application may give rise to significant problems of implementation and acceptance, particularly in contemporary cases of standardization, at least during the lengthy initial period. If phonetic diversity is considerable, it can be impossible or very difficult at the start of the standardization process to find people who, as teachers, newsreaders and the like, can adopt in practice a single phonetic standard so far removed from their vernacular systems. The solution in such cases is either to make no pronouncement on any phonetic standard, which would allow it to develop freely and leave the decision to each broadcaster or organization, or to name more than one system as standard, while reducing the diversity of vernacular orthology to two or three broad and practicable formulas.

3.1.2.3. *The spread of competence and use*

Codifications formerly known and practiced by a very small number of literate individuals now enjoy daily social use by large numbers. In some cases, they have even succeeded in elbowing aside ancient vernacular varieties in informal speaking as well. Thus, in a country as emblematic as France, the situation has shifted from 50% of the population in 1789 speaking absolutely nothing of what would later come to known as ‘French’ and only 12-13% speaking it ‘correctly’—and this solely in the central area of the country (Hobsbawm, 1991)—to today’s reality, which is characterised by en masse and almost exclusive use of ‘French’ in written and spoken contexts around the country, coupled with advanced processes of intergenerational abandonment of previously existing

⁷⁷ There are cases, however, in which a consensus on pronunciation may arise and yet, by contrast, it is much more difficult to achieve consensus on spelling. This appears to be the case with Welsh. Despite the existence of a generally accepted standard phonetic form, an agreement on orthography was not reached until 1928 (Lewis, 1982: 28).

vernaculars. This process has been possible fundamentally thanks to the combined action of two big factors: the determination of political power, and the extraordinary technological and economic modernization of the past 150 years.

The nineteenth century and, even more so, the twentieth century have witnessed fundamental socio-communicative transformations that have had a huge impact on individuals' language knowledge and use. An extraordinary increase in the ease of ground and air transportation, the growth of industrial and commercial activities, and the successive technological innovations based on radio waves and the Internet, account for the material context in which the state takes part through its creation of mass, compulsory education and the spread of national ideas and language standardization. In many cases, the expansion of the traditional communal areas of communication and the language demands of new economic activities promote the triumph of policies aimed at spreading the standardized variety pushed by the state through its institutions and public servants.

Political power is the great historical driving force behind expansion in the social use of the variety codified by grammarians.⁷⁸ A particular ideological discourse, which is centred on the concepts of 'nation' and on the collective identity represented by the national adjective derived from the name of the state—e.g., 'French', 'Spanish' and 'Italian'—seeks to legitimate the generally coercive diffusion of the standard language and the outlawing of any other varieties. It also seeks to galvanize the populace around a single 'patriotism of state'.

The state, with its monopoly on physical violence, might use all of the legal, juridical and bureaucratic instruments at its disposal to support the knowledge and use of the new variety by the entire population.⁷⁹ Instructors in the new system of public education become the individuals fundamentally responsible for ensuring that all citizens within the territory acquire the practical norms that facilitate use of the standard code. In many cases, therefore, they are also the first to require training in a standard language with which they have not previously been familiar. Grammar books, exercise and reading books, support materials and so forth all need to be prepared to enable the enormous task of

⁷⁸ Political institutions will take explicit steps to sanction the normative codification that is to define the standard variety. In Spain, for example, Philip V declared that the spelling approved by the Spanish Royal Academy (RAE) was mandatory in all printing. He declared the RAE dictionary official and made its grammar the standard and compulsory text on the subject (Marcos Marín, 1979: 85).

⁷⁹ The large bodies of laws and provisions of all kinds enacted by political authorities in the French and Spanish cases show the point to which the state can become involved in expanding the use of the language variety declared 'national' and official (*cf.* Balibar & Laporte, 1976; Ferrer, 1985; Aracil, 1983: 221-263, and Viana, 1995: 275-284).

spreading knowledge of the codification. In parallel, the state decrees the public presence of the standard in signs and signals. In most cases, the state also makes it the sole language variety throughout the apparatus of the state. For this reason, all public servants receive education in the new code, and the use of other linguistic modalities is banned within the administration. This is what occurred with Latin and also with so-called ‘patois’ languages in the French case. The eagerness of the state to pull off a rapid and effective implementation of the standard can readily lead the state to prohibit the use of other language varieties by ordinary citizens in their dealings with the administration, which can operate under the instruction of not accepting any documents that are not written in the variety that has been declared ‘official’.

Looking at the history of processes of standardizing linguistic communication, we see in many cases not only measures to spread the codified variety, but also explicit policies to ‘destroy’ other different varieties, particularly the ones most commonly used by the populace. These policies aim to prohibit their use not merely in official functions but also in the public activities of private organizations and individuals. Likewise, the schools become a vehicle to transmit an ideology favouring the standard and denigrating other varieties, which are given explicitly stigmatizing labels such as ‘patois’ or are valued negatively and their non-use is demanded—in the case of varieties with very different structures—or their adaptation to a standard variety is required—in the case of vernaculars that are closer in structure and that, therefore, have come to be viewed as spurious and incorrect forms of the standard itself.

In more contemporary cases of language standardization, the role played by the mass media can be as great as or even greater than the educational system. Although schools retain the basic task of explicit written literacy, the linguistic ecosystem fills with messages broadcast over the radio waves that reach the entire population with absolute ease, including even those who live many kilometres from the place of production and broadcasting. In parallel to exposure to the traditional language forms of the group or community in which they live, individuals also enter into daily and ongoing contact with new and different language forms coming not only from teachers and textbooks at school but also from the press, radio and television, and now the Internet, which are rated highly and have great symbolic appeal. Governments carrying out contemporary processes of standardization also concern themselves, therefore, with this dimension of mass communication and promote periodical publications and radio and television broadcasters who can make a crucial contribution to the dissemination of the standard in its written form and, especially, in its spoken form.

In this context, the spread of the standard variety is a gradual and asymmetrical process dependent on institutions, communicative functions and individuals. Given the general lack of knowledge of spelling, grammar and lexical norms of the target standard variety, the process must begin with the training of instructors who, in turn, extend competence to other core groups. In this respect, an initial team of instructors needs to take charge of providing education on the codification to public servants, who depend directly on the instigating political power and therefore need to be the first to put the planning of the linguistic *corpus* to effective use. Essential, too, are primary-school teachers, who bear responsibility today for teaching the entire population to read and write and for generally spreading the standard variety to the next generation. Public servants with a greater involvement in administrative tasks will also be the recipients of training in the standard variety, because the standard will have been officially enshrined as the daily vehicle of communication for the bureaucratic machinery of political power, both within the bureaucracy itself and with the citizenry at large.

The standard language is disseminated among practically the entire educated population, who gain mastery of the standard in four broad skill areas: reading comprehension and written expression—which are often considered the two fundamental skill areas—and listening comprehension and spoken expression. In the case of written expression, the standard can be transmitted as a highly unified variety with rules to be applied in a quasi-uniform manner in the pertinent functions by individuals from a variety of dialectal areas, whereas in the case of spoken expression, the articulatory constrictions of previously acquired languages may exert a strong influence on the standard variety as spoken by such individuals. Despite the efforts of teachers to correct any possible phonetic differences that their students may present with respect to the pronunciation seen as more suitable for the standard, such differences can persist because of the articulatory difficulties involved and they may give rise to a planned or unplanned form of the standard that has its own phonetic characteristics, which can typically come to be seen as normal and usual in that part of the territory.

With respect to adults, the standard can spread among individuals whose work duties involve the need to craft public messages, which must be constructed as a matter of policy according to the norms of the officially decreed codification. Journalists, writers, editors, newsreaders, printers and so forth will also need to be educated in the pertinent standard in order to produce texts at an adequate level. Similarly, administrative staff in companies will also need to gain knowledge of the norms at least in order to prepare documents relating to

official bodies and to draft documents of a legal nature. For a considerable period of time, the training phase will persist and, in all likelihood, a group of specialized language correctors and advisors will be needed in order to help ensure that any texts produced meet the standards of the current codification.⁸⁰ It is more likely that the rest of the adult population, whose work does not require an active and complete literacy, will go through a process of development regarding the comprehension of the spoken standard—as public communications making use of this standard reach them—but they will find it more difficult to acquire the complex knowledge of the written standard. For groups who have previously learnt to read and write in another language, the speed of acquisition will depend on their motivations and needs and on the degree of the structural and normative gap between the two codes. In general, however, widespread attainment of the four competences in the standard variety—reading, writing, listening and speaking—will not fully come about until the next generations whose entire education has taken place in the target code enter the workforce and begin to replace individuals lacking knowledge of this code.⁸¹

With respect to communicative functions, the standard variety is the one generally used in *institutionalized* communications⁸²—i.e., written and spoken communications of a public and formal nature, usually impersonal or anonymous, that emanate from official and non-official institutions. Over time, it may or may not move into *individualized* communications—i.e., the colloquial and informal speech of a more private nature, which has typically made use of traditional vernaculars. Thus, the standard model comes to orient language behaviour across the entire breadth of formal written production, whether official—e.g., laws, documents, government correspondence and signage—or non-official—e.g., publications, books, informational leaflets, advertising, and packaging and labelling—and across the entire breadth of formal oral produc-

80 The need to have special staff with language ability in the early stages of expanding the social use of a given standard variety has already been remarked on by F. Brunot in his volume *Histoire de la Langue Française*: “The needs of the [...] administrations forced them to have a large number of public servants in every city and village, who needed to be able to use French at least in their writings. [...] This was a kind of garrison of the French language, limited in many places to a general staff that was greater or lesser in size, but whose presence would have its consequences” [free translation from Spanish] (Balibar & Laporte, 1976: 34).

81 The spread of the written standard to the entirety of the school-age population is a fallacy in many cases. Given socio-economic and other types of differences among the population, the effects of the educational system are not homogeneous. Beyond so-called ‘school failure’ in general, concern over the quality of the written standard acquired at school has been rising for some years among academic authorities and analysts (cf. Maurais, 1985).

82 Cf. Corbeil (1980).

tion—e.g., the media, planned written, parliamentary or ceremonial addresses, the language activity of teachers, professors and public servants as members of public bodies, and customer service staff in leading companies and other organizations.

The way that the use of the standard spreads in institutionalized communications also tends to be asymmetric and gradual. For example, in the case of communications produced by official governmental bodies, it is easier to use the standard in ‘fixed’ situations, such as printed forms and signs, which can be checked by correctors, rather than in more tailored, variable contexts, which require prior knowledge on the part of the public servants responsible for these communications, who will logically need more time for their preparation. As new generations schooled in the standard join the workforce, organizations will be able to expand use of the standard variety to all of their formal communications and thereby consolidate the centralized regulation of public language behaviour.

3.1.2.4. *Functional elaboration*

In no way could we characterize the past 150 years in terms of static societies or unchanging technology. The varieties of things to be named linguistically, together with the opportunities to create ideas and acquire knowledge, have risen enormously, exponentially, for a broad swath of humanity. In the past, anything once thought at a given spot on the planet and in a given tongue would take decades to spread elsewhere to people speaking other languages. Yet today it can be known easily, rapidly, across the entire planet. Different human societies have had to refer to a huge number of new phenomena that often come from outside and they have constantly needed to create new language forms capable of naming technological and ideological innovations. The desire of many of the world’s language communities to engage in contemporary life in their own codes without being subjected always to the codes of historically dominant communities—with the language forms that these have developed over time to express reality—entails a hugely important task producing terminology and styles to make this aim possible.⁸³ While dominant societies with widespread, consolidated languages, such as English, Spanish or

⁸³ As Aracil pointed out so insightfully, “In principle, growth in the use of a language will produce [...] a development of its structure and, inversely: restriction in its use will produce a kind of withdrawal, impoverishment or atrophy [L’ús expansiu d’un idioma produirà [...] en principi, un desenvol-

French, respond to the high rate of technical and conceptual innovation through a constant production of new terms and names, societies that have recently gone through their own processes of language standardization have to make an even greater effort to coin new terms for new purposes. Not only must these human groups, building on their own linguistic traditions, decide how to name everything in today's reality, but they must also devise all the language and style tied, for example, to the political and governmental matters of a modern society, such as a resolution, a decree or a sentence; all the language and style bound up with the media, such as news bulletins, sports broadcasts, advertisements, and journalistic language, and so on, addressing scientific and technological areas and beyond.

Once the standard spelling, grammar, dictionary and now also orthology stand ready, the stage of basic codification is complete. For contemporary processes of standardization currently underway, this point marks the beginning of problems relating to the widespread dissemination of the standard and its acceptance and effective adoption by the population at large. As we see the language codification being used in the production of texts, new needs can emerge with respect to the form of the standard variety. From the stylistic perspective, the decreed reference variety will need to adapt, as we have seen, to the different functions demanded of it by contemporary social communication. Therefore, these different communicative uses will require suitable language forms that may not have been envisaged by the codifiers, focused up to this point on establishing the basic structural elements. The subprocess of elaboration or functional development will involve this enlargement of the specialized forms and styles in the service of the various communicative activities of a complex, contemporary society.⁸⁴ The next stage will be characterized by dictionaries of terms, principles of scientific language, specific lexicons, style guides with standards for diverse genres and registers, and so forth. In a socio-technological context such as the present one, this stage will often remain incomplete, open-ended, and with greater participation from users than seen in earlier stages.

All of this task of functional elaboration of speciality forms and languages within the standard often exceeds the strict framework of the language academies or authorities in charge of formal regulation and they are frequently

lupament de la seva estructura —i inversament: l'ús restrictiu produirà una mena de replegament, empobriment o atrofia]" (1983: 91) (see also Cabré, 1999).

⁸⁴ It is interesting to see how, as Haugen noted (1983), codification seeks stability for the code, while elaboration or functional development, by contrast, requires the code to be flexible.

carried out by users themselves. Such users, who sometimes do not have sufficiently rigorous criteria, can put given forms or structures into use that are not always viewed as acceptable by prescriptivists, who from the relevant institutions may attempt to change any forms or structures that they consider inadequate. However, depending on the cases, they can also fail in their attempt, if the use of these forms and structures is already widespread and common and the population rejects the proposed modification in practice. In cases of contemporary standardization, in which the overall speed of the process is considerably greater than the speed recorded for historically dominant languages, the role played by current specialized users of the standard—e.g., writers, scientists, journalists, professors, newsreaders, technicians, government officials, etc.—will be critical in the early stages, because these users will very often need to resort to a stylistic or terminological creation *ex novo*, when there is no prior tradition of use of the new standardized language in addressing the corresponding subjects and areas.⁸⁵ Thus, the standard will need to provide differentiated language registers for use in the multiple communicative activities of the various realms of human activity, which will greatly expand the functional diversity of the reference variety being created and disseminated.

3.1.2.5. *Acceptance and assessment*

Not all standardization processes addressing language forms and behaviours unfold as their instigators would like. In some cases, the process may be completely successful, while other situations become complex and cause social conflict. The range of possible trajectories is wide. Rejection can centre on the disseminated variety as a whole or it can focus only on, for example, highly precise and specific lexical or spelling features. A government may very well face serious difficulties in bringing about the adoption of a new variety as a public one, if the population is divided on the matter,⁸⁶ while a normative institution can also see, for example, how its instructions regarding particular lexical chunks are disregarded by a majority of the people. Understanding each of these cases of ‘language disobedience’ can be genuinely complex and each

85 For additional theoretical background on this subject, the reader can consult Lamuela (1987) and Marí (1992). For an excellent example of the resources that must be employed to create specialized terminology, which is scientific language in this case, see Riera (1992).

86 The Norwegian case provides one of the best illustrations of this aspect (*cf.* Haugen, 1966).

can differ radically from the next. This awareness of the possible difficulties that may be encountered in the effective adoption of language forms decreed as standard is what leads other theoreticians of language planning to include as a further important aspect of the process the evolution of representations and behaviours in potential users regarding the variety in expansion. Acceptance or rejection of the planned variety also involves a periodic phase of assessment of the processes aimed at expansion of the standard, precisely to check the effects of the programmed activities and revise or confirm them.

3.2. SOCIOLINGUISTIC EFFECTS OF CONTACT BY POLITICAL DECISION⁸⁷

In addition to the information expressly declared, linguistic practice inevitably communicates information about the 'differential' manner of communicating, i.e., about the expressive style, which, being perceived and appreciated with reference to the universe of theoretically or practically competing styles, takes on a social value and a symbolic efficacy.

PIERRE BOURDIEU⁸⁸

3.2.1. General consequences

The gradual spread of language standards driven fundamentally by political power and aided by the general modernization of society—e.g., economic, technological and ideological changes—has given shape to a linguistic landscape in the countries of the developed world that differs radically from earlier periods in history. Exponential growth in the volume of communications that we have called *institutionalized*—e.g. from the state bureaucracy, the general

⁸⁷ I will not go into the specific effects of contact over and above habitual language *forms*, such as the phenomenon of interference or language borrowing. Other authors have produced highly accurate accounts (cf. Payrató, 1985; Nussbaum, 1992; Turell, 1994).

⁸⁸ “ La pratique linguistique communique inévitablement, outre l’information déclarée, une information sur la manière (différentielle) de communiquer [...] qui, perçu et apprécié par référence à l’univers des styles théoriquement ou pratiquement concurrents, reçoit une valeur sociale et une efficacité symbolique ” (1982: 99-100).

educational system, printed forms, audio-visual media, signs and signage, advertising, and packaging and labelling—and the quasi-exclusive occupation of these realms and functions by the standard variety have forged a new type of language ecosystem in today's world, with crucial effects on the language behaviours of individuals.

Beyond the continuum of previously existing traditional vernaculars, the vast majority of sovereign states have been or are still spreading a standard language variety that has already or will eventually become known by the entire populace and is typically used exclusively at the very least in the written and formal oral communications of the institutions and organizations present in the territory, as well as by its highest authorities. Decreed as an 'official language' and as the language of instruction in the educational system, the selected and conveniently codified standard variety will tend to become the quintessential public language over time and it will come to occupy all the communicative realms that share this character.

This creates a context of circular reinforcement. As more people learn the new variety, more people use it. As more people use it, more are exposed to it and master it. Individuals gain *de facto* competence in at least two varieties: the vernacular already acquired in their basic socialization and the standard developed through the school system and in other institutionalized communications. With the exception of speakers of the basic dialect of the standard (assuming that this has been the fundamental criterion selected), everyone else speaking vernacular varieties that diverge to a greater or lesser degree from the reference variety will face a situation of potential variety choice, at least when speaking. The typical situation in the early stages of spreading the use of the standard can be described by a quasi-generalized competence in this variety, but also by limited use in most of the communications of daily life. Although the standard will occupy most of the formal or generic spoken and written public communications—official events, ceremonies and the media—many people with a differentiated vernacular as their first language will continue to use it habitually in their interpersonal relationships, at least in their informal ones. In many cases, the use of vernacular varieties will be normal even in more formal relationships, for example, with public servants or staff in organizations, until instructions dictate otherwise, such as in the cases of political subordination that explicitly seek the extinction of languages other than the official language of the state.

The public's sensitivity to the degree of the standard's use and functions can vary according to the social status and/or professions occupied by individuals. The upper socio-economic strata have a higher sensitivity than other strata to-

ward following what is considered *normative* in society and can, as a consequence, adopt the standard on a greater number of occasions and even come to use it fundamentally as their sole variety. Similarly, people in institutionalized roles who therefore use the standard habitually in their formal activities may also tend to adopt it in place of the vernacular in many of their daily activities. By contrast, the rest of the population may continue being led by what they consider to be *normal* in their informal language uses, employing traditional vernacular varieties for such purposes while reserving the standard purely for strictly formal activities and often adapting it to distinctive features of their vernacular, particularly any of its phonetic characteristics. This produces a situation characterised by *code-switching* resulting from whether a particular communication is viewed as individualized or institutionalized, i.e., informal or formal. The use of vernaculars will be seen as suitable for the former type, whereas the standard, by contrast, will be seen as appropriate for the latter type.

The implementation of this model will not be immediately evident. It will take at least a generation to become apparent. Because the adult generation alive when the standard is rolled out through the educational system will be unaffected due to their age and absence from the system, the effective adoption of the standard for use in the relevant formal functions will have to wait for the first generation schooled in the standard. In general, this generation will be the one to apply the distribution of functions among the varieties in their language repertoire and the one to decide the extent of continuity or change in language forms and behaviours through the norms and structures adopted by them in their socio-communicative conduct.

Until the nineteenth century, language differences existed but were not very present or important in the daily lives of individuals.⁸⁹ However, widespread schooling and the previously mentioned growth in public communication produced many individuals who became aware of language diversity and who, as a consequence, created directly related representations and behaviours. Frequently, the emergence of an awareness of language difference occurs at school, where the new code is disseminated along with, in many cases, a specific ideology promoting the official standard and simultaneously denigrating the vernaculars. Many will become aware not only of language diver-

89 As Walter B. Simon notes, "In pre-industrial rural and predominantly illiterate societies diverse language groups may exist side by side peacefully while the members of small educated elites perform the functions of government in a shared *lingua franca*. Consequently, language was not an issue or a source of tensions in a predominantly rural and mostly illiterate multilingual Europe ruled by an elite that communicated in Latin and later in French" (quoted in Dion, 1981: 20).

sity, but also of speaking poorly and of possessing a disadvantageous and stigmatizing language variety.

The future consequences of these developments will differ from place to place. In some cases, the addition of a standard results only in a quite stable situation marked by a hierarchical, complementary distribution of functions between the two codes of the individual: the vernacular for traditionally informal and colloquial activities and the standard for formal and written communications. In other cases, the situation may develop in such a way that the vernaculars shift towards the structural characteristics of the standard—where there is little distance between the varieties—or towards what has more properly been dubbed *language shift*.⁹⁰ This appellation covers, for example, the phenomenon of abandoning a vernacular attributable to language system *X* and the adoption of the standard corresponding to language system *Y* as the sole habitual informal spoken variety as well, albeit sometimes with small phonetic, lexical and/or grammatical modifications. It is in this latter case where the highest index of language disappearance is recorded, given that the intergenerational continuity of vernaculars is broken when parents transmit the official standard to their children instead of their own vernacular. Indeed, a variety of the standard with greater or less local colour will become the native code of many new speakers. The aim of the following pages will be to seek to understand the various effects of this linguistic ecosystem.

3.2.2. Mutual adaptation

In the vast majority of cases in which the official standard variety was built primarily from one of the previously existing dialects, which is typically spoken by the demographically most numerous group or the one that holds political and/or economic power, the acquisition of formal writing and speaking skills did not represent exposure to any great difference for this group, given the similarity between the vernacular or vernaculars at its disposal and the variety taught through the educational system. To the contrary, the self-image of this group could only increase, owing to the ideology of self-esteem that accompanied the standard.⁹¹ For these individuals, no problem existed. The official vari-

⁹⁰ See Aracil, 1982.

⁹¹ One of the mechanisms of producing prestige is ‘retrospective historicity’, by which standards are attributed with “a glorious past which helps set them apart from less prestigious varieties current in the community” (Lodge, 1993: 8).

ety imposed by political power coincided with their own and it was the one they needed to use to earn their living as well. There was no need, therefore, to introduce any group or interactional change. They could basically continue to speak as always or with small modifications and they also enjoyed a positive social assessment that had been explicitly enshrined by political power.

The process has had other consequences in the case of speakers of vernaculars that differ from the vernaculars serving as the basis for the standard (but not so different as to be attributable to another general language system) and that are perceived by their speakers as a variety related structurally to the standard. Given the establishment of the referential character of the standard variety—"this state language becomes the theoretical norm against which all linguistic practices are objectively measured" (Bourdieu, 1982: 27)⁹²—the speakers of these vernaculars, in many cases, began a gradual process of movement toward the standard and this shift became much more accentuated from generation to generation.⁹³ Children were made aware in school of the vernacular forms that did not coincide with forms viewed as normative by the reigning standard and they were advised to correct them in line with the official model, which they sometimes achieved completely and at other times achieved only partially. If these differences were fundamentally lexical and/or grammatical and of little complexity, individuals in the new generation not only were able to master the standard very correctly and use it for any necessary functions, but also they adopted it as a model for their own informal speaking, which often took on a form quite close to the promulgated standard, albeit with distinctive features. If phonetic differences also existed with respect to what was considered to be standard pronunciation, they may tend to persist at least partially, given the difficulty of making specific changes to articulation.⁹⁴ In this case,

92 " Cette langue d'État devient la norme théorique à laquelle toutes les pratiques linguistiques sont objectivement mesurées ".

93 For example, "In Northern Germany, the spoken language soon moved quite close to the common language. In the lands of Southern Germany, which were less extensive and ethnically more homogeneous [...] the spoken language remained more dialectal [En Allemagne du Nord, la langue parlée s'est rapprochée le plus tôt et le plus près de la langue commune. Dans les pays de l'Allemagne du Sud, moins étendues et ethniquement plus homogènes [...] la langue parlée est restée plus dialectale]" (Raynaud, 1982: 118). Similarly in the French case, Lodge points to "local and regional speech-norms being gradually displaced by norms emanating from Paris". Indeed, as Lodge goes on to note, "with the spread of the belief in the identity of language and nationhood in the nineteenth century, the promotion of linguistic uniformity according to Parisian norms became a prime duty of citizenship" (1993: 228).

94 However, there can also be cases in which speakers construct *ad hoc* rules of adaptation in order to adjust their phonological system to the production of non-stigmatized phonetic forms (Pate-man, 1987: 95).

adaptation was mutual in many respects. On the one hand, the standard variety was phonetically articulated in terms of local features, while on the other hand the vernaculars could approximate the standard at all other grammatical levels. These types of processes can be found today in many places on the planet. The degree to which the vernaculars and the standard move toward and adapt to one another varies by case, but the pattern appears to apply to a large number of situations. The evolution would be toward a basic fusion of the features of the relevant vernacular and standard languages, giving rise to what has sometimes been called ‘regional’ spoken standards, which present a notable reduction in dialectal diversity within their own area, but partial differentiation with respect to the standard norm seen as basic.⁹⁵ In such cases, the differences between the forms used in institutionalized and individualized communications fall sharply both because of the approximation of the traditional colloquial varieties to the standard⁹⁶ and because of the adaptation by the standard of given features characteristic of local languages, features that tend to persist and that are not experienced negatively. This process leads to the disappearance of a large number of local language systems. As Mioni notes, it is another kind of language death, although it is not as visible because of the lesser extent of structural distance. The phenomenon produces a language continuum without abrupt breaks, in which “minor languages are captured by the bigger ones and their speakers tend to consider their vernaculars as a natural part and parcel of the major ones” (Mioni, 1988: 317). In these situations, the original distribution of functions for the varieties disappears, because a single fundamental code is created and used in the relevant registers in all communications, while preserving or creating the usual markers for formality and informality.

95 This, for example, seems to characterise the historical evolution of the Aragonese and Leonese languages toward the spoken standard form of Castilian (commonly called Spanish today) in the middle of the Iberian Peninsula. Similarly, this also appears to be occurring with the dialects of northern Italy, which tend to be evolving toward convergence with models of language use more or less based on the written standard. Thus, “disagreements not present in the written model are merging or being eliminated, morphophonological processes and word structures that diverge too greatly from the written model are shifting” (Trumper & Maddalon, 1988: 222).

96 In this process of adaptation between language structures, speakers can fall foul of the phenomenon of hypercorrection, when they attribute non-existent forms or rules to the standard form that do not apply in specific cases (Pateman, 1987: 78).

3.2.3. Diglossic distribution

In addition to mutual adaptation and the approximation toward a standard by vernaculars that are not structurally distant, there are also situations characterized by the basic stability of vernacular forms, by the development of full competence in the standard variety, written and spoken, and by a hierarchical and complementary distribution of communicative functions between the two modalities of vernaculars and standard. The basic characterization of this typology corresponds well to the properties attributed by Charles Ferguson, in his seminal article of 1959, to situations of ‘diglossia’. The distribution of functions typically follows in a usually identical manner the division mentioned earlier between institutionalized communications—interpreted as formal and of high status and prestige—and individualized communications—experienced as informal and of high closeness and solidarity. The standard variety is typically used in official functions, education, religious ceremonies, public signs and signage, the media and in all written materials. As a result, it is necessary to acquire the standard through the appropriate institutional bodies, namely the educational system. By contrast, the spoken vernacular varieties form an inextricable part of the natural socialization of individuals—in the family, in groups of friends, and so forth—and are used in the vast majority of daily interactions by most of the population. As a result, they give continuity to the traditional spoken language activity of human beings where it has, in particular parts of the planet, undergone the superimposition of formal and written language activities typical of contemporary developed societies.

The fundamental difference between mutual adaptation, or the convergence of vernaculars to the standard model, and diglossia is that, in the latter case, dialects can register a variety of interferences and other influences from the standard, while keeping their own structural characteristics and not evolving, at least not quickly or significantly, toward a future fusion with the reference variety. Although it cannot be maintained that such patterns are immutable or enduring, many of these cases do persist for periods long enough for other situations to change radically. Examples include the situations listed by Ferguson (1959), such as the Swiss-German case, the cases of Arabic, the Greek case and the Haitian case, as well as the southern German vernaculars and vernaculars in many other corners of the world.⁹⁷

⁹⁷ Ferguson (1988) calculates that there are 200 cases globally that fit the classic notion of diglossia.

These sorts of situations contrast with the gradual evolution of vernaculars toward the standard on the one hand and, on the other hand, with situations of language shift, in which contact occurs between structurally very different varieties but stability is not achieved and the vernaculars, instead, tend to be replaced by spoken modalities based directly on the official standard. In the former case, the situations of diglossia characterised by Ferguson do not appear to present an adaptive evolution of the vernaculars toward the standard. Instead, the perception is that the standard is only appropriate for more formal written and spoken communications, but not for conversation and informal communication in general. Indeed, as Ferguson himself points out, the most fundamental characteristic of his typology of diglossia is the *radical* distribution of functions, where the standard variety is not used by *any* social group for informal daily communication. With the intervention of this clearly separate categorization of varieties and their functions, the oral modalities are not questioned by social groups of higher status, but rather keep their prestige relative to the standard.

With respect to the other characteristic—the continuity of such situations at present—we can ask ourselves what is it that causes situations marked by hierarchical distribution of functions among language varieties that are not structurally close to one another to appear more stable in some cases, and in other cases, by contrast, to tend toward the abandonment of the varieties engaged in individualized communications and toward their substitution by varieties used in institutionalized communications. What are the factors that determine these different results: stable diglossia (as Ferguson describes it) *versus* shift? Rather than turning to structural divergences, we probably need to turn to speakers' cognitive representations of the language varieties involved. What leads some speakers to abandon their vernaculars while others do not? Note that what we are trying to understand here is not why they *adopt* a variety, but why they *abandon* one.⁹⁸

Situations marked by a diglossic distribution of functions usually present the coexistence of varieties *perceived* as belonging to a single 'language'. This is particularly clear in the Arabic and Greek cases. Whatever the people use, the two varieties are experienced as undeniably Arabic and Greek. Being disseminated, the standard—especially the written standard—raises no issue of

98 Here we adopt the perspective taken by Lieberman (1981) that the causes of bilingualism can be separated and distinguished from the causes of language shift. We assume that "the pressures in favour of and against the acquisition of a second language are at least partly different from the pressures affecting parents with respect to the language they will use to raise their children" (p. 130).

identity. As we have said, the distribution of the varieties is complementary. The standard variety is never used in spoken individualized communications and the vernaculars are never used in writing and rarely in highly formal speaking. The standard variety is conscientiously acquired in the educational system generation after generation, while the vernaculars, as the first varieties acquired by individuals, fill functions in family and daily life. In principle, therefore, there does not appear to be room for any ethnolinguistic conflict, because the varieties are not symbolic of this kind of opposition.⁹⁹ The contrast between the varieties does not seem to entail any negative representation for speakers that would lead them to abandon vernaculars in favour of the standard in informal daily communication. Indeed, the opposite may occur. In Arab countries and in Greece and even in the Swiss-German case, the signs appear to point to a rise, not a retreat, in the use of the vernaculars or an evolution of the formal varieties toward the structural characteristics of the colloquial varieties.¹⁰⁰ In the Swiss-German case, the preferred phonetic standard is not the High German standard, which is most common in Germany, but rather a pronunciation based on characteristics clearly defined by Swiss vernacular systems.

Clearly, the groups cited seem not to attribute any negative evaluations to their vernacular varieties that might lead them to abandon these varieties in informal daily communication, which remain the most widespread varieties in common use by the vast majority of the population. If in the Greek case the classicising standard was seen as their own variety, not alien, but without possible models for individuals to use in their informal daily speech, the Swiss case is marked by possible models of oral uses that are, however, either attenuated by the diglossia present in southern German dialectal areas or that suffer from a comparison that does not lead speakers to conclude that any change from their habitual vernacular variety is required of them. In addition, there must be a much more relaxed pro-standard ideology in the German-speaking world than, for example, in the French or English-speaking worlds (*cf.* Lodge, 1993). The situation must also point to a relatively high group self-esteem—Switzerland is not a poor or economically backward country—as well as to the fact that their adoption of the general German standard is not the consequence of outside imposition or political minoritization, but is the result of an internal decision that can be freely reversed.

99 This does not mean that social conflict around the standard modality may not arise between supporters of a more distant existing modality and supporters of a new standard closer to actual colloquial varieties. Something like this exists in the Greek case between Katharevousa and Demotic Greek.

100 *Cf.* Ferguson (1988).

As a result, this typology appears to present a differentiated evolution. It differs both from structural evolution toward a locally modified standard (i.e., drift) and from the intergenerational abandonment of vernaculars in favour of adopting a variety more or less modified from the standard for use in individualised communications (i.e., shift). Paradoxically, this in-between situation, which is too distant for a simple structural reconciliation and too close (even if only cognitively) to be defined as an absolutely different language, can become quite stable for long periods of time, at least as long as no new social changes push it toward another outcome. Fundamentally, however, the reason for the stability of such cases of diglossic distribution must be located in the political dimension. None of the commonly analysed cases involves a situation of political subordination such as the situations faced by minoritized European communities. The perception of dependence and, therefore, of self-denigration finds no cause to develop. In all likelihood, it is not the simple fact of bilingualization that leads to language shift. Rather, the key is the *context* in which bilingualization takes place and the sociocultural meanings associated with that process.

3.2.4. Language shift

3.2.4.1. *General characterization*

In addition to situations included in the typology of a diglossic distribution of functions characterized by their relative stability, we can also find contrasting situations that have passed through stages at least superficially similar and yet have tended to evolve toward the substitution of vernacular varieties by the official standard even in families' spoken communication, giving way to a natural break in language transmission and, in many cases, to the ultimate disappearance of numerous language systems. In these cases, the process initiated through the political dissemination of the official standard variety—particularly through the widespread literacy offered through educational systems and the explicit prohibition against public use of other languages—has worked along with other, no less decisive factors to drive the process of sociolinguistic change to the point that other varieties are pushed out of their historical functions, leaving the use of functional varieties based on the single reference modality in all communicative functions. Gradually, language behaviours are unified around the state's standard model. As noted earlier, the state's standard model comes to be seen as the only way of speaking correctly and appropriately in all situations, with

the corresponding functional adaptations. The French case is a clear example of moving from an “amalgam of numerous diglossic communities organised around the monoglot region of Paris” (Lodge, 1993: 152) to a country today where most of the other language systems have practically disappeared and where ‘French’ now occupies all of their functions.¹⁰¹ Similar processes can be found in the Celtic languages—Irish, Scottish Gaelic and Welsh—in Great Britain and also in Spain itself, where the Basque, Galician and Valencian, for example, are cases of dynamic language shift processes. Why, in these cases, has it not been possible to maintain at least a standard/vernaculars continuity along the lines of the previously examined diglossic distribution of functions?¹⁰²

Obviously, the first thing to note is that the relevant political power, unlike in the situations described by Ferguson, has not exactly sought such an outcome. In many cases, the large-scale dissemination of the state standard, which coincided with the first literacy of the vast majority of the population, aimed explicitly right from the outset not only to spread a *lingua franca* for general communication but also to put an end to the existence of other systems of linguistic communication that differed from the model adopted by the central, sovereign political power.¹⁰³ Disseminating the state’s standard through schools goes hand in hand with a clearly denigrating and stigmatizing discourse directed at the vernacular varieties: “soyez propre, parlez français” (be proper, speak French), “habla en Cristiano” (speak in Christian [meaning Spanish]), “habla la lengua del imperio” (speak the language of the empire [again, referring to Spanish]). At the same time, decree prohibits the use of differing language varieties in public communication and even in oral discussions in private institutions. In this framework of subordination and dependency, people gain

101 However, we must bear in mind that the process has been long and costly in the French case as in many others: “It must be remembered that it is only in the twentieth century, after a long evolution followed by a profound political revolution, but above all after having digested the fruits of the Industrial Revolution, that the ways of speaking of most French people became more or less uniform, or at least comprehensible to one another [Il faudra se rappeler que c’est seulement au XXe siècle, après une longue évolution suivie d’une profonde révolution politique, mais surtout après avoir digéré les fruits de la Révolution industrielle, que les parlers de la majorité des Français sont devenus plus ou moins uniformes, ou au moins intercompréhensibles]” (Mackey, 1994a: 62).

102 Kloss notes that vernaculars tend to persist much longer than standards: “Quite frequently it will be found that in the case of replacive bilingualism the local dialect of the defeated tongue will be much slower to yield ground than the standard tongue” (1969: 72).

103 The report written by the great instigator of French language policy after the French Revolution, Abbé Grégoire, was addressed to the Convention under the title “Report on the necessity and the means to annihilate the *patois* and universalize the use of the French language [Rapport sur la nécessité d’anéantir les patois et d’universaliser l’usage de la langue française]” (cf. Balibar & Laporte, 1976: 179-197 and Viana, 1995: 275-284).

competence in the new state standard and, as they do so, they may choose to transmit this standard to their children as a basic variety of socialization, i.e., as a native variety, interrupting the intergenerational transmission of the group's own vernacular. Because adopting this behaviour will obviously be subject to the judgment of the community, the change in the usual patterns will require a clear ideological and/or practical justification and legitimation. This is the purpose served by the discourse of the 'national language', the idea of a single, overarching language for all citizens. In the words of Abbé Grégoire in his cited report, "May the unity of the language among children of the same family extinguish what lingers of the prejudices rooted in ancient provincial divisions and tighten the bonds of friendship that shall unite brothers" (Balibar & Laporte, 1976: 184).¹⁰⁴ Thus, in the case of France, renouncing the continuity of vernaculars becomes interpreted officially as an act of patriotism in the service of liberty. From the practical standpoint, the legal enforcement of the standard known as 'French' as the sole code for official, public use, in parallel with the processes of industrialization and urbanization and their encouragement of the populace's social and geographical mobility, amplified the perception that there was a vital need of the standard language for one to survive and to gain economic advancement. Gradually, through a process of asymmetric dissemination by social and geographic groups, the standard as *langue nationale* becomes adopted first as a variety for institutionalized communications and later is transferred by a newly competent generation to individualized communications. This same generation then transmits the standard as native to the next generation, which will rarely know the old vernaculars, making the standard—conveniently adapted to colloquial functions—their sole customary language.

Unlike in cases of Fergusonian diglossia, we notice that the concurrent varieties in these cases cannot be attributed to the same language system or to a single 'language' because of their obvious structural distance, which can be perceptually widened or shortened on a case-by-case basis, depending on the ideological assumptions of the people interpreting the situation.¹⁰⁵ Often, this typology can be characterized by vernaculars in contact with a structurally quite distant standard and, as a result, by a more or less diffuse degree of dif-

104 Free translation from Spanish.

105 We should not forget that one possible case is for speakers to be made to believe that their variety is a poorly spoken dialect of a given standard, even though it belongs structurally to another group of languages. Given that individuals, in principle, know only what they speak or do not speak through information that reaches them socially—in their community, schools, press, etc.—they can be influenced to see themselves as speakers of an obviously low-prestige modality of the official language and encouraged to replace their vernaculars with the dominant alien standard as a common colloquial variety.

ferential ethnolinguistic awareness. As noted earlier, it is precisely this factor that is distinctive and significant with respect to the typical situations of diglossia. In such situations, the standard is not customarily seen as imposed and/or as a variety belonging to another ethnolinguistic group with which there is a confrontation. By contrast, in situations of language shift, differential awareness is clear and lies behind the move of the subordinate group toward adoption of the dominant variety for the upbringing of their children. This presupposes the intervention of identity-based elements that are weak and unappealing on one side, but strong and prestigious on the other side. While situations of diglossia bring no necessity to give up vernaculars in order to remove any stigma or assimilate to any other group, situations of language shift involve abandonment driven by the desire to adopt a language behaviour that does not denote original ethnic membership even in informal communications. A stable distribution of functions, even one that is diglossic in nature, cannot occur if it becomes socially disadvantageous for speakers to continue speaking the autochthonous vernacular. Gradually, from the top of the social hierarchy to the bottom,¹⁰⁶ individuals will abandon their vernaculars and adopt the standard—sometimes locally modified by vernacular features—as a model of formal and informal language behaviour.

3.2.4.2. *Social and intergenerational dynamics*

Clearly, situations of language shift can occur when linguistically differentiated communities are subject to political subordination. Once integrated into centralized nation-states that do not give them official recognition, public use of their languages may be prohibited. It may be denigrated and stigmatized. This is achieved by pure might in authoritarian regimes or even by electoral might in democratic regimes, when the majority ethnolinguistic group votes to do so. While this may describe the main cause of language shift, however, it is not the only cause. Arriving at the complete abandonment of the spoken language forms of one's own social group is not a simple or straightforward phenomenon. Rather, it is complex and multidimensional and it can be understood only in dynamic terms.

Together with the political phenomenon of the nation-state and the consequences of language policy that derive from it, the processes of language shift

106 Cf. Querol (1990).

recorded in the last 150 years have taken place in close interrelationship with other factors of equal importance in the context of the general process of *modernization*. Developments such as industrialization and urbanization, which have led to socio-economic and geographic mobility, have also played a fundamental role in the creation of conditions that encourage shift. With respect to the desire for socio-economic advancement, the contribution of modernization was to spread language changes up and down the social ladder when, before, they had taken root only in given, circumscribed strata at the top of subordinate societies. In many of these cases, the autochthonous aristocracy had already begun the process of language shift and abandoned the language of origin, both in formal and informal uses. In a top-down process, the haute bourgeoisie of the cities imitated this substitution behaviour as well and shared in the aristocracy's belittling of autochthonous language forms, viewing them as inferior and bound to disappear in favour of the language of the court and/or of power. The industrial revolution rocked the stability of the social structure and the distribution of power shifted. In many cases, the newly ascendant bourgeoisie tended to imitate the already existing upper classes and took pains to become bilingual in the language seen as 'superior'. Later, they would abandon their language of origin as a language transmitted through the family. Cities embodied the leading edge of these shift processes.

In addition to social mobility, another kind of mobility also took place: the rural population migrated to the cities. This displacement of individuals had a dual sociolinguistic consequence. On the one hand, it broke up communities that had in many cases sustained vernacular languages peppered around the country. On the other hand, it led to a need for new standards of behaviour in the cities themselves, making the interrelationship crucial between existing urban language behaviours and those of the newcomers. If the displaced population came to cities that had a clear predominance of a variety or varieties corresponding to their own language system, adaptation was gradual in that direction. If the populations mixed in cities where the use of the language of political power—alien to most of the rural population—was predominant, at least in the higher social classes, two things might occur. In some cases, the arrival of large numbers of people from the countryside with autochthonous language varieties could reinforce the bourgeoisie who had not yet substituted languages and tilt the city toward its own code. In other situations, if the shift process was already quite advanced in the higher strata and the newcomers adopted the cognitive representation that associated upward social mobility with abandoning use of the varieties of their own language, these varieties tended to disappear in all realms, formal and informal, and their spontaneous

intergenerational transmission was interrupted. If such migrations also contained populations with language varieties ascribable to the language of political and economic power, the situation became more complex. In many cases, this was an even greater spur for the minoritization of the autochthonous language population and for the consequent rejection of the use of the language in social life and in language transmission within the family. As a result, urbanization could be lethal to the continuity and stability of many politically subordinate language communities, particularly if they internalized their minoritization. In that case, as a result of the process indicated, the urban populations would largely come to adopt the dominant language.¹⁰⁷

To this aim, we can also add compulsory education given solely in the dominant language, with the complete exclusion of any languages of subordinate communities. Through the official educational apparatus with its vast social and symbolic impact, the standard language enjoys dissemination at the optimal age of language acquisition. The aim is to control ease of access to the leading intellectual resources needed for economic survival in developed societies. In this way, the official standard language can be acquired by each and every individual in the social community and put into practice in whatever functions are deemed appropriate for it. If this process, as noted earlier, is also accompanied by a discourse that denigrates and stigmatizes other languages, presenting them as language systems without any fixed grammatical standard but purely as oral, dialectal and secondary, and parents are called on to speak the language of the schools with their children in order to help them achieve academic success, then the conditions leading to disuse of the varieties of the autochthonous language will gain greater and greater force.

Nonetheless, the abandonment of a group's own language system is not a quick or an easy process. The elements that encourage behaviours to persist in the group, in interactions and in the individual will have an influence, as noted in the first part of this book. Because the development of productive language competences becomes harder as an individual gets older, many adults in a situation of language contact may not be able to master fluency in the new code. As a result, they may avoid using it when not strictly necessary. That means that if they remain at this level of competence, they will also not use the

107 Kloss (1969) has already pointed to the critical importance of cities in processes of language shift or maintenance. He cites the cases of Irish, Welsh and Breton, whose use has been lost in cities such as Dublin, Cardiff and Brest, as well as the cases of Romansh and one of the standards of Norwegian—*Landsmål*—that have never been used by urban populations. Urbanization is almost always deadly to these languages or varieties.

new official standard variety to speak with their children and that their children will not experience this variety as their first language of socialization. However, this does not necessarily lead to the second generation not becoming fully competent in the standard used as an institutional vehicle. Given the educational language policy present in most of these cases, the single, customary language of instruction in the education system will be the official standard, even frequently in extracurricular language use, because teachers are sought by the political authorities explicitly from outside the linguistic area or because the autochthonous students have internalized the need for language shift.

In a context of ongoing exposure to the official standard, which will also become the common language of all remaining public communication, particularly of the written communications of the official or para-official bodies of the government, members of the second generation can become asymmetrically bilingual in their codes. On the one hand, they gain only an informal oral competence in the vernacular variety of their first language. On the other hand, they acquire formal written and oral competence in the second language, the official one, in its standard version, with features that are more or less local depending on the case. This is the 'bilingualism' characteristic of situations of political subordination. The group's own language is limited to the oral vernacular continuum, while the language declared official by those in political power becomes the group's formal standardized written and spoken modality. The group's competence is perfectly unequal: individuals will know only how to speak in the code of their own community and use it to speak only on subjects of private daily life, while they will generally know how to write and speak according to standard norms in the other code, but lack the more colloquial registers. This can produce the seeming paradox that communities that speak the official language most closely to the normative standard variety—except perhaps phonetically—are precisely those communities that do not have it as their first language, but only as a second language learned fundamentally at school.

Notice that this political framework is responsible for the typical hierarchical distribution of functions and for the high interference experienced by autochthonous languages that tend to show all the processes of language shift before they advance effectively toward abandonment of their own vernaculars. In an ecosystem in which the use of the autochthonous language system is not allowed in official and institutionalized communications in general, this system will necessarily be absent in such communications and it will necessarily not develop or adapt any suitable and necessary variety of its own to fulfil these types of functions. In the absence of such variety or of any bodies that

could take the relevant language decisions, it is hardly surprising that the trend will be to adopt forms coming from the only standard language model available to refer to the multitude of things in social life, particularly in the fields of knowledge and technology. Over time, even the denominations and constructions that already exist in the autochthonous code can be replaced by others from the official standard. In this way, the autochthonous vernacular continuum tends to present an image of mixing and blending with the dominant language. Perversely, the authorities can take advantage of this fact to corroborate the inferiority of the language system of the subordinate community and/or present it as a 'simple dialect' or a spurious and badly spoken 'patois' of the language declared to be official.

According to the asymmetric model presented above, the bilingualized generations of subordinate communities will present code-switching depending on the situation and the function. The most commonly seen distribution is spoken/written, given that the written level cannot be occupied by any variety of the autochthonous language and will only be performed in the alien official language, which is provided exclusively for these functions. When speaking, individuals will switch between one system and the other fundamentally according to how they categorize a function. In keeping with the policy instructions in force, formal speaking activity in official or assimilated areas will have to be in the official standard. The community will tend also to listen to the speeches and contributions of its leaders and to the classes given by its teachers and professors solely in the official language. In general, all media will function in the official language, too. This does not mean that there will not be cases such as the situations of diglossia depicted by Ferguson in which the local authorities or teachers will not speak autochthonous vernaculars when the microphone is switched off or outside the meeting room or classroom. Now, however, these communications will be experienced as individualized and therefore as less formal in nature.

In this distribution of functions, individualized communications are still reserved for autochthonous vernaculars by force of group custom and the face-to-face norms established among speakers. However, this can break down if individuals see themselves forced to speak together in the official standard because of any other constraints imposed, for example, by the norms of the field in which their interactions take place. The strength of the personal or intra-group language norm can grow weak. If, as in the French case and in particular periods of the Spanish case, even the deliberations of municipal councils and other more or less public institutions have had to make use of the official language, it is not surprising that these situations might evolve toward

code-switching that is not only institutional but also personal, at least between individuals who find themselves in these circumstances. Other factors affecting the relaxation of intragroup language norms include phenomena such as the more or less common presence of allochthonous individuals lacking competence in the language system of the subordinate community. Given these individuals' lack of knowledge of the autochthonous code and their usual membership in the dominant language group of the state—they are normally outside public servants or professionals sent to territories with different languages, without any account being taken of this fact—the resulting norm of language interaction has been for the autochthonous population to adapt to the allochthonous population and not vice versa. In light of this asymmetry of competences and the symbolic superiority of the official language—an evaluation shared by outside interlocutors and frequently also by autochthonous individuals themselves as a result of their status as subordinate and of the representations directed at them by the machinery of the state—any interactions with individuals in these roles, which may include doctors, secretaries and other administrative staff in the city council, pharmacists, lawyers and priests, tend to occur in the only official language. The influence of these people, who are typically of high status in the eyes of subordinate communities, extends so far as to affect the language behaviour of autochthonous individuals among one another when in their presence. This may be to facilitate their understanding of the conversation or it may reflect the social and symbolic asymmetry that exists between the language groups in contact. Whatever the case may be, the minoritized population that most interacts with these social strata tends to speak in the official language. In many cases, given the status of their interlocutors, they may even gain some satisfaction from being able to do so.

Resistance to this macroprocess of modernization seems to have arisen only from those communities able to draw on their economic and cultural strength to make a positive interpretation prevail of their own language varieties and, more broadly, of themselves as a human group. They have succeeded in maintaining a discourse that wrests legitimacy from the situation in which they live. Catalonia, for example, appears to be one of these few cases in which the majority of the autochthonous population has tended to keep its vernacular varieties and, although to a lesser extent and clandestinely, its knowledge of the standard form as well, despite all of the political pressure exerted on it in highly coercive and repressive situations and, perhaps, in part because of this pressure as well. By contrast, however, this did not appear to be the majority tendency in the region of Valencia or even in the Balearic Islands. In spite of significant centres of resistance, they appear to be heading toward a

reality differentiated from the evolution of Catalonia. Their reality may go as far as the abandonment of their autochthonous varieties and the adoption of the Castilian/Spanish standard in individualized communications and in generational transmission, mainly in the cities.¹⁰⁸ Obviously, this requires a definition of reality that would, in the populace's scale of values, put a positive assessment on the abandonment of their vernaculars over and above their maintenance. As we have said, this state of affairs is typical of minority situations, caused either by political subordination or by migration, and it typically involves a very negative assessment of the populace's own varieties or, in any event, as varieties only worthwhile in 'folkloric' terms. They may even come to be considered socially stigmatizing. Given the circumstances, parents take the view that for the good of their children it will be much more advantageous for them to speak the official standard well, not their historical vernaculars, whose social meanings are associated with the past, rural life, and a world in decline. By contrast, the standards tend to represent the future, modernity, the chance for economic survival, and a dynamic and prestigious world with which individuals want to identify themselves. In Valencian, it used to be said quite graphically that "speaking in Valencian is to wear [old-fashioned] espadrilles, while speaking in Spanish is to put on shoes".¹⁰⁹ In the end, an incredibly high number of languages around the globe are disappearing because their own speakers feel shame and embarrassment in the face of the standardizing pressure of the state. It amounts to a crisis of language diversity.

108 In the case of the region of Valencia, Ninyoles (1978: 56) singles out how social mobility and language shift became interrelated phenomena during the second half of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth. "Language change", he wrote, "will constitute the inevitable result of the changes occurring in the social standing of individuals and groups. However, unlike in earlier periods in which the change operated within a single layer of society, it now spreads to several layers: the land-owning oligarchy, the middle classes and the petite bourgeoisie [El canvi d'idioma constituirà el resultat inevitable dels canvis que es produeixen en la posició social d'individus i grups. Ara bé: a diferència d'èpoques anteriors, en què aquell canvi s'operava dins d'un mateix nivell social, ara s'estén a nivells diversos: oligarquia terratinent, classes mitjanes i petita burgesia]". Today, I would also add the urban population more broadly.

109 "Evaluative comparisons with other groups or their individual members can become an important aspect of a person's self-esteem, especially when the person is viewed as marginal by others and (explicitly or implicitly) 'inferior' to them in important respects. The phenomenon is common and can be far-reaching, such as the belief of blacks in their own inferiority with respect to whites" (Tajfel, 1984: 362 and 364). Indeed, according to Merton, "The individual orients his conduct in terms of the approval or rejection of groups to which he does not belong. The reference groups are outside groups that create scales of values for individual action and they constitute the reference system within which the individual evaluates his conduct and the conduct of others" (cited in Dahrendorf, 1975: 49 [free translation from Spanish]).

The key moment in the disappearance of codes comes with the interruption of their native acquisition and use in the next generation. As we have seen in situations of contact through migration, parents who become bilingual in the dominant language will decide to transmit it to their children and not the group's own language. This decision stems from their view that it will be more advantageous for economic survival or for upward mobility or social acceptance. Characteristically, the process sustains a situation in which the generation of parents can still speak to one another in the autochthonous variety, but use the second code—the official, prestigious one—to address their children. The children perfectly internalize the new language, which is typically also the language of instruction in schools, and they establish new social norms of language use that spread as generational replacement occurs. Through contact with their parents' generation, this first generation will already possess the allochthonous code as their L1.¹¹⁰ Yet they will still have the ability to understand the autochthonous code orally, because they have been exposed to its use by their parents' generation. It is even possible that the change may spread asymmetrically from the top to the bottom of the social ladder at the outset, if the extent of intergenerational language shift does not reach most of the population. However, as the substitution behaviour spreads, the new code can become wide-ranging and anyone still with the autochthonous L1 will grow ashamed and embarrassed at using it. They will avoid speaking it, at least in public, particularly with friends and classmates. By this point, an entirely new generation will have largely adopted the new language behaviour through their parents and the initially allochthonous code will become native.¹¹¹

3.3. MIGRATORY PROCESSES

*People learn language for a purpose
and the more purposes there are for a language
the stronger it is and the more attraction
it has for its community.*

WILLIAM F. MACKEY

110 L1 = first language, i.e., the language learnt first in an individual's lifetime.

111 For more on language shift, see also section 3.3. Cf. also Dorian (1980, 1989), and Junyent (1992).

3.3.1. Contact through migration

In addition to the vast phenomenon of language contact produced through the expansion of official standards in the present day, we also find another great and unceasing cause of exposure to language diversity if we look back through history: the migrations of populations. As old as the history of humanity, large-scale movements of groups of people from their traditional territories into areas already inhabited by other groups have frequently led to encounters between different cultures and languages, and the results have varied according to the circumstances. From the disuse and disappearance of the code of the immigrants or the code of the host group to the fusion and the emergence of a new language system constructed out of elements of one or more of the preceding codes, contact through migration generally involves change, for at least one of the groups in contact.¹¹² Today, the displaced group, for example, tends to find a sociocultural habitat that differs from the one it has left. In all likelihood, it will face the necessity of adapting to this environment for economic survival and even for sociopsychological survival, depending on how numerous and how concentrated the displaced population is. However, if the size of the two groups in contact is relatively similar and there are other factors—e.g., political, military, economic, technological, and cultural—that imply a greater degree of overall power for the immigrants, then they may become the ones to absorb the host group and not vice versa. Despite their differences, North and South American cases provide evidence of this. European immigrants have gradually absorbed Native American groups, who have come to adapt socio-

112 In other aspects of culture, it is more common to find processes of fusion and syncretism by the two groups in contact, although perhaps to a different extent. In the case of language, there seems to be a widespread tendency for fusion, leading ultimately to use of only one of the codes in contact, although some elements of the abandoned code may be incorporated, such as words and turns of phrase. For example, in Argentina in the late nineteenth century and early decades of the twentieth century, foreigners represented nearly half of the population in the economically and demographically most important provinces and nearly 70% of the population of the capital. According to scholars, a process of cultural syncretism took place. However, in terms of language, the process resulted in “a convergence toward the use of Spanish as the only language [tuvo su realización en una confluencia hacia el uso del español como única lengua]” (Fontanella, 1978: 30). The emergence of new codes through pidginization and creolization are not unusual either. The code that may prevail in the circumstances can also be affected structurally, although it is not possible here to speak properly of pidginization. Rather, there is the influence of the ‘substrate’, i.e., the influence of specific features of individuals’ first language, as the current sociolinguistic evolution in Catalonia would seem to indicate in the case of the Catalan used by immigrant youths.

culturally to a more or less optimal degree to the organization established by the Europeans in the Native Americans' traditional territory.¹¹³

From a sociolinguistic viewpoint, this type of contact by displacement of populations contains elements that differentiate it from contact by political expansion of the official standard language. In this case, the contact may tend to occur more through individualized channels than through institutionalised channels (at least in the first generation of immigrants). In the most typical cases, the displaced population will need to maintain a large degree of its face-to-face interactions with the host population, if it wishes to survive, at least for the purposes of working, given the economic superiority of the already established population.¹¹⁴ Thus, exposure to the language forms of the autochthonous population will involve a more informal and spontaneous process, rather than a formal, planned one. Many immigrants can come from countries that have not yet undergone a process of widespread literacy. As a result, they have no instruction in writing. Contact is basically oral and in natural situations, with the corresponding consequences on the language repertoires of individuals. These individuals can undergo bilingualization, but it is basically informal and usually imperfect if they are past the optimal age of language acquisition, which is very often the case. The codes that they develop may not tend to be constructed out of standard varieties, but rather out of vernaculars that are present in their immediate context, where they live or work. The greater or lesser extent to which they develop competence in the language system of the host population will depend on the intensity and quality of their contact with

113 New World cases also illustrate a further, later evolution of the process. Established and settled as full owners of the territories to which they have migrated, North and South American societies that are European in origin can, in turn, generate defensive discourses against the languages of new immigrant groups who may be perceived as threats to their achieved stability. A current example in the United States comes in the ideas and actions adopted in defence of English as a response to the influx of Hispanics from the South. Another example comes from Argentina and the defence of Spanish in response to the large-scale migrations of the early twentieth century, particularly from Italy. Fontanella highlights how “in the period of large-scale immigration, the defence of Spanish, ‘the storehouse of the spirit of the race’, served as a common ground for the national ideologues of the country and for the press enlisted in this school of thought [en el período de la inmigración masiva la defensa del español, ‘depósito del espíritu de la raza’, fue un lugar común entre los ideólogos nacionalistas del país y en la prensa enrolada en esa corriente]” (1978: 29).

114 In some cases, contact on economic grounds can be slowed if immigrants organize themselves economically so that only their leaders have frequent contact with the host population, e.g., to gain raw materials and so on, while later arrivals subsist economically by joining the enterprises and businesses of the earlier arrivals. If the size of the displaced population of the same origin is high, a kind of economic and social self-sufficiency can arise, at least to some extent. This can then retard the usual contact with the host population and the host population's language, at least in the first generation.

this host population. At the outset, their length of residence in the new territory will be a factor that can be readily correlated to the level of their knowledge of the new language. Later, however, this variable will have less influence. When the minimum basic necessities of comprehension and expression for survival are met, the language development of many immigrants will seem to stop. This is especially the case with immigrants doing more manual labour that requires less education. At this point, they halt at a level of competence that may change very little for many years to come.¹¹⁵

Note that in the case of contact through political expansion of an official allochthonous language, bilingualization tends to be different: the variety acquired through the institutionalised approach—typically through the educational system—will be the standard, it will have a great impact on writing and it will not reflect the characteristics of the spoken vernaculars. Typical bilingualization brought about strictly by political subordination will be L1 vernacular/L2 standard,¹¹⁶ while bilingualization resulting strictly from immigration will usually be L1 vernacular (+ standard?)/L2 vernacular, generally with little impact on writing or formal styles in the first generation. Likewise, there will be differences in the functions of the codes. In the first case, L2 will tend not to be used in typical social interactions, at least not in the early stages of the process, given the absence of large numbers of speakers of the language. Rather, it will be used fundamentally in written communication and more formal speaking. By contrast, in the second case, L2 will be a variety typically used in social interactions, except in the relations that individual immigrants maintain with members from their home country.

The typical portrait drawn so far corresponds more appropriately to situations of contact between groups in societies where institutionalized communications are not yet developed to a high degree. These types of situations are useful for a clearer analysis of the role of individualized and institutionalized factors. Take many of the present-day situations in Africa characterized by contact among different language groups displaced to cities where compulsory, widespread education is still inefficient and where the number of other

115 In the international bibliography, this phenomenon is known as *fossilization* of a competence, as we said before. Nonetheless, it must affect the level of expression more than it affects the level of comprehension. Although few studies specifically examine this difference in capabilities, it seems likely that the level of comprehension may continue to develop according to the individual's exposure to a language. This is suggested by the case of Spanish-speaking immigrants to Catalonia, where the statistics and studies pointed to much greater progress in understanding Catalan than in expressing themselves in Catalan (cf. Bastardas, 1986).

116 L2 = second language, i.e., the language acquired after development of the first language, L1.

public communications is not very high, e.g., through radio, television, advertising, official forms, and so on. These examples show the important impact of non-formal language development. Populations of diverse language origins that are forced to coexist and interact in a new urban setting must adopt/generate systems of linguistic communication that can enable them to communicate and survive. Language interactions at the informal social level, therefore, are not in any way looked on negatively. Rather, they can have a crucial influence on the outcome of processes of contact. Obviously, to understand sociolinguistic situations, we need to address this dynamic of interrelations between individualized and institutionalized communications or, put another way, between spontaneously regulated and self-organized social life and the life of organizations and formal interventions with political power at the forefront.

I say this because when language contact caused by immigration is studied, the institutionalized dimension has typically been ignored, as though group contact took place at most in the socio-economic sphere, but without the presence or intervention of the political sphere. As noted elsewhere, we have tended to overlook the fact that the relationship between two species, as ecologists note, is not binary, but ternary. There are in reality not merely the two species, but also the environment surrounding their relationship. And this environment can have an extraordinarily significant influence on what happens as a result of contact. Two species in an environment configured in one way can evolve very differently from the same two species in a different environment (see Bastardas, 1993). Indeed, this tradition is the opposite of many studies addressing language policy that have tended to ignore precisely this everyday social level and quite often the socio-economic factors as well. Rather, they have tended to focus almost exclusively on institutionalized communications, as though they were the only ones of importance, as if societies existed without individuals. Taken to an extreme, this 'institutionalist' perspective is unable to explain, for example, situations in which the recorded sociolinguistic outcomes have been contrary to the outcomes sought by the policies actually carried out. As I have said repeatedly, it is my view that the most intelligent and most appropriate approach to the nature of reality must be the one that takes account precisely of the *interrelationships* between the two large blocks of communications or, even better, between the two integrated and inextricable ends of the continuum that is linguistic communication, with these interrelationships constituting precisely one of the great questions that we still do not understand in depth.

Now that the importance of the informal and self-organized social level has been established, we need to say that in many cases, particularly in Europe,

migratory movements have occurred and still occur in the context of societies that are highly organized and institutionalized in the political sphere. Also the public sphere, in general, has a decisive weight in the direction of a large number of social developments. This makes it difficult to analyse the process of migratory contact in Europe while disregarding the political dimension and its effects on the public realms that it controls or on which it exercises more or less direct influence. Given that individual/social minds make holistic interpretations of the reality that they perceive and are influenced globally by all of the dimensions of their existence, the sociocultural sciences must necessarily also assume a comprehensive perspective that includes complexity. For this reason, we move from migratory movements that occur not only in the individualized social realm, but also and at the same time in the institutionalized realm. When a contemporary European moves, he moves to a particular, politically defined country or area of a country where he will find a particular population. He will hold particular cognitive representations of this population, with the corresponding social effects. In the face of an autochthonous population, he will perceive that it is superior, equal or inferior based on biographically constituted mental representations. As a result of the interaction of his cognitive apparatus with the reality of daily existence at the purely social level and at the institutional level, he will make decisions with respect to his courses of action.

Using this overall approach, we can understand the processes of language assimilation that typically occur as a result of contact through migration. As stated earlier, in general, the most common development is the complete adaptation of the immigrant population—or rather, of their descendants—to the host society's system of linguistic communication, coupled with the abandonment of the systems of their place of origin. The typical pattern consists of a cycle of three generations, as suggested by Duncan, Galitzi and others in the United States during the first quarter of the twentieth century.¹¹⁷ Rarely does the first generation develop a completely adequate ability to transmit the language of the host country. Quite frequently, the first generation tends to live with other members of its own group. The second generation is the authentic bridging generation. As their parents are often not comfortable or fluent in the code of the host society, members of the second generation still tend to have the language brought by their parents from the country of origin as an initial language of socialization within the family. However, the institutional and in-

117 Cf. Price (1969) and Bastardas (1985).

formal context to which they are exposed outside of the family will facilitate their development of a native or quasi-native competence in the traditional language system of the new country of their birth. Compulsory education is crucial for members of the second generation to acquire the official standard variety, through the formal speech of their teachers and as they learn to read and write, and the vernacular variety or varieties, which they pick up from autochthonous students in the classroom group. If the influence of the social context outside the family is high, these children may go as far as to speak the language of the host country with their own siblings, even at home, although they will tend to preserve use of the language of origin with their parents (*cf.* Johnston, 1969).¹¹⁸ Members of the second generation will be on an equal footing with natives in terms of language. Also, unlike their parents, they will not have moved physically from another territory. As a result, they tend to mix socially much more with the autochthonous population and typically show a higher index of linguistically mixed marriages. Economically, they will get jobs that are not purely manual and they will compete against individuals in the host group, achieving upward mobility, particularly when economic conditions are favourable. As a result, they will unavoidably need to use the language of the host society. The third generation generally presents a language and cultural education that is very close or identical to the education received by the host society. Most members of the third generation may no longer have their own group's native language as a first language of family socialization owing to the fact that many second-generation members will already have chosen to speak the host society's language with their children, particularly in the case of mixed marriages. In any event, each member of the third generation will be perfectly competent in the host code and they will have few reasons to know or use the group's native language, given the lack of frequent contact with the original country of the group and the practical uselessness of the code in the society where they now reside. The degree of intermarriage will rise and probably spread more widely, erasing all the most distinctive cultural traits of the first-generation immigrants.

This typical pattern can be affected by several factors present to a varying extent depending on the case, e.g., the number of immigrants and their degree of dispersion or concentration. If the immigrant group is greater in number,

118 In some cases, such as Norwegians in the US in the early twentieth century, the pressure from the social context can lead the children to use the language of the host community even with their own parents, despite their parents speaking to them in the language of their place of origin (*cf.* Haugen, 1953).

there will be more chances for intragroup relations and, therefore, a reduction in intergroup exposure. If the residential distribution tends to concentrate newcomers in specific areas instead of dispersing them among the host population, there will tend to be less contact with the autochthonous population, with the consequent social and linguistic repercussions: ignorance about the host population, a lack of stable, satisfactory relations with the host population, less development of language competences, and so forth. Similarly, a variable such as the structure of the immigrants' language can affect the speed or slowness of the change of first language across the generations of the immigrant group. Indeed, the degree of structural similarity or difference can influence the speed with which the host language is adopted as early as the first generation. If the languages in contact are similar, the ease of acquisition increases and the process could proceed faster than usual.¹¹⁹ As we shall see, another typology that is also different from the indicated process is made up of what Kloss calls 'speech-area immigrants'; that is, ones involving intrastate rather than interstate migrations, particularly when the people who have moved to a different language area belong culturally to the linguistically dominant group in the state in question, as in the Catalan experience (1971: 252).

3.3.2. The adaptation of the first generation

Examined in greater detail, the process of linguistic assimilation differs for each generation. Normally, the first generation of immigrants goes through the hardest experience. Living in a different cultural area, they must face the difficulties of living in a society that differs from the one in which they underwent

119 This is explicitly indicated by Fontanella (1978) in the Argentine case: "The linguistic proximity of Spanish and Italian favoured a gradual comprehension of Spanish by the Italian immigrants after brief residence in the country and it facilitated relatively fast learning of Spanish so that they could communicate readily with Spanish speakers [La proximidad lingüística entre el español y el italiano [...] favoreció una gradual comprensión del español por los inmigrantes italianos a poco de vivir en el país y les facilitó un aprendizaje relativamente rápido del español que les permitió comunicarse con cierta facilidad con los hispanohablantes]" (p. 15). By contrast, "the distance between Spanish and the vernacular spoken by Russo-Germans—a variety of High German—[...] doubtless favoured a clear maintenance of the boundaries of both languages that hampered a gradual movement from one to the other by means of a transitional form like the 'cocoliche', as in the case of the Italians [la distancia existente entre el español y el vernacular hablado por los ruso-alemanes —una variedad del alto alemán— [...] favoreció, sin duda, un claro mantenimiento de los límites de ambas lenguas que impidió un paso gradual de una a otra a través de una forma de transición como el 'cocoliche', como en el caso de los italianos]" (p. 21).

their primary and secondary socialization. As minds produced in another sociocultural ecosystem, their linguistic-cognitive equipment is not suitable for survival in the host society. From a strictly linguistic viewpoint, they must undertake a process of resocialization in a biopsychological period that is often not optimal, except in the case of children who arrive with their parents. In this case, the children follow a process similar to members of the second generation. In addition to all the other difficulties of the initial adult immigration experience, such as fully solving the struggle for daily survival, finding more or less stable economic means, and forging new networks of friends and social recognition, the immigrant who goes to another language area will generally confront a lack of mutual understanding, which complicates the challenges noted above for a considerable length of time, but especially during the earlier periods after arrival.

Understanding others and making oneself understood in an unknown society and in the face of uncertainty in every area of life is neither an easy nor a pleasant experience for anybody. For this reason, the immigrant seeks out the help and company of other individuals from the same group, particularly those who may already have established themselves in the new country and have a greater knowledge of the language, the customs and the ways to achieve stability, even if it is only a relative stability at the time. If the immigrant makes the journey with a family including children, the immigrant experience can be even more difficult, because the needs that must be satisfied are greater and the accompanying tension, likewise, is also greater. As a result, in many cases, an immigrant moves to a new country alone in order to find work and explore the situation before bringing the rest of the family. Nonetheless, leaving one's nearest and dearest behind and coming to a new country alone is not a very satisfactory solution in sociopsychological terms, even if it is often the only solution possible in these cases.

The early need for intragroup relations becomes less exclusive as the immigrant gains familiarity with the systems of linguistic communication and social organization characteristic of the area in which he has come to live. Right from the outset, like it or not, the newcomer will be exposed to the flow of public communications typical of contemporary developed societies. Television, signs and signage, advertising, radio, special courses (in some countries): each will bring the immigrant into contact with the language of the host society. Gradually, the newcomer develops comprehension through a series of concentric approximations that are generally quite chaotic. Then, as he receives more contextualised exposure, i.e., with clearer visual or sensory references, he will become better able to make headway in deciphering the significant

conventions of the autochthonous society and transfer this ability to the area of expression.¹²⁰ Sooner or later, depending on the degree of self-sufficiency of the endogroup's economic organization, the displaced individual will come into contact with individual members of the host society, although this contact may be partial and only during certain periods of the workday, given that the immigrant will generally prefer to interact within his own group when there is a choice. In general, such contact occurs in the context of the need for economic survival. For example, it may take place through increasingly regular or more frequent face-to-face relations of an intergroup nature, either with work colleagues or with people for whom some service is provided.

Not merely the quantity, but also the quality of these relations can be an important factor. For example, while the quantity of exposure encourages the development of comprehension and the frequency of interactions encourages expression, the overall satisfaction or dissatisfaction of intergroup relations will have an influence on the representations constructed by the individual immigrant about the host group. As a result, it will affect his future ethnolinguistic behaviours. The individual immigrant's overall existential experience plays a part in defining his attitudes about the host society and the features of its culture. The cognitive and affective relationship established by the immigrant with the language code of the autochthonous society and with this society itself taken as a group will be hugely influenced by the outcomes of intergroup interactions. If the immigrant encounters constant hostility and antipathy from the host population, it is not at all unusual that the initial positive expectation that drew the immigrant to the host country will turn into a negative, contrary attitude toward both the autochthonous society and its culture. If, in addition, the economic situation makes the integration of new individuals into the workforce difficult—a fact that unavoidably tends to have a greater effect on populations with less education who are not yet integrated into the society's economic system—the assessment of the immigrant experience can turn to

120 Although the current prevailing language theory envisages little or none of this, we need to bear in mind the intrinsic diversity of language competences, their partial mutual independence and the differences in their conditions of production. While oral comprehension basically requires sufficiently contextualised and regular exposure to assist in discovering the system of relations between forms and meanings, written comprehension additionally requires knowledge of the graphical conventions and of the forms absent from common speech that are used solely or preferably only in formal writing. In addition, the abilities developed in relation to comprehension are not directly transferable to the productive abilities—speaking and writing—but rather require a long and often costly exercise in real communication, with results that are hardly optimal in comparison to natives, if the practice has not already begun in an individual's infancy or, at the latest, during childhood.

frustration and become highly negative, leading to marginal and aggressive conduct.¹²¹

Frequently, immigration is undertaken largely by adults who are young and not yet married. Unlike their married counterparts who may or may not have children, they face the additional challenge of finding a partner. In the context of intergroup contact, both quantitative and qualitative factors affect their selection of a future spouse. If the immigrant group is smaller in number, more will be forced to find partners belonging to the host group or sometimes, in large contemporary urban centres, belonging to other immigrant groups with different languages and cultures.¹²² By contrast, if the immigrant group is larger in number, the chances of endogamy rise. At the same time, however, the quantitative factors can be influenced by qualitative factors. Depending on the mutual representations of each of the groups in contact, partnerships between individuals of different origins—i.e., autochthonous and immigrant—can be looked on more or less positively in social terms by the two groups. Where there is tension and hostility or simply a degree of cultural difference, the number of mixed marriages will tend to be less than if intergroup relations are more accepted or, in any case, not directly rejected by either of the two groups or between groups with similar cultures.¹²³

In first-generation endogamic couples, i.e., between members of the same immigrant group, the family language tends to follow the language of the group, because this will be the one still used more fluently and naturally by the displaced individuals. In all likelihood, it will also be the one used within the couple before their constitution of a family through, as noted earlier, their networks of intragroup relations. This language will also become the first language in the socialization of their children, who will later undergo a process of

121 Large-scale contemporary migrations to urban centres can become an important factor in disrupting the stability or at least the relative homogeneity of the host society, even in the long term. Continual growth in the number of immigrants of a given group, the ease with which oral, written and visual communication can be transmitted through technology, the speed of transport, etc., can become factors that encourage immigrants to maintain their culture for longer periods than has been common historically.

122 For more information on the Canadian case, see Lieberman (1970).

123 The Argentine case illustrates the influence of cultural distance: “The relative cultural difference of the Germans from the native population and from the two largest immigrant groups, the Italians and the Spanish [...] fostered an attitude of cultural preservation and stood in the way of mixed marriages in earlier generations [La relativa diferencia cultural de los alemanes tanto con la población nativa como con los dos grupos inmigratorios mayoritarios, italianos y españoles, [...] facilitó una actitud de preservamiento cultural y dificultó la existencia de matrimonios mixtos en las primeras generaciones]” (Fontanella, 1978: 23).

'external' bilingualization that tends to reduce the functions of the immigrant language and gradually increase the functions of the host society's language. In many cases, as we shall see, the latter may even become the code most commonly used by the second generation.

In the case of exogamic couples, i.e., between individuals of different groups, the predicted language behaviour is not so clear. It will depend on the personal and contextual circumstances of the individuals. The most general case, however, is for the couple to speak together in the language of the host group. This will usually be the code most shared by the two partners, because the autochthonous partner is not likely to know the language of the immigrant partner, while the latter will already have developed knowledge of the language of the autochthonous group, even if it is only imperfect knowledge. However, in circumstances in which the autochthonous individual has a good knowledge of the immigrant's language, the couple may tend to speak to one another in this language, given the immigrant's likely lack of fluency in the code of the host group. However, in this case, should the immigrant also have developed fluent expression in the autochthonous language, the outcome again becomes uncertain. Instead, it will depend largely on the sociodemographic context of the individuals and/or of their ethnolinguistic representations and ideologies. If the individuals live in an area where there is a clear predominance of one of the two groups, it is likely that they will use this language, because it will be the common language of social relations there. Even so, however, particular assessments of the languages in contact may alter this result, for example, if one of the languages is clearly held to possess greater general social prestige, ethnic identification or communicative power than the other. The issue grows even more complicated if these parameters collide with one another, i.e., if one enjoys a positive assessment from the viewpoint of ethnic identity, but the other is seen to have greater general social prestige. Nor can disagreement between the spouses be ruled out. They may push for different languages to communicate with one another. Although this subject is typically resolved before marriage, it can nevertheless resurface when it comes to speaking with their children. The initial language of the two individuals' relationship will be crucial because it tends to define the languages of the relation within the family in a quasi-automatic manner, at least between the partners. This happens as a result of the phenomenon by which inter-individual norms persist. Although it is not impossible, a change of language between individuals who have had a regular and frequent relationship tends to be difficult. It can cause discomfort and awkwardness for the interlocutors. Consequently, it is rejected more often than it is accepted, unless the social circum-

stances make such a change a pressing or highly advisable matter (e.g., a social or work network extremely aware of a given language option, ideological conversion, etc.). Whatever the case may be, however, individuals in the first generation who did not arrive as babies or very young still tend to come together with individuals of the same language group, if the circumstances are propitious, rather than with members of the host group.

3.3.3. Second generation

However, the very sociocultural context in which the parents live, as first-generation immigrants, can also give rise to quite different results, if the people who are exposed to this context are not adults but rather individuals at the bio-psycho-cognitive stage of primary socialization. In these conditions, an adult immigrant may only partially and imperfectly develop oral expression, for example, in the corresponding variety of the host country, while any children may achieve a competence that is practically the same or very similar to the competence acquired by autochthonous individuals of the same generation. In the context of their best properties of brain/mind development (*cf.* 2.1), if members of the second generation are exposed to a social context marked by sufficient participation of young children of autochthonous origin, they will grow up with an index of productive and receptive competences in the language of the host group that is hugely superior to the first generation. In frequent face-to-face context with autochthonous children, the children of immigrant parents will, by social osmosis, develop the system of linguistic communication used by their host counterparts, particularly if they are numerically in the minority in the pertinent social spheres. They will gain a comprehension of the language variety or varieties used in frequent and regular social interactions whether or not the communication is directly aimed at them. This will occur either consciously or unconsciously. It will occur naturally and involve the inference of meaning from the conveniently contextualized production of language. By contrast, the development of expression will depend on the real use of the language in interactions with other young children and also with adults. Such use or non-use will be determined by factors such as the demolinguistic composition of the domains of personal relation, the institutionalized communications that may occur there, the image developed by individuals, and the norms of use appropriate to the various situations in which they find themselves.

The demolinguistic composition of the social spheres in which they participate—e.g., the neighbourhood, the school, groups of friends, and extracur-

ricular activities—can have a large influence on the determination of which language behaviours occur in these places. If the ratio of individuals in the two groups is highly asymmetrical in a particular area, the tendency will be to use the language variety of the most numerous group if no other factor is involved, particularly if it is a social sphere where the encounter is long-term and regular, such as a classroom group at school. However, this tendency can be altered by the force of higher demolinguistic spheres and by institutionalized communications. If the demolinguistic imbalance occurring in one sphere is not reproduced in other spheres as well, the tendency to use the language of the largest group in a given situation can be diminished by the reverse situation, for example, which may arise in other areas. If, however, the imbalance is also common in the street, in leisure centres and so on, the tendency to use the language of the group that turns out to be larger in the resulting social communication will be strong. However, if the immigrant group is marked by a strong concentration in its residential distribution, it is highly likely, at least to some extent, that individuals in the second generation will use their first language, the language learned in the household, among themselves and even in other spheres, particularly in non-general communicative situations and when the interlocutors are all or nearly all of the same immigrant origin. However, if the pressure of the social domains in which they participate is strong and especially if the use of the immigrants' language in public is not generally looked on as socially positive, the use of the host code can become customary even within the group, among second-generation individuals, as a result of their mixing with their peers in the host group. By contrast, if the number of immigrants is very high and they live in partial or total separation from the autochthonous society, the natural and spontaneous language influence of social interaction will be much less great. At an extreme, it may even drop to zero, so that the second generation linguistically reproduces a complete image of the first generation. And in spite of some obvious cultural changes, they may even constitute a new 'first generation' from the viewpoint of language, even though they have been born in the territory of the host society. The bilingualization of these individuals, in any event, would have to wait until adolescence, when they leave their tight-knit neighbourhood and interact more with autochthonous individuals of the same age, and/or when they enter the workforce, which in many cases can force them into contact with the autochthonous population, with whom they will typically have no chance to relate on a regular and fluent basis in the language of the immigrant group, because the host group will not know it.

This extreme situation of second-generation immigrants having a complete or considerable lack of knowledge of a host society's language code tends to be

unusual and highly exceptional in Western countries, because institutionalized communications typically extend their influence to the entire society. For example, the fully consolidated implementation of mandatory general education for all children in the country, as seen clearly in early sections of this book, represents exposure to an institutionally planned and organized language input capable of producing in individuals the development of other language competences, behaviours and representations that do not stem directly from their spontaneous and 'natural' social relations with one another. While, in normal cases closer to the standard variety, the progress of the autochthonous population through the educational system simply represents its acquisition of the language capabilities needed for writing and for formal speaking, school can represent, for immigrant children, the development of their general language capability in a code different from the one they normally use at home, particularly in the early years of schooling and in cases where they have little previous exposure to the autochthonous code. Indeed, in situations of high immigrant concentration and separation, the language used by teachers will be one of the few effective vehicles for the bilingualization of members of the second generation at their optimal biopsychological age and before they enter society in general and the workforce in particular. Although language interaction will be rather more formal and with interlocutors who occupy roles that are seen as higher in nature, language development will not cease to occur or to equip the individual with the ability to use the language in any functions deemed appropriate. Indeed, in more permanent situations of face-to-face contact, the language variety normally used in institutionalized communications can also exert a significant influence when deciding the language norms among the different interlocutors. Attenuating or reinforcing the influence of demolinguistic composition, the language of institutionalized communications, which is typically the official language of the territory or society to which the immigrants have moved, will have a clear impact on intergroup communication. Given the presence and wide reach of institutionalized communications, the usual tendency will be to expose the second generation regularly to the host code, even in the sphere of the family, for example, through television and other audiovisual media. With progress through school, bilingualization in the host language becomes unavoidable. It will play a determinant role in any encounter between an individual of group *X*, who will typically know only *X*, and an individual of group *Y*, who will know *Y* and *X* in general terms. Naturally, any interaction between *X* and *Y* will take place in the code shared more by the two of them, i.e., in *X*, the code of the host group. Even if the habitual composition of the social spheres of immigrants, for example, leans heavily toward immi-

grants, the fact that any teachers, monitors and others in charge use only the host language in relevant activities and the fact that this language is the only one present in other institutionalized communications—e.g., television, video, music, wide-circulation periodical publications, posters, signs and signage—can cause the interactions between individuals of the two groups to take place clearly in the code of the host group, the only code widely known and used by the recipient society.¹²⁴

This does not mean that the code of the immigrant group is left without any function in this second generation. The children of immigrants can continue to use the group's original code habitually with their parents when the parents are both of the same origin and with other adults in the wider intragroup network more generally. Except in the case of immigrants who are highly isolated from other individuals of the same origin, members of the second-generation also tend to use their own language variety not only within the family but also with their friends of the same origin, where they acknowledge being members of the same cultural group, particularly in clearly intragroup situations. This is the reason why, for the phenomenon of 'bilingualism', the second generation is usually studied. However, it is necessary to bear in mind that this so-called 'bilingualism' is, as we have seen, asymmetric and unequal, much as occurs in the typical case of populations bilingualized through political subordination in their own historical territory. Given the distribution of social functions among the languages in contact and the overall sociocultural ecosystem in which this distribution takes place, second-generation immi-

124 Institutionalized and individualized communications are closely interrelated, as Fontanella (1978) clearly shows in the Argentine case: "The state's effort was translated above all into the educational aspect through the enforcement of Spanish as the sole language of the country [...] and this had its effective outcome in the mass literacy of the population and in the learning of Spanish in the case of speakers who did not have Spanish as their mother tongue. In addition, beyond the mere school learning of Spanish, the contact between children of native households and households of various immigrant groups—along with other factors, such as life in the 'conventillo' or tenement block—led to the formation of bonds of friendship between the children in these relations, which certainly had a striking impact on the linguistic and cultural assimilation of the various immigrant groups [El esfuerzo estatal traducido, sobre todo, en el aspecto educacional por imponer el español como única lengua del país [...] tuvo su efectivo resultado en la alfabetización masiva de la población y en el aprendizaje del español en el caso de los hablantes que no lo tenían como lengua materna. Por otra parte, más allá del mero aprendizaje escolar del español que la enseñanza posibilitó, el contacto escolar entre los niños procedentes de hogares nativos y de distintos grupos inmigratorios —junto con otros factores, como la vida en el 'conventillo' o casa de vecindad— dio lugar a la formación de lazos de amistad entre los mismos y determinó el uso exclusivo del español en estas relaciones, incidiendo sin duda marcadamente en la asimilación lingüística y cultural de los distintos grupos migratorios]" (p. 28 and 10). See also Lieberson (1981) for the US case.

grants generally attain a more complete knowledge of their second language than of their first, named as such in keeping with the order of acquisition. They will rarely have a formal and reflexive knowledge of their first code, unless they set out to procure it or their host country facilitates its acquisition, which does not often happen. They will master only the vernacular variety spoken by their parents and other members of their group. On the other hand, they will gain knowledge of the standard variety of the second language, both spoken and written, and of the vernacular varieties with which they come into contact. Functionally and stylistically, they generally attain an ability to communicate better in the language of their host society than in the language of their parents. In this context, the immigrant code will inevitably begin to present interferences coming from the host code, first in lexis or fixed constructions and later in morphology and syntax. Phonetically, the impact of the host code may be less great, at least in this generation, even though it can also register certain influences, which are, however, not yet phonological in nature. Amid the need to express an entire new set of elements arising out of industrial society that may not have been present in its society of origin, the immigrant group will tend not to coin new words in their own language, but rather adopt words already in use in the host society. Over time, constant contact will lead immigrants and their descendants to adopt ways of speaking and constructions previously only part of the host language. These new ways of speaking and new constructions will come to be seen and lived as usual and fully their own. Likewise, words and expressions may be created out of mixed elements of the two codes.

One of the other phenomena typically attributed to second-generation immigrants is so-called 'code-switching'. Given the interpenetration of the immigrant group with the host group, the bilingualization to which the second generation is quickly subjected, and the preservation of intragroup social networks, it is not unusual for one and the same individual, for example, to alternate use of his codes according to function, person, subject, place, situation, and so forth. For example, a second-generation immigrant who has to write to a public body in the place where he resides will need to do so in the code of the host society. If he must attend a class or lecture or he must speak to a group whose composition is mixed, he will need to do so in the autochthonous code, although this might change if everyone present turns out to share the same origins. If he must speak with anyone who is not a member of the same ethnic group, he will also need to do so in the host code, which can however be alternated with the code of his group of origin if the interlocutor changes and he is now addressing an individual originally from the same place. Equally, second-

generation individuals often come to switch their use of the two codes in contact even among themselves, in a variety of circumstances. One very common situation entails two interlocutors of immigrant origin who are speaking to each other in their own code and then must change because an autochthonous individual joins their conversation and does not typically understand the immigrant code. Similarly, code-switching can occur among immigrants, given that they can choose which code to use at least orally, simply because of the presence of an autochthonous interlocutor, who may not be about to join the conversation but may be listening and can view the use of the immigrant code negatively, giving rise to expectations of possible repercussions against the allochthonous individuals. It can equally be the case that they have an informal conversation in *Y* but switch to speaking in *X* when the subject matter becomes more formal and they need terminology and suitable turns of phrase only provided to them by the host code. On conclusion of the subject, they may move to another sequence categorised as more informal and/or personal, so that the intragroup code is again used. Quite often, in these cases, individuals have come to assume perfectly well when to speak with the other code, which has been received through the institutionalized route. In all likelihood, these situations pose the phenomena of interference and code-switching together, and adequately disentangling them can be hard.

On many occasions, the codes in contact can acquire different representations and assessments by the second generation, particularly if its social relations still have a high degree of intragroup social relations. The code that receives most use in functions and situations relating to personal and private life can be associated with family values and solidarity, while the other code, the language of the host society, can be the code of public life for them, and social advancement and upward economic mobility. However, it is often the case for immigrants who have successful friendships and acquaintances with autochthonous people, e.g., in the neighbourhood, school or workforce, that the host autochthonous code can also become associated with these values and the initially radical distinction between the categories ceases to apply. Most probably, the quantity and quality of the second generation's intergroup relations will have an extremely important impact on the third generation. When they reach marriageable age, second-generation individuals will have to establish relations of a conjugal type and decide what language to speak with their children, the third generation of immigrant origin. This is the crucial moment in the retention or disappearance of the language used by the displaced group within the host society.

Given their opportunity to use two oral codes fluently, which their parents could not do, second-generation immigrants must decide which of the two

languages to use when addressing their spouse, if also of the same origin, and later when addressing their children. In the first situation, both the ability to use the language of the host society at a practically native level and complete socialization within this new context hugely facilitate the possibility of intergroup marriages. Without a doubt, couples of mixed language origin will use the host code, given the obvious lack of competence of the autochthonous partner in the immigrant code. Commonly, the host code will also be the only first language of the children, because it is more likely that the parent who is a second-generation immigrant has no interest in his children also having their code as a primary language of socialization. If he does have such an interest—and this can sometimes occur—any possible opposition from the autochthonous partner will have to be overcome, particularly if this partner does not understand the immigrant code. In any event, and despite exceptions, it appears common for the codes used within the family to be understood, if not also spoken, by every member of the unit, and particularly by the two spouses, given that in the case of the children, they will acquire the corresponding knowledge within the family itself, if the codes are regularly used in any of the common directions of interpersonal communication. If the vast majority of second-generation immigrants opt for exogamic unions, the third generation will generally have a receptive, only partial knowledge, if any, of the code of their ancestors, resulting from any exposure that they may still have through conversations held in this code by their parents with their grandparents or friends and acquaintances with whom they still preserve use of the language of origin. However, these opportunities are limited by the presence of an autochthonous parent who, if unable to understand the immigrant language, will influence the interactions of the immigrant group, which will, in his presence, tend to take place in the host language, given the immigrants' likely mastery of the language of the host society, even though this mastery may well be imperfect in the members of the first generation. In all likelihood, third-generation immigrants who are children of mixed marriages will tend to be practically monolingual in the host language, but will, in some cases, also have a certain knowledge of the immigrant code, albeit only at a receptive level.

In the case of intragroup or endogamic couples, the situation can be more varied, although the tendency is very often similar to the case of mixed marriages. One of the clearest differences lies in the language used between the partners. While the general tendency in mixed marriages is that they use the host code in inter-partner communication, there are two options for immigrant couples. They may use the immigrant code or they may use the host code. If the immigrant group is clearly oriented toward assimilation with the host so-

ciety and there are no other outstanding cultural or religious differences and the group is not segregated, it is likely that the adolescents and young people of immigrant origin living among the autochthonous population may already have grown accustomed to using the host code among themselves and have adopted it as an interpersonal norm. In this case, many pairings between second-generation immigrants may already speak to each other in the host code, although they use the immigrant code to speak with their parents and other adults. In these families, there is also a clear tendency to choose the host language as the language to speak with any children, given the abandonment of the immigrant language by the two partners of immigrant origin. The immigrant code will be seen as a code of the past, while the host code will be associated with the future and, therefore, seen naturally as the appropriate first language of the children. In family units in which, by contrast, the two partners have got to know one another in the language of origin—given that their social networks tend to be intragroup in nature, either because of the number or density of individuals of this origin or because there are cultural and especially religious differences that are very hard to abandon—the code used between the partners will tend to be the immigrant code, including any transcode interferences and switching that have been incorporated in the organization of intragroup linguistic communication in the new country. The situation can continue like this until children are born. Their arrival, however, can lead to a review of the family's internal language organization. With the presence of newborn members of the family unit, a decision is necessary regarding the language spoken with them. Most commonly, a large number of partners who are second-generation immigrants will choose to address their children in the language of the host society, which they will consider more suitable for their children's schooling and socio-economic advancement. Many parents will take the view that the best solution is for them to speak with their children in the language that they themselves have learnt second, the language that has now become the most comfortable and most fully mastered one. They come to this view bearing in mind their memories of group differentiation and of the hardships encountered in their own development of the host code. Likewise, they do so in light of any unfavourable future expectations of the usefulness of the immigrant code within the host society. Once they have overcome any possible identity-related obstacles in relation to the socio-affective associations of their home code, in light of the fact that the intergenerational language norm favourable to the host code tends already to be a behaviour with a numerous following, the parents will speak to their children in the code of the autochthonous society, despite their decision to keep using the language of origin with

each other—a common occurrence.¹²⁵ As a result, there are households in which languages are used in function of the interlocutor. While the partners use *Y* with each other, they will use *X* with their children. The children will use *X* with their parents and with each other, although they understand *Y* as a matter of habit because it is used at home between their parents. However, they will not have language *Y* as a native language. Rather, in the interfered and modified form used by their parents, *Y* will be developed for comprehension as a second language and it will only rarely be developed for expression as well.¹²⁶ However, if the immigrant group has differentiated cultural and religious characteristics and it can succeed in becoming demoeconomically self-sufficient, many second-generation couples may still choose to speak to their children in their first language, in the belief that this is the only way for their children to obtain knowledge of the group code so that it can still be appreciated and valued and seen as a distinctive sign shaping their specific collective identity.¹²⁷ While these family units will see equally clearly that their children must perfectly master the language of the host society—with help through the relevant institutional channels and through natural social contact with the autochthonous society¹²⁸—they will transmit the code of origin to their children as a first language, even though their children may soon come into contact with the code of the host society. This will then lead to reproduction of the situation and process followed by the second generation itself again in the third generation. It may occur in exactly the same way, but it will be characterised broadly by one language for family and intragroup use and another for public use,

125 In some cases, the partners can even decide to alter their own interpersonal norm to accommodate the overall family language use at the arrival of children. The strength of the already established norm, however, can mitigate against this change, which will have to be highly conscious and very much wanted by the pair, if it is to work effectively in practice.

126 This is the typical situation, for example, that Campbell (1980) describes in the case of Italians in Australia: “The children of first generation migrants, the second generation, speak Italian only with their parents and with older first generation migrants, virtually never among themselves, so that in turn their children, the third generation, rarely hear Italian” (p. 6).

127 As noted earlier, it is necessary to recall here that the causes of bilingualization and of language maintenance/shift do not need to concur exactly. Theoretically at least, it is perfectly possible to have a case of bilingualization in each generation of immigrants and at the same time find intergenerational retention of the immigrant language as the first code of the children.

128 In general, among immigrants, it does not appear to be very common for each partner to address the children in a different language in order to ensure the development of the two codes, although clearly this could happen. This tends to occur in family units with partners of mixed origin and/or advanced education. Having knowledge of two languages, they consciously give their children competence in both languages, which each have demonstrated usefulness for communication at a national and/or international level.

formal and intergroup in nature. In specific, highly isolated groups mindful of their difference, this phenomenon can even reach the fourth generation or go on indefinitely into the future, if the conditions and representations of the situation are not modified with the passage of time (see, for example, the Amish communities in the United States).

3.3.4. Third generation

In spite of this diversity of possible outcomes, which quite often occur within a single immigrant group, the third generation will generally tend to have lost numbers through mixed marriage or through endogamic pairings that have decided not to use the immigrant language with their children. This means that quite often even in groups that are most resistant to intergenerational language shift, the loss of demographic weight, the geographic distance from the home country, and the critical reconsideration of certain cultural or religious assumptions that underpin differentiation of the host society by coming generations of the immigrant group, can lead them to abandon the use of their code and adopt the host language for all of their functions until the group is fully integrated into the autochthonous society. As a result, the vast majority of the third generation in the typical evolutionary pattern will tend to speak together internally in the language of the host country, given the presence in the immigrant group of individuals who will not understand or very poorly understand the language of the country of their grandparents, forcing any remaining actively bilingual members of the group to abandon the group code even in relations and events that enjoy participation of a purely immigrant population.¹²⁹ Even if the general sociocultural conditions encourage the ongoing use of the home code, this dynamic will recur in a similar way in each successive generation until total fusion with the host society occurs in the vast majority of cases. This does not necessarily mean that the collective must completely lose its historical memory of its own origins or other cultural forms, which may continue to be relevant in areas such as food, some forms of social relation, rites and ceremonies, and even in the area of language, as illustrated by the Jewish case, where the code has become exclusively bound up with the religious sphere.

¹²⁹ This has been the case, for example, in the United States: “Bilingualism usually disappears when the core of monolinguals who made its existence necessary has been dissipated” (Haugen, 1953: 7).

3.3.5. The migrations of linguistically dominant groups

Obviously, not all migrations have ended or are ending in the linguistic fusion of the displaced group in the host society. While this is so in the vast majority of cases, a glimpse at history and at today's situation shows migrations that not only have failed to end in fusion with the host society and the clear adoption of the host society's code as *a*—and eventually *the only*—customary language of social relation, but rather have produced or contributed to producing exactly the opposite phenomenon, i.e., the assimilation of the host society to the language of the displaced population. Without going into the cases that have simply been an armed territorial invasion accompanied by a policy of repopulation and displacement of the conquered group, the phenomenon of reverse assimilation can often occur in situations that Heinz Kloss (1971), as we said, accurately called cases of 'speech-area immigrants', i.e., of displacements produced between different language groups that, nonetheless, belong to a single state, particularly movements from the territory of the dominant and larger national language group into territories of societies typically characterised, in relative terms, as 'minority' societies. In situations of this kind, well-established and well-organized societies that were quite linguistically normal—as illustrated perfectly by the case of Wales—can be culturally overrun by large numbers of incoming migrants belonging to the predominant language group of the state. Through a dynamic of interrelation with the institutionalized communications, this can lead demographically smaller communities into a process of language shift, with a clear tendency toward the absolute loss of all functions of the autochthonous code able to assure its normal reproduction.

To gain an adequate understanding of this type of collective abandonment of a language by the host group in the face of linguistically dominant immigration, we need to start crucially with the organic structure of the state and the degree of control exercised by the demographically larger group over the political institutions. In all likelihood, the results of migrations between language areas that are co-participants in a single state will tend to be different if the state is organized linguistically on the basis of the principle of equality between the different languages—safeguarding an ecosystem for each group to enable its stability—or, to the contrary, on the basis of granting all the official and public functions only to the code of the demographically biggest group. All other variables being equal, the linguistic result of contact through migration will differ enormously if the portion of the majority population in the state that moves does so in an officially multilingual state and it moves into an area in which the official and publicly preeminent language is the autochthonous lan-

guage, in comparison to when this majority group moves into an area where the only code used in institutionalized communications is the standard of the migrant group, that is, their own language is generally the sole language allowed in official contexts. In the first case, the most likely evolution is at least toward an effective and widespread bilingualization in the public code of the corresponding area by the incoming populace, which may decide to retain or abandon its language of origin from generation to generation depending on the factors at play. In the second case, by contrast, the development of capabilities and use of the territorially autochthonous language will not tend to be widespread or even extensive among the group of linguistically dominant immigrants, because this language is not spread through the educational system and its acquisition will have to depend solely on exposure through the informal interactions of the autochthonous population, particularly interactions in which the immigrants themselves are not directly taking part, since their participation will lead the autochthonous population to use their language, given the mastery of the autochthonous population arising out of the general influence of institutionalized communications.¹³⁰

Clearly, processes of contact through migration involving the assimilation of the host group by the immigrant group tend to occur in situations characterized by an asymmetry of political power between the two groups in contact, except in cases where there is a huge demographic imbalance. In the case of speech-area migrations, the typical situation is one of a migration of the group wielding power in state institutions when the state is centralized and has declared the language of the dominant group to be the only official language in the entire territory under its sovereignty, even in areas where it is not customarily used by the autochthonous population. In this context, the host population will have developed speaking and writing competences in the language declared official by the government of the state, thanks to compulsory education and the institutionalized communications of the state. Indeed, this language will be the only language in which the entire population will have learnt how to read and write. When face-to-face contacts occur with the population of the state's dominant language group, therefore, this group will encounter a population that has already become bilingual—even asymmetrically against

130 The simple presence of foreign persons can, in some cases, lead autochthonous individuals to use only the allochthonous language. This occurs in situations described by Gal (1979) with Hungarian speakers, and by Gumperz (1985) with speakers of Slovene, among monolingual German speakers in both cases. This behaviour has not been unusual in the Catalan language area, particularly among particular social groups residing in the large cities.

their own autochthonous language—and is able to use the code of the immigrant population. This is precisely a situation that is extremely unusual to find in migrations to other countries—unless they are different states that nonetheless have the same official language. If the host group knows the language of the immigrant group and the immigrant group does not know the host group's language, the asymmetry in their competences at the time of contact will be one of the key factors that play in favour of establishing a language norm for intergroup relation that is the immigrant code—which will also be the code of institutionalized communications because of the existing regulation of public, official communication.

Frequent contact between the host and immigrant populations will cause the former to attain even more competence in the language of the latter. It will also enable them to learn colloquial forms and engage in informal conversations that they might not have had in school. As the host population gains competence in the different registers and grows more comfortable in the use of the immigrant language, it will also see a decline in the opportunities and motivations of the immigrant group to develop sufficient competence in the autochthonous language. Even in the absence of an ideology of superiority on behalf of the linguistically dominant immigrant group,¹³¹ the structure of the situation itself will tend to hinder the bilingualization of this group, given that the language of the host population will be neither taught nor used in the educational system, nor will be it used by the host population in their relations with the allochthonous population. In general, many first-generation immigrants, who will have passed the optimal age for language acquisition, will tend to develop only their comprehension of the host code as a result of sufficient exposure and because the linguistic distance between the two languages makes this not very difficult. Depending on the situation, however, a portion may successfully attempt to develop sufficient competence in the code of the host society, if they perceive that it could be socially or economically advantageous. Where individuals in the host group control much of the economic activity in which the migrants must integrate or at least form relations despite the existence of political subordination, some immigrants may decide to use

131 It must not be forgotten that individuals in the politically dominant group do not arrive in the new territory without any representations of the situation: "The participants involved in the formation of the new joint action always bring to that formation the world of objects, the sets of meanings, and the schemes of the interpretation that they already possess" (Blumer, 1982: 15). In all likelihood, they will tend to project onto the situation they are living the ideological contents conveyed by the state to justify the adopted language policy.

the code of the autochthonous society to achieve better, faster socio-economic integration, particularly if the autochthonous population perceives those who do not speak their language as foreigners and outsiders. Nonetheless, this factor may not have a far-reaching effect, because there is always the possibility of intercommunication in the official/immigrant language with the autochthonous population and this can discourage immigrants from making the effort needed to learn a new language code as adults.¹³²

In the second generation, however, changes can occur in the sociolinguistic situation of the immigrant group as a result of certain factors that may have an effect on it. Despite the pre-eminence of the allochthonous code, i.e., their own standard variety, in institutionalized communications, factors of social influence at play in the area of non-formal community life can produce a certain degree of effective bilingualization in the children of the immigrants. Indeed, this influence can be much more extensive than in the case of the first generation, if the circumstances help. Fully at the optimal age of acquisition, the portion of the immigrant group that has more frequent contact with the autochthonous population of the same age—e.g., at school, in the neighbourhood, at leisure centres—may tend to adopt the language of the host group in their usual relations with them, particularly if the difference in the number of individuals in each group encourages this. The fact that teachers can use the language of the allochthonous group in classes may not be strong enough to prevent children's need for support and for the customary social identification with their classmates that can lead second-generation immigrants in a social setting where the host group is predominant to want to use the host code and not the teachers' code to speak with their friends of autochthonous origin.¹³³

132 On adapting language to the interlocutor, Fishman & Giles (1984) refer to Homans' social exchange theory and state that "an accommodative act should incur more potential rewards than costs for the speaker. Such rewards can include a gain in the listener's approval, while the potential costs may include such factors as expended effort and a loss of personal (and sometimes, cultural) identity" (p. 390).

133 In relation to this phenomenon, Ervin-Tripp writes: "Social support appears to be of greater importance to children than to adults. It is a common complaint of sojourners abroad that their children both learn and forget languages too readily, whenever the linguistic milieu is changed. [...] Perhaps children's selection of linguistic variety is more dependent on the social milieu and less dependent on private motives than it is for adults" (1969: 30). The phenomenon of language adaptation—or sometimes, co-adaptation—in groups of children is documented in numerous studies (*cf.*, for example, Ardanaz (1975) on French and English in Canada, Labov (1980) for the case of varieties of English among blacks and whites in the United States, and Maluquer (1965) on the Catalan situation in the early 1960s). In these adaptations via the social route, the adopted language variety is very often not the standard but the variety spoken colloquially by the individuals with whom one comes into contact (*cf.* Fishman, 1972: 98).

If the phenomenon gradually spreads still farther in this direction, it is possible to reach the situation—paradoxical to some—of a speaker of the dominant first language in institutionalized communications preferring to use the code of the politically subordinate host group when speaking with members of that host group. If the norm of speaking with the host population in the host code develops spontaneously at an early age, the custom will become routine and the behaviour will typically occur unconsciously, unless ideological or other reasons later push the individual to change this practice. As we can see, this is a situation in which the factors at play on the institutionalized level and on the individualized level mutually influence one another, often in the opposite direction. While institutionalized factors, particularly those directly related to political power, work in favour of the immigrant group and against the autochthonous group, factors partway along the continuum, such as economic factors, can work in favour of the autochthonous group. So can the factors operating on the social level, if the ratios of the groups are still asymmetrical enough and the residential picture is not one of segregation, but rather of integration.

If, as happens on many occasions, the immigrants mostly live concentrated in specific urban areas where they are the largest group, the force of social influence will tend to work in favour of the immigrant group and the effects described in the previous paragraph will tend not to occur. Just as the immigrant group can feel the influence of members of the autochthonous group when the former is in the minority in the demolinguistic composition, this influence will be much weaker when the composition is balanced or the allochthonous group is larger. Indeed, the influence can go in the other direction: members of the autochthonous group residing in areas in which the immigrants reach half or more of the population can be influenced by their social surroundings and, in connection with the influence exerted by institutionalized communications, and most importantly by the language used by teachers, they can adopt the official/immigrant code in relations with their allochthonous peers and even with one another when in mixed groups, if they are small enough in numbers.¹³⁴ It can also perfectly well occur that simultaneous but different processes of bilingualization may arise out of the same situation: the autochthonous group can acquire the official standard through the institutionalized channel, while through the individualized channel the resident immi-

¹³⁴ This situation was clearly experienced in Catalonia during the Franco dictatorship and, in part, it continues even into the present.

grant group can equally develop the code of the host population through non-formal oral communications, and the autochthonous group surrounded by immigrants can acquire the language of the displaced population, even adopting certain non-standard traits that are present in the oral varieties of the displaced groups themselves.¹³⁵

From an overall standpoint, the contact caused by migration of linguistically dominant groups presents divergent characteristics depending on the circumstances and the combination of factors at work. Generally, however, the language that turns out to be known best by the society, taken as a whole, will always be the language transmitted through institutionalized communications, particularly through the educational system and the mass media. As a result of this structuring of language facilitation,¹³⁶ the autochthonous code will tend not to be known as completely and widely as the allochthonous code. Thus, it will become partial and unnecessary, while the official code of the immigrants will be considered general and necessary. With the settlement of the populations and the passage of time, mixed marriages will become more common and they can work in favour of the loss of intergenerational retention of either of the codes. In light of the overall context, many more couples will typically not retain the autochthonous code than will cease to transmit the allochthonous code, which can come to be seen not only as the language prevailing in institutionalized communications but also fully valid even from a social viewpoint and in non-formal communication. Although the pace might be slower than in the other processes of language shift caused by migration seen earlier, the situation of linguistically dominant migration may exert effects in the long term that resemble the effects that would have been produced if it had been the autochthonous population that had immigrated, particularly if the incoming group is numerically strong, creating an ecosystem with institutionalized and individualized communications in an allochthonous language, with likely adaptive evolution by means of language shift. This appears to be indicated by a case as geographically close as North Catalonia (in France), where the causes of political subordination and of migration in both directions—i.e., emigration and immigration—come together to yield the widespread public and social disuse of the historically autochthonous language. In this context of double minoritization in the same territory—i.e.,

135 If we add into this schema that the immigrant origin population of school age is now bilingualised formally in Catalan as well, we get a picture of the current situation in Catalonia, characterized by simultaneous and interwoven processes of mutual bilingualization in some places.

136 See Pueyo, 2000.

both political and demolinguistic in nature—new generations of autochthonous individuals will feel effects similar to those of any displaced group: no importance of their code in symbolically important public functions—officialdom, school, written uses, audio-visual media, etc.—and the constant presence of the allochthonous language in social relations, along with a strong public and ideological discourse in support of the dominant language. The negative representations that this type of context can generate in the minds of individuals with respect to autochthonous cultural elements can lead them to a gradual intergenerational abandonment of their own code through mixed marriages or through rejecting the retention of the intragroup language by two partners in relation to their children. They may even come to see their own code as socially stigmatising and as a curb on their future economic and social survival, particularly in a world that is increasingly interdependent and marked by multinational economics. Human groups who experience language contact simultaneously via two routes of pressure—sandwiched between institutionalized communications from above and individualized communications from below—may face an acceleration of the process not only of effective bilingualization but also—and more importantly—of total abandonment of their own code, i.e., even in daily social relations and especially in language transmission within the family.¹³⁷

Nor should it be forgotten that the influence of the state's only official language is also felt in the case of migrations of other demo-political minority groups to the language areas included within the state. When the autochthonous population and individuals from another non-majority language area come into interaction, the language of the interrelation that is established will very often tend to be the language most shared by the two groups in contact. If one exists, it will tend to be the language most widely spread by the state educational system, which is typically the language of the demo-politically dominant group in cases of official unilingualism. Faced with the possible perception that their code is useless in the new area of residence and that there is little motivation for its retention, intergenerational language change can move in the direction of transmitting to the children not the code of the autochthonous society but rather the code declared official and spoken by the state's demographically larger group. This is the code that parents will see as more

137 The case of Romansh in Switzerland clearly demonstrates the distinct influence possible in the retention or substitution of group language varieties when the causes come out of the institutionalized sphere or the individualized sphere: "Unstandardized Schwyzertütsh is replacing Romansh, although several generations of Raetoromans have known Standard German as well" (Fishman, 1972: 99).

necessary and useful for the next generation to reside and earn a living within the new society. Therefore, as a result of the policy of a single language in all areas of the state, any contact that would have evolved in support of the language of the autochthonous group will do so instead in support of the code of a third group, the one that has seen its own language politically enshrined as the sole official language and sees its strength rise indirectly even outside its historical language area.

Even in cases in which the state has later made its language policy more flexible and, for example, allowed education in the autochthonous code or even allowed the code to become the main language of instruction in some schools and the language achieves some presence in the media, the norms set by the majority in favour of the intergroup use of the allochthonous code and the fact that this code is mastered by the entirety of the population, while the other code is not, will result in many institutional and individual originators of communications continuing to lean toward the most widespread code, at the expense of the autochthonous code. This will nonetheless appear to be a situation of free choice in the use of the codes in public communication. Even with its partial official recognition, the autochthonous code will tend to continue to be seen as private and idiosyncratic and only for a portion of the population, as the example of the Welsh case would appear to demonstrate. In this context, some areas will remain in which the autochthonous code enjoys social predominance, generally outside the metropolitan areas. In these areas, the use of the autochthonous code will continue, but often without the ability to stop or reverse the intergenerational shift process, which will continue being globally active. The reversal of the situation—succeeding in making the autochthonous code generally known and used—will only be achieved with a significant degree of political change that at least puts a clear priority on the public use of the language of the host society and does not give different treatment to immigrants who are members of the state's linguistically dominant group.

3.4. LANGUAGE REVITALIZATION AND NORMALIZATION PROCESSES

The recognition of traditional values and of the ethnic language arises largely from the fact that only in a modernizing society, where contact with other groups and languages is fairly frequent, does an ethnic group become self-conscious. Consciousness is a function of contact with others.

GLYN LEWIS

3.4.1. Reversing language shift

The direct and indirect effects resulting from the political regulation of institutionalized linguistic communication in subordinate societies and from the migrations of politically dominant groups are not limited to the phenomenon of language shift. In addition to human communities who continue inexorably down the path toward total abandonment of their own language codes and the adoption of outside languages even for private uses, there have been and still are communities that have put up varying degrees of opposition to this apparently fatal evolution, trying to modify the ecosystem leading toward their disappearance as a linguistically distinct society. Whether as part of an overall process asserting demands for self-determination or self-government or as a movement basically focused on the achievement of recognition as a distinct cultural—and therefore language—community, a large number of ethnolinguistic groups have sought to throw off the political causes that obliged them to feel and act as minorities in their own historical territory. Thus, as Tajfel rightly points out, many of these groups have wanted “to decide to be different (preserve their separateness) as defined *in their own terms* and not in terms implicitly adopted or explicitly dictated by the majorities” (1984: 357). This type of process has at least two stages: first, the creation of self-consciousness in relation to the unjust situation of political and/or language subordination; and second, the process leading toward a change in the political or linguistic structure deemed inadequate by the subordinate group.

Looking first at the initial internal process, it should be noted that there will probably be at least two different positions within the subordinate ethnolinguistic group on how to define the actual situation. Depending on the case, a larger or smaller part of the group may view the situation as appropriate and

'normal', and support the arguments of an ideology that Cobarrubias (1983: 63) calls 'language assimilation'. Drawing their views from the ruling political structure, they will tend to think that all groups and individuals residing within the sovereign area of the state in question should speak and write in the same manner as the demo-politically dominant group—whose language will most commonly be the only one declared 'official'—independently of the legitimate or illegitimate origin of their integration into this state and of the current will of the distinct groups, which will be explicitly denied equality of language rights with respect to the majority group. Thus, the proponents of this position will subscribe to the arguments put forth by the established political power and they will believe in the language superiority of the dominant group. On the other side of the question the prevailing ideology will tend to be 'language pluralism', based on the right of linguistically distinct societies to maintain and cultivate their languages based on the principle of equal rights for all human language communities (Cobarrubias, 1983: 65). In the cases where this is so, this segment of the group will also have individuals who champion not only the recognition of cultural pluralism, but also the recovery or acquisition of the group's own politically sovereign organization, without any ties of subordination or dependence to the politically dominant group. To varying degrees, this entire segment will be in favour of challenging the established political order and, in some cases, of securing a minimum of equal rights among the language communities within the state or achieving a maximum of separation from the state and constructing a new political entity. Lieberman outlines three major solutions possible for groups that are linguistically subordinate on political grounds: 1) "to evolve toward the dominant group, to give up the native language and reduce (or eliminate) the ethnic identity"; 2) "to reduce the handicap facing speakers of a given language by reforming the societal institutions (changes in the educational system, political provisions, etc.)"; and 3) "abandoning the existing nation: outmigration, revolution, separatism, or expulsion of the dominant language group" (1970: 4).

Of these three major options, the position that wins out within a subordinate group will do so as a function of the complex ecology of the intervening factors and the group's interpretations of events as they unfold. The policies adopted by the state with respect to any politically subordinate group or groups, and the reactions that these in turn generate, will be a hugely important variable. The possible evolution of the situation will not be the same when the subordinate group sees its language not declared official but has total freedom to use it in given public communications, even though these may be non-official, as when the minoritized group faces a wholly belligerent state that

opposes any type of use of the autochthonous code or, going even further, persecutes people in an undemocratic manner without legal safeguards if they publicly take issue with the applied policies. The perceived illegitimacy of the situation may be patently clear and encourage the group to propose demands of a level that other types of measures would perhaps not have triggered. An awareness of subordination may take root in minoritized human groups after being schooled in an exogenous standard which is interpreted as illegitimate and foreign, and this can readily turn into an emancipation movement in the face of an aggressive policy against the group's own language. This can be seen in the Finnish case, in which the Finns had been loyal to the Tsarist empire but then objected to a subsequent policy of russification, and in the Catalan case, after the period of the Franco dictatorship. As Hobsbawm notes, in Europe "most such [national] movements appear to be reactions against the centralization—i.e., the remoteness—of state, economic or cultural power" (1991: 178). The remark made by Pilsudski, the liberator of Poland that "it is the state which makes the nation, not the nation the state",¹³⁸ while probably accurate, needs to be interpreted not as unambiguous, but rather as polyvalent. A state not only creates its own nation, but in reaction to this event, can readily promote, albeit involuntarily, the creation of other national (id)entities within the state. The demeaning sensation of belonging to a state that is not 'yours' because it explicitly banishes 'your' distinct traits from the symbolic armature of representation of this political institution, as well as from the public spheres and functions that are perceived as most important, can readily lead a given ethnolinguistic group with hardly any prior linguistic and/or political consciousness to develop its own national image in opposition to that of the state and to actively demand its own distinct political and linguistic self-organization. As Mackey notes, in general, "the motive behind pro-autonomy demands [for control of schools, hospitals, industry, trade, the public administration, etc.] often stems from a desire to redress the injustices of history, particularly as this concerns oppression, such as that of small peoples by major powers" (1979c: 257).

Thus, in the context of Lieberman's second and third solutions—autonomy and official multilingualism or independence and a single official language, that of the group—we can see historical processes of sociolinguistic transformation that have gone not in the direction of language shift but rather toward what, drawing on Aracil's (1965) initial proposal of terminology, we might call

138 Cited by Hobsbawm (1991: 44).

language ‘normalization’, insofar as the term remains heuristically useful. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, a large number of Europe’s language groups, at varying junctures, pursued autochthonous processes to standardize their public linguistic communication. This pushed up the number of codified languages in Europe from 16 in 1800 to 30 in 1900, and from 30 in 1900 to 53 in 1937 (Ninyoles, 1975: 60).¹³⁹ Whether as a result of movements of self-termination or simply to achieve cultural recognition, we have seen how the self-consciousness of language differentiation and the desire for equal dignity for a group’s own cultural traits encouraged the phenomenon of language revitalization and normalization to spread.

If we look at the term ‘language normalization’ itself, the state of concepts and categories in sociolinguistics may lead us to a purely terminological discussion of the boundaries of the term and the cases in which it applies.¹⁴⁰ I use the term here in preference, for example, to the most internationally accepted of ‘standardization’ in order to characterize and conceptually differentiate processes that, despite having striking similarities, differ significantly in their sociogenesis and phenomenology. Such differences, for instance, appear between the cases of language communities characterised historically by a high degree of sovereignty and political self-control and the cases of politically subordinate groups, particularly over the course of the past two centuries. ‘Standardization’, thus, could describe processes characterized by locating the problem fundamentally in the contact between vernaculars and a codified reference variety that is widespread.¹⁴¹ ‘Normalization’, which would obviously also include the typical

139 In all likelihood, ethnolinguistic groups without their own state have ultimately internalized the values of the ‘patriotism of the state’, i.e., that language is fundamental to identity. The problem has been that these groups perceive themselves as different and therefore, in many cases, have had to create their ‘language’ as a defence of their own dignity, according to the terms used by state nationalism.

140 In this terminological and conceptual aspect, however, we need to take into account the Popperian position defended by Janicki (1990), which advises against starting definitions with the term to be clarified, but recommends the opposite approach, thereby avoiding getting lost in often futile essentialist discussions over the exact meaning of the labels being used, which are after all entirely arbitrary. I agree with Janicki, who writes, “I accept Popper’s critical view of ‘essentialism’—[Aristotle’s attributing utmost significance to definitions]—[...]. This view both denigrates the role of definitions in science and promotes the idea that concepts, in terms of which the world is perceived by human beings, do not have discrete boundaries, and are thus never precise” (p. 1). As Janicki also recalls, in line with chapter 1 here, “People confuse words with things [...], that is, people behave as if words *were* actually the things that in fact they only refer to, or conceptualize” (p. 7). Thus, Janicki recalls Korzybski: “If we reflect upon our languages, we find that at best they must be considered *only as maps*. A word is *not* the object it represents” (1933: 58).

141 As I said before, internationally, the label ‘normalization’—especially in the French-speaking world, but also in English-speaking writers like Haugen (1966: 10) who look there for their terms—presents problems of usage in the sense given to it by Catalan sociolinguists. This is because its meaning is

phenomenon of ‘internal’ standardization, would need simultaneously to take account of the special vicissitudes of subordinate communities seeking to ensure the triumph of their own standard in functions typically occupied by an ‘official’ variety viewed as foreign and ‘external’ and, where applicable, of their own vernacular varieties in everyday colloquial functions, all within a framework originally shaped by total subordination and an absolute lack of self-government (*cf.* Bastardas, 1988). As a working definition, therefore, we could use the one offered by Bastardas (1994: 32), which partly modifies the original term in order to make it more general. This would be to apply ‘language normalization’ to the “intentional social macro-process which, starting from a situation of language subordination, seeks recovery of functions and speakers for subordinate code *X*, with the aim of impeding, stopping or reversing language shift and of fully ensuring the future stability and continuity of cultural community *X*”. We thus include the major traits of many similar contemporary processes which a commission set up by the Irish government defined, for example, as “the [Irish] language should once again be a normal means of conversation and communication among Irish people” (Macnamara, 1971: 76), or, in 1965 in the words of the then-chairman of the Conseil de la Langue Française, “to make French the priority language of Quebec” (Corbeil, 1980: 38).¹⁴² To this end, as Hobsbawm notes, “linguistic nationalism was and is essentially about the language of public education and official use”, that is, the language of institutionalized communications. “It is about ‘office and school’”, he goes on to say, “as Poles, Czechs and Slovenes never tired of repeating as early as 1848. It is about [...] the language of road signs and street names, about public subsidies for a television channel in Welsh; about the language in which debates in distinct councils are conducted and their minutes drawn up; about the language on the application form for driving licenses or electricity bills” (1991: 96).

3.4.2. Cases and factors

Though all of these cases may be broadly characterised as ‘language normalization’, however, they are not strictly identical and each has distinct elements. Of the most important differences, four stand out: 1) the degree of political

associated with syntagmas such as ‘normalisation terminologique’ and others that elicit a sense of homogenization or the setting of standardized rules, and these senses are precisely what distort the broad, general and dynamic meaning which we gave to it, similar to “revitalization”.

142 “ Faire du français la langue prioritaire du Québec ”.

self-control and the effective reduction of dependence achieved from a prior subordinate situation; 2) the initial sociolinguistic situation of the autochthonous group itself; 3) whether or not there is a significant proportion of the population belonging to the previously dominant group; and 4) the degree of official recognition of language rights for this previously dominant population. As we shall see, a comprehensive process to replace an allochthonous language standard with an autochthonous one and to promote endogenous vernacular varieties in the individualized functions from which they have been disappearing can take different shapes depending on whether the process is carried out in a context of total political independence or simply in relative autonomy from the previous subordinating community. In the latter case, the relationship may continue to maintain a high degree of subordination and *de facto* asymmetry. Thus, despite their similarities, the Hungarian and Norwegian processes of language normalization are not exactly the same as those of Catalan or Basque in Spain or of Gaelic in Ireland.

The first of the four distinguishing criteria—the degree of political sovereignty attained—can have extraordinary importance in some cases, particularly in connection with the other factors listed.¹⁴³ While total political independence enables a new state to exert quite stringent control over everything that occurs within its new borders and it can thus fully regulate, for example, the linguistic messages that need to circulate at the public level, e.g., in the political and administrative sphere, the educational system, the mass media, product labelling, the representative functions of highest symbolic content and so forth, limited political autonomy typically entails *de facto* a high degree of political and cultural interference, as can be seen, for instance, in the Spanish and Italian cases.¹⁴⁴ The continued existence of political dependence and its attendant consequences have myriad effects in a wide variety of fields. The *Staatsvolk*—the central, most numerous group in the state from which a relative power of autonomy is granted—can exert a high degree of control over the subordinate group by means of the majority of seats typically allocated to it in common parliamentary institutions and in civil service positions within the apparatus of the state and judiciary—if no constitutional provisions allow for solutions to compensate for what is simply a demographic difference. The free

143 “Under the circumstances, all nationalism not already identified with a state necessarily became political. For the state was the machine which had to be manipulated if a ‘nationality’ was to turn into a ‘nation’, or even if its existing status was to be safeguarded against historical erosion or assimilation” (Hobsbawm, 1991: 96).

144 For more on the Italian situations, see Gruning (1993) and Colautti (1994).

circulation of all kinds of products and messages throughout the territory of the state, which are very often only in the language of the dominant group, as well as the representation of identity resulting from seeing oneself included in names and symbols that are normally fashioned—exclusively or to a very high degree—out of the attributes of the majority group, can continue being powerful elements of language destabilization among demographically smaller groups. In the Catalan case, for example, the entire population is able to receive many more television channels in Spanish than in Catalan and yet, by contrast, it typically receives less in other equally neighbouring languages, such as French or Italian, or in international languages such as English.¹⁴⁵ As political integration continues in Spain without a state-wide policy of official multilingualism, which Italy also does not have, the vast majority of commercial messages—e.g., advertising, instructions, information on products, etc.—circulate in the entire territory only in the language of the majority group of the state.¹⁴⁶ Similarly, the applications for judicial review lodged by the official bodies of the state against provisions of internal language policy adopted by the autonomous governments of smaller groups, the omissions of the languages of these groups in activities promoted by the central government abroad, and generally the central government's indifference toward the official recognition of minoritized languages at central levels of the administration—which are supposed to be common to all—are all equally strong illustrations of the imbalance and tension in this sort of situation. Nevertheless, if language competence and use—at least in individualized communications—have been kept alive and the population and its autonomous institutions have the will to do so, this type of normalization process can move forward, halting the intergenerational process of language shift underway and reaching if not complete normalization in the use of its code, then relative language stability, though typically without eliminating the bilingualization of the subordinate community in the dominant language of the state as a whole. The latter will inevitably need

145 As a typical demonstration of the enormous power that the larger group retains in this type of state, the post-dictatorship central government of Spain in its treatment of a matter as sensitive as audiovisual media not only refuses to regulate language diversity in television channels awarded to private companies, it also does not facilitate the reception of regional channels in Catalan among the various autonomous communities that share this code. In fact, it openly puts up barriers and obstacles.

146 An example of the language repercussions of limited governmental autonomy can be found in the language of instructions on products distributed throughout the Iberian Peninsula. Increasingly, products are labelled in Spanish and Portuguese, while Catalan, for example, is completely absent even from products manufactured and distributed in the Catalan language area. Any measures taken by the Catalan autonomous government in this respect, for example, appear to have no practical effect in reality.

to be used in extra-group functions and in all communications to which the subordinate group is exposed from outside the community (e.g., media, documents, products, etc.). The situation in Italy's South Tyrol, for example, seems to suggest this.¹⁴⁷

Even though limited political autonomy within a state that has a central official unilingualism can give rise to uncertain and contentious processes of language normalization, political independence is no guarantee that this sort of phenomenon will meet with success where the initial sociolinguistic situation is one in which the competence and use of autochthonous varieties is already highly reduced among the native population. As the Irish case appears to confirm, even when there is full political control, the previously subordinate group can run into enormous difficulties in achieving a successful process of linguistic revitalization and normalization. Even when the population's attitudes and predispositions strongly favour restoring full use of Gaelic, the sociolinguistic situation will be hard to change in those cases in which the language is not only missing from institutionalized communications but has also largely disappeared from individualized ones. It appears much easier to move from individualized to institutionalized communications, rather than the opposite. Yet the latter is not impossible, as the case of Hebrew in Israel seems to show. In particular, if the loss is not simply in use but also in competence, the reintroduction of an autochthonous language code basically through the school system offers no certainty that it will be adopted as a language of everyday colloquial communication, a basic function for the 'natural' sociocultural reproduction of language codes. In the Irish case, there are also other factors that may further hamper the normalization process. The significant degree of structural distance between Gaelic and English, for instance, may be an additional obstacle to the adoption of Gaelic in habitual social use. Given the high competence in English that has been acquired at home and at school, the norms of language use among individuals have already been established in that language. Just as any behaviour does, such norms become subconscious and routine and so tend to persist auto-

147 Nevertheless, the particular characteristics of this case also need to be taken into account. The population of the South Tyrol speaks German, which is fully official in the neighbouring state and has a large number of speakers. This enables the South Tyrol to be self-sufficient in terms of publications, media, etc. As a result, the self-denigrating representations common among minoritized groups, which are enormously effective in processes of intergenerational abandonment of their own language varieties, do not arise as easily and find it much harder to become established in the society. It is not at all certain, therefore, that another group without these elements will enjoy the same stability in a similar political and linguistic configuration. Notably, Austria has always given assistance to the Tyrolean community under the jurisdiction of the Italian state.

matically and hamper the adoption of Gaelic in interpersonal relations. This stands in the way of its necessary social practice and hinders the attainment of a fluent and colloquial competence—a factor that retroactively works as a further brake on the habitual spontaneous use of Gaelic. Nor is it trivial that the language in which Gaelic is in contact became the quintessential global *lingua franca* in the twentieth century. Perhaps the representation and assessment of reality would be very different, if the language in contact with Gaelic were Polish or Finnish, for example. The proposition of abandoning English as a first language with your children cannot be the same as that of abandoning another code that does not have the current characteristics of the prevailing language of the British Isles and the United States. Nevertheless, it is quite likely that the fundamental factor that explains the failure of the revitalization of Irish Gaelic should be sought more in the weakness of the sociolinguistic starting point of the population than in any other contributing factors.¹⁴⁸

As previously mentioned, the case of Israel is typically cited here as a counter-example to cases of failure like that of Gaelic in order to refute the impossibility of political independence as an avenue toward the full recovery of a language in cases where a majority of the population has lost competence. Though it is true that Hebrew has had extraordinary success in attaining a full social revival, we need to apply a socio-ecological perspective here to better understand the overall dynamic of the process in the Jewish community. The political level never acts in a void, but rather has a close and integral relation to the social and cultural levels. Therefore, this perspective must be adopted to examine the successful revitalization of Hebrew. Thus, we will see that, unlike the Irish case, the existence of a language of social communication shared by everyone in the territory that later became the state of Israel was an overriding need arising out of the diverse linguistic backgrounds of the Jewish diaspora. While English had become the general social code of spoken and written intercommunication in Ireland, none of the languages typically used by the Jews met these conditions. The ‘oralization’ of the Hebrew of religious texts—which had hitherto only been known as a written language, or at most as a ‘read’ spoken language—gradually became a symbolically attractive solution in that it confirmed the national self-awareness of the group. It was also practical, because it filled the gap of a *lingua franca* needed for communication between the various language groups of the Jewish community. Israeli children came from a mixture of backgrounds, with an initial predominance of certain Central Eu-

148 For more on the Irish case, see, for example, Macnamara (1971) and Hindley (1990).

ropean groups. Therefore, they shared no prior general norms of language use. As a result, the language of their teachers gave them the code necessary for their habitual spoken inter-communication. Over the course of generations, Hebrew thus became the most commonly used language both officially and socially. Given the need for inter-communication, Israel's institutions devised and pursued a macro-strategy of modernization and societal spread of Hebrew. The elements in the strategy ranged from methodologies and special schools for the learning of Hebrew to the publication and broadcast of newspapers and programmes in simplified Hebrew. Also included was a major effort to expand its terminology and adjust its styles. At the same time, broadcasts and messages were allowed in other languages brought by Jews arriving from around the world and this helped to lessen the hardship of adaptation among a generation of immigrant adults.¹⁴⁹ In addition to an awareness of identity, which is important and necessary, the successful recovery of full use in communities that have lost competence and habitual use of their autochthonous codes, at least for speaking, appears to require special circumstances, namely the absence of another generally established language norm and a practical need to solve the problem of inter-communication.

Political independence may not be a necessary condition for a process of language revitalization to be completely successful, however, if the community embarking on the process has control over its territory at least in language aspects and the state to which it belongs recognizes and is organized to provide effective protection to the subordinate language community. This appears to be illustrated by the Flemish case in Belgium, which evolved toward the principle of territoriality in the Swiss style, except for the capital, Brussels, which is governed by the principle of personality. In this context, Flemish has been able to build a habitat that fully supports language normalization, neutralizing its long-standing political subordination to French.¹⁵⁰ In this sense, communities joined together in states with a confederal or federal structure based on the principles of egalitarian plurilingualism can, at least in theory, achieve quite stable sociolinguistic situations even though they remain politically bound up with other distinct language communities. In this type of structure, however, the weight of other factors, e.g., demographics, economics, the media, etc., is not clear. The Belgian case, as in fact all cases, has characteristics that make it

149 For more on the Hebrew case, see Paris (1992) and Nahir (1987).

150 For more on the Belgian case in general and the Flemish case in particular, consult Senelle (1983), McRae (1986) and Deprez (1987). For a more updated view based on the constitutional reform of 1993, see the bulletin *Mercator* 6 (April 1993).

special, given the demographic and economic development of the Flemings in relation to the Walloons. Today, the Flemings dominate or at least have a decisive weight in the control of the state. As a result, they have shed their characteristics as a minority and a subordinate group. Perhaps such a positive evolution for a subordinate language community and such a successful process of normalization as the one experienced by Flemish in Belgium would not be so likely in a situation in which the demographic and economic correlations between the human groups in contact were more asymmetrical. The Swiss example, however, does have demographically uneven groups and it appears to show that the application of egalitarian plurilingualism at the federal level and the principle of territoriality at the level of each language community can lead to the normalization and stable coexistence of linguistically diverse groups in a single shared political organization.

Another distinguishing factor of processes of linguistic normalization mentioned earlier is the absence or presence of a significant number of residents belonging linguistically to the group whose language has hitherto occupied the institutionalized functions in the historical territory of the subordinate group. Depending on the situation, this can pose an added difficulty to the usual challenges faced in this kind of process. In spite of the exclusive official status of the autochthonous language, the presence of significant numbers of people from the formerly dominant group—particularly if they hold important places on the social scale—can represent a delaying factor and cause potential conflict in the spread and general public adoption of the new language.

If, as can sometimes occur, the majority or a considerable number of the population whose origins lie in the politically dominant group adopt a contrary or belligerent stance toward the process of normalization initiated—given that it clearly represents the loss of their privilege of non-bilingualization after having moved to a language area other than their own—the process can run into periods of internal clashes, where each group will seek to ensure that their language criteria prevail in accordance with their own interests and representations of the situation. If the demolinguistic asymmetry between the groups clearly favours the autochthonous population, the formerly dominant group that has decided to remain will typically adapt to the new situation, becoming bilingual in the autochthonous code for the functions in which this is necessary and even, in many cases, evolving intergenerationally toward the abandonment of their L1 in more private uses. If, by contrast, the demographics have become more equal, the process can be more complex, should most individuals from the formerly dominant group cling to anti-autochthonous attitudes and not evolve toward a minimal accommodation to the new situa-

tion.¹⁵¹ Depending on the circumstances and the cases, this type of normalization process can, to a varying degree, face delays in its attainment of stability and a more typical evolution. In this type of situation, the control of political power will clearly be a paramount factor. If the formerly subordinate group has achieved total political sovereignty and thus dominates its own institutions of government, the situation can evolve gradually toward the widespread implementation of the new standard and toward the adoption of the autochthonous language in place of the allochthonous one in social relations between the native group and the formerly dominant immigrant group, passing through stages of legal safeguards for the newly minority population, speakers of the formerly dominant language, in order to ease the path toward the new situation.

In situations involving less conflict between groups and languages, the presence of speakers of the formerly dominant language can give way to stable regulations of plurilingualism, ensuring official status for the various languages. This is the case of Swedish in Finland, where the successful normalization process of Finnish has been accompanied by the maintenance of Swedish as a co-official language for the 5.5% of the population who currently speak Swedish as a first language. As noted earlier, however, the particular features of the Finnish case must also be taken into account here. During six centuries of Swedish rule, there was no explicit policy of 'swedenization' and when Finland sought independence, the problem was not with Sweden but rather with Russia, which had often pursued russification measures that affected both Finnish speakers and Swedish speakers during the periods in which Finland was ruled by Russia.¹⁵² In any event, the low number of Swedish speakers and their general attitude of solidarity with the rest of the Finns made the issue uncontentious. This can be seen in the fact that the Swedish language community, despite language regulations that support their code, have become widely bilingual in Finnish and the number of speakers is very slowly declining through intergenerational change in favour of adopting Finnish as a first language.

A further combination of distinguishing factors in language normalization processes, taken in their broadest sense, is one in which there is a lack of political independence and also a high number of individuals speaking the dominant language within the territory of the subordinate society, which neverthe-

151 An example of this type of challenge can be found in the newly independent Baltic republics—Estonia, Lithuania and Latvia—where many individuals of Russian origin—the formerly dominant power—can lead to situations of conflict, particularly in the republics where their numbers are greatest, as a result of their potential opposition to the processes of language normalization undertaken.

152 For more on the Finnish case, see Gambier (1986).

less still largely maintains a habitual use of its own code. This is the situation in Quebec, which is part of a majority English-speaking state—Canada—and also has an important historical presence of English speakers. Situations such as this one also have a good deal of instability when the subordinate community sees that it faces potential interference not only externally from the dominant language group but also internally from the English-speaking group residing in the territory of Quebec (roughly 7/8% of the population, but occupying the upper classes) and from immigrants who have tended to join the English-speaking group more readily than its French equivalent. The structure of the situation, therefore, differs from the Flemings in Belgium because—leaving Brussels aside—Flanders does not contain a significant percentage of French-speaking Walloons in its language area and because the federal option in the Canadian case has not been plurilingualism based on the principle of territoriality, but rather on the principle of personality. While Belgium has followed the Swiss model, Canada has instead followed a model inspired by the Finnish case, seeking to establish a federal English/French bilingualism throughout the territory, a goal that has led to more than one headache. Quebec, which supports the territorial solution in order to more adequately safeguard an ecosystem that would lead to the stability and security of language communities minoritized by demo-political conditions, has been taking significant steps toward “Frenchification”, particularly in the economic and commercial spheres, and it has successfully prioritized French as the sole official language of Quebec, while also keeping strong language safeguards for English speakers in the areas of education, healthcare, the legal system and so on.

This policy gives clear pre-eminence to French in the public sphere within Quebec, making it advisable for English speakers to become bilingual and ending the unilateral bilingualization of the French-speaking population. That, coupled with the policy of official bilingualism at the federal level, appears to be on the way toward enabling French to achieve full and stable normalization in Quebec society, despite Quebec’s immersion in the English-speaking sea of North America.¹⁵³ Its own code is prioritized officially, economically and publicly, while language safeguards are in place for the historical English-speaking community in Quebec. This, together with full recognition of the non-majority language, French, by the federal administration, also appears to be enabling, as in the Belgian case, the continuity of a previously destabilized group that did not

153 For more on the case of Quebec, consult Corbeil (1980), Plourde (1983), Gémard (1983) and Maurais (1987, pp. 359-416).

enjoy language normalization within the context of political association with a demographically larger language group. An important idiosyncratic factor in this case is the fact that French is also a highly self-sufficient language of great international prestige and tradition, suggesting that the evolution of this type of situation would not be the same in the case of another code lacking these characteristics. Once again, however, it appears that we must conclude that if a subordinate language group has its own recognized, suitably protected space and it also has the official recognition of the state through an egalitarian, plurilingual structure, its relative political minoritization in shared institutions does not appear to be a factor that necessarily leads to language shift and disappearance.

On the other hand, processes of language normalization can become more complex and uncertain when the presence of high numbers of dominant language speakers in the historical territory of the subordinate community occurs in a situation of limited political autonomy very often accompanied by official unilingualism in the central administration of the state and by the continuation of the official status of the dominant language in the territory of the subordinate community, but now side by side with the autochthonous language that must pursue language normalization. As we have seen, this model can enable the stable language continuity of German speakers in Italy's South Tyrol, but it cannot lead to successful normalization processes in cases in which the autochthonous population has already lost much of its competence and habits of use or where there is a low degree of sociolinguistic awareness or large numbers of people from the majority language area. If even in situations of full political independence, such as we have seen in the Irish case, the colloquial and habitual use of the autochthonous language does not become widespread where there is evident historical disuse, it is not likely that a similar situation can evolve differently in a context marked by a high degree of political dependence on the part of the subordinate group and also by a significant presence of individual speakers of the dominant language.

The Basque case, for instance, reflects this state of affairs and it really is an open and unpredictable process. These structures can move in the direction of the results achieved by the Irish model or those of the Hebrew case. In the Basque case, however, the absence of practical motives similar to the need for inter-communication in Israel suggests that the success of the revitalization process is likely to encounter major challenges and uncertainties.¹⁵⁴ There is no

154 The impetus to recover the historical language of a group that does not use it today arises, as I have noted earlier, from a language's ideological relationship to national 'identity'. This is often incomprehensible for people who have not lived through the experience of minoritization. In the similar case

fast or easy way to address objective factors such as the adoption of the dominant code by the vast majority of the population as a first language for extremely widespread general use in daily communication, or the fact that the situation is not one of independence but of limited autonomy in a state with strong central competences, or the considerable structural distance between Basque and Spanish, which resembles the case of Gaelic and English. This means that in addition to the challenges faced by the autochthonous population in developing competence in its own historical language—which necessarily requires an extensive, lengthy maintenance of the allochthonous standard in public use because the autochthonous one is not yet understood by most of the native-born population—there is also the presence of a population who are members of the dominant linguistic group and who can seek to stop the revitalization process because it forces them to become bilingual in the subordinate code. We must also add the ideological support in opposition to revitalization that the most conservative segments of the majority group will seek to disseminate from the outside, using powerful state-wide mass media.¹⁵⁵

On the other hand, even among communities that still have a substantial level of use and competence in their autochthonous code and only a limited allochthonous population and no insurmountable structural differences relative to the dominant code, such as Galician, they can also embark on an erratic or unambitious revitalization process whose conclusion is equally uncertain because of the negative representations which the autochthonous population holds about its language. Such representations are typical of processes of language shift, which is quite often what happens when people move to cities, where use of the dominant language tends to be more common. They abandon autochthonous varieties and adopt the majority language in their new urban relationships and with any future children, driving a slow but inexorable process of intergenerational language replacement that is hard to stop because of its deep-rootedness in the subordinate mind-sets of the individuals involved.

This may resemble the situation of the autonomous community of Valencia, where representations and behaviours inherited from the immediately preceding historical and political period have led to the squandering of enormous opportunities to make progress in the normalization process and have also apparently deprived the political class of the necessary energy and support to

of Irish Gaelic, Mackey notes how the official status of this code “has the support of a people who barely possessed this language, but who showed their pride by seeking to realise the notion of a national language” (1979c: 261).

155 See Rotaetxe (1987) and, from a comparative viewpoint, Bastardas (1991), pp. 45-55.

move resolutely forward. In this case as well, a large part of the autochthonous population has been adopting Spanish as the language to use with their children. This shift toward Spanish within Valencia, which has been more recent in time and smaller in extent than in the Basque case, stems from self-representations based, as Ninyoles has noted, on 'self-hatred' and a desire to assimilate with the dominant group, one of the possible approaches earlier pointed out by Lieberson. While there is a lack of linguistic distance between the structures of the two codes in contact, the normalization process is made complex, and its evolution uncertain, because of the ideology of language subordination internalized by a majority of the autochthonous population, limited political autonomy which allows the assimilationist ideology and the identity-based influence of the subordinating state to persist, and the belligerent attitude against revitalization which is adopted by segments of the autochthonous population and by the allochthonous L1 population integrated administratively in the autonomous community based on the previous provincial division of the state.

Lastly, we come to the case of Catalonia. As we shall soon see in greater detail, Catalonia illustrates a similar situation in terms of the effects of limited political autonomy, of a linguistically inegalitarian structure at the central levels of the state, and of the presence of an extremely high number of dominant L1 population originating, in this case, from migrations out of their language area elsewhere in Spain during the twentieth century. The difference, however, is that the autochthonous population has shown a high degree of loyalty to its own language and, consequently, the regional government has pursued a language policy that is more favourable to the normalization process. Other significant factors, however, have worked to hinder the process. For example, the segments of the dominant group who are most staunchly against the process have sought to spread their discourse among the allochthonous population who now reside in Catalonia.¹⁵⁶ In addition, the state is not structured into language areas permitting Catalan to have full pre-eminence in its territory, but is rather conceived as a space in which the dominant language has official status everywhere and is typically the only habitual language of most non-official messages circulated there. The ongoing use of the dominant code in many

156 Indeed, it is necessary to see clearly how "classes and other antagonistic social collectives are continually engaged in a struggle to impose the definition of the world that is most congruent with their particular interests" (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992: 14). Minoritized groups quite often do not have sufficient power to be able to confront the dominant group's quasi-absolute domination of the media and informational sphere. This prevents them from bringing their alternative proposals into existence not only within the dominant group, but even among members of the subordinate group itself.

institutionalized communications and the extremely high number of population with Spanish as L1—accounting for 55% of the population (2013)—gives rise, as noted earlier, to a ‘sandwiching’ situation in which the autochthonous language comes under pressure from the allochthonous language from above and below, that is, in institutionalized *and* individualized communications. If we add to this the narrow room for manoeuvre in the autonomous community’s decisions on language policy, which is always subordinate to current unequal and asymmetrical constitutional provisions, and the fact that the language in contact, Spanish in this case, is not a code of limited range but, to the contrary, has a great number of speakers globally, the overall evolution of the language normalization process of the historically subordinate code does not appear likely to be an easy one.

4.1. THE CATALAN CASE

While the biculturalism promoted by the state is imperialistic because it embodies a policy of representation and even of overlaying substitution of one ethnic group by another, the biculturalism promoted by a host ethnic group in relation to guest ethnic groups does not have the notion of eliminating cultures underpinning its foundations, but rather embodies cultural integration on an individual basis, because in any event the existence of the guest ethnic groups continues in their territories of origin regardless of the position they obtain or the historical role their members play in the territory of other ethnic groups.¹⁵⁷

CLAUDI ESTEVA FABREGAT

4.1.1. Introduction

Throughout this book, I have argued for an ecological complex view, based on the image of orchestral or polyphonic music, as a complexity metaphor to picture the fundamental interrelation between the different elements of a reality that is at once multi-layered and integrated. This is because the complete resulting dynamic organization can give a better account of the real situation than an isolated analysis of some of its levels can. Without ever stopping the

¹⁵⁷ “Mientras el biculturalismo promovido por el Estado es de signo imperialista porque se asume como una política de representación y hasta de superposición sustitutoria de una etnia sobre otra, el biculturalismo promovido por una etnia anfitriona en relación con las etnias huéspedes no tiene el carácter de eliminación de culturas en sus bases de sustentación, sino que más bien se asume como una integración cultural a título individual, ya que en cualquier caso las etnias huéspedes continúan su existencia en sus territorios de origen con independencia de la posición que obtengan y del papel histórico que ejerzan sus individuos en el territorio de otras etnias”.

music, the organization of voices and instruments can change: new ones can join in, others can leave, the members of one group may wish to perform another piece, and so on. This requires an accommodation with others if one wants to maintain the underlying functional harmony and agreement. The resulting musical forms fluctuate according to ‘internal’ orchestral or choral changes, which are the result of events that are hidden or invisible at first sight if our attention is focused basically on the sounds and not on perceiving the sudden changes in the elements that make the sounds’ existence possible.

If we apply this metaphor to the field of language contact, we can clearly see how the changes in verbal behaviour and forms that may result from the introduction of new performers who only know how to play other instruments or sing other melodies—that is, individuals who are competent only in other codes and have ethno-identity representations distinct from the others—can be important to the musicians who initially formed the orchestra—i.e., the individuals of the historical language community—if the latter wish to continue the music. Just as happens with the arrival of new musicians from outside, the arrival of a new conductor with ideas and competences different from those of his or her predecessors can change the musical results of an orchestral or polyphonic group. The conductor can change the repertory, the way of playing, even the members of the group, the interpretive style, and so on. So it is with the sociolinguistic aspects of societies and the arrival of new populations from other language areas or of new political authorities, who can introduce fundamental modifications to the overall balance that made possible the existence of a given system of verbal communication, which can then readily evolve toward modification or substitution by one based on a different organization. The Catalan case is a good example of a complex interweaving of phenomena and processes, and of influences in one direction or another, which are all dynamically interrelated and shape an intricately entangled sociocultural ecosystem that it is necessary to understand and disentangle.

4.1.2. The modern evolution of the language situation

Catalonia in the early twentieth century still had low levels of literacy. It had inherited a situation that could be characterized politically by a lack of specifically autochthonous governmental organization and linguistically by an aim to spread Spanish as a single official language in the entirety of the Spanish state and by an official ignorance of the other language codes belonging to non-Spanish-speaking communities that were also part of that state. The dis-

inction between the language used at the political level, and in all non-official public communication functions, and the code normally used by practically all of the population of Catalonia in all everyday spoken communications—with the exception of particular Barcelona families of the aristocracy and upper classes—led to a distribution of functions between the written and the spoken among that portion of the public that had become literate. The communicative organization of society, at least the literate part, had adapted to the language constraints historically imposed by the political authorities and by the Church, which also had partial control over the school system. People learned a different language for written communication and kept up autochthonous vernacular varieties for speech. For the portion of the population that was illiterate and seldom urban, the impact of the political power was still limited at the time. As a result, they lived within an organization whose linguistic ecosystem was sufficiently harmonious in practically all of its functions, except in the case of any written documents that might sporadically reach them in Spanish, which they were unable to decode or interpret, being illiterate. The vast majority of Catalonia's population had no trouble passing down their own language varieties to future generations, which acquired them naturally within the context of family and society.

The gradual modernization of the state soon spurred pushes for literacy among the population. Given the political principles of the period, this was done in Spanish, despite the gradual spread of requests that it be done in Catalan or movements in favour of the Catalanization of education that began to gain ground, though strictly as a minority stance, within the broader political context of the newly established *Mancomunitat* of Catalonia. Over the first third of the twentieth century, Catalonia saw its earliest major migrations from Spanish-speaking language areas. The musical stave of political power, previously altered by subordination to the Spanish central government, now faced an additional, though not yet significant, change in terms of its population groups. Particularly in Barcelona, Spanish oral language varieties now appeared in everyday speech because of the incoming population. These changes in the group sphere began to have effects at the interactional level when autochthonous individuals and speech-area immigrants had to converse, particularly if the former had received schooling or somehow had prior exposure to Spanish. The challenge of communicating in inter-group relations had to be overcome. If the autochthonous interlocutor knew more Spanish than the immigrant participant knew Catalan, the conversation typically moved toward Spanish being spoken by both interlocutors. If the opposite was true, because the immigrant had lived some time in Catalonia and begun to understand and speak some Catalan and,

by contrast, the autochthonous individual had less exposure to Spanish, the conversation might move toward Catalan for the autochthonous speaker and toward a Spanish mixed with Catalan morphological and lexical forms by the speech-area immigrant, who was trying to adapt to the interlocutor. To a varying degree, the so-called ‘bilingual conversation’ in which both interlocutors speak in their own L1 enjoyed a more optimal context than at present, given the lack at the time of sufficient competence in Spanish among many autochthonous interlocutors, particularly at the level of speaking.

The evolution of these early migrations tended somewhat to go as it usually goes in typical cases (*cf.* section 3.3). From a basically receptive and imperfect bilingualization in spoken Catalan by the first generation, which went on hearing Catalan in its surroundings, it passed by simple social osmosis to a spoken bilingualization at the native or quasi-native level in the second generation. This phenomenon came as a result of the intervening properties that arise during the basic socialization processes of individuals within a context that may have been ‘Spanishized’ on the written and formal level, but was fully Catalan in the areas of almost everybody’s spoken relations. At the time, it was notable that even for much of the autochthonous population that had received schooling, their practical spoken competence in Spanish was not entirely colloquial because of the informal spoken use of Catalan apparently among most of the autochthonous teachers in the schools during students’ brief period of schooling, though this was disrupted in the second third of the century by the Spanish Civil War of 1936-39, causing the primary school education of many individuals to be interrupted.¹⁵⁸ Similarly, other factors must have had an influence on the progress in effective bilingualization of the second generation, namely the small number of immigrants in relation to the autochthonous population and their likely positive symbolic assessment of the Catalan language, given their socio-economic differences with respect to the host population, common in most situations of immigration.

We can see the considerable, albeit non-official, strength that Catalan appears to have had in that period, particularly before the Spanish Civil War, with the result that immigrants adopted a process of spontaneous bilingualization despite the formal absence of Catalan in schools. Such bilingualization is similar to that of normal countries, with the clear exception of formal compe-

158 This may have been different among the more affluent population of longer residence in Barcelona because of their more extensive schooling and because of their potentially more frequent exposure to Spanish speakers of autochthonous origin—the upper classes who abandoned Catalan—or to civil servants of outside extraction or to passing visitors.

tences in Catalan, which was not present in the educational system, and of the small extent to which Catalan appeared in the written public communication of the time.

The political and linguistic demands of Catalans were somewhat successful with the elections of 1931 and the arrival of the Second Spanish Republic, though this was short-lived. The end of the monarchy brought a certain degree of autonomous power to Catalonia, in the form of the Republican *Generalitat*, and Catalan was given official status, though without excluding the official status of Spanish in any part of the territory under Spanish sovereignty, and not giving official recognition to Catalan or other non-Spanish languages in the central institutions of the state. Even so, political pressure at the group level in Catalonia made headway, albeit with major difficulties, toward the official and public use of Catalan. The presence of Catalan grew in institutionalized communications, particularly those issued by the new autonomous political power and by municipal governments. This, in turn, invigorated its use in non-official signage and forms. It must be borne in mind here that a large portion of the population lacked knowledge of normative standard Catalan because of its historical absence from the school system. Indeed, it was not just that the population generally did not know the codification established by Pompeu Fabra and the *Institut d'Estudis Catalans* during the years prior to the dictatorship of Primo de Rivera, but that the work had not yet even been finished. Thus, as a matter of urgency, the political transformations had to take into account the completion of the codification and, at the same time, consider the general spread of the codified variety for it to be used publicly and become Catalonia's standard of formal linguistic communication. However, signage, publications, radio, courses, and so forth continued to show the public existence of Catalan to an insufficient degree at the close of the Republican period (1939), due to the inherited situation and the little time in which the autonomous government, in reality, had to transform the sociolinguistic situation.¹⁵⁹

Every advance that had been made in the field of institutionalized communications in the Republican period was once again quashed by the radical

159 For example, the belief in a Republican school system in which Catalan was taught formally and performed the functions of a habitual language of instruction appears to be a fallacy rather than a reality. In its very brief periods of self-government, the *Generalitat* (Catalonia autonomous government) did not succeed in putting into a practice a mass refresher programme in normative Catalan for the teachers of the time. Catalan was formally taught and used only in a few iconic schools, which have been used to create the myth. In the remaining schools, most of the teachers may have been autochthonous, but they were formally trained only in Spanish (cf. Carbonell, 1984; Monés, 1984, and Navarro, 1979), and they reported to the central Republican government.

change in political power that the Francoist period represented. Catalonia's statute of autonomy was abolished and the official status of Catalan was ended. Not only did the normalization process come to a standstill, but any use of the language, particularly in the early years of the new period, was quite literally persecuted. Signage, publications, radio broadcasts, education, forms, institutional addresses, administrative documents, everything had to be solely in Spanish. The road toward correspondence between the codes of institutionalized and individualized communications—that is, between the communication arenas and functions directly or indirectly controlled by the political power and those at the levels of groups and interactions—was once again truncated and the emerging equilibrium that had been taking shape was definitively shelved. The ensuing period saw a considerable rise in influence at the political level and in pressure exerted at the levels of groups and interactions to expand the use of Spanish greatly throughout Catalonia and in every possible function. The flight of many into exile and the purge of numerous autochthonous teachers cleared the way for large numbers of civil servants to come from outside Catalonia and take charge of bringing literacy solely in Spanish throughout the territory. As the newcomers themselves often neither understood nor spoke Catalan, the effect was to further encourage the total spoken use of Spanish. An entire new generation would grow up under the impact of anti-Catalan political directives in an overarching situation of military defeat and repression of any divergence or demand. Demeaning slogans and a discourse that stigmatized everything related to the typical cultural traits of Catalonia were powerful companions of the Catalan population during the 1940s and 1950s, and lessened in intensity only in the mid-1960s.

In this political context, the aforementioned spontaneous intergenerational evolution toward bilingualization in Catalan by the immigrant population ran into trouble as Catalan children and youths gained competence in Spanish. In schools, where Catalan was denigrated and ridiculed and where Spanish was presented as the 'language of the empire' and 'Hispanicity', each generation's self-minoritizing representations and its own sense of the remoteness of the past resulted in an autochthonous population that was much more likely to use Spanish in interpersonal relationships, particularly in urban areas, than it was to create an immigrant population likely to use Catalan. By virtue of the official language policy, the autochthonous population became bilingualized in both spoken and written Spanish and was given no help even to understand the formal rules of its own language, which was banned from official and non-official public communication. By contrast, the population of speech-area immigrant origin found an educational and official environment that gave them full

use of their own formal variety in the school system and in public communication and denied them use of the host area's language. Under these conditions, the number of intergroup communications in Spanish by both interlocutors rose, following a custom already established particularly in Barcelona among autochthonous individuals who were familiar with Spanish. Among the new generations, this behaviour became enshrined as a 'natural' norm and, indeed, one that had to be followed.

Thus, political changes acted in synergy with changes occurring at the level of the population and built a system of interactions in which Spanish became commonplace. The most important impact at the level of population groups, however, only appeared in the second half of the twentieth century, when many more people than before began to arrive in Catalonia from the Spanish-speaking language area. The situation was peculiar not only because of the extremely high number of newcomers, in what was probably the most extraordinary migratory movement of the twentieth century in Europe not caused by war, but also because they joined previous migrations that had not been perfectly integrated intergenerationally. This produced a residential distribution in which the newcomers were often concentrated in neighbourhoods far from traditional city centres. As a result, the situation would evolve abnormally in relation to the typical cases of immigration described earlier. These major migrations took place in a political period in which the Catalan community was subordinate to the dictates and laws of the Spanish government, which included the full implementation of a language policy that prevented the teaching of Catalan and *in* Catalan within the school system and which produced very nearly the sole use of Spanish in all public communication. This made it difficult for a large part of the first generation of the most recent immigrants even to have enough exposure to develop a basic understanding of Catalan. They were often located in demolingually homogeneous environments that were allochthonous in origin within neighbourhoods, factories and businesses, where their contact with Catalan was quite limited because of their greater numbers. Even in cases where the autochthonous and immigrant populations worked or lived in the same place, the natives' growing bilingualization in Spanish led them regularly to address newcomers in Spanish, especially if we bear in mind that the newcomers obviously had not arrived with any competence in the historical language of the territory. Encounters, therefore, now occurred between two populations, one of which knew the language of the other, but not vice versa. With this distribution of competences, the personal interactions between individuals of one group and the other tended to be in Spanish or, in any event, each speaking his or her own language, sometimes with a mix of words and

phrases in the other language in those cases involving older autochthonous individuals who had not been able to develop sufficient competence in Spanish. To this state of affairs, we must also add the radio, only broadcasting in Spanish, and later television, also only broadcasting in Spanish, with the exception later on of some programming in Catalan during low-viewership hours. In this context, the regular use of Spanish by both interlocutors in intergroup conversations turned into a norm for many immigrants, who could thus feel entitled to expect an autochthonous individual to use Spanish in his or her relations with them.

On the other hand, the abnormality of a context in which the historical population of a territory was required to adapt to the language of immigrants, and not the opposite as one would expect in a normal situation, slowly became erased from the consciousness of the autochthonous population itself. Once the norm was established generally as an expected and enshrined social conduct, social mechanisms for the preservation of cognition and behaviour (see section 2.5) drove its reproduction as if it were the 'natural' and legitimate conduct, especially as seen by new generations. Catalans soon found themselves in an ecosystem that facilitated the constant practice of Spanish at both the institutionalized and individualized levels, except in relations among themselves, if they even recognized one another as such. By contrast, the immigrant population experienced a situation in which the clear majority of them did not need to know or ever use Catalan. That said, some immigrants might face a certain discomfort in the existence of an autochthonous language when they were exposed to some interaction, either as an onlooker or a participant, and would not understand linguistic emissions in Catalan that were ordinarily not addressed personally to them but to others close by or, in any event, to them but simply as members of a mixed group. This stage was perhaps the worst, the one that churns up the most painful memories, for many individuals in the two groups in contact. The autochthonous population applied the rule of speaking Catalan with one another quite naturally because they felt very strange and uncomfortable if they had to use Spanish among themselves.¹⁶⁰ This, however, proved unsettling for others because they could not follow the thread of the conversation and, even more so, because they could not understand at the time why Catalans, if they could speak Spanish, were obstinate about speaking in

160 This discomfort, however, was felt less acutely in Barcelona and among certain upper classes of other cities because of their habituation to the use of Spanish, which appears not to have been experienced as a kind of ethnolinguistic betrayal (see Boix, 1993), but rather as the use of a prestigious and valued code, a way to distinguish themselves from the behaviour of the lower classes.

Catalan, even in the presence of people who could not understand the code. Thanks to this ‘obstinacy’, however, a good deal of immigrants received exposure to Catalan through their involvement in interactions among the autochthonous group, enabling the situation not to become entirely self-stymying despite the norm to address all non-Catalan speakers in Spanish. If the intra-group norm to speak in Catalan had not persisted, even in the presence of non-Catalan speakers, the latter would never have benefited from this input for the spontaneous and natural development of at least their comprehension of the autochthonous code, and their exposure to Catalan would have proven even more limited.

4.1.3. Language policy, functions and population

The third stage of Catalonia’s sociolinguistic history in the twentieth century began with the end of the dictatorship of General Franco and the establishment of a constitutional monarchy, which once again recognized some degree of autonomy for Catalonia and the official character of its language. As in the Republican period, however, Catalan has not been recognized as an official state language as, for example, French is in Canada and Switzerland and Swedish is in Finland, alongside the majority languages of those countries. Spanish continues to maintain its official status in the entire territory of the Spanish state. Nevertheless, this new stage saw the resumption of the process of language normalization that had been broken off in 1939, as well as resolute progress toward completion of the basic planning of the linguistic corpus—producing vital terminology, updating dictionaries, formulating oral standards, etc.—and the spread of knowledge of the normative rules of Catalan and its use in schools as a language of instruction, albeit not the only one. Once again, Catalan began the process of being disseminated among civil servants working in regional and local institutions in order to make it a customary language, and also among teachers, as the Generalitat of Catalonia had major competences in education, contrary to the Republican period. As knowledge of the normative rules spreads, use can also spread, though such a large-scale shift in competence and in language behaviour proves to be a complex and gradual phenomenon, not one that can be achieved immediately. Institutionalized communications under the direct control of the autonomous community’s government were gradually switching to Catalan, and yet Spanish has equally kept its official character at this level of administration and it must be used with anyone who requests it. Therefore, political changes once again have an effect at the level of the

population, which is seeing a rise in formal competence in the autochthonous code and in its use in pertinent functions, albeit at the pace of intergenerational replacements. The degree of change across all official and non-official institutionalized communications is now considerable, but it is by no means complete or even a majority. This is especially true in the case of entities and services directly under the control of Spain's central government or of private organizations. Catalan remains in the minority today, for example, in communications to the public from the telecoms companies, the state railway network, the justice system, the national police, in all product labelling, advertising, and even in cinema and television. Overall, the current environment of public communication is still dominated by Spanish, and Spanish is by far the most frequently used code, at least in written form, in business and work in Catalonia overall. Similarly, the current legal framework dictates that Catalans cannot use their code when addressing the central institutions of the state, but rather must adapt their language to the administration and not the opposite, as in countries with more egalitarian plurilingual principles.

We may again observe the influence that the political level can exert over the levels of the population, in this case through the effects on its competence produced by expanding the use of Catalan in public communication. Thus, many L1 Spanish people arriving in the second half of the twentieth century, who had very little exposure to Catalan during the long period in which it was banned from public spheres, have developed a considerable degree of at least receptive competence in the language.

By contrast, however, their productive competence in Catalan has not developed at the same pace. This is often attributed by a portion of the autochthonous population to the fact that these individuals, generally adults, have a 'negative attitude' toward the Catalan language. In all likelihood, such opinions stem from the bilingual experience of the autochthonous population without realizing that this is not exactly the same as that of a great many members of the allochthonous population. For the vast majority of Spanish-speaking adults coming to Catalonia and also partly for their descendants born there, the conditions for developing competences and uses in Catalan have been very different from the ones that have produced the bilingualization of the autochthonous population in Spanish. Among the latter, a majority of the individuals currently living in the society found a school system prepared to give them spoken and written competence in Spanish, where it was the sole language of instruction. Also, the context reflected general public communication largely in that code. In many cases, they regularly practiced Spanish with their peers and friends at school, as a second language they had been acquiring from the

time of their basic socialization and therefore at an optimal bio-psychological age (see 2.1.4 and 2.1.5). These are not the same conditions in which, in many cases, adult L1 Spanish individuals have developed their Catalan.

Except for people socialized in school since 1980, a clear majority of the Spanish-speaking population of Catalonia has not experienced a school system equipped to provide them competence in Catalan. Nor have they have found an environment of institutionalized communications operating predominantly in this code. Nor, as a result of partial residential segregation, have they had peers and friends with whom to use the autochthonous language.¹⁶¹ Nor have many, because of their age at the time of their arrival, had the chance to do so before puberty, the ideal time for language development. For the majority, Catalan is still a language that they have been acquiring at later ages on the basis of unplanned, imperfect and partial exposure. And it has proven a challenge to develop spoken competence as they might like, because at their first sign of difficulty, many interlocutors tend to switch immediately to Spanish, hampering their ability to speak Catalan colloquially and to feel fully at ease in conversation.¹⁶² The results of the current situation, therefore, appear perfectly logical considering our knowledge of the psycho-socio-cultural sciences and of similar experiences.

If we look at public communication as a whole, and particularly at communication that has a greater effect on children and young people, the index of use of Catalan is not comparable to the index of use of Spanish in the his-

161 In many cases, this has not been possible even for individuals in the company of autochthonous peers, because the latter 'practice' their Spanish, thus preventing them from practicing their Catalan in interpersonal conversations (*cf.* Boix, 1993).

162 In this regard, there appears to be some development, albeit still minimal. The switch to Spanish by a vast majority of autochthonous individuals tends to be largely automatic, routine and subconscious when the interlocutor is perceived as a non-Catalan speaker—leaving aside whether he or she may understand Catalan—or if he or she occupies certain roles or professions—e.g., state security forces, taxi drivers, bus conductors—or he or she is simply a stranger (see Bastardas, 1991). Apparently, the straightforward statistical verification of the fact that such jobs are more commonly held by speech-area immigrants than by autochthonous individuals or that Spanish speakers are more common than Catalan speakers in a particular social space is enough to establish a general norm that applies to the corresponding categories, the likely aim being to avoid from the start any language *divergence* with the interlocutor. The simple fact of starting a conversation in Catalan, even if only to explore the abilities of the interlocutor before choosing the language in which to carry on the interaction, has become a behaviour that is hard for a large portion of the adult autochthonous population to put into practice. So they directly initiate the relationship in Spanish, leading to intragroup interactions in Spanish without the interlocutors even realizing it, specially in the metropolitan areas. The situation, therefore, appears to confirm the strong tendency toward language *convergence* among individuals and societies of mixed composition and, in the long run, toward the social predominance of use of a single code, at least at this level of functions.

torical bilingualization of the autochthonous population. Thus, many of the messages to which the new Spanish-speaking generation is being exposed outside school do not encourage exposure to the L2 they are developing, but rather to their L1. While this is obviously not necessarily negative, it reduces the L2's potential impact. As regards opportunities to practice the L2 in interpersonal conversations, I have already noted the enormous difficulty of many young people of immigrant origin to find interlocutors who speak or want to speak Catalan with them. This was far from the case with the L2 of Catalan speakers. The current school system should be expected to produce an effective bilingualization of the population of immigrant origin, at least at the formal written or spoken levels. On the whole, however, some unease cannot be completely discounted among the second (or third) generation of immigrants in their informal and conversational use of Catalan because of the limited oral experiences that they may have had over the course of their schooling. This does not mean that they could not later, in suitable contexts, come to use Catalan in individualized functions. However, it may represent a preference to continue using Spanish, particularly when speaking in inter-individual relations, because of their limited custom of hearing themselves speak in Catalan in an informal and non-institutionalized context and because of a certain insecurity in the application of competence in conversations, which are the least 'prestigious' from the 'culturalist' perspective and yet the most fundamental for the 'natural' life of languages. This may be a major handicap for the overall success of the Catalan language revitalization process. It would maintain a certain asymmetry in the overall communicative competences of individuals in a relation. That, together with a strongly established intergroup norm in favour of Spanish, can lead to a sociolinguistic situation that fails precisely where, as I have said, the survival of language ultimately plays out: in individualized communications.¹⁶³ Given the future bilingualization of the *entire* population, at

163 To avoid misunderstandings that have sometimes arisen regarding the respective influence of the levels of individualized and institutionalized communications on the survival and continuity of language varieties, I will say again that, while normalization processes must act fundamentally upon institutionalized communications, as it will customarily be at these levels where an allochthonous language has been introduced, the survival of codes is ultimately played out at this other more informal and apparently 'spontaneous' level of individualized communications, at which populations decide how to speak in their everyday relations at work, among friends, in their affective-sexual relationships, with neighbours, and so forth. In particular, intergenerational language continuity will be determined within an individualized relationship—the couple—but this relationship will not be free of institutionalized influences. In a dynamic interrelation, for instance, institutionalized communications will contribute to determining the language competences and norms of the social actors and they will also have a bearing when the couple decides, either consciously or subconsciously, on which code or codes they will speak

least in theory, the slightest difference in the degree of colloquialization in the languages present can be a crucial factor in the negotiation of an interpersonal language norm. If colloquialization, that is, the development of competence in a language to a perfect degree of ease in informal conversations, remains lower in Catalan among young people of allochthonous family origin than the colloquialization of autochthonous family youths in Spanish, future intergroup relations may go on occurring largely in Spanish. Add to this the current habit in favour of Spanish, mentioned earlier, and it will have major consequences for the evolution of the sociolinguistic situation.

Interpersonal norms, therefore, play a crucial role in the overall evolution of the process, particularly if we consider the demolinguistic evolution that has been occurring since 1960s. The balance between the groups has been tipping intergenerationally toward a majority of L1 Spanish speakers in Catalonia, even while a significant group of bilingual families has appeared. This is very likely due to several factors: growing numbers of people of immigrant origin, despite bilingualization in Catalan in the twentieth century, have continued to transmit Spanish as L1 to their children; the allochthonous population has tended to show different birth-rates than the autochthonous population in the early years of migration; and for years, many couples of mixed origin have given preference to Spanish as family language, especially in Barcelona and the greater metropolitan area. This is not to say that the current proportions will necessarily remain steady or that they cannot change because the autochthonous birth-rate may recover or because the mechanism of mixed marriages might increase the transmission of Catalan in the future, at least by some parents. However, the demolinguistic evolution to date is of enormous importance for the future of the language normalization process. Unsurprisingly, several voices have been raised in concern about the health of the use of Catalan in the near future, after noticing the widespread use of Spanish as a colloquial code by increasing numbers of people, particularly among children and young people. While the use of Catalan overall makes progress at the level of institutionalized communications, the use of Spanish is doing so in individualized communications owing to the demolinguistic gap. This is not to say that the effects of institutionalized communications have not begun to be felt in given generational groups that have been effectively bilingualized in Catalan and can use it quite normally in formal and informal functions, when they are in domains

as parents to their children, a basic variable in the process of intergenerational language transmission and, therefore, of the survival or extinction of human languages.

where its use is the prevailing norm. However, the extraordinary impact that this demolinguisitic reversal could have on the evolution of the process escapes no one. Nor does the added danger of reproducing the intergroup norm in favour of Spanish.¹⁶⁴ For the first time, the linguistic minoritization of the autochthonous population may be not only political but also demographic within its own territory. This is increasingly turning into a reality as intergenerational replacement of the population proceeds. In this regard, what will probably be crucial are the language representations developed by children of all backgrounds, but particularly those of L1 non-Catalan origins. What significant relationship will they sustain between the two languages, Spanish and Catalan? How will the issue of their group identity affect this fact? What might be the effect of anti-integrationist discourses coming from outside Catalonia but prevalent there because of the mass media, which consist largely of television channels and radio stations broadcasting from the Spanish-speaking language area? In this regard, the future appears wide-open and uncertain.

4.1.4. The Spanish language in Catalonia

As the foregoing exposition clearly shows, the contemporary presence of Spanish in Catalonia is not the result of a single, straightforward phenomenon, but is rather the outcome of a dynamic interrelation between two basic factors. The first, which is by far the most important, is the historical political subordination of the Catalan community by the institutions of Spanish central power, which has been centralizing and homogenizing in nature. The second relates to the major migrations of individuals from other language areas within the same state. To a very large extent, they have come from Spanish-speaking parts of the territory. Given the interdependent nature of reality, these phenomena have obviously become intrinsically interrelated and synergistic. Yet it is vital to distinguish them in order to understand the evolution of Catalonia's socio-

164 It should not be forgotten that competence is not the only critical factor in changing the norms of language use. As Susan Gal notes, "The choice of language did not hinge on the speaker's or the listener's ability to understand either of the two languages, but on the felt appropriateness of using either one" (1979: 123). In the Catalan case, this feeling can still lead autochthonous individuals to use Spanish, even with individuals who are clearly of school age. As Amparo Tuson points out, the adaptive norm is very likely to function as a means to avoid communicative conflict (1990). Looking at the case of Quebec, Heller (1990) also notes, "There are [...] often limits to the extent to which people are prepared to allow group conflict to influence interpersonal relations. It sometimes makes more sense to maintain contradictory behaviour than to live with the consequences of being consistent" (p. 14).

linguistic situation adequately and to devise more suitable language policies to transform this reality. There is a risk that the historical tension against Spanish in Catalonia, primarily caused not by widespread knowledge of Spanish but rather by prohibition of formal knowledge and public use of Catalan—the language of the autochthonous population—could turn into a conflict with the immigrant population that has come to live in Catalonia and its descendants, if confusion over the various causes is not clearly disentangled. Hearing Spanish spoken in Catalonia can still be seen today by a varyingly broad swath of the autochthonous population—or of people of autochthonous ‘ideology’, because there is also the phenomenon of conversions—as an exact continuation of an earlier stage vaunting ‘the language of the empire’, without distinguishing between the persons who do still uphold this subordinating ideology—however small a minority—and the vast majority of the non-Catalan-speaking population who do not support this ideology and whose behaviour, in any event, is simply the result of general factors encouraging or retarding language competence and of a sociocultural ecosystem that favours their code, giving rise to no or little practical social need, and often no opportunity, to develop their use of Catalan. It is necessary to draw very clear distinctions between power and the people. It is not immigrants who once caused the autochthonous population to be illiterate in its own language or acted to prevent this code from being in customary and regular public use in all normal functions, e.g., in the public administration, on the radio, in the press, on signage, and so forth. Rather, the decisions of the corresponding political power are at fault. Nor was it the immigrant population in general that prevented the necessary reintroduction of Catalan in all functions of Catalan public life, but again it was the political authorities or the people running the affected organizations, companies and services.

The fundamental causation of the entire Catalan sociolinguistic situation lies at the political level and in the legacies of such a long period of subordination and lack of self-government in the cultural history of the country. This subordination has taken place precisely at a period of European history in which, as I noted in section 2.4, the ideology of the nation-state has been predominant, widespread literacy has been achieved in the language of the state (with the exception of a few cases of egalitarian multilingualism) and, more broadly, the process known as modernization has taken place, with far-reaching technological changes that have encouraged the irreversible expansion of areas of communication and control, abetting in the centralization of governments and the massive influences wielded by dominant powers over populations and communities that have become ‘minorities’ in their own historical

territories by virtue of political vicissitudes. This is the general context in which to understand not only the abandonment of language and identity by a not inconsiderable portion of the urban upper classes of Catalonia in favour of Spanish as a first language with their children, but also the failure of attempts to make Catalan official again in its own territory because of external political imposition and, in general, the sociolinguistic situation of the country at the end of the Francoist period.

Given that human situations are not static but intrinsically dynamic, new factors have emerged in the current situation at the level of the population. New migrations, coming now from more distant areas such as Central and North Africa and South America are arriving in Catalonia. If the influx continues, it may bring new change to the current demo- and sociolinguistic map.¹⁶⁵ In what direction will new migrations help to tip the process? Will they be a neutral element or add their weight to one of the language groups in contact? From the few studies that we currently have, it may be said that the new populations are, in principle, sensitive to the environment in which they reside. If they settle in communities with a clear predominance of Catalan speakers, the adults may begin to develop competences in Catalan, particularly the men. This is because in their cultural traditions, particularly in the case of Arabs, many women do not work outside the home. If, however, they live in communities or neighbourhoods where Spanish speakers predominate, they will tend to develop Spanish more than Catalan. This is especially true for the adults, as their children will encounter Catalan at school, and this may perhaps offset the imbalance. The weight of present and future migrations must not be underestimated.¹⁶⁶

4.1.5. Other Catalan cases¹⁶⁷

The other major Catalan language areas within Spain, namely the autonomous community of Valencia and the Balearic Islands, have both similar and differ-

¹⁶⁵ These newcomers now account already for roughly 15% of Catalonia's current total population (2014).

¹⁶⁶ Any reader who wants to know more about the Catalan situation can consult the bibliography provided by Strubell (1993). For an updated view of the sociolinguistic evolution of Catalonia, you can consult, in English, for example, Woolard, 1989, 1991; Strubell & Boix-Fuster, 2011; Boix-Fuster & Farràs, 2013; Boix, 2014, 2015; Vila, 2005, 2008, 2012, and Arnau & Vila, 2013.

¹⁶⁷ Cf. Sociolinguistic situation in Catalan-speaking areas. Tables. Available on-line: <http://llengua.gencat.cat/permalink/7c8aed03-5386-11e4-8f3f-000c29cdf219> (accessed April 24, 2018).

ent aspects in relation to Catalonia.¹⁶⁸ On one hand, they have experienced Spain's political vicissitudes just as Catalonia has. They have also received displaced populations from the Spanish language area in amounts that are considerable, albeit not as significant as those in Catalonia. Yet they have apparently not evolved in the same way in terms of their representations of identity or the value placed on their own language varieties. The case of Valencia reflects an advanced process of intergenerational language shift, especially in the major cities. Even today, though the autochthonous language has co-official status, language shift remains active in the society. This behaviour in families appears to fit with the autochthonous population's representations of their collective identities and the languages involved. Whereas the autochthonous population in Catalonia largely has a representation that is concentric, first politically Catalan and then Spanish and even possibly European, the order of the terms appears mostly to be reversed in Valencia: first Spanish and then, as a subset, Valencian. Also, while the autochthonous language in Catalonia has an important value that is central to society and has a high priority and is mandatory in education, such a feeling does not appear to have the same intensity in Valencia. As a result, the language is only an educational priority for parents who request it. They are increasing in numbers, but still a minority overall.

The situation of the Balearic Islands is also peculiar and different from Valencia and Catalonia. Until recently, sociolinguistic evolution there was not tipping in the direction of intergenerational language shift as it was in Valencia. The idiosyncratic nature of the islands' geographical location produced a conservative society, even in the language aspect, until the take-off of the tourism industry in the 1960s. With the enormous economic growth that resulted from being the destination of thousands of European tourists, the socio-cultural ecosystem was negatively affected, particularly by the arrival of people from the Spanish-speaking language area on the peninsula. Interrelations at the political and institutionalized levels resembled those to which Catalonia was exposed. With autochthonous individuals who were literate only in Spanish and had no clear collective consciousness—each island is, in fact, a different society—and no standard language of reference, the population bilingualized asymmetrically in Spanish, which became the usual code of the tourism industry and of relations with Spanish-speaking newcomers. As in

168 The case of Andorra has extremely particular characteristics that are distinct from the other major areas of the Catalan language within the borders of Spain. Similarly, the situation of the Aragonese border area, Northern Catalonia (in France), and that of Alghero (on the Italian island of Sardinia) require specific analysis.

Catalonia, intergroup relations take place in Spanish, which has become customary, turning into a now subconscious norm that constrains both interlocutors, particularly in Palma, in Mallorca. The phenomenon of intergenerational language shift is now becoming prevalent in some of the upper classes of the capital and also in the case of couples of mixed ethnolinguistic origin, leading both partners to use Spanish with their children, who are thus made L1 Spanish speakers. The mechanism of environmental influence is very likely to resemble that of Catalonia: if a couple's place of residence has a majority of Catalan speakers, the partners move toward Catalan; if, by contrast, the demolinguistic composition is more balanced or there is a majority of Spanish speakers, then the evolution is toward Spanish. Intergenerational evolution as a whole is negative for Catalan. In fact, all indications are that if there is no change in language policy to push resolutely forward with the revitalization process, the situation may force the autochthonous code through ever more regressive stages.

4.1.6. Looking towards the future

As I wrote in Bastardas (1994), we must bear in mind that the Catalan concept of *language normalization*, in many cases, encompasses at least three distinct, though interrelated, processes: first, there is *halting and reversing the loss of vernacular varieties* customarily used in private communications, which includes the family environment and especially intergenerational language transmission; second, there is the process that is better-known internationally and traditionally as *language planning*, which seeks to achieve the standardization of the language in public communication; and lastly, where the phenomenon occurs, there is the process of *integration-bilingualization of immigrants*, who are often speakers of varieties of the dominant or other languages as a result of the current freedom of movement.

If we look at the first of these macro-objectives—halting the loss of language varieties or, in other words, stopping intergenerational language shift since such abandonment works in favour of the allochthonous code—it becomes clear that there is a need to change individuals' representations of the varieties or generally of the code in question. When faced with the interpretation of autochthonous language forms as socially detrimental for their speakers, a positive 'resignification' must be achieved. Speakers must again feel that these Catalan forms are useful to them. In advanced scenarios where the allochthonous code is being adopted as L1 with children, who as noted earlier

usually develop a variety based on the standard mode (if there is no normal social contact with speakers), the only effective road toward resignification is to dignify the autochthonous code through the dissemination of a fully codified variety and give it functions that are socially and symbolically important. The process of intergenerational abandonment appears to be still quite active in the cases of Valencia and the Balearic Islands. It is highly advanced in Northern Catalonia, within France, and now affects most of the population there. But it is much less prevalent in Catalonia. In the latter case, one can expect that any current examples of language shift, particularly among mixed couples in areas where there is a high concentration of Spanish speakers, will decline in numbers as the importance of Catalan in schools rises, along with its public prominence. Ceasing to speak with your children in a local variety of a language that has no formal public use is not the same thing as not transmitting a code that they will have to study in school and that will be the vehicle of much of the knowledge that is conveyed to them.

Thus, it is very likely that the second macro-process—the construction, dissemination and full adoption of a standard in prestigious public functions—will act on the first one and contribute to the maintenance of spoken varieties of the language, which the population will stop abandoning in order to facilitate acquisition of the new school standard and, more broadly, enable its use in a portion of institutionalized communications. Statistics appear to confirm that we can expect a growing number of individuals in Catalonia who will have two first languages as an outcome of couples in which one parent speaks one code to their children and the other parent speaks another code. Here we need to take into account that many L1 Spanish parents will not view Spanish as ‘relinquishable’. This is because of its official status, its prestigious functions and its role as a language of supranational communication. At any rate, the mixed solution serves to preserve Catalan as a first language, even though Spanish will occupy the same or a very similar place in many cases. If we turn again to Valencia and the Balearic Islands, halting the process of language shift does not appear as likely to happen. Though Catalan has official status in these areas, the practical application of its official status in institutionalized communications has been limited and the effects have not yet reached their populations, who as noted earlier tend to start from discouraging representations of their own autochthonous language varieties. Despite this issue, it would advisable for the two territories to apply urgent strategies to stem losses that may be happening on a daily basis (each new birth brings the establishment of a norm of linguistic communication between adults and the new baby and this normally tends to be perpetuated for their entire lives).

In terms of the second macro-process of language normalization, the standardization of the language, we must distinguish between Catalonia and the cases of Valencia and the Balearic Islands. In the case of Catalonia, the dissemination and acceptance of a standard variety is gaining ground. The autochthonous code now has important functions in the regional and local administrations, in the school system, on particular television channels and radio stations, in certain large companies, and so forth. Also, divergences in the model of language used in these institutionalized functions are apparently being resolved gradually and the necessary terminology is becoming available to express anything that has not previously been said in Catalan. The process of standardization is in its final stages and the functional elaboration and expansion of competence and uses are progressing toward their objectives. The road has not been easy or smooth. But in Catalonia, one may, if things do not change, expect the standardization of Catalan to become a reality, at least among the autochthonous population and much of their allochthonous counterparts as the metabolism of population proceeds and new generations are socialized in the current educational context. By contrast, we will have to wait to see the impact in Valencia and the Balearic Islands of the spread of knowledge of the language's normative rules that is now taking place, at a minimum, through widespread teaching of the language as a subject. Obviously, given today's generally low identity-based awareness in the two territories, the influence of the instructional language can be very high, and this may cause the school system to produce a result typified by greater practical and theoretical knowledge of standard Spanish than of Catalan. It is perfectly clear that safeguarding a more balanced knowledge of Catalan and Spanish will require steps to be taken toward the use of Catalan as a language of instruction in a good number of subjects. This would counterbalance the preeminent public presence that Spanish will continue predictably to have in institutionalized communications. They must also move forward with plans and actions to transform language use in signage, advertising, the media, and so forth, if they want the introduction of the autochthonous language in school to have any sense of usefulness.

However, the most complex objective of the three macro-processes of language normalization concerns the population of Spanish-speaking origin residing today in the Catalan-speaking area. This is a clear case of an immigrant-origin population that is politically and demographically dominant in the state as a whole (see 3.3.5), with all the difficulties this may entail. Also, it seems entirely likely that most of this population, despite the economic crisis affecting industrialized regions, will not abandon its current places of residence, but will become a permanent and stable population, as it indeed is. In fact, a pro-

cess of *indigenization* of Spanish is occurring in the historical Catalan language area. That is, Spanish is the first language of a large portion of the population of allochthonous origins, even when they will have resided in Catalonia for three generations.¹⁶⁹ They will probably lose their ties with their areas of origin, now those of their grandparents, and view their own identity as Catalan,¹⁷⁰ yet they will very likely still speak Spanish as a first language. The major problem, therefore, is that the clear majority of the non-autochthonous origin population who live in Catalonia today come from the Spanish-speaking language area and therefore have an L1 which is dominant in politics, economics and the media within Spain, and which is prevalent in the historical colonial territories of the Spanish crown. As a result, most of them will hardly be willing to abandon it as their language of transmission within the family. Given the conditions of the current socio-politico-linguistic ecosystem of Catalan, it is unlikely that many people with such a background will reach the conclusion that it is better for their children not to have Spanish as a primary language. In this context, the fact that Catalan is the predominant language of education may have two opposing effects: for some people of immigrant origin who develop a colloquial use of Catalan, the option of switching language with their children, particularly in areas where the autochthonous population clearly predominates, may prove to be seen as a positive behaviour because of the advantages of social homogenization that it may give them. For others, however, seeing Catalan so prevalent at school and Spanish less so, they may take the decision to continue transmitting their L1 to their children to compensate for what they may sometimes assume to be less exposure to Spanish. For still others, the vast majority, who live in areas where the allochthonous popula-

169 Regarding the categorization of populations as ‘autochthonous’ and ‘immigrant’, and particularly in relation to when a population ceases to be ‘immigrant’, Heinz Kloss offers this view: “My answer, tentatively, would be, that not only the foreign-born themselves but even their children belong to this category. Once, however, a majority of the adult members of an ethnic group are natives of native parentage, i.e., are the children of parents born in the host country, the group has to be classed as indigenous” (1971: 28).

170 The identity aspect is one of the most obscure for the future evolution of the situation. If it is true that ties with their parents’ territories of origin do weaken, it is also true that the group representations in such cases may span a continuum “from over-identification with the host country to over-identification with ‘home’, even if home represents a country they have never seen” (Dumon, 1979: 66). In the Catalan case, there is always the added possibility of identifying with the category ‘Spain’, with different meanings for everyone, but perfectly operational for anyone who wishes to make it the centre of their ethnolinguistic affiliation, particularly L1 Spanish individuals. In any case, these identity-related representations need to be studied and followed with maximum interest and rigour. Because they are dynamic, they constitute a cognitive-emotional object that changes and is sensitive to the remainder of the sociocultural ecosystem.

tion predominates, the shift toward Catalan cannot be viewed as having any social benefit. To the contrary, the opposite may well be true in their surroundings. So, they will decide to maintain Spanish at home and Catalan in public activities whenever this is necessary. The Catalan case, therefore, seems to be moving clearly in the direction of co-existence between at least two groups of L1, with maybe one-third of families being bilingual, in a context of a bilingualization of the population and each L1 group knowing the language of the other. Thus, it will be increasingly necessary to look deeper to understand the factors that ultimately affect citizens' language behaviours.

Among these factors, individuals' perceptions of their own language skills in real communication will be very important. A person who perceives that he or she is not competent, even when having good basic knowledge of a language, will tend to avoid using it unless absolutely necessary.¹⁷¹ This can occur much more often among individuals of allochthonous origin than among the Catalan autochthonous population, because the latter has experienced bilingualization for decades and generally sees itself as competent in Spanish, while the former have been exposed to the process of acquiring a second language for less time and generally could tend to think they will not be successful at using it, though this is patently false. If there is a desire to resolve this factor, therefore, the educational policy must plan the strategies required for colloquialization in Catalan among any L1 Spanish individuals who have little exposure and practice of oral Catalan.

The other major problem that will likely face L1 Spanish individuals in the near future is the conduct of the L1 Catalan group itself, if the latter adapts immediately and reflexively to any interlocutor that they happen to categorise as a non-Catalan speaker. Despite intergenerational change, there are grounds to believe that overall the autochthonous population still tend to follow a norm of adapting linguistically to an interlocutor to a much greater extent than the allochthonous origin population does, even when communicating with a portion of the latter group that is perfectly competent in Catalan, at least from a theoretical viewpoint. It is one thing, therefore, to know a language and another to decide—or *feel*—the functions in which you should use it or the interlocutors with whom to use it. Changing a long-established intergroup norm might be slow, but not impossible, if we consider the gradual bilingualization of the allochthonous origin population, which at the conscious level, in their

171 Argyle (1982) notes that “studies have shown that language fluency is a necessary condition for the adjustment of foreign students in the U.S.A., though there is also evidence that confidence in the use of language regardless of ability is just as important” (p. 64).

majority, does not appear averse to using Catalan with autochthonous individuals.¹⁷² Even so, the evolution will tend to be slow, particularly because of the propensity of language behaviour to become subconscious and because of the autochthonous population's own fear of the negative meaning that it may have for a Spanish-speaking interlocutor if they do not adapt to the allochthonous code. After all, such adaptation is viewed by most as expected and appropriate.¹⁷³ If there is a desire to push forward with a change in norms, therefore, the strategy for intervening must be based on an in-depth study of the problem, especially the representations and meanings associated with behaviours, and on the subsequent design of actions to produce the most appropriate cognitive change, tailoring these actions to make them suitable in each context. However, we must not overlook how difficult it is for actions taken by political power to have a direct effect on changing the social behaviours of populations. Group and interaction domains can often be highly resistant to influences at the political level. Though these levels are interrelated in the ecosystem, the existence of each is partly autonomous and there can easily be contradictory or discordant behaviours.

4.1.7. A model of language organization

The “construction of a viable language community within the modern European concert”, as Lluís Aracil said in 1983, is not an easy or smooth path to follow. Indeed, as Aracil himself had previously indicated, it is more of an ‘adventure’. And it is an adventure that has historically not enjoyed the best of

172 As Bourdieu & Wacquant have acknowledged, “The habitus can also be transformed via socio-analysis, i.e., via an awakening of consciousness and a form of ‘self-work’ that enables the individual to get a handle on his or her dispositions” (1992: 133). The key to changing norms, therefore, seems to lie in becoming conscious of the phenomenon, in justifying and legitimating the new conduct and, above all, in ensuring positive acceptance by the other affected participants. For instance, the change in the use of the word ‘xampany’ [‘champagne’ in Catalan] to the word ‘cava’, which has been imposed by European circumstances, took place at a fast pace not only in institutionalized communications, but also among the population. The modification was likely seen as legitimate and it may even carry a weight of ‘local’ pride because France refused to give permission to use the appellation. In this case, however, the change was not viewed as contentious by anyone, so it could be adopted smoothly once people were made aware of it.

173 Though it may be hard to imagine because of where one lives, the norms of language use between different groups can take a variety of shapes. For example, Gumperz (1985: 38) notes cases in which each interlocutor speaks his or her own variety, because “to adopt the other’s way of speaking would count as discourteous and constitute a breach of local etiquette”, while this behaviour, by contrast, is rarely followed in the Catalan-speaking area. What may be viewed as perfectly normal in one place may prove extremely rare in another.

contexts. To the contrary, as we have seen in previous chapters, it has been pursued in the most complex situations imaginable. Moving with increasing intensity from a case of political subordination, coupled with tension with the elites controlling a state, to co-existence in the same territory with a numerous population that has come precisely from the language group that enjoyed the exclusive favour of that state, has produced an undeniably intricate reality. A single political context can lead to different evolutions of the overarching sociolinguistic and sociopolitical situation depending on the configuration of the population's representations and behaviours. The political context of today's autonomous community of Catalonia could give rise to a process of language normalization that is faster, more accepted and less tense, depending on whether the makeup of the population is largely autochthonous in origin, or even partly made up of immigrants from other states, or it is of mixed composition, as it is at present, with a very significant number of people whose L1 is precisely the code that occupied the institutionalized functions that corresponded to Catalan. Thus, proceeding with the reintroduction of the territory's own code in the public functions that legitimately correspond to it—an event normally viewed with satisfaction and pride by nearly all human language communities—can be experienced uneasily or even tensely by part of the population because their code is losing pre-eminence, in the case of the allochthonous origin population. It may also be experienced with confusion and trepidation by the autochthonous population when they perceive that many individuals with whom they have now lived side by side for many years express incomprehension at the process. For the process or adventure to reach a successful conclusion, therefore, it is necessary to pay close attention to the opinions and feelings of the population and use education, sensitivity and tact in order to remove any misunderstandings that may exist and to make adaptation to the new situation easy for individuals who have farther to go, while also avoiding as far as possible the creation of unnecessary difficulties.

In the Catalan case, for example, the major options under discussion can be boiled down essentially to two. The first stresses the role of Catalan as the primary public language because it is the language of the country and is thus entitled to this role, while Spanish would become the second language in these areas, being used whenever necessary at the public level and having its full use safeguarded at the individual level. The second position, by contrast, supports a model that is more firmly grounded on an official bilingualism ensuring strict parity at the governmental level in Catalonia. According to the second standpoint, Spanish should be also considered a 'proper' language of Catalonia and it should have *exactly* the same official status and public use as Catalan.

Once the public presence of the two languages has been officially established, the discussion should focus on the levels and functions of use that correspond to the pair. Within the international terminology, the first option is characterized by granting a *certain degree* of *territorial* pre-eminence to the historically autochthonous code, while the second one is based on a strict model of the *personality* of language rights and the correlative obligation of institutions to use both languages in their communications to individuals and to society. Both options are possible and present in other cases, so how can we know which option is the most appropriate to meet the aims of language normalization in a situation as complex as the one faced by Catalan?

To assess policies, it is important to examine their effects. What would be the consequences of the two models? Generally, a quick and simplified assessment is that the more *territorial* model, in the Swiss or Belgian style, leads to a clearly pre-eminent public use of the prioritized code and a normally effective bilingualization of any population whose L1 is another language, while the option of a strictly egalitarian *personal* official bilingualism is appropriate when the aim is for no language to be politically prioritized and for the language groups in the society to continue being functionally monolingual. In the second case, the need for individuals to become effectively bilingual disappears because each language group, in theory, has *all* functions within reach in its own language. It would be as if the political institutions wanted to be a neutral factor within the overall ecosystem and therefore left how the sociolinguistic situation of each group would evolve in the future in the hands of the remaining differential variables of each group. In the Catalan case, this second option is defended by a portion of the allochthonous origin population. But what would be its likely effects in the future?

Any analysis needs to take an ecodynamic perspective that enables us to view the problem globally. As Leon Dion says, “To correctly assess the soundness of a language policy in a given context, we must consider not only its effects on the language variables, taken strictly, but also on the cultural, economic and political variables on which it is often predominantly based and which, in the final analysis, determine its outcomes” (1981: 30). The first element to bear in mind is the starting point. In this case, it is one characterized by major effects from prior sociopolitical ecosystems that have produced a considerable asymmetry between the language competences and uses of the groups in contact. Also, as we know, intergroup relations tend to occur largely in Spanish for many interlocutors—with the intergenerational consequences that ensue—and Spanish is still clearly predominant in the communications of official state-wide organizations and many other private ones. We must over-

lay this state of affairs with a constitutional framework at the political level, which is characterized by asymmetry in the treatment of the various languages of Spain and clearly favours Spanish.¹⁷⁴ In practice, the central government and institutions adopt a model of language organization that has effects like those of the *territorial* model mentioned earlier, that is, the clear legitimation and prioritization of the official code and the necessary, effective and clearly required bilingualization of individuals of other languages who are also citizens of the state. This model is mitigated only by some use and acceptance of Catalan in specific areas of the peripheral administration of the state, in the territory of the autonomous community. In the case of central institutions, however, not even the personal right of the Catalan citizen to address them in his or her code is recognised. His or her bilingualization is taken for granted and is, in fact, required. Given these supracontextual factors, what would be the effect of choosing the second model of language policy in Catalonia? We would have an autochthonous group that has been necessarily and effectively bilingualised in Catalan and Spanish, but in an ecosystem with an extremely high presence of Spanish in public communication by any official statewide or non-official body and the mandatory daily use of Spanish in numerous functions. And we would have allochthonous origin groups that had likely only studied Catalan as a subject at school—as there would be a network of schools using Spanish as their sole language of instruction—and that would be able to use Spanish everywhere and in all functions, and this language would be predominant in public communication (television, films, radio, the press, books, advertising, product labelling, etc.) and in everyday contact with a peer group accustomed to speaking with individuals of this origin largely in Spanish. Given the present residential segregation and the completeness of functions for Spanish that would exist in Catalonia, how many people of immigrant origin would even begin to feel a need to have an adequate communicative mastery of Catalan at all levels, let alone be able to use it effectively, in practice, in social life?¹⁷⁵ If it were not needed for work because of the habitual use of Spanish in those functions, which could not be regulated in favour of Catalan because of the ‘neutrality’ of the Catalan government in language aspects owing to this model’s implicit freedom for organizations in language matters, there would be an exponential increase in the perception that even the subject

174 See Vernet (1994) and Ninyoles (1994).

175 We need to recall that, as Edwards says, “Bilingualism *can* be a stable condition, but only when there exist important domains of use for each language. [...] [P]eople do not maintain two languages for ever, when one is sufficient in all contexts” (1985: 71-72).

of Catalan at school was a useless ‘imposition’. With groups that are *de facto* asymmetrically bilingualized, might it one day be possible for them to relate to one another in the code that is less well-known by the two groups, namely Catalan in this case? Accordingly, what would be the direction of the inevitable and advisable merger of the different populations? Obviously not toward a social evolution that favoured the interpersonal and intergenerational use of Catalan, which would face enormous challenges even to achieve greater use in non-official institutionalized communications. Given Spain’s current constitutional framework—which, coupled with the historically inherited reality, is driving toward a *de jure* and *de facto* bilingualization of non-Spanish-speaking populations—this model is shown to be entirely inadequate for a normalization process like that of Catalan, which started from such a weak and adverse situation.¹⁷⁶

Everything seems to indicate, therefore, that the most appropriate alternative is a model based, at a minimum, on the pre-eminence of Catalan in public communications—which would, in fact, only be those originating in the territory of Catalonia—and in the recognition of personal rights for the two languages. How can this model be put into practice? Notice that the chosen option is based on a mixture of principles. It is *partially territorial*¹⁷⁷ in the sense that it gives priority to Catalan in official and non-official institutionalized communications, but without radically excluding Spanish, and it is *personal* to the extent that it gives people the right to be attended in whichever language they choose. This may allow apparently contradictory objectives to be met, namely enabling the recovery of public communication in Catalan, while taking care not to pose unnecessary obstacles for L1 adult Spanish speakers and, at the same time, assisting the latter to adapt gradually to the context. The fundamental action, therefore, must be directed at organizations, so that they will tend to use Catalan as the primary language of public communication and as

176 Indeed, it is a commonly observed constant in officially bilingual political organizations that effective bilingualization generally occurs only among speakers of a minority L1 or an L1 of less communicative utility.

177 Arguably, the principle of territoriality for language rights can be equivalent to the concept of *protected spaces* in natural ecological systems. It is about preserving a given ecosystem so that a specific mode of language organization can continue existing there with minimal adaptive changes. In the Catalan case, a potential third way—to avoid the strict territoriality or personality of language rights—might lie in the principle of *functionality*, that is, the non-hierarchical functional distribution of the codes according to, for instance, the area of communication, i.e., local, supralocal or international. In actual fact, this situation is quite common in many organizations: all of the most usual local communicative activity is in Catalan, while all messages aimed at the rest of Spain are in Spanish, and communicative relations with other countries use English.

their normal working language and yet also respond to people with whom they have relations in the code of the latter's choice. The intervention must be taken mainly from an institutional, not an individual, perspective. We must move from the rights of individuals to the *obligations of organizations*, distinguishing between natural persons and 'legal' persons. The latter must be the focus of the intervention, while also articulating specific actions for the resignification and change of intergroup behaviours at the informal everyday level.

As the various actions are drawn up, it is necessary to keep the separation of three fundamental levels very clear: competence, behaviour, and representations. For a language policy to be appropriate overall, it must achieve positive results at *all* three levels, but especially at the third level of representations. In a situation as complex as the one in Catalonia, it would be not only a mistake but also a potential risk for the future success of the normalization process itself, if competence in Catalan is successfully pushed forward, and behaviour is as well to some extent, and yet at a minimum, legitimacy, sympathy and affection are not successfully developed—with sometimes even hostility and hatred being generated instead—toward the historic code of the country in the representations of the population as a whole.¹⁷⁸ Catalan can easily make headway in competence and to a certain degree in mandatory uses and yet flounder in representations. As we saw in section 2.1.3, it is crucial not to forget that individuals make decisions about their behaviour fundamentally at the level of representations. Preferential attention to this level, therefore, is unavoidable if society wants the adventure of normalization to meet with success.

If we turn to the remaining territories within the Catalan language area currently under the sovereignty of the Spanish state, they all have special features that make them distinct and give them their own rhythm and aspirations. As Vallverdú indicated some time ago, "It is unrealistic to expect the set of

178 Bastide (1977), for instance, warns of the results of an intervention that is felt to be coercive compared to another perceived as free: "Forced acculturation will express itself through 1) the proliferation of conflicts and 2) the intensification of phenomena of disaggregation and greater operational speed, while voluntary, slower acculturation allows the restructuring phenomena to operate at the same time" (p. 56). The dilemma between an intervention grounded more in persuasion and one based on explicit regulation is also addressed by Dion: "Persuasion is the way to make a preference generally accepted, but it is often not very effective and can consequently contribute to inflaming rather than allaying the concerns within a language group which planning seeks to promote. By contrast, if coercion often appears as the only way to obtain results, it should therefore be framed by carefully adopted principles and it is likely to trigger the anger of the dominant language group, potentially leading to undesirable consequences" (1981: 29). It is probably necessary to find a balance between the two strategies, not using compulsory regulations if they are not required and, in any event, acting within an optimal framework of regulation and cooperation and facilitation (see Bastardas, 1994).

language policy measures that apply to Catalonia to be easily implemented in other territories of the Catalan language” (1979: 45). As I have indicated, the starting point in Valencia is still much weaker than in Catalonia because inter-generational shift is occurring within the autochthonous group itself and there seems to be a prevalent collective representation to see themselves as an indistinct subset of the entity ‘Spain’. In these circumstances, the language policy is also negatively affected and even the measures that are adopted in favour of language normalization, which seem very minor if we compare them to Catalonia, are met with incomprehension and opposition among certain groups within Valencia. With an eye toward the future, the process of recovering the autochthonous code does not appear able to make effective progress if the political power does not take the initiative and at least makes it the language of instruction for a minimum of half of the school subjects, to safeguard its easy acquisition and make it prestigious again. At the same time, there should be an effective impetus in the regional and local administrations so that their example can encourage private commerce and business to use it on signage, on forms, and in speaking. Also, the regional and local media—radio and television—should contribute fully to this effort. If the language changes functions, speakers will also be able to change representations. The path ought to be similar in the Balearic Islands.

4.2. THE SUPRACONTEXTS AFFECTING THE NORMALIZATION OF CATALAN

There has been an overall fragmentation in our general attitude to reality. This leads us to focus always on particular problems, even when they are significantly related to a broader context.

DAVID BOHM & F. D. PEAT

4.2.1. Spain, a unilingual or multilingual state?

For the adventure of linguistic normalization or revitalization to reach a successful conclusion, it is not only a question of what may happen in Catalonia and other territories of the Catalan language. It also depends on events and ideas that may be predominant in wider contexts. Today more than ever, it is

obvious that no human community can live in isolation and that interrelations among the different parts of the planet will tend to become increasingly closer.

As Catalonia and the vast majority of the Catalan language area today form part of the politically sovereign organization called 'Spain', the vicissitudes of Spain will tend to have an extraordinarily important influence. For long periods, the structure and ideology of the ruling elites of the Spanish state had a highly negative impact on the social organization of linguistic communication in the Catalan-speaking area. Nevertheless, Spain's current constitutional framework has made possible the recovery of some degree of autonomous political power that should not be belittled. It has also permitted the process of language normalization to begin again. Clearly the principles governing the makeup of the state re-established in 1978 have had an overall effect on the entire Catalan language area, encouraging or hampering the development of many aspects of collective life in these communities.

As we know, the language arrangements enshrined in Spain's present constitution are based on the Spanish language's ongoing role as the only officially recognized *state language*. Yet other languages, in what was a positive change from the past, are also allowed to have official status, though this status is territorially limited and they are not recognized equally as *official state languages* or even as *national languages*, using the nomenclature with which the Swiss constitution also refers to Romansch, the language with the least number of speakers in Switzerland. In addition to an absence of practical or symbolic declarations, all of which are important, there are also no laws or regulations to recognize the right of speakers of other *Spanish* languages to use their language and receive responses in it from the institutions of *their* state, except in the case that these bodies are established in the autonomous community where the code of these citizens has official status. And even this exception is often not applied in practice or only in a confusing manner.

Consequently, the effects of this model are extremely important at the internal level of the state and externally as well. The existing interpretation that allows Spanish to be considered the only *official language of the state* not only leads to the prohibited use of other language codes of Spain's population in all relations between the public and the central administration, but it also *de facto* regulates the pre-eminent model of linguistic communication in non-official activities and relations at the level of Spain. The arrangements in force, therefore, maintain the fiction of a linguistically uniform population in the minds of those who are in charge of organizations that act throughout the entire sovereign territory of the state. As a result, there is no provision for an administrative organization that can adequately respond to the diversity of codes that

exist in Spain. It is not simply that ministries, the Spanish parliament, the courts, large public companies and so on do not attempt to adapt their structure to the reality of a multilingual Spain; nor do, in general, private communications companies, commercial businesses, service-providers, etc. Even in functions for which it would be very easy to take concrete action in response to the plurilingual phenomenon of the population, such as forms and affixed labels, it rarely occurs. Unsurprisingly, many individuals residing in this area of political sovereignty can find it easy to conclude that this is *not their* state.

This impression is equally confirmed by the external effects brought about by the current constitutional framework or, in any event, by its current interpretation and application. To the outside world, Spain is normally presented as an undifferentiated language unit. Thus, when Spain joined the European Community, only one language was added to the others in the supranational framework: Spanish. It did not occur to anybody to add any of the other languages spoken by hundreds and thousands of other citizens—not even, as I recall, did the direct political representatives of their regional institutions speak up. Once the problem was put on the table, however, the state turned its back. Recognition for Catalan has either been rejected or won only minimal concessions to have the same functions as other European languages—some with fewer speakers—or even simply to become part of European language programmes. Because the state responsible—in this case, Spain—did not request it and does not request it now, the Catalan language community does not formally exist at the official European level on a footing of equality with the other communities.

At this point in history, it is genuinely incomprehensible, given the models of reasonably or very successful plurilingual regulation,¹⁷⁹ why the elites who decide on the Spanish—and Catalan—political makeup maintain a situation that neither encourages nor secures allegiance to a newly re-established state, but rather perpetuates the unease and sense of alienation and of ungrounded discrimination among a large portion of the populations whose L1 is not Spanish. Why would it not be symbolically attractive for the clearly majority population of the state to have a plural language organization that welcomes and integrates demolinguistically minority populations? Why should a powerful, established and internationally widespread culture like the Spanish culture have anything to fear from this? Why can the Spanish-speaking majority not

179 See, for example, Bastardas & Boix (1994), Consell Consultiu (1983) and McRae (1983 and 1986).

feel generous and open? How would the sociocultural ecosystem of Spain be changed if it recognized itself as an egalitarian plurilingual state? The adaptation that the majority group would have to make would obviously be minimal or none and there would be no risk to its historical continuity.¹⁸⁰

It is very likely that making the other languages of Spain officially equal would also not lessen the motivation of the demographically smaller groups to know Spanish, as its need and usefulness is evident in many areas and communications among non-official organizations and between the people of Catalonia and people in the rest of the state. This includes business and cultural relations as well as everyday friendships. In addition, the obvious primacy of Spanish in the audio-visual sphere and mass communications in general equally ensures that L1 non-Spanish populations will have exposure to Spanish and will therefore develop competence, further assisted by the enormous exposure to Spanish in the normal social life of these populations, who are often in contact with people of Spanish-speaking origins who live in other language areas of Spain.

However, the fact that the population of the historically non-Spanish-speaking areas is very competent in Spanish has nothing to do with the fact that a state does not provide services or respond to them in the code of each nationality. My knowledge of Spanish—or, for example, English or French—should under no circumstances nullify my right to be attended in the official code of my language group by the administration of a state shared among other human groups. The notion of a ‘common language’, which is often understood by intellectuals and by the courts of the majority group as a justification to ban the use of other Spanish languages in and with the state administration, does not need to be thought of in this exclusionary sense. Egalitarian language regulations can perfectly well exist in all the central bodies of the state, precisely *because they are common* to all citizens. One language can, in practice, be more likely to perform the function of an *interlingua* among different language communities. In Spain, clearly this is and would be Spanish.

180 The current organization of linguistic communication in Spain contrasts sharply with the reigning philosophy in Switzerland: “Our Swiss conception of the state, and the constitution itself, do not recognize the juridical notion of linguistic minorities, nor that of legal protection of these minorities. On the contrary, our public law is founded on the principle of equality of the national languages recognized by the Confederation. German, French, and Italian are moreover considered as the three official languages, and placed on a footing of equality. Indeed, the special character of our federal state consists precisely in that the Swiss populations speaking different languages live in common in a state that gathers them into a single nation. These different groups cultivate in full liberty their language of origin and the specific mentality that derives from it” (*Feuille fédérale*, 1942, I, 274 [cited in McRae, 1983: 121]).

A serious analyst cannot fail to notice the differences between the sociolinguistic situations of the Spanish and Swiss cases. In principle, the proportions and number of groups are similar. In Switzerland, the German-language group is clearly the majority one, while French is in second place, the Italian speakers follow at a greater distance, and there are even fewer speakers of Rhaeto-Romansch. In broad terms, this breakdown corresponds to Spain, where the Castilian/Spanish-speaking group is the majority one, Catalan lies in second place, Galician comes next and, lastly, with fewer speakers, there is Basque. However, there are distinguishing factors of no small importance. While not ruling out the ideal of moving closer to the sound principles of Swiss multilingualism, we must recognize that establishing the exact same model in Spain *today* would probably not be readily accepted by the population or by its representatives. We would need to see where exactly the problems are and gradually move with sure and effective steps toward a solution closer to the Swiss or Belgian model, albeit adapted to the Spanish reality. The first major difference—in fact, the most fundamental element to be changed—lies in the different ethno-politico-linguistic representations of the smaller groups that are held by demographically majority groups. While the German speakers in Switzerland do not appear to hold any attitude against recognizing the equality of the codes of smaller groups at the federal level, the ruling language ideologies of the Spanish-speaking tradition in Spain do not take the same perspective. While the subject has been studied very little, it lies at the heart of one of the major problems standing in the way of a historical solution to the language question in Spain. As Linz said (1975), “Many of the difficulties in creating anything like a multilingual and/or multinational state in Spain are derived from the nature of the Castilian language and the sense of identity of those who do not speak anything but Castilian” (p. 374). Like many other demolingually important human groups that have been at the centre of the construction of a state to which other ethnolinguistically distinct groups have typically been annexed or integrated, the Spanish-speaking group has not been historically subordinate. Rather it has subordinated others. Because it has controlled the structures of the state, it has not generally undergone bilingualization. Historically, it has been exposed to a rather imperialist discourse full of self-pride, not to an ideology of solidarity and cooperation with smaller groups. The prevailing idea that ‘Spain’ still has of itself is shaped according to the concept of a unitary and homogeneous nation-state. Though new phrasing along the lines of the term ‘nationalities’ was introduced into the current Spanish constitution, the inertia of previous mental dispositions has halted any generalised evolution in this respect. Clearly, the more neutral term of ‘autonomous community’ or even the

neologism ‘autonomies’—used not as a quality, but for the existing administrative structure of the autonomous communities—is now used abundantly and has completely blurred the conceptual overhaul implied, at least to some degree, by the new Constitution. For example, attempts as timid as gaining acceptance and approval to use all of Spain’s languages on a footing of equality in an annual session of the Senate met with enormous difficulties. At least in terms of its representations, the population of the Spanish-speaking area still seems very far not only from accepting language equality but also from the Swiss idea that “the recognition of a national language implies a guarantee for its existence and the preservation of its traditional area, as well as a federal interest in maintaining the national languages” (McRae, 1983: 170).

A second major difference would be the different distribution pattern of the population in Spain over the course of the twentieth century. While the language groups in Switzerland are heavily concentrated in specific territories, the demographically majority language group in Spain has spread practically to every other language area, with the partial exception of Galicia, which has been a centre of emigration. As noted earlier, this has been especially true in Catalonia, but also in Valencia and the Balearic Islands and even the Basque Country, where many people of Spanish-speaking origin have settled permanently. This hampers the application of a language policy based on the exclusive principle of the *territoriality* of language rights, at least over the short and medium terms. The principle of *territoriality*, in the Swiss and Belgian cases, implies that the population of a language group moving to another area with a different language must adapt linguistically to the code of the territory where they have gone to live. They cannot demand attention from the territorial administration or school system in their L1. They can only obtain it in the language of the territory. Applied generally, this principle gives everyone equal rights. It is the same for a German speaker moving to the French language area as it is for a French speaker going to live in the official German language area. If the principle were applied to Spain, it would imply most strikingly that just as a Catalan speaker could not demand language rights if he or she moves to the autonomous community of Madrid, a Spanish speaker could not do so either when going to live in Catalonia. The principle of territoriality is viewed as one of the foundations of language peace. This is because it safeguards the stability of language groups by giving them a secure and protected habitat, even against changes of residence by other populations within the same state that might endanger their cultural and linguistic continuity. Within this legal framework, populations with different languages and demographics can live peacefully in shared states without any fear of being assimilated by larger

groups. The implementation of this structure of language organization in Spain would, if it ever happened, have to be evolutionary and gradual. For this reason, the proposal for a mixed schema of territoriality/personality in language rights, as discussed earlier in the case of Catalonia, could move the current situation of non-Spanish languages forward. Yet at the same time, it would offer gradual adaptation for the Spanish-speaking population living outside their historic territory, leaving room for a future evolution open to decisions reached by consensus among the affected populations.

Another aspect that differentiates the Swiss case from the Spanish case lies in the characteristics of the language codes themselves. The Swiss case has the particular feature that co-existence is—with the exception of the smallest language, Romansch—among languages that correspond to consolidated states and cultures that are sufficiently numerous to be quite self-sufficient in all or nearly all aspects of everyday life. In addition, the specific prestige given historically to French in all of Europe has traditionally made the population of the German-speaking area in Switzerland look on the learning of French by their children as a very positive thing, because they can acquire another important and prestigious language. The case is not the same in Spain, where the representations that Catalan—or Galician or Basque—can arouse in most of the Spanish-speaking population—particularly those who have not moved from their historical territory—will not tend to be like the ones that French produces in Switzerland's German speakers. It should also be noted that the demographically larger group in Switzerland is in a peculiar linguistic situation. As noted earlier, this is characterized by a diglossic distribution of quite distinct language varieties. Though standard German is adopted as the language of highly formal written and spoken institutionalized communications, the predominant Swiss community uses a set of varieties that are structurally quite far removed from the standard in its colloquial and semiformal spoken communication. This is true to the point that in spite of structural similarities or rather correspondences, there is no easy mutual comprehension between a speaker of Swiss-German who has not been schooled in the standard and another who is using the standard. As a result, the relation of identification between the Swiss majority group and its 'official' language—viewed as a code that must be learnt at school by each generation, since the population never abandons their own vernaculars with their children—may tend to be quite different from the one that can exist between the L1 Spanish population and the form and idea of 'Spanish' or being a 'Spaniard'. In the latter case, the official standard language is seen as the 'natural' and proper code. By making the equation 'one state = one language', this language becomes the 'normal' language that should be

used by *all* citizens of Spain. By contrast, however, the structural distances between the languages in the Spanish case—except for Basque—are much smaller than in the Swiss case and in many other cases of multilingualism. While a thorough learning of the other languages may not be easy, this does facilitate a minimal development of familiarity with Catalan and Galician by many educated Spanish speakers.

Turning to the problem of intercommunication among distinct language communities in a single state, the political solution in the Swiss case is for each language group to promote the learning of the other groups' languages. Albeit imperfectly, this is achieved more between German speakers and French speakers, however, than between these two groups and Italian speakers, who more often adapt to the other groups because of their own smaller numbers. The issue of communication between communities has certainly not been definitively resolved in Switzerland, above all when the new factor of globalizing markets has made it necessary to know other languages, particularly English. Today it can happen that you will find it easier in Bern to communicate in English than in French, and many German-speaking parents may be more in favour of their children learning English than French. There have even been proposals, though apparently not entirely well-received ones, to declare English the intercommunication language of Switzerland, given that its character as an exogenous code would not represent the imposition of any Swiss group over another and it would also facilitate international communication. In the Spanish case, the situation is obviously different, because the knowledge of Spanish today spans the entire territory of Spain and its use as a general language of communication is deeply entrenched and functional, quite often even among non-Spanish language communities. If one decided to maintain the function of Spanish for intercommunication, however, it would be necessary to take into account, as I have said before, that this decision would not negate the obligation of a linguistically egalitarian state to safeguard the official use of all Spanish languages in common central institutions and to regulate their presence in the official and non-official communications issued to the entire territory of the state (e.g., the media, commercial products, etc.) in order to promote service to the non-Spanish language populations in their own language. As a fundamental principle, the existence of an intercommunication language should never endanger the ecosystem of languages that do not perform this function and, therefore, never imperil their continuity. Never should a 'common language' surpass its strict functions of intercommunication in well-established and regulated instances, nor should it ever, in any circumstances, invade the communication space of other codes.

Whether this is the solution for the linguistic complexity of Spain or there is another one, it does not appear impossible to ‘denationalise’ the state, making it plurinational and ending its identification with only one of the ethnolinguistic groups that make up Spain. To do away with a uninational and unilingual state might also be to do away at least with the political minoritization of demolingually smaller communities, which do not see why they should be attacked aggressively by the state of which they form a part. At the same time, it would hugely encourage a reduction in intergroup tensions when the non-majority groups see a better chance of being part of a state that recognizes them on a footing of equality and does not interfere in their autochthonous sociocultural ecosystem. In the Catalan case in particular, a solution that officially and publicly prioritized the Catalan language so that it could regain the functions that historically pertain to it, together with the maintenance of language rights for Spanish speakers so as to promote their gradual, conflict-free adaptation, all within a Spanish context that was moving toward an egalitarian recognition of other languages at central levels and toward the regulation of a clear public multilingualism, could be broadly acceptable and might, to a large degree, improve coexistence among the different national language groups.¹⁸¹

4.2.2. Language normalization, the European Union and globalization

The communication challenge of organizations and human groups with different languages is not a purely Spanish issue. It is also a problem for Europe and now the world. Given the current techno-economic revolution that is rendering former spaces of communicative relation obsolete and superseding them at the continental and/or supra-continental scale, the imperative need for common language tools is becoming greater than ever. An increasing number of countries in suprastate bodies make it increasingly difficult to sustain the institutional plurilingualism of these organizations, which was instituted to preserve

¹⁸¹ It seems a plausible hypothesis that conflict diminishes in those cases in which the members of two different language groups find themselves in a context in which they face similar pressures to become bilingual in the code of the other group. If, for example, the autochthonous population in Catalonia must become bilingual in Spanish because of the utility of Spanish in many functions of supralocal relation, but the allochthonous origin population also has to develop Catalan for many everyday functions, the conflict would tend to be less than if only the autochthonous population had to learn Spanish, as happened previously.

the unilingualism of each member. The solution to this problem will probably be to move toward the establishment of an effective and economical supra-language for worldwide intercommunication. In the absence of formal decisions by international political or cultural organizations, this role *de facto* is now performed by English, while each language community maintains sufficiently stable ecosystems with the maximum number of functions possible for each language in order to avoid futile conflicts over the question.¹⁸²

As Norbert Elias says, “The nation state’s supreme function as a survival unit diminishes in an era of atomic weapons, supra-national economic markets and steadily shrinking travel time”, and increasingly “humankind as a whole emerges step-by-step as the most likely survival unit” (1991: 140). This shift poses major questions for human groups with language normalization processes underway. With the gradual globalization of human existence, ideological patterns that were valid for a now bygone world become obsolete even though new world views suitable to a new present and future have yet to emerge. However, representations that have based the construction of national languages on the narrow perspective of existing nation-states must be reviewed considering new developments. The earlier defences of individual monolingualism are now entering into crisis, paradoxically for being able to facilitate the continuity of the language group. If demographically smaller language communities do not become adequately polyglot, they may face an internal crisis as individuals see the language needs of the new global age and perceive a dichotomy between their own language and an outside language or languages.¹⁸³ Within the framework of an international unity that nonetheless safeguards diversity, smaller language

182 In fact, Lluís-Vicent Aracil wrote about this in 1965 in the context of Europe: “Above all, we need to avoid a proliferation of language conflicts. We will need to pursue language normalization at the European scale on two complementary levels. First, obviously a supranational language must be chosen and we must ensure its most appropriate working in the interests of the whole. Second, we will simultaneously need to safeguard the normal and autonomous survival of each *national* language. [...] Thus, to communicate with anyone, it is enough for each individual to know only *two* languages: his or her own and an interlanguage common to all. [...] This means, however, that the coexistence of national languages and a supranational *interlanguage* will be not hierarchical” (1982: 34, 37 and 38) (Free translation).

183 On this subject, Mackey observes that “within the sovereign state, individuals faced with such alternatives [minority language *versus* supranational languages] may opt either for their own betterment or for that of their ethnic group—since the two no longer seem to coincide” (1991: 57). In the strict case of Catalonia, the establishment of Catalan as a school language appears to be quite well secured, though the population is likely not to want to lose sound competence in Spanish and will probably ask increasingly for a good practical knowledge of English as early as primary education, and that of other major European languages, such as German or French, at other levels. Indeed, this internationalization does not seem as risky in Catalonia as it does in Valencia and the Balearic Islands, where the population

communities must now prepare effectively for this transition and begin examining imaginative solutions in all areas, most urgently in education, if they are to ensure the internal prevalence of their own codes in internal public functions, so they can survive and be effective in a world that is becoming more interrelated and interdependent with every passing day.

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might treat the decision as a dilemma between Catalan and, say, English. In Catalonia, it may even be beneficial to introduce broad mastery of another code for external communication.

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PART II

Dosis sola facit venenum.
(The dose alone makes the poison.)

PARACELSUS

Biological and linguistic diversity. Transdisciplinary explorations for a socioecology of languages¹

1.1. INTRODUCTION

1.1.1. A warning

As the new century begins, humanity can approach the question of preserving biological diversity and linguistic diversity with a certain unity of purpose. Today there is a widespread awareness that many animal and plant species are threatened by extinction, and a growing realization as well that many of the linguistic varieties that our species has created throughout its development are in danger of disappearing. Given the simultaneous nature of these two large-scale phenomena and the apparent coincidences of the processes at work, it is tempting to conceptualize them together. Equally, given the current state of development of the two fields, it is even more tempting to transfer categories and ideas from the field of biology to the field of linguistics, since the theoretical conceptualization of the biological phenomenon has made major advances which have led to the organization of conservationist movements and the proposal of strategies for intervention.

Though a firm believer in transdisciplinarity and the mutual nurturing of knowledge I am nonetheless aware that an uncritical transfer of ideas and concepts from one field to another is unacceptable. We should be particularly careful to avert the danger of a biologicistic reification of linguistics, something which this discipline had not been able to avoid at earlier stages of its development. We must explore the immense potential of the concept of interdisciplinarity but without falling into blind mimetism which, instead of helping us to describe and understand more accurately the phenomena that interest us, could lead to the construction of theoretical scenarios which have their own internal logic but are not entirely suited to the ontology of the facts we are examining. As the physicist David Bohm said, “A theory is primarily a form of

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insight, i.e. a way of looking at the world, and not a form of *knowledge* of how the world is". We must always be aware of the risk of mistaking constructed representations of reality for the reality itself. In any field we must be conceptually alert in order to avoid later misconceptions and problems, especially in areas that are particularly sensitive for humans.

1.1.2. Differences and coincidences between objects

One of our first tasks is to define the differences between the objects that concern us. On the one hand we have biological species, sets of organisms that belong to 'nature'; on the other we have linguistic varieties, established socio-communicative codes and behaviours of human beings, ascribable, therefore, to the ambit of 'culture'. However keen we may be to apply a systems theory approach to these two types of objects, and even though we may find specific similarities in their internal organization and in their relationship with their contexts, it is very clear that there are major differences between the characteristics and properties of biological systems and the systems of communicative behaviour of a particular evolved species. On the one hand we have genetic organization and biological development, and on the other, cerebral cognition and interpersonal and social behaviours which in fact are products of the ways in which we experience the genetic and biological endowment. So our objects of study are 'integrated' in the organisms themselves and in their interactions, though they correspond to different levels and probably require different theoretical representations to give a full account of their peculiarities.

Whereas biological diversity is the product of evolution, that is, a complex sequence of chance genetic combinations inside specific ecosystems, linguistic diversity corresponds fundamentally to the socio-cognitive and experiential vicissitudes of a particular biological species—one that appears to have greater brain power than others. Indeed, not only do the two elements differ constitutively, but the conditions of their existence are also very different. If biological objects are controlled fundamentally by genetic chance and the biosphere, linguistic objects are also controlled by the sociocultural experiences of their speakers; this fact differentiates clearly between the reproductive aspects of the two. In their struggle to survive through history organisms are affected by their natural environments, while linguistic systems are additionally affected by the socio-economic and politico-cultural conditions of individuals, who are able to decide personally on the language to be transmitted to their successors. Similarly, given the greater flexibility of cultural reproduction, language

change will be faster than genetic change. Since linguistic varieties are products of human social mechanisms, they may be constricted to the decisions—conscious or unconscious—of humans, in the framework of their personal autonomy, whereas non-human biological species will be in general much more subject to instinctive programming. The reproduction of biological diversity is a matter in which the protagonists—the species—have little say, controlled as they are by contextual conditions. But in the reproduction and preservation of linguistic diversity the main actors are human beings themselves, humans endowed with awareness and emotions who, confronted with change in their sociocultural context, have to take decisions which will ultimately affect the continuity or demise of the linguistic diversity that has built up over human history.

The existence of important differences between natural and cultural objects does not necessarily mean that we cannot find interfaces of connection between the two theoretical fields or useful conceptual suggestions or adaptations for a fuller understanding of the nature of the level of language and communication. Indeed, the more exposure we linguists have to theoretical conceptualizations and research in the field of biology, the more interesting the contributions of the biologists will appear to us, especially as regards the potential of many biological approaches for the understanding of linguistic phenomena, in particular those deriving from the contact between distinct human groups and the ecological relations that languages maintain with their socio-cultural context.

This paper presents the preliminary results of an exercise in reading certain contributions to the study of biological diversity from a 'linguistic' viewpoint. Never overlooking for one moment the differences between the objects, we have nonetheless tried to extract theoretical and conceptual analogies that may contribute to the construction of a socioecology or a linguoecology. This study is provisional and exploratory and aims to generate debate. It is not considered to be a definitive product, but a stimulus for thought, imagination and creativity.

1.1.3. A general view of the conceptualization

Examining and understanding the conceptual adventure of biological ecology will be useful in the construction of a sociocultural ecology, not only because the main protagonists of this other, often less tangible part of the reality are also biological organisms themselves, but also because, with the due care we

mentioned above, many concepts and ideas that have taken form and become widespread in the study of the life of the biosphere are enormously rich in conceptual analogies and creative perspectives for the understanding of phenomena related to the life of linguistic aspects of human societies.

The concept of *ecology* itself, which has done so much to further our understanding of the existence, development and extinction of biological species, can provide interesting innovations in the linguistic field, and in the sociocultural field as a whole. The decision not to study linguistic objects and events as if they existed in a vacuum in isolation from other facts and phenomena but to see them as entities interrelated multidimensionally with their context is a huge step forward. The creation, then, of a '*linguistic ecology*' which analogously transfers "the study of relationships between organisms and their environment" (Brown, 1995: 18) to the level of the language behaviour of humans and promotes the study of the relations between language varieties and their geodemosociopolitical contexts may be illuminating for linguistics, which is still excessively centred on the code.

The ecological approach stresses the 'whole' rather than the parts, and makes us fully aware of the interrelation of phenomena of reality and of the key nature of these interdependencies inside the ecosystem in which the organisms themselves live, since in the systemic view—the basis of the ecological perspective—objects are principally networks of relationships embedded in larger networks (Capra, 1997: 37).

From the viewpoint of sociolinguistics and from that of general linguistics as well, the ecological metaphor is illuminating. On the one hand it allows us a better understanding of the vicissitudes of human systems of communication, and on the other it allows us to integrate these systems holistically in the world of social interaction, which they contribute to building (see Bastardas, 1996 and 1999).

In addition, the dynamic conceptualization of the ecosystems restores the temporal dimension to linguistic phenomena, a dimension often neglected by the mainstream approaches of the twentieth century. "Ecosystems can be seen more powerfully as sequences of events rather than as things in a place. [...] Ecosystems are process-oriented and more easily seen as temporally rather than spatially ordered" (Allen & H., 100). Rather than 'objects', then, there are events and processes, a fact that questions the still prevailing tendency in social and cultural sciences to treat statically and mechanically what exists as a meaning/action/emotion in human beings in society. The dynamic and ecosystemic perspective thus urges us to see reality as a process, not only as a 'structure'.

From an ecological perspective, evolution is always *coevolution*, since all organisms evolve interdependently with the others in their environment. Similarly, the evolution of human languages and verbal behaviours coevolve in conjunction with demographic, socio-economic, political, and technological events in their milieus. Languages may intervene in the configuration of the events that affect other phenomena, and these events may affect the organization of the languages. For example, the political configuration of a state may be affected by the distribution of the linguistic groups that compose it; at the same time the political decisions of this state may have an enormous effect on the existence of these linguistic groups.

Other concepts derived from the ecological perspective also offer conceptual clarifications that are useful for our understanding of sociolinguistic phenomena. For example, the differentiation between ‘population’ and ‘community’ is interesting. ‘Population’ denotes a particular species, but ‘community’ describes the set of species that coexist in a particular habitat. More specifically,

[...] the difference between a community and a mere collection of organisms is the accommodation that the different species make for each other. The community is not the presence of a particular set of organisms, it is the difference in the organisms because the other community members can be expected to be present. [...] A community at an instant is the embodiment of prior processes of accommodation, for example character displacement where a species has been selected to avoid direct confrontation with another species (Allen & Hoekstra, 1992: 127).

Transferred to the linguistic field, ‘population’ could be used to designate a specific first language group (L1), while ‘community’ would refer to those societies formed by distinct first language groups, with some degree of mutual influence and adaptation. In the case of Catalan, for example, we might have populations who have Catalan as the L1, or Spanish, or both of them, or other first languages. In the dimension of ‘community’ all these groups can adapt to the presence of others and evolve in ways which would never have occurred in the absence of the other group.

In Catalonia today, from phonetic aspirations in Catalan or excessively open vowels in Spanish to phenomena of bilingualization through contact or intergenerational substitution of the L1 inside a particular population are phenomena that an ecology of cultural communities must bear in mind. Indeed, I remember that Uriel Weinreich recommended that in the study of linguistic contacts a distinction should be made between L1 populations. In the case of Catalan—as in all other cases—we should ensure that studies make this distinc-

tion and thus offer more than just the compilation of data on, for example, the ability of the community as a whole to use Catalan, an important datum but one that may conceal more subtle processes at work at the level of populations. In the biological field, “the subdisciplines of population and community ecology are concerned with questions of how the abundance, distribution, and diversity of species are affected by interactions with other organisms and with the physical or abiotic environment” (Brown, 1995: 18); equally, sociolinguistic research can and should be carried out in a similar way at the sociocultural level.

This distinction between ‘population’ and ‘community’ also sheds light on the treatment of sets of humans who speak the same language but may present different relations in different communities. We may refer to the Catalan L1 population as a unit, but we should not forget that this population is distributed in communities which may have very different compositions and different dynamics, and so they need to be studied separately. As a result, as the bioecologists say, “one might expect populations to have a larger spatial scale than communities. Note how competition, a principal process inside communities, is a very local affair [...]. Interactions inside communities are generally slower than inside populations” (Allen & Hoekstra, 1992: 173). At the same time, “the past processes that built a community have become part of community structure” (Allen & Hoekstra, 1992: 128), a fact that might help us to understand the phenomenon of the persistence of the norms of intergroup use that favour Spanish and not Catalan in Catalonia itself, even among a large proportion of the new generation of subjects who have become bilingual. The present is clearly the fruit of historical events—political subordination, migrations, etc.—which may continue to determine, albeit indirectly, the reality of the groups that make up contemporary communities.

Another of the aspects in which the conceptualization of biological ecology seems to me to be interesting for the study and understanding of the evolution of linguistic diversity is the adoption of the notion of ‘model’ to formulate explanations of the functioning of the ecosystem, and in particular the idea of the ‘minimal model’.

The minimal model gives predictions from the smallest number of explanatory principles. [...] The model must be consistent with the data, and scientific progress is made when data invalidate the model. [...] Minimal models give generality and that is the hallmark of good science [...] Science is about organizing experience in a manageable way, the more manageable the better, and it may or may not relate to ultimate truth (Allen & Hoekstra, 1992: 24-25).

The results of modelling have been spectacular. Models have made it possible to push forward our understanding of the phenomena involved and offer unsuspected predictive power. Knowing the flows that control each particular ecosystem, biological ecology can, in many cases, predict the disruptions that would occur if certain environmental conditions were modified. If only sociolinguistics had reached this stage; but we started a long way behind, and in addition the objects and phenomena that we have to understand may vary widely (though sometimes this does not appear to be the case) and may evolve in very different ways: this obviously makes a rigorous prediction more difficult.

So, as Capra says,

[...] while behaviour in the physical domain is governed by cause and effect, the so-called 'laws of nature', behaviour in the social domain is governed by rules generated by the social system and often codified into law. The crucial difference is that social rules can be broken, but natural laws cannot. Human beings can choose whether and how to obey a social rule; molecules cannot choose whether or not they should interact (1997: 206).

Humans are therefore more *autonomous* in decisions on their sociocultural and therefore linguistic behaviours than the rest of the biological species, or than the biophysical level of humans themselves. Very probably, then, the socio-cognitive order will have to have concepts and theories that are different from those of the biophysical order, even though they must be integrated, and consilient (see Wilson, 1998), and mutually inspirational in order to imagine models for understanding reality. The great challenge facing sociolinguistics, then, is to develop the concepts necessary for the creation of these basic models that will allow us to understand—at least approximately—the developmental dynamics of the different types of existing situations, and, if necessary, to guide the interventions considered appropriate.

All this highlights the need to move towards a *socioecological* conceptualization which, being contextual, must include not only a process-oriented perspective, with open systems that are self-organized and causally circular, but also the most distinctive feature of human beings: the mind and its representational, emotional and behavioural consequences. Above all we must avoid the risk that the ecosystemic conceptualization will continue to treat human and social facts simply as 'objects'; to do so we must take full account of the level of sense and meaning in human facts.

1.2. THE FORMATION OF DIVERSITY

A brief look at some of the questions and fields for research that have been opened up—or re-emphasized—by the study of biodiversity will make linguists immediately aware of the problem of the *formation* of diversity. We see this diversity all around us; we believe we should try to preserve it; but how did it emerge? What implications do the ideas and concepts of biodiversity have for the understanding of the formation of linguodiversity?

Leaving aside the problems of the adequacy of the concepts of ‘species’ or ‘language’ inside the plural, varied reality, we must acknowledge the fact that distinct organisms and systems of linguistic communication have very different solutions. One of the most frequently noted causes of biodiversity is the genetic isolation of a particular type of organism:

Each biological species is a closed gene pool, an assemblage of organisms that does not exchange genes with other species. Thus insulated, it evolves diagnostic hereditary traits and comes to occupy a unique geographic range. Within the species, particular individuals and their descendants cannot diverge very far from others because they must reproduce sexually, mingling their genes with those of other families (Wilson, 1994: 38).

This characteristic of isolation and the absence of interrelation that helps to form the development of biodiversity is also present, I would say, in the formation of linguodiversity. Just as “reproductive isolation between breeding populations is the point of no return in the creation of biological diversity” (Wilson, 1994: 46), if a fluid, relatively large-scale communication is not maintained, parts of linguistic groups of the same origin evolve in different ways, and increasingly grow away from the possible innovations that the original nucleus may produce. In the long term, the structural differences may become so vast that mutual comprehension is no longer possible; the codes are experienced as totally distinct, unrelated objects. The geographical distribution of populations has a fundamental influence on the understanding of the production and existence of diversity. As Margalef says, in ecology “the importance of space should not be ignored” (1991: 174), because it “functions as an insulator ... [and so] the relations may be limited to species whose individuals live in close proximity” (1991: 209).

The linguistic evolution of humanity is still a mystery, in spite of the coincidences between groups and families of languages which have begun to permit the formulation of wider-reaching hypotheses. Nonetheless, it is still an

open, complex field of research. Just as “the early man-ape populations both evolved and split into at least three distinct species” (Wilson, 1994: 48), the species *sapiens-sapiens* must have become fragmented into distinct linguistic branches as it expanded throughout the planet. Once the original intercommunication was lost, the evolutionary dynamics have followed divergent paths, but always in accordance with the characteristics and properties of the species. This means that we may postulate that universal concepts and mechanisms are likely to exist in the study of the world’s various languages.

This ‘linguistic speciation’, like its biological counterpart, was based, as we said, on a geographical speciation. On the basis of the property of autopoiesis or self-organization, the reproductive isolation of the group favoured the development of varieties of communication that were specific to each human subset; over successive generations these forms of communication have evolved dynamically to produce more historical diversity. As Capra states,

[...] the theory of autopoiesis shows that creativity—the generation of configurations that are constantly new—is a key property of all living systems. A special form of this creativity is the generation of diversity through reproduction (1997: 216).

This phenomenon, needless to say, is still alive today. The linguistic evolution of humanity is not a closed, finished process. It is in constant flux; the directions it takes are totally unpredictable.

An idea that comes in fact from one of the creators of the theory of autopoiesis—Maturana—seems to me to be particularly useful for the reflections of linguists. Maturana draws attention to the static way in which we name specific objects in reality, a fact that may conceal from us the dynamic, process-oriented nature of many of the ‘objects’ supposedly identified. At the linguistic level, for example, the word ‘language’, which is very useful in many circumstances but may conceal the continuous state of change that characterizes the linguistic phenomenon. From the perspective of action and movement there are no languages; there is only ‘linguaging’. Humans engage in ‘linguaging’, that is, we ‘make language’ when we speak and try to make others understand us. Especially in oral language—which is the basis of all linguistic communication—humans in part maintain, innovate, modify, alter, and create together linguistic forms in the framework, and in the service, of our social relations. So it has been this incessant ‘linguaging’ that has created human linguistic diversity in space and in time.

So the ‘languages’ we see today are the evolutionary result of the sociolinguistic history of humanity. Just as “an organism’s structure is a record of its previous

structural changes and thus of previous interactions” (Capra, 1997: 215), the contemporary linguistic codes are the result of the socio-communicative events of humanity’s past. In languages are deposited all the ideas, concepts and images we have created in order to survive, and to improve our existence in this world. But we should be aware that the adventure is not over: the need for creativity and innovation remains.

1.3. CONTINUITY

As in biological ecology, in linguistic ecology we also need to adopt a dynamic, process-oriented perspective that accounts more precisely for the developments in our field. We must leave behind Saussure’s dichotomy of ‘synchrony’ and ‘diachrony’, since one cannot exist without the other. The diachronic perspective is merely a historical view on the succession of synchronies, and the ‘synchronic’ states are merely stages in a particular evolutionary course.

Once the diversity of the linguistic expressions of the species has been created and has spread to the four corners of the planet, the continuity of this diversity will be closely linked to the fortunes of their particular bio-socio-cultural habitats and contexts. Linguistic varieties are likely to endure if there is a high level of intragroup relations and a low level of intergroup relations. As Wilson acknowledges, “The outright elimination of habitat [...] is the leading cause of extinction. But the introduction of aggressive exotic species [...] come close behind in destructiveness” (1998: 328). Similarly, in the linguistic field, while human groups live in a habitat without the presence of other linguistic forms that can compete with their own, the continuity of these varieties is guaranteed—except evolutionary modifications which emerge inside the group. Without contact with other languages, permanence is a natural, inevitable fact. The intergenerational reproduction of linguistic forms is achieved via the process of socialization, though the auto-co-construction of speech varieties by members of the new generation may enable them to introduce a degree (however limited) of innovation.

In the understanding of biological continuity, a key role is played by the concept of ‘ecological niche’, defined as “any one of the places that can be occupied by individuals belonging to species of similar alimentary and abiotic requirements inside the structure of a biocoenosis”, considered as “an n dimensional space in which a species may live inside a particular ecosystem” (Gran Enciclopèdia Catalana, 10: 541). According to Brown (1995: 30), as early as 1957 Hutchinson “suggested that the niche of any species could be represented

quantitatively in terms of multidimensional combination of abiotic and biotic variables required for an individual to survive and reproduce, or for a population to persist". For Hutchinson, "The niche is an attribute of species, not of environments".

Centred then on the species—and not so much on the ecosystem—the concept of 'ecological niche' allows us to imagine the minimal contextual conditions required for a particular linguistic group to achieve sustainable continuity in a framework of linguistic contact. (Without contact, obviously, continuity is guaranteed, as we said above, unless other events occur that affect the group's demography). In addition, the accurate multidimensional conceptualization of the term by ecologists can be transferred to the linguistic domain, as we can thus study together "the combined effects of many variables on a single species over a long period of time or over the entire geographic range", since "abiotic conditions, competition, and predation all play important roles in limiting the local distribution of this species" (Brown, 1995: 32).

What environmental conditions do linguistic varieties require to achieve their continuity? What is the minimal ecological niche that a particular language needs in order to ensure its permanence and reproduction? In the domain of linguistic behaviours, the maintenance of linguistic varieties depends above all on the use their speakers make of them. And this use corresponds to social conventions that are adopted inside the context of a particular socio-politico-economic situation and particular cognitive representations that rationalize, 'explain', and justify the behavioural decisions taken.

Once it is established that in situations of more or less irreversible linguistic contact the individuals present different levels of bi- or multilingualization, the key element is the distribution of functions of the languages involved, and the historical evolution of this distribution of functions. Since, as the ecologists say, "stability at all levels is not a requirement for persistence, for only one stable level of organization is necessary" (Allen & Hoekstra, 1992: 222), we should explore carefully the idea of 'exclusive functions' for the codes which are in situations of high contact with others and are in danger of falling into disuse. Some situations, in Africa for example (though there are cases in Europe as well), show that a population that is functionally bi- or multilingual does not necessarily lose the use of its own language.

This seems to happen in human groups able to maintain a clear functional distribution that assigns 'exclusive functions' to the code that is the language of the society in question. For instance, groups in Africa which have been multilingual for many years reproduce their own language varieties in all (or the vast majority of) the functions that could be described as 'local', and use the other

codes basically for the functions of relations with the ‘exterior’. In Europe, in Luxembourg or in the German speaking area of Switzerland, the populations have historically been bi- or multilingualized but intergenerational transmission does not seem to have been affected.

Very probably, the secret of the maintenance of a language lies in the clear reservation of certain important functions for the group’s code. Although the group has had to acquire and use other allochthonous languages, these other languages are habitually appropriated for ‘external’ uses or for specific, clearly defined functions. So we need to define these minimal important functions that allow the continuity of linguodiversity, and we should investigate how sociolinguistic organizations of this type can be constructed and made stable and sustainable in the future. This will require commitment at the sociopolitical level of human groups, because the whole community will be involved in the debate on the organization of its linguistic communication and in the decision-making process.

1.4. CHANGE

If biodiversity presents variations during its evolution, linguodiversity presents even more. The forms of diversity present at a particular moment of history are not eternally fixed, since both forms of diversity live and reproduce—totally or partially—inside the dynamic of ecological succession. These diversities will vary then not only in terms of time but also in terms of space, since populations and communities undergo quantitative and qualitative changes in their compositions, processes of expansion and processes of contraction (see Flos & Gutiérrez, 1995: 194).

Evolutionary change, therefore, is seen from the ecosystemic perspective as “the result of life’s inherent tendency to create novelty, which may or may not be accompanied by adaptation to changing environmental conditions” (Capra, 1997: 221), since “evolution is not just tinkering ... It is emergent order, honoured and honed by selection”, as Stuart Kauffman said (quoted by Capra, 1997: 221). Also then at the level of language, change and stability coexist in a continuous and interrelated flow, through the incessant ‘linguaging’ of human beings, which can be innovated autopoietically and/or organized adaptively to the various situations and configurations that humans experience.

So, in biological diversity:

[...] all forms of life have emerged from that ancestry by a continuous process of variations throughout billions of years of geological history. In this evolutionary process many more variations are produced than can possibly survive, and thus many individuals are weeded out by natural selection, as some variants outgrow and out-reproduce others (Capra, 1997: 218).

In linguistic diversity as well—though over a shorter time period—evolution has produced new forms and varieties, some of which have reached us in often highly modified forms, while many others have existed and disappeared without trace. Equally, in the incessant communication between individuals, new forms and terms are created which then spread to other groups, are used for a time and then forgotten.

According to Capra, “Lynn Margulis claims that the formation of new composite entities through the symbiosis of formerly independent organisms has been the more powerful and more important evolutionary force” (1997: 226).

Perhaps we should consider this hypothesis even more seriously in the context of linguistic diversity. It is true that we are used to thinking that contact between populations that speak different languages tends to culminate in the extinction of one of the codes present—the language of the less powerful group—but we should not neglect the possibility of a kind of symbiosis, in which part of one of the codes lives in the structures that develop in the other. Examples of this include the emergence of new varieties of linguistic communication formed through the mixing of different codes, reorganized at the system level to create a new set of structures. Good examples of this process are ‘pidgins’. Pidgins are formed from a base code, but adapt this base code to conform to structures from the language of the recipient population, and at the same time create innovative solutions based on the new, reorganized system.

1.5. EXTINCTION

Whether or not linguistic contact is resolved symbiotically, it has always been one of the great forces of change in the linguistic diversity existing at any one time. To use a term from bioecology, contact between languages could be described as a ‘disturbance’.

A disturbance is any change, unpredictable from inside a particular system, that modifies the existing environmental conditions and creates new ones. It represents the disorganization of the ecosystem and releases new resources. Their

frequency and intensity, and also the area they affect, are key attributes of the dynamic of the ecosystems and are at the basis of the organization of the environment. [...] The intensity of disturbances is usually measured in terms of their effects on the ecosystem (Flos & Gutiérrez, 1995: 193-194).

In the historical dynamic, many of these cases of contact lead eventually to the disappearance of the languages of proportionally weaker groups, and to the adoption by these weaker groups—with a greater or lesser degree of modification—of the language of the groups which are dominant.

As is often the case in biology, the environment is particularly important in the evolutionary dynamics generated by linguistic contact. In the intense interaction between species, there will often be “environmental conditions that favour certain species to the detriment of others” (Flos & G. 1995: 205). Given that “most extinctions are caused by a combination of demographic population processes and environmental changes” (Brown, 1995: 159), our attempts to understand these dynamics must be centred on both levels and we must be alert to their synergies and interdependences. Indeed, the cases in which language shift occurs most rapidly may be precisely those in which the disturbances are acute at both the demographic and the sociopolitical levels. The *tempo* of the evolutions may be slow if the disturbance occurs at only one of the levels, but if it occurs at both at the same time, the imbalance in the sociolinguistic habitat will be far more serious and may indeed accelerate the abandonment of a population’s own linguistic forms.

The sociopolitical context, however, may exert a profound influence on the evolutionary course of the contact, even in situations in which the influence of the demographic factor is low. As shown by cases in which the politico-economic subordination of certain groups has been the key element, with little—though select—immigration, the power of state institutions to transmit ideologies and representations in humans is immense; once these ideologies are internalized, they justify the abandonment of the population’s own code, and the adoption of the dominant group as the group of reference. As Allen & Hoekstra say with reference to biology, in the linguistic setting as well the “survival of the fittest is in fact survival of the ones that fit the context” (1992: 31).

Another decisive factor is migration. As Brown says, and as we noted above, the “movement of individuals into new areas or out of previously inhabited ones can also have important effects on diversity on local to continental scales” (1995: 168). Migration can be one of the great determinants of extinction, of either species or languages. In the linguistic context, both the ecosystems that

receive immigrants and the systems the emigrants leave behind may be deeply affected by the process, especially if it is on a large scale. For an established population in a particular setting, mass immigration may represent a major disruption of the sociolinguistic organization, particularly if the demographic proportions are strongly in favour of the immigrant group. As the new community evolves—above all if the recipient community is not socioculturally superior to the newcomers—the language of the immigrant population may predominate. The language of the recipient population may eventually die out if the immigrants do not adopt it for daily use.

Equally, in the communities that emigrants leave behind, the departure of large numbers from the traditional habitat—particularly in groups with relatively low populations—may mean the gradual disappearance of their language, especially if those who stay in the community come into politico-economic contact with other dominant populations. Those who leave, in most cases, eventually become integrated in their new environment and assimilate the behaviours of the recipient population; very frequently they abandon their original language. When the migration is to societies with a low capacity of absorption or if the migrants are members of majority language groups moving to areas in which the autochthonous languages have fewer speakers and/or relative power, the evolution may be unpredictable. There may be a slow absorption of one of the groups by the other, or else a dynamic equilibrium may emerge in which each group more or less maintains its speakers. Population movements, then, will almost always be an important source of alterations in linguistic diversity.

1.6. PRESERVATION AND RECOVERY

In recent decades we have become increasingly aware of the fact that biological diversity is disappearing, and of the need to intervene to ensure its preservation and recovery. Preservation has become a public issue and the media, parliaments and governments all take the demands of the NGOs active in the area very seriously. There are obvious differences between the domains of biodiversity and linguodiversity, but it is interesting nonetheless to ask whether the theoretical and practical experience of preservation and recovery in biology may be an interesting analogy for the linguistic domain.

One of the key features of the vision of biological conservation is, as we have seen, the concept of ‘ecological niche’, the habitat seen from the perspective of what a species needs to survive (Brown, 1995: 35). The vision, obvi-

ously, is based on the fact that species do not live in a vacuum, but are fully involved in their natural context and are interdependent inside it. What we have, then, as Gregory Bateson would say, are species-in-their-context. Species and their habitat—their ecological niche—form the basic unit of existence. If we seek to transfer this idea to the domain of linguistic varieties the analogy may be useful in that it brings home to us the fact that languages are also, in all likelihood, languages-in-their-context. Clearly, human systems of linguistic communication are not elements that live in isolation but are inevitably linked to the historical experiences of their speakers. Speakers change and develop these systems, omitting or adding words and expressions, mixing them with other words and expressions which originally derived from other human groups, and spreading them to other areas; either this, or they stop using them, replace them with other systems and thus condemn their original language to extinction.

So the first context of languages is constituted by the people that transport them and make them exist. These special cultural beings live in natural contexts but also in specific politic, economic, demographic, and psychocultural environments. As long as the multidimensional habitat that gave rise to the development of a particular form of human communication remains stable, the continuity of this linguistic variety occurs ‘naturally’ and automatically from one generation to the next, even though there is always the possibility of a certain degree of change due to the process of auto-co-construction of linguistic varieties that each new generation conducts. If, however, there are alterations in any of the important dimensions of their existence, this intergenerational reproduction may be affected and, in frameworks that are unfavourable to the continuity of the traditional forms of linguistic communication, the languages may be replaced by others that are also present in the environment and are considered by speakers as socioculturally advantageous (see Bastardas, 1996).

The continuity of linguodiversity depends on the degree of disturbance of the traditional habitats and, as the physicist Prigogine says, on knowing how “to find out under exactly what conditions non-equilibrium situations may be stable” (Capra, 1997: 86). The current era is characterized by the introduction of technological, economic, and political changes in the traditional organization of human groups which lead to an indiscriminate increase in linguistic contact, either due to migratory movements, political associations, economic transnationalization or innovations in communication technologies. The great challenge, therefore, appears to be not so much to avoid this contact—inevitable in the vast majority of cases—but how to manage it to ensure that it does not destroy a large part of the linguistic diversity that human groups have cre-

ated over the course of history. In many cases, the level of contact that has been reached requires the creation of a “restoration ecology” (Allen & H. 1992: 265), so as to preserve what remains—in many cases, very little—but also to reinstate the lost equilibrium and thus to ensure a sustainable continuity of linguistic diversity. Many of the human communities whose historical languages are disappearing—for instance, the indigenous populations of Canada today—deeply regret this loss and would welcome the chance to re-establish contexts which would permit the recovery of their ancestral codes of communication.

A perspective for the management of an ecology for the restoration and preservation of biodiversity which I feel could be usefully applied to linguodiversity is the one presented by Allen & Hoekstra:

The central management principle we wish to erect is: the most effective management will recognize the manner in which the context is missing, it will identify the services that the context would have offered to the managed unit, and it will subsidize the managed unit to as close to that extent as possible [...]. Before management, the unit to be managed lies orphaned from the context. Management fosters healthy development in the absence of a natural context. [...] If the managed unit is being provided with all it might expect from a natural context, then it can function to full effect (1992: 276).

This is an area that ecological sociolinguistics has not yet researched. What should we prioritize in our reconstruction—or conservation—of sociocultural contexts in order to recover and/or preserve the functions of linguistic varieties in recession? What changes should be reintroduced in today’s sociopolitical organization in order to bring about this revitalization? And what changes should be implemented in the economic domain? What, in sociocultural contexts, is vital for the preservation and recovery of languages in danger of extinction?

What is clear is that linguistic communities in recession today will continue on the way towards disappearance unless they introduce major changes in the social organization of their habitat—changes that halt the neglect of their historical codes and promote the recovery of functions for these codes. But it would probably be wrong to think of an approach based purely on “subvention”—in the most everyday sense of the term—as the most appropriate: that is to say, an approach that provides aid for the linguistic varieties in question on a sporadic basis, which fails to take account of the real needs of the sociocultural group, and simply focuses on more folkloric aspects. The actions im-

plemented should be based on “(maximizing) the natural contributions of energy to the functioning of the managed system, while minimizing artificial energy subsidies” (Allen & Hoekstra, 1992: 275). That is, there is a need to intervene on the level of the everyday functions of the community, which are what in a ‘natural’ way give continuity and functionality to linguistic varieties, and not on a partial subsidy of specific aspects of little importance to the recovery of the autonomous energy of the group seeking its sociocultural continuity.

The restorative intervention, then, must be conducted from a holistic perspective, since “sustainable solutions can only be achieved if the manager works with the underlying processes in the system to be managed, not against them” (Allen & Hoekstra, 1992: 277-78). The ideal is therefore that the use of language should be governed by the habitual practices of the group itself in their everyday activities and not by enforced constraints. This involves a knowledge of the dynamics of language uses in human communities in situations of linguistic contact, and attempts to attain this knowledge should seek to build models —within the limits imposed by the contingent character of human behaviours. Indeed, it may be more difficult to preserve a human language in danger of extinction than a species facing the same threat.

One way of applying these principles could be, as we noted above, to promote the use of the varieties in recession for specific *exclusive functions*. Given that, in many cases, it is impossible to return to a context which reproduces or bears a great resemblance to that before the language fell into disuse, we have to imagine how its maintenance and recovery can be achieved in the new situation. In this framework, as William F. Mackey indicated, the attribution of exclusive, specific uses to the code in recession means that the code returns to (or at least does not lose) everyday functionality, even though it is not used to express all the community’s communicative exchanges. Without exclusive functions the language will become dispensable, superfluous, and will rapidly become extinct; but if the code is functional and regularly used, its speakers will have a greater motivation to transmit it ‘naturally’ to the coming generations, who will see it not as a relic of the past but as an active part of their habitual communicative behaviour.

Of course, each case is different. As Flos & Gutiérrez indicate with regard to biology, “Environmental conditions [...] and the regime of disturbances (or the way in which the forms of external energy enter the system) will also determine the set of possible strategies” (1995: 212). The causes of language contact and the overall situation of the recipient community will be important factors for deciding which types of action are most suitable. For example, there are differences between a case in which contact is due to the subordination or

political integration of the community in recession in a state dominated by a different linguistic group, and the case of contact produced by migrations, or a case in which both factors are at work. The dynamics, even though apparently similar, may be distinct, and will require different actions (see Bastardas, 1996 and 2000).

The easiest cases to resolve are, in principle, the ones in which the population in question occupies a particular territory in which the presence of outside elements is limited, even though it is part of a state with linguistic groups that are demographically more numerous. These situations—situations of vertical contact—can be organized around a clear distribution of functions, in which local communications will be attributed to the historical language and ‘exterior’ communications will be conducted in the dominant language, if the state’s central administration cannot be organized multilingually. More difficult are the situations in which contact is horizontal, i.e., demographic, in which populations with different L1s share the same geographical space. The organization will be more complex, though it can be achieved; the more the populations are able to lead their lives as they would have if there had been no contact, the lesser the potential for tension and conflict. If this is not the case, a possible solution is to achieve a balance of disadvantage: neither group has complete linguistic control over functions and so both must know the language of the other. Here the basic problem is to guarantee the equilibrium of the balance, that is, to take great care that the distribution of functions does not lead to the abandonment of the language of the group that is subordinate.

In any event, the recovery and maintenance of linguistic diversity is never easy, since the contexts in which linguistic groups live are more likely to oblige those that are demoeconomically less influential or politically subordinate to abandon their own code. Without sufficient control over their public life and their linguistic organization, many human groups cannot implement actions to maintain and sustain their language. Often, even those who have a certain—if limited—control over their life as a group will continuously encounter obstacles in their attempts to implement policies for protecting their language, because the dominant group may see these policies as threatening. A classic quotation from Dawkins which may help to illustrate situations of this type: “The fox runs for his supper, and the rabbit runs for his life” (quoted in Margalef, 1991: 176).

1.7. LINGUOECOLOGY: THEORIES, ETHICS AND POLITICS

As we have seen, a ‘linguistic’ reading of some of the theoretical approaches and conceptual tools of bioecology are stimulating and suggestive for the development of a ‘linguoecology’, or a sociolinguistic ecology. The systemic approach provided by biological ecology offers the chance to consider linguistic forms and codes as elements that are irremediably integrated in their sociocultural habitat. Analogously, we may think that linguistic forms and codes are interrelated inside ecosystems with other objects, such as the ideas that the individual has of reality, the social meanings they attribute to forms and codes, the socio-economic categorization of individuals, and the group’s representations. Turning now from the bioecologists to more broadly *socioecologist* authors such as Edgar Morin, we can base our theoretical constructions on the circular premise that forms and codes are present in society and culture which, at the same time, are present in linguistic forms. We can express in this way the non-fragmentation of the reality, the non-separation of elements and their contexts. In fact, a linguoecological perspective may affect linguistics in general in a way that goes far beyond the simple conceptualization of the (co)existence of the different varieties which humans use in order to communicate.

From a multidimensional and interdependent perspective we can try to give an integrated account of grammar, of the interpretation of meanings, and of language uses, as in fact they form an inseparable whole.

From this viewpoint, we can advance towards the ‘consilience’—conceptual coherence and integration—that Edward O. Wilson (1998) requests for knowledge. The ecological perspective allows us to bring together aspects which previously appeared to be separate, at the same time retaining a sufficient degree of autonomy for each distinguishable part. We are now in a position to put an end to the separation of linguistic codes from the other elements in reality, a separation that has presided over linguistics for many years. Taking the interpretative capacity of human beings as our starting point we can now reassociate—as Gregory Bateson proposed—the various levels and phenomena in socio-communicative activity. The theoretical construction, by starting from the individual rather than the pure linguistic form as interpreter and creator of meanings, becomes far more powerful and integrative, and far better placed to explain phenomena that were previously unclearly or poorly conceptualized (see Bastardas, 1999 and 2013).

In fact, Wilson’s idea of ‘consilience’ should also be achieved in the field of sociolinguistics. Constituted as a ‘transdiscipline’, sociolinguistics receives contributions from the various schools and branches of the sociocultural scienc-

es—from cognitive psychology to political sciences and law—without having so far a unifying paradigm that gives conceptual and theoretical coherence to these various contributions. The ecological imagination can also help us here to try to deal with the various lines in an integrated way and to see their interrelations, and to advance towards a common, shared ensemble, even though each of the academic traditions that participate can conserve their particular research focus. In my book published in 1996, I suggested an orchestral or polyphonic image as a possible way to articulate this integration. Individuals live their lives in a temporal flux on the basis of their own auto-co-constructed minds, in interactional relations with other individuals, also categorized on the basis of their group—in ethnic, linguistic, economic, professional, or religious terms—and under the influence of economic and political powers and the media. Language—or languages—are the result of all these pentagrams which tend to harmonize or deharmonize mutually in accordance with the historical tensions and changes that take place. Linguistic systems thus reflect the events and the needs of their users and their environments, and co-evolve with them.

Apart from the theoretical and conceptual benefits that the knowledge of the work of bioecologists can bring to linguistics in general, social movements in favour of the preservation of linguistic diversity can also be illustrative at the ethical level, in spite of the substantial differences we noted above between biological and linguistic or cultural objects, which must be borne in mind in the design of interventions to favour the continuity of diversity. If we value biological diversity and seek to conserve it, it should be equally important to take moral responsibility for the preservation and development of linguistic diversity. Why should we sentence to death hundreds of languages and cultures which may contain the seeds of creativity and innovation for humanity as a whole? How can we not be moved by the suffering of the minority groups forced to abandon the use of their own codes in order to survive?

There is much work to be done; we have only just begun, and we can expect to meet fierce resistance from the economic and political powers. Only the creation of international, global organisms able to make their voice heard universally can help the subordinate linguistic groups to implement the contextual changes necessary for them, at the same time as they develop economically and culturally, and to do so from the perspective of a modernization and conservation of their languages and cultures, not as part of a process of unchecked, savage assimilation into the dominant languages and cultures in today's world.

Indeed the attempt to harmonize economic 'development', international communication, and the maintenance of languages is one of the great theo-

retical and practical challenges before us. Applied ecologists are aware that their interventions will have to be conducted inside new contemporary contexts, since it is impossible to return the ecosystem to its original state. As we have said, we need to find at least a 'sustainable' situation, ideally via the use of processes that arise spontaneously to advance their development rather than by opposing them and fighting against them. The ideal strategy is to direct the changes in favour of the population in recession. Applied ecology clearly assumes the need for an ecosystemic approach that takes into consideration the ecological, economic and sociopolitical systems that coexist in reality and inter-co-determine it. The main idea is, as Allen & Hoekstra state, the centrality of the context and consequently the need to compensate for its loss.

'Linguoecological' or ecolinguistic intervention should be, clearly, very different from purely bioecological intervention. Its starting point should always be the mental capacity of human beings, since, despite the substantial influence of their material contexts, the mental possibilities of humans mean that they can be more creative in their relations with their surroundings; unlike beings with less awareness and intelligence, humans can consider the possibility of resisting the pressures of the context and can attempt to modify it in their favour. In the human context the degree of determinism is lower and the chance that protagonists have to redirect the sociocultural processes in which they take part is far greater.

So the approach cannot be purely 'contextual'—as in the case of animal species without mental faculties—but must also consider the level of representations, narratives, social practices and values through which humans experience situations. An excessively bioecological perspective would lead us, as I said above, to conceptions that have proved erroneous—but are still widely held in certain sectors—based on a sociology that does not take the mental faculties into account, that is, on a sociology that views people as automata determined externally rather than as individuals able to think and to change their reality. So we should construct a socio-cognitive and historical ecology that considers the contextual influences, sees them in dynamic terms and also bears in mind the mental abilities of the subjects, with all that this involves.

So, from the ethical point of view, it is not exactly the same to act in order to try to save a species from extinction as to intervene to try to maintain or recover a particular language. In the former case, there is no need to obtain the explicit authorization of the participants—who, we presuppose, would be in favour of the intervention—while in the latter case not to do so would be amoral and abnormal. However justified conservationist linguists may consider themselves to be, we cannot oblige a human group to maintain particular

linguistic behaviours without their voluntary and active participation, and even less against their will. Sociolinguistic ethics, then, taking the equality of all languages as the starting point and aspiring to preserve the linguistic diversity that our species has created, cannot forget that acceptance and support from the social agents involved is absolutely necessary. We cannot create forced linguistic 'reservations', even though they might manage to maintain a particular linguistic variety. Ecolinguistic ethics must always bear in mind the people involved and their autonomy, and people must be its centre and its main reason for existing.

This ethical dimension obviously introduces important differences at the political level between a bioecology and a socioecology or applied ecolinguistics. The measures must be adopted by means of democratic procedures and participation, carried out with the respect and consideration necessary for dissenting voices. Indeed, achieving agreement between all those affected will not always be easy, given the typical situation of minority linguistic groups who are practically always faced with the dilemma of utility and identity: whether to neglect their linguistic varieties and adopt the dominant language, or to ignore the dominant language and maintain the collective identity in spite of the potential economic disadvantages of doing so. Bioecological restoration encounters none of these difficulties; it is enough to construct a natural habitat suited to the needs of the species, which will adapt to it deterministically, if the conditions are adequate for its survival and continuity.

In fact, not only success, but the very possibility of effective intervention in favour of the preservation of linguistic diversity is far more difficult in the case of humans. While, for example, a majority human group may applaud the adoption of policies to preserve animal or plant species in danger of extinction, the same group may object to action in favour of the maintenance of linguistic diversity in areas controlled by the state in which it forms the dominant part. In parallel to the absence of an ethical awareness (however small) in the domain of language preservation, there exists a predominance of ideologies and interests which, instead of favouring linguistic difference, promote homogeneity and the assimilation of groups other than the predominant one. In the case of language, we may find then that majority groups will refuse to help minorities maintain their language. Against this background, action in favour of creating contexts of cultural continuity may be impossible in spite of the active requests of the subordinate group, which, lacking control of its own social space, may find itself condemned to a slow but irreversible process of extinction as a specific linguistic group.

1.8. TO CONCLUDE

This 'linguistic' reading of certain texts on biodiversity and bioecology can be valid and stimulating providing, as I said above, we do not unthinkingly accept all the possible analogies. Like all readings, this interdisciplinary reading runs the risk of misinterpreting the concepts and the ideas of the field that the author knows less; this may have been the case here. What is important, however, is not so much the correct interpretation of the concepts of the other discipline—important though that is—as the analogous suggestion or questioning of the classical procedures of the paradigm that the author knows well. This brief exploratory attempt may or may not be considered successful, but what is certain is that it has made us and will continue to make us think beyond the usual limits of our discipline—an important exercise if we mean to encourage scientific creativity and innovation, and indispensable if we are to achieve 'consilience' in human knowledge.

In fact, the result of this exercise is the conviction of the need to promote an autonomous socioecology from the perspective of complexity. A socioecology—which would include linguoecology—which, taking all the productive analogies from bioecology, attempts to provide a rigorous theoretical conceptualization of the state of its own area of research, from a realistic epistemology, and placing human beings at its centre. This is clearly the way marked out by, among others, Gregory Bateson, Edgar Morin, Fritjof Capra and David Bohm. Inspired by the analogies of other disciplines, but at the same time creative and innovative in our attempts to understand the facts of our fields, sociocultural researchers now have the historic possibility to produce new paradigms which, while maintaining this integration with other scientific disciplines, open up the way towards a fuller understanding of human phenomena.

There is an urgent need today for the application of holistic ecological perspectives and theories of complexity to widely differing fields. Perhaps this renewed thinking should be inscribed in the broader framework of a crisis of civilization which leads us to reconsider fragmentary and reductionist images of the world and to adopt representations that are closer to the reality of human life, through values based on universal complexity, sustainability and fraternity. To start us on our way, Fritjof Capra (1997: 10) proposes this short list of global paradigmatic principles displayed in the right hand columns of the table below, each one paired with a corresponding term on the left: the terms in the left hand columns are the ones that prevail and are, in part, responsible for some of the impasses that face humanity today.

Thinking		Values	
<i>Self-assertive</i>	<i>Integrative</i>	<i>Self-assertive</i>	<i>Integrative</i>
Rational	Intuitive	Expansion	Conservation
Analysis	Synthesis	Competition	Cooperation
Reductionist	Holistic	Quantity	Quality
Linear	Non-linear	Domination	Partnership

Indeed, this change of paradigm is essential if we are providing an adequate response to the main problems facing the societies of our times. Now that genetics has established that humans are a single species—if we were not convinced of the fact before—and that the genomes of other species are not so different from ours, perhaps we will be able to enter a new era characterized by solidarity between different cultural groups and with other species with which we share the biosphere. Biologically and linguistically, as Wilson says, “Soon we must look deep within ourselves and decide what we wish to become” (1998: 309).

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World language policy in the era of globalization. Diversity and intercommunication from the perspective of ‘complexity’²

The great difficulty is thus considering the unity of the many and the multiplicity of the unity. Those who see the diversity of cultures tend to overlook the unity of mankind; those who see the unity of mankind tend to dismiss the diversity of cultures.

EDGAR MORIN, *L'identité humaine*.

2.1. INTRODUCTION

The group of processes referred to as ‘globalization’ or ‘internationalization’ are constructing a new sociolinguistic situation, at least for the most economically—and technologically—advanced areas of the planet, that we need to explore and understand fully if we want to be able to control its effects and shape its development.

The linguistic consequences of this phenomenon are caused mainly by the sharp increase in the transnationalization of economies (with a trend towards global free trade and the foundation of large corporations through mergers and take-overs), and by developments in communication technologies.

In the first instance, we see how extending traditional market boundaries produces the need to learn new languages to enable negotiations with new suppliers and potential buyers. Furthermore, as national firms are taken over by multinational corporations and factories belonging to the latter are set up in new territories, the need arises for staff (especially highly-qualified staff and those holding intermediate and management positions) to know and possess everyday usage of languages other than those of their traditional communities. This series of economic factors, then, tends to produce changes in the linguistic competences required professionally and, hence, in the ‘language of work’ fac-

² Text of the plenary speech given at the World Congress on Language Policies (Barcelona, 16-20 April, 2002). Published on-line: http://www.genclat.cat/llengua/noves/noves/hm02estiu/metodologia/a_bastardas1_9.htm (accessed 12 April, 2018).

tor which can, as we know, have a profound influence, in specific contexts, on the stability or abandonment of the languages of human groups.

In the second instance—developments in communication technologies—the Internet phenomenon, particularly in the ‘First World’, has given people access to web content and contact with each other on a daily basis over long distances, thus breaking the limits of physical proximity. Nowadays, large numbers of people communicate electronically with others who live many kilometres away and whose first language can be one of a range of different codes. Moreover, communication satellites make it increasingly possible to receive broadcasts produced at great distances from the point of reception and, hence, in languages other than those of the traditional community.

We are also seeing a number of actions, largely in response to these changes, in the political organization of significant parts of mankind, particularly on a continental level. In Europe then, a process of financial, political and cultural integration is underway. This process requires solutions to problems caused by the creation of a large area of fluid interrelation between a large number of human groups that speak different languages.

The traditional areas of human communication and interrelations are therefore undergoing substantial growth. Up until now, these areas had guaranteed the preservation of a certain historical *status quo* which, at least for those groups able to retain their political autonomy, had been able to keep individuals and societies in a certain functional monolingualism.

The expansion in areas of human interrelation (mainly economic and technological), is giving rise to an important phenomenon of the bilingualization or functional polyglotization of many individuals. This is due to the linguistic demands of the new situation and the fact that more and more people see advantages in possessing multiple linguistic competences. A novelty of this process is that the knowledge of more than one language or having to use these with different interlocutors or for different functions (an issue previously affecting only elite groups or minoritized or small linguistic groups) is now an increasingly everyday phenomenon for many individuals from larger and/or majority linguistic groups within their states.

This extended language contact and the polyglotal needs of more and more members of human groups that were, up until now, non-minority (in the traditional sense of the word), are generating feelings of cultural threat and defensive reactions, previously only experienced by groups habitually minoritized through political integration without official and public recognition. Although these feelings of linguistic insecurity and threat may be exaggerated in most cases, this effect of globalization could be a good starting point for a serious

review of the foundations of the linguistic organization of mankind as a whole. Now that this sense of feeling threatened is not exclusive to politically-subordinated groups, now that it encompasses those that are beginning to suffer from the (inter)dependence of economies, technology and the mass media, it should be used to increase understanding of the classical situation of minoritization by larger, minoritizing groups. We may well be on the threshold of a new era in history where linguistic fraternity and intercomprehension between the different human groups can progress and give rise to new, fairer principles of political and linguistic organization than those in place previously.

One extremely important issue that arises from increased contact and interrelations is how we humans can come to understand each other, regardless of the linguistic group that we come from. Since the scale of normal communication is expanding from being merely state and regional to become continental and even planetwide, is it not about time that mankind started to think about how to resolve the issue of communication between the species as a whole?

In practice, because there are no effective structures for planetwide political organization to discuss this general problem, each individual and organization resolves its communicative needs with the outside world in the manner most convenient to them. Due to the economic and technological importance of English-speaking countries and their political supremacy over the last two centuries, this language is considered to be capable of resolving the present and future intercommunication needs of contemporary societies most adequately. It is thus being gradually adopted by more and more people and organizations. English is, without a doubt, the most frequently-learned second language at the moment. It is the language used most often as a code for relations between different linguistic groups and the most habitual in international, scientific, and commercial communication.

This exponential extension of competence in and use of English, sometimes used unnecessarily through snobbery or as a sign of 'modernity', is causing an equally dangerous polarization in many areas. On the one hand, groups are rallying against the learning and use of this language due to its condition as an 'imperialist language' (particularly associating it with current North-American hegemony) while, on the other, elites are adopting it as their habitual language and/or passing it on to their children, thinking of the financial and symbolic advantages that will benefit them. This may spark processes of language shift within certain social layers, whose behaviour could then be copied by larger groups of society. As we know, this could lead to the progressive general abandonment of use of the community's own language.

However, new language contact may extend beyond English (clearly, the language with the widest L2 extension), particularly in non-Western areas, to languages of regional hegemony, within the context of processes of economic integration on this level. In Africa, for example, languages such as Swahili are extending beyond their traditional borders while, in Latin America, Spanish is putting the finishing touches to its penetration into indigenous linguistic groups. Arabic is also consolidating itself over a vast area and similar phenomena could also take place in Asia. Language contact, therefore, is clearly on the increase for more and more human groups. The great challenge is how to control this contact and how to organize state, regional and planetwide intercommunication harmoniously on the basis of existing linguistic diversity.

On top of all these changes, the current globalization process is also partly to economic desperation and a quest for progress. The latter are causing an increase in the movement of significant groups of people from one linguistic area to another. The potential consequences of such a movement are significant, depending on the circumstances, for both the migrants and the receiving societies, particularly if the latter are politically-minoritized groups or use languages in a small demographic area. Some sociocultural ecosystems that were already unstable and had a poor equilibrium before the arrival of new groups of immigrants may be affected by the linguistic evolution of the displaced individuals. New immigrants may think that they should gear their linguistic behaviour towards the dominant, majority language, rather than towards the code of the subordinated receiver group or the group with minority status in that state. It goes without saying that this behaviour can help increase the demolinguistic minoritization of this group and cause intergroup tension.³

However, migration can also cause the abandonment and loss of a significant degree of linguistic diversity in cases where the vast majority of its members leave the historical territory and integrate themselves individually into other societies where they have few possibilities of continuing to use their code of origin.

There is, therefore, a clear need for all levels of public authorities, from planetwide to local, to address the contemporary needs and linguistic problems of mankind. The issue is no longer one of scorned 'minorities', but rather of a culturally-diverse species that wants to live in harmony and solidarity, dealing with any potential problematic situations that could arise.

3 See Bastardas i Boada, Albert: "Llengua i noves migracions. Les experiències canadenques i la situació a Catalunya", *Revista de Llengua i Dret* 37 (2002), pp. 153-190. Available at: <http://revistes.eapc.gencat.cat/index.php/rld/article/view/412> (accessed April 8, 2019).

2.2. DIVERSITY AND INTERCOMMUNICATION: ADDRESSING LANGUAGE CONTACT USING THE 'COMPLEXITY' PERSPECTIVE

In all likelihood, the most problematic issue raised in the above introduction is how to make two seemingly contradictory facts compatible: continuity of the linguistic diversity created by humanity through its diaspora all over the world, and the need for intercommunication between these groups of linguistically-diverse individuals in the new—'glocal'—era of positive re-unification of the species. It seems clear that we should shy away from a dichotomous view that would force us to resolve the antinomy by opting for one side or the other of the balance. Mankind is linguistically diverse, and human groups understand this and support the continuity of this diversity. These same human groups also realize that they are destined to live together in solidarity on this planet called 'Earth'. The problem may be the way that we perceive reality, rather than in reality itself. The difficulty lies in thought and conceptual change, rather than in the notion that it would be impossible to carry out.

The extraordinary tendency of human beings to think in terms of dichotomies could be the root of the problem. In the past, and even nowadays, this tendency to think in terms of dichotomies seems to have dominated the view of language contact, thus making it impossible for all groups concerned to live in more harmonious contentment. The vast majority of states seem to find it impossible or very difficult to structure themselves politically in a way that would permit *both* the continuity of the linguistic life of their constituent groups *and* the intercommunication necessary for common living between these groups. The great majority seem to choose one over the other: they either impose a single official language for all groups, without recognizing their diversity (and often explicitly against this), or the existing linguistic groups are recognized but the matter of intercommunication is not resolved satisfactorily. It is hard to believe that either option can have a future in the current era of mankind: against the background of positive growth of the democratic and egalitarian conscience of human groups and the dignity of each and every one of these, historical groups that have been thus far subordinated will not sit back and allow the introduction of solutions condemning them to a reduced linguistic existence when this could be full and normal. Moreover, a political and linguistic organization that does not consider the forms of intercommunication between its components in the best possible way is not sustainable.

Thus, there is no alternative but to imaginatively explore other forms of political and linguistic organization that could make the two objectives above compatible: preserving the linguistic diversity and dignity of all historical lin-

guistic groups, while ensuring fluent intercommunication and a feeling of solidarity among our species.

I believe that we might be able to reach some sort of solution if we explore the ideas that arise from the perspective of ‘complexity’, which uses the basic contributions of cognitive, systemic, ecological, chaological, and/or holistic approximations. In a name, the author I consider best suited to conceptualizing ‘complexity’ as applied to human affairs, is the French anthropologist, sociologist and thinker, Edgar Morin. It is through this paradigm that we learn to recognize the limits of our representations of reality and to become aware of the revision of the categories through which we see the world and our existence.⁴ Our representations are dominated by conceptualizations that tend to come basically from the material world and not from our own mental world. Representations lie and are produced in the brain/mind, but this does not mean that these representations are automatically conscious and aware of *where* they are produced and *how*.

The representations that have dominated—and still dominate—Western thinking (which later spread to many other parts of the world) are based on the properties of material, physical elements using Aristotelian logic, which is founded on the principle of identity and exclusion of the third.⁵ For example, if a place is taken by something, it cannot be occupied by anything else. This view, when automatically applied to the field of human relations (as is often the case), means that if a state or group already has a language, it cannot have another. Secondly, if individuals see themselves as belonging to an ‘identity’, they cannot consider themselves to be members of any other. This is not necessarily the case in the sociocognitive, mental world. An individual can know several languages and distribute uses of the languages that they know, and form part of different categories of identity, within human societies. The logic of complexity, therefore, “escapes, in its most fundamental points, from the binary logic of ‘all or nothing’”.⁶ This vision of things, with more ‘water-type’ or flexible instead of ‘rock-type’ or rigid categories,⁷ can therefore encourage a reformulation of situations, resulting in new possibilities that need to be ex-

4 “Our ideas are not reflections of what is real, but rather translations of what is real”. Morin, Edgar (1992), *Science avec conscience*. Paris: Fayard, p. 242.

5 Morin, Edgar. *op. cit.* p. 282. See also: De Bono, Edward (1998), *Manual de la sabiduría*. Barcelona (Spanish translation of *Edward de Bono's Textbook of Wisdom*. New York: Penguin, 1996), esp. pp. 146-157, and, by the same author, *New Thinking for the New Millenium*. London: Penguin, 2000, on the need to change our way of thinking.

6 Morin, E., *op. cit.*, p. 282.

7 See De Bono, Edward (1994), *Water logic*. London: Penguin Books.

plored—along with the difficulties that this will no doubt entail—with imagination, creativity and rigour.

In all probability, the world and societies would be much simpler if there were only one language or identity. This would no doubt please the supporters of simplist and simplifying thought—whom we would all probably be if we could. However, the fact is that our world, our societies, and our individuals are not simple; on the contrary, we can actually be highly complex. To aid understanding of these non-simple phenomena, Morin attempts to develop the paradigm of complexity. Complex thought is understood to be “the union of simplicity and complexity; it is the union of the simplification processes which are selection, hierarchization, separation, and reduction, with other contra-processes of communication and articulation of whatever is dissociated and distinguished; and it shies away from having to choose the alternative between either reductionist thought, which sees only elements, or globalist thought, which sees only the whole”.⁸ I believe that these postulates for the reform of thought should form the basis of attempts to think of principles of the linguistic organization of mankind that go beyond traditional dichotomies. We must now think in terms of ‘and’ instead of ‘or’. After years of thinking in terms of ‘or’, we now need to explore the linguistic organization of mankind in terms of ‘and’, i.e., from the point of view of complexity—without excluding either objective. We must ask ourselves about *how* precisely we can make *both* possible: the maintenance and development of the various languages and, at the same time, the necessary intercommunication.

However, as Morin himself says, ‘complexity’ is a problem word, not a solution word: “Complexity for me is the challenge, not the answer. I am searching for a way of thinking through complication (that is, through the countless inter-retroactions), through uncertainty and through contradictions”.⁹ Given that “any objectives we reach will take us down a new path, and that any solution will give rise to a new problem”,¹⁰ we now need to put our critical imagination and intellectual creativity into action, using this new perspective, to design the future, accepting initially contradictory positions and working out *how* we can fit them all together in the best and most practical way. The challenge, therefore, lies in making the effort “not to sacrifice the whole for a single part, or a single part for the whole, but rather to understand the difficult problem of organization”.¹¹

8 Morin, E. (1990), *Introduction à la pensée complexe*. Paris: ESF, p. 135.

9 Morin, E., *op. cit.*, p. 134.

10 Morin, E. (1993), *Terre-Patrie*. Paris: du Seuil, p. 201.

11 Morin, E. (1982), *Science avec conscience*. Paris: Fayard, p. 43.

2.3 LANGUAGE CONTACT, EQUILIBRIUM AND SHIFT

When looking at the issue of language, it would seem much simpler to think in terms of ‘and’ (and not ‘or’) in individual competence. Many of us have the experience of knowing—and using—more than one language. We are therefore aware that the phenomenon is possible, with certain costs such as borrowings or mixtures between the codes we dominate; these are, in any case, not very important and do not challenge the possibility of personal polyglotism. The perspective of complexity does become problematic, as we know, at group and sociopolitical levels. There is a widely-held belief in certain geocultural areas that generalized social bilingualism usually—or even inevitably—leads to a process of language shift, i.e., the ‘weaker’ language gradually loses functions whereas the ‘stronger’ language gains functions, and the process ends with the abandonment of the group’s own code, i.e., language death.

Although history reveals a number of cases of this nature that seem to corroborate the above statement, the evolution is not always as above. As Norbert Elias says, what we may need to do is at the same time “investigate the nature of this range of possible transformations and the configuration of factors responsible for the fact that, of all of the possibilities, only this one is materialized”.¹² In other words, we need to know more precisely why the situation evolves in this way and not in any other (such as maintenance of the language, for example). Once we have a clear idea of the factors and mechanisms, we then need to find out whether we can intervene in these cases to prevent them from being affected by shift, ensuring that the recessive languages are maintained and that they progress. We urgently need to identify the variables and dynamics of processes of shift, and to create models that will enable us to design effective possibilities for intervening in different types of situation, different stages of development, and the unequal contexts in which these can occur.

One of the possible paths for exploring processes whereby shift evolves from mass bilingualism might be to explore the cases where this is not so. The situations that Ferguson termed ‘diglossia’ can be used initially to try to shed some light on the problem. How is it that, despite considerable interlinguistic distances (as with the Swiss-German or Greek cases) and a clear distribution of ‘high’ and ‘low’ functions, the latter are not abandoned from generation to generation in favour of the ‘high’ functions? Is this not precisely what happens in

¹² Elias, Norbert (1970): *Sociología fundamental*. Barcelona: Gedisa, p. 197 (Spanish translation of *Was ist Soziologie?* Munich: Juventa Verlag).

many cases of language shift? How can situations that are so superficially similar from the point of view of language shift evolve in such crucially different ways? What if mass bilingualism was a *necessary* but *not a sufficient* condition to explain the evolution towards the intergenerational abandonment of own varieties? What if, as Norbert Elias said, “when we are dealing with the problem of the need for social evolution, we have to distinguish clearly and concisely between the statement that B has to necessarily follow A and the statement that A necessarily has to precede B”?¹³

What, then, makes situations with a hierarchized distribution of functions between linguistic varieties that are structurally distant appear as stable in some cases whereas, in others, the varieties used in individualized communications tend to be abandoned and replaced by institutionalized communications?¹⁴ Which factors would eventually determine these outcomes—diglossia with varying stability (using Ferguson’s concept) *versus* shift? Rather than looking at strictly language-based structural divergences, we will probably need to focus on the socio-cognitive representations of speakers on the linguistic varieties at issue and, secondly, on the contexts in which the latter are produced and maintained. Let us clarify that, here, we are not discussing why a given variety is *adopted*, but rather why the other is *abandoned*.

Firstly, unlike the situations described by Ferguson, as regards the political context of language shift phenomena, the political powers in question very often hope for the result of language abandonment. In many cases, since the very launch of the process of mass dissemination of the state language (which, for the vast majority of the population, is often first experienced when learning to read and write), the explicit aim is not only to transmit a general language of intercommunication, but also to eliminate any other systems of linguistic communication that differ from the model used by the central, supreme political power. Against this background of subordination and dependence, the population (as it becomes more and more competent in the newly-acquired state language) may choose to transfer this language to their children as a basic variety of socialization, i.e., as a native variety, thus ending the intergenerational transfer of the group’s own vernacular. The change in habitual guidelines will need a clear, ideological and/or practical justification and legitimation, since we are addressing a behaviour that the community clearly values forming part of. Here, the patriotic discourse of a ‘national language’, which

13 Elias, N., *op.cit.*, p. 197.

14 Using the terminology of J. C. Corbeil.

promotes the notion of a single, general language for all citizens, can be used. Gradually, therefore, as part of a process of asymmetrical dissemination among social and geographic groups, this 'national language' will be adopted as a variety of institutionalized communications; it will then be transferred to individualized communications by a generation that is already competent in the language. This generation will transfer the language as native-speakers to the next, which will now be somewhat unfamiliar with the old vernaculars and will make this variety, received as the formal standard (conveniently adapted to colloquial functions), their own habitual language.

On the contrary, the diglossic distribution of functions usually involves the coexistence of varieties that are *perceived* as being part of the same 'language'. This is particularly clear with the historical Greek and Arabic cases. Whichever is used, the two varieties have always been seen as undeniably 'Arabic' or 'Greek'. The standard does not tend to cause issues of ethnic identity.

As we said earlier, the varieties are in complementary distribution: the standard variety is never used in informal oral, individualized communication and the vernaculars are never used in written form and rarely in very formal speech. The official standard is consciously learned by generation after generation at schools, whereas vernacular varieties are used in everyday and domestic environments and are the first varieties acquired by individuals. In theory, therefore, there does not seem to be room for ethnolinguistic conflict, since the varieties do not symbolize this type of opposition. Thus, the contrast between varieties does not seem to offer speakers a negative representation leading them to abandon the vernaculars in favour of the standard in informal, everyday communication. In fact, the opposite appears to take place.

Basically, then, the reason for relative stability in these cases of diglossic distribution lies in the political and cognitive dimension: none of the cases usually analysed are situations of political subordination, such as minoritized communities. The perception of dependence, with its negative undertones, and as a result, self-denigration with the adoption of foreign cultural elements as the main reference for behaviour and values, do not need to occur. It therefore seems obvious that intergenerational shift is not caused by the simple facts of bilingualization and the asymmetrical distribution of functions, but rather by the political and economic *context* in which the bilingualization occurs and the *meanings and representations* associated with it by its protagonists.¹⁵

15 See Bastardas Boada, Albert (1997), "Substitution linguistique versus diglossie dans la perspective de la planétarisation", in: Bouchard, G. & Y. Lamonde (dir.): *La nation dans tous ses états. Le Québec en comparaison*. Montreal/Paris: Harmattan, pp. 111-129. See in Catalan, "Manteniment diglòssic i

In many cases, the root of the problem lies in these significant representations of the situation and, specifically, in the evaluations and expectations for each linguistic variety at issue. The functional equilibrium that would allow intergenerational reproduction of the situation collapses if individuals arrive at the conclusion that, all in all, their children would benefit more from the transfer of their L2, rather than their L1, because they see more advantages in the L2 (often linked to socio-economic aspects and political and cultural prestige). When overt, formal prestige has greater importance than 'covert' prestige—as it has been termed by some authors—individuals may decide to change their child's language. We therefore need to look at the *context*—the sociopolitical and economic *ecosystem*—for the factors that may have led to this decision to abandon the intergenerational transfer of the group's historical language.

In certain lights, it may appear that this abandonment is strongly influenced by socio-economic factors, particularly with regard to expectations of usefulness as a language of work and, overall, to the positive nature of the language entering the general process of 'modernization'. These contrast with negative factors associated with the traditional language, regarded as a variety linked to the past—a pre-modern period that needs to be transcended. However, there are also important examples of communities from underdeveloped economies that have been modernized entirely, without losing their language; quite the opposite, their language has been promoted, encoded and extended as one that is appropriate and functionally present in all the communications of an advanced, contemporary society. Therefore, economic aspects alone can sometimes explain the desire and concern of individuals for knowing the most useful languages in these cases, but it is more difficult for them to explain the abandonment of the group language. At any rate, this phenomenon must occur in a more general context of minoritization (especially at the political level), leading the community to lose its own structures which could guide the process of modernization from its own points of view and favour its interests instead of those of the politically-dominant group. (The other important variable in explaining abandonment is demolinguistic mixing, whereby significant migratory movements, particularly from the politically-dominant group/s, cause the alloctonous variety to gain ground, even in everyday interpersonal communication, while the native language loses speakers and functions).

substitució lingüística: notes per a una continuïtat de la linguodiversitat", in: *Homenatge a Jesús Tuson*. Barcelona: Empúries, 1999, pp. 26-32. On-line versions are also available in French and Catalan at *DiversCité Langues* <http://www.teluq.quebec.ca/diverscite>, vol. II (1997).

2.4. NEW PRINCIPLES FOR A NEW HISTORICAL ERA

Political action and representations and discourses on language diversity, political integration and intercommunication are therefore primordial. One of the first aspects we need to study with world authorities is how to overcome, through discourse, the dichotomies that restrict us, and as we said earlier, promote the search for new principles and ways of looking at situations of language contact. As regards the traditional criteria for the organization of plurilingualism, for example, I believe that we may need to look beyond the principles of ‘territoriality’ and ‘personality’ for the more complex situations that so require. Despite their obvious advantages, both principles tend to presuppose that individuals are monolingual and cannot, in principle, resolve the problem of intercommunication. How, then, can principles such as these resolve the construction of a European sociocultural space in practice? How are we to understand each other, setting aside simple, formal institutions with multiple translation systems, if we all want to remain functionally monolingual? How would the application of a principle of ‘personality’ be possible for so many languages in such a wide space? We may well have to look elsewhere for the answer.

I suggest, therefore, that the search focus on the study of the application of the principle called ‘subsidiarity’ (already present in European nomenclature) in the field of linguistic communication. We could adapt this political and administrative principle into a language policy principle that, generally-speaking, establishes the criteria that “whatever a ‘local’ language can do, a ‘global’ language should not”. That is to say, we would allow—and promote—the effective, mass knowledge of other languages, giving *functional pre-eminence* where possible to the language of each historically-constructed linguistic group. So-called ‘foreign’ languages would be used for external contact (which would occur increasingly more often) but local, everyday functions would be clearly allocated to the own languages of each linguistic group.

This reserve of functions for the ‘local’ languages of each group must be clear and transparent to prevent the existing polyglotization from leading to the abandonment of the code with less communicative scope. Thus, in addition to the principles of polyglotization and subsidiarity, we need to incorporate the principle of ‘specific’ or ‘exclusive’ functions for ‘local’ languages, which could be overpowered by the bigger languages. Clearly, there would be a strong, important nucleus of reserved functions to be performed habitually in the group language and not in any other. The exclusive functions of the group code must not be limited to informal, oral communication; rather, they would have to incorporate the maximum possible formal, written functions to ensure

that the representations and evaluations of individuals did not favour the other extragroup languages. This would involve the creation, in the words of the Quebecois linguist, Angéline Martel, of a type of ‘positive diglossia’. I am led to believe that this type of success is possible, not only by cases such as Ferguson’s aforementioned diglossias or by other African multilingual situations, but also by situations such as that of Luxembourg. The languages of this small European state are organized around a certain type of functional distribution enabling the continued polyglotization of individuals and the clear maintenance of the group language.¹⁶

Correlatively to polyglotization, subsidiarity, and exclusive functions, all levels of political authorities should supervise the prevention of a trend that could well take place : *abusive use* by bigger languages. If this *ecological* equilibrium that we need to construct is to be successful, the big languages must not want to occupy more space and functions than is their right, by taking advantage of the mass polyglotization of individuals. They cannot abusively invade local areas and leave the use of group languages with no possibilities, or at a severe disadvantage, in functions that are very important for evaluating languages, such as those usually dominated by these great codes. Some type of general regulation must be established; this should be based on the principle of subsidiarity and respect for the dignity and stability of all linguistic groups produced throughout history. Without international organizations with authority over these aspects, it could be very difficult to maintain a fair and adequate equilibrium. The responsibility of current, planet-wide organizations—and those in urgent need of creation—is extremely important and decisive.

Promoting the effective polyglotization of individuals also involves taking new decisions that must be studied and debated, as well as the need for research and effective imagination in methods and strategies for learning second languages. One of the first decisions that must be taken is which second language or languages need/s to be learnt; such a decision obviously depends on the language/s we adopt at the various levels of communication—general or planet-wide, regional or continental, and local. As we are all aware, many international organizations and countries have already taken decisions on this

16 The possibility of non-hierarchized, functional language distribution could also be an interesting and fitting solution for cases with two (or more?) linguistic groups that are more or less equal in numbers where it is difficult to agree which language should benefit from the principle of subsidiarity in favour of the local language. Non-asymmetrical, functional specialization can involve each group knowing and using the language of the other, which can help balance the situation and resolve the potential conflict of this type of context.

aspect that clearly tend to favour the adoption of English, as we pointed out earlier, although often in conjunction with other codes. I do not believe that this aspect should not go unquestioned, simply to become an inevitable and irreversible fact that irrationally feeds off contemporary North-American hegemony. Mankind as a whole needs to ask itself what it wants to do, communicatively-speaking. What is best for us? To continue spreading the knowledge of a language of a specific human group (which clearly asymmetrically favours those with this language as their L1), or to focus on a language of intercommunication that is not the L1 of any human group? What is best for the continuity of linguistic diversity? To continue learning the language of a group or series of groups that are hegemonic at this point in time, or to think about adopting a new language that belongs to nobody, for all of mankind? Many people may think that these questions have already been answered *de facto* by reality. However, I sincerely believe that our species cannot make a decision of this importance unless the organizations that represent us and the citizens themselves debate, deliberate, evaluate, and finally give their verdict on the issue.

English-speaking countries and individuals clearly benefit from the current situation and, depending on the conditions, social development can lead to increasingly more individuals imitating native English speakers and, as we said earlier, adopting English as their habitual language and as the L1 of their children. At the moment, a product in English—even if it is not only local, but also localist—is immediately an ‘international’ product, whereas the same product in another language has restricted circulation. Clearly, if a neutral code that is not the L1 of any group was adopted, people would be less likely to see a code of intercommunication as an L1, thus guaranteeing further the level of conservation of historical linguistic diversity. This would also make humans more equal in terms of their initial language competencies, since everybody would have to learn the language. Moreover, as we saw in Ferguson’s diglossias, complementary distribution contributes to maintenance: the formal variety is not habitually used in everyday communication and therefore rarely becomes an L1.

However, here we may face problems, such as the linguistic distance between the languages of each group and the structure of the language of intercommunication that is finally adopted. How can we create a neutral code that will be equal for everybody? Perhaps the issue is not that easy to solve (as we have seen in India, for example), and debate between the different linguistic groups may make it impossible to ever reach the point of adopting this neutral code. In that case, the continuity and expansion of English would be guaranteed, at least until some other power in the future decided to challenge that language and try to impose its own.

If the prevailing solution was continuity of the international use of a language belonging to a pre-existing human group, I think that we would then need to think about introducing some clear counterweights, not only as regards clear regulation and the establishment of an authority to supervise abusive usage, but even ‘taxes’ for usage; the resources obtained in this way could then be used to benefit languages with more difficulties. The exportation of English knowledge and the fact that products written in that language can encompass a significant part of the world market provides an enormous amount of financial benefit for this group of countries, particularly for Great Britain and the United States. The sharing of these benefits and returning them to other linguistic groups is not too far-fetched an idea to imagine it becoming a reality in the immediate future as planetwide integration advances.

2.5. IMMEDIATE PRIORITIES FOR THE GENERAL MAINTENANCE OF LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY

Without setting aside the reflection and action required to shape the future of the linguistic communication of humanity, we need to concentrate on more immediate problems and try to act in coordination on smaller scales, which are, for the moment, more often decisive. International group action is required both by the organizations common to humanity at this moment in time and by the most local of public authorities. These must make people fully aware of the linguistic diversity crisis and undertake action at every level of government to change the current, inadequate conditions. However, although we can conceptualize the phenomenon of language contact as a unit, the situations and stages of development of the various cases can be very different, and thus require very different types of action. Currently, we find contact ranging from that of the language of an important group (i.e., with solid demographic expansion, economically-developed, with full political sovereignty) that uses English as a technical and scientific interlanguage, to that of a group with few individuals that is economically and politically minoritized, in constant contact with the language of the dominant group in all of these aspects. It is evident that the problem of diversity is aggravated as we near the lower end of this continuum of situations, i.e., cases of maximum political, economic, demographic, educational, mass media, and even ideological subordination. One of the most urgent aspects that needs to be studied and solved, therefore, is knowing exactly which policies to apply in the diverse situations all over the planet.

By way of example and for provisional study, we need to at least distinguish between these different situations (by combining variables such as group demographic volume, level of political subordination, level of economic development, everyday contact with other groups, and representations of the situation):¹⁷

- Demographically smaller groups that are politically subordinated, economically underdeveloped, with somewhat negative self-representations and that are socially-mixed with other group/s with greater relative power or that are higher in numbers.
- Smaller, politically-subordinated groups that are not or very scarcely mixed in their everyday social territory.
- Smaller groups that are not or very scarcely mixed, with a certain level of political autonomy and official and public recognition of their language.
- Small to medium-sized groups with a certain level of political autonomy and official and public recognition of their language but which have an intense, daily social coexistence with another group or other groups that also have official recognition.
- Medium-sized, politically-independent groups.
- Semi-large, politically-independent groups.
- Large, politically-independent groups on a continental or supracontinental scale.

These 'structural' situations can also be found in diverse stages of development, characterized by the various levels of the population that uses and/or is competent in the language within the group itself, and by different representations of the value and usefulness of this code. Given the dynamic nature of the situations, different political action is required depending on the phase of each group, particularly in clear cases of language shift in movement. Intervention in a case where only a quarter of the population habitually uses the code will differ from that used in a situation where three quarters habitually use the language. Similarly, an attempt to change the linguistic behaviour of groups with positive representations about their language will, at least initially, require a different type of action than a situation of a group in which the majority have negative associations about their own language.

¹⁷ Rigorous combination of variables would produce more categories, enabling us to widen the categorization.

Ideally, we should have already arrived at a theoretical agreement about the most effective action for each type of situation. To set aside study of the discussion and theorization of the values of diversity and to put these into practice, we would need to be able to make a clear decision about *which policies are required in which type of situation at which stage of development and in which historical contexts*. I believe that this is the important issue that will guide our research, creative activity, and scientific discussion over the coming years. We urgently need to fully understand the mechanisms of the processes and to construct models of action for each type of problem.

It is of the utmost importance that organizations such as UNESCO (or even the UN) increase their awareness of current linguistic diversity problems, particularly for the impact that their decisions could have on continental and, particularly, state public authorities. In fact, without a clear world policy (which includes the acceptance and dissemination of the appropriate ideological perspectives and the provision of necessary financial aid), it will be very difficult in the current state of affairs for the governments of many of the countries undergoing linguistic crises to see the need or opportunity to intervene. As their elite groups have been educated with European-style ideology, they tend to apply in their own countries schemes that history has proven to be wrong and that are now being revised in Europe. Moreover, due to a lack of resources for carrying out policies of asymmetrical bilingualization in a European language, these countries create a galloping language shift between the elites in favour of the foreign language (often that of the ex-colonizer). Moreover, they also impede the democratic participation of most of the population because it never reaches a competent level in the official language, and this causes an extremely high level of legal defencelessness.

Against this backdrop, it is not at all strange that parents that are able decide to abandon their own language and communicate with their children in the official language. Therefore, instead of promoting the codification of native languages, immediate literacy of populations, and use of these codes by civil servants and state organizations (leaving the bi- or multilingualization of individuals for a later date), these governments reproduce an outdated nation-state view and, in doing so, perpetuate state-control by the leading classes, since a lack of knowledge of the official language prohibits the majority of the population access to the most important positions of government and the civil service. The mechanism is therefore perverse and can cause an image of rejection of one's own code and an exaggerated evaluation of the official language in question. An inverse policy of official multilingualism would allow different linguistic groups to take part in democratic life and the dignification, usefulness and,

hence, maintenance of their own codes, beside the bilingualization or polyglotization of the population in the languages of intercommunication that are required. The ideological line presented is, however, prevalent for the time-being in most African states and Pacific territories and, albeit with significant differences, in certain areas of South America and in other parts of the world.

International organizations must inform these and other countries of the need and justice of basing their linguistic organization on the perspective of complexity and subsidiarity, within the framework of a new type of ethics. This *new type of ethics* must be based on an *ecological*¹⁸ vision of sociolinguistic situations in that they should not only focus on the official and standard level, but also on the series of factors that determine the situation and its evolution. Thus, we can search for a balancing, compensatory action that favours the proportionally-weaker linguistic groups. As complex thought postulates, each living being and each element must be inserted into its context, seen dynamically and in terms of its ecosystem, from the point of view of eco-self-causality and self-eco-organization.¹⁹ Rather than searching for *equality*, therefore, we will need to search for *fairness*, in order to guarantee a sociocultural ecosystem that favours the stability of linguistic diversity. Alongside the traditional conceptualization in terms of 'rights', *compensatory functions* will need to be introduced into cases that so require; this conceptualization is much wider and more appropriate for solving language contact problems, particularly where there is a great deal of asymmetry between groups.

2.6. SYNTHESIS AND CONCLUSION: SOME PRINCIPLES AND VALUES FOR PEACE AND LINGUISTIC JUSTICE THROUGHOUT THE PLANET

To sum up, and to help to round off the discussion and reflection, I will repeat some of the principles on the linguistic organization of mankind, developed throughout the essay and dealt with in earlier research:²⁰

18 See Bastardas i Boada, Albert (ed.), *Diversitat/s. Llengües, espècies i ecologies*. Barcelona: Empúries, 2004, and also "Biological and linguistic diversity: Transdisciplinary explorations for a socio-ecology of languages", this book.

19 Morin, E. (1982), *Science avec conscience*. Paris: Fayard, pp. 114, 186 and 296. See also: Bastardas i Boada, Albert (1996), *Ecologia de les llengües. Medi, contactes i dinàmica sociolingüística*. Barcelona: Proa. English translation in this book, part I.

20 See Note no 15 and Bastardas i Boada, Albert (2000), "De la 'normalització' a la 'diversitat' lingüística: cap a un enfocament global del contacte de llengües", *Revista de Llengua i Dret*, 34, pp. 151-168.

One. The ideologies and conceptual landscapes we need to think about must take into consideration the existing sociolinguistic experience if we are to avoid a linguistic organization of the planet based on a hierarchical and asymmetrical structure between the language or languages of intercommunication and the remaining codes. Equalitarian coexistence must be based on the correct distribution of functions, using the principle of 'subsidiarity', which would introduce the norm that everything that can be done by local languages, does not need to be performed by a more general code of intercommunication. The main idea would be adequate protection of the ecosystemic spaces of each language.

Two. One of the guides for applying the first principle must be that being sufficiently competent in a code of intercommunication does not do away with the right or need of human linguistic communities to use their own codes fully and in the maximum possible local functions. The indiscriminate application of the 'principle of competence' will always favour the code that is most generally shared (that of intercommunication), which could take functions from other languages, endangering their existence and, hence, activating unnecessary conflicts that are hard to resolve.

Three. Since human beings can represent reality arriving at conclusions that do not depend directly on reality, but rather on narrative and interpretative configurations created by humans themselves, in addition to the practical instructions for organizing linguistic communication, public authorities must disseminate an ideology that clearly favours diversity and linguistic equality. Therefore, they need to promote the self-dignity of marginalized linguistic groups and offset wide-spread popular representations, such as the ideology of 'linguistic superiority' or phenomena such as the self-perception of inferiority to external 'reference groups or languages' considered as models to be assimilated.

Four. Preference should be given to methodologies for developing communicative competence in the code of intercommunication to ensure a sufficiently high level for the diverse generations of individuals that will acquire this language. We should also ensure that inadequate results do not lead to parents (able to do so) using the code of intercommunication as their child's L1, instead of the native variety of the group. Clearly, this development of practical knowledge of the language or languages of interrelations should not prejudice the development and use of local languages.

Five. Equal attention should be paid to the study of cases whereby a linguistic group has frequent social contact with a considerable number of individuals whose L1 is a code of intercommunication, as it is highly likely that the

predominant trend will be to use the latter as a habitual norm; this would have potential repercussions on the intergenerational reproduction of the other language if the populations integrated socially. In these cases, the mechanism of mixed marriage can unintentionally reduce the index of generational transfer of local codes considerably, if the population is not made aware and if linguistic diversity is not fostered within the family unit itself through the principle of 'one parent = one language', in cases where this is possible and necessary.

We are, therefore, faced with a fascinating task of research and organization, requiring considerable imagination. We urgently need to organize ourselves to inform, persuade and convince the heads of world organizations, state governments, and other public organizations to study *how* these principles can be applied and to put them into practice. Furthermore, it is both urgent and necessary to carry out in-depth research on the various aspects concerned (politics, law, pedagogy, philosophy, socio-economics, etc.), from the point of view of ecological complexity, bearing in mind that, as Morin says, "Political action itself, more so than complex knowledge, depends on the strategy, on the art".²¹

The extension of perspectives of complexity and their application to very diverse fields is one of the current needs of the entire planet. It may be necessary to relocate this reconstructed thinking in the widest context of a crisis of civilization leading us to re-think fragmentary and reductionist views of the world in favour of representations that are closer to the reality of human facts and values based on ecological vision, sustainability and universal fraternity. This change in paradigm does seem urgent because it is clearly coherent with the main problems of modern societies.

21 Morin, E., *op. cit.*, p. 307.

3.1. FROM 'SUSTAINABILITY' TO 'LINGUISTIC SUSTAINABILITY'

Transdisciplinary analogies and metaphors are potentially useful tools for thinking and creativity. The exploration of other conceptual philosophies and fields can be rewarding and can contribute to producing useful new ideas to be applied to different problems and aspects of reality (Holland, 1998). The development of the so-called 'sustainability' approach allows us to explore the possibility of translating and adapting some of its main ideas to the organization of human language diversity.

The concept of 'sustainability' clearly comes from the tradition of thinking that criticizes the perspective of economic development that almost totally overlooks the natural environment—the precise context where this development takes place—and which thus leads it to a final end devoid of resources and clearly harmful for the life of human beings; to an end, that is to say, which is clearly unsustainable. Against this economicist view, which is blind to its very important side effects, some academic and activist enclaves have proposed the perspective of 'sustainable development' or 'lasting development'. In other words, they have theorized, constructed, and begun to practice an economic and urbanistic development respectful of, integrated into, and in keeping with the dynamics of nature. Such a perspective provides a way of improving the material aspects of human life while at the same time not damaging other environmental aspects still more necessary and fundamental for the quality—and even for the simple possibility—of human existence. In fact, the view is a synthesis of possible opposed patterns. It does not renounce material and economic improvement, but nor does it exclude a fully healthy environment that is appropriate for the continuation of the species.

As a concept, 'sustainability' was born at the end of the 1980s. It found world-wide resonance at the conference of the United Nations in Rio de Ja-

²² Published in *Glossa. An Ambilingual Interdisciplinary Journal* (on-line), 2007, vol. 2, no 2. Also in: *Sustainable Multilingualism* 5 (2014), pp. 134-163.

neiro in 1992. The document known as the 'Brundtland Report' defines the term as a form of sustainable development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Today the term 'sustainability' is already being used in many not exactly equivalent senses and by many highly distinct—and even opposed—social actors, a situation which makes it necessary to go to the root of the problem and attempt to conceptualize it more basically and in greater depth. Therefore, we believe that, from a general perspective, the sustainability philosophy would seek the integral development of the human being, with a humanist approach and not a purely economic social 'progress'. The aim would not be to have more but to live better. By way of example, Ramon Folch—one of the most representative promoters of sustainability philosophy in Catalonia—supports an ability to imagine an 'economy without growth' (Reales, 1999). Other thinkers in the movement also explicitly claim to be against what they call 'the disease of growth'. From this take on reality, sustainability sets itself the task of the in-depth re-thinking of society and gradual transformation of the current paradigm of production and consumption. This view postulates a nonaggressive economic model towards an 'ecological' economy. The aim, thus, is a mobilizing utopia that presents itself as a new way of hierarchizing values, in contrast to politico-ideological conservatism.

Opposed in the same sense to growth for its own sake, the sustainability philosophy is also against expansive and dominating societies and also offers itself as the mainstay of postcolonial and postnational thought, with a planetary and universal outlook. The movement, then, aims for the formulation of utopias for the twenty-first century and the building of an international sustainability. In this regard, sustainability thinking recognizes the wisdom of many societies that are still undeveloped economically and hence can consider, as Folch says, the so-called 'developed' societies as "very large barbarians simply provided with powerful machinery or with decisive financial means" (Reales, 1999).

One of the fundamental characteristics of the sustainability argument is its emphasis on the safeguarding of the natural environment, from an ecological perspective. This philosophy posits a way of overcoming the environmental crisis and safeguarding biodiversity. It postulates an environmental morality (Jacobs, 2001) because the basis of the problem lies, more than in legal dispositions, in the scales of value shared by society and shaped by juridical codification. Therefore, a training process for a new collective consciousness is needed, a process of reflection and socioecological debate, so that the ethics of sustainability can be acquired as a proper value of the moral identity of the

contemporary and future individual, all in order to enable 'sustainability ecologism' to pervade the general socio-economic reality.

This, in fact, is what the aforementioned Brundtland Report was already saying when it stated that a strict minimum of sustainable development means not endangering the natural systems that keep us alive, that is, the air, water, and soils, as well as living beings. Hence, the great challenge will be to find a way to harmonize economic and social progress without endangering the planet's natural balance.

If we now try to transfer and to apply this way of thinking to the linguodiversity reality, what do we see? Are there useful analogies and metaphors to be made? We believe there are, and ones that can be used to good advantage, and linked, moreover, to the traditions of thought that have always been present but perhaps even more so these last years with the drive to develop the thinking we are calling 'eco-linguistic'. From the outset, we would underscore the will to *connect* apparent 'opposites' in an integrative conceptualization, such as the very syntagm 'sustainable development'. On the sociolinguistic plane, our debate should probably be about our 'opposites', which could be on the one hand the expansion of the dominant languages and, on the other hand, the maintenance and development of human linguistic diversity.

Let us note that the existing positions tend to polarize on these two aspects. For some, it is necessary for peoples to abandon their original languages and adopt only the great nation-state or global codes of communication in order to be able to advance their economic and cultural development. For others, the struggle is clearly in favour of the preservation of linguistic diversity and the maintenance of distinct collective identities—as a way of avoiding the poverty and anomie that are the results of disorganization of the traditional subsistence ecosystem—and of the continuance of the knowledge and wisdom each culture has produced. These perspectives may seem, at first, to be irreconcilable and antagonistic, and wholly impossible to integrate and assemble.

Would there be some way of transferring the procedures and the conciliating conceptualization of 'sustainability' to the language field, and combining the competence and use both of languages of greater communicative scope and group tongues? An 'ecological' and 'egalitarian' perspective on linguistic diversity would have the aim to stop and reverse expansionist and dominating ideologies. To put an end to the value hierarchy implied by the belief in linguistic superiority/inferiority is equally urgent and just. Passing into another historical phase of humankind where the predominant vision would be one of recognizing the equal dignity of all languages and linguistic groups is, clearly, an aim that cannot be put off. To paraphrase Ramon Folch, we could say that

linguistic sustainability should be a process of gradual transformation from the current model of the linguistic organization of the human species, a transformation whose objective would be to avoid that collective bilingualism or polyglotism of human beings must require the abandonment by different cultural groups of their own languages (Reales, 1999). Basically, the ideology opposed to this would come from the negative human tendency for dichotomous thinking: black or white, one language or the other. Today, however, from the paradigm of complexity (Bastardas, 2002b) we know that there are other possibilities.

Why, then, can we not forcefully postulate a morality of maintenance and development of multilingualism similar to that of the maintenance of species and of the natural environment? Why must human groups completely give up speaking their original languages in favour of those that are more dominant? Why, in so far as it is possible, cannot weak languages be functionally prioritized? Why can we not safeguard our linguistic environment, since we are a species conscious of the problem?

It is then necessary to maintain a vigil over the sustainability of linguistic groups and the safeguarding of these languages for our descendants. The personal and groupal benefits of preserving languages (greater self-esteem, greater positive self-image of the group, no shame in origins, etc.), while not easily quantifiable, are important to the happiness of people, as many contemporary cases show us. The larger majority groups should adopt sociolinguistic ethics and act in ways that are respectful of linguistic sustainability.

Just as sustainable development does not negate the development and the desire for material improvement of human societies but at one and the same time seeks to maintain ecosystemic balance with nature, so linguistic sustainability accepts polyglotization and intercommunication among groups and persons yet still calls for the continuity and full development of human linguistic groups. Just as in the general sustainability framework we think and act in ways intended not to destroy our very biospheric context and intended to save the natural resources we depend on, in linguistic sustainability we want to develop ourselves and intercommunicate with each other without destroying the linguistic and cultural resources that identify us. From sustainability ethics, the diversity of the ways different groups of the species communicate is clearly a value to protect, and not as an 'anthropological' curio but because of the intrinsic and inalienable dignity of human persons and societies.

Another facet of the tenets of sustainability, which we consider important, is naturally its ecosystemic conception of phenomena. As the facts have shown a great many times, we humans do not live independently of our natural en-

vironment; hence, our actions and productions have a clear interdependent effect, and vice-versa. The conception that overlooked the settings and contexts of all things has inevitably entered into crisis, and today we see clearly how intervening in a fact or an element means intervening simultaneously—and above all—in the environment and the context of a fact or an element. What this signifies is that getting our actions right in the framework of linguistic sustainability requires our in-depth knowledge of the fundamental evolutionary dynamics and factors of sociolinguistic ecosystems, both on the local and the global scale. The ecology of languages should take a socio-cognitive holistic approach based on cultural ecosystems and the relations among these ecosystems, because the basic unit is not language but always *the-language-in-its-context*. Making a language sustainable in a sociocultural ecosystem will mean balancing a complex organization in the framework of which the corresponding code can be provided with a functional niche that is sufficient to guarantee adequate homeostasis. Sustainability is clearly ecosystemic and dynamic (Bastardas, 2002, 2004).

From this perspective, it should thus be clear that languages are not simple objects but rather complex ones, emergences produced and maintained at the meeting point of different dimensions (Holland, 1998; Vilarroya, 2002). A real language is not only its grammar or its lexis but also living human cognition, interaction, and identification, in the simultaneous intersection of, as Edgar Morin states, the ‘noosphere’ (knowledge systems), the ‘psychosphere’ (the mental individual), and the ‘sociosphere’ (society) (Bastardas, 2003). The linguistic code, therefore, will register the events of these planes, and will evolve in accordance with them, naming things that we want to name, and being used or not in the circumstances which we desire. In this sense, languages are in our hands and we are in the hands of our own vital circumstances. The socio-cognitive ecosystemic approach is, then, indispensable and essential.

Sustainability is aware of avoiding a break in the dynamic balance of the different elements that participate in an ecosystem. For example, Jacobs (2001) observes that “‘sustainable’ commonly applies to the practice of drawing on renewable resources at a rate no speedier or greedier than the rate at which the resources can renew themselves” (p. 67). Folch states that it is necessary to produce only what is reasonably held to be needed and with the least number possible of distorting external factors (Reales, 1999). Thus, the aim is always to conserve/preserve the fundamental balance that makes possible the very maintenance of the ecosystem and of its components. If we now translate this analogically to linguistic sustainability, we could clearly establish principles

such as that of using only the allochthonous²³ languages for that which is reasonably necessary and with the least cost of functions (or with the least distortion of functions) for the autochthonous languages. Then, sustainable linguistic contact will be that which does not produce linguistic exposure or linguistic use in allochthonous language at a speed and/or pressure—to a degree—so high as to make impossible the stable continuity of the autochthonous languages of human groups. We can, then, state that the sustainable character of massive bilingualization comes from the comparison between the degree of valuation and functions of the language that is not originally that of the group (L2) and that of the language that is originally that of the group (L1). If the first is lower, the contact and the bilingualization are sustainable; if it is greater, the bilingualization is not sustainable and the language original to the group will degrade and disappear within a few decades.

Also applying the terminology of sustainability to the current crisis of many of the linguistic ecosystems of humanity, we may be able to begin to speak of assuring the *ecological [ecolinguistic] viability* of linguistic groups via a *socioenvironmental [sociolinguistic] management* that is made adequate to assure avoidance of excessive disorganization that could be lethal for many of the linguistic codes which the different human subgroups have built up throughout their existence. The first task is to avoid abuse against the systems. One should not exceed their ‘charge capacity’. Therefore, as there are toxic and nontoxic levels, we should attempt to see *what degrees of linguistic contact prove sustainable in each typology of the different ones that exist, what functions prove to be the fundamental ones to be reserved for the autochthonous linguistic codes, and how the changes introduced work in interaction with other changes that could be taking place at the same time in the situation*. This forces us to go into still greater depth than is possible at present in our knowledge of the ecodynamics of linguistic contacts. Linguistic sustainability, however, is not a purely linguistic fact, as we have seen, since languages depend on their sociocultural ecosystem, and that ecosystem may be in a continual state of change, receiving the introduction of new factors. Hence, just as studies are carried out on environmental or biological impact, we also should be able to study the *sociolinguistic impact* of economic, political, and educative measures, and of migrations, technological innovations, etc. We need to quickly reach clear and functional models of sociolinguistic ecosystems, to know of the interactions of their different elements,

23 ‘Allochthonous’ = the language that is not originally the one of the group (versus ‘autochthonous’ = the language that is originally that of the group).

of how to quantify them and, in so far as it is possible, to be able to make predictions about their evolution and hence be able to propose measures that are adequate from the perspective of a sustainable management of plurilingualism.

There is no reason to conceal that being able to reach this state of practical awareness of public administrations regarding linguistic diversity implies, even today, a constant and conscientious task in the political and governmental domains. In many cases, these studies would lead us to having to recommend important alterations in the distribution of power in many states, until now little sensitive to their internal national and cultural diversity. This would be necessary in order to give to different historical linguistic groups an important degree of control over their own collective life, something at present unavailable. For example, the generalization of the principle of what is now known as ‘political subsidiarity’—enabling decisions to be taken on the maximum number of topics in politically administrative instances close to the citizens—would undoubtedly benefit the possibility of such linguistic self-government. Applying another version of subsidiarity, in a linguistic sense, we could say that everything that a local language can do need not be done by a more global language, i.e., by default, the language of pre-eminent use should be that of the group, the weaker, except for those cases of external communications when the situation so requires.

We are aware that even though the aims and principles of the philosophy of sustainability are by nature universal, their application must be differentiated according to given situations, their particular constrictions, and their evolutionary moments. Certainly, linguistic sustainability will require different actions according to the degree of, for example, the group’s techno-industrial development, its political organization, the composition of its populations, collective self-images, the general force of the languages present, etc. But for each case we are sure that we can go forward towards creating ‘good practices’ that will lead us to the application of sustainable multilingualism. Probably the priorities will be different: in economically underdeveloped groups, for example, swift action would be necessary to keep their own languages from falling into discredit with their own speakers. But in groups with greater economic development but with an already important loss of their language, it might be necessary to intervene in the intergenerational transmission still capable of being saved. And in other small countries with a strong presence of an international language, it may turn out to be necessary to replace the functions of the latter in order to halt its abusive and unbalancing uses, and so on. Much work still remains to be done to be able to reach a clear assessment of the models, their phases, the different situations to which they correspond, the priorities and interventions, and the most adequate action and evaluation strategies.

3.2. THE IMBALANCE AND MAINTENANCE OF SOCIOLINGUISTIC ECOSYSTEMS

Our advance in the design of sustainability principles and interventions will move more slowly if we don't equip ourselves with a conceptualization powerful enough to account for the fundamental factors and interrelationships of such interventions, which are responsible for the existence or nonexistence of human languages. The sustainability or unsustainability of a language, as we have indicated, obviously does not depend on that language itself, but on the general sociocultural ecosystem in which it finds itself inscribed, and in which other elements of reality interrelate. Clearly, humanity's linguistic continuity—wherever it has occurred—has existed due to the fact that its speakers were living in a given system of (inter)relations that caused them to use that code and regularly to transmit it to new and successive generations, even though structural changes were progressively taking place. Contrariwise, the phenomena of language shift and abandonment have come about clearly because of the introduction of new elements into the traditional sociocultural ecosystem which have ended up dis-(re)-organizing it, and thus taking it into another phase.

Hence, we can conceive of the 'linguosphere' as a set of sociolinguistic ecosystems in continual internal and external equilibrium inside which the individuals use or avoid using the codes in their unceasing communication. These ecosystems, made up of elements such as the human brain/mind, behavioural competences and habits, cognitive-emotional representations of reality, the sub-groups they constitute sociologically, enterprises, commerce and other social organizations, the mass media, educational institutions, and governments and public administrations, for example, sustain—permitting, in the process, as we have seen, internal change—the mutual communication systems that are languages.

These, as complex objects, will simultaneously live in the minds, in the social interaction, and in the general communication of a given community, which will make use of them for purposes of social relations, categorization of reality and, when necessary, to identify themselves in relation to other humans speaking other languages. Historically, if this ecosystem suffers no fundamental disturbances, it will tend to reproduce itself intergenerationally, even though with internal change, via self-co-construction of the codes by the new individuals. If, however, as we have already stated, the ecosystem registers a large and powerful enough entry of exogenous linguistic elements, then there could occur a reorganization of competencies and norms of linguistic usage,

and this could lead to important evolutionary repercussions (Bastardas, 1996). There have been basically two main causes of the historical disruption of linguistic ecosystems: migratory irruptions and politico-economic integrations.

One crucial aspect that is derived from a sustainability approach to linguistic diversity is the distinction between the causes of bilingualization and those of the intergenerational abandonment of one of the codes which, as the Canadian sociologist Stanley Lieberman already observed some years ago, probably are not exactly the same (Lieberman, 1981). It is also pertinent here to question—in order to attempt to understand more completely the exact mechanisms—the widespread belief that, ineluctably, ‘bilingualism leads to language shift’. The sociologist Norbert Elias already warned us that when it comes to dealing with the problem of the need for social change we must clearly distinguish the affirmation that ‘figuration B’ will necessarily follow ‘figuration A’ from the affirmation that ‘figuration A’ must necessarily precede ‘figuration B’. All of which is to say that, in fact, bilingualization must have been previously existed if any abandonment of an original code was to have taken place. However, what may be less clear is that by the mere fact of this bilingualization, individuals have necessarily to abandon their first language as they bring up their children, for example. That is, that bilingualization is perhaps a condition that is *necessary* but *not sufficient* to explain the evolution towards the intergenerational disuse of local varieties. The exact answer therefore remains open in regard to this evolution which is, as we know, unfortunately not at all infrequent in many cases.

Sustainability, because it proposes conciliation of two apparent antinomies—to develop oneself economically and not damage the natural environment, or else to know/use more than one language and not abandon any of those known/used—again places the subject on the table for discussion and therefore insists that we sociolinguists detail our answer so as to refine our theorizing and our research. Hence, when and why does a situation of bilingualism or polyglotism in a society evolve towards the abandonment of the weaker code by its speakers and when not? To be able to answer these questions, we obviously need to refer to the socio-cognitive representations of speakers in regard to the linguistic varieties that are present and in regard to the contexts in which these are formed and maintained. As we already said in other publications, the first important factor that we have seen is usually very active in this type of situation is the political context. In many cases, the political powers in charge have sought precisely this result of linguistic abandonment from the very beginning of the process of massive diffusion of the state language—which, for the great majority of the population, first coincides with learning to read. In many cases,

the explicit aim was not only that of spreading an interlanguage of general communication but of doing away with the existence of other systems of linguistic communication that differ from the model adopted by the central and sovereign political power. The scholastic diffusion of the official standard will, then, be accompanied by a clearly disparaging and stigmatizing discourse on the vernacular varieties (“soyez propre, parlez français”, in France, or, in Spain, “habla en cristiano”, “habla la lengua del imperio”) while, at the same time, in many of these cases, there will even be a decree to prohibit the use of the other different varieties in public communication.

It is in this framework of subordination and dependency that people, as they progressively become competent in the newly acquired official language, will opt to transmit it to their children as the basic variety of socialization that is, as a native variety, thus interrupting the intergenerational transmission of the group’s own vernacular. As it is a question of a behaviour that will obviously be evaluated by the community, the change in habitual norms will require a clear ideological and/or practical justification and legitimation. This, however, will be usually brought about by the discourse of the ‘national language’ which will favour the idea of the single and general language for all citizens, argued on the basis of images such as “children of the same family” or “ties that bind siblings” (Balibar & Laporte, 1974: 184). Thus, in the case of France, for example, renouncing the continuity of one’s own language will officially be interpreted as an act of patriotism at the service of freedom. From the practical point of view, the legal imposition of the standard variety of the official language known as “French” as the only code for official and public use in parallel with the processes of industrialization and urbanization that will favour the social and geographical mobility of the population(s) will increase perception of the need and essentiality of this language for survival and, especially, for economic ascent. Gradually, then, and in a process of asymmetric diffusion according to the social and geographic groups, the new variety—in the form of ‘*langue nationale*’—will be adopted first for institutionalized communications and later transferred to the individualized communications by a generation already competent which, at the same time, will transmit it as native speech to the following generation. This latter generation will rarely know the old vernaculars and will make the official variety—conveniently adapted to the colloquial functions—their only first and habitual language.

If, however, we compare that typical language shift process with the cases of stable balance, such as the diglossia typical of German Switzerland, we find that very probably in this stabilization of local varieties there must intervene the fact of the existence of a highly positive groupal image—Switzerland is not

a poor country that is little developed economically—and the fact that the adoption of the general German standard is not in any way a foreign imposition or the fruit of a situation of political minoritization but rather a decision of the language group itself—and, if they wish, a revocable one freely taken. In our study of 1997, we concluded that, “fundamentally, then, the reason for the relative stability of these cases of diglossic distribution must be sought in the politico-cognitive dimension: none of the cases habitually analysed are situations of political subordination like those of the minoritized European communities. The perception of dependence and, in consequence, of self-deprecation, taking a group or foreign cultural elements as a main referent of behaviour and of values, simply does not need to take place. It seems clear, therefore, that it must not be the simple fact of bilingualization and asymmetric distribution of functions which can lead to intergenerational language shift, but rather the politico-economic *context* in which this bilingualization takes place and the *meanings and representations* that its protagonists associate with it”.

Note that in this conclusion, we mention fundamentally two different but fully interrelated planes of reality, the *macro* and the *micro*, the large factors and events, and, at the same time, the sociosignifications that are produced by the individuals that live in these circumstances. This is important to bear in mind because, in spite of the fact that humans can be influenced to a high degree by the events and elements of their sociocultural environment, in the final analysis it is their brain/mind that creates the representations of reality and decides, consciously or otherwise, their courses of action. Those who move more towards the abandonment of their own codes are those human groups that have no control of their collective life—and hence of their public linguistic functions—and that are little developed economically but integrated into supraeconomic and perhaps more advanced areas, that experience geographic and social mobility—even if this is internal, for example, from rural areas to cities—and that maintain a non-favourable self-image while on the other hand tending to follow another group of reference, whose language they attempt to adopt and, when possible, use to speak to their children. On the other hand, the abandonment of the local code is much less frequent in those groups that to a significant degree control their collective life, their code having enough public linguistic functions and their group a very high or medium degree of economic development, and a feeling and self-image of positive identity. In between, we find all sorts of other cases, with a gradation in which, as the French sociologist Bourdieu would say, we see clearly how social *positions* and *dispositions* highly correspond.

If we look more closely at how bilingualized people and groups come to abandon their first languages, we discover a whole series of dynamic characteristics in which often the protagonists of the very phenomenon may not be particularly aware of the historical process in which they are participating. For many, consciousness of the problem comes when it may already be too late, as has been seen in many cases we know of. What happens, however, is that a series of behaviours is set in motion with important historical consequences which too often are little understood by their very agents.

The key point of breaking the balance may be in the moment when an important number of individuals of the same group accept, among themselves and in a habitual manner, the use of the language that was initially allochthonous. In as much as there is a functional distribution that makes the outside language basically used to speak with individuals of other groups or to carry out only determined public functions, there may be a more or less unstable balance, and the continuity of the linguistic collective appears assured, even though it is in a context that is perhaps little favourable. If, however, they begin to use it among themselves, and above all this takes place in a general way, even in the level of individualized communications—those of private and domestic types—then the system can begin a crisis dynamic. If among the members of the group, for example, the young people speak in the other code in important numbers, this will mean that couples will begin to be formed in that code who will eventually have children, to whom they will also probably tend to speak in that language. We would then have the first members of the group that have the allochthonous language as an L1 that is not the original one of the group. If the behaviour is widely imitated and extended progressively, the group will progressively be emptied of people who have the original code as an L1 and its use will continually decrease.

A group can inexorably empty itself in this way, although the functional endo/exogroupal distribution is not broken, due to the fact of mixed marriage, especially if it is a question of a demolinguistic situation where the volumes are equalled or, indeed, if the other collective is the majority. Even if the habit or norm of speaking together as a group continues to be preserved in the original language, in a mixed ethnolinguistic couple there will be a strong tendency to use a single code between conjugal pairs, which will tend to be the best positioned in the social distribution of linguistic competences. That is, it will become customary to use the language more developed by both participants and/or seen as more 'appropriate' for inter-group relations, a fact that often will depend on the language policies being applied in the situation, or on the social context in which the individuals live. In a mixed marriage there is customarily

an important tendency to speak to children in only one of the languages, even though it is also possible for each parent to speak to the children in a different language, something which is not, however, as common.

In fact, in order for one partner in a mixed marriage to be able to use with the child a language which is different from that used by the other partner, an important condition seems to be the fact that, at least, the other member of the couple must understand this language. Otherwise, they would not be able to understand a good part of the linguistic input available in the domestic setting. This, of course, would limit the possibility of maintaining the transmission of the codes, although it certainly doesn't make it impossible if the conjugal partner willingly accepts the situation. We would then have an individual with, we could say, two L1s, as long as both languages were spoken to the child with more or less the same intensity. The strategy of bilingual growth in the family is an opportunity that too often goes unused for linguistic maintenance; one which we think should be favoured and promoted in those cases that are suitable.

It is clear, then, that in situations of politico-economic and/or demographic subordination it will be more difficult to succeed in creating sustainable dynamics of linguistic maintenance. This kind of context will hardly be favourable and the speakers can abandon the use of their L1 due to negative or at least not very positive social meanings that can be associated with them in regard to the other language that is present, or else for practical reasons of communication in everyday relations among individuals. Hence, it will not be easy to assure sustainability in all the different sociolinguistic situations that exist today on our planet.

3.3. WHAT SHOULD A SUSTAINABLE MULTILINGUALISM BE LIKE?

What we now wish to posit is how to avoid situations whereby people who have been bilingualized or polyglotized have to abandon the fundamental uses of their group's L1 in their daily life. That is, how to make it possible for these people to continue using their habitual code and using it for the maximum number of functions. Let us distinguish, in our analysis, between two large situation types, which, however, can also exist together: vertical contact, and horizontal contact (Barreto, 1995). What we should consider then is whether bilingualization is the fruit of a territorial and group integration inside wider political and socio-economic structures, or whether the situation has basically

come about because of face-to-face contact with other people from migration processes with whom one coexists on a daily basis.

Prior to beginning to analyse in more detail each major typology, let us be clear about the fact that in order to be able to act on the abandonment of languages by its bilingual or polyglot speakers, the main need will be to achieve an impact on their representations of reality. This is true for two main reasons. First, in cases where the speakers have arrived at an interiorizing of negative evaluations regarding their L1, they will need to be exposed to a discourse—and also, hopefully, a situation—that presents alternatives which promote and dignify their language and their group to keep them from abandoning the use of that language and, instead, recovering it and making it grow. The second reason is to do with cases where there is no formal negative discourse but there are demoesociolinguistic conditions which spontaneously and in a self-organized way cause the speakers, for very practical reasons, to progressively stop using their own L1 almost without realizing it so that they will need to be made aware and convinced of the need to change their behaviour as effective long-term language group self-destroyers.

In the first type of situation, that of ‘vertical contact’, we are referring, as mentioned, to linguistic groups which, without having been displaced from their territory, habitually become bilingual due to the fact of being politically integrated into a higher structure which decides to adopt, in the simplest typologies, a language with an official character, one which is not that of the affected group. Since there are far fewer states than there are languages, this is a case that is far from infrequent. In extreme cases, the state, which often consciously desires to build a homogeneous ‘nation’, will tend to put into practice a policy which exalts the values of the official language, presenting it as the guarantee of national unity and the symbol of the new nation one wants to build. Reciprocally, in many cases, the discourse will be one of disparagement or at least of public oblivion of the other languages existing on the perimeter of sovereignty. Moreover, if this political subordination occurs, as is often the case, in the framework of acute technoeconomical change, which often leads to the destruction of the culture’s traditional economic organization, then the new language will progressively be seen as the language of the new situation, in turn seen as ‘modern and of material progress’. The new language will then need to be not only known well but even adopted if one wishes to become integrated in the new ruling class or, simply, to improve one’s social status. If this process becomes generalized gradually among the population, there may follow cases of group self-abandonment of the original language and thus an initiation of the process of linguistic extinction.

In these situations, action should be fundamentally political to reorient the predominant discourses in the directions of self-esteem and, at the same time, if possible, to provide the peoples with a sufficient degree of political and economic selfhood in their collective life. This should permit sociolinguistic self-determination and provide the freedom necessary to distribute communicative functions between both languages. Insofar as it is possible for the hegemonic powers to see their way to adopt this point of view and put it into practice, halting the abusive uses of the large interlanguage, these situations, if well balanced and if the peoples in question recover their cultural self-esteem, can be sustainable in the long run so long as other types of factors are not added to them. There are organizational principles and techniques, as we know, which can organize the corresponding distributions of functions and linguistic rights (Bastardas & Boix, 1994). Depending on the territorial distributions of the peoples in question and on their volume, we can be guided by the now classic criteria of 'personality' or 'territoriality', to which we personally would suggest adding those of *functionality* and *subsidiarity*, for those cases in which the other two principles cannot be applied with their optimum force (Bastardas, 2004b). If the political power involves itself in this in a sincere way and the group's demographic volumes are not too low, they are cases that can be solved and lead to long continuity.

These cases, however, may present more sustainability difficulties if, in a comparative sense, their demolinguistic numbers are proportionally lower and, indeed, if they are territorially dispersed. Here, the compaction of the collective plays an important role. If the members are few but compacted, if they live in a single territorial base that clearly enables them to have public use of their L1 and easy and continual linguistic interaction, then sustainability will be higher. On the other hand, if the group has been progressively dispersed and has mixed with other groups, even if the state in question recognizes their rights and has positive official ideologies, they won't be able easily to use their code in daily communication, and that could play against its preservation. In such cases, the acting mechanisms in the mixture situation can gradually lead to disuse of the L1, in favour of the more general one employed in the community.

Most probably, the key to the question of linguistic sustainability is to be found in the states and in their linguistic policies, which of course cannot be divorced from their responsibility to embrace a sociolinguistic ethics, respectful of linguistic diversity. Hegemonic groups must especially bear in mind that a language today requires much more than in the past simply to exist. In past societies the functions of a language were based in those of local quotidian life.

Today, the functions which, for the psyche, can be seen as most important often depend not on local universes but on supralocal organizations that are not at all infrequently international. The language of work, of ‘media/cinema/music’, of ‘progress’, and of technological advances, exercises an important influence on people, who can come to interiorize, as we have seen, a negative vision of their own L1. In order to compensate for this—since often it will not be possible for a language to serve all the functions of a contemporary developed society—we should assign the maximum number of important ‘local’ functions to the original languages of the human groups in question, assuring them *exclusive* functions that makes them useful and profitable in the eyes of their speakers. In ecological terms, we could say that the states should aid the languages in being able to find (and occupy) functional niches that are sufficiently important to invite their maintenance and their intergenerational transmission.

One of the points which states—and populations—have to keep extremely clear is that techno-economic development does not necessarily require the abandoning of group languages, just as economic development need not bring the destruction and degradation of the environment and/or of natural resources. The decisive fact here is that ‘modernization’ be controlled by the different society itself, made by it, without having to be politically or linguistically subordinated to the others. We can make it possible for those countries where very important techno-economic changes are occurring at present to achieve ‘development’ without unnecessarily destroying linguistic ecosystems. The challenge is to discover what must be accommodated, what must be adapted, but by designing environmentally and culturally sustainable development. Progress need not mean destroy and build back but rather it can mean build while conserving and rehabilitating, modernizing but maintaining. And this will always be a vision that is far more civilized than the reverse, the one often adopted by subordinated and provincial communities.

If we now move toward the type of contact we call ‘horizontal’, that is, the type in which bilingualism is basically produced by migration and direct face-to-face exposure, the factors and the dynamics can be different and, it should be noted, it can be a good deal more difficult to make it sustainable. As we know, even though linguistic diversity, in order to be generated, needed isolation and uncommunication between the different human groups, these have always tended to move from their territories, in search of survival, greater well-being, or even colonizing adventures. This means, and we are at present living in a critical moment, that the encounter and the physical contact between different populations is an old phenomenon and at the same time extremely contemporary.

Here also we would find different typologies. From population displacements from contiguous linguistic areas, one in the direction of the territory of the other, to migrations in the direction of very faraway lands which, today, with our transport technologies, are becoming progressively closer. This brings with it a type of linguistic contact in which, momentarily bracketing the variables involved in officially controlled public communication, a set of specific dynamics is generated in which other factors also play an important role. In this type of encounter, the demographic aspects will have a very decisive weight. The situation could evolve in a different way if the volumes are clearly unequal or even approximately the same. If the contact, now leaving aside other factors, is weighted between, for example, 15% and 85% for each group, then we could predict that the smaller group will tend more than the larger to abandon its original code, above all if the people in question are little concentrated and compacted. Naturally, the pressure to use the codes present will be more favourable to the L1 of the larger group than that of the smaller. It is also clear that if there is no prohibition on exogamy for some reason, then 15% has more possibilities of mixed pairing than the reverse, a situation which will create the typology of linguistic behaviour in pairing of which we spoke above, with negative consequences for the L1 of the smaller group. Certainly, other variables could here come into play. For example, it will not be the same if the demographically smaller group is an economically—or culturally or technically—superior community, but everything indicates that displacements in unequal volume will tend to evolve towards the loss of the smaller group.

If, on the other hand, the volumes are more equal, the perspectives for continuity are clearer since, if there are no other decisive asymmetries, the effectives can tend to remain very much the same because the statistical opportunities for mixed marriages will be the same for both. Other factors, certainly, can contribute to causing the evolutionary balance to shift, such as the linguistic policies under which this encounter takes place and whom it tends, overall, to favour. In these situations, all the factors—economic, ideological, residential, media factors, etc.—can become relevant, and in each case specific dynamics can be produced.

There are also special situations in the current great urbanization processes in Africa and, to a lesser extent, in Latin America. The meeting of populations of different origins in cities in the process of formation, with little presence of state action and, at times, without a clear predominance of one of the groups, can provoke a situation in which it is difficult to maintain clearly any language, since a tendency can arise to create mixed varieties or else to adopt general interlanguages that did not originate in any of the groups in contact.

In these cases, attempting to create situations of linguistic sustainability can be very difficult, more so when the priorities of the groups and the governments are not centred on these aspects but on others that are much more important and urgent for the respective peoples themselves.

In more developed societies, with functionally effective states, one can certainly attempt to arbitrate support policies for the linguistic sustainability of displaced groups, even if, at times, they themselves consider that they are not interested, if they have already clearly chosen the option of installing themselves in the new country. Often, when a person in such a situation is reminded that they are different, this fact is not what they most like to hear, since what preoccupies them, and above all in terms of their children, is making their adaptation complete, obviating the need for their children to go through the difficult situations the parents had to experience. Very often, then, if the parents have become somewhat competent linguistically in the language of the receiving country, they themselves will be the ones who choose to abandon their groupal code to bring up their children in a way that they feel most benefits them. Here, governmental actions should aim at making people aware of the fact that, in a host society that is linguistically normal and developed, the host country's language will also be learned and that if they transmit their original L1 then their children will have greater linguistic competence that can benefit them in future. On the other hand, this could save the parents the inconvenience of seeing how their children are unable to speak their own original language, a situation probably both personally and collectively regrettable. Here also there would be room for action, especially in dignifying the original languages and informing the populations of the security of their effective bilingualization at an early age.

One of the conflictive aspects that can be placed on the table with the new facts of migration is the destabilization of the receiving groups by the displaced groups, especially in those cases in which the receiving society is one that is not politically independent and is disequibrated already due to previous migratory movements, or due to a significant presence of part of the dominant group in its own territory. Again we can find here (with evolutionary effects of which the actors are unaware) something which makes these cases into situations difficult to organize satisfactorily and open to intergroupal misunderstanding and uncertain outcome.

One of the new phenomena that these last movements are provoking in this age of globalization is the use of the major interlanguages instead of the languages of the receiving country for the purposes of relations between immigrants and receivers, provoked by greater linguistic knowledge—by polygloti-

zation—of the people themselves, both those who move in and those who are already established. And this can be seen as an unwanted consequence of the massive polyglotization of societies. Imagine how these societies could evolve if, simultaneously with their bi- or multi-lingualization, there should come about important migratory movements, also of multilingual persons, and that they implant their interrelation in the L2 that is most shared by the two groups—quite logical, of course, from the operative point of view. This means that the habit would be implanted whereby in their relations they used not the language of the country, which was habitually the solution that was traditional—even though certainly gradual and imperfect but still enabling linguistic sustainability—but instead one of the major interlanguages. If the volumes of the displaced are very high and the societies progressively become mixed, we might have here, in the long run, a dangerous situation for the linguistic continuity of the receiving community, since it would be impossible to linguistically integrate the displaced. Therefore, it would be the receiving community itself that would be pulled towards new linguistic behaviour led by the immigrants, whether in their L2 or their L1, if this L1 is also one of the great interlanguages.

This situation is not fantasy but something that can happen even in contemporary Catalonia, for example, a situation where the most habitual intergroup language is not Catalan, the L1 of the receiving group which has been historically subordinated by the governments of the Spanish state, but Spanish, that of thousands of speech-area migrants coming from the south of Spain over the course of the twentieth century, and now from Latin America. And the same thing is happening with the migrations whose provenance is the north and the centre of Africa or the east of Europe, which tend to establish relations with the autochthonous people and the other groups more in Spanish than in Catalan. Certainly, in a meeting of humans, the most logical way of acting would seem to be to use the optimal communicative instrument for mutual understanding. But if this behaviour becomes consolidated, and it is not only transitory, then the great interlanguages will always win. We should thus look at ways of creating the conditions—among people who live in a stable way in a territory—by which they also can know and use the less communicatively powerful languages when these are the historical and first languages of the receiving societies.

The Catalan situation is one in a state of disequilibrium and which could be typical of other similar cases that could come about in the future. Bilingualization or polyglotization of compacted and communicating human groups, with exclusive and secure spaces for their language, can be sustainable; how-

ever, it is not so certain that the language ecosystems will last if the current migratory volumes into societies that are not fully independent does not stop or even increases.

However, right now we need to await the outcomes of these cases since, as is happening in Quebec, it could also occur that the first generation, which does not know the language of the receiving country, might tend to use one of the major interlanguages (for example, English) while, for the second generation, it might turn out to be more general to adopt the original language of the receiving society—French, in this case—as the language of interrelationship. This, however, certainly requires good and effective educational institutions and, above all, a very clear vision of what must be the language of earning a living and of habitual social relations in society. In the case of Catalonia, the volumes are different from those of Quebec, as are the historical facts and the ideologies involved (Bastardas, 2002b). The future, then, is very much open.

This globalization of migratory movements may cause ‘ethnic conscience’—unlike what one might initially have expected to result from globalization per se—where there previously was none, or where there was very little. A large, stable receiving group, with little ‘ethnic conscience’—regardless of the ‘state/national’—can greatly increase its sense of ‘inter-ethnic’ personal difference if it comes into habitual contact with people from other groups that have moved to its territory. Certain groups of medium-large languages may not accept the fact of having to speak in one of the ‘large interlanguages’ in their own country (e.g., the Dutch or the Danish with regard to English). Obviously, they know them for ‘exterior’ communication, but not for ‘interior’ communication. For quotidian use, they will probably clearly prefer to use their own language, and they may consider the other person’s persistence in using the interlanguage as offensive and, if that person indeed resides there habitually, as a demonstration of their desire not to adapt. Certainly, this could grow in the case of migrations of some significance in numerical terms, more so than in the case of the isolated ‘visitor’ to whom one feels more predisposed to adapt linguistically.

In all probability, then, to the extent that globalization also increases personal inter-ethnic contact, it could tend to increase the ‘ethnic conscience’ of human individuals or groups. The challenge is to organize and manage this: how are we to avoid conflicts, and inform the population of the fact that this can be happening? How are we to make known the need for transition phases in linguistic adaptation? We have to find a way of establishing a set of negotiated principles of coexistence that save: 1) *the principle of linguistic stability and continuity of the receiver group*, 2) in consequence, *the principle of intergroupal and social adaptation of the immigrant group* and, 3) *the principle of personal*

freedom of the displaced in regard to the continuity of their cultural elements, at the intragroupal level. On this point, many questions remain open and much work remains to be done.

3.4. CONCLUSION

We must of course be realistic and thus start from the fact that there is still much terrain to be covered in the creation of sustainable linguistic development. At the same time, we should also be aware that we are acting in a different and rather peculiar time in the human adventure, one that could create obstacles to the full attainment of the aims being proposed by those of us in favour of sustainability. Our times are characterized, as we've seen, by an exponential increase in contact among peoples and languages and, hence, by the end—or in all events the considerable reduction—of the traditional isolation that favoured linguistic differences within the same species (Bastardas, 2002). But simultaneously with this, the creation of new identities of suprastate origin, the selection of only a few languages to be denominated official and public, and the growing role of the large languages of intercommunication, are facts that tend to work not in favour of maintaining the traditional codes but of the often abusive and unimpeded extension of these state and international languages. Moreover, human populations, seeking to survive and to materially improve their lot, are leaving their historical territories and going to other linguistic areas, with the consequent disorganization and, in any case, reorganization of the ecosystems that until the present moment had assured the existence both of the linguistic groups that are moving and many of those that are receiving them.

On the other hand, now more than ever, awareness of linguistic diversity is advancing, and high levels of international and governmental organizations are operating in an ethics of protection and of solidarity in regard to politically subordinate linguistic and, above all, economically less developed groups. The complex political structuring of states, with power sharing in different territorial organizations, is also advancing, and making available more opportunities for political self-government by linguistically differentiated populations. This makes it possible for such groups to take decisions autonomously in regard to the linguistic aspects of their life. It is true that much more still needs to be done and that there are languages in great danger of extinction, but there is clearly a general advance—too slow, certainly, and even badly understood by the hegemonic groups, but an advance nonetheless. The sustainability mod-

el thus offers itself as a horizon and a process on the path to improving the linguistic life of humans, through the development of interlinguistic equity and justice. Because the linguistic claims of the so-called ‘minorities’ are not ‘something from the past’ but clearly for the future, as they are looking for sustainable equilibrium and maximum development to be secured.

In order to be successful in this universal undertaking, we will need to combat the causes more than simply providing palliative remedies. Clearly, we should overcome the mentality of conservative political positions that hold that the solution is basically to subsidize languages, and pass over to a view that adopts more progressive and egalitarian positions based on the adequate distribution of the functions of languages, in the aim of achieving their sustainability. A lasting compromise must be sought among linguistic groups—and this is the special responsibility of the large groups, more than of the medium-size and small ones—in order to efficaciously influence the causes that make people abandon their own languages, taking as a centre and motivation of our action the *people* and not the purely ‘anthropological’ perspective of the museum or ‘reservation’. If the territorial distribution of groups allows this, the ideal horizon is for each linguistic group to tend to maintain control of their own sociolinguistic space, enabling intervention according to the general evolution of the sociocultural ecosystem. It should be recalled that, in the present technoeconomic situation, contact and exposition—even if by electronic means—to other, different languages, will grow and not many populations will remain marginal. Therefore, only those languages that can initiate compensatory and rebalancing actions in their ecosystem will be able to continue sustainably reproducing. Given the degree of intensity of contemporary changes, there exists the risk that populations that are in a situation of high subordination will not be able to undertake actions that are compensatory or that reroute their evolution. These will be condemned, very probably, to a slow and gradual abandonment of the use of their language. Our great challenge, then, will be, as in other sciences and fields of life, to know how to find the “exact conditions of nonequilibrium that can be stable” (Capra, 1997: 104), from a fluent conception of the reality.

One special responsibility in this whole state of things falls on the international cultural institutions, which must effectively compromise themselves to adopt the philosophy of sustainability and promote research on practical and valid organizational principles, for example, based on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights or the more specifically related Universal Declaration of Linguistic Rights created in Barcelona in 1996. Linguistic sustainability clearly seeks the concerted world action of all the peoples on the planet, which must agree and decide upon how they desire to organize themselves communica-

tively in this new century. Let us conclude by simply enumerating five points, which we think are crucial to recall and which can guide our actions and interventions in favour of linguistic sustainability. The priorities should be:

1. Stop the abusive uses of the large interlanguages, and extend the ideology of linguistic equality and solidarity.
2. Dignify the self-image of subordinated, non-majority language groups.
3. Allow these linguistic groups to be able to control their own communicative space, autonomously regulating their public linguistic uses.
4. Distribute communicative functions, providing *exclusive* and effective functions to the codes of linguistic groups currently in a situation of subordination.
5. Create awareness in governments, commercial firms, and societies in general, of the importance of attaining linguistic sustainability, urging them to habitually incorporate necessary studies on sociolinguistic impact in their decision-making processes.

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4.1. INTRODUCTION

The technological, economic, political and demographic processes and sub-processes now underway in the ‘glocal’²⁵ era may come to modify many of the solutions and approaches traditionally applied to the problem of linguistic contact. Our species, fragmented into sub-groups that cover an enormously diverse range of languages and identities, is now caught up in globalization in a process of rediscovery and re-encounters such has never before been witnessed, and it is in this new context that adequate solutions must be found for a series of organizational questions of fundamental importance in terms of cooperation and harmony.²⁶

In situations of very close and continuous language contact, individuals may easily designate social meanings to the languages that are used in their context, and associate them with a range of sentiments and emotions, which

24 Excerpts from my book *Language and identity policies in the glocal age: New processes, effects and principles of organization*. Barcelona: Institut d’Estudis Autònoms, Generalitat de Catalunya, 2012. Available on-line at http://www.ub.edu/cusc/llenguesmitjanes/wp-content/uploads/2011/07/IEA_50_Bastardas-English.pdf

25 The term ‘glocal’ allows us to express the idea of an essential ‘localness’, and all that that entails, and at the same time to relate it to the events that are unfolding at all the other scales up to and including that of the globality of the planet. Thus, we take account of the reciprocal influence of the elements and of their mutual and complex interplay in the reality, a process that is operating at a multiplicity of interconnected levels. The result is, as Appandurai says, that “globalization [...] produces problems that manifest themselves in intensely local forms but have contexts that are anything but local” (2001: 6).

26 According to Wright, the bringing about of all these changes is what enables us to speak of a general process of globalization: “Some political power seemed to be leaching away from the nation state to inter- and supranational bodies [...] and international courts ruled that there were limits to state sovereignty. The economic autonomy of the state diminished significantly [...] and [...] capitalist interest groups pressed for a global market place without tariffs and quotas. The idea that a national economy could stand alone or be protected was no longer tenable. Culture increasingly crossed frontiers; few national film and music industries continued to produce only for their own domestic market, and the US product penetrated most markets. The revolution in information technology allowed an unprecedented volume of information to circulate at an unprecedented rate, at least among the societies and classes able to afford the hardware. [...] And it is not only virtual contact that increased, but real contact too. Improved transport communication put the major cities at a few hours flying time from each other and at a price that a growing number could afford” (2004: 10-11).

may also have an influence on their verbal behaviour as well as on their social and political conduct. This is the typical situation, for example, when a human group is politically and economically integrated in a state in which it is in a demographic minority, or when groups migrate to other societies that speak a language different to the one spoken at the group's place of origin. It is in such situations, typically characterized by contact between a majority group and one or more minorities, in which we usually see the emergence of the individual and at the same time collective phenomenon known as 'identity'. Thus, 'languages (and groups) in contact' and 'group identities' are typically phenomena that coincide and which, at the same time, are mutually reinforcing. In virtually all situations, understanding and managing language contact also means understanding and managing 'identities in contact'.²⁷

The phenomenon of identity, therefore, has to be conceived as a markedly relational and 'emo-cognitive' fact, that is, as a meaningful representation of the reality self-co-constructed by the individual in their context of group relations, capable of engendering a powerful emotive activity, which can result in a high degree of behavioural and mobilizing motivation.²⁸ This 'identity' will lead the person to identify with given cultural, symbolic and behavioural models that will acquire pre-eminence, and which s/he will aspire to conserve and develop. If s/he believes that these models might be undermined, for example, by political or demographic changes, the individual that presents this high degree of identity may take steps to prevent these changes prospering; in this way, s/he might ensure that it is possible to maintain the fundamental ele-

27 It appears that language and collective identity did not acquire this intense potential relation until Fichte, in 1806, argued that language was what naturally defined a nation. Thus, he wrote, "The first, original, and truly natural boundaries of states are beyond doubt their internal boundaries. Those who speak the same language are joined to each other by a multitude of indivisible bonds by nature herself, long before any art begins; they understand each other and have the power of continuing to make themselves understood more and more clearly; they belong together and are by nature one and an inseparable whole". It was thus, according to Djité (2006), that "soon enough, nationalism became intricately bound with language and began to be built on linguistic difference". However, we should bear in mind that the central process of building an identity performed by a language is not seen today as an automatic phenomenon but rather one that will depend on the cognitive-emotive interpretations of the situation, and according to the individuals and their sociocultural characteristics. Thus, for example, as Mallikarjun (2003) points out, "Even the role of a language as an identity marker may not happen in India, because caste, religion, attire, food habits, and even personal names may often provide important identities for the individual or the family or the society. Language may assume a secondary role as an identity marker in such contexts".

28 "Identities and their conditions of existence are inseparable. There is no identity outside of its context: identity depends on conditions of existence which are contingent, its relationship with them is absolutely necessary" (Keith & Pile, 1993: 28).

ments of their collective identification. On the contrary, it might occur that, if the contexts in which the person lives are not only highly antagonistic to their presuppositions of identity but also clearly difficult to change, these individuals might have to undertake a revision of their collective images, with the corresponding effects that this might have on their behaviour.²⁹

4.2. MAJORITIES AND MINORITIES

Undoubtedly one of the most frequently recurring situations in which the phenomena of identity and the awareness of language group differences might appear is that characterized, as discussed above, by the presence of a majority group and that of one or more minorities. Above all in cases of a historical group or groups that have been settled for a long period in a given land, and who have become ‘minority groups’—often against their will—because of their political integration in states where a different demographically superior group holds sway, these peoples may become particularly sensitive to the unequal treatment handed out to their code in official and political spheres. If this difference in treatment occurs—a not infrequent occurrence it would seem—then the situation might be perceived as unjust or humiliating, in particular if there are or there have been other historical conflicts or differences between the groups in question. This would mean that the reality might tend to be interpreted in light of this historic tension, and the differences in the way the codes are dealt with might be considered to be socio-significant and emotionally important.³⁰

In such situations, the minority national group will tend to have a high awareness of the identity of its own differential attributes with respect to those of the majority group, and this can lead to wide-scale mobilizations to obtain more satisfactory political and linguistic acceptance for their interests and wishes. As Bauman claims, “Whenever you hear that word, [identity], you can be sure that there is a battle going on. A battlefield is identity’s natural home.

29 Thus, Bauman can state that “‘belonging’ and ‘identity’ are not cut in rock, [...] they are not secured by a lifelong guarantee, [...] they are eminently negotiable and revocable” (2004: 11).

30 As Dua says, “Language acts as a symbol par excellence and is subject to ideologization in varying degrees of intensity under different social conditions. It can magnify or minimize ethnic, social, religious or other forms of divisions, and is therefore used as a catalyst in such social processes as modernization, mobilization and communication” (1985: 25). Likewise, “As Donald Horowitz observed (1985), language is an especially salient symbolic issue because it links political claims with psychological feelings of group worth” (Schmid, 2001: 42).

Identity comes to life only in the tumult of battle; it falls asleep and silent the moment the noise of the battle dies down” (2004: 77). In many cases, therefore, language takes on an extremely important collective significance, and it becomes a highly prized symbolic object, well beyond its practical usefulness in day-to-day communication. It lies at the heart of the group’s identity.³¹

If the majority group resists the changes the minority seek, then this may strengthen further the construction of their identity as a distinct and separate group from that of the majority, and they could show absolutely no inclination to adopt a multi-identity that would enable them to include that promoted by the corresponding state entity. In such an instance the function of the representation of their identity will be to maintain themselves in the group’s collective image, avoiding the acceptance of changes that might be seen as emanating from the majority group. In certain cases, and if this minority status stretches between generations, the identity constructions of the group can change if the new individuals do not prescribe to the same cognitive-emotional constructs as those held by their predecessors. In many cases, in fact, the minoritized group runs the risk of an internal division and major internal confrontations, because of the differences in opinion regarding the present situation and what represents the best future paths for them.

Thus, for those groups that find themselves in a minority in states with a single identity and which are officially monolingual, their identity is, very often, an ‘identity of resistance’, as Castells calls it (2010: 95): “That identity in which a human collective that feels either culturally rejected or socially or politically marginalised reacts by constructing with the materials of its history forms of self-identification, enabling it to confront what would be its assimilation into a system in which its situation would be structurally subordinated”.³²

31 Often, the language—as an idea and practice—becomes central to the minority situation because no other satisfactory alternatives are offered for organizing the self-government and/or the recognition of the distinct identity, even in formally liberal states of law. Thus, as Mortimer says, “Democracy, by giving power to the majority of citizens, gives questions of culture and community an urgency which they do not have so long as power is legitimized by dynastic or religious arguments. If decisions that may affect my most vital interests are to be taken by a majority of my fellow-citizens, I need to feel a great deal of confidence in them. I may not mind being on the losing side in an election once in a while, or even every time, so long as the issues on which elections are fought do not threaten my existence or call my identity into question; so long, in other words, as I feel confident that majority and minority together form a single community with shared perceptions and interests. But democracy has little to offer me if I feel that I and people like me are permanently and structurally in a minority” (1999: xi).

32 A view shared by others, including Murray: “Communities, and minorities in particular, excluded from the prevailing image of the nation have often found in the notion of culture a method of self-assertion” (1997: 13).

These groups, in resisting, will seek to change their situation of subordination using whatever they have to hand, even though it may be difficult because of their ‘structural minority’, in the sense that, above all in democratic systems, they will never constitute a sufficient numerical majority to change the situation in their favour. However, in some cases important steps have been taken thanks to pacts with the state institutions, which have gradually been able to recognize—albeit only partially—the identity and language of the minority group. However, as we know, not all minoritized groups adopt postures of resistance in this process of accommodation to the pressure exerted by the state and the majority group, but rather, some in accordance with their subordinate socio-economic situation or in accordance with their negligible demographic weight, over the generations gradually adopt the identity facilitated by the state and, consequently, slowly abandon the use of their own language and adopt the official state language. In such instances, we witness a process of language shift that may terminate in the original language of the group falling into complete disuse and the adoption as native speakers of the state language. Thus, changes in identity and changes in language behaviour may be quite closely bound together. If the collective—relational—identity is perceived in negative terms with respect to the other alternative identity with which they are in conflict, the language of the group may also acquire a negative socio-significance and so its members may gradually abandon it. The ideas and feelings concerning language and identity often seem to go hand in hand.

Majority-minority situations, however, do not occur today solely as a result of the political integration of different historic peoples in common politico-economic states or structures but also as a result of major migratory movements. Here also we find a relation between a majority group—the host group—and a minority group, or groups. Although the emergence of contrasting identities is likely because of the contact between culturally distinct groups, the outcome of the group’s self-definitions are not necessarily the same as those that occur in situations of political integration of large groups of peoples without migration. In the latter instance, the definitions of reality may be built on a historic conscience of having inhabited a land and group characteristics inspired in the ‘national’ conceptualization of human groups, something which is much less likely to occur in the case of migratory movements, which are much more likely to be the result of individual decisions, taken in full awareness of the territorial shift involved, and, in many cases, assuming the ethno-linguistic continuity of the group in their place of origin. In cases of collective political integration, the minority situation is often ‘involuntary’, and in many cases the result of a forced or non-consultative process of annexation. In the case of migrations, the

minority status is foreseen and accepted, since the move—if we are not dealing with a refugee situation—is, despite everything, voluntary, and reflects a decision taken by the individual who has first weighed up the advantages and disadvantages of this new life compared with that in his place of origin. The cognitive and emotional experiences in the two cases may be quite different, and should not be treated under the same ‘multicultural’ label that is so much in fashion today.

In this context, it would seem that the fear of losing its language and identity felt by a group is what could underlie ‘identity fear’ in the new global era. Given the great expansion of languages in contact brought about by growth in the media, trade and exchanges between different peoples, not only those that are without their own sovereign land, but also many of those who are, may feel a new concern for the path that we might be taking. As Castells writes, “Nations excluded from the process of generating their own state—Catalonia, Scotland, Quebec—but also those which generated a strong nation—France—are at this moment feeling lost in globalization, which is glimpsed both as a loss of autonomy in terms of the power of the state and as the invasion of foreigners in a culture which resists assimilation” (2010: 96). Human constructs of identity have taken on, therefore, a central importance at the start of this century, and, along with these concerns, the language differences that go with them and on which they are often based.

4.3. ‘IDENTITY’ VERSUS ‘LANGUAGE’

However, despite the inter-relationships which may bind the two, ‘identities’ and ‘languages’ are not the same thing, and nor do they belong to the same order of things. Languages may exist in the absence of a strong sense of identity, and there may be identities that have nothing to do with language. If a group of humans has no contact with other individuals from different groups, that group’s collective self-representation will not be based on the contrast with other groups with different traits, but rather, where appropriate, on a contrast with other elements of the surrounding environment. Thus, such people may be unaware of how they speak as this will be a totally spontaneous and habitual phenomenon, like breathing, something that requires no conscious attention. In the event of contact it may also be that the basic trait which the groups believe distinguishes them from one another is not language, which they may or may not share, but rather religious beliefs or skin colour or political structures. Therefore, ‘language’ and ‘identity’ are not necessarily linked phenomena.

Furthermore, identity is not always equivalent to a simple attribution that serves to classify individuals. If there is contact we may 'know' that we belong to group *X* and that others belong to group *Y*, but without this being accompanied by an emotional response in either party, or without it giving reason to feel separate and profoundly different; likewise, there may not be aspects that, when making the comparison, cause us to feel ashamed or which provide a motive to organize ourselves socially in opposition to one another. 'Identity-building' (and it is indeed something under construction) occurs in specific circumstances that may lead one or both of the groups in contact to develop a strong awareness of the other, this being produced by a sensation—whether real or imagined—of conflict or strong difference between the two. In such situations, this self-awareness may be transformed into a positive or negative self-image with respect to the other group, and this can lead one of the parties to take a course of action based—according to the circumstances—on adaptive submission or active resistance. In the former case a 'negative' self-image will have emerged and this will favour a situation in which the behaviour of the other group is followed. In the latter case, the 'positive' self-image will lead this group's members to resist and generate conflict with the other group. There may also be situations characterized by the adoption of an intermediate position between these two extremes.

The situations in which we consciously tend to link the two terms 'language-and-identity' are generally those that correspond to the latter of the abovementioned forms, namely a context of resistance and, therefore, of tension with respect to other groups with which there is contact. In these cases, and for whatever reason, a clear process of identity-building has occurred in one of the groups, which constructs a definition of itself in which the conflict with the other group moves centre-stage, and where the linguistic differences between one group and another play a key role or take on some other symbolic value. In certain situations, the simple use of one language or another, corresponding to one or the other group, may become highly significant in social terms, that is to say, this usage is interpreted not only in terms of 'what is said' but also 'how' it is said, in which language, and this may have repercussions as regards what is felt toward the other person: friendliness or dislike, proximity or social distance, etc.

Needless to say, the very fact of linguistic diversity among the human species readily facilitates these types of situation in which linguistic identity-building is produced. This is particularly the case in situations involving minoritized groups, whether of a political or demographic nature, and where one human group may feel threatened or unfairly treated by another within their

own specific territory. However, the same may also occur in the case of majority groups, who may feel less safe than before as a result of widespread immigration, leading them to increasing self-awareness as regards their identity and language.

Nevertheless, although the idea of identity-building has clear repercussions on the level of individual awareness and with respect to certain actions, it should be noted that its influence in the linguistic domain is less automatic, a fact that also indicates the need for a distinction to be made. As Joseph says, "Knowing who one is belongs to the realm not of communication, but representation" (2004: 91). In everyday 'linguaging' (a term which reveals the 'dynamic' nature of the process), individuals-with-linguistic-identity may not manage to transmit their group ideas coherently, and may behave linguistically in ways that do not reflect them, as these behaviours are often subconscious and have become routine. The distinction is also illustrated by the fact that some people may be competent in a given communicative form but not wish to use it; alternatively, people with ideas of identity might favour the use of a given language but fail to do so because they lack the necessary competence. Clearly, therefore, identity-building belongs to the realm of awareness and representations of reality, whereas language belongs to the domain of basic cognitive skills and social action; of course, as we have seen, this does not mean that connections between the two cannot be established in either direction.

4.4. LANGUAGE-AND-IDENTITY IN THE GLOBAL ERA

Having distinguished between the terms and the phenomena it should now be noted that it is increasingly common to find the two elements united in a single discourse, one in which they appear as an increasingly common syntagm. In the past this was commonplace in the context of minoritized groups or migration, usually within the most subordinate group, but nowadays it is also appearing in the discourse of majority groups or those in a position of superiority. This is clearly a result of the greater contact between human groups produced by technological and economic globalization, a process which is extending the traditional areas of inter-relationship not only to a continental but also to a planetary level. As a consequence, groups that previously would not have recognized and/or would have given short shrift to the claims of sub-groups within their nation state over language and identity, now find themselves obliged to take on board these discourses, since the new situation in which they find themselves can begin to seem unsettling in this regard. Thus, the 'defence' of

language and identity has entered international debate as never before, particularly as regards the spread of English as the language of global relations, but also with respect to the new political and economic unions that cross individual state borders.

The new 'fears over identity' aroused through globalization, and their association with language, rest fundamentally on the dual social function of language, namely communication and identification (or identity-building). Although language clearly serves as a vehicle for communication, in other words, for *inter-signification*, it also provides key elements of *socio-signification*.³³ For we do not only mutually suggest meaning to each other to those aspects of reality that we refer to mentally but also, and more precisely, it happens that the visible difference between the codes used by humans serves as a potential vehicle of emotions through which we become identified with a given group. Thus, it is far from easy for a human group to consider relinquishing its linguistic code, since this implies not only ceasing to use a given language but also letting go of one of the basic aspects around which its identity as a group is structured, and this has important emotional repercussions on the personal level. If a human group finds itself collectively in a situation in which it is forced to give up its language it is likely that a sizeable proportion of that group will wish to resist and seek ways to prevent this from happening, despite the fact that the slow nature of such processes means that by the time awareness is raised it is often too late to stem the tide.³⁴ Whatever the case, if a sense of insecurity and threat develops to an as-yet non-advanced extent, human groups will tend to be dissatisfied with this situation and a period of conflict may be ushered in with respect to the other group or groups, who may refuse to introduce the necessary changes.

However, at this point in history there is a need to consider the unnecessary conflict that could arise if these 'fears over identity' become widespread in the global age. From a glocal perspective, and with a more measured viewpoint, it must be said that these fears are often unfounded and are due to the inherent ignorance of these processes, or even to the demonization of personal

33 Cf. Bastardas, 2004.

34 This is the case of many groups of American Indians who are now striving to recover their language: "Someone could say you're not a people anymore because you don't have a language. I don't want to hear that in my lifetime", points out, for example, Amos Key Jr., director of the First Nations Language Department of the Woodland Cultural Centre, near to Brantford, Ontario. According to the 2001 census only 24% of people descended from aboriginal groups of Canada are able to converse in the original language of their group (cf. "Vanishing words", *Canada World View* 23 (2004), pp. 14-15).

bi- or multilingualism. Many people who are used to monolingualism and a unitary identity may now look warily at the changes being ushered in by globalization. There is a need, therefore, to develop adequate political strategies that enable individuals to understand how processes of bilingualization work, and to identify whether or not they might lead to the abandonment of a language, the aim being to calm their anxieties in the face of increasing contact between different languages. Likewise, it is necessary to help people assimilate images of identity in which the latter is plural in nature rather than something set in stone, images that can bring together without undue difficulty the different levels of relationship and communication in which human beings increasingly find themselves. People may be polyglots and maintain without conflict their own language as the habitual and core tongue in their collective identification, while at the same time making use of others as accessories.

On an international level, and given that generalized contact is most likely irreversible, ensuring that these new perspectives take root will entail finding ways of enabling all parties involved to adapt to the new situation, setting out a series of general principles that allow them to live peacefully and in respectful harmony alongside one another. Efforts are also required in terms of modifying the traditional views held by each human group, and these groups will have to take an open-minded view of the diversity of languages and identities, as well as imagining themselves as an internally diverse group rather than as separate and distinct units in conflict and rivalry with one another. As Fettes says, there is a need for imagination in helping human beings see themselves “as members of a ‘world polity’ which includes all states and all people within its horizon of significance. [...] World-centric thought and belief is quite diverse [...] [b]ut it does seem to offer an opening for new forms of thought and action as well” (2003: 50).

There will also be a need to learn from history so as not to repeat the same mistakes on what is now a much larger scale. If we compare different examples it is clearly possible to achieve a degree of enduring peace with respect to language and identity provided that political and linguistic organization is carried out in a mutually respectful way that prioritizes equality and justice. In contrast, forms of coexistence in which there is no official or public recognition of the language and identity of different human groups leads to discontent among them and can generate potentially long-lasting conflict, which sadly may also become violent. Although its value may not be understood by non-minority groups, ‘identity capital’ can be of enormous symbolic importance to large numbers of people who, as a cultural group, find themselves without their own space and in a position of subordination.

One of the key aspects in need of change is the tendency to view these issues from the perspective of classical logic, one that does not allow the simultaneous existence of apparent opposites; instead, a more ‘oriental’ point of view is required, one that can go beyond simple dichotomies and give free rein to more complex thought. It is no longer viable to argue that if there is an identity ‘X’ then there cannot *also* be an identity ‘Y’. For identities are not physical but rather *emo-cognitive* elements which, as such, can coexist and blend with one another in space and within individuals. Although languages are more complex phenomena they too, when well developed and distributed, can exist alongside one another in space and within people, and thus the diversity that humanity has created across the evolution of our species can come to be organized in a peaceful and harmonious way. Identities and languages are, therefore, as much ‘essences’ as they are ‘existences’. And to avoid conflict as far as possible and achieve a new equilibrium there is, as Edgar Morin would say, an urgent need “for us to take possession of the ideas that possess us” (1991).

4.5. ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL UNIONS

The expansion of the traditional areas of economic inter-relationship is accompanied by a shift toward stable forms of cooperation and/or political unions, which cover extensive areas that exceed classical political boundaries. Given that English has taken on global functions many countries may start to have doubts about whether their ‘foreign language’ teaching should focus on neighbouring languages and traditional forms of interchange, or prioritize the language which is becoming most widespread.

In terms of recognizing the link between identity and the languages of a given state and the human groups that make up the new unions it is obvious that reciprocal learning is, on paper, the best solution. Everybody accepts the same imposition based on a reciprocal agreement and, on the basis of an egalitarian official status, the various groups can feel that their dignity is being respected. However, its incorporation into an increasingly global world—one which also needs another language—may shake the foundations of such an agreement. How all this will evolve depends on the other factors involved, as well as on the practical interests that emerge within populations, and of course this will occur alongside the generation of identity and social meaning with respect to English. For it is one thing to regard English as the expression of US hegemony, which must be opposed, and quite another to see

it as simply the practical language of intercommunication on a global level. Whatever the case, governments will have to consider which linguistic resources are the most beneficial for their respective countries and reach a decision accordingly. In the European Union, for example, the process toward a predominantly political integration is already quite advanced and is based on a model that officially recognizes the equal status of the respective languages of member states, alongside the recommendation that everybody also learns two other European languages, without these being specified. This model may be satisfactory when it comes to recognizing the language and identity of the political units involved, but is less so in terms of inter-communication between them. Given that nothing is said about which European languages should be learnt the possibility is lost of ensuring that the various groups can understand one another through the fact of sharing the same 'second' language. Obviously, questions of identity come into play here, and no country wants to state officially which of the languages should be awarded the bridging role, although in practice this reticence is tempered by the fact that it has increasingly being accepted that English should be given prominence within the compulsory education systems of the various countries. Even without a desire to recognize this publicly, English has become established as the shared supra-language, and even France is adapting its education system to take account of this.

Obviously, another matter—and once again France serves as an example—is that states take internal steps to halt the possible abusive functions which English might seek to adopt within their territories. Here lies the heart of the question: if the need for a common *lingua franca* is accepted the distribution of functions between this language and the indigenous languages of each country must be clearly spelled out, as each society has the right to feel secure as regards its linguistic sustainability and dignity. Moreover, the respective educational systems should not be prevented from promoting the learning of other languages, whether European or not, in order to provide maximum linguistic resources in a world that is as technologically and economically integrated as the one now emerging.

In fact, as we have seen, the issue of internal inter-communicability has yet to be resolved in many states, particularly in those such as Switzerland and Belgium in which existing languages have been granted equal status. In these situations, in which the full recognition of linguistic equality, along with its implementation in non-official, public linguistic communications, hindered any attempts at a forced and wide-scale bilingualization of the population, such a process of bilingualization may now take place in another language,

namely English. The new global situation may therefore lead many people and companies of these states to feel that they can communicate more effectively in English than in the language of one indigenous group or another. This may become clear in Switzerland, a country whose German-speakers are losing interest in French, as it ceases to be an international language, and are showing an increased desire to learn English due to it being a global language. As regards the country's French-speakers, learning standard German has never meant gaining a real command of the German that is actually spoken in Switzerland, given the enormous difference between the two, and thus they may also turn their attention to English. So far, the proposal to make English the official language of inter-communication in Switzerland has been regarded as somewhat heretical on the grounds of identity and social meaning but it remains to be seen how this situation evolves over the coming years. Similarly, in Belgium, and despite the growing interest shown by French-speakers in the Dutch language, it will be interesting to see the effects that increased knowledge of English has on the country.

Clearly, a potentially greater reliance on English for internal uses in states without an official language of intercommunication does not challenge their model based on linguistic 'territoriality'; on the contrary, it may even render it more legitimate and necessary. The introduction of a supra-language must go hand in hand with a clear definition of those functions that will be reserved for the languages of the social groups in a given country so as to give collective continuity to their linguistic characteristics. This situation was already foreseen in Quebec, where the passing of Law 101 was designed to preserve the official functions of French in the face of the pressure of English from North America. On a practical level this policy has clearly reassured the French-speaking community, and this has subsequently enabled increasing calls for the new generation to become competent in English so that, given its international significance, this language can be used for external functions whenever appropriate.

This analysis would appear to suggest that in political or economic unions between different linguistic groups, whether as supra-states or states, there are at least three different levels that must be addressed. The first concerns the official recognition of equal status among the languages present at the federal or confederate level, or in common institutions of the union, so as to ensure the symbolic dignity of each of the groups and give citizens and organizations the possibility of addressing and communicating with general institutions in their own language. The second involves offering effective guarantees of inter-communicability between the people and organizations that

relate to one another in a given shared area, which could be achieved—in the case of a lack of mutual intercomprehension—by ensuring that there is, as a minimum, a common language for the corresponding functions; this often requires a process of bilingualization, at least of those groups whose own language is not the one used for inter-communication. And thirdly, there is the question of the sustainability of the linguistic group as such, something which will require the maintenance of an exclusive or highly prominent core of official and non-official functions for a given language so as to retain both an optimum level of communicative utility and a positive view of the associated identity.³⁵

In this regard it would seem advisable for those states which have yet to resolve all these issues to take the necessary steps toward building a more optimum form of co-existence in the context of human plurilingualism. Whereas Spain, for example, needs to go further in recognizing its territorial linguistic minorities at the common administrative and political levels, as well as in terms of the support it gives to their sustainability, it may be that Switzerland and Belgium, for instance, need to address the problem of inter-communication. Likewise, on a different level, the European Union must overcome its 'statist' view of languages and give equal recognition to those as-yet unrecognized linguistic communities that are calling for this. Furthermore, it may have to decide what to do as regards the language of inter-communication. The designation of English, French and German as 'working languages' does not solve the problem, because it fails to explain why, at the end of the day, there have to be three rather than just one such language. Moreover, what kind of solution is this for those countries whose own language or languages are neither of these three? French is probably on the list due to its past prestige, and German because it is the language of the country which contributes the most in economic terms to community budgets, but this situation should be a transitory one while each country is striving to ensure that its population has at least certain skills in English in the near future. The most likely scenario is that the habitual use of English at this level of functions will, as it has done to date,

35 It is very important that states with linguistic diversity among their native populations are aware that, in the absence of policies which adequately take into account this diversity, it is very easy for two sorts of opposing nationalisms to arise: a 'state nationalism' versus a 'minority nationalism' (that resists, seeking the autonomy or independence of the group), which feed mutually off one another. As Kymlicka & Straehle say, "The fact that state nation-building can be minority nation-destroying even when conducted within the constraints of a liberal-democratic constitution, helps to explain why minority nationalism has remained such a powerful force within Western democracies, and why secession remains a live issue in several regions" (1999: 76).

continue to grow on its own accord since it is already *de facto* the most widely-used second language among Europeans.³⁶

This does not mean that efforts should not be made on the personal level to promote knowledge of as many languages as possible. Indeed, the more polyglot individuals become the better, something which would require countries to adapt their education systems, including English as the main and compulsory foreign language but providing opportunities to learn other languages too, which may differ from one centre to another in order to ensure the overall increase in a country's linguistic resources. There is also a need to pay close attention to improving current language-learning strategies, reviewing them critically, providing teachers with adequate training and developing the optimum teaching resources for language in practice.

In sum, what can be derived from the above is a model based on the *polyglotization* of individuals and the principle of *subsidiarity*, one that gives priority, whenever possible, to local and indigenous languages and which recognizes the use of other languages at higher levels of external communication. Thus, in a well-organized concentric plurality of languages and superimposed identities it might be possible to outline structural relationships between the languages of human society that are much more adequate than those which have predominated to date. However, there may not be an ideal solution to the organization of human linguistic diversity, as current situations may evolve in ways as yet unforeseen or, alternatively, populations may continue to move in great numbers from one place to another and, as we are now seeing, generate new problems that will require new decisions, perhaps based on new principles.

4.6. SOME IDEAS ON WHICH TO BASE THE ORGANIZATION OF A MULTILINGUAL WORLD

The fact that it is now technologically possible to communicate instantaneously with the other side of the planet, and move both people and objects across long distances in a short period of time, has ushered in a new era characterized by enormously increased contact between institutions, companies, and people from diverse and distant countries and languages. Given the diversity of languages produced by each human group this extraordinary rise in inter-relationships has made it vitally important that a solution be found to the

³⁶ We do not now know the consequences of the 'Brexit' process.

problem of inter-communication. So far this has been resolved at the global level through the increasingly widespread use of English, while in less generalized and more circumscribed areas and functions other languages such as Spanish, Mandarin, Arabic, Hindi and Swahili, for example, are becoming more extensively and/or intensively used across large regions.

All this communicative reorganization of the human species may very well pose new problems and aggravate existing tensions as regards language and identity if certain conditions of key importance to human beings are not respected. For it would seem that these processes comprise at least four major conceptual dimensions which must be taken into account above all else, as they are both widespread and, left unaddressed, may lead to significant social instability. These dimensions concern linguistic *recognition*, *communicability*, *sustainability* and *integration*.

History would clearly seem to suggest that linguistically-distinct human groups can link up with one another to form new political and economic units, and that this new state of affairs is much more satisfactory if their respective languages obtain official and symbolic *recognition* of equal status, without there being differential treatment between them. This, for example, could be part of the reason why Switzerland has a long history of harmonious relationships between its respective linguistic groups, and also explain why states with high levels of internal conflict, such as Belgium or Canada, have nonetheless maintained their political organization. In contrast, the fact that these requirements are not met by Spain's current model of plurilingualism, in which only one language is recognized as official in common state bodies, remains a source of disquiet and is viewed as disregard by large numbers of people whose mother tongue is one of the unrecognized languages. Hence, many of these citizens can come to feel that the state to which they belong is not—justifiably—their state, and may consider that they do not need to recognize a state which does not recognize them. Over and above the practical aspects of intergroup communication what is overlooked here by state institutions is the *identificatory* and *emotional* dimension of languages. Failure to recognize languages may thus be readily interpreted as failure to recognize a social group and, therefore, as a form of contempt for its members.

Central governments frequently argue that having one common official language is an advantage that enables quick and easy communication between all social participants. No doubt this can have its benefits when one compares it to those states that do not have a common language of real communication between the individuals and organizations of their different linguistic groups. Thus, *communicability* between the members of the corresponding political

unit is a value and an advantage, both socially and economically, as it enables group barriers to be overcome and stable forms of contact and cooperation to be established. The problem has usually arisen from the way in which the two main possible solutions—one based on the official recognition of the different languages and the other on the use of a single official language in common institutions in order to promote their common use by all citizens—have been regarded as a mutually exclusive dichotomy. And yet there would appear to be a third possibility that would bring together the advantages of both approaches, as there is no need for them to be mutually exclusive. The proposal is to recognize the equal status of each language on the official level of common state or supra-state institutions and, *at the same time*, ensure inter-communication by indicating which language everybody will share in order to maintain the advantages of this solution.

Nonetheless, there is no point pretending that it will always be easy to reach an agreement as to which language will serve as a bridge, and one need look no further than India, for example, or Europe, for evidence of this. There would seem to be at least two reasons for this: one is fear of the effects that another language which all or most people understand and have a command of could have on each linguistic group, while the other concerns the sources of group rivalry and envy, especially as regards potential major competitors and the possibility that their language will be chosen for the function of inter-communication. This can be clearly observed in contemporary Europe, where no one has yet dared to indicate explicitly that English is the European *lingua franca*, in opposition to French, especially, but also German, both of which insist on being considered as ‘working languages’. In contrast, smaller countries such as Denmark, Sweden and Holland would probably see no problem in going ahead with what they regard as a practical solution. From the functional point of view it is clearly preferable that, faced with the need to learn another language, everybody learns the same one.

Obviously, this does not mean we should fail to take into account the fears raised as to whether large-scale bilingualization in a common language could begin to dismantle the historical developmental ecosystem of other languages. For example, at the level of higher-level common institutions, efforts must be made to avoid arguing that since everybody speaks English there is now no need to address citizens in their mother tongue. The principle that *knowing a supra-language does not exclude the recognition of the group language* must be made explicit at the outset. In other words, the fact that someone knows another language does not diminish the linguistic rights that he or she may have when dealing with common institutions. It is therefore important to set ade-

quate limits on the functions to be served by the language of inter-communication and to establish clear criteria of co-existence so that the bridging language does not become an abusive presence in the domain of each national society's indigenous languages.³⁷

The keystone of the system is clearly that it must ensure the linguistic *sustainability* of each group, and this requires the maintenance and development of a language's normal functions within its own geo-social space so that those who speak it retain a highly positive image and feel assured and rewarded as regards their identity. Thus, great efforts must be made to avoid falling into the same traps as before, which, as we know, have seen many human languages disappear in the face of the degrading conditions under which large-scale bilingualization and the restructuring of identity took place. It is here, as was said earlier, that a clear commitment must be made to plural identity, one which can take on concentric and inclusive forms rather than base itself on mutually exclusive and sterilizing dichotomies. For representations of identity may be 'liquid' rather than 'set in stone', and this notion has already been taken on board by thousands of people who nowadays see themselves as belonging to different levels and groups.

The basic principle underlying linguistic sustainability is likely to be functional *subsidiarity*, i.e., whatever can be done by the local language should not be done by another one which is more global. In other words, the native languages of human groups should, by default, carry out the majority of functions, while only those functions of a strictly supra-group nature should be addressed through more widely shared languages. This implies the clear assignment of exclusive functions to the languages of each social group and the precise delimitation of those to be fulfilled by the major languages. The key to maintaining linguistic diversity in the context of inter-group communicability is basically a question of the degree and organization of linguistic contact. This has to be structured in such a way that the respective communities are recognized and stabilized at the same time as being fully integrated within higher-level scenarios. Thus, as in the quote from Paracelsus, there is a need to recognize clearly that it is "the dose alone that makes the poison". Contact between languages is not 'poisonous' *per se*, but when the correct dose is exceeded it can prove harmful to the language whose position is weaker.

37 De Cock (2006) provides an example of the kind of surveillance required and describes how, in Belgium, "Flemish education law has established that English cannot be used as the main language of teaching for a degree programme (unless the same institution organises an equivalent programme in Dutch)", and has also adopted the measure whereby "master's programmes in English require special approval".

English, as a global language, is also becoming used not only transnationally—especially for contacts in the technological, economic and scientific contexts, where the Internet and other media formats are paramount—but also as a ‘second’ language that will be taught in the majority of schools. Therefore, it will have a peculiar status in that it will be promoted by political authorities and ascribed worldwide functions, most of which will be non-official but nonetheless of enormous value for large proportions of society, whether in the economic and information fields for adults or in the leisure context for young people. On this global level the dimensions of recognition, communicability and sustainability have a different application in that we are here faced with a different phenomenon. Through its widespread presence in education systems, at the same time as in new and old media formats, English will penetrate societies in such a way that, on the whole, it will not pose the problems related to ‘identity’ that might be generated by other languages associated with the dominance of other groups with whom a given social group feels it is in conflict. At all events, while some people may associate English with US foreign policy this does not seem to be hindering acceptance of the language. Given that it is not being directly imposed by an external power the associations regarding identity and social meaning may be neutral or even favourable in some cases, since English is often associated with modernity and technological progress.

Furthermore, given that the technological, economic and scientific sectors are increasingly urging the incorporation of English as a vehicular language in university studies, at least at postgraduate level, it could come to compete not only with other potential languages of global communication but also with those traditionally used in a given nation-state. Thus, it seems unavoidable that English will have a considerable ‘internal’ presence and therefore the abovementioned principles of sustainability will need to be effectively applied. Indeed, as we have seen, the authorities in some countries have already had to intervene to halt the use of English for inappropriate functions and this phenomenon may become more commonplace. It is likely that more areas of conflict will arise in this regard, particularly where English tends to be used exclusively because it is argued that everybody understands it (this having already been the case in Europe in the context of labelling), or alternatively when it is used as the vehicular language in universities or in the case of certain transnational companies that impose English as the internal working language in countries without a tradition of being English-speaking. There will thus be a need to find a new balance in the way society is organized linguistically, at the same time as monitoring the way in which English

is used with respect to other languages, the aim being to prevent its obvious benefits in terms of communicability from being to the detriment of linguistic sustainability.

At present, however, there seems to be no immediate danger of other languages being widely replaced since we are still at a stage of bilingualization. Nevertheless, should English come to be used across the board as the common 'second' language of the species then this would indeed constitute a shift of enormous significance. For it could then transpire that the traditional principles used so far to organize our lives linguistically would no longer be valid in such a context. For example, the system applied by those states which are most respectful of plurilingualism within their borders, namely the principle of territoriality at the local level accompanied by a principle of equal status at the federal or central level, is impractical at a planet level. There will be no general instances that can be related with each human linguistic group in the language of each one of them. Furthermore, and as pointed out earlier, the communicative needs of the supra-language are stronger in the economic, communications and technological-scientific fields than in the context of traditional functions whose nature is either official (government and schools) or religious (the church). The entrepreneurs and prime movers among society want to understand products (whether professional or entertainment-based) in this language, and they want to use it to communicate with people from outside their groups in order to do business or simply to make friends; moreover, they want to take part in scientific advances and international civil and political movements. It is unlikely that this tide can be turned, and it may lead us toward new stages of organization in terms of language and identity, and also perhaps to a reunification of the species.

A related issue is that the way we respond to migratory movements has also become of key importance due to their current volume and the likelihood that they will increase further in the future; as such they require a set of principles that will enable precise and effective policies to be drawn up as regards the tensions which could be produced. From the point of view of the *integration* of language and identity the key probably lies in the adequate handling of the stage of *adaptive transition*. In the case of migrations it is likely to be no good ignoring them and basing our response on the *laissez-faire* approach of previous eras, but nor will it help to apply the same protective principles as would be used in the case of national minorities within their own historical territory. In the former case, immigrant groups could end up being unattended by and lost within the new society, and this could hinder their adaptation still further; in the second case a strict application of the rights usually afforded to

national minority groups may not, depending on the circumstances, facilitate their adaptive bilingualization and this could have serious consequences for their co-existence within the host society, which could turn against these groups as a result of their lack of integration.

For example, in the case of recognition, migrant groups don't necessarily assume that they will find a society which functions as their own did, or that their language will be officially recognized and given equal status. However, they may be grateful for and consider it only fair that they are given help with their social integration, for example, by finding people to act as interpreters, giving them important instructions in their own language and, where possible, offering certain services, such as aspects of healthcare, in their mother tongue. If they arrive accompanied by children or adolescents of school age then it will be helpful to ensure that the latter become properly integrated within the education system, and specific strategies of adaptation may be required in this regard. All of the above is appreciated by people who have arrived from another country and may go some way to laying the foundations of good mutual relations.

As regards communicability, it is again clear that immigrant groups will be grateful for a rapid facilitation of the host language so that they can live independently in the new society and enter the job market on the best possible footing. To this end, the organization of teaching strategies and specific services will be a priority in all cases and it will be necessary to dedicate the necessary human and financial resources to the task at hand, for example, by training suitable professionals and setting up adequate institutions. With respect to sustainability it should be remembered that in most cases of migration the language of the immigrant group continues unabated in the country of origin and therefore there is no need to apply this principle within the host society. However, policies and public pronouncements should not undermine the maintenance of their mother tongue but rather must promote its continuity, provided, of course, that an effective process of bilingualization in the host society's language is already underway and that the immigrant group expresses an intergenerational willingness to continue using its own language. These concepts will have to be developed further and a general consensus must be reached regarding how best to approach the question of language and identity in the case of a mobile species such as our own.

It would seem, therefore, that the linguistic organization of human societies is becoming structured on different levels, although these may tend to overlap, especially in a bottom-up direction. For example, an immigrant group may bring its own language and have to learn to function in the local language of the

host society, but in the event that the latter is not in itself a nation-state the immigrant group will also have to learn a state-wide language. Furthermore, if this state forms part of a higher-level union which uses another language for intercommunication among its members, then this language will also have to be learnt and, if it is not English, then a fifth language will have to be learnt if the immigrant group wishes to participate on the global level. Although it is not unheard of for someone to be able to function in five different languages it cannot be said to be a commonplace situation at present. Moreover, if people find that they have to learn too many languages which of these will they choose to drop? Which of the levels of organization might suffer the most serious crises as a result of simplifying the linguistic competence required of individuals? We don't know the answer to these questions at present, but it is clear that when faced with a crisis of this kind, people may begin to give up those languages that are of least use to them in terms of communication, unless these languages are linked to questions of identity that prevent this from happening. Thus, the languages which will tend to be given up will be those regarded as the most dispensable, even though this will be a gradual—and probably intergenerational—process; in contrast, priority will be given to those languages that serve higher-level functions, as these will continue to enable communication between members of a group as a result of their prior polyglotization.

Although it is also true that not everybody may need to acquire a command of five languages, it seems clear that our species will become much more polyglot in the future, a difference that will be especially noted in those countries that until now have been largely monolingual. For we are heading toward a situation in which languages will be superimposed over one another within the same space, but on different levels/orders/dimensions according to the networks of relationship/communication (from the more local to the international); in this regard, each local node/group will have its most frequent and maximum interaction with the immediate environment, but at least some members of this group will also connect with more distant points of the network where they will use other languages—that of the state, the wider transnational area or the global level. It is within this framework that attempts must be made to achieve the delicate balance between polyglotization and maintaining the language of each group.

We do not yet know with any certainty what the future holds for the languages of humanity, for a species that having become linguistically fragmented across its evolution is now finding itself once again and may wish to live in a more integrated and interdependent way. At all events, we must continue to observe carefully how this situation evolves and seek the most adequate poli-

cies for each moment, the objective being to ensure that the languages and identities of our species can co-exist harmoniously.

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5 Complexics as a meta-transdisciplinary field³⁸

5.1. 'COMPLEXICS': A TERMINOLOGICAL AND THEORETICAL PROPOSAL

The recognition that many phenomena relating to life are 'complex' in nature—i.e., that they are interwoven, self-organizing, emergent and processual—has prompted us to re-examine how we have conceived of reality, both the way we have looked at it and the images we have used. This is the point of departure for the various efforts being made in the distinct (inter)disciplines engaged in refreshing such concepts and finding new ways of thinking that better fit the complex organization of facts and events.

Theoretical and conceptual innovations in this vein can be grouped under headings such as 'complex thinking', 'sciences of complexity', 'complex perspectives', 'complex [adaptive] systems', and so on. In turn, these can be brought together into a more overarching field, one that I propose calling 'complexics', echoing 'mathematics' and 'systemics'. 'Complexics' denotes the *meta-transdisciplinary* field specifically concerned with giving us suitable cognitive tools to understand the world's complexity. Additionally, the use of the adjective 'complexical' would avoid the common confusion caused by the adjective 'complex', which belongs to everyday usage and already has its own connotations of *complication* and *confusion*. Thus, 'complexical' thinking and 'complexical' perspective would provide clearer terms, be freer of confusion, and refer more precisely to epistemic elements in contrast to the 'complexity' typical of many phenomena of reality.³⁹ In short, the

38 English version (2016) of: Bastardas-Boada, Albert (2014). "Cap a la 'complèxica' com a transdisciplina", in: Martí, M. Antònia, & Mariona Taulé (eds.), *Homenatge a Sebastià Serrano*. Barcelona: Publicacions i Edicions de la Universitat de Barcelona, pp. 63-77.

39 Roggero also points to the problems caused by the many meanings of the term 'complexity', referring to difficulties observed in the reception of the work of Edgar Morin in the field of sociology: "The ambiguity of the same term 'complexity', which is often used as a synonym for 'confusion' or 'faulty thinking' or a 'complicated' objective, makes abundantly clear that Morin's use of the word is not the common one" (2013: 113).

world would be ‘complex’, but our way of looking at the world would be ‘complexical’.⁴⁰

As a transdiscipline, ‘complexics’ would carry on the perspective of cybernetics: “Cybernetics deals with all forms of behaviour insofar as they are regular, or determinate, or reproducible. The materiality is irrelevant... The truths of cybernetics are not conditional on their being derived from some other branch of science. Cybernetics has its own foundations” (Ashby, 1956: 1). Thus, it has a distinctly transdisciplinary mission to provide concepts, schema and possibilities of thinking and representation able to express the multidimensional and systemic interwovenness and interdependence of the many, highly significant phenomena of reality that have these characteristics.

Indeed, what the ‘complexical’ perspective first undertook was to absorb the progress already made in disciplines such as physics—e.g., relativity and quantum theory—and biological ecosystems, as well as the foundations of cybernetics (Wiener, Ashby) and systems theory (Von Bertalanffy). In the field of human and social sciences, the movement has been equally prevalent, although it has perhaps had less impact, despite the contributions of Gregory Bateson, Edgar Morin and Norbert Elias, whose works are central to the perspective applied in the area of human beings (*cf.* Bastardas, 1996 and 2013). Others have had a hand in its construction as well. In Catalonia, Frederic Munné was a driving force behind the creation and application of the perspective of complexity in social psychology, Sebastià Serrano extended cybernetics and information and systems theories to linguistics and communication, and Lluís V. Aracil expressly developed an interdisciplinary, historical, and discursive perspective in sociolinguistics.

The proposed meta-transdisciplinary field of ‘complexics’ would bring together all contemporary efforts in any specific disciplines or by any researchers specifically devoted to constructing tools, procedures, models and concepts intended for transversal application that are aimed at understanding and explaining the most interwoven and dynamic phenomena of reality. This would encompass Edgar Morin’s theories of complex thinking, the epistemological and theoretical contributions of physicists such as David Bohm, Ilya Prigogine and Fritjof Capra, or of cognitive biologists such as Humberto Maturana and Francisco Varela, and the proposals of ecologists such as Ramon Margalef and

40 According to Ruiz Ballesteros, “The problem is not that we are using the notion of complexity to construct the world—which we already know is complex—but that we are trying to devise a way of thinking about the world, and this is where the greatest difficulty lies” (2013: 154). This would be the mission of a transdisciplinary complexics.

Timothy Allen and of sociologists such as Norbert Elias. It would also include the most recent contributions of Barabási and Albert, and of Soler in network theory, and of Maxi San Miguel and Albert Díaz-Guilera in statistical physics and the study and computer simulation of complex systems.⁴¹

Without doubt, complexics—and here I cease to use inverted commas to set the word apart—currently lacks an integrated and unified body of theory to enable us to characterise the field in a general, widely agreed-upon manner. Nor can we dispel all doubts about its feasibility, although I am convinced that we shall see important progress in the coming years to confirm the wisdom of this approach and, above all, of its aspiration to be transdisciplinary. At a minimum, we are already witnessing a series of transversal concepts and models that are not only pushing forward specific disciplines with new images and perspectives that pass between them, but that are also forging a shared scientific lexicon useful in interdisciplinary communication and integration, which are made more difficult by the diversity of terminology.

5.2. THE CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW THEORETICAL VISION

The task of building, in a coordinated and integrated manner, a meta-transdiscipline such as the one depicted here requires progress on both the theoretical and the methodological levels. Indeed, at present, there are advances being made in both domains, although they appear to lack integration and mutual communication.

On the level of theory, complexics needs to provide a set of principles, concepts and conceptual landscapes that can be applied transversally to distinct areas of knowledge and phenomena of reality, enabling us to gain a much firmer grasp of the complex aspects of their existence than we currently have. For this reason, our aim needs to be, as Morin says, not “to reduce complexity to simplicity, [but] to translate complexity into theory” (1994: 315).

To achieve this objective, one of our first tasks is to acknowledge the difficulty of putting into words a reality that is dynamic, processual and changing, using terms from our languages that are based on a rather static and stable view of the world’s phenomena. In fact, we need to shift from a science ‘of nouns’ to one ‘of verbs’ (‘linguaging’, ‘bilingualing’, ‘identitying’, etc.) (*cf.* Ar-

41 For a broader look at the perspective as a whole, see the excellent overview provided by José Luis Solana Ruiz (2013). Shorter summaries can be found in Bastardas (2013 and 2013b) and Massip (2013).

thur, 2013). By using forms of motion, we not only help our brain/mind to escape from its ‘conservative’ furrows and open ourselves up to a more creative conceptualization, but we also draw much nearer to the ‘truth’ of the characteristics of the observed facts, which are certainly the product of ceaseless interaction among real agents and elements.

One of the other profound changes that we need to address from the epistemological perspective of complexics is the tendency to disconnect the elements of reality once we have given a distinct name to each of them. Apparently, the act of assigning different names tends to lead us to think of these elements as existing independently, not interrelatedly, when, in reality, what is most typical is precisely their interdependence and interwovenness. If we turn our thoughts to ‘society’, for example, we imagine an entity not only different from the agents—human beings—who comprise it and give it existence, but also an entity that is separate in space. Society, we say, is ‘on top of us’. On this matter, Norbert Elias, is clear: “We talk of the person and his environment, a child and his family, the individual and society, the subject and objects without always realizing that the person also forms a part of his ‘environment’, the child is a part of his family, the individual is a part of society, the subject is part of the objects. [...] But our language and our concepts are largely set up as if everything that is outside of the individual person had the character of static objects. Concepts like ‘family’ or ‘school’ typically refer to a group of people. But our usual kinds of terminological and conceptual configurations make them sound as if they were objects of the same nature as rocks, trees or houses” (Elias, 1982: 14).

In the case of sociocultural facts, Norbert Elias proposes in his figurational sociology that we do not think in terms of ‘human beings and their environment’ or the ‘social framework’, but in terms of configurations constituted by groups of individuals (with oneself among them): “Nobody would think to define the process of a game involving a player as the player’s ‘environment’ or ‘milieu’ or ‘framework’” (Elias, 1982: 115). Morin concurs; based on his recursive thinking, in which the products and their effects are necessary for their own production, he says: “Individuals are not in society as in a box. There are interactions among individuals that produce society, which never exists without the individuals. [...] We produce a society that produces us. We are part of the society that is part of us” (Morin, 1994: 304-05). Our task here is to change our habitual images and develop visions that are closer to what actually occurs in reality.

In the phenomenon of language, this confusion can also arise. As we have already developed the concept of ‘language’, we may think that language exists in and of itself as an isolated and independent entity, when to the contrary we

must conceive of it as a phenomenon closely tied to the human beings who give life to it and/or change it (or let it cease to exist). And this is where we have the debate on the *locus* of language—or of ‘linguaging’. Where do forms of linguaging reside: in the individual or in society? As we can see, this is a spurious debate. ‘Society’ is not something outside the individuals who are its members. Rather, they cause it to ‘emerge’. It is always a society of individuals. For Elias, the patterns of human culture are an emerging property of social processes, the unplanned result of interwoven plans and of the emotional and rational impulses of individual people: “From this interdependence of people arises an order *sui generis*, an order more compelling and stronger than the will and reason of the individual people composing it” (Elias, 2000: 366). Indeed, the forms of human linguaging are assuredly a singular phenomenon, because they live *in* and *among* people, requiring important conceptual changes to the representations that we have hitherto maintained. One approach is to think of them analogically as if they were a dance: “While different people can dance the same dance figuration, there is no dance as such without dancers” (Dunning & Hugues p. 53). Thus, we can study the different language ‘dances’ created by humans, but we must not lose sight of the fact that they are the socio-communicative actions of diverse groups of people. Forms of linguaging are independent of any particular individual, but not of individuals as such.

5.3. NEW METHODOLOGIES FOR NEW APPROACHES

It is clear that the appearance and/or consolidation of these new theoretical perspectives must necessarily have ramifications at the more practical level of methodology. New tools for the conception, apprehension and treatment of the data of experience will need to be devised to complement existing ones and to enable us to make headway toward practices that better fit complexical theories.

One of the interesting theoretical-methodological examples is ‘network theory’, to which researchers such as Barabási and Soler have contributed. Their formulations have resulted in enhanced tools for the representation and mathematical treatment of interconnections at distinct levels of reality. As a result, these tools have been applicable to a variety of disciplines. In the field of sociocultural and communication sciences, however, this contribution may yet be at an excessively one-dimensional state, given that greater stress is being put on the ‘internal’ interactions of a system than on what happens between the system and its other systems or environments. As proof of this, we now have access to ‘big data’ to represent and study certain characteristics of a

phenomenon—for example, Internet connections between many corners of the globe—and yet we have very little knowledge about what is actually going on. Why do certain connections exist and not others? What communication occurs across these connections and what influence does it exert in the real behaviours that may ensue? What relationships do these points of connection maintain with the sociopolitical and economic ecosystems with which they co-inter-exist? And so on and so forth. There is much scope here yet for advancement.

Indeed, network theory could be ‘ecologized’ more in order to include the interrelated multidimensionality of reality. This is what lies behind the addition of ‘adaptive’ to the phrase ‘complex systems’ in the terminology of ‘complex adaptive systems’ (CAS), which was popularized by the Santa Fe Institute, in New Mexico. I have often wondered what differences of substance existed between the ‘ecological’ perspective, which I applied in *Ecologia de les Llengües* in 1996, and the new CAS terminology. Apart from any innovations in the mathematical and computational treatment that there may have been, the basic approach is fundamentally very similar.⁴² According to Levin (2010), the Santa Fe Institute has rechristened the perspective and made headway by offering new and significant conceptual and methodological proposals. The change of name has also been positive by enabling us to jettison the overly ‘biologising’ resonance of the term ‘ecology’. ‘Complex adaptive systems’ has a much wider range of association and application, which may be beneficial for its expansion into a far broader array of fields, such as economics, neurology and sociology. Certainly, researchers will produce new innovations to pave the way for yet more progress to be made.

New complexical mathematical and computational contributions have continued to grow in number, thanks primarily to scholars in statistical physics and computer science, such as Stephen Wolfram, who are now taking an interest in social and economic phenomena (*cf.* Epstein & Axtell, 1997; Ball, 2005;⁴³ Epstein, 2006). Drawing on analogies involving the study of systems that arise from the interaction of given agents and their rules in physics and in other disciplines, there are a rising number of contributions seeking to apply the new

42 This can be seen, for example, in the basic overlapping of approach among advanced socio-cognitive perspectives as shown in my 1996 book (now published in translation in the first part of this book). It also appears in the similarities contained in the document prepared by the interdisciplinary group known as ‘The Five Graces’, after the name of the hotel in which they met. Their document appeared in print in 2009 under the title “Language is a complex adaptive system: Position paper”.

43 “Statistical physics may help to liberate planners and policy-makers from their propensity for linear thinking and to encourage a greater sophistication in their perception of cause and effect” (Ball, 2005: 571).

computational possibilities to our understanding of human social phenomena. This has also reached certain aspects of linguistics, such as the evolution of language, evolutionary contact, and change.⁴⁴

Especially in the field of sociolinguistics do we find valuable contributions that need to be understood and evaluated seriously.⁴⁵ To date, the studies have been based fundamentally on the use of computational techniques known as cellular automata and multi-agent models. Building on the complexical ideas of self-organization and emergence, these models of complex systems have attempted to simulate and dynamically display on screen the organizational results produced by the interactions among their ‘agents’,⁴⁶ such as, for example, the greater or lesser degree of use of a language relative to another language with which it is in contact (*cf.* Abrams & Strogatz, 2003). To achieve this aim, they have sought to identify the parameters that they believe may be more explanatory, such as the ‘prestige’ of languages or the ‘volatility’ (or the propensity of a speaker to switch language), and they simulate the evolution of the encounter between two groups, while also adding or not adding bilingual individuals (*cf.* Castelló, 2010; Castelló *et al.*, 2007, 2013). By controlling the degree of each of the parameters, we can see the evolutionary changes caused by any variations in these magnitudes. This can help us to better understand the factors determining how the encounter will develop.⁴⁷

Not only simulations, but also programmes of this type using real data have been run to validate the model. One example is the use of cellular automata to examine the processes of language shift in a study devised by the group led by Francesc S. Beltran, using data for the autonomous community of Valencia (2009 and 2011). The model is built on the basis of a community using two

44 “Mathematical or computer models can be useful in the formulation of concepts and in the consideration of properties of the social sphere that are intrinsically linked to its character as a complex dynamic system. From this perspective, the objective is not to draw a realistic portrait of social systems, but rather to explore types of systems in which the relationships between the different levels of organization involved enable us to reflect on the different levels of organization that we identify within social systems” (Chavalarias, 2013: 186).

45 The applications of computational and complexical perspectives are also of great interest in the field of general linguistics, cognition and communication. See, for example, the works of Luc Steels, who starts from the belief that “the view that emerges [...] is that language can best be seen as a living system that is continuously evolving and adapting in a cultural process based on the distributed activity of its users. Consequently the computational investigations into genetic evolution, ant path formation, neural networks, and other biological systems are an important source of insight” (Steels, 2000: 24).

46 The use of computational simulations as an heuristic tool and in the production of theories is potentially of great interest. See Ihrig & Troitzsch (2013).

47 For more on the experience of ‘playing’ with this kind of tool, see http://www.ifisc.uib-csic.es/research/complex/APPLET_LANGDYN.html.

languages, one dominant and one subordinate. Individuals are characterized as monolingual speakers of the dominant code, as bilingual with a preference for the dominant code, or as bilingual with a preference for the subordinate code. In this case, the model assumes social pressure—the number of people in the neighbourhood who encourage one behaviour or another—to be one of the fundamental variables in the evolution of the sociolinguistic situation, and this allows us to view the evolution of intergenerational language transmission.

5.4. INTEGRATING THEORY AND METHODOLOGY

Certainly, these methodological innovations put into question and again make us take note of the excessive separation between the training received by researchers in the ‘sciences’ and in the ‘arts’. Closer collaboration between these two subsets of researchers would, in all likelihood, be much more energizing and creative than their current mutual distance.

Nevertheless, we need to have a critical eye and ask to what extent these transdisciplinary computational models, probably valid for other phenomena, are also the most appropriate for an understanding of shifting human phenomena. Their utility—which is based primarily on the simplified representation of human beings as ‘agents’ with little autonomous, creative cognitive-emotional activity—may be limited if we want to grasp not only the possible evolutions of a situation with ‘stably’ defined rules, but also, as a whole, the causal dynamics that have given rise to and determined the actions of its units.⁴⁸ That said, nobody can deny the importance of the studies conducted to date from the perspective of complex systems, or the utility of modelling, which has brought us nearer

48 One characteristic of this kind of modelling is that it uses few parameters. This clashes with the aspiration of complex theory to build a comprehensive ecology out of the elements involved: “Several models have been proposed to account for different mechanisms of social interaction in the dynamics of social consensus. The idea is to capture the essence of different social behaviours by simple interaction rules: following the idea of universality classes, in collective emergent phenomena details might not matter” (Castelló, 2010: 24). Morin (2005: 4) takes a rather more critical view: “Restricted complexity has enabled important advances to be made in formalization, in the possibilities of models, which in turn stimulates the potential for interdisciplinary efforts. But one is still within the epistemology of classical science. [...] In some sense, complexity is acknowledged, but it is decomplexified. Thus, a gap opens up, and an attempt to plug it ensues: this is the paradigm of classical Roman science, only fractured”. To gain an adequate view of the whole and to understand the *how* and *why* of the process pursued by the agents in reaching the states that guide their decisions, as Xavier Castelló has similarly put it, it will probably be necessary to use computational research together with other types of research that are closer to the changing cognitive and emotional activity of the agents (*cf.* Rodríguez & Rogero, 2011).

to the essential elements of processes and to the expression of their interrelationships with the utmost clarity. It seems obvious, therefore, that human complexics must be seen as multi-methodological, insofar as necessarily combining quantitative-computation methodologies and more qualitative methodologies aimed at understanding the mental and emotional world of people. The epistemic foundations of complexical theory, set on gaining a deeper understanding of the world, seem to put this as a clear demand. As do human facts, with their peculiarities and their differences in relation to the dynamics that occur at hierarchically ‘inferior’ levels of organization in the universe (*cf.* Malaina, 2012).

Much like physics, we have arrived at a fork or point of separation into two branches—a division that needs to be harmoniously stitched together again. On the one hand, we have the contributions of the more theoretical physicists, such as David Bohm, Ilya Prigogine and Fritjof Capra, and on the other hand, the contributions of more quantitative-oriented physicists from the field of statistical physics modelling, such as Murray Gell-Mann, Maxi San Miguel and Albert Díaz-Guilera. It will certainly be useful for us to gain familiarity with both of these major approaches, see their fruitful application in our disciplines, and attempt to exploit them in a coherent and integrated manner. However, I think we must also be cognizant of the peculiarities of human phenomena, which are characterized by the existence not only of purpose and regularity in the control of behaviour, but also by the significant degree of agents’ cognitive and interpretative autonomy and by the powerful influence of the emotional dimension.

This differential fact seems to pose a contradiction for the two fundamental orientations of complexics developed to date. On the one hand, the more epistemological and philosophical contributions lead us to postulate the inevitability of taking into the account the brain/mind and everything that arises bio-cognitively from the brain/mind in order to understand complex human behaviours. On the other hand, the proposals put forward by physics and computer science move in the opposite direction, postulating the selection of a few ‘practical’ parameters that can computationally ‘explain’ the observed facts.

Faced with this sort of dilemma, the need in my view is for the two lines to come to a meeting of the minds, to cease disregarding one another as they have done, and take steps toward a mutual integration based on the acceptance of the shortcomings of each approach, achieving progress through a non-contradictory complementarity of perspectives.⁴⁹ It must be conceded that the practi-

49 As Roggero has noted, “Today, there are more experts in formal disciplines taking an interest in the social sphere than there are sociologists borrowing the techniques of the formal disciplines. If a meeting of minds takes place, it will turn out to be hugely beneficial for both groups. The first will need

cal and methodological application of basic complex ideas needs to be developed much further in order to apply them to specific research. At the same time, the limits of complex adaptive systems as computational strategies must be accepted in the pursuit of a better understanding of the dynamic and evolutionary processes typical of human beings. In the final analysis, models always have a *narrative* running behind them that reflects the attempts of a human being to understand the world, and models are always interpreted on that basis. This is precisely what Allen and Hoekstra have recognized in the field of ecology: “Narratives are the bottom line in science. Yes, there are hypotheses, predictions, theories and models, but all of these devices are in the service of achieving compelling narratives. [...] The end product of science is a story improved by models and made convincing by predictions” (2015: 310).

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to learn sociology’s language and ways of thinking, including the sociological culture; the second will have to contend with the formal rigour, the methodological demands and the utilization of useful computer tools found in the formal disciplines” (2013: 116).

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This book aims to contribute to the overall, integrated understanding of the processes of language contact and their evolution, be they the result of political or economic (dis)integrations or migrations or for technological reasons. Via an interdisciplinary, holistic approach, it also aims to support the theoretical grounding of a unified, common sociolinguistic paradigm, based on an ecological and complexity perspective.

This approach built on the fact that linguistic structures do not live in isolation from their social functions and must be situated in relation to the sub- and supra-systems that determine their existence if we are to understand their fortunes.

It is a useful contribution to understanding and promoting the processes of linguistic revitalization in the world, combining at the same time the maintenance and development of diversity while ensuring the intercommunication of human species.



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