The bioprogram hypothesis was first put forward in detail in Derek Bickerton's *Roots of Language* (Ann Arbor: Karoma, 1981) and subsequently modified. A good overview of the issues can be found in Romaine's *Pidgin and Creole Languages*, ch. 7, and Bickerton's article 'Creole Languages and the Bioprogram', in Frederick Newmeyer (ed.), *Linguistics: The Cambridge Survey*, 2. *Linguistic Theory: Extensions and Implications* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 268–84.

The example from Pidgin Yimas is taken from William Foley's article 'Language Birth: The Processes of Pidginization and Creolization', in Frederick Newmeyer (ed.), *Linguistics: The Cambridge Survey*, 4. *Language: The Socio-Cultural Context* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 162–83.

The story of the mutiny on the *Bounty* can be found in James Norman Hall and Charles Nordhoff's trilogy *Mutiny on the Bounty*.

The Guyanese Creole example is taken from William O'Donnell and Loreto Todd, *Variety in Contemporary English* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1980). Further information on the Guyanese situation is contained in John Rickford's book *Dimensions of a Creole Continuum* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1986).

A discussion of the problems surrounding the use of Hawai'i Creole English can be found in Charlene Sato's article 'Linguistic Inequality in Hawaii: The Post Creole Dilemma', in Joan Manes and Nessa Wolfson (eds.), *Language and Inequality* (Berlin: Mouton, 1985), while further information on the social status and uses of Tok Pisin can be found in Suzanne Romaine's articles 'The Status of Tok Pisin in Papua New Guinea: The Colonial Predicament', in Ulrich Ammon and Marlis Hellinger (eds.), *Status Change of Languages* (Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 1991), and 'Pidgin English Advertising', in Christopher Ricks and Leonard Michaels (eds.), *The State of the Language* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 189–203.

For information on socio-political issues in the Caribbean, Hubert Devonish's *Language and Liberation: Creole Language Politics in the Caribbean* (London: Karia Press, 1986) is useful.

Sarah G. Thomason and Terence Kaufmann's book *Language Contact, Creolization and Genetic Linguistics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988) attempts to inform the methodology of traditional historical linguistics with findings from studies of language contact.

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Linguistic Problems as Societal Problems

A senior professor of education visited a London comprehensive school and discussed with one class the languages they spoke at home. One boy put up his hand and said that his family spoke a French Creole. In an unguarded moment the professor replied, 'That's nice.' 'What's nice about it?', asked the boy.

SOCIOLINGUISTIC research, in particular on social dialects and minority languages, has had many practical implications since it is concerned with fundamental inequalities in language use. There are many areas of public life where language has an impact, such as the medical and legal professions, but particularly in the school. Sociolinguists have been actively engaged in studying the problems which arise from language use in these contexts, and especially what happens when there is a mismatch or difference in language involved between the participants, such as doctor and patient, lawyer and client, judge and jury, etc. In this chapter I will focus on some of the types of problems arising in school which are language-related.

Language and educational failure

Language has often been cited as the main cause for the greater rate of school failure among minority children. As one of society's main socializing instruments, the school plays a powerful role in exerting control over its pupils. It endorses mainstream, and largely middle-class, values and language. Children who do not come to school with the kind of cultural and linguistic background supported in the schools are likely to experience conflict. This is true even of working-class children belonging to the dominant culture, but even more so for children of ethnic minority background.

In Britain, for example, there is a hierarchy of educational success or failure. Indigenous middle-class children do best, while

children of West Indian origin do worst. Data from 1969 and 1975 from the Toronto Board of Education showed that students of non-English-speaking background who immigrated to Canada performed worse academically and were in lower academic streams than those born in Canada. In the United States Grade 12 Hispanic students are about three and a half years behind national norms in academic achievement. Much the same has been found elsewhere, for example in Europe. To begin with, however, it should be noted that a percentage of minority children do not attend school anyway. In West Germany, for example, about 25 per cent do not attend school, and more than 50 per cent do not obtain any kind of leaving certificate. Drop-out rates for immigrant children in the secondary schools are higher than for indigenous pupils. In Denmark during the years 1975–8, not a single child of Turkish or Pakistani origin (the two largest minority groups in Denmark) finished secondary school.

After leaving school, these minorities also have a greater chance of being unemployed than indigenous children. In 1982, for example, the unemployment rate for foreigners in Sweden was twice as high as for Swedes. The economic returns from schooling are in general much greater for those who are advantaged, i.e. middle-class, to begin with. Thus, even if minority children achieved better in school and were able to complete their education, it wouldn't necessarily guarantee employment. Minorities in most countries have access to a smaller percentage of the available economic resources than the majority. This is reflected in the fact that ethnic minorities are over-represented in almost every category that can be used to measure educational, psychological, economic, and social failure, e.g. rates of crime, alcoholism, mental distur-bances, etc. This, however, masks a lot of important differences among various distinctive minority groups. Some south-east Asian minority students in both the United States and Britain have managed to perform better than their White mainstream classmates. Their success has been hard-won and such individuals and the groups they belong to have suffered backlash from the dominant group with whom they are competing for places in higher education, jobs, etc.

For some time there has been an unacknowledged relationship between bilingualism and special education. There are many reasons why disproportionate numbers of minority-language children

have been placed into special education classes and vocational programs in many countries. The indiscriminate use of psycho-logical tests on newly arrived immigrants to the United States in the early part of this century resulted in the deportation of persons who were assessed to be feeble-minded, largely because they did not understand English. The number of foreigners deported for this reason increased by approximately 350 per cent in 1913 and 570 per cent in 1914.

The misguided use of psychological assessment is also in con-siderable part to blame for the over-representation of ethnic minority students in classes for the mentally retarded. Constructs such as intelligence, learning disability, language proficiency, and bilingualism are poorly understood by many educators. In Britain, for example, a government inquiry into the special educational needs of children contained only one paragraph devoted to the assessment of minority children. It states that whenever a child is being assessed whose first language is not English, at least one of the professionals involved in assessing the child's needs must be able to understand and speak the child's language. However, the formal recommendations of the report make no mention of the needs and rights of minority students.

Because schools measure success in terms of mastery of standard English (or whatever the accepted language of society is), non-standard speech is seen as illogical, and bilingualism as a problem. It was not too long ago that minority children in countries such as Australia, the United States, Britain, and Sweden were subjected to physical violence in school for speaking their home language. Some Finnish schoolchildren in the Tornedal area of Sweden had to carry heavy logs on their shoulders or wear a stiff collar because they had spoken Finnish. In other parts of Sweden, such as Norrbotten, there were workhouses, which poor children attended and where they earned their keep by doing most of the daily domestic work. When one of the children spoke Finnish, they were all lined up and had their ears boxed one by one.

Much of the early literature appeared to indicate that bilingualism exerted a negative influence on children's development. Beliefs about the harmful and undesirable effects of bilingualism have been used to support policies of monolingual instruction in the majority language, in particular for children of minority-language background. Bilingualism was, and still is, often cited as an

explanation for the failure of certain groups of children. It has been argued that it is counter-productive to the child's welfare to develop and maintain proficiency in more than one language. Linguists have argued that learning two languages need not be a handicap. If that were so, then the rich would not consider it an advantage to send their children to private schools in Switzerland, where they learn French or German and are exposed to another culture. Why is it considered a disadvantage for a British child to know and maintain Panjabi?

Educators have also fought against the use of dialects in school because they were regarded as substandard forms of speech. Based on studies of the language of minority groups, sociolinguists have, however, argued that non-standard speech forms are just as structurally complex, rule-governed, and capable of expressing logical arguments as standard English. Moreover, because such varieties play an important role in speaker identity, change towards standard English may be resisted. Recall from Chapter 4 that inner-city-area Black youths who socialized in street gangs were those who used the most non-standard forms of speech and were most opposed to the value system of the school. Not only did they have the highest rate of failure, but they were also regarded as those most likely to fail by their teachers.

Many factors are responsible for the poor achievement of some schoolchildren, e.g. lack of exposure to the school language, linguistic/cultural mismatch between home and school, inferior quality of education provided to minority students, socio-economic status, disrupted patterns of intergenerational cultural transmission as a result of minority/majority-status relations, and attitudes of the majority to the minority and vice versa. Many linguists now conclude, however, that negative attitudes towards non-standard speech and bilingualism are more decisive in determining school outcomes than actual linguistic differences themselves.

It has been shown that teachers already tend to have negative expectations of minority children. In one study teachers were asked to evaluate samples of speech, writing, drawing, and photographs of some school pupils. In particular, they were asked to say how successful they thought a child was likely to be based on the evidence from the samples. The experimenters obtained independent ratings of all the samples and then presented them in various combinations. Thus, one hypothetical child might have a

speech sample independently judged as sloppy, paired with a photograph and writing sample judged to be good, etc. Assessment of students' likely success in school was linked most strongly to the speech sample. Those who had speech samples judged to be poor were stereotyped as underachievers, even though they might have produced written work and drawings independently rated as good.

In another study, kindergarten teachers in Toronto were asked to pick three students whom they felt were likely to fail by Grade 3 and three whom they felt would be highly successful. Those who had English as a second language were regarded to be likely to fail about twice as often as other students. Once labels such as 'limited English proficiency' or 'learning disabled' are given to these children, this is seen as the explanation for their problems. It then deflects attention from other possible contributions in the school and larger social environment. It has also been shown that teachers' assumptions about students' proficiency in English affect the quality of the instruction given to them. In one case non-English-speaking students were made to focus on more mechanical tasks associated with reading rather than activities associated with promoting comprehension.

Difference versus deficit

In the 1950s a very influential theory about the connection between language and school success distinguished between a so-called 'restricted code' and an 'elaborated code'. The elaborated variety was alleged to have greater syntactic complexity, as evidenced, for example, by a greater proportion of subordinate clauses, conjunctions, etc. It makes meaning explicit, and one does not have to be in a particular situation to understand the meaning. The meaning is in the text, not the context. These codes are believed to be acquired by socialization into different classes and family structures. The failure of working-class children in school was explained in terms of their lack of access to the elaborated code.

As samples we can take the following types of stories told by 5-year-old schoolboys when asked to describe what they saw in a series of pictures. Of particular interest here is how the participants in the picture are referred to by the choice of pronouns or nouns.

The elaborated version explicitly states who did what and can be immediately understood without seeing the pictures:

Elaborated version
Three boys are playing football and one boy kicks the ball and it goes through the window the ball breaks the window and the boys are looking at it and a man comes out and shouts at them because they've broken the window so they run away and then that lady looks out of her window and she tells the boys off.

Restricted version
They're playing football and he kicks it and it goes through there it breaks the window and they're looking at it and he comes out and shouts at them because they've broken it so they run away and then she looks out and she tells them off.

For many, the implication of this theory was that speakers of underprivileged groups could succeed if they could be taught the elaborated code. This became known as 'deficit theory', and programs of so-called 'compensatory' education were launched in the United States and elsewhere to provide deprived pre-school children with compensating experience and exposure to middle-class culture so that they could start school on an equal footing with middle-class children who had exposure to the elaborated code at home. Between 1965 and 1970 $10 billion was spent on these kinds of programs, the best-known of which was Project Headstart. In some cases educational programs were proposed which used methods designed for teaching English as a second language because it was argued that the children lacked a language. When results were not as good as had been hoped for, some suggested that pre-school intervention programs came too late because mothers were not socializing their children into the kind of environment which would lead to school success. Thus, it was mothers who had some deficit. Obviously, if this sort of argument is carried to its extreme, we are no longer talking about environmental differences but genetic ones, and indeed some did believe that the IQ differences found between children of different social class and ethnic backgrounds were genetically determined.

Linguists who have attacked deficit theories have argued that different groups have different ways of using language, but no one's language is deficient. Evidence against verbal deficit comes from many sources. For one thing, it can be shown that non-standard varieties of language are just as structurally complex and

rule-governed as standard varieties and just as capable of expressing logical arguments as standard speech. Logicality, however, becomes linked with middle-class language because it is middle-class children who do best at school.

Language differences in the classroom

In a study done of 'sharing time', a common speech event at many schools, we can see how the teacher's assumptions about what is a good contribution are not made explicit. This activity usually begins with the teacher asking, 'Who has something important, special, or exciting to share?' What is 'important' is defined by the teacher and it is obvious from remarks made by some children that they don't know what the teacher will consider important. The teacher asked one child who volunteered a story, 'Is this very, very important?—because we don't have much time this morning.' The child replied, 'I don't know if it is or not, but I want to say it anyway.' From analyzing the contributions made by different children and the teacher's reactions to them, we can get an idea of what the teacher wanted.

A good story should have a simple statement of one topic and a series of comments leading to the resolution of some action concerning it. Certain topics are thus not inherently important or trivial. What was important was to talk about a topic in such a way as to make it sound important. But some of the children used styles of speaking which made it seem to the teacher that there was no topic at all. The narratives expected by the teacher were book-like in that all the details had to be fully spelled out and made explicit as in the elaborated code discussed above. Minimal background knowledge was to be assumed on the part of the audience. Objects had to be named even when they were in plain sight.

Let's examine how one teacher reacts to two different styles of narration, one by a Black child and another by a White child. In the following extract, the Black child is labelled D and the teacher T:

T. I want you to share some one thing that's important.
D. In the summer, I mean, when I go back to school in September, I'm gonna have a new coat and I already got it and it's got a lot on it and when I got it yesterday and when I saw it, my brother was going

somewhere. When I saw it on the couch and I showed my sister and
I was reading something out on the bag and my big sister said: 'Deena,
you have to keep that away from Keisha' 'cause that's my baby sister
and I said 'no' and I said the plastic bag because when she was with
me and my cousin and her—
T. Wait a minute. You stick with your coat now. I said you could tell one
thing.
D. This was about my—
T. OK. All right. Go on.
D. And yesterday when I got my coat my cousin ran outside and he tried
to get him and when he got in the house he laid on the floor and I told
him to get up because he was crying.
T. What's that got to do with your coat?
D. Because he wanted to go outside.
T. Why?
D. 'Cause my mother wanted us to stay in the house.
T. What does that have to do with your coat?
D. Because . . . I don't know.
T. OK. Thank you very much, Deena.

In terms of the teacher's notions of sharing time, a story like
this one is difficult to follow. It seems to have no single topic, no
beginning, and no end. The focus of the story has to be inferred
from links that are never made explicit. At the point where the
teacher interrupts, she tries to bring Deena back to develop what
she thinks is the topic, i.e. the coat. When the child was inter-
viewed later about her story, she explained the link between her
cousin and the coat by saying that she was trying to keep him from
putting his dirty hands on it. The other topic had to do with the
coat and the plastic bag. In one case the child was protecting
her baby sister from the bag the coat was in and in the other
topic she was protecting the coat from the messy hands of her
cousin. The outcome of this mismatch in styles and expectations
between teacher and child is that the teacher cannot see her way
into the narrative and consequently does not help the child to
produce the kind of narrative considered appropriate for sharing
time. She can't follow the transitions between topics. The child
said afterwards she felt frustrated by the teacher's interruptions,
which she took as a sign of her lack of interest in what she had to
say.

The next extract is from a White child, M, who uses a style
which is more like what the teacher wants. Here when the teacher

interrupts, she does so in a way that helps the child to expand the
narrative:

M. When I was in camp, we made these candles.
T. You made them?
M. I tried it with different colors with both of them but one just came
out. This one just came out blue and I don't know what this color is.
T. That's neat-o. Tell the kids how you do it from the very start. Pretend
we don't know a thing about candles. OK. What did you do first? What
did you use? Flour?
M. There's some hot wax, some real hot wax that you just take a string,
tie a knot in it and dip the string in the wax.
T. What makes it have a shape?
M. You just shape it.
T. Oh, you shaped it with your hands.
M. But you have first you have to stick it into the wax and then water
and then keep doing that until it gets to the size you want it.

The teacher and the child are in synchrony in this story. The
teacher prompts the child and gives her guidelines as to what is
important in order for the story to proceed. When she asks the
child to pretend 'we don't know a thing about candles', she is
instructing her to assume no knowledge and to be explicit. The
child picks up her clues and builds on them. Children are either
aided or hindered in their transition from home to school by the
stories that are told at home, and the functions they have in
particular communities. In one study done of two communities
fictitiously referred to as Roadville (working-class White) and
Trackton (working-class Black), it was found that although both
groups spent a lot of time telling stories, they had different ideas
about what stories were and what they were for.

In Roadville, stories stick to the truth and are factual. They end
with a summary and a moral. Any fictionalized account is not a
'story' at all, but a lie. What Trackton people call stories are, how-
ever, hardly ever serious. The best stories are 'junk' and those who
are the best story-tellers talk the best junk, i.e. make the most wildly
exaggerated comparisons. Neither Roadville's factual accounts
nor stories from the Bible would be called 'stories' in Trackton.
For Roadville people, Trackton's stories would be lies, while for
Trackton, Roadville's stories would not even count as stories.
These different ideas about stories derive partly from notions of
literacy. The Trackton parents do not read books with their

children and have no reason to talk about the stories in books. Roadville children are used to looking at books at home. Yet neither community prepares its children for the uses of written and spoken language they will encounter at school. At school they must learn not just how to tell and write stories, but how to talk about them.

Similarly, questions these children hear at home are not like those which teachers use at school. Most of the teacher's questions are about things to which the teacher already has the answer or are requests to name things, e.g. *what color is that?* Another frequent type is really a rhetorical question about things in isolation from their context, e.g. *I wonder why he did that?* One of the teacher's complaints was that Roadville and Trackton children seemed unable to answer even the simplest questions. One local grandmother noticed the difference between questions at home and school when she commented, 'We don't talk to our children like you folks do; we don't ask them about colors' names and things.'

Literacy is acquired in the context of schooling. In Chapter 3 I showed how what goes by the name of 'logic' in language is mainly an acquired way of talking and thinking about language which is made possible largely by literacy. There are many school uses of language which derive their mode of interpretation from literate uses of language. Take, for example, the type of test or quiz in which children are given a question such as: 'Henry VIII had two wives. True or false?' Why is it that the correct answer is false? Henry, of course, had more than two wives, but that means he had at least two. Nevertheless, the conventional interpretation of this utterance is that Henry VIII had only two wives, although there is nothing in the linguistic form to indicate that this should be so.

It is hard to have judgements about speech independently of notions of correctness we are taught in school when we learn to read and write. Studies have shown that teachers routinely correct children in school for using forms that are quite acceptable in speech. Moreover, they use these forms themselves in the classroom. Not surprisingly, the children are confused about what the teacher wants. An example can be taken from a French study, where a teacher is trying to get a child to be explicit. In this extract she is asking the child about a story which has been read in class. The teacher is labelled T and the child P.

T. Que fait le Papa de Daniel? [What's Daniel's father doing?]
P. Il promène la chèvre [He's walking the goat].
T. Bon. Alors elle répond: 'Il promène la chèvre.' Qui est-ce 'il'? [Good, well, she's answered: 'He's walking the goat.' Who is this he?]
T. Elle m'a dit 'il'. Moi, je sais pas qui c'est il [She told me 'he'. I don't know who this he is].
P. Promène la chèvre le— [Walks the goat the—]
T. Qui? [Who?]
P. Le fermier [The farmer]
T. Alors je repose ma question: 'Que fait le papa de Daniel'? [Now I'll ask my question again. What's Daniel's father doing?]
P. Le fermier promène la chèvre [The farmer is walking the goat].
T. Oui. Est-ce je t'ai demandé ce que fait le fermier? J'ai demandé ça? J'ai demandé ça les petites filles? [Did I ask you what the farmer's doing? Did I ask that? Did I ask that, girls?]

The answer the teacher wants is, *Le papa de Daniel promène la chèvre* 'Daniel's father is walking the goat', but she fails to elicit it. She rejects various answers. At first, when the child fails to make the subject explicit, using instead the pronoun *il* 'he' to refer to *le papa de Daniel*, she tries to get the child to repeat *le papa de Daniel* by claiming she doesn't know who 'he' refers to. The teacher prompts again before the child tries something else which is more explicit, but the teacher rejects it too without saying why, and then repeats her original question. The child interprets this as a prompt to repeat a complete sentence, but this still does not satisfy the teacher.

It is not clear why only *le papa de Daniel promène la chèvre* is the 'right' answer. Both *le fermier* and *il* accomplish the same thing, and it is clear from the context who these words refer to. In replying to the teacher's question, the pupil is using a rule which is quite acceptable and normal in both spoken and written discourse: namely, a referent known by speaker and hearer can on second mention be referred to as 'he' or 'she'. Imagine that this exchange took place in the teacher's home between the teacher and a friend, with the two of them talking about Daniel's father, and the teacher suddenly says 'I don't know who this he is'. The friend would certainly think the teacher did not know how to carry on a conversation. Only in the classroom could such an abnormal use of language count as a legitimate exchange. By 'abnormal' I mean that there is nothing ungrammatical, but what has been said violates the rules governing communicative

competence. The teacher is trying to impose on the child a language which is in fact too explicit for the context without explaining why it is 'better' to do so.

Why Johnny can't read

Standards of language use and standard languages are essentially arbitrary conventions which can be learned only by going to school. This is precisely why they are so effective in maintaining barriers between groups. There has been much discussion in the popular press and academic professions about the problem of declining standards. Standards change. This is true of language no less than other cultural products like fashion. People have complained about the decline of English since at least the fifteenth century. In 1989 Prince Charles angered British schoolteachers when he complained publicly that his staff could not read or write English properly. Around the same time, the *Times Higher Education Supplement* carried a front-page article in which several Oxford professors complained about the low standards of English used by students at Oxford University and suggested the possibility of introducing remedial instruction. Interestingly, these remarks came in the wake of the British government's inquiry into the teaching of English, which was full of recommendations for tolerance of pupils' varieties of English. The same report also stressed the need for standard English to play a part in a new national curriculum.

Testing: who decides what is right?

There can be no doubt that whatever knowledge it is schools test, it is unevenly distributed among schoolchildren in a way which follows patterns of social class stratification and ethnic divisions in society. When test scores are looked at longitudinally, it appears that the population is doing less well. In the United States there is alarm that SAT (Scholastic Achievement Test) scores are declining. There is, however, no reason to panic about this. When the SAT was normed, its population represented a small minority of college-bound White middle-class students. It tests the extent to which those who take it have acquired the middle-class norms necessary for success in higher education. No wonder standards

appear to have declined when the same set of norms is being used to test an ethnically more diverse population. The crisis in language proficiency is in some respects an academic problem created when definitions of literacy, competence, etc. have been narrowed to such an extent that they make children's experience with language at school discontinuous with everyday communicative competence.

Given the inherent bias in the school's curriculum towards the language and culture of the dominant group in society, it would be surprising if minority children managed to score better than mainstream children, even when a foreign-language background is not an intervening variable. Research has shown that when tests are devised which are aimed specifically at the kinds of knowledge minority children have, but which majority children lack, the minority children do well. A Black high-school group averaged 36 points higher than a White group on a test called BITCH-100 (Black Intelligence Test of Cultural Homogeneity), which contained 100 vocabulary items in use in Afro-American slang. This difference in scores reflects the fact that the White students had less opportunity to acquire the words than the Blacks through previous cultural experience.

I showed in Chapter 3 that just because children do not choose the answers which the testers decide are the correct ones does not mean that their early experience is deprived or that they are unintelligent. It just means that they have not had the experiences which the tests focus on. There is no unequivocal relationship between any one set of cultural experiences and the abstract concept we call intelligence. IQ tests are designed to exclude any culturally specific ways in which minority children have gained intelligence. Since many aspects of intelligence are learned or mediated through specific cultural experiences in a particular language or variety, it is impossible to devise a test of intelligence which is context-free and culture-independent. This means that all tests need to be interpreted in the light of the effect of a particular child's minority background, and knowledge about bilingualism, where another language is involved.

In an IQ test given to low-income Portuguese-speaking children in Massachusetts, many children are unable to answer the question: *From what animal do we get bacon*? Despite the fact that pork is a staple food for most Portuguese families, children are not

familiar with the term *bacon*. If the question had been rephrased so as to ask: *From what animal do we get sausages?*, children would have been able to answer it. In another item children are asked whether it is better to give money to a well-known charity or to a beggar. Within the children's culture, organized charities are almost non-existent, so the only real choice is to give the money to the beggar. The testers, however, want the child to pick the charities. The cultural bias in testing procedures such as these has led some researchers to recommend alternative means of assessment which rely less heavily on formal tests.

Taking appropriate action

Political mobilization of linguistic minorities and legislation prompted by equality of opportunity has led in some places to the development and funding of programs aimed at rectifying linguistic inequalities. In some cases, however, the courts have become battlegrounds for issues which, although not primarily linguistic, have had fundamental linguistic implications. The Ann Arbor decision on Black English in the United States in 1979 is an example of litigation brought under Equality of Opportunity legislation, which actually makes no mention of language. It guarantees simply that no one shall be denied equal educational opportunity on account of race, color, sex, or national origin. Black parents in Ann Arbor, Michigan, filed a suit against the school board for failure to take into account the linguistic background of their children.

The issue of language, in particular the autonomy of Black English, became salient in this case because it was argued that a language group, i.e. speakers of Black English, coincided with a racial group. The Ann Arbor case probably could not have occurred or been won without the research done on social dialects in the 1960s and 1970s, which supported the argument that Black English was not a deficient, but only different, linguistic system. The judge, who ruled in favor of the Black parents and their children, was clearly influenced by the expert testimony of sociolinguists.

After the United States Federal Government passed the Bilingual Education Act of 1968, over $7 million were appropriated for 1969–70 to support educational programs which were aimed at the special educational needs of children of 'limited English-speaking

ability' in schools having a high concentration of such children from families with low incomes. The budget for bilingual education increased steadily until in 1980 it had reached its peak of $191.5 million. The money was intended to support initiatives in bilingual education that would later be financed through state and local funds. In the first few years the emphasis was on elementary education.

Although the Bilingual Education Act provided opportunities for schools to set up bilingual education programs, it did not place individual schools under any legal obligation to do so. Litigation brought to the courts on behalf of various groups of minority students led in some cases to court-mandated bilingual education programs. The most famous precedent-setting case was that of *Lau* v. *Nichols*. In this instance a class action suit was brought against the San Francisco Unified School District by Chinese public-school students in 1970. It was argued that no special programs were available to meet the linguistic needs of these students. As a consequence, they were prevented from deriving benefit from instruction in English and were not receiving equal treatment.

The plaintiffs made their appeal not on linguistic grounds, but on the basis of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which states that 'no person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance'. In their case against the school board, the plaintiffs requested a program of bilingual education. Although the case was lost, the Supreme Court overturned the decision of the federal district court in 1974. It concluded that 'the Chinese-speaking minority receives fewer benefits than the English-speaking majority from respondents' school system which denies them a meaningful opportunity to participate in the educational program—all earmarks of discrimination banned by the regulations'. This was a landmark decision because it meant that for the first time in the United States the language rights of non-English speakers were recognized as a civil right.

By this stage, however, the Chinese students had dropped the request for bilingual education. Like the Ann Arbor ruling which said simply that the school board had to 'take appropriate action'

to ensure equal participation for all students in its educational programs, the Supreme Court decision did not press for any specific remedy. It pointed out only two possibilities: namely, teaching English to the students or teaching them in Chinese. They requested only that the school board rectify the situation of inequality of educational opportunity. The remedy taken by the San Francisco school board was to set up a bilingual education program for Chinese, Filipino, and Spanish language groups, who made up over 80 per cent of the students with little or no English. Teaching in English as a second language was offered to all other minority groups.

The Lau decision led to other cases. It also encouraged expansion of the services and eligibility provided through the Bilingual Education Act. Moreover, many states passed bills which mandated bilingual education. This followed the precedent set by Massachusetts in 1971. The Lau decision was also instrumental in setting up policy guidelines at the federal level which would allow the US Office of Education to decide whether a school district was in compliance with the Civil Rights Act and the Lau case. A document was produced which is referred to as the 'Lau Remedies'. It directed school boards to identify students with a primary or home language other than English and to assess their proficiency in English and the home language. Elementary-school students were to be taught in their dominant language until they were able to benefit from instruction entirely in English.

The significance of the Lau Remedies is that they prescribed a transitional form of bilingualism and specifically rejected the teaching of English as a second language as a remedy for elementary students. When the Bilingual Education Act came up for renewal in 1978, a large number of school systems had implemented the Lau Remedies and set up bilingual education programs.

In 1975 the US Civil Rights Task Force examined a number of school systems around the country which were receiving federal assistance. In the case of Dade County in Florida, for instance, it stated that the constitutional rights of over 10,000 elementary pupils of various language backgrounds (e.g. Portuguese, Greek, Arabic, Korean, etc.) were being violated. Since the Lau Remedies had ruled out instruction in English as a second language as an acceptable educational program, the county was directed to

provide bilingual education to all non-English-speaking students; otherwise, it would lose all federal funds.

The model of bilingual education prescribed by the federal government, however, was opposed in its aim and principles to the kind of enrichment program Dade County had pioneered in the early 1960s. The federal regulations supported only transitional bilingualism, which meant that the students and school board would be judged on how proficient the students had become in English so that they could switch to mainstream English-only instruction. There was no intention or provision to maintain the students' home language. The latter presumably would fade of its own accord through lack of opportunity for use and support by the schools. Instead of receiving equal instruction in both languages as they would in a maintenance program, the students would be given increasingly less instruction in their native language until they finally left the program.

The result has been that although Cuban-American children fare better in Dade County's public schools than other Hispanics in public schools elsewhere in the United States, they still experience greater failure than Anglo students. There are, however, some private, low-tuition schools for children of working-class background in Dade County (and elsewhere in the United States). There a different approach is taken to bilingual education. The schools are staffed mostly by Cuban teachers, who in most cases were born and educated in pre-Castro Cuba. Classroom instruction reinforces the values that prevail in Miami's predominantly Cuban neighborhoods, and Spanish is the social language of these schools. Despite the fact that most subjects are taught in English, development of Spanish skills is, nevertheless, central. Literacy in Spanish according to monolingual Cuban standards is expected and obtained. The success of these schools can be attributed to the prestigious status accorded to Spanish. The concept of language dominance is not useful in these schools because no curricular decisions are based on it.

The actual number of children in the United States who presently receive bilingual education represents only a quarter of the population for whom it is intended. Most of these schools do not attempt to maintain the native language of the children and over half do not provide any instruction in the native language for subjects such as mathematics, science, etc.

Litigation in US courts during the late 1960s and early 1970s has also led to the clarification of rights of bilingual students to non-biased assessment and appropriate placement procedures. A landmark case was decided in California in 1970 (*Diana* v. *State Board of Education*). A suit was filed on behalf of nine Mexican-American children who had been placed in classes for the mentally retarded on the basis of the results of IQ tests administered in English. The court ruled that the inherent cultural bias of the tests discriminated against the plaintiffs.

An out-of-court settlement was reached in which the following provision was made:

All children whose home language is other than English must be tested in both their primary language and English; . . . Such children must be tested only with tests or sections of tests that do not depend on such things as vocabulary, general information, and other similarly unfair verbal questions. Mexican-American and Chinese-American children already in classes for the mentally retarded must be retested in their primary language and reevaluated only as to their achievement on non-verbal tests or sections of tests. . . . Any school district which has a significant disparity between the percentage of Mexican-American students in its regular classes and those for the retarded must submit an explanation for this disparity.

In the years that followed this decision, close to 10,000 minority children were reinstated in regular classrooms in California. However, a first-language assessment of children who show discrepancies between verbal and non-verbal IQ is appropriate only within the first few years of a child's residence in the new country. Testing in the first language after this period is likely to be invalid because of possible attrition of ability in that language due to increasing exposure to the second language.

As has been typical with legislation concerning language rights of minorities, court recommendations have been made in advance of the technology and expertise required to carry them out. In the 1960s and 1970s no one had had much experience in devising adequate tests for minority students in their own language or for determining when speakers were 'of limited English proficiency', and therefore eligible for education under the provisions of the Lau Remedies.

Bilingual education: maintenance or assimilation?

In some respects it is ironic that one of the reasons why bilingual education has been viewed so negatively by many people in the United States is due to the fear that it aims to maintain languages, and by implication cultures, other than English. Often the most outspoken opponents are those of immigrant background for whom no provision was made, and who were eager to assimilate as quickly as possible to the mainstream American way of life. One such person, who emigrated from Germany at age 9 and was put into regular English schooling, wrote a letter to the *New York Times* (18 Feb. 1981) in which he said: 'I am convinced a bilingual education would have impeded my integration into American society.' Another, who was Yiddish-speaking, wrote (*New York Times* 3 Nov. 1976): 'The bilingual method is probably more confusing than helpful to many. Exposure to English throughout the day results in more rapid and more effective progress than dilution in a bilingual process.'

Former President Reagan also spoke out strongly against the desirability of maintaining native languages. He condemned the idea as un-American. In a speech made to a group of mayors he said (as reported in the *New York Times*, 3 Mar. 1981): 'It is absolutely wrong and against American concept to have a bilingual education program that is now openly, admittedly dedicated to preserving their native language and never getting them adequate in English so they can go out into the job market.' President Reagan's remarks echo those of one of his predecessors, Theodore Roosevelt, who in 1918 said: 'We have room for but one language here, and that is the English language, for we intend to see that the crucible turns our people out as Americans, of American nationality, and not as dwellers in a polyglot boarding house and we have room for but one loyalty, and that is a loyalty to the American people.'

The antipathy to multiculturalism and multilingualism runs deep in the American ethos. One of its more recent manifestations can be found in the English Language Act passed in California and other states, which makes English the official language for public use. This came about through the efforts of the organization called US English, founded by former Senator Hayakawa to lobby for a constitutional amendment which would make English the official

language of the United States. The organization also seeks to repeal laws mandating multilingual ballots and voting materials, to restrict government funding to short-term transitional programs, and to control immigration so that it does not reinforce trends towards language segregation. It welcomes members 'who agree that English is and must remain the only language of the people of the United States'.

Early in 1988 ex-Senator Hayakawa sent a letter to voters in the Washington, DC, area informing them:

We have embarked upon a policy of so-called 'bilingualism' putting foreign languages in competition with our own . . . prolonged bilingual education in public schools and multilingual ballots threaten to divide us along language lines . . . help us put together the money needed to wage a vigorous campaign to restore English to its rightful place as the language of all Americans. All contributions are fully tax-deductible. We have enough problems as a nation without having to talk through an interpreter. We can still reverse our misguided course, and secure for ourselves and our children the blessings of a common language . . . In a pluralistic nation such as ours, government should foster the similarities that unite us rather than the differences that separate us.

In 1983 President Reagan proposed to cut the federal budget for bilingual education and to relax restrictions on the remedies used by local school districts in educating children who were of limited proficiency in English. The Congress took testimony from the National Association for Bilingual Education (NABE) and US English. In its testimony NABE argued that there were demonstrable gains from bilingual education, as evidenced by improved test scores and enhanced self-esteem and community involvement. They also stressed the value of languages other than English as a natural resource, which should be built upon and expanded. US English, on the other hand, claimed that bilingual education retarded the acquisition of English, and the integration of the student into the mainstream.

Immersion or submersion?

Many politicians and educators in the United States have inappropriately cited the success of the Canadian immersion programs as justification for English immersion as a suitable form of education for linguistic minorities in the United States. However, the issues

are different in the two countries and so are the contexts in which acquisition takes place. In Canada the students are predominantly of English-language background and the language of instruction is the minority language of the society as a whole (i.e. French), although in the wider international context, it is a language of considerable prestige and importance. Despite their superficial similarity, submersion of minorities in English-only programs in the United States and Canadian immersion programs are different and they lead to different results. In the United States there is no intention of giving wider institutional recognition to the students' minority languages. Just because some groups of minority students can survive in immersion or submersion programs does not mean they are necessarily the most appropriate means of education for all students.

The type of program chosen will typically, though not always, have different consequences in different contexts. Immersion programs usually result in additive bilingualism. They seek to add a second language without threatening the first. The child's native language is intact and develops, even though the child has not had the same amount of instruction as its monolingual peers in majority-language schools. Most of the positive results of bilingualism have been obtained by researchers in Canada from this kind of acquisitional context. The outcome of the so-called language shelter programs in Scandinavia could also be described as additive bilingualism.

In submersion programs a second language gradually undermines proficiency in the first. This has been called subtractive or disruptive bilingualism because the development of the child's first language has been disrupted and is incomplete. Many researchers, particularly in Scandinavia, have claimed that the development of the children in both languages is fragmentary and incomplete. They are thus referred to as 'semilingual', or 'doubly semilingual'. The negative results for bilingualism, e.g. lower IQ, poorer achievement in language tests, etc., have been obtained largely in connection with subtractive bilingualism in submersion-type programs. The political implications of this are clear, although they continue to be ignored.

In practice, the situation in individual countries is complex and often several different options are available for different kinds of children, depending on a variety of circumstances, which vary

from place to place. We can compare German and Swedish policy for the education of the children of migrant workers who entered western Europe in large numbers in the 1960s and 1970s to provide labor during a period of economic expansion. In Germany, there are six different types of classes in which guest-workers' children receive their education. They can attend ordinary German classes with minimal or no consideration given to their lack of ability in German. They can also attend special classes for guest-workers' children only. These follow the ordinary German curriculum. The main difference is that the children are segregated from other German-speaking children. If they attend international preparatory schools they can obtain intensive training in German as a second language. Here the aim is transitional because the children are expected at a later stage to be integrated into the ordinary German classes.

Another type of transitional program provides instruction in the native language for several years and German as a second language. Some of these lead to compulsory transfer to ordinary German classes after Grade 6. Some of the classes, however, have an optional transfer. Often the mother-tongue teachers do not want the children moved because they fear they will lose their jobs. The German teachers may also feel pressure from German parents who do not want their children in the same classes with foreign children. In practice, many children drop out after the sixth year or are not transferred. Finally, some children have the option of attending mother-tongue classes which follow the curriculum of the home countries and are organized by them. This is also a segregationist model, and does not aim at bilingualism, although at the same time it is the only program which attempts maintenance of the native language and culture. From the perspective of the child's chances of returning to the home country and reintegrating, only the last option is a reasonable one. The German classes segregate them and alienate them most by assimilating them into German values and ideology. We can see how the education which the children of migrant workers receive contributes to the reproduction of the powerless status of the parents at the same time as it allows the host country to maintain control over the migrants' destiny. When economic expansion began to decline in the 1970s, it was more profitable to export capital to underdeveloped countries where wages were low than to import workers. As unemployment

rates began to rise in the European countries, many people began to argue that the guest-workers should be sent home because they were a drain on the social services and prevented nationals from getting jobs.

Education for foreign children in Sweden falls into three categories. The most common provides instruction in Swedish in ordinary Swedish classes. The child may have already had some teaching in Swedish as a second language. There may also be supplementary tuition given in some subjects in Swedish and/or the mother tongue. The school decides whether the child needs supplementary tuition in Swedish, and if so, it is compulsory. Teaching of and in the mother tongue is, however, voluntary, except in areas where there are sufficient numbers of students who want it. There is also an option whereby a child attends classes with one Swedish teacher and one immigrant teacher in classes which contain Swedish children and children from one immigrant group only. These are called compound or cooperation classes. The groups are taught separately, each by its own teacher through the medium of the native language for part of the time, and then in Swedish together with the other children for the rest of the time. In practice, the amount of mother-tongue teaching is limited and decreases gradually because the aim is that by Grade 4, the immigrant children should be able to be taught in Swedish only. Thus, this is a traditional assimilationist model of transitional bilingualism.

Finally, there is also the possibility of attending classes where the instruction is done mainly through the medium of the mother tongue with Swedish as a second language. The classes consist of children of the same nationality. This continues for the first three years with the amount of time given to Swedish steadily increasing. Only 10 per cent of all immigrant pupils attended such classes in 1981. Since this is the model preferred by many immigrant groups themselves, there has been increasing pressure to set up more of these programs. It has as its goal maintenance of the mother tongue.

It is not possible to evaluate policies except within the context of the relationship between the host and sending countries, and the status and function of minorities in the host country. Thus, while monolingualism in the minority language in segregation programs may make the children linguistically equal to their peers

in the home country, within the context of the host country they are being educated to be kept in the same weak position as their parents. They are unable to demand any rights, and are potentially ready to be sent back.

Monolingualism in the majority language by submersion programs prevents the children from going back and tries to assimilate them to the dominant culture. Given the different status and function of minorities in Germany and Sweden, different policies for education prevail. It is not surprising therefore to find that German and Swedish researchers do not agree on what the best educational strategy for these children is. In Scandinavia it is recommended that immigrant children should be taught through their home language with the majority language as a second language. Researchers, along with the minority groups themselves, are opposed to putting children directly into the normal majority classes. In Germany, however, many researchers recommend rapid integration into the German classes and are opposed to native-language instruction. The minority groups themselves are divided in their opinion. In Berlin, for example, Turkish parents want instruction for their children in German from the beginning of primary school onwards, while Greeks prefer their children to be taught for the first years in Greek only. The attitudes of different minority groups towards mother-tongue teaching and language maintenance reflect general views on cultural assimilation. In both Sweden and Germany, however, researchers believe they are recommending what is best for the children under the present socio-political circumstances. The German researchers want to ensure non-segregation, and the only way to do that in the German system is to send the children to ordinary German classes.

Semilingualism: a new deficit theory

In Sweden policy has been partly influenced by some controversial research findings concerning 'semilingualism'. This term has been used to describe what some researchers believe to be the less than complete linguistic skills of some bilinguals. From a historical and political perspective, it is significant that the term has emerged in connection with the study of the language skills of ethnic minorities. The term has since become widely used in the Canadian debate about bilingualism, and it has become more popular in the United

Kingdom too. The terms 'semilingualism' and 'double semilingualism' are, however, usually defined with reference to some idealized and rather narrow notion of 'full competence' in one language or another. Individuals are said to be semilingual, for instance, if they have a smaller vocabulary, compared with monolinguals who are of the same social group and educational background. In addition, the semilingual can be expected to deviate from the norm in the two languages.

Here we see a number of basic misconceptions about the nature of language and about what constitutes competence in a language, as they have been applied specifically to bilinguals. Linguistic competence has been conceptualized in terms of an implicit container metaphor: a container which can be either 'full' or 'partially full'. From the perspective of the history of science, it is perhaps not surprising that the container metaphor should be applied to notions of linguistic competence since the container metaphor is a basic one in the human conceptual system. It has been a dominant mode of conceptualizing human intellectual capacities in other scientific fields as well. One needs only to think of craniometry, i.e. the measure of brain size and volume, as a good example of the literal application of the metaphor: 'the mind is a container'. Once the notion becomes reified that the mind is located in the brain and the brain is the center of intelligence, it is easy to see why some scientists in the nineteenth century believed that one could measure intelligence by measuring the volume of the brain.

The controversies concerning craniometry were not confined just to the more academic journals. They became a subject of interest in the popular press, particularly when the results were used to prove that the alleged inferiority of some racial groups, and women too, was genetically determined. The work of anthropologists was influential in dismissing cranial indices as measures of mental worth by showing that they varied widely both among adults of a single group and within the life of individuals.

What craniometry was for the nineteenth century, intelligence testing has become for the twentieth. The misuse of mental tests is not inherent in the idea of testing itself, but arises largely through the fallacy of reification. Craniometry was based on the illusion that a measure of what filled the cranial space told us something of the value of the contents. IQ testing can be thought

of as a more sophisticated attempt to reify the container metaphor. Although the measures it relies on are considerably more abstract, their relation to the general concept of intelligence is not clear; nor is the latter notion well understood. Even though many are aware of this, the results of IQ testing have been misused, particularly in the case of minority language groups.

We see too the container metaphor interacting with a spatial metaphor so that the idea is fostered that there is a relationship between form and content. We expect that more of form equals more of content. Linguistic expressions are seen as containers and their meanings are the contents of those containers. The container metaphor becomes problematic when it is translated into measures developed by the testing industry. When notions like the 'ability to extract meaning' become operationalized as scores on, say, reading tests, a child who fails is then labelled as one who is 'unable to extract meaning'. Similarly, when the cognitive aspects of language are tested in terms of being able to produce synonyms or create new words, the child who can't is branded as 'lacking in the cognitive aspects of language development'. Then it becomes easy to believe that abstract, and usually quantitative, measures, such as size of vocabulary, response time, etc., must express something more real and fundamental than the data themselves. Once certain features, such as the mastery of complex syntax, accurate spelling and punctuation, etc., become established measures of language proficiency, it is hardly questioned what is actually meant by language ability and what role these features play in it. The kinds of tests used in schools are only indirectly related to common-sense notions of what it means to be a competent language user, as I have already shown.

Many minority students can develop communicative skills in a new language within two years, while lagging behind in other areas of proficiency, which might take up to seven years to develop to the appropriate level attained by monolingual students. Part of the reason why conversational skills are acquired more easily is that they are context-embedded. Children learn these aspects of language through interaction with peers. The kind of knowledge required to do well on tests is considerably more abstract and is learned largely through classroom instruction. Most testing instruments rely on the assumption that it is possible to separate analytically different aspects of language competence without

reference to the context of use. This is a highly questionable assumption.

Although it is true that some of the surface features of language can be easily measured, there is an inverse relationship between what can be easily measured and assessed quantitatively and its importance for effective communicative skills. More visible and highly recurrent features, such as pronunciation and vocabulary, are measured and quantified throughout a child's school career without regard for their interrelationship with other levels of linguistic organization. These features tend to be the ones that are measured, rather because we think we know what they are and their inventory is easier to delimit than because of what they tell us of language learning and development. Often children's progress is measured longitudinally by comparing scores obtained on the same or similar tests from year to year. This practice assumes that because a feature measures something meaningful at one stage, it continues to do so. It has, however, been shown that this is clearly not the case for reading, a skill which is essential for school success. Different levels of language take on significance at different stages in the process of learning how to read.

Just as it is not clear who is semilingual, it is not easy to locate the ideal bilingual. I showed in Chapter 2 that where bilingualism exists at the societal or individual level, the two languages are functionally differentiated and coexist in a diglossic relationship. In such situations, the same competence does not develop in both languages or varieties, although together they bear the same functional load as one language does in a monolingual community. In much of the research on bilingualism, the notion of balanced bilingualism has, however, functioned as an implicit synonym for 'good' or 'complete' bilingualism. It has been used as a yardstick against which other kinds of bilingualism have been measured and stigmatized as inadequate or underdeveloped. Much of this terminology reflects the ideological bias of a linguistic theory which has been concerned primarily with the idealized competence of monolingual speakers in the speech communities of western Europe and the United States: communities which, on the whole, have a high degree of stability and autonomy, and also possess highly codified standard languages and prescriptive traditions.

The term 'balanced bilingual' also reveals a static conception of language. Where languages are in contact, there is usually

considerable intergenerational variation in patterns of language use and often quite rapid change in communicative repertoires. We can see how notions like 'half', 'full', etc. rely on some sort of assessment procedure. At this stage, however, there is no general agreement among child language researchers about the 'normal' course of development among monolingual, let alone bilingual children. Most of the studies of both groups focus on the middle-class child. Although it could be argued that some language contact phenomena reflect the consequences of incomplete language acquisition, it is impossible to define the notion of complete acquisition. If we assumed that complete acquisition included knowledge of the monolingual standard variety, then the Spanish of second- and third-generation bilinguals in California would have to be considered an incompletely acquired variety, in spite of the fact that these speakers are able to communicate fluently in Spanish in all the domains where they are expected to use the language. One could not test the competence of these speakers by measuring their control over the categories and rules of the monolingual code, some of which do not exist in their own speech. A realistic assessment of bilinguals must be based firmly on a knowledge of developmental norms for the two languages, and typical patterns of interference as well as patterns of socialization.

The social and linguistic consequences of using two or more languages for different functions are not the same everywhere. Communicative competence is differentially shaped in relation to patterns of language use, as well as community attitudes and beliefs about competence. Certain types of bilingualism can become 'problematic' when a society perceives certain complexes of skills as 'inadequate' or 'inappropriate' relative to the things that have to be done and the conventionalized linguistic means for doing so. Clearly the notion of language proficiency needs to be defined in such a way so as to allow us to look at the productive skills of bilingual children as strategic accomplishments in performance rather than as deficits in competence.

We must ask what goals different societies have when they try to make various children bilingual or monolingual (see Chapter 2). Often children are caught in a vicious circle. Because the school fails to support the home language, skills in it are often poor. At the same time they do not progress in the new language at school, and are labeled semilingual. Often it is argued that

bilingualism impedes development in the second language. Thus, the failure of the school to let children develop further in their mother tongue is often used to legitimize further oppression of it.

We have seen that the term 'bilingual education' can mean different things in different contexts. If we take a common-sense approach and define it as a program where two languages are used equally as media of instruction, many so-called bilingual education programs would not count as such. Moreover, the 'same' educational policy can lead to different outcomes, depending on differences in the input variables. The traditional policy, either implicitly assumed or explicitly stated, which most nations have pursued with regard to various minority groups, who speak a different language, has been eradication of the native language/culture and assimilation into the majority one. This is still the most common experience for minority children. An example would be the Romanies in Finland, whose children are placed in ordinary Finnish schools without any consideration for the Romany language or culture. There is no attempt to provide any mother-tongue teaching or extra teaching in Finnish. Often the education of these children entails removing them from their parents and their own cultural group.

Proponents of maintenance programs have certain social and political assumptions about the value of cultural pluralism and the negative aspects of enforced assimilation. They rest on the view that the right to one's own language is a basic human right.

Annotated bibliography

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The Roadville and Trackton study is found in Shirley Brice Heath's book *Ways with Words* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

Sociolinguists are also actively engaged in the problems arising from the use of language in professions such as medicine and law. Peter Trudgill's collection *Applied Sociolinguistics* (New York: Academic Press, 1984) surveys some of the applications of sociolinguistic research to communicative problems in society, and Robert Di Pietro's collection *Linguistics and the Professions* (Norwood, NJ: Ablex, 1982) examines communication in professional settings. There are also many other specialist volumes concerning particular areas such as language in the courtroom, as in William M. O'Barr's book *Linguistic Evidence: Language, Power and Strategy in the Courtroom* (New York: Academic Press, 1982) and language in the deaf community, as in Ceil Lucas's collection *The Sociolinguistics of the Deaf Community* (New York: Academic Press, 1989).

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Conclusions

WITHIN the perspective adopted in this book I have claimed that language has no existence apart from the social reality of its users. Although language is a precondition for social life, it does not exist on its own and it does not simply reflect some pre-existing reality. I have tried to show how social and linguistic knowledge are intertwined by looking at some of the various ways in which social differences are encoded in speakers' choices both of variants within what is thought of as one language as well as between languages.

I commented in my Preface that sociolinguistics lacked a convincing theoretical model within which to situate and explain its findings. While sociolinguists have shown the importance of heterogeneity and developed powerful statistical methods for analyzing it, some critics have claimed that they have not really 'explained' it. There has been some confusion in sociolinguistic discussions about what it means to explain something, as well as about cause and effect. This is particularly true in studies making use of quantitative analysis which establishes correlations between certain social and linguistic variables. In fact, it is almost paradoxical that for many this kind of work (discussed in Chapter 3) is synonymous with sociolinguistics because in many cases once a sample of speech data has been obtained from a group of speakers representing particular social categories, the emphasis is subsequently almost entirely on quantifying, formalizing, and analyzing the linguistic variables. The social categories such as class, gender, etc. are taken as given and the social context which motivated the collection of data in the first place is often lost sight of in the final product. Within such statistical studies it is often easy to forget that speakers create and interpret language rather than merely respond passively to variables such as style, social class membership, etc.