

Language Policy and Linguistic Culture

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The notion of “linguistic culture” and its applicability to language policy is one that seems to be something I must take credit and/or blame for, since I cannot escape responsibility for connecting the two ideas, or attribute it to anyone else. When I began to use the term “linguistic culture,” I assumed it was a term already in use, a commonplace, i.e., something in need of no explanation. I thought of it as simply that part of culture (defined as “that which is *learned*”) that has anything to do with language, just as we tend to speak, in common layman’s parlance, of *sports* culture, *business* culture, and so on. The idea that there was that part of culture that had to do with language seemed to me uncontested, since there were already in the literature of sociolinguistics many studies that referred to such things as “folk linguistics” (Hoenigswald, 1971) “folk etymologies,” or “myths about language” (Ferguson, 1959b/1968; Miller, 1982). Linguists and linguistic anthropologists had been writing about the connection between language and culture (Hymes, 1964) for decades, since Sapir (1949) at least, and I wanted a term that referred to all of the phenomena that could be subsumed under one rubric. It also seemed to me axiomatic that culture did not reside *in* language (more about this below), certainly not within language as most narrowly defined, i.e., in the *code* or the grammar of the language, but somewhere in the consciousness (or memory, or shared knowledge, or imagination) of linguistic communities. So if there was a feature of language-and-culture that

needed to be discussed, such as attitudes about a language, I wanted to be able to talk about it as being located in, or being part of, linguistic culture, rather than *in* a language.

I was surprised to learn somewhat later that there were scholars from other disciplines who were displeased with the idea of linguistic “culture” since they were, as it turned out, dissatisfied with the term “culture.” These “culture-critics” disliked the term because they felt that it had been “misused” by other scholars, colonial authorities, or whatever, and therefore they wished to replace it with something else. What they planned to use instead never became clear to me, but my rejoinder was that simply because a term has been “misused” and abused by others does not make it useless. After all, the fact that some people misuse an automobile and cause someone’s death in “vehicular homicide” does not render the automobile a useless tool that ought to be abolished.

The other group of scholars who were unhappy with the term were those who had espoused the notion that linguistic “ideology” (also known as “language ideology/ies”) was the only way to explain the kinds of concepts I wished to embrace with the term “linguistic culture,” and that since a large number of people had written about language “ideology,”¹ which was by then the dominant discourse, I should abandon my approach and join the larger school of thought.

I should perhaps first define what I mean by the term. In particular, I see language *policy* (roughly, “decision-making about language”) as inextricably connected to *linguistic culture*, which I define as

[T]he sum totality of ideas, values, beliefs, attitudes, prejudices, myths, religious strictures, and all the other cultural “baggage” that speakers bring to their dealings with

language from their culture. Linguistic culture also is concerned with the transmission and codification of language and has bearing also on the culture's notions of the value of literacy and the sanctity of texts. (Schiffman, 1996)

In other words, I think it is important to view language policy as not only the explicit, written, overt, *de jure*, official and "top-down" decision-making about language, but also the implicit, unwritten, covert, *de facto*, grass-roots, and unofficial ideas and assumptions, which can influence the *outcomes* of policy-making just as emphatically and definitively as the more explicit decisions. It seemed to me that language policy had too often been defined as the explicit and the overt, while the cultural notions about language that influence the underlying ideas about language that are current in a particular culture (and which may also influence, sometimes rather profoundly, the *implementation* of language policies) are often ignored, or are treated as impediments that must be overcome. That is, policy-makers, if they are too confident that their explicit decisions are the correct ones, often see the implicit factors (which are more embedded in the "unconscious" linguistic culture) as *problematical*, thwarting the well-intentioned plans of the decision-makers, who of course are only trying to do the "right thing."

EVOLUTION OF THIS CONCEPT.

I first used the term "linguistic culture" in print in connection with my study of the shift from German to English in the United States (Schiffman, 1987). However, my thinking about language policy has been more deeply influenced by my experience working with Tamil, one of the major languages of India, which has the second-oldest literary tradition in India, after Sanskrit, and exhibits a number of socio-cultural characteristics that are difficult to explain

without some notion that there is a kind of Tamil “linguistic culture” that differs in some ways from that of other language groups in India, while also sharing many features in common with the larger South Asian linguistic culture.

My stay in India in 1965-1966 to study this language and do research for a linguistics dissertation on a topic of Tamil syntax coincided with a year of political turmoil in India that had begun when the deadline for the replacement of English as India’s official language, with Hindi, had come due. The Indian Constitution of 1950 specified that there should be a change-over from English to Hindi, but in order to allow for an orderly transition, a 15-year period of adaptation was specified. Little had been done to effectuate this transition (the old “implementation” bugaboo I mentioned above), but in early 1965, advocates for Hindi proclaimed that the time was up, and English should now cede its place. Speakers of other languages in India reacted with great emotion, and in some cases, violence.

The Tamils in particular, steeped in their own reverence for their language, its “purity,” its unique ancient literature, and who had spent at least half a century attempting to revitalize the Tamil language, “purify” it of the foreign influences (Sanskrit and Hindi) that had “corrupted” it, were determined to resist the imposition of Hindi. Violent resistance ensued, and lives were lost; some Tamils immolated themselves by fire and others took poison, rather than give in to this “abomination” (Ramaswamy, 1997).

I arrived in Tamilnadu (then Madras State) in September 1965, somewhat oblivious to the political turmoil that had closed down a number of universities for almost nine months, and not until I went to a conference in North India in January 1966, did I learn that the Tamils were perceived as “language *fanatics*.”

Though I had studied Tamil for three years in America, and a number of other languages in my undergraduate years, I experienced for the first time what it meant to learn to use a language that had two distinct forms, one spoken and one primarily written. This condition, known as *diglossia* (Ferguson, 1959a, 1991) had been identified for such diverse languages as Arabic, Swiss German, French Creole, modern Greek, and many of the languages of South Asia. In Tamilnadu, I found that I was not only not expected as a foreigner to be able to speak the spoken variety, in fact it was deemed *inappropriate* that I try to learn the spoken language, and instead should only speak the formal literary form, even though all other members of Tamil society around me were communicating *only* in spoken Tamil to each other. My attempt to record speech samples was seen as somehow *contributing to the corruption* of the language, and when some members of the *Dravida Munnetra Karakam* (DMK) political movement learned of my activities, they visited me in my quarters and entreated me to cease and desist from this project. Why my study should have led to more degradation of Tamil than the daily speech habits of 60 million Tamils was not clear to me, but they seemed to be implying that I was *dignifying* a variety of language that was best ignored, and that this was inappropriate, especially for a *foreigner*.

DIGLOSSIA AND LINGUISTIC CULTURE.

It was in this situation that I first began to think about how these powerful ideas regarding the Tamil language affected linguistic habits and behavior, and in particular, how the fact that diglossia, which can be a long and stable linguistic condition, but one that has come about without any overt planning or policy-making, can characterize a language, and influence people's speech habits. It was clear that the fact that Tamil is diglossic was a sort of *implicit*

policy—nothing explicit had been done to make it come into existence, and nothing explicit could, or apparently ever would, be done to change it. I saw it (Schiffman, 1997) as a long-established way of thinking about language in the Indian subcontinent, since Sanskrit also exhibited diglossic features.

Tamil speakers all seemed to know when to use the spoken (“L” variety) forms and when to use the Literary or “H” variety, and yet they were never explicitly taught what the explicit contexts were in which the proper form was to be used, and no explicit rules about use seemed to exist. The idea that any change in this situation was necessary was anathema to almost every Tamil speaker I met. In fact, no Tamil term for diglossia exists, nor is the concept even overtly realized or discussed—if any discussion arose, it was that the “beautiful” literary version of the language was the *real* Tamil, and the spoken variants were corrupt, degraded, used primarily by children, the uneducated, and women, and best ignored and forgotten. Some Tamils even denied that they *ever* spoke vernacular versions of the language, and if observed doing so, would say that they simply had to use it to communicate with these lesser mortals, but that they weren’t really *speaking* it—and it certainly wasn’t their mother tongue.

In my book-length exposition of linguistic culture and its connection to language policy (Schiffman, 1996) I devote one chapter to linguistic culture of South Asia in general and another to Tamil linguistic culture, so it is not necessary for me to recapitulate that discussion here. Suffice it to say that the notion that language policy is rooted in linguistic culture certainly grew out of my involvement with Tamil and Indian linguistic culture. It had also been influenced by my previous study of Russian, and of Soviet language policy, which also exhibited characteristics that exemplified the “covert” in conflict with the more overt policy. And, as mentioned above, I first used the term “linguistic culture” in the late 1970s in a study of the

assimilation of German-Americans to English, at which point I thought of it, not as a new idea or term, but simply a description of that part of culture that has to do with language.

What I realized from my study of the shift from German to English among the large numbers of German-Americans who had settled in America primarily in the 19th century was that German policy-makers (those responsible for making policy about what language would be taught in German-American parochial schools, and in church services) had both ignored and to some extent suppressed facts about spoken and written language in their zeal to preserve the German language in America. Imbued (like the Tamils) with a love of German, and with religious reverence for the language of Luther, and his translation of the Bible, they could not conceive of anyone who was offered that “treasure” wanting to use the English language instead. But the kind of German taught in the schools of the German-American church was not the same as the usually non-standard dialect German brought to America by most immigrants, so a kind of diglossia similar to that of Tamil also prevailed, but was, like diglossia in India, ignored by policy-makers. They apparently believed that enforcing the use of standard *Hochdeutsch* in German-American schools and churches would preserve this language for all generations, but they did not reckon with the possibility that American-born Germans would adopt English as their spoken vernacular, and they certainly did not believe it would result in language shift.

Thus the German-American policy-makers were both blind to the effects of German diglossia and of the German-English diglossia that developed among American-born Germans, and failed to reckon with its consequences. Stonewalling demands for English services and English-speaking pastors, and faced with constantly increasing immigration from Germany, they overlooked the fact that they were losing members, especially among the linguistically assimilated. These and other conditions prevailing in the German-American immigrant

community, and even in the literature about German-American immigration, which ignored internal documents and gave credence only to official pronouncements of the German-American church, concealed the aspects of language policy that I came to refer to as “covert.” Overt policy in the German-American church gave the impression that it was the effects of World War I and anti-German legislation of that era that killed the German language in America, whereas internal documents of the church revealed demands for English as early as the 1880s that were not so obvious. It was therefore the combination of German diglossia, coupled with overt denial of demands for English, that led me to posit the notion of linguistic culture as being made up of both overt and covert aspects, since if one simply takes at face value what decision-makers and the “power elite” in a society say about language and language policy, the true picture of what is happening will not emerge.

Another instance of covert policy is that of the situation in schools in Czarist-occupied Poland, the birthplace of Marie Skłodowska Curie. Her biography describes how schools in Poland (before 1918) secretly taught in Polish, but when the Russian inspectors arrived to visit, instruction would switch to Russian. As a bright student, Marie Skłodowska was usually called on to recite the lesson in Russian. The inspectors, pleased by what they saw, left, and instruction in Polish resumed. This seemed to me another kind of covert policy—a *subversive* and *resistant* policy, but one that succeeded in keeping the Polish language alive for a century, until independence after World War I. The Russian inspectors only believed what they observed, so were unaware of a covert policy that was more representative of actual practice than they could realize. The tendency to present one face to the world while keeping other linguistic activities “under cover” turned out not just to be a feature of language policy in Czarist Russia and its dominions, but in post-Czarist Soviet Russia as well, as we learned when the lid finally came off

with the fall of the Berlin wall, and long-suppressed animosities that had supposedly been eliminated by “enlightened” Soviet policy came bubbling to the surface. Soviet policy on language and ethnicity, in other words, as with Soviet policy on the environment and many other issues, turned out to be a sham.

Language Policy in France

It is difficult, if not impossible, to characterize French language policy succinctly; books have been written about it, and I have also published on the subject (Schiffman, 1996, 2002). What I learned in France about language policy in general, and linguistic culture in particular, is that the strong beliefs the French have about their language policy are mainly based on what I call *mythologies* about both the language and the policy. My research for these chapters revealed that the French populace in general, and even some French scholars who have written about the policy, believe certain things very strongly, such as that certain legal provisions regarding use of the French language exist, which in fact *do not* exist, and did not, until certain laws, known collectively as *la loi Toubon*, were enacted in the 1990s. That is, the French believed so strongly that they had the most explicit and ancient language policy in the world (Balibar, 1985) that even though the provisions they thought existed did *not* exist, their belief in these supposed laws made for a policy that was quasi-legal, since everyone believed it.

As Balibar puts it,

France is today the only nation in the world with legislation requiring (since 1794) the exclusive use of the national language in all public and private acts, from the drafting of laws to the language of commercial transactions and even a private citizen’s last will and

testament, etc. . . . France is the most extreme case [*le cas limite*] of a nation totally identified with one language, but which goes beyond this to defend the integrity of this linguistic personality in all aspects of social life against the claims and encroachments of any and all languages from inside or outside its borders. . . . [. . .] But French public opinion, perhaps anaesthetized by its poorly-understood monolingualism, is not sensitive to the urgency of language problems. . . . (Balibar, 1985, p. 9; translation mine, HFS)

When I first read this statement, written by a French scholar of language policy, I resolved to seek out the legislation she was describing, but my search ended in a blind alley. The legislation she was referring to fell far short of specifying the exclusivity of French in all these domains, and the circumstances in which it was enacted were clearly shrouded in a subsequently-developed myth that far exceeded the terms of the actual legislation. Yet French public opinion, as she says, “perhaps anaesthetized by its poorly-understood monolingualism” (and, I would add, by its poor understanding of the history of *language legislation* in France) believes something very different from the facts. This lack of understanding, I believe, is epitomized by the use of the term *le decret Barère* (the Barère Decree) instead of what should have been the official name of the law (*8 pluviöse an II*). Barère is a person who became famous for his virulent denunciation of the non-standard forms of French, such that words he uttered have come to be taken as part of the *legislation* itself, when in fact the text of the law was much milder and weaker, and in fact never took effect. But the myth of its power became the power of the myth, and leads ordinary people and scholars alike (e.g., Balibar) to believe something that never happened.

Barère acted as the spokesman of the Committee of Public Safety to the *Convention*, the representative body that was then the chief legislative organ in existence. Speaking for this

committee to the delegates of the *Convention* on January 27, 1794 (which under the French revolutionary calendar was then the 8 *pluviose*), he asserted that

. . . federalism and superstition speak Breton; emigration and hate of the Republic speak German; the counter-revolution speaks Italian and fanaticism speaks Basque. Let us smash these faulty and harmful instruments. It is better to instruct than to translate; it is not up to us to maintain these barbarous jargons and crude dialects which can only be of further service to fanatics and counter-revolutionaries. . . .²

Since this kind of rhetoric became part of revolutionary discourse, it is easy to see how the fiery denunciation of non-standard languages, which was much more interesting and memorable than the actual *text* of the law, could come to be remembered as the *text of the law*, and coupled with Barère's name, entered French linguistic culture as emblematic of what happened in 1794, rather than the actual legislative text, which was much tamer. Thus even scholars of the subject remember better what Barère said than what the law said.

What the Law of 8 *pluviose an II* actually said was that "French shall be taught in every commune where the local people do not speak French." This rather mild and toothless proposal was based on the assumption that schools would have to be opened in such communes, and that bilingual teachers would have to be found; no one assumed that an immersion approach would do (teaching French to children who did not understand a word of it). But it was quickly discovered that there were no teachers who were perfectly bilingual in both the local languages and French, and anyone who was capable of teaching bilingually was already otherwise

preoccupied. Few applicants applied for the positions specified, and the net result was that despite the best of intentions, the decree could not be implemented. As implementation is almost always the weakest link in language policies, we see here that fiery rhetoric was one thing, but carrying out the intention of the law was another.

So another solution was proposed: start an *école normale* or teacher training institute; this would be conducted in Paris, and the trainees would then be sent to the provinces to teach others. So the *école normale* was created by the decree of 27 September 1794 (*6 vendémiaire an III*) But again, poor planning: there were few candidates who showed up, and meanwhile the original old schools were closed with nothing to substitute for them. Plus, by now France was in the period known as the Reign of Terror, so what ensued was a *terreur linguistique*, with much persecution and bloodshed. The law that Balibar claims is responsible for implementing a rigorous and explicit language policy did no such thing, and was “dead on arrival.”

One could go on at length, exposing the facts and how they contrast with the myths and misunderstandings, rampant in French linguistic culture, about the status of French, the explicitness and rigor of its putative language policy, but this would be extremely repetitive. As we have already noted, it was only in the mid 1990s that France finally realized that its supposedly explicit language policy was in fact largely unwritten. So the *Loi Toubon* was enacted to finally make explicit and legal what had been largely unofficial and unwritten, and many Frenchmen then could then breathe sighs of relief that French language policy was finally explicit (because without this, who could predict what might happen?).

My point in discussing all of this, of course, is to make it clear that France did not need an explicit language policy to make people understand that certain restrictions applied—the

existence of a myth, deeply embedded in French linguistic culture, took care of that. As I put it in my 1996 study, the power of French language policy

. . . rests in what people imagine it to consist of, rather than on actual statutes or rigid codes. In other words, it is not as explicit as French people think it is, but it is every bit as restrictive as they think it is, as long as they think it is. (Schiffman, 1996, p. 123)

Perhaps we can better understand this dilemma by noting the difference in legal traditions: in Anglo-Saxon law, what is not explicitly forbidden is permitted. But in other legal traditions (including the French), the opposite assumption applies—what is not expressly permitted is forbidden, so that not making French official and other varieties unofficial is, in such legal traditions, downright dangerous. What this tradition fails to observe, however, is that even if there is no common-law tradition, there are still implicit assumptions that can be as strongly constitutive (of language policy, etc.) as explicit formulations can be.

Jacobinisme, dirigisme, monarchisme . . .

The tendency to decide things centrally and to control so many details of life is known, since the time of the French Revolution, as *Jacobinisme*. It developed as an antidote to tendencies that were seen as counter-revolutionary, and has remained in force in French life as part of the way the French govern themselves. It is thus part and parcel of French linguistic culture as well, since linguistic *jacobinisme* is part of this culture of attempting to control things that Anglo-Saxons would not consider necessary, or even desirable. The counter-revolutionary tendencies, as we have seen above, were most typically expressed in the words of Barère—the

idea that non-standard languages (*les patois, les idiomes, les jargons*) were not just defective or inferior, but even worse, they contained undesirable qualities, even ideas or ideologies, that were a threat to the Revolution, and which had to be extirpated. This notion persists to this day, and the threat from English, and from *le franglais*, is seen as similar; ideas inimical to French culture are perceived to be contained in, embodied in, the English language and the English loan-words that are flooding into France, and they must be eliminated, or French culture will be ruined.

CONCLUSION

To summarize, it seems clear that when it comes to language policy, things are not always “as they seem,” and we must look more deeply than explicit policy to understand how policy works in practice. To emphasize that language policy is embedded in culture also recognizes the role of language as the main vehicle for the construction, replication, and transmission of culture itself. And though language itself is a cultural construct, this does not imply that it can be deconstructed, changed, or radically altered by the application of particular theoretical frameworks, or political scrutinies of one sort or another. Language (and languages) mean different things to different people, and policy-formulation is often vague, ill-defined, or poorly understood. The best example of this is exhibited by language policy in the United States—we have no explicit language policy, but we have a linguistic culture that supports the use of English to the exclusion of almost all other languages, so that an explicit policy that would officialize English is not necessary, and probably never will be.

What might be the weaknesses of such a theory? For some, as I have already noted, the notion of “culture” and what constitutes it is poorly defined, and can be “misused.” One might also find fault with the possibility that “culture” (and in particular “linguistic culture”) could be

circular, i.e., that defining “linguistic culture” as that part of culture that is concerned with language could be tautological, or at best vague, with ill-defined borders. What I would answer is that we need a theory that can handle as many variables as there in fact seem to be involved in language policy formation (and this includes factors that are unforeseen when individual policies are formulated—the law of “unintended consequences” always seems to turn up new results that were not accounted for when a particular policy was initiated). Some theories would treat these “cultural” factors as pesky problems that pop up to thwart the plans of the planners, but I hold that if the data confounds the theory, then the theory needs to be fixed, not the data.

I also think it important to be able to differentiate between different kinds of ideas about language—myths, attitudes, religious beliefs, economic ideas—instead of lumping them all together into an undifferentiated, oversimplified, and reductionist one-size-fits-all rubric. Another fault I find with certain social-science approaches to the study of language policy is that they constantly treat language like some sort of “black box” with no internal factors or features that would make any difference to the grander scheme of a policy. Such approaches treat language as almost irrelevant, as if it would make no difference in, e.g., France, if the Japanese language were substituted for French. Clearly Japanese language policy and French language policy are different, and the languages are not interchangeable; but if we read Marxist language policy theory carefully, we find that language is in the end *irrelevant*, and that when the State finally “withered away,” differences between languages would also cease to exist. Fortunately, the Soviet Union collapsed before the “State withered away” and we did not have to wait for this eventuality.³

Annotated Bibliography

Calvet, L.-J. (1987). *La guerre des langues et les politiques linguistiques*. Paris: Payot.

This work focuses on the issues of language conflict as an outcome of language policy and planning. Calvet's title, *The War of Languages and Language Policies*, focuses on the fact that languages have a birth, a life and then death, and because there are many languages spoken in the world, they come into conflict with each other, and some survive and some don't. He avoids proposing that those that die do so because they are somehow defective, but does look in some detail at the question of language planning, and whether the intervention of humans in the life of languages has a salutary effect, or whether the jury is still out on this question.

Hymes, D. (Ed.). (1964). *Language in culture and society*. New York: Harper and Row.

This edited volume, a pioneering work on the relationship of language to culture brought together studies from many different subfields of linguistics, anthropological linguistics, and the sociology of language. Of particular interest are Part III, *World View and Grammatical Categories*, and Part VII, *Social Structure and Speech Community*. The former deals with issues that later became categorized as "ideological," in particular whether grammar reflects thought; in the latter, treatments by Martin on speech levels in Japan and Korea, Ferguson's pioneering diglossia article, and Wolff's "Intelligibility and Inter-Ethnic Attitudes" foreshadow later concerns with culture and language policy.

Miller, R. A. (1982). *Japan's modern myth: The language and beyond*. New York: Weatherhill.

One of the best treatments of language and “mythology” by a non-Japanese who knows Japan and Japanese intimately. Miller’s work dealt with attitudes the Japanese display toward their own language and to the learning of others, and in particular, with the mythology surrounding the Japanese language and its supposed “special status” (i.e., “unrelated” to any other language in the world) which Miller held were a way of holding on to some formerly racist ideas that could be attributed to the Japanese language, instead of Japanese culture or society.

Schieffelin, B., Woolard, K. A., & Kroskrity, P. V. (Eds.) (1998). *Language ideologies: Practice and theory*. New York: Oxford University Press.

An excellent overview and review of the subject of language and linguistic ideologies, which has now replaced the former “world view” or “Weltanschauung” approach, known previously as the “Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis,” in which cultural ideas about the world as supposedly reflected in the different grammatical structures of various languages. From this hypothesis, it is a mere hop-skip-and-a-jump to making claims about language influencing thought, how ideologies are (or can be) “built-in” to language, and other ways in which cultural ideas language can be found to be embedded in language.

Schiffman, H. F. (1996). *Linguistic culture and language policy*. London/New York: Routledge.

First full-length treatment of the notion of “linguistic culture” and its relationship to language policy, this study reviews a number of language-and-culture precursors, devotes considerable background to issues of religion, myth, and language, shows the difficulties inherent in typologizing language policies, and then illustrates various ways in which linguistic culture interacts with language policy in three multilingual “democracies”—France, India, and the United States. One chapter is devoted to the overall picture of each polity, and then another focuses on one region of the polity—Alsace for France, Tamilnadu for India, and California for the United States.

Discussion Questions

1. How important do you consider the historical and cultural background of a country in the evolution of a language policy, and can language policy be easily changed by legislators acting against the basic historical trends?
2. In what ways do religious ideas about language differ from other ideas, such as nationalist or racist ideas about language? How easy would it be to go against these ideas, and implement a language policy that challenged these ideas?
3. When it comes to language issues in your part of the world, in what ways does actual practice differ from policy as laid down from above? Is the policy on language use in drivers' licensing different from actual practice?
4. Americans are often accused by people from other countries as being aggressively monolingual. Would you say that this is part of American "linguistic culture" or just laziness, or a recognition of pragmatic reality?
5. What about the accusation that the English language is "imperialistic"—aggressively asserting itself over other languages and seeking to annihilate them. Do you see this notion as having any validity?

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Endnotes

¹ Cf. Woolard (1998) for an excellent overview of some of these approaches. Although I have many reservations about this school of thought, the multidisciplinary approach taken by van Dijk (1998) is more satisfying to me than some others.

² “*En somme, le fédéralisme et la superstition parlent bas-breton; l’émigration et la haine de la République parlent allemand; la contre-revolution parle italien et le fanatisme parle*

basque. Brisons ces instruments de dommage et d'erreur. Il vaut mieux instruire que faire traduire, comme si c'était à nous à maintenir ces jargons barbares et ces idiomes grossiers qui ne peuvent plus servir que les fanatiques et les contre-révolutionnaires . . ." (Translation mine, HFS).

³ I am indebted to Ann Shepherd White for a careful reading of the final draft of this paper, and for suggesting judicious editorial comments.