SOME ASPECTS OF LANGUAGE FROM THE VIEWPOINT OF SOCIAL
ANTHROPOLOGY, WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO MULTILINGUAL
SITUATIONS IN NIGERIA

- by -

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PART ONE

CHAPTER ONE: The Focus of Communication

Communication is the basic social act through which human beings relate to one another, affect others and define themselves. Exchange is one form of communication; signs and symbols, as well as objects, can be exchanged.

Language is the characteristic human act of symbolic relation: through it, men can alter society, as they can by manipulating significant symbols of all kinds. The creative process of linguistic communication is therefore of importance to social anthropologists.

The communicative act is composed of participants, code, message and channel; any of its aspects can therefore be studied, at different levels of detail. Communication consists of many communicative acts, and they do not simply take place at face-to-face level, but relate groups of all sizes, linked by shared significant symbols. The coherence of societies might thus be explored by analysing these processes of communication.

CHAPTER TWO: Models for Linguistic Description

Until recently linguists were 'structural functionalists', examining formal relations of language and ignoring its 'random variations', by which, in fact, speakers identify each other socially. Linguists'
achronic models could not account for linguistic change, which occurs through motivated shifts, and according to one's age group.

First Saussure and now Chomsky limit the linguistic field by dividing langue from parole and competence from performance. Apart from other difficulties, the model constructed (langue, competence) cannot account for the variations of parole, performance, which are wrongly considered to be areas of random variation.

Instead linguists can choose any model of language, but they may have to write alternative rules to account for variations in usage. The language they described is therefore a model, and will not have territorial bounds: 'a language' is a sociological construct, so anthropologists cannot rely on linguistic demarcations as independent guides. Even intelligibility measures intra-group valuations and their desire for communication, it is not an objective factor.

CHAPTER THREE: Problems of Measurement and Identification

All individuals use different varieties of language to communicate with members of different groups; this may entail knowledge of several 'styles', 'dialects' or 'languages'. In this sense we are all multilinguals and operate with repertoires best distinguished in terms of the number of non-shared rules. In terms of use, one community may use two very similar varieties for purposes served in another by two different languages.

Repertoires are not equivalent in power, and the 'informant's model' of his repertoire may differ from 'empirical reality'. Thus the
measure of large-scale multilingualism, although important for education, is difficult, and the figures in censuses are suspect.

'Informants' models' of language use, and the discrepancies from actuality are, however, sociologically significant, and offer a fruitful field for social anthropologists, particularly those investigating complex or 'plural' societies.

CHAPTER FOUR: Situations and Speech Communities

Linguists have become increasingly interested in the sociological aspects of language, and 'sociolinguistic' studies of language variation, multilingualism, etc., are increasing in number, though they are often still sociologically naif.

Although Malinowski was very interested in the social uses of language, he missed most of its communicative, sociological aspects, and his insights were marred by linguistic naivety. British anthropologists did not follow up his work, but the British linguist J.R. Firth took over and re-thought his 'context of situation' as crucial to linguistic description.

Later linguists have, however, found this a difficult concept to apply, and subsequent theories of registers - appropriate varieties of language for particular social situations - suffer from 'mixed' definitions: anthropologists may find that the linguistic boundaries of registers, like those of languages, have been naively predetermined on sociological grounds.

A comparable American approach, the 'ethnography of speaking',
offers a useful framework to guide an anthropologist who wants to investigate communication. It is descriptive, not analytical, but helps him to understand how different ways of communication can occur, to identify situations and participants for which particular codes or varieties should be used, and to seek for their social effects.

CHAPTER FIVE: Language Development and Linguistic Identification

It is also possible to look at languages as wholes, and compare them according to the uses to which they can be put, and the richness of their repertoires. There is constant interaction between languages and their users, but no simple equivalence.

Languages are 'made' and altered by their users, particularly writers. Written styles may become very different from spoken ones, and preserved in such forms by the necessity of learning to read and write, as signs of privilege ('Diglossa').

Groups wishing to assert their identity can use their language as a symbol, and even create a language to do this. Hence the passions of 'linguistic nationalism'. But it is probably impossible to make a national language without literacy.

CHAPTER SIX: Literacy

Literacy is a complex skill, and people may confine their use of reading and/or writing to particular purposes. The literate, however, controls a powerful medium of communication.
Some have claimed that literacy created modern, as opposed to 'magical' or 'primitive' thought, but this seems rather the result of a secular world-view. Innovation is however often a product of literacy in a foreign language, which carries new ideas. This is an argument against the development of vernacular education in Africa.

The new literate has access to new stereotypes and schemata, which he can apply to other situations, possibly in his own language. Thus the forms of literate language may alter individual consciousness.

PART TWO

CHAPTER SEVEN: The Development of Pidgin Languages

When people of different language and culture need to communicate, they may choose one of their languages as a base, but alter it in use: simplification, innovation and fluctuation mark the results. Such 'pidgins' seem to become stabilised in the second generation, the children of 'mixed' parentage.

This conclusion rejects the current distinction between 'pidgin' and 'creole' languages, and the term pidgin only is preferred.

A supplementary explanation of pidgins is that a Mediterranean Lingua Franca formed the base for a Pidgin Portuguese which in turn was the stereotype for subsequent pidgins.

Since pidgins tend to have a diglossic relationship to major languages, and to be used as one variety in multilingual repertoires, they are not equivalent to the major languages.
CHAPTER EIGHT: Pidgin Portuguese, 1440-1750

Pidgin Portuguese spread the length of the Portuguese Empire, and often survived it. The explorers on the West African coast captured natives to use as interpreters, and later small communities of mixed blood made use of both their languages as interpreters and middlemen in trade. The pidgin that developed supplemented the Portuguese-based jargons that were picked up and recorded by sailors of other nations.

Pidgin Portuguese became part of the institutionalised pattern of trade and was maintained and transmitted by the 'black Portuguese' well into the eighteenth century, until it was no longer a valuable badge of identity to them.

CHAPTER NINE: The Establishment of Pidgin English, 1650-1750

Secondary pidgins developed on the coast in response to trade needs, modelled upon Portuguese Pidgin; English became the most used, because of the wide distribution of English interests by the end of the seventeenth century, and the diffusion of their skilled labour, freemen, castle slaves, etc., who could use it as a lingua franca.

Then, as the slave trade expanded, English became more and more useful, though the Caribbean Creoles (English, French, etc.) are more likely to have developed on the plantations, and were probably modelled on a Portuguese Pidgin used at the beginning of settlement in the West Indies.

Europeans who stayed in West Africa were more involved in local society than has sometimes been thought, but their languages were used
because of their admired life-style and technological dominance, as well as for ease of trading.

CHAPTER TEN: **Pidgin English in Nigeria**

Although Benin was one of the earliest European trading points, many other ones on the coast of present-day Nigeria were not visited extensively until the eighteenth century. Thereafter, the area became a major source of slaves, and later of palm-oil, and Pidgin English was widely spoken there. By the end of the eighteenth century, there were African literates in Old Calabar, using English.

After 1850, returning Sierra Leonians (who had learnt Pidgin in Freetown), did the bulk of missionary and clerical work, and became important members of the early British administrations. English, especially literacy in English, becomes a valuable qualification from this period, but Pidgin English, although it was extensively used between Europeans and Africans, was less capable of mediating their very different world-views than it had been as a communication link for a trading community with common interests.

CHAPTER ELEVEN: **English and Literacy in Nigeria before 1914**

Pidgin became an innovatory acquisition to the new migrants of the colonial period, but the ability to write 'standard' English was more valuable. The successors (and sometimes the descendants) of the earlier innovators in coastal societies were the 'educated natives', who were often posted anywhere in British West Africa.
Education was hardly available except in mission schools, whose curricula were designed for literacy in the Bible, preferably in vernacular languages. An 'oral' rote-learning tradition was brought from England, and has been perpetuated through difficult conditions, including under-trained African teachers, so that English proficiency, though popular, has remained limited.

A small number of better-educated Africans, however, developed a consciousness of African worth and nationalistic aspiration through a locally written Press, now a century old.

CHAPTER TWELVE: Communication through the Press: the Voice of Azikiwe

Although the 'educated natives' might be very much a part of 'tribal' societies, the Europeans, who resented them, stereotyped them as 'unrepresentative', and also gradually removed them from positions of authority.

African journalists were thus politicians without power, able only to oppose. Conditions were unsuitable to the collection of news, and the first editor to attract a large readership was Nnamdi Azikiwe, who launched The West African Pilot in Lagos in 1937.

Azikiwe preached 'Renascent Africa' to young literates, who found the Pilot voiced their aspirations, and offered lively features and a bold presentation in the familiar intellectual tradition of the West African press. Himself well-educated and successful, he was a hero with a following before he took up politics. Readers responded to his emotional style and rich, Nigerian English.
CHAPTER THIRTEEN: Some Developments in Written Communication in Nigeria

Azikiwe finally established written English as part of the Nigerian repertoire. He drew on Nigerian spoken English (but not on Pidgin) as well as on a variety of British and American styles, which offered exciting variety to imitators. They also took seriously his Messianic rhetoric.

A tradition of versifying, patterned on hymns, Shakespeare and Victorian poetry, was as old as journalism, but fiction and drama do not appear till after 1945. Writers, whether publishing in England or writing locally produced 'novelettes', conventionalise Pidgin as a 'low', comic style and translate vernacular dialogue into British English, rather than reflect the actual span of Nigerian English.

These stylisations are part of the conventions of Nigerian writing, which should be understood as literature before it is used as ethnographic source material.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN: Some Conclusions

English is now an important item in Nigerian repertoires. Its use can only be understood in the context of multilingualism and the social history of its users.

The theoretical approach of this thesis is a necessary preliminary to any anthropological study of language, and the content of language. Communication, in particular, is best understood in social and linguistic
terms together, not through their simple correlation. Such 'interdisciplinary' investigations need not be 'naive', and they promise insights into social process and organisation.
INTRODUCTION

This thesis is a study of some of the ways in which language can be viewed by social anthropologists. Communication, a basic social act, is enormously enriched by the ability of human beings to use language, and any aspect of language may therefore be relevant to those who study men and women in society. I have looked in particular at the ways in which speakers signal their membership of a group linguistically, and likewise differentiate themselves from others.

One can look either at language users or their continuous creative usage which makes 'a language'. I have looked at language development principally as evidence of use by particular groups. In the second part of the thesis I trace the social history of some language users in West Africa - the creators and transmitters of Pidgin Portuguese and Pidgin English. I then concentrate on Nigeria, to show how its innovatory language users eventually added 'standard' spoken and written English to their repertoires, so that today several varieties of English, including 'Pidgin', are languages of the country. This entails a consideration of the messages for which a variety of English was chosen as the medium. I therefore at the end of the thesis discuss the Nigerian Press, through which English was first indigenously published, and finally some aspects of modern creative writing.
Language is so multifariously a part of our lives that one can only examine a little of it at a time, and yet is always plagued by basic questions of definition. Before attempting the detailed approach of Part Two, I had to decide what is 'a language'? Where does the line come between language and dialect? Can a Nigerian be a 'native speaker' of English? How should one differentiate between people who use a language for all their activities, and those who use one variety for home, a second for work, a third for politics? Are they different from people who can use a language both colloquially and formally, perhaps switching between 'dialect' and 'standard', or using two quite different styles for speaking and writing?

It seems to me that these problems of demarcation and definition must be understood before one can proceed to particular problems, including semantic analysis, symbolic classification or any of the questions of the relations between language and thought or language and culture. These are topics which I do not discuss in detail, though they are taken into account. They are as it were companion topics to mine, which, taking the form of language as its level (instead of, say, word meanings) falls also into the territory of the linguist.

I am not a linguist, but I have, especially in Part One, looked at linguists' definitions, and I try to present their relevant findings, in a critical way, as an introduction to the social study of language. There is now a growing interest in 'sociolinguistics', studies of linguistic -social stratification, multilingualism, linguistic nationalism, and the
like, which are of interest to social anthropologists, but to which (I suggest) social anthropologists can themselves contribute a good deal. Nor should they feel bound by the linguist's categories of relevance; the study of linguistic form as undertaken by the literary critic is just as useful when one wants to understand the ways in which language is used to alter the shape of society. Hence my final chapters.

The point of view in the thesis moves therefore from general considerations of theory to a particular language history, which should, however be seen in relation to the theory. Illustrations are taken from Nigerian material wherever possible to provide some ethnographic unity. In Part Two, the viewpoint narrows from West Africa to Nigeria, and the treatment is chronological. Unless otherwise specified, all evidence refers to Nigeria as bounded in the present Federation, but before 1966. I worked in Northern Nigeria as a university lecturer in English between 1963 and 1966 (which followed some years' schoolteaching in Kenya) and was a testing kind of fieldwork, which raised many of the questions, and suggested ultimately some of the conclusions, here. The observations I submit as my own are, however, supported by others' evidence.

I would like to acknowledge the helpful attention I received at the several libraries I used, and among the many people who helped me the following in particular gave information, loaned material, and solved translation problems: Dr. and Mrs. W.J. Argyle, Mr. G.K. Beeston, Mr. I. Hancock, Mr. F. Hardy, Miss G.R. Hart, Miss G.M. Herwig,
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I owe a great deal to the interest and stimulating criticisms of my supervisor, Mr. E.W. Ardener. While I have tried to acknowledge his ideas, I am sure that some have been unconsciously assimilated. I hope they do not reappear in a distorted and diminished guise.

The work has been possible because of the award of a Studentship by the Social Science Research Council.
Chapter One

THE FOCUS OF COMMUNICATION

1. Social Acts: Communication and Exchange

In The Gift Marcel Mauss suggested that gift-giving is an act which includes the expectation of a return. Groups (of which individuals are the representatives) exchange goods and wealth, and even more importantly

'courtesies, entertainments, ritual, military assistance, women, children, dances and feasts' (1954, p.3).

The pattern of exchange which Mauss described seems to be universal. It is indeed part of basic social behaviour: the communicative act whereby one human being gets into relationship with another. The purpose of the move is to get a response; that is understood by the person signalled, who in turn tries to understand the motives of the signaller:

'we first grope for the intention behind the communication, and the key to this intention lies largely in the way we feel we would react' (Gombrich, 1960, p.232).

Although animals communicate socially too, they appear to lack the full facility for symbolization which humans have developed, principally by language. G.H.Mead thought that language itself developed out of acts of relation, and with it the separation of the self from others around it:
'the self, as that which can be object to itself, is essentially a social structure, and it arises in social experience' [1934, p.140].

Without needing to debate the origins of language, we can easily accept that the individual develops through socialization, and that language, through which he expresses his understanding of the universe, must be learned from others: it is the primordial social fact.

As every individual is the product of his unique genetic programme and a mass of social pressures, it is false to dichotomise "the individual" and "society". We are all social beings and appear to others as representative of different social groupings. Consequently, too, it is not surprising that

'In spite of the fact that language acts as a socializing and uniformizing force, it is at the same time the most potent single known factor for the growth of individuality'

(Sapir, 1956, p.19).

Even if the expression is individual, though, it has to remain comprehensible to others, and if it is not, the individual is considered mad. Aphasics and autistic people share no code with others and cannot fully communicate themselves.

Individual acts of communication, therefore, are likewise social, but 'society' is not one unit, it will comprise all sorts and sizes of social groups, and while communication is an act of connexion

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1. Whether he is innately equipped so to learn or not. Some aspects of theories of acquisition are discussed in Chapter Two.
2. See Medawar, 1957, pp.154-5.
its participants may be of the same or different groups, attempting to lose or to gain self-containment, to exchange or to share in hope of reciprocity. As Mauss points out, too, words can be exchanged as well as objects. To the request 'Have you a match?' a box or a negative can be returned. It is for this reason that communication and exchange must be treated as a whole, despite the fact that if words are exchanged, no object is lost or gained. Such physical exchange seems to me simply a sub-type of the communicative act.¹

In fact, objects given may carry meaning beyond themselves - the difference between symbolic and non-symbolic gifts is neatly summed up in the poem by Dorothy Parker about the girl who, tired of receiving 'one perfect rose' wonders if she will ever get 'one perfect Cadillac, do you suppose?' Such objects are also signs, standing for something beyond themselves, or symbols, whose meaning is themselves and what they point to. The semiologist Buysens quotes Hegel's definition of a symbol:

'Un fait donné ou présent immédiatement à l'attention et qui doit être compris non pas tel qu'il se présente immédiatement, pris en lui-même, mais dans un sens plus large, plus général' (1967, p.24).

Obviously the line may be hard to draw between these classifications, and both objects and signs, if selectively and habitually used, tend to become symbols, according to my definition. I think it worth stressing a difference, however, if one wishes to discuss both sign

¹. I do not think therefore that Leach is justified in criticizing Lévi-Strauss' identification of communication and exchange (1970, p.110) despite its flaws of detail.
systems and particular symbols or symbolic clusters. In the sign system of language, too, many varied relationships are created between signs by syntax, whereas symbols are powerful communicators of concentrated and resonant meanings, but the relationship between these meanings is left implicit, and the only way to give them ratiocinative power is to produce them in sequence as in ritual - one can compare the way a story is often told in film through the cutting and juxtaposition of camera shots.

The communicative act then, on whatever scale one sees it, or from whatever aspect one approaches it, for its contents, its form, the values of its participators, or as a whole mode of action, is a very important subject for social anthropologists, and indeed because of the influence of Mauss, it is in many ways a traditional one. However, by concentrating on the act of communication we see that it has "to take place in real time, in a sequence of events, with the corresponding limitations of irreversibility and succession" (Shands in ed. Thayer, 1967, p.100).

It is true that society is in some ways maintained by reiterated acts of communication (see Sapir, 1949, p.104), and knowledge is transmitted

1. Another treatment is to distinguish iconic and arbitrary signs (see the work of Morris), Buyssens, to whom I refer in this chapter, has another, but comparable, approach. For signs cp, e.g. Ullmann, 1964, p.20.

2. Symbols are therefore capable of acquiring more and different meanings, polysemous by definition. Turner's distinctions of 'multivocal' and 'polysemous' therefore seem superfluous. He himself says at the same time, 'symbols are never simple; only signs which by convention are restricted to a single referent, are simple' (1968, p.5).
through time by 'preserved communication', oral or literary. But rituals, though 'storage-units' of information can be changed, and the meaning of the information can be changed. To consider a communicative act fully, one must look not only at the choices made by the participators but the ways in which these are communicated; not only at the minimal units into which the act can be analysed, but at its ongoingness and creativity.

2. Communication, Culture and Social Theory

After British social anthropologists moved from 'the functional analysis of social structures' to 'the structural analysis of social life' as their study (Pocock, 1961, p.73), they began to want to show their analysis as existing in time, and more recently, actor-centred studies have appeared, of networks, social fields and decision-making. But concepts of communication have not been used so much as in America, where, however, they were mainly utilised for descriptive analyses of culture, with unrewarding results. The model of communication used in Information Theory, though taken up with great enthusiasm, also proved disappointing when handled in this theoretical framework.

1. The phrase is Turner's, who discusses the conservative and creative aspects of symbolisation and ritual in detail in 1968, Introduction. See also Leach's presentation of ritual as 'communicative behaviour' (1966).

2. There is an interesting example of such changes in myth, and how they were communicated, in Lawrence's account of cargo cults, (1964).
In the *Results of the Conference of Anthropologists* (1953) there is an euphoric reliance on the word 'communication', similar to that on slogans from Chomskian linguistics today. But the postulates of Shannon and Weaver were welcomed as matching current phonemic theory. The attitude of anthropologists and linguists is indicated by Jakobson's little joke about the unanimity of the conference members: '*We were all like allophones assigned to one and the same phoneme.*' (p.11).

The linguist Hockett hoped the Information Bit would match the phoneme as the minimal unit of language, and the anthropologists were looking for cultural phonemes.

The telecommunications engineers were interested in the transmission of messages, and therefore in the prediction of frequency of information. The application of their work in the powerful and prestigious field of computerisation has encouraged the use of the jargon of 'code', 'message', 'redundancy' and 'binary discrimination', and diverted attention from the real problems of communication, which lie in the nature of the "code-book" and the ways in which "senders" and "receivers" compose and agree it. The concepts of code, message and channel are very useful to the discussion of communication but they can easily give a false air of simplicity to a complex process, in which meaning is conveyed by the interaction of all three, and 'code' really stands for several layers of form.

It is often apparently thought that if there is 'a channel' and 'a code', 'communication' will occur. In the work of Hall and Trager,

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who singly and together, attempted to demonstrate that 'culture is communication and communication is culture', there are 'primary communication systems' like Territoriality, Bisexuality and Interaction. It is hard to see how these can be analytical concepts, since no distinction is made between message, code and channel, the systems being rather themes of incomparable value, which may occur universally.

Hall and Trager really meant that culture was transmitted in such terms as these, without bothering how, since they were primarily trying to identify 'building blocks' of culture, which, appropriately arranged, would describe any country an American national found himself in. In such work, of course, they were not alone; the best known work of this period and type is that of Pike (1954, '55, '60).

Pike objected to the attitude that

'the linguist as such is not interested in language as it functions, i.e. as a communicating device, and cannot analyse the communication process as such, i.e. the content of communication, as an integrated part of the larger cultural patterns of the community.'

(Part I, p.23).

The trouble with his approach is that chunks of activity are offered for comparison, with no means of comparing the acts of communication which may happen to occur within the cross-cut. Human beings behave, but the social consequences of their behaviour are not the focus of analysis. The resulting classifications led one commentator

1. Hall and Trager, 1953, Trager, 1959, Hall, 1959, (This last, however also offers interesting material on the 'silent languages' of time and space and their different meanings in different cultures).
to exclaim at

'the dullardry of an anthropology which can see no difference between eating cornflakes and eating communion wafers'. 1

Another defect in Pike's approach is that it does not probe the 'how' of communication, or even distinguish the use of language and non-verbal sign systems. Language, as an assemblage of structure built up from phonemes, morphemes and other immediate constituents, is for Pike a paradigm of social behaviour. This was a common attitude of the time — the example most familiar to British social anthropologists is Lévi-Strauss' early writing on linguistic themes (1961). 2 But each treatment of the language component in social behaviour at the analogical level has simply cast a false, deceptive light on sociolinguistic problems.

3. British Moves: Transactionalism and Symbolic Structures

There has been a considerable movement towards action centred anthropology in Great Britain, and also great interest in symbolic distinctions and cosmic classification. How much does this work contribute to the understanding of communication? Abner Cohen has recently put forward some interesting criticisms of the two approaches (1969b).


2. However, Lévi-Strauss was already more interested in the 'logical relations, oppositions, correlations and the like' [1953, p.2, reprinted in 1961] which seemed common to language and culture. He also considered communication as action, see p.3 above, f.n.1.
Cohen points out that the action theorists, who include the 'transactionalists' and those who study role-taking, tend to take 'the symbols governing social behaviour' as given, since they distrust 'analysis in terms of groups and group symbols', and concentrate on the activities of political man.

'In fact these symbols are dramatically involved in the whole process at every one of its stages. In other words, this approach assumes stability as it studies change. For an ambitious and clever man to be able to manipulate other men, he must be able to manipulate symbols by interpreting and re-interpreting them. These symbols are the collective representations of groups, and only when a man himself participates in such groups and accepts the constraints of their symbols can he succeed in his endeavour.' (pp.224-5).

That then of the anthropologists who are interested in symbols, the thought structuralists? They make the contrasting error of neglecting the particular political conflict, since for them 'the key to understanding the structure of society is thus, not the analysis of the dynamic ongoing patterns of interaction between men, but essentially the 'code', or the logic, the grammar that is implicit in the thought categories and in the systems of relations between them. Thought structuralists are therefore bent on 'breaking the code' for all time and for all culture'. (p.225)

Cohen wishes that both groups will pay attention to the subject matter of the other, and offers a list of questions about symbolic forms and functions whose answers would contribute to political anthropology. But it looks as if neither group can at present profit much from the other, since the action theorists do not record the symbols used by their subjects, and the thought structuralists, by neglecting specific social context, make it difficult to test their theories in
particular cases. The two approaches cannot therefore be integrated. Both sides, however, might gain from a communicative focus, in which one takes into account the values utilised and the codes in which messages are transmitted. This involves sensitivity to the forms of language, so as to identify the means of rhetoric in political situations, or indeed to understand the symbolic value which participators really consider their language to have. The conscientious anthropologist of any school will of course pay attention to these considerations, but a focus on the means of communication may give a richer idea of the quality of action within a group (or 'community of interest'), as well as deciphering its means of establishing relationships and maintaining them by verbal and other symbols.

4. Levels of Communication and Semiotic Systems

Communication is so complex that it is difficult to compare different approaches which are in effect focused on different depths of field. What at one level can be analysed as linguistic structure,

1. Cohen refers to the controversy between Beattie and Needham over the symbolic classification of the Nyoro. Structural analyses of symbolic contrasts etc. may be linguistically as well as ethnographically naif: see Whiteley, 1966.

2. The transactional approach of Barth is amenable to a socio-linguistic approach, see Pride 1969a, pp.18, 19 and 1969b. But it is worrying to note that a recent contribution to 'The Craft of Social Anthropology' (ed. Epstein, 1967) virtually ignores language. Its Bibliography, too, designed to aid the anthropologist, cites only one work of linguistic import – an article on learning a native language.

3. A continual difficulty in evaluating and relating linguistic and social studies - noted also by Pride, 1969a, p.24.
at another is a fragment of a complex situation, treated in terms of content. A symbolic act may be composed of many signs. The communicative act I have described as basic is usually recognised in a larger context - the exchanges listed by Mauss in my initial quotation, courtesies, feasts, rituals, are far from simple. One 'code' can carry many 'messages'; we can elicit from Malinowski's description of the kula more kinds of communicative exchange than he recognized himself. The apparently straightforward commercial exchange may turn out to communicate notions of value and hierarchy and any object may be used as a sign: 'I asked for bread and you gave me a stone'.

Though we tend to think in larger categories like arguments, decisions, rituals, deeds, and recognize their overriding message, for productive analysis at any level it is necessary to understand the way in which a communicative act occurs at its most basic, and in particular the use of sign systems. Language is the most obvious of these, and some of the different attempts to characterise its structures are discussed in this thesis. Considered as a sign system, it is only one way of communicating, though semiologists sometimes claim that other systems are subordinate to it:

'It is true that objects, images and patterns of behaviour can signify, and do so on a large scale, but never autonomously; every semiological system has its linguistic admixture', (Barthes, 1967, p.10).
It is easy to confuse levels here: at the level of media (television, press, ritual) one can treat semiological systems as mixed, but they can also be broken down to distinguish verbal from non-verbal, and to show the complexity of the verbal system itself. For instance, if I shout "Come in" with eager emphasis, smiling face, expansive gestures and close stance, this is a co-ordinated message; if I say it flatly, with a cold expression and holding my distance, the message is complex. Since here there are a bundle of codes or sign systems one could not say that language is mixed in them, rather language is the code carrying the "normal" meaning, which may however be reversed by the sign systems of gesture and intonation: it is they which dominate, and gesture indeed can stand alone. Although, too, the message of expression and gesture can be put into words, its meaning is likely to be reduced thereby.

The communication code can be viewed therefore as a semiotic frame,

'a bundle of interacting events or non-events from different communicational subsystems, or modalities, simultaneously transmitted and received'

(Crystal, 1969, p.8)

When, however, is an act not communicative? If one assumes that 'tout acte de communication constitue un rapport social' (Buyssens,

1. This contribution to the forthcoming A.S.A. Monograph on anthropology and linguistics offers a review of the relevant literature, and also offers a comprehensive list of modalities.
1967, p.17), then one must be able to identify human interpreters or agents. Facts, as he says, do not communicate; signs do. For Buysens, a cross communicates when it is in a church, but not when in a museum. This example shows too how the duration of a communicative act can vary.

There has been much dispute as to whether music and the visual arts are communicative. The disputes naturally depend on the meaning given to communication, but behind them all lies the question of language and rationality: is language a system of 'verbal tags' (see Hebb, 1949, p.132)? Are words the symbols of 'mental experience' (Danto, in ed. Hook, 1969, p.126, himself quoting Aristotle)? Or is cognition developed through language and indistinguishable from it (another long line of thought, currently known through Vygotsky and his disciple Bernstein)? This question can be by-passed by considering language as a semiotic system, and I will not discuss it in detail in this thesis. However, it is important to see that the status of "communicability" depends on one's evaluation of rationality. If the meaning of a message cannot be rendered linguistically, it may be thought not to communicate.

1. A point made by Buysens, 1967, p.11. Communication is of course more than the total of semiotic systems (see e.g. Morris, 1964), and it is to emphasise its qualities of connexion and relation (see the definitions offered by the C.O.D.) that I use this word instead of 'semiotic' as a slogan.

2. Note that even where communicability is played down, there may still be analysis of the 'languages of Art' (Goodman, 1968).
From the viewpoint of social anthropology, visual images and aural effects may be profoundly communicative. A rousing march or a moving dirge can be codes, conveying persuasive messages, and agents alive to the power of symbols have always used them as such. Non-verbal communication is important to most people, and the words "irrational" or "emotional" in no way explain its effect. The power of music is not less because it cannot be translated into words.

This is an important disclaimer to put in a thesis about language, but it is a dimension of communication I have tried to bear in mind. 'Language' is not something which we experience on its own: speech is spoken by particular voices and issues from specific bodies, all affecting our comprehension of its message; even the printed word's meaning is in part the meaning of its paper and type. And the medium is part of the message even when language is taken as far as possible on its own. Some of these complexities have been ignored by linguists, who have for instance conspicuously ignored irony and humour as linguistic features, though these are important topics to people interested in literature. They know too, that communication is not easily achieved; painful misunderstandings can occur between the most closely united people, and writing itself is a never-ending battle to communicate.

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1. See Leach 1970, Chapter 7, for an account of Lévi-Strauss' beliefs about musical communication and the structure of the human mind. Both Lévi-Strauss and Marshall McLuhan in some degree approach the problem of translation which discussion of non-verbal (or nonlogical) communication raises, by presenting their arguments in a non-rational way.
5. Communication as Social Drama

The literary critics of today are descendants of the rhetoricians, who understood that language is a means of social control. Much of the current sociological interest in communication owes inspiration to a teacher of literature, Kenneth Burke. His disciple Duncan who has investigated sociological thought on the subject (1962) is a lucid interpreter of Burke's views.

Communication has been defined as 'all those processes by which people influence one another' (Ruesch & Bateson, 1951, p.6). This would narrow my concept of an act of relation, but it certainly describes a great proportion of human messages. We could also say that much communication is persuasive, and it attempts to enlist the sympathy or help of the person(s) addressed. It is therefore in the widest sense political - another reason why it is an appropriate focus for studies in political anthropology.

Kenneth Burke's 'dramatism', with its emphasis on how motives are communicated, is therefore a possible approach to the study of communication and social order. Duncan explains and uses the theory, taking as his thesis the statement:

1. C.p. Buyssens, for whom semiology is 'l'étude des procédés de communication, c'est-à-dire des moyens utilisés pour influencer autrui et reconnus comme tels par celui qu'on veut influencer' (1967, p.11).
'Society emerges and continues to exist through the communication of significant symbols. Through the use of such symbols we identify with each other' (p.253.)

Enlisting people is getting them to join our side, and thus to make them act, in some respects at least, like us. The significant symbols thus tend to be those by which the desire for sociation is gratified and cohesion or solidarity is created. Duncan is interested in their content and the values therein confirmed.¹

Such an approach to society presupposes a desire for sociation, and indeed an ability to speak.² Since Burke and Duncan also see social order as the purpose of communication, and this order in the distribution of authority, they further presuppose a hierarchical sense, by which we relate everyone else as superior, inferior, or equal to us. I do not think that this assumption follows from the evidence: hierarchy is not an automatic feature of the communicative act, even though it seems a basically human feature, one which like sociation itself is found in man and apes. Certainly, however, hierarchies are maintained by symbol, and altered through communication.

'Man is an animal but he puts the basic facts of life to work for himself in ways that no other animal does or can'.

(Robin Fox, 1967, p.27)³

1. However, he does not examine fully the forms through which these symbols are expressed.
2. 'The capacity for language must precede its use' (Burke, 1950, p.176). This point is discussed in the next chapter.
3. See also Tiger, 1969, for a sociologist's discussion of ethologists' views.
In quite a different way, Duncan's understanding of social order is also limited by his view of hierarchy: this time as social drama. Cohen considers (in the article discussed earlier) that Duncan's insights though profound remain largely intuitive. I think this is because he is mostly interested in the symbolism by which social order is sustained and not enough by the non-symbolic acts of communication by which it is sustained as well.¹ One realises this from Duncan's real-life examples, as when he attributes Hitler's success to the drama of sacrifice he created to inspire the German people. It is illuminating to realise that people were indeed inspired by this and that Hitler did not offer affluence and success, but the reasons for German acceptance seem to me much more complex, and include their particular values, the economic situation, and the social organisations through which the Nazi ideology could be communicated, as well as actual coercion and threat.²

Burke and Duncan are students of literature who care about its social values, but though their presentation enriches literary understanding it impoverishes "real life". This seems partly due to sociological naivety, but also to limitations on their own ground. Duncan looks to 'art' as the source of his 'significant symbols' but it

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1. In Cohen's words one needs to analyse 'the dialectal interaction between two major variables: relationships of power and symbolism' (ibid. p.321.)

is solely literary art, and even more specifically, drama, (in
the Western tradition). To him this affords a creative experience
of the resolution of social disorder. I find this is a true
account, but I think there is a confusion between drama as an
actual experience in some people's lives, and drama as a metaphor
or analogy of other social experiences, or acts of communication.
It is a powerful metaphor in the West, with its considerable
familiarity with play-acting, so that we often consciously feel that
we or others are "playing a part", and for long the drama of
Christianity was deeply familiar as such through ritual and liturgy.
But I am not sure that it is a categorisation of experience for
peoples with little or no dramatic tradition.

Dramatism, then, although a useful model is not a wholly
satisfactory one, since it does not cope with the continuing
interaction of the symbolic and the real. But the model of a drama
is also misleading because its few, equivalent characters, in face-
to-face-involvement, are not a mirror for the nature of true society,
or life, in which individuals are involved with groups of differing
strengths, interacting with differing intensity. Interestingly, the

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1. Though even here people often confuse the actor with his role.
Since categorisations of the self, as of the self's relations with the
environment, seem culturally defined, so models of drama (and role)
may distort the distinctions pursued by the subjects themselves.
"Persuasion" is of course often not the dominant end of communication
in 'Play-acting' situations: see Huizinga's account of play in Homo
Ludens (1949).
sociological conception of 'role' modifies the dramatic image by suggesting that one man can play many parts, but this analogy tends to confuse the sender with the code. A full discussion of role theory is not relevant here, but I should perhaps briefly explain this particular point.

According to Mead, the self develops by taking on the roles of others. By knowing others, it becomes a self. But there is a difference between the concept of a self as a whole set of behaviours, as a cut stone is all its refractions, and the notion of a "true self" which recognises its other actions as play-acting. In Mead's model of development 'role-taking' is a possible word for the process he describes, but the word 'role' means something quite different when adult roles are being described, except in the Freudian sense that we model all our actions on our earliest experience. The success with which we play adult roles depends on our command of the symbols (as well as the manipulation) of 'real' power; that is in our ability to communicate with the people we should be influencing. Goffman's handling of drama and role in 'the presentation of self in everyday life' is amenable to such a communicative focus.¹

¹ Goffman, 1965 (in U.S., 1959). As Pride pointed out, (1968) Goffman's analysis can be extended to bring out e.g. the patterns of linguistic mean of 'impression management'. Goffman does not pursue the fundamental symbolism revealed in his analysis, e.g. our values for front and back in the stage of life, but he has much to say on the persuasive aspects of acts of relation.
6. **Symbol and Reality: An Example from 'Animal Farm'**

Thinkers and teachers concerned about the differences between 'straight and crooked thinking' have long been analysing the methods of verbal persuasion. Their insights are valuable to anyone who wants to study political change, and realises that one can look primarily at the form or the content of messages, but may not ignore the one for the other. George Orwell was painfully alert to the way in which political men can gradually alter the content of a form or use it for a different purpose: *Animal Farm* is a concise manual of such manipulation. It describes a cumulative process, and it is therefore difficult to select any point in the book without cross-references, but the description of the weekly Spontaneous Demonstration illustrates my theme economically: the manipulation of symbol and action which is analysable through a communicative approach.

The animals march in hierarchical order 'with the pigs leading' and the dogs flanking the procession. 'At the head of all marched Napoleon's black cockerel'. Discontent is silenced by the sheeps' bleating of the slogan 'Four legs good, two legs bad!'

'But by and large the animals enjoyed these celebrations. They found it comforting to be reminded that, after all, they were truly their own masters and that the work they did was for their own benefit. So that, what with the songs, the processions, Squealer's lists of figures, the thunder of the gun, the crowing of the cockerel, and the fluttering of the flag, they were able to forget that their bellies were empty, at least part of the time'. (p.98).
The pigs have thus created a climate of feeling which, given the animals' sense of pride, both assuages revolt and prepares for the time when the pigs' power is sufficient for them to dispense with such reinforcements and to walk on two legs, with a revised slogan to beat down any protests. Even while the form of the original slogan remained the same, its functions had been altered, as described above, at the Demonstration.

The order of marching communicates to the animals their intended station in life before this is made explicit by the revised slogan 'All animals are equal, but some are more equal than others'. The dogs flanking the procession communicate threat; they are an example of the way in which objects can become symbols. First revealed to the animals in terrible action when Napoleon launches his putsch against Snowball, they can thereafter simply be reminders of the practical consequences of opposition. At any moment the symbol can become the object itself again.¹

One cannot learn from such analyses as this how symbolic values are conceptualised, or how ratiocination or language are developed, but one can see how new symbols develop, and how far

¹. Orwell communicates his anguished sense of the "real" in all his writings, but he was always concerned to point out the importance of symbolic action in producing physical results. In 1946 he thought 'that the present political chaos is connected with the decay of language, and that one can probably bring about some improvement by starting at the verbal end' (1951, p. 351). Later, he showed verbal corruption, moulding thought and action in 1984.
men and women—prophets, demagogues and dictators, great artists—can handle symbols and, by changing them, move groups of people to new action. It is, moreover, often by a better understanding of the significant features of the codes used that one sees how the message changes. Such a study does not explain why a message succeeds, but by examining both sides of the communicative act, the intention and the response, one can learn some answers to what Joyce Cary called "the fundamental question, the root of all politics, all arts...what do men live by? What makes them tick and keeps them ticking;" (1951, p.9).

7. Communication and Communications

'Communication' is something of a cant word at present; can these current uses be related to an anthropological enquiry? One hears a great deal of the 'communications business' (newspapers and T.V. especially), of the importance of communication in private life and in business (where it means the ability of workers and bosses to understand what the other is after); and there are communications, meaning roads, railways air-services—and newspapers and radios as well. In fact any study of 'communication' in an under-developed country usually turns out to be a study of these means of communication in different senses, indicating that as I mentioned earlier, there is a confused belief that providing a channel will ensure a successful message.
However, there is common to this array of meanings an emphasis on the participators in communication, their diversity and accessibility to one another. There is also confusion between the human transmitters and the channels for their messages. This is the confusion made by Hall, as I mentioned above. Karl Deutsch avoided this by saying 'Cultures produce, select and channel information' when he examined communication as an aspect of communications (1953, new edition, 1966). Seeking the features which favour national unity, he realised that:

"Ties of transportation, economic intercourse, social stratification, cultural similarity and similarity in already existing speech habits, as well as relative barriers and discontinuities in all these respects will all have their effects in determining what the actual speech community will be at any one time" (1966 ed., p.41)

Deutsch realizes that successful communication depends on many factors. He also senses that one cannot define a community by speech alone, this is partly a function of the other factors. He is therefore mistaken in making 'the speech community' the unit of communication, as if this were a homogenous self-contained entity. One must rather ask who communicates what - and with whom? I return to this problem later in the thesis.

Any discussion of community involves a consideration of how the community maintains its cohesiveness, and of what sub-groups there are within it. Since language is a social marker as well as an instrument of communication, it is necessary to look at the form of
codes, the styles by which sub-groups differentiate each other.

But Deutsch of course runs together channels, codes and meanings. 'Ties of transportation' can initiate communication, as Joyce Cary's Rudbeck realised when he had built a road:

"The road itself seems to speak to him. 'I'm smashing up the old Fada - I shall change everything and everybody in it. I am abolishing the old ways, the old ideas, the old law; I am bringing wealth and opportunity for good as well as vice, new powers to men and therefore new conflicts. I am the revolution. I am giving you plenty of trouble already, you governors, and I am going to give you plenty more. I destroy and I make new. What are you going to do about it? I am your idea. You made me, so I suppose you know.' (Mister Johnson, pp.168-9).

It is not the road itself though, which can make an explanatory focus for enquiry, but (as Cary points out) the act of creating it by men, even when, like the British in Nigeria, they did not consider the full consequences of their actions. Channels are secondary features in the communicative act, compared with the messages which flow along them and the significance of these as interpreted by sender and receiver.

8. Topics for Enquiry.

Although the word 'communication' gets discussed in several senses, these clearly only cover a little of a large subject. And although many people may have talked communication without knowing it, the social and the linguistic aspects of communication have often not been integrated. In the following chapters, I try to look at some of
the social aspects of language, and discuss the consequences of a social viewpoint for parts of linguistic theory.

In selecting foci for enquiry, one could divide the possible areas up as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>speaker</th>
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<td>process</td>
<td>structure</td>
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1. Speaker and code: the choice of style, an individual's repertoire, its social power.
2. Code and structure: multilingualism, the 'ethnography of speaking'.
3. Speaker and process: the speakers' manipulation of event.
4. Code and process: the development of languages....

There are other combinations possible and other variables; an especially important one is the introduction of writing, a new channel, a new code. In the second part of the thesis, where I trace the development of pidgin languages, and the uses of a particular code, (English) in Nigeria, language will necessarily be seen from the point of view of its learners and transmitters, basing themselves on models, and reproducing stereotype utterances. Their use and alteration of these stereotypes is important if we are to understand the innovations which alter a supposedly "traditional" society.

Underlying all these topics is the question, what is society? How do the individuals who use language use it to relate to one another?
If we take 'society' not as a given, labelled as such by its institutions, but as a cluster of communicative events, will we get a fairer idea of what societies mean to those who live through them, or does this view unduly ignore the larger social facts, the whole that is bigger than the sum of the people who live through it? It may be necessary to produce both sorts of study, and false to make them alternative instead of complementary. Since we are not exempt from the perceptual constraints and schematizations that we describe, there can of course be no 'true' account; but attempts to describe the creative powers of language, through which perception can be altered, are as relevant to anthropology as analyses of informants' models, which are records of some such perceptual constructs in use.  

1. See Whiteley, 1966, for a linguist's discussion of this problem.
Chapter Two

MODELS FOR LINGUISTIC DESCRIPTION

1. The Autonomy of Linguistics

Since linguistics is a diverse and developed discipline, one might expect that some linguists would have studied the communicative act. But, apart from the approaches mentioned in the previous chapter, they have generally confined themselves to 'the language itself', and deliberately avoided

'studying the physical and physiological, psychological and logical, sociological and historical precipitations of the language.'

(Hjelmslev, 1961, p.5)

It has been felt that the only way to understand how language is structured is to ignore so far as possible its users. Study of the way they use their system may extend our knowledge, but we must understand the system first.¹

Linguistics in fact has had its structural-functional phase, corresponding closely to social anthropology's. Currently, however, the discipline is dominated by Noam Chomsky, and

¹. This is still held by Chomsky: his views are discussed below, p.36 ff. And c.p. Halliday: 'It has sometimes been said that linguists have shown too little interest in the social background of language, although it might be argued that, if they had not concentrated, almost exclusively for a time, on the internal workings of the linguistic system in its specific manifestations in different languages and dialects, such further questions could never have been broached' (1967, p.5).
'every other 'school' of linguistics at the present time tends to define its position in relation to Chomsky's views on particular issues'.

(Lyons, 1970, p.9).

Chomsky is a universalist, trying to understand how speakers create language; his views are therefore relevant to 'thought structuralists'. He is not interested in social interaction, a fact which affects his basic terminology. Because language is a social activity, even linguists are not immune from unconscious social classifications of speakers, which are likely to control the selection of data for analysis. I therefore discuss Chomsky's definitions of 'competence' and 'performance' below.

Chomsky's influence has not prevented a considerable shift of linguistic interest to the 'social meaning' of language, and in a recent inaugural lecture, a professor of General Linguistics prophesied that

'in the coming decades some of the most fundamental work on language will take the form of sociolinguistic enquiry'.

(Halliday, 1967, p.5).

Some of the sociolinguistic work which has already appeared I discuss in succeeding chapters. First however, I consider briefly some of the terms with which linguists commonly operate, their criteria for selecting out of the mass of language events a universe for description and analysis. Such selection is likely to have sociological implications whether or not a linguist is interested in sociolinguistic enquiry, so that it may not be possible to explain 'language itself' without making 'extra-linguistic' assumptions.
This argument has in fact been advanced, from another standpoint. The late Uriel Weinreich came to believe that linguistic change could only be explained by a model which, being speaker-centred, charts language according to what different people - different social beings - do with it, in communication with one another.

'Sociological factors, solidly formulated, have not been adduced to explain distributions and shifts in linguistic phenomena which, from a structural point of view, would have been seen as random'.

(Weinreich, with Labov and Herzog, in Lehmann and Malkiel, 1968, p.177).

Bloomfield, for instance, while recognising that actual language usage was highly variable, explained the fact merely by saying that

'Every speaker's language, except for personal factors which we must here ignore, is a composite result of what he has heard other people say' (1933, p.46).

Labov has shown that one can group these sources according to age and class, and demonstrate that the 'composite result' is selectively arrived at, on social grounds: it will alter with age, and also according to change in social status. (Labov, 1966a, 1966b etc.) He has classified a mass of variability by statistical techniques, and provided a description of language change which is in itself 'chronic' and progressive.

Work like Labov's cuts across the division between synchronic and diachronic linguistics set out by Saussure. In fact, both these names stand for achronic models (Lehmann and Malkiel, and Ardener, 1969) by which it is possible to generate successive states of languages, but not to explain the transitions between them. Until recently, most
linguists worked, like social anthropologists, in an anti-historical tradition, so that this was not felt as a limitation. Now that linguists have changed some of their premisses, terms created for an earlier theory may need revising. I think that we need to look more critically at the Saussurean pair langue and parole, two terms still very generally in use.

2. **Langue and Parole**

Saussure divided language into two aspects, langue and parole. Only langue was the proper study of linguistics. Although he intended to discuss the 'linguistics of parole', he died before accomplishing this, and many linguists accepted his judgment that parole, the 'heterogeneous mass of speech facts', was not their business; viz. that variations in a language should be ignored. The same attitude was taken by Bloomfield, as I have mentioned above.

The Course in General Linguistics is a synthesis of Saussure's views built up mainly from lecture notes, and this explains some of the contradictions in the text, where langue, for instance, seems to have more one meaning. Recourse to Godel's study of the sources confirms

1. References are to the English language edition, with glosses from the original where it is necessary to distinguish 'langue' and 'parole' (the distinction is often blurred in the English, thus adding to the confusion). For a discussion of the significance of Saussure for modern social anthropologists see Ardener (1971).

2. (1957) Godel traces the shifts in presentation through Saussure's three lecture courses, and statements in the Course are often thereby clarified. I restrict myself to langue and parole: Godel devotes much of his thesis to other key topics, e.g. the sign as conceived by Saussure.
that Saussure in fact never completely worked out his distinction, and the Course conflates his developing and changing ideas.

Saussure pointed out that 'a child gains his language from "outside"; an adult deprived of the ability to speak can still understand others. This seems to be the essence of language, hence in one sense, it is langue. But how is this langue to be described? At one time Saussure said that langue is

‘tout ce qui est contenu dans le cerveau de l'individu, le dépôt des formes entendues et pratiquées, et de leur sens'.

(1957, p.145)

And thus

‘il suffira de prendre la somme des tresors de langue individuels pour avoir la langue’.

(p.146)

In this sense, langue is the total of treasures, all the words used by a population. (The emphasis is on an inventory of words, not of syntactic organisations). Saussure was thus closely in line with the Neogrammarian approach, as Weinreich et al. have pointed out. Hermann Paul had put forward the concept of Sprachusus:

'A comparison of individual languages (which we may, at the risk of terminological anachronism but with little fear of distortion, relabel 'idiolects') yields a certain "average", which determines what is actually normal in the language'


1. Or, more precisely, of significés. The phonological realizations would, in this model, be part of parole, but Saussure does not necessarily distinguish a model of langue consisting of all possible significés from one consisting of some norm or essence, an idealisation recognised as such.

2. Idiolect = the speech habits of an individual speaker. - now used more as a description than an analytical term.
But while Paul had insisted that this 
Spraehvsus was an artefact of
the linguist, and had no territorial bounds, Saussure's claim that 'language
(langye) is concrete, no less than speaking' (1960, p.15) may suggest that
langue has reality, is available to the linguist. He was obviously influ-
enced by Burkhein's claim that language (surely = parole?) is a social
fact, but in trying to explain how a 'passive' langue was expressed, he
suggested that

'the faculty of articulating words - whether it is natural or not -
is exercised only with the help of the instrument created by
a collectivity and provided for its use (p.11)...Language is not
complete in any speaker; it exists perfectly only with a
collectivity'

(p.14).

It must, therefore, be derived from an aggregation of idioclects (c.p.
the sregrammarian approach above), as Saussure indeed realised:

'Sens doute, dans un certain sens, nous ne connaissons la
langue que par la parole. Il faut la parole pour que la langue
s'établis'

(1957, p.15).

Logically, then, one can say that not langue but parole is the social
element of language. This is what Saussure had said at one stage:

'La sphère parole est la plus sociale, l'autre est la plus
complètement individuelle. La langue est le réservoir
individuel; tout ce que entre dans la langue, c'est-à-
dire dans la tête, est individuel'

(p.145-6).

From this, as Godel points out,

'la conclusion logique, que Saussure n'a pourtant pas voulu
tirer, serait de prendre la parole pour objet premier de la
linguistique'.

(p.146)

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1. Godel shows that this is well-attested as a comment by Saussure and
not attributable to any in student note-taking.
But he did not follow up his conclusion, so his editors were reasonably justified in ignoring the statement when making their compilation.

Saussure was perhaps able to make these contradictory statements because his own notion of the social features of language, and indeed of society at all, were so limited. He seems to have taken over the Durkheimian idea of collectivity, in its grossest simplicity, and not to have enquired further into the nature of social organisation. To him, society is a solid thing, an impermeable and undifferentiated whole with a collective unconscious that irresistibly forms language: in Godel's words,

'tout système sémiologique suppose une convention sociale, un accord entre les membres de la communauté qui l'utilise; mais les individus, le communauté même, ne peuvent ni modifier la convention ni s'opposer à l'évolution... du système'

(1957, pp.201-2)

So far therefore as Saussure takes over the orthodox French sociology thus defined by Godel, he is able to assume that the forms of langue and of parole are nearly the same. The granite monolith, society, is composed of a simple aggregation of individuals, who are 'wilful', and heterogeneous. Within this 'masse parlante'

'some sort of average will be set up: all will reproduce - not exactly of course, but approximately - the same signs united with the same concepts'.

(p.13)

1. Saussure was not a contributor to L'Année Sociologique nor was he mentioned in it. Dr. S. Lukes does not recall that Durkheim mentions Saussure (personal communication).
This is the Sprachusus, converted into Saussurean semiology. But, because he did not recognize any socially systematising varieties in language, only individual and territorial variation, this semiological approach is not creatively communicative.

It may be that Saussure was moving away from a view of langue as a passively assimilated inventory, generated as speech by the individual (p. 14); for he did talk in his lectures of langue as 'un certain moyen qui s'établira [entre les individus]' (1957, p. 156), but he did not develop this communicative approach. Nor did he work out the distinction between langue as 'input', and langue as the capacity to produce language at all, sometimes called 'faculté de langage'. These differences have been distinguished more firmly by Chomsky.

Saussure's ideas are so fertile that they continue to attract interest after better worked-out accounts of language (like Bloomfield's) seem exhausted, and some of the difficulties, as I hope I have shown, arise from the disparate material the editors had to make coherent, if they

1. Apparently he said he had not time to go into 'la diversité interne de la langue' (p. 88).

2. He looked forward to a 'science that studies the life of signs within society' (p. 16); such a study is now being developed by Roland Barthes and his followers; see their journal, Communications, Ardener (1971) discusses the implications of an anthropological semiology: he calls the semiology of Barthes a 'semiologia minor'.

3. Although recognizing the primacy of spoken language, Saussure falls into the trap of assuming that the essence of a language is that which can be represented in writing, see the end of the section (2) on page 15 of the Course.
were to give some of Saussure's concepts to the world at all. His thought
is of the order that can inspire workers on subjects, and with
theoretical approaches, quite foreign to him. But his langue-parole
model (however interpreted), and the assumptions on which the distinctions
of synchrony and diachrony rest, are not sufficient for students of
language change, since

'for him the precondition of dealing with language as a
social phenomenon was still its complete homogeneity'.

(Weinreich et al. p.121)

Many linguists would no doubt argue that they must elucidate a
langue (= Sprachusus) in order to understand the fundamental system of
relations in a language (c.p the views of Halliday quoted on p.27
(footnote 1). But this entity 'the language' may not be so easy to
circumscribe (see the last part of this chapter), while the range of
varieties in it are poorly described in terms of a langue : parole
dichotomy. This is because langue, in the 'Sprachusus' sense, is a
model, to describe a selection from the complex richness of language.
It is thus surely a mistake to elevate parole and study its structure
(as the linguist Hymes wishes to do; I discuss this theory again when
dealing with his 'Ethnography of Speaking'). Langue is not any better
sort of reality, it is simply what is chosen for study, and parole is in

1. Some of the confusions which occur with a rigidly dual model are
described by Hymes (1969), and illustrated by the problems of Le Page,
discussed later in this chapter.
a sense composed of langues. Langue as 'faculté de langage' stands outside the dichotomy altogether; this leaves only the sense of langue as a set of rules with which to create parole. At this point the terminology will be recognised as Chomskian: what use he has made of a dual description I will now try to sketch out.

3. Competence and Performance

Noam Chomsky's reputation is so powerful that anthropologists will naturally wonder if his work can help theirs. His theory is now directed to understanding fundamental structures of the human mind, and in this he leads a whole contemporary way of thought, but he has dismissed the studies of his fellow-leader Lévi-Strauss as simply proving that 'humans classify, if they perform any mental acts at all' (1968, p.65).

Chomsky's critics include those who think he pays insufficient attention to the sociological aspects of language; any application of his theories by anthropologists should I think, take into account the sociological implications of his operative terms, competence and performance. In order to discuss these, I have briefly to review his

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1. There is a danger that Chomskian linguistics may be picked up with the same sort of unproductive, because uncritical, enthusiasm as Communication Theory. See forthcoming ASA volume ('1969') for discussions.

2. Chomsky's most recent source for this conclusion was The Savage Mind. See Ardener, 1971 however, who argues that Lévi-Strauss may in fact be achieving more knowledge of the mind than Chomsky.

3. Some of these criticisms are discussed, and made by Hymes in his ASA paper, 1969. I refer to these again when dealing with Hymes' 'Ethnography of Speaking'.
present position and the steps by which he arrived at it. Many confusions arise because Chomsky in every publication has developed and altered his thinking, but he does not often explain how his more recent conceptualisations have changed.

Chomsky is interested in how the mind works, and he selects for particular attention the capacity for language, which he thinks is species-specific. He revives the philosophy of innate ideas to deal with mind, and in his presentation goes out of his way to attack behaviourist explanations of language but he has, anyhow, never shown interest in language's social aspects.

'If we hope to understand human language and the psychological capacities on which it rests, we must first ask what it is, not how or for what purposes it is used.'

(p.62, 1968).

Chomsky does not want to know how languages differ; what matters is the degree to which they are the same. He now assumes there is an innate structure, a 'language acquisition device' which enables every child to create comprehensible speech. This mechanism is not discoverable from its productions, however; one cannot derive its operations from speech any more than one could find out how a computer is made by examining its programme. This analogy shows the fundamental irrelevancy

1. For a lucid account of Chomsky's theories, development and importance, see Lyons (1970). Competence and performance are not however, criticised from a sociological point of view, since Lyons accepts langue: parole and similar distinctions as a linguistic principle.

2. Chomsky in this passage from which this sentence is taken is really rejecting not a communicative approach but the 'behavioral' simplifications of it; this leads him to all or nothing confrontation of "expression" against "modifying behaviour" as the defining quality of language. Cf. my view on p2.

3. I recall this example from Chomsky's John Locke lectures at Oxford, 1969. It is the logical consequence of his theories but a consequence he has not usually appeared to recognise.
of linguistics if you want to discover the workings of an assumed 'L.A.D.'

Nor does it follow that the rules of a generative grammar will be the computer's actual programme.¹

If the L.A.D. is at one end of the linguistic production line, at the other flows the data – the output of the speaker which is also the input for other speakers, especially children learning to speak.²

To Saussure, the output is parole; the input, however, would be langue. Chomsky has recently attacked Saussure's 'impoverished and thoroughly inadequate conception of language' (1968, p.18), but earlier he had been willing to praise his langue: parole division, because 'the logical priority of the study of langue... seems quite inescapable' (1964, pp.61-2.) On this occasion, Chomsky deliberately related his theory to Saussure's, roughly in the way I have just done. His own division is between competence and performance.

Chomsky began his 1965 volume with an aggressive statement of policy:

'Linguistic theory is concerned primarily with an ideal speaker-listener, in a completely homogeneous speech-community, who knows its language perfectly and is unaffected by such grammatically irrelevant conditions as memory limitations, distractions, shifts of attention and interest, and errors (random or characteristic) in applying his knowledge of the language in actual performance' (p.3)...'we thus make a fundamental distinction between competence (the speaker-hearer's knowledge of this language) and performance (the actual use of language in concrete situations)' (p.4)

¹. It will be appreciated that there is not room here to discuss the levels of generative grammar, and their 'truthfulness'. There is an enormous linguistic literature on the subject; for an anthropologist's approach, see Ardener, 1969, 1971.

². The social significance of input to adult speakers is discussed in this thesis, passim.
In this manifesto Chomsky seems to be combining definitions from more than one model. Competence is a sprachusus, and provides the corpus for which rules are constructed to account for the user's knowledge of his language. This corpus has been tidied up, since the linguist is not interested in trivial slips, false starts etc. But we cannot suppose that rules constructed out of an idealized corpus will generate the actual use of language in concrete situations if this entails, for instance, switches from one language to another, as it does for the many, many people who do not live in a completely homogeneous speech-community.

Chomsky has repeatedly pointed out that he is interested in how syntactic structures are produced, and that for this activity it is necessary to confine oneself to manageable, viz. selected and idealized data. But the discussions in the first chapter of 'Aspects' (1965) suggest that he quite ignored current work on the structured diversity of actual language use, and was simply transforming an underlying stance of attack against the field linguists who had dominated American linguists when he was a student. The objection to the 1965 version of competence is that it could not include the speaker-listener's ability to organise and select from more than one system.

1. But hesitation phenomena, for instance, can be linguistically significant. See the work of Goldman-Eisler (e.g. in ed. Lenneberg, 1964) and the article by Carter, (1963).

2. Lyons provides a useful account of their intellectual tenets and preoccupations (1970, Chapter 3).
Since 1965, such underlying assumptions are not so apparent. Perhaps in face of attacks, Chomsky has shifted his ground, to suggest that competence is a theory of language acquisition which 'is one element of a theory of performance' (1970, p.83), and even to admit that he may have cast 'a variety of questions into the waste bin of 'pragmatics' (1969, pp.30-1) - pragmatics appears to mean performance here. Since presumably (if it is assumed that all languages are basically alike) what is true for one language is true for all, Chomsky seems quite justified in using any selection of data he wishes for his model: the difficulties occur when the grammars produced for it are supposed to account for "empirical reality." Some of the same difficulties attend his theories on language universals. Here there are no findings as yet which would be very illuminating to social anthropologists.

1. Incidentally, although the paper from which this quotation is taken was for a symposium devoted to 'Communication', Chomsky, I think used that word only once, when differentiating human language from 'animal communication' (his usual collocation).

2. We are interpreting "universal grammar" as a system of conditions on grammars. It may involve a skeletal substructure of rules that any human language must contain, but it also incorporates conditions that must be met by such grammar and principles that determine how they are interpreted' (1968, p.57, note 30). Chomsky's own suggestions are at a very high level of generality therefore, but the empirical difficulties of writing universal rules remain. For an interesting collection of suggestions at this level, see Bach and Harms, 1968, which contrasts also with the earlier inductive approach of the contributors to ed. Greenberg (1963); and see Lyons' discussion, Chap.3, 1970.
There has been no lack of challenge to particular points in Chomsky’s arguments. From the anthropological view, his division of competence: performance is misleading because of sociological naiveté, but this only becomes important the more ‘reality’ Chomsky tries to pack into his model. So long as Chomsky keeps separate the notion of a Language Acquisition Device and a grammar it produces (in the Language and Mind lectures, 1968, they are sometimes treated as one) and considers both models, as ‘abstractions’, competence is useful concept, and performance, like parole, needs no matching attention, it is not an equivalent entity. The problem however, remains of ensuring that competence can account for performance, in all its complex diversity.

1. Apart from linguistic objections to competence and performance there are criticisms by workers in the other disciplines to which Chomsky appeals: philosophy and psychology. See e.g. ed. Hook (1969), and ed. Lyons and Wales, (1966) - Lyons gives here a fuller criticism than he allows himself in his short work on Chomsky (1970). Weinreich et al., in the paper already referred to, discuss the limitations of Chomskian models for describing linguistic change. Ardener (1971) discusses the different statuses for sociolinguistics of the recent formulations of Chomsky, compared with those before the publication of ‘Aspects’.

2. Hymes seems to me wrong in treating performance as if it were on the same level as competence, as he does also for langue-parole (see p. 33 above) He is drawn to do this by the claims – usually from Chomsky’s followers – that elicitation of a competence/langue will provide the unique truth about a language, (instead of realising that it is an abstraction.) Hymes is also led to this approach by his theory of ethnography, which I discuss later.
Performance is also what the child hears when he is learning to speak. In their zeal to refute gross behavioral explanations of language learning (most effectively refuted by Chomsky in his review of Skinner's *Verbal Behavior*, 1964), generative grammarians have paid little or no attention to this input. One can accept the existence of an innate ability to use language (whether or not this is independent of other abilities to symbolise, develop thought etc.) without rejecting the huge contribution of learning to language development.  

Structured and structuring socialisation, including language but not solely linguistic, gives the child not just competence, but a specific social performance in language.

According to the diversity of the data afforded him, the child may be able to develop alternative systems — as I have observed two year old Europeans in Kenya, speaking English to white people and Swahili to black ones. Or if he hears a great number of alternatives for which

1. Some of the most persuasive arguments for a genetic, species-specific language ability have been put forward by Lenneberg. His further suggestion that there is no simple correlation between this ability and intelligence (e.g. 1967, p.73-91, 1967, p.229 etc.) stands if it is accepted that this largely develops according to the way the child develops its self and inner speech, from the kind of data presented to it — the thesis of Mead and Vygotsky (1965).

2. For one account of how, successively, two systems can develop, see Leopold, 1954.
there seem to be no restrictions as to user, he may incorporate "free choice" into his rules. Later, for instance at school, more restrictions may be enforced, or he may also build on new rules for new languages.

"Language is a tool that changes you as you use it". This is the view of Basil Bernstein, who further believes that the quality of the data and the quality of the acts of relation through which it is communicated to the child will largely control his cognitive stretch — the way he thinks and his ability for independent, detached thought. In particular, Bernstein has been devising experiments which suggest that working class children internalise 'restricted codes' which are less powerful than the 'elaborated codes' of middle-class children, and of higher education. Working class children may therefore not be able to use their 'equal opportunities': social differences are self-maintaining systems.

Bernstein's work is particularly interesting for social anthropologists because it tries to distinguish the dynamism of different linguistic systems in social terms, even though these are not always convincingly worked out.

1. Quoted in Sunday Times, 17.3.68, in Nicholas Lloyd and Philip Knightley: 'How to talk to a Child'.
2. see Douglas (1970), for some extensions of his ideas.
3. For some linguistic criticism, see Pride, 1969a, pp.22-3. His concepts of social structure etc. need anthropological attention, and his reliance on questionnaires, see e.g. Bernstein and Henderson (1969) is suspect.
His methods, however, might well help us to understand not only differences in intellectual ability, but also the culturally cognitive differences which remain such a topic of controversy. In multilingual settings also, there is often a problem of total language ability: are all the codes used equally effective for communication and cognition? I discuss this point later. Like the social and linguistic circumstances of language learning, this has not received much experimental attention.

4. Linguistic Description: models and reality

Bernstein's work suggests that linguistic competence is not describable in universal terms, and I have already suggested that without a theory of language acquisition that allows for limitations and especially for alternatives, it is impossible to explain or systematise the apparently very unstable or variable varieties of language that are actually in use, which appear to make nonsense of that common linguistic informant, 'the intuitions of the native speaker'. In a multi-lingual community, whose intuitions are "reliable"? The problems

1. See Hymes' complaints (e.g. 1962): in 1968, Pride commented that the situation remained the same. It is clear that for instance the workers on the Nuffield Survey of child language at Edinburgh ignore much social data.

2. When Chomsky wrote 'Syntax Structures' (1957) he was Bloomfieldian linguist enough to envisage a grammar that would account for the utterances of a native speaker (pp.13, 14). Lyons stresses that he now includes such intuitions as part of the subject matter the linguist has to account for. (see e.g. pp.88-9) From a socio-linguistic point of view the intuitions of any speaker have to be accounted for.
of description which may occur can be illustrated from the work of those interested in creole languages, which are notoriously unstable in detail.

In the Caribbean, for instance, 'English' which is unintelligible to native-born Britishers (whatever their own dialects) is spoken by many who know no other language, but even more confusingly, these people may fluctuate between something like 'Standard English', and highly deviant forms. How to describe their language? When Le Page studied the speech of schoolchildren in British Honduras, he found such apparently random shifts in style (and even between English and Spanish) that he felt forced to reject the notion of langue as a linguistic system:

'the more one probes, the more the supposedly autonomous systems are seen to be constructs which each of us makes for himself, out of the data presented to us, and according to our needs'.


This Chomskian conclusion is not, however, accompanied by belief in 'linguistic competence': Le Page feels forced to reject any langue : parole dichotomy.

We need empirical studies like Le Page's to bring home to linguists how impossible it is to rely on 'the intuition of the native speaker' as a criterion. But the fallacy is compound: such intuitions are the informant's model, not 'reality'. The point is now familiar to anthropologists, but is not always taken by linguists (including Chomsky).

1. see footnote 2, p.44. To say that intuition is an 'important part of the linguist's data' (Lyons, 1969, p.154) still does not fully take the point - Lyons significantly does not himself question the phrase 'native speaker'.
Le Page himself confuses models with reality. He seems to think that if he could aggregate the idiolects of British Honduras, and make certain sociological correlations, he would discover 'British Honduran Creole'. This language will not be uniform, but variable - its grammar will be particularly indeterminate - nevertheless, it will be 'the language'. Le Page considers that existing Creole grammars are 'idealised constructs by...native speakers, each recalling the vernacular of their youth' (p.205). This is as much as to say an inadequate model; but the most that Le Page could do would be to construct a better one, i.e. a model that accounted for more of the data. He could not describe 'the language', whether or not this had apparently determinate bounds, and no single model of 'langue' or 'competence' could produce 'real' parole.

The descriptive linguist, like the social anthropologist, has to define his universe. Analysing the mass of speech events coming from people said to speak the same language, the linguist abstracts the consistently distinctive features which will then define what that language is. The process is necessarily circular, and he must act as if 'a language' exists.¹ Le Page's study shows that this is an arbitrary process, which will not work for some language situations.

¹. The alternative method of social anthropologists, to select one small part of the universe for analysis as 'representative', is probably often used by linguists as well. Theoretically, it is of course even more defective.
The only possible solution seems to be to disregard geography, and set up a model which distinguishes degrees of shared rules. Such a model was suggested by De Camp for Jamaican English, as a set of conversion rules deriving from 'Standard English' rules:

'...the result could be a grammar not of one but of all varieties of Jamaican Creole...As one moves down the row of speakers, one applies more and more of the conversion rules appended to our grammar...'

(1962, p.231)

De Camp is methodologically more sound than Le Page for he does not confuse levels of abstraction, and he is also truer to the communicative nature of language, which an individual-centred description cannot reveal. In this regard, it cannot be true to say as Dalby says, that 'a community of idiolects represents the highest level of linguistic relationship' (1967, p.171). It is indeed linguistic relationships that are sought, and these are rules in the sense that the same speaker may base different rules on different occasions, and at different periods in his life. The 'community of idiolects' is merely the raw material from which these relations can be constructed. That there can be lack of 'fit' between the 'social community' and the 'language' is another reason to distinguish linguistic rules from territorially demarcated populations.
5. What is a Language?

What we heedlessly and somewhat rashly call 'a language' is the aggregate of millions of ... microcosms many of which evince such aberrant linguistic comportment that the question arises whether they should not be grouped into other 'languages'.

(Martinet in Weinreich, 1953, p.vii)

Ordinary people certainly think there are languages, or even if they do not make this conceptualisation, they recognise that other people speak differently from themselves, even so as not to be understood. Languages are therefore social facts, but this means, in a way not brought out by Durkheim, that they are what people believe about their speakers as well as being collective representations in themselves. I have criticised langue: parole and competence:performance distinctions on sociological grounds as well as "logical" ones: since both these sets of distinctions purport to divide up any given language, it remains to examine this basic 'given' also.

There is obviously an objective, discoverable linguistic element in any classification of 'a language', but its extent may be hard to determine comparatively. Intelligibility, for instance, which seems the most common and fundamental distinction one can make, is not an objective criterion.¹

¹. As the examples I give show, it is not simply a 'subjective' one either, (Dalby, 1967, p.172), because the factors affecting one's judgment are largely (though not of course entirely) social.
Hockett set up a formula to compute dialect flexion as a means to categorize languages. His criteria, he said,

'stem from an everyday assumption about language: that people who "speak the same language" can understand each other and conversely that people who cannot understand each other must be speaking "different languages". The facts are not so simple, yet the everyday expectation can be modified to yield more formal grounds for idiolect-grouping.'

(1958, p.322)

Unfortunately, this 'everyday assumption' may lead to "illogical" divisions, as the existence of one-way intelligibility proves. Valkoff comments that labourers from the Cape Verde Islands understood the people of St. Thomas (but not vice versa) because they were familiar with a large number of dialects on their own island (1960, p.120). They were already used to applying what Weinreich called an 'automatic conversion formula' which enabled them to translate the unfamiliar sounds of St. Thomas into known ones.

Although one might dismiss such cases as exceptional, evidence remains that intelligibility rests not on linguistic criteria alone, or on peoples' sophistication in dealing with the "linguistic" problems, but on sociological judgments. This was pointed out conclusively by Wolff, in an article on 'Intelligibility and Inter-Ethnic

1. 'Thus in central Romansch most [awg] occurrences of one village correspond to [ay] sequences of another and to [aw] sequences of a third. In so far as such conversions are regular, they diminish the interdialectal gap.' (1953, p.2.)
Attitudes' (1959). When he was setting up orthographies in Nigeria, he
found that there might be a low correlation between similarity in
vocabulary and grammar, and 'intelligibility, real or proven'.
Kalabari speakers, claimed, in opposition to Wolff's linguistic evidence,
that Nembe was a different, and unintelligible, language. Nembe
speakers, however, said they could understand Kalabari. Since the
Kalabari have overtaken their neighbours, and with the rise of Port
Harcourt have become prosperous, while Nembe and Brass, once superior,
are now reduced to 'miserable fishing villages by the shifting sandbanks
of the lower Niger'; (p.442) Wolff is led to ask 'is it possible to
speak of a "pecking order" of unintelligibility?' (p.445).

It is fairly common for people to feign ignorance of a language if
they judge it politic or status-maintaining to do so, but Wolff's
contrastive account of the Angas suggests an additional answer to his
question. The Angas, a people of the Plateau, told Wolff they could
understand Hausa, the power language of Northern Nigeria, but not Sura,
a language far more closely related to Angas, and spoken adjacently.
In our terms, the Angas must in fact have learnt Hausa, at a passive
recognition level, though they might not have learnt how to speak it,
at the expressive, reproductive level of learning. Their explanation
of intelligibility does not derive from the same premisses as the
linguist's - a difficulty familiar to the anthropologist.

Linguists who try to measure degrees of intelligibility are usually
trying to establish the boundaries of the dialects which make up
"a language" whereas, as Sapir pointed out:

"there is no real difference between a "dialect" and a "language" which can be shown to be related, however remotely, to another language."

(1949, p.83)

To him all the Romance languages...and all Indo-Aryan vernaculars are in a sense...merely dialects of a common Aryan or Indo European language (ibid). Sapir thus distinguishes languages only by genetic criteria; all sub-groups are socio-cultural constructs.

But it is important to notice that intelligibility crosses genetic barriers. Guimperz has pointed out that in India, there are people who do not indeed understand geographically distant speakers of a dialect related to their own, but who do understand their neighbours, speaking a genetically unrelated language. (in ed. Hymes, 1964, p.418). Matching the translations made by these borderland bilinguals of each others' words, he found that

"varieties of both languages are analyzable in terms of a common set of grammatical categories, e.g. pronouns, adverbs, inflectional patterns, etc., and in terms of identical rules for their combination in sentence structures.

(1967, p.52).

That is to say, even when two different languages are compared, 'they differ only in their morphophonemics' (i.e. in the rules which determine

1. e.g. Kay Williamson's Grammar of the Kolukuma Dialect of Ijo which treats Ijo as a collection of 'dialects' 'each' at least partially intelligible with several others. She explicitly follows Hockett's formula of 'dialect flexion' (q.v. above) in setting up this relation. (1965, p.1)
the phonetic shape of relevant words and affixes'). Since, however it is at this level that genetic relationships are usually determined, and

'it is the area of structure where the two varieties differ most, it is not surprising that historical linguists in the past have failed to make systematic analyses of the underlying similarities'.

(p.54).

Gumperz has discovered these linguistic similarities by focussing on communication —by identifying networks of speakers as well as trying to elicit the linguistic features of what they speak. This in turn makes him see language relationship as a changing process, in which bilingualism can 'materially change the structure of local speech varieties' (p.49). His analysis, while throwing light on the possible linguistic bases for intelligibility, shows that changes in linguistic form must occur for sociological reasons: in the caste-divided Indian villages he describes, communication is no guarantor of commumality.

Such a communicative, processual view of language brings out points of interest to both linguists and social anthropologists:

'The view that language distance is a function of social interaction and social context raises some interesting general problems. If in spite of surface appearances, as our Indian examples indicate, language is not necessarily a serious barrier to communication, why do such differences maintain themselves over long periods of time? What is it within the system of roles and statuses or in the norms of social interaction that favours the retention of such overt symbols of distinctness? Under what conditions do such symbols disappear?'

(p.56).
Evidently linguistic change, which can only be described on the assumption of distinct and lasting forms, must, correspondingly be seen as a social process, - and here we return to the points made at the beginning of the chapter.

It is also noteworthy that Gumperz came to his conclusions through examination of a multilayered, multilingual society, and this led him to measure language distance as 'a function of the number of non-shared rules' found in a sufficiently large sample of speakers. Here again we find the 'linguistic' view of 'a language' postulated by De Camp. (One can see from Gumperz' account at how many levels such rules can operate). I discuss in the next chapter some problems of linguistic description from the point of view of individual speakers.
CHAPTER THREE: MULTILINGUALISM

1. Problems of Measurement and Identification

The boundaries of a language, as we have seen, are hard to draw, and if surveyed geographically, may be 'hidden in transitions' (Saussure, p.204). That is to say, whatever the version of a language described in the textbooks, it may gradually seem more and more like the next language as one moves territorially from one lot of speakers to the next: for instance,

'in the classic example of the Dutch-German dialect area, we have a complex chain of dialects with gradual differences from dialect to dialect but a language boundary. The area as a whole, however, has a higher rank than that of language'

(Lehr, 1960, p.42).

An overriding standard language may coexist with these spoken chains, and its nature and influence deserve social enquiry: I return to this subject in Chapter Five. Historians of language cannot confine themselves to the 'standard' because

'the coexistence, in a number of humble peasants, of two at times conflicting sets of linguistic habits, the one a prestigious language, the other a despised patois, may have important repercussions on the linguistic history of that part of the world'

(Martinet, in Weinreich op.cit., p.viii).

It is not so easy to trace interaction if there are no written records of the 'despised patois'. In areas of no literacy, the traditional stamping ground of social anthropologists, the time-depth of record is so shallow that language classification, on the scale developed for Indo-
European languages is impossible:

"any classification of African languages can be no more than a classification of modern vernaculars"  
(Dalby, 1966, pp.173-4).

A surprising amount of historical information about the topography of named groups can be derived from the records of European and Arab visitors to Africa, and work of this kind for the West coast has at the least tended to disprove some of the hypotheses of mass migration within the period of European contact, and of tribal disintegration being caused by the slave-trade. But earlier than this few profitable correlations of language and speaker can be made; historian and social anthropologist will find for instance that

"the Bantu line (that historico-linguistic figment) swings back and forth bewilderingly over vast stretches of country, fortunately to no great danger to the inhabitants"  
(Ardener, 1969, p.6).

Ardener explains in this paper why historical linguistics necessarily lack historical value; this account assumes the fact that there is no necessary historical link between languages and their speakers - a single line of transmission which can be postulated for a language does not entail a corresponding genetic line of speakers. Languages die out because their speakers die out, but equally, people can go over to another

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1. See e.g. the work of Hair, and Ardener (1966). It is possible to relate many of the examples of African languages given by travellers and the areas mentioned by them, so as to identify languages still spoken, and at the same points, today. These early vocabularies are discussed in Part II of this thesis, for the light they throw on the development of pidgins on the West African coast.
It is sometimes possible to attest this process historically, as for today's 'Black Caribs' of the Caribbean:

'These [runaway] Negroes knew they were no match for the Europeans: in 1668 and again in 1683 the Carib both of St.Vincent and of Dominica had been obliged to submit to the English, and to promise to hand over all runaway slaves. Their only hope of continued freedom lay, therefore, in the adoption of the Indians' language and culture and, in so far as this might be achieved, in the mingling of their blood; for the Europeans had long decided that the Carib were useless as slaves.'

(Taylor, 1951, p.138)

Even without written records, the discrepancy between these Negroes and their language would be puzzling, but in many parts of the world such histories cannot be deduced, except occasionally "in reverse" so to speak, where linguistic islands attest a differential history for part of an otherwise linked group of peoples. ¹

These points may seem obvious, but they have not always been appreciated, even by linguists. ² It is also necessary to see how linguists

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1. Questions of language shift occur in all studies of conquest states, for instance, (but often we have no history of such a conquest available). Amongst a multitude of examples the anomalous linguistic position of the Itsekiri peoples of the Benin kingdom might be cited (Bradbury and Lloyd, 1957), and for a spectrum of political, cultural, social and linguistic admixture see p.61 and footnote 2, p.61 (ibid.)

2. An example of this in African language studies is the 'Hamitic Hypothesis': linguists were clearly swayed by a set of stereotype beliefs about heroic Hamite herders and brutish Bantu ("negro") agriculturists in their linguistic assignment of Nala to the Hamitic group. Armstrong (1964) describes the history of this hypothesis and the work of Greenberg and others in demolishing it. Though their work should in time kill the Hamitic myth (still accepted and propagated by naïve writers, e.g. Haywood and Clarke, the historians of the R.A.F. (1964), it remains to be repeated that linguistic evidence alone will tell us nothing of the cultural affiliations of speakers, nor of their genetic makeup. These facts were ignored by the linguists who used glottochronology, a now more or less exploded method of reconstructing language history. It assumed a...
have come to the corresponding topics of bi- or multi-lingualism, in order to estimate the value of their descriptions to social anthropologists.

Much of the current interest in 'sociolinguistics' is focused on multilingual situations, and has arisen from studies of multilingualism. One can understand why from an examination of Uriel Weinreich's pioneer study, Languages in Contact (1953), which has been very influential.

The title is significant. Weinrich worked as a structuralist, assuming 'the organisation of linguistic forms into a definite system, different for every language and to a considerable degree independent of non-linguistic experience and behavior' (p.5).

But he found himself looking at the 'loci of contact': bilingual speakers, whose use of either language showed mutual 'interference', 'deviations from the norm... that invite the interest of the linguist' (p.1).

It is through bilingual use that lexical borrowing occurs; the phonological merging of two systems was also investigated by Weinreich.

The concept of 'interference' has been modified (e.g. by Haugen, 1956) - it clearly does not fit many linguistic situations, and is dependent on a rigidly Saussurean notion of linguistic system, which I have already

footnote 2 cont. from p.56. constant relation between language and culture, and also a constant rate of language change (see Chapter 7, below).

Armstrong's account of the study of West African languages, if optimistically historicist, is an interesting introduction to the history of West African language studies. Hair's 1967 study The Early Study of Nigerian Languages is historically rather than linguistically evaluative. Armstrong's comments on the value of Koelle's work (1854) have been reinforced by the studies based on it by modern linguists, published in recent years in the Sierra Leone Language Review (now African Language Review).
But the important point was that Weinreich found such interference could not be wholly explained by the structures of the two languages in question.

'A full account of interference in a language-contact situation, including the diffusion, persistence and evanescence of a particular interference phenomenon, is possible only if the extra-linguistic factors are considered' (p.3).

These 'extra-linguistic factors' were 'socio-cultural' ones, and Weinreich devotes some part of his book to analysing them.

Weinreich found in American anthropology only acculturation studies which appeared relevant, and it can be seen that these did not offer useful models for the sort of enquiry which he found he needed to institute, as to the pressures towards group identification which entailed the maintenance of two languages, or to interference from one of them. The scale of 'language loyalty' which he drew up has been used and discussed by succeeding workers, but they have tended to work within the framework set up by Weinreich, which was not a sociological one, rather than approach the whole topic freshly. There thus remain a great many questions for social anthropologists, which I discuss again later in this chapter.

1. As Le Page noted, it was of no use in explaining the variations of language in British Honduras. Weinreich soon abandoned 'the illusion of a perfect system' (1954, in ed. Fishman 1968, p.309).

2. Particularly by Fishman, who has developed the notions of 'language maintenance and language shift' and 'dominance configurations' see e.g. 1967. But it is an underlying concept in most sociolinguistic work; sources see FN 1, p.32 below.
Another point, however must first be dealt with: the nature and measurement of bilingualism. Weinreich was not of course the first to deal with this; there was already an enormous literature on the subject. But he came to the conclusion that

'The mechanisms of interference, abstracted from the amount of interference, would appear to be the same whether the two systems are "languages", "dialects of the same language", or "varieties of the same dialect". (p.4).

It can reasonably be said, too, that if we are considering the uses to which people put differences in language, the discriminations they make and the values they put upon the differences, the same wide scope of "bilingualism" holds. From the point of view of any individual, 'language' is his communicative ability - the different sorts of people he can understand, talk to, communicate with in writing or learn from in books. Judging by the number of groups we can communicate with, we are all bilingual, or multilingual.

2. Verbal Repertoires.

The term 'verbal repertoire' has been used by Gumperz for the total

1. See, for instance, the 658 titles listed by Weinreich; in 1956 Haugen listed some 500 for the Americas, and a wide variety of articles have appeared since, together with books, like Vildomec's (1963) which also reviews the subject. I refer to several writers with sociolinguistic interests, but cannot of course look other than selectively at a topic with many aspects of interest to social anthropologists. Psychological and semantic studies, for instance, are little dealt with here. Aspects of multilingualism in Nigeria are discussed in Part II.

2. See articles, 1964 on. The concept has been taken up by Hymes and utilised e.g. by Tanner 1967 (see pp.63, 64, 122 below).
of communication codes used by an individual, and also for the total of codes used in a given community.

"Whenever several languages or dialects appear regularly as weapons of language choice, they form a behavioral whole, regardless of grammatical distinctness, and must be regarded as constituent varieties of the same verbal repertoire."

(1964, p.140).

I concluded the last chapter with some examples by Gumperz of the linguistic differences obtaining between two items in such a repertoire, where

"language distance can... be measured as a function of the number of non-shared rules!"

(1967, p.50).

In this case, two separate languages (as they would normally be called) prove to have more shared rules than styles of New York speech, and this is another reason to ignore problems of bilingualism and multilingualism in definitional terms, for

"in a monolingual society, selection is limited to alternates of the same language. In bilingual or bi-dialectal societies, however, choice between two dialects or two languages may fulfill social functions similar to stylistic alternatives in monolingual societies"

(1966, p.30).

In this sense we are all multilingual, all able to classify groups of people, and topics or occasions, by using different language varieties for them. Although the authors I quote may use 'bilingualism' or 'multilingualism' for comparable situations I shall use 'multilingualism' for repertoires whatever the differences between their codes, and I shall try to confine 'bilingualism' to interpreter situations. Bilinguals of this kind have been called bridge-builders by linguists whose assumptions
are coloured by living in a country of immigrants; where however they build a bridge between two distinct groups their own status is ambiguous: in trade and conquest conditions they are necessary but not respected; their anomaly may be compounded by miscegenation. I describe later in the thesis the part played by communities of such bilinguals on the West Coast of Africa.

The bi- or multi-lingualism much investigated recently by sociolinguists is not of this kind. There are many examples of the kind I have quoted from Gumperz: groups communicating with each other and yet maintaining distinct forms of language. This occurs at any major border area, but also a community which employs one form within its borders and another for dealings with its neighbours may utilise the latter internally for some topics. Thus, in the trilingual community of Sauris described by Denison, adults may switch from the local dialect to Italian (the 'official' language) if they want emotionally to distance the situation (1968, 1969).

Stable multilingualism is found in many uncentralised, isolated areas, where there is no overriding style of language to which speakers feel they have access, as the English language is widely felt to have an existence independent of the nationality of its many speakers. 'Repertoire' is a suitable model for situations of the kind described in New Guinea by Salisbury (1962), and in Brazil by Sorensen (1967)-chains or sets of communities

1. Haugen uses the phrases specifically for immigrant situations (1956, p.11), unlike Hockett, who defines 'bilinguals or polyglots' generally in these terms (1958, p.8).
who are all of the same culture and frequently intermarry, but retain the distinctiveness of their own language varieties.

In Great Britain, however, the levels of difference between varieties in a repertoire will not be like this. Besides the regional varieties, (with their social connotations) there are the styles appropriate for different topics, speakers and audiences; registers as British linguists have called them. These can be signalled often by a single lexical collocation or grammatical structure: Halliday, McIntosh and Strevens point out how easily we contextuallyize 'mix well' and 'mixes well'. There may also be a register-dialect tie:

'It is a linguistic error to give a radio commentary in cockney or sing popular songs in the Queen's English'

(1964, p.94).

Halliday et al. have proposed a simple division between dialect and register:

'A dialect is a variety of a language distinguished according to the user: different groups of people within the language community speak different dialects...The name given to a variety of a language distinguished according to use is 'register'. (p.87).

But there are difficulties with these definitions in practice, as I shall show in the next chapter. It does not seem possible to correlate a formally defined style with every different situation of use — and quite often the linguistic tail wags the situational dog, as McIntosh points out (1965, pp.11, 12). English speakers (in Britain) signal their intentions through a complex of intonational contour and lexical collocation, as well as syntactic structure that shifts at each cue from the other interlocutor in ways which linguists are only now beginning to appreciate (see especially Pride's sensitive approach, 1969a;
Crystal op. cit. 1969, reviews paralinguistic approaches). To break down the flux of speech into 'occasions' such as advertising commercials, sermons or political speeches, well defined as these are, misses much of the stuff of social life, all organised through language structures which signal status, establish relative positions, "create the right note", let us "get away with murder" and so on...

The notion of repertoire may therefore be only a very rough and ready guide to gross divisions of code, and cannot by itself analyse the equally important means of transition between them. Tanner (1967) has suggested how Indonesian speakers "try out" phrases of another code when they wish to move from the neutral code to another with specific connotations. In England the movements may be fluid and subtle, phrases not tied to any linguistically definable style but socially significant all the same, and as necessary for speakers to control.

It also becomes clear on reflection that the codes in verbal repertoires may be quantitatively copious, but not qualitatively so. A trader, for instance, may be able to converse as buyer or seller in many language varieties, and in this sense he would have a large repertoire. Yet he may not be able to communicate effectively in certain relationships or on certain topics in any of his varieties: in this sense his repertoire is limited. In communicative terms, he cannot handle some sorts of messages. Although repertoire in this sense may seem over-expanded, to include more than the formal linguistic properties of codes,

1. Such selection was one of the drawbacks of Pike's approach (see pp. 7-8 above.)
the expansion is only semantic.

The theories of Bernstein are obviously relevant here: we cannot assume that codes are in any way equivalent. Analysis, such as Gumperz's, of the linguistic distance between codes, will probably show that for a great deal of multilingualism only one set of rules, including semantic rules, with a few similar conversion formulae are needed: it does not imply cognitive development of the sort said by Bernstein to be expressed through elaborated codes, which could also perhaps be called qualitatively rich repertoires.

So far I have considered language from the point of view of the individual user. Individual repertoires, of course, may cut across language divisions, and explain the blurry edges which bother the descriptive linguist in for instance the Caribbean, as in the article by Le Page already discussed. From a consideration of such repertoires, too, one discovers that

"the range of uses, or functional range, of a language is the product of the uses to which its specialized varieties can be put."

Tanner 1967 (p.27).

Application of this hypothesis to her material leads Tanner to consider that languages are not functionally equivalent. And it is for this reason that I think registers, varieties, styles, dialects, languages may have to be treated on a level as items in a repertoire, when one wants to examine the definition of 'a language', or such a classification that has already been made.
An individual-centred view of language is appropriate to transactional analysis, as Pride has pointed out (1969b). But one cannot confine sociolinguistic attention to individual or face-to-face encounters, both because the social meaning of language implies representativeness, and because social analysis involves the relations between individuals and different sizes of groups. So far, anthropologists' attention has been directed toward the ethnography of language use in given communities; I discuss treatments of this kind in the next chapter. The sociolinguistic accounts of large-scale multilingualism have also to be considered, and the whole topic of the social uses of language differentiation, as anthropologists might approach it.


Any description of multilingualism is subject to definitional difficulties of the kind I have already outlined, and further complicated by the unreliability of people's evaluation of their own language behaviour - it is this kind of judgment which is usually recorded in census returns. One must, therefore, be reserved about any conclusions as to large-scale language behaviour, particularly where census figures are unreliable anyway. Nowadays there are many practical reasons

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1. 'It is estimated that from 4.7 to 8.5 million persons were omitted from the 1960 census of the United States' (Lieberson 1966, p.144). Census figures in, say, Nigeria are notoriously inaccurate. Lieberson discussed actual examples of deficiency in linguistic data arising from incomparable, insufficient or unanswerable census questions.
why governments should need to know, in detail, the total language situation within their borders, but often there are just as many accompanying reasons why the enquiries should be undertaken ineptly, answered falsely, and lead to misleading conclusions.¹

Even the best of censuses could not be expected to bring to light many socially significant features of language use, if these are not already recognised by a name and a mythology. 'Diglossia' for instance, the feature so named by Ferguson in 1959, is distinguished in Greece in this way,² but there may be other countries where no such conscious discrimination occurs between a high prestige, written variety of language and a low prestige spoken one. It would be difficult to get data on this except by a set of complementary procedures, small and large-scale investigations of written material, spoken varieties, settings of use, teaching practice etc.

An investigation of this kind has been taking place in East Africa (the Survey of Language Use and Language Teaching in Eastern Africa)³

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¹ See e.g. the discussion in Bright, 1966, p.306ff on the variable implications of the Indian Census of 1951, and the conclusions in it about the status of Hindi as a lingua franca; also the examples in Lieberson, op.cit.

² As the two styles Katharevousa and dhimotiki. (I discuss 'diglossia' further in Chapter 5). One linguist's account for Greece is Householder, 1963. A recent move in the long political dispute about these modes is the colonels' decision to insist on teaching through the 'literary' medium (Times Lit.Supp. June 6, 1968, p.599).

³ See e.g. Prator & Whiteley (1967, p.59-167), an illuminating account of the research problems in multilingual countries. Professor Whiteley tells me that the Survey's findings should be published shortly.
which balances "anthropological", participant observation with larger scale methods. This is necessary to discover differential use in different situations but even then there is the problem that the observer's presence may itself affect language choice by the participants: I think we have to assume that this may happen in any investigation of language behaviour.

Such deficiencies in large-scale accounting may seem obvious to social anthropologists, but it seems worth reiterating their defects when very often conclusions drawn from them are diffused far from their source, used "for rough comparison" etc., so that their flimsy foundations are forgotten. Moreover statisticians and indeed social scientists generally have been very naif about language use and, if coming from technologically advanced countries, may unconsciously skew their statistical conclusions to demonstrate the assumed necessity of monolithic monolingualism and literacy for 'advancement'.

1. Another feature of language not suitable to a census, and not discoverable from sampling; cp. Leach 1967, on the inability of statistical methods to elicit social facts.

2. A view put forward also by a sociologist (with some surprise) after reading the literature. He has some perceptive comments on the uses of linguistic awareness for sociology (Grimshaw in ed. Lieberson, 1966, p.201).

3. This has been convincingly argued by Fishman, attacking the constructions of 'cross-polity files' (devised to enable 'investigators to compare individual polities...and to gauge the interaction between various social, economic, political, and cultural factors across polities') (in ed. Lieberson, p.19). See also my discussion of Inglehart and Woodward's conclusions, in Chapter 5.
The best linguists are well aware of the deficiencies in their material, but even they seem to be seduced by the general belief in statistical formulation, to offer typologies of language use which are dangerous precisely because they are offered to readers who lack the informed scepticism of those who drew them up. After one such presentation by Ferguson, who commented on some of the exceptions to his rules, one conference member concluded:

"The very features you treat as shortcoming of your method, as troubles for which you seek remedies, are essential characteristics of linguistic situations and may be of critical interest in themselves. I'm arguing that linguistic phenomena, in that they they consist of members' common ways of talking, are METHODS for producing organizations of everyday activities..." (in ed. Bright 1966, p.323.)

I don't know what notice has been taken of Garfinkel's statement, but I think it points the way to a properly anthropological approach to multilingualism, which has as yet hardly been developed at all.

1. The discussion after Ferguson's paper brings out a number of very telling objections to his method. But c.p. also Stewart (1962, rewritten for ed. Fishman, 1968), Kloss, whose modest account nevertheless depends on defining 'community' as 'all the citizens of a given state but excluding members of those whose mother tongue is spoken natively by less than three per cent' (1966, p.7). Fishman himself, despite his own cautions, has unnerving confidence in his own formulae (1967) and moves to typological generalisation (1969). Pride discusses at length the crudity of much sociolinguistic discrimination (1969(a), 1969(b)).

2. An amusing answer to my query is provided by an article in New Society's 'The Sociological Swi.' by Jackie Lukes (18th June 1970, no.403, p.1050) which suggests that Garfinkel is the new guru for trendy sociologists. But see p.111 below.
4. **The Informants' Model of Language.**

We have already seen how the Nembe and the Kalabari delimited themselves and each other by non-identical criteria, so that their definitions of language boundary were also non-equivalent. This led the orthographer to classify Nembe and Kalabari as separate languages, despite linguistic evidence to the contrary. One could easily imagine the choice going the other way, according to the political predilections of the judge.

I have already commented that languages tend to be demarcated on sociological grounds, but (as the example of Wolff shows), the fact that there may be clashing classifications does not usually appear in the linguistic records. Yet it is important to the social anthropologist, seeking to discriminate between models of social organisation and the conceptualisations offered by his informants. The theoretical implications were mentioned by Nadel, but not developed in sociolinguistic terms. He describes a case analogous to the Nembe-Kalabari one, of the group conquered by the Nupe who called themselves Nupe whereas other Nupe 'would refer to these newcomers disparagingly by their tribal name'; Nadel concludes:

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1. Wolff, 1959c, p.35.

2. Nadel limits his discussion of verbal identification to naming.
"the ambiguous nomenclature, the conflicting theory, and the uncertain boundaries of this widest group - a state growing by conquest and the absorption of alien people - thus all go together!"

(1951, p.149).

It is possible that the structure of social organisation was also symbolised for some (but not all) of those who operated it by recognising language difference. Or, we see a not surprising use of the languages available to indicate social distance. In the community of Sauris already mentioned, a threefold division of village community, province and nation (with the corresponding tensions of segmentary opposition) is expressed through the choice of one of the three languages available (Denison, 1969).

The inhabitants of Sauris have a sharp, conscious awareness of the difference between their codes, which is consonant with their self-contained isolation from the wider world. But peoples' conscious intentions do not always match their actual use, and it is such discrepancies which may be sociologically significant. Gumperz, recounting his study of a Norwegian community, commented that language switching (from the dialect to boknal) occurred among friends against their own expressed values.

"People say, "We are from Hemnes. We speak Hemnes dialect wherever we are." As a matter of fact, they were very upset when we played back the tapes and found they were shifting. Our best informant, who is also trained as a philologist, refused to transcribe the tapes - he said, "I couldn't possibly do this. It would upset me too much."

(1966, p.43).
An analysis which simply recorded the shift as evidence that, among equals, topic controlled code choice (the sort of sociolinguistic conclusion usually found) would miss this contradiction. It may suggest that the speakers' allegiances were more ambivalent than they allowed themselves to feel. Whatever the eventual conclusion, conflict between assumed and actual choice of 'diatypic distinctions' (= varieties in repertoire) adds a dimension to Denison's summary that the presence of such distinctions implies

'a social analysis and categorisation of situations by participants over and above the primary semantic analysis presupposed by any linguistic text in an act of communication' (1969, p.2).

It is of course impossible to detect these contradictions without some careful linguistic analysis. In showing the deficiencies of much language classification, I do not wish to suggest that evaluations of social distance can replace an abandoned notion of linguistic distance. Linguistic distance must be measured, but it may operate at different levels; this will be clear from the experiments into Indian bilingualism I mentioned in the last chapter. Here the distinctions were no doubt arrived at after empirical observation - these speakers of 'unrelated languages' nevertheless communicated.

One reason to distrust census figures on bilingualism or any such information gathered by questionnaire, is the overriding power of stereotype over actuality. If people have strong values attached to some

1. viz. his summary of the linguistic aspects of communication for the benefit of social anthropologists.
aspect of language use they are generally incapable of knowing what they actually do. A good example has been provided by Rona, in his discussion of bilingualism in Paraguay (1966). It is commonly believed, both inside and outside the country, that Paraguay is a truly bilingual country. But Rona was able to show that even on preliminary analysis of census returns 93.9% of the population knows Guarani, but only 58.5% knows Spanish, with a lower incidence of bilingualism outside the capital. (Rona, 1966, p.284).

If these figures are compared with the answers of some quite well-educated Paraguayans to a questionnaire which elicited not only their beliefs about their language competence but also their ability to translate either way, the incidence of bilingualism seems far less. It is clear that the informants often had little real fluency in Spanish, but at the same time they could not manage to translate even slightly technical material into Guarani. The languages thus appear to stand in imbalanced complementarity; they are not, though Paraguayans think so, functionally equivalent.

It is claimed in the discussion on this paper that the Paraguayan pattern was unique. I would think on the contrary it is a common one, as I think will appear from my account of English in Nigeria. Both sets of data are in a sense ‘true’, but there is practical cause to

1. It is beliefs about language use which are probably recorded by Rubin (1962, 68). Either way, however, communication may be successful: if operating with a shared level of ability, within a common cultural code.
distinguish the sorts of truth involved, for while it is absolutely necessary to know what peoples' language beliefs are, one cannot, as Professor Rona pointed out, actually plan language alterations (e.g. to make Guarani 'functionally equivalent' to Spanish, as it is thought to be) unless the "operational truth" about their language achievement is appreciated.

It appeared to me in Nigeria that some of my students had an idealised conception of English, revealed in their novels and stories, which fitted badly not only expatriate usage (as one would expect) but also their own performance. One can compare the statement by Gumperz and Naim,

'Hindi and Urdu therefore might best be characterised, not in terms of actual speech, but as norms of ideal behaviour in the sociologists' sense' (1960, p.100).

Such idealisations are a sort of folk langue, but it remains to be investigated whether they affect actual language use. They are certainly likely to be invoked in the social categorisation of others, and this may create changes in usage.

The two different models of behaviour, one derivable from acknowledged beliefs and the other from observation, are of course familiar to social anthropologists. It must not be assumed however, that the deeper truth lies in the patterning of the structure itself, as been claimed for myth. Instead we seem to see manipulation of the arbitrary features of the language code, sometimes with a subtlety that
recalls Lévi-Strauss's account of the 'intellectual dandyism' of the
Australian aborigines.¹ The value given to distinctions of form,
however, varies not only with the cultural perceptiveness of any group,
the attention it seems prepared to give to fine distinctions,² but
also of course the attitude it has to itself vis-à-vis its neighbours.
Again and again we observe language difference being utilised to
accentuate political distinctiveness, not the other way round. (I discuss
this point further in Chapter 5).

Whether such distinctions of form are ever more than one variable
in the pattern of cultural traits that groups can use for social
identification cannot be decided without more investigation. I think
this needs to be investigation with a communicative focus, as described
in the first chapter, examining both form and message and their interaction.
This means uniting the skills of the linguist and the literary critic, but
these too are not enough without a sociological viewpoint. Linguists and

¹. 1967, p.89-90.

². All languages are structured with fine distinctions that do not seem
related formally to other categories. (We could not expect them to be
directly relatable to the users' own classifications, see pp.55-56). These
distinctions are not consciously understood by most users. Though verbal
art is conscious and deliberate, the distinctions I mean are those which
exist independent of notice, (see e.g. Lévi-Strauss 1951, p.156) but may
be consciously appreciated and used - or some part of them - as signs of
difference in the users. The first shibboleth was a verbal one; but
quite gross differences can also be ignored or treated as 'free
variation'.

even 'sociolinguists' as I have tried to show, have rarely worked in this way, and interest by social anthropologists is recent and still undeveloped.

5. Possible approaches to multilingualism for social anthropology.

One linguist really aware of social perspectives is J.J. Gumperz, whose pertinent questions about stable multilingualism began my discussion, at the end of the last chapter. His work is increasingly critical of the social assumptions of linguists, and it is presented in an explicitly social framework:

"What we are doing at this stage is throwing out hypotheses, and we know too little to generalize - but I think that one problem that affects most linguistic studies is that they are not based on formal analyses of social systems of the type that a social anthropologist makes" (1966, p.45).

He for instance tried to distinguish speech community from society, by confining its social activity to interaction; it is

'any human aggregate characterised by regular and frequent interaction over a significant span of time and set off from other such aggregates by differences in the frequency of interaction.' (1964, p.137).

But what does 'interaction' involve? Gumperz has generally confined himself to pointing out that 'linguistic community' can extend beyond 'society' (as in his Indian examples) and examining rather the type of interaction within the group. He has for instance selected networks and distinguished the open ones from the closed by the choice of
language variety. But this approach does not distinguish social groupings (which of course hardly appear in such an egalitarian area as he chose for his Norwegian study.)

Gumperz would not I think find, in the theory of social anthropology, a methodology suited to seeing what part is played by language in the making of 'a society'. Societies are usually taken as givens, and their nature is then discussed, within the given universe. Far from seeing what clusters of communication might constitute social interaction, the universe was often defined on linguistic grounds in the first place. Anthropologists have perhaps now become wary of saying "the tribe is defined by the language, which is said in Westermann and Bryan to be..." since the circularity of such definitions is now better understood. It is of course circular because the definition of language as I have said was frequently sociological, or 'naïf' in the first place. Indeed it is a part of the justification for the existence of a true unit for study, that the people in it consider themselves to be a society. (It may not be the whole truth, however, as the Nupe and Nembe examples show).

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1. See his 1966 article, which has many interesting comments on social and linguistic analysis.

2. See e.g. Dalby 1966,177-8 and his own re-classification of 'West Atlantic' (1965 esp. p.16).
Linguists, one might hope, might equally have agreed on definitions of language and dialect, and on making clear the differences between linguistic and social distance in their descriptions. Unfortunately, one cannot rely on this happening, as a quotation from a recent monograph shows:

"The 14 speech communities here designated to be "languages" are so designated because they correspond to political entities already set up on linguistic and ethnic grounds or because within the same "clan" (and this was true in two cases only) the speakers themselves indicated the importance of keeping the speech communities distinct."

(Crabb, 1965, p.5)

Whatever 'language' may mean linguistically, it usually implies a greater distance than the 'Ekoid Bantu Languages' described appear to manifest. In the same series the criterion of 'intelligibility' is invoked to demarcate the chain of Ijo dialects (Williamson, 1965), which may show comparably distinctive features, but this is impossible to tell, because of the incomparable principles of definition; if one may give the name 'definition' to such an olla podrida of models as Crabb's.

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1. Instead we find competing classifications - see Dalby, ibid., and Alexandre's trenchant account (1969, Ch.1). Westermann and Bryan, however, has been reissued without correction, although sometimes based on census information of fifty years ago (Kirk-Greene, 1969).

2. According to Crabb's own descriptions. This view is supported by Mr. H.W. Ardener's research.

3. Following Hockett's formula for an 'L-Complex' (1958, p.324). Wolff, however, lists four Ijo languages, of which Brass-Kembe and Kalabari are two (1959c, p.36).
If this is the quality of the linguistic evidence, then social anthropologists have an excuse for not making much use of it. On the other hand, it is surely time to revise the language-group based classifications of the Ethnographic Survey, which presumably hark back to out-dated assumptions of the identity of language and culture, possibly even race (as in divisions of Nilotes and Nilo-Hamites). Such identification, as I have pointed out, is untenable, and all sorts of exceptions have had to be incorporated into the descriptions. (see F.W.l, p.56 above for some examples). In Nigeria, for instance, although the language divisions used have some political correlation, one cannot deduce from the ethnography what sort of equivalence there is between the units selected for description.

One reason for the lack of sociolinguistic interest by social anthropologists is a historical one - the choice of simple and self-contained societies as far as possible. Here one would not expect complex repertoires:

1. I take Maquet's point that 'the classification of the survey is a pragmatic device, very well adapted to its purpose; it does not pretend to be based on theoretical foundations' (1969, p.6). But he gently implies its deficiencies in the rest of his article.

2. Of course this is partly due to the difficulty of relating timeless ethnography, abstracted often from historical accounts, to rapidly developing political associations which have indeed changed further since the surveys were written. The role of language among the 'Yoruba-speaking peoples', for instance, has been complex, and will be referred to in Chapter 5.
The fact of language in Ijaw, as we have said on several occasions, is that stratification where it exists, works first along the lines of geography and clan, a purely linguistic phenomenon then along differences of proficiency prevalent everywhere among individual speakers of all languages on earth, for example, those that put one man out of many in Ijaw for the role of bebe-are-owiei, that is orator or spokesman for a town or clan. Stratification then within a clan in Ijaw where all men speak one and the same language with a syntax, accent, lexis and register held in common and equal stock, is a matter of art and rhetoric.1

(J.P. Clark, 1968, p. 29)

Clark points out very clearly the differences from, say English, but the clue to "formal" Ijaw distinctions would presumably be found in 'art and rhetoric';1 the functional limitations of Ijaw are suggested by Clark's use of English to write in - and, since Clark is Ijaw himself, his name leads us to speculate on Ijaw relations with the British, in the wider society produced by colonialism.2

This brings me to a final suggestion of a way in which anthropologists can look to see what uses are made of differences in language form: this is their study in complex societies, together with the kind and quality of communication between sub-groups. In his attempt to define

1 The Plural Society in the West Indies', M.G. Smith tried briefly to

1. See e.g. Albert 1964. Obviously all linguistic observations are desperately difficult for a foreign observer, but the richness of perception gained by sensitivity to language is always noticeable in ethnography - e.g. Lienhardt's discussion of Dinka religious terms (1961).

2. Lastly, of course, Clark ignores the group antagonisms which led Ijaw (=Ijo) speakers to define others out of the community, as Wolff discovered - v. suura.
examine 'Language, the essential mode of communication between the
dominant and subordinate groups' (1965, p. 28 and see p. 145, p. 192),
but much more, clearly, could be done.¹ The 'plural society' may prove
to be an empty title for many different sorts of complexity —
contributions to Kuper and Smith's symposium on 'Pluralism in Africa'
were exploratory, and no coherent theory emerges — but obviously there
is much to be learnt of the kinds of relation and superordination and
cultural differentiation which can be contained within a group for
it to be called a society. The part played by communication is most
important and needs much investigation — we take it for granted as a
problem within our own society² — and the rare comments on language in
Pluralism in Africa indicate some of the problems; in Zanzibar, for
instance, neither Swahili nor the common religion of Islam appear
to have united Africans and Arabs (Lofchie,³ in Kuper and Smith, 1966).
There is one paper on language, by Leonard Thompson, a historian.
Bravely asserting that 'the linguistic situation in a society is more complex
and more subtle than is generally realised' (p. 354), he goes on to list
questions: 'What languages are spoken within the society? How are the
languages related to one another, to languages spoken in contiguous

¹. His suggestion that there are three linguistic styles, to match
three social strata, does not seem to be borne out by other evidence,
see e.g. De Camp, 1962.

². Bernstein's explorations being only one in a line of investigation
of 'the Two Nations'.

³. Who lists them as 'factors of integration', however.
societies, and to universal languages?...What are the discernible factors promoting change in the linguistic situation in the society (e.g. the kinship system, the administrative system, the educational system, the economic system?) (p.356).

Such questions reveal some perceptions of the problems, but also linguistic naivety, and only superficial understanding of the current work in sociolinguistics. It is to be hoped that social anthropologists will move further, and ask such questions as, what groups communicate within the society? What communication relations link it to other societies or sub-groups? How do groups distinguish themselves and each other linguistically? What value do they place on such distinctions? What differences are observed between linguistic norms and actual usage? Such questions require a good knowledge of the linguistic repertoires involved (and I go into this point in the next chapter) but if the changes in the shape of the society are to be understood, then the creative content of communication must be studied. One obvious linguistic variable in social change is the evolution of a standard language, and this I discuss in Chapter 5.

1. Probably confined to Gumperz 1967, which he cites.
CHAPTER FOUR

SITUATIONS AND SPEECH COMMUNITIES

1. The State of the Art

Interest in what we may broadly call the sociological aspects of language is steadily increasing. As the dates of my citations show, many of the articles and symposia collections devoted to multilingualism have appeared within the last five years. One's comments have therefore to be frequently updated, the more so as workers have begun to refine the necessary crudity of the first tentative statements and hypotheses. A comprehensive critical review of much of this work is J.B. Pride's forthcoming The Social Meaning of Language.

The state of the subject is thus fairly primitive, with most topics not yet systematically examined, and the criteria so far developed,

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2. Professor Pride kindly sent me draft chapters which are cited as Pride (1969a).

3. Many current findings have in fact however been anticipated by Sapir, whose writing remains most stimulating for those interested in social aspects of language.

4. A point made by Fishman, in his review of Bright (1968a).
like 'power and solidarity' or 'prestige' for values governing language choice, simplistic and ill-defined. Much more detailed work on the social determinants of linguistic behaviour is needed before such categorisations can be imposed.\(^1\) In fact, where so little ethnographic detail has been analysed, claims to parsimony and elegance are suspect.\(^2\)

At the same time, some theoretical principles are needed to organise such analysis, else all that may develop is a series of particularistic descriptions, 'a kind of snap-shot album' (Pride, 1969a, Introductory Notes).

I have referred for convenience to a 'subject', but I hope with Professor Dell Hymes that 'sociolinguistic' will become an adjective, designating an approach to a 'problem area', rather than another discipline fragmenting off. Hymes in this connection has sketched the history of 'ethno-linguistics', 'linguistic anthropology' and the like (1969); the current term 'sociolinguistics' reveals the dominance of linguists, but this should not deter anthropologists from starting from the social, instead of the linguistic problem.

Hymes himself is an exception among 'sociolinguists' in his anthropological interests, and he stresses the early importance of anthropologists in developing linguistics (1969). In the rest of this

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2. Examples of such economy, misplaced because it is based on inadequate data, are given on pp.68-9 above, and footnote 1, p.69.
chapter, I consider some of his contributions, preceded by an account of Malinowski's ideas on language, and their use and development by British linguists. As can be seen from a historical approach, all these linguists have an interest in two important definitional problems, that of situation, or the relation between the utterance and the circumstances in which it is uttered, and that of speech community, the nature of the universe selected by the investigator. Sociolinguistic exploration utilizing these two concepts naturally entails further assumptions of social identity and structured event, which are worth the attention of a social anthropologist.

2. Malinowski.

It is well known that linguistic discussion is often bedevilled by the meaning of 'meaning' for the discussants: Malinowski's pronouncements are often similarly unsatisfactory because the meaning of 'language' is not clear. When he says that language 'is a mode of action rather than a countersign of thought' (1923, p. 326), he is confusing two levels of language, not expressing a contradiction. If we think of language as communicative, this becomes clear: language is an instrument of action (message level); 'action' is a summary for 'command', 'explain' etc., messages delivered symbolically through word-signs in syntax (code level). But Malinowski does not think of language as creative communication; and although he manages to break away from nineteenth century treatments of language
which do not do so either, it was because of his ethnographic
difficulties as language learner and translator, not because he applied
to language any insights derived from his understanding of exchange.¹

He has, in fact, no sociological theory of language; curiously it was
the linguist J.R. Firth who turned Malinowski’s theory to sociolinguistic
account, as I shall show.

Sometimes Malinowski is really thinking of language in evolutionary
terms. When he says that ‘ultimately all the meaning of all words
is derived from bodily experience’ (1935, p.58), and that the ability
to talk about a situation is secondary and derived, he is really
offering a ‘heave ho!’ theory of the way in which language originated,
but it is offered as a generalisation from ethnographic description.²

Leach has discussed the way in which an ‘evolutionist’ substratum flaws
Malinowski’s empirical generalisations: this afflicts his thinking
about language as well. In an attempt to resolve the contradiction
between ‘primitive’ and ‘civilized’ language which he had recognised in
1923, he attempted to ‘extend’ his Trobriand observations to modern
civilization (1935). He thus ignores most of the real complexities of
language, by applying to them a theory generalised out of a narrow range

¹. Leach 1957, p.133 discusses the ways in which, by rejecting the symbolic
features of exchange, unlike Mauss, Malinowski missed the communicative
aspects of the kula. See also p.11 above.

². Hence Duncan, naively accepting the implications that the Trobriand
Islanders are primitive (in evolutionary sense) criticizes Malinowski for
reducing ‘language to its purely tribal and collective aspects’ (1968, p.41).
of linguistic experience.

Malinowski also put forward an explicitly evolutionary explanation of language, as language acquisition. He distinguished magical from other forms of linguistic communication, and further suggested that children learn words because of their 'deep impression that a name has the power over the person or thing which it signifies' (1923, p. 320).

Despite the obvious defects of this theory, Malinowski does draw attention to the way in which language is action, that is where utterance is performative and considered decisive, the 'speech act' defined by Austin (1962). This is another field of language which deserves more attention not only to the from social anthropologists, binding power of the word, but also to ritual languages generally.¹

It is easy to pick out illogicalities and absurdities in Malinowski's writings about language. He treated all utterances as if they were performatives, thus losing a very important distinction between uses of language: and because he refused to consider language as a system of signs his theory of language would logically be unable to comprehend any generalisation or comparison at all, for

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¹ Some linguists have attempted to put speech acts into deep grammar, since they felt forced to assume their differential status (see Boyd & Thorne, 1969). There are discussions of Malinowski's theory of magical meaning by Fortes and Nadel in ed. R. Firth, 1957. But there has not been a great deal of attention to the problem since, (see Hymes' exposé of Tambiah, 1969, f.n. 8). Horton (1964 & 1967) relates magical speech acts to primitive theory building, but since Malinowski there has been little attention to the language of magic, and I know of no sociolinguistic analyses of ritual and secret languages.
'Meaning is not something that abides within a sound; it exists in the sound's relation to the context. Hence if a word is used in a different context it cannot have the same meaning; it ceases to be one word and becomes two or more semantically distinguishable units!' (1935, p.72).

This comes close to the fallacy satirized by Swift, in his portrait of the Laputan philosophers who carried sacks of things to save the waste of words. Yet in his own ethnographic studies, Malinowski by no means confines word-meanings in this way, but compares and generalises from other contexts, as Langendoen easily demonstrates. Many of Malinowski's exaggerations are due to his struggle to explain how one learns a language without formal teaching and dictionaries, in the field.

In so doing, as Robins (1969) has emphasised, he and later, Firth were trying to understand how word meanings (or, as Malinowski also stressed, sentence meanings) were acquired from others' performance, a problem disregarded by Chomsky and his followers.

Malinowski's theory of language is a semantic theory: and as such I shall not discuss it further, except for his term context of situation.

1. Langendoen's lucid critique fails only to convince that in his early days, Malinowski would have acknowledged the genius of Chomsky. This bias of discipleship also leads him to neglect the sociological intuitions of Firth (q.v. below).

Naturally, Malinowski has been ridiculed for this position, but the boundary of word, in cases of homony and polysemety, is not always determinable. See for instance the several discussions by Ullmann.

2. I owe this suggestion to M.W. Ardener.
since it has been much used (though not usually in quite Malinowski's sense) in sociolinguistic senses as well as semantic ones. For him, the context of situation is half the meaning: isolated words are only linguistic figments, the full utterance in context is 'the real linguistic fact' (1935, p.11). This for example explains why a vital sequence of action may have no single name. (ibid., p.68).

The situation is the 'environmental reality' and Malinowski listed three types of context, body and speech interrelation, narratives, and 'phatic communion', a catch-all category for everything else.¹

¹But what can be considered as situation when a number of people aimlessly gossip together? .... The situation in all such cases is created by the exchange of words, by the specific feelings which form convivial gregariousness.... The whole situation consists in what happens linguistically. Each utterance is an act serving the direct aim of binding hearer to speaker by a tie of some social sentiment or other.' (1923, p.479).

These categorisations are all questionable. In situations of action, actions often replace words,² and words in such situations are likely to be context-free conversation, (as Mitchell has pointed out (1957). Langendoen clearly shows the difficulties Malinowski faced, in his theory of context-bound discourse, to account for story-telling. As for phatic communion, the quotation shows how Malinowski blinds himself by tendentiousness. Phatic communication is not aimless: as he almost

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¹ The three types are analysed in Sec.IV, 1923, pp.470-481.
² Or words signal actions (but are not the meanings of such actions). One might indeed call Malinowski's theory not 'heave-ho' but 'harambee' (Kenyatta's slogan = let's pull together).
immediately infers, it is purposeful, and could be described as language in its expressive function (in Hymes' schema, q.v.). The speakers understand each other very well; moreover it is by 'greetings formulae and the like' that status is signalled, claimed and often adjusted.  

Malinowski distinguished 'context of situation' from 'context of culture' (1935, pp.51-2), but his preoccupation with translation led him to contextualise language continually in Trobriand culture; 'Language is not something that can be studied independently of cultural reality' (1935, p.vii). He rejected the langue:parole distinction, on the grounds that langue was merely a 'norm' (1937, p.63, 150*, in ed. Hymes) viz. presumably, a Sprachusus. I have suggested that this is a tenable position, but it does not logically follow that language cannot be divided from context. This, however, often seems to be Malinowski's standpoint. 


2. This of course can equally be done by non-verbal salutations. Lord Privileg extended two fingers to his younger son, and one to his grandson, Peter Simple, who realised that if his father became heir, 'instead of two fingers you would receive the whole hand, and instead of one, I should obtain promotion to two' (Harryat, 1834 II, p.109).

3. He did not systematically relate language and context (op. Whiteley 1966), he merely said words could not be understood without describing their context (to outsiders). The point is made by J.R. Firth (1957b, p.107), who however, says 'There is one example of what a linguist would accept as a system, to be found in his treatment of the six Trobriand words for garden. That they can be regarded as a lexical system on the evidence supplied, is clear from his own statement that they are defined by placing them within a series of terms with mutually exclusive uses' (1935, Vol. II, pp.15, 16).
From the point of view of individuals operating in society, extra-linguistic & paralinguistic details affect the meaning of the messages they wish to communicate or understand. (Language + context) is the data for the rules which one would have to write to account for communication. Malinowski did not make this point, but it was sensed by his friend J.R. Firth:

"the voice of man is one component in a whole postural scheme, is part of a process in some sort of situation" (1937, reprinted 1964, p.20).

3. J.R. Firth

In the memorial volume Man and Culture, J.R. Firth praised Malinowski generously:

"Malinowski's contribution in English to the advancement of the study of...[exotic] languages is a brilliant enhancement of the English tradition and we can be proud to include him as one of the makers of linguistics as we now understand it in this country" (p.94). "His outstanding contribution to linguistics was his approach in terms of his general theory of speech functions in contexts of situation, to the problem of meaning in exotic languages and even in our own." (p.118, 1957)

1. See Langendoen p.14, who suggests that Malinowski half saw this point. Langendoen, however gives as much distorted priority to 'internalised rules' as Malinowski to 'functions and needs' so that he misses the level of the anthropologist's model which Malinowski at his best was concerned to elicit, as for example for 'kula ring' which is not limited to the 'internalised rules' of individuals. It does not appear, however, that Malinowski had any sense of the 'rule-bound creativity' of language.
It is ironical that Malinowski should have so influenced the thinking of the man himself usually regarded as the maker of modern linguistics in Britain, without taking over any analytical understanding of language in return, to inspire social anthropologists. They were encouraged to learn the language of their subjects, but no university departments combined anthropological and linguistic teaching to the same extent as in the United States.

Although Firth makes so much of 'context of situation' he does not seem to have applied the model. Unfortunately too he, like Malinowski, seems to have been a leader whose power to inspire is not revealed through a body of coherent theory. In a discussion of Firth's Theory of "Meaning" (1966) John Lyons selects the words

"Meaning.....is to be regarded as a complex of contextual relations, and phonetics, grammar, lexicography, and semantics each handles its own components of the complex in its appropriate context"

(1957a, p.19).

as the key to Firth's position. This is a different concept from Malinowski's, as Firth himself says:

"Malinowski's context of situation is a bit of the social process which can be considered apart and in which a speech event is central and makes all the difference, such as a drill sergeant's welcome utterance on the square, Stand at-ease."

(1957a, p.182)

1. Perhaps because he himself was such a 'gifted polyglot' (Robins 1969, p.1) he underrated the value of the formal training for the less gifted. His own analysis would surely have been far more useful if he had understood modern linguistic techniques (see Berry's caustic 'appreciation of Coral Gardens, 1966).
For Firth, the context of situation is

'a group of related categories at a different level from
grammatical categories but rather of the same abstract nature'
(p.182);

that is, he attempted to bring Malinowski's semantic beliefs into a total
linguistic theory; for him linguistics are a 'group of related techniques
for the handling of language events' (p.181). By distinguishing
phonological, grammatical, lexicographical and situational contexts,
Firth actually was able to conceive of situation more sociologically
than Malinowski. Lyons thinks

'it is...undeniable that the notion of 'situation,' however
difficult it might be to formalize or even to discuss
satisfactorily in general terms, is essential to any
comprehensive theory of linguistic behaviour. Firth must be
given credit for his recognition of this fact and for his
insistence that situational correlations are to be taken into
account as an integral part of the description of language (and
at all levels of analysis) and not treated as a secondary
'paralinguistic' situation.'


Malinowski and Firth have received critical consideration recently
for their reliance on context as a source for meaning - this is opposed

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1. Firth's monism was even more explicit than Malinowski's: 'my own
approach to meaning in linguistics has always been independent of such
dualisms as mind and body, language and thought, word and idea,
significant and significative, expression and content. These dichotomies
are a quite unnecessary nuisance in my opinion and should be dropped'
(1957a, p.227). In fact, he was a more subtle analyst than such
outcries suggest, but in popular writing he could confuse levels just as
badly as Malinowski, see e.g. 1964, p.113. ('The meaning of a great deal
of speech behaviour is just the combined personal and social forces it
can mobilize and direct'). But to understand how, the levels, and
speakers, must be distinguished, see p.9 above.
to the semantic theory of Chomsky's associates (See Robins, 1969 for a presentation of the issues, and of Langendoen's criticisms). But the 'Neo-Firthians' have also discussed further the situational aspect outlined by Lyons - which I discuss below.

Firth's general theory of language led him to try to analyse the situational level apart from the consideration of meaning, to consider speech as 'socially determined' and to see it as a social label, in ways not attempted by Malinowski. He suggested that contexts of situation can be grouped and classified by discovering the relevant features of the participants (as social and individual beings: 'personalities' and 'persons' in Firth's terms); the relevant features of the verbal and the non-verbal action; the relevant objects, and the effects of these actions. (see Fig.I, 'Contexts of Situations'). These are only programmatic hints, but they were twenty-five years ahead of American thinking on sociolinguistic methodology.¹

In one other part of his work Firth foreshadowed another sociolinguistic approach, a current British one. In his popular work of 1937 (reprinted 1964), The Tongues of Men, he essayed what is in effect a redefinition of Malinowski's 'context' in the language of psychology. He discussed the human 'sets'.

¹ Acknowledged by Hymes, in a footnote to his 1962 article on the Ethnography of Speaking (which I discuss below).
these "conditioned" forces of flesh and blood which manifest themselves in the details of specific behaviour.

(p.90)

- and considered that 'what a man actually says in a given speech situation is at that moment a dominant process in the working of his "set", and perhaps also a dominant factor or term in the situation.'

(p.90).

Using this concept, which suited his 'monistic' approach, Firth was able to see human beings as having 'a bundle of assorted "sets":'

An Indian often shows three quite different sets. On his farm or estate he will be a local son of the soil, his homely social attitudes bound up with the local dialect. He may also be a fervent Hindu or Moslem. In either of these cases, his "set" will be very definite and will manifest itself in a special and characteristic form of speech and a distinctive alphabet and form of writing. A third "set" is wedded to the English language and it is kept apart from the others.

(p.92)

Firth even uses this concept to avoid the absurdities of Malinowski's theory:

'We see, therefore that there is usually a close association of the appropriate language component and of the rest of a man's "set". That is to say, language behaviour may not only be observed in the actual context of situation on any specific occasion, but may be regarded also as manifestations of the "sets" which the speakers bring to the situation. We all carry our "sets" about with us.....'

(p.93)

1. In this he is cited with approval by Pike (1954, p.24) since they both try to unite speaker and situation in the "context" of behaviour.

2. Firth continues by saying 'The "downward infiltration" of features of the English "set" into the other Indian "sets" is extremely uncommon.' This seems to me untrue, and therefore a pointer to inadequacies in the concept 'Sets' cannot be treated as purely individual (cp. 'idiolects'); they arise in social interaction and are modified by it, as Weinreich and other students of multilingualism have shown, in studies of interference.
This sense of 'set' as an inextricable compound of socialised personality and linguistic resource for dealing with the situation fits Bernstein's approach. Indeed, Firth interestingly notes the qualitative differences in sets, and comments,

'those in authority in education are very apt to forget the man whose circumstances limit him to a small-range "set". But he is in the majority...'

(p.93).


Just as social anthropologists in Britain have worked separately from theoretical linguists, so the latter, despite Firth's sociological orientations, had little contact with sociology or anthropology. Reasons for maintaining the autonomy of linguistics have already been mentioned; but in the same passage I quoted Halliday's forecast that 'sociolinguistic enquiry' will be of fundamental interest to linguists (p.28 above), and he is now involved in the work of Bernstein.

Through Firth's influence, however, there has been a continuous line of interest in extra-linguistic factors; the disadvantage of isolation from social scientists is that these were not systematically investigated, If one wants to relate (and therefore to correlate) linguistic variation with the 'outside world', one problem is to define
the situations\textsuperscript{1} which call for distinct linguistic behaviour.

Even if one identifies topics, settings and participators (to give some of the labels that have been used) there remain antecedent variables, like the participants' previous knowledge, in the light of which their actual utterances must be interpreted\textsuperscript{2}, their 'sets' which they may or may not adjust to the situation, and so forth.

We find, then, only one article generally cited as a successful treatment of 'context of situation' - Hitchell's 1957 account of Buying and Selling in Cyrenaica. This is a study of the predictable concomitance of identifiable utterances and situations. Hitchell claimed that

'by adhering to the principle that meaning must be sought in use, we are able at the situational level to make a systematic classification of material on the basis of correlation between texts and their environments.'

\textit{(p.32)}

Bargaining is for his subjects highly ritualised, a clear example of the way in which

'If you do not know your part there are no cues for the other fellow, and no place or excuse for his cues either.'

\textit{(Firth, 1964, p.9.)}\textsuperscript{3}

\begin{itemize}
\item\textsuperscript{1} I am treating situation as a sociolinguistic, not a semantic term. This is the distinction silently made by Halliday (see p.98 below esp.f.n.2). Halliday treats context as the semantic level. This is a useful refinement of Malinowski's and Firth's inclusiveness.
\item\textsuperscript{2} Firth quote's Wegener's description of the three types of situation (1957b, pp.103-104) which includes the viewpoint (\textit{Anschauung}) of the participators, analogous to their schematisations or stereotypes, which affect their interpretation of what occurs.
\item\textsuperscript{3} Mitchell himself refers to 'snowball effect'. Perhaps game theory would be a more powerful analogy.
\end{itemize}
Mitchell elicits four regular stages in his situation, offers texts of representative utterances, identifies some features which only occur in it, or which have specialised significance in this situation, and always shows the relation between utterance (or silence) and situation. The 'situational meaning' of these exchanges is not of course the semantic meaning of lexical items which may occur in different contexts. Rather we have an account of the linguistic markers of a buying and selling situation, 'contextualised' for us so that we realise some of the ways in which bargaining is marked off from other stretches of social activity.

If Mitchell's study had a broader sociological focus, one could get a better idea of the significance of the bargaining situation to the Bedouin of Cyrenaica. Are all their communications so tightly structured? Does the prescriptive linguistic aspect of buying and selling mirror its ritualisation at other levels? Are there other,

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1. Cp. Lyons' comment on a 'brilliant' study:

'This article does indeed demonstrate the value of the notion of "contextualisation" of utterances in recurrent and identifiable situations, each culturally determined. It does not, however, lead us to expect (and perhaps does not intend to suggest) that the notion of "context of situation" can be extended to the point that Firth's theory demands.'

(1966, p.301)

2. A non-Arabist cannot tell how much of the usage is formally tied to situation, but Mitchell surely does more than 'tend merely to indicate "varieties of language," rather than to specify in more detail how situational features correlate with formal features', (Dixon, 1965, p.34) - see discussions of register ensuing.
perhaps interestingly parallel, 'situations' which can be or
must be signalled linguistically? Such a coverage is formidable,
but it would represent the anthropologist's model of the Bedouin's
own sociolinguistic competence.\(^1\)

There have been several objections to 'situational' analyses,
on the ground that only a few predictable and recurrent situations
are firmly delimitable, and this delimitation does not necessarily
imply social significance, possibly the reverse.\(^2\) The sort of
sociological comparison I have suggested is necessary to avoid
this. Moreover, relationships between linguistic form and situation —
the mechanisms of linguistic selection to signal situation differences —
are only discoverable when linguistic and extra-linguistic factors
both occur in a contrastive range.

Presumably it was the unidentifiability of situations which led to
recent British definitions of register. In Halliday's 'Scale and
Category Grammar', the situation lies outside the study of descriptive
linguistics, though it consists of the extra-textual features relevant
to the linguistic data. Context hovers on the edge of linguistic
form, as the semantic aspect of lexis.\(^3\) (see Fig. 1)\(^4\) Situation is

\(^1\) Levels not understood by Langendoen, who considers that Mitchell's
study 'properly belongs to the realm of ethnography and not of semantics'
p. 64.

\(^2\) This is the objection that can also be made against Pike's choice
of situations, see e.g. Gauthier, 1960.

\(^3\) 'Context of situation' does not appear in the index to Halliday et al.
I do not discuss the semantic aspects.

\(^4\) My notes on Wells (1965) and see Halliday et al, 1964, pp. 37-40.
however, mentioned both in general terms (e.g. 'a language-contact situation') and as a producer of register, defined as variety of language (or code in the repertoire of a language user), according to the definition quoted on p. 62 above.

Halliday, McIntosh and Strevens have, however, further restrictions for the term.

'It is by their formal properties that registers are defined. If two samples of language activity from that, on non-linguistic grounds, could be considered different situation-types show no differences in grammar or lexis, they are assigned to one and the same register: for the purposes of the description of the language there is only one situation-type here, not two.'

At the same time, they claim that

'It is only by reference to the various situations, and situation types, in which language is used that we can understand its functioning and its effectiveness.'

Having acknowledged that little is known yet about the formal properties of registers, Halliday et al. then suggest that they can be 'predicted and defined from outside language' (p.90). Thus within a couple of pages, quite contradictory definitions are offered, in a teachers' text-book. Nor is the subsequent procedure for defining a register situationally as easy to operate as it looks. A framework of classification is suggested:

1. Halliday et al. distinguish 'Institutional Linguistics' (Hill's name, 1958), from descriptive linguistics, but the practical differences entailed are not clear, though of course it is sensible to distinguish the purposes for which one wants an analysis, and if necessary use different models (op. Halliday, 1964).
'along three dimensions, each representing an aspect of the situations in which language operates and the part played by language in them.'

(p.90)

Under the heading 'field of discourse'

'registers are classified according to the nature of the whole event of which the language activity plays a part.'

(p.90)

The language activity may or may not form part of the 'event'; the field of discourse could be politics but the event washing up. (This distinction of course avoids the logical impasse of Malinowski's total situation.)

The second dimension is 'mode of discourse' - spoken or written - and

'within these primary modes, and cutting across them to some extent, we can recognise further registers such as the language of newspapers, of advertising, of conversation and of sports commentary.'

(p.92)

The third dimension is 'style', an at present arbitrarily demarcated cline, locating such categories as formal/polite or frozen-hot.

This process of identifying a number of registers is then said to be only partial identification:

'It is as the product of these three dimensions of classification that we can best define and identify register. The criteria are not absolute or independent; they are all variable in delicacy (2), and the more delicate the classification the more the three overlap. The formal properties of any given language

1. Since it is defined by mixed, often ethnocentric criteria, see p.102 below.

2. Delicacy: 'Relates cruder simpler descriptions to finer, more complicated ones - detailsness.' (Wells, 1965).
event will be those associated with the intersection of the appropriate field, mode and style.'

(p.94)

In Fig. I. I have attempted to represent this three-dimensional process. The ultimate pointlessness of the exercise seems to me suggested by the authors themselves, when they concentrate on the language user (instead of trying to break down aspects of language use):

'Institutional categories, unlike descriptive ones, do not resolve into closed systems of discrete terms. Every speaker has at his disposal a continuous scale of patterns and items, from which he selects for each situation type the appropriate stock of available harmonies in the available key...'

(p.94)

Register in many multilingual situations is expressed through selection of language, but in practice the code-switch may take place at any or all linguistic levels, so that it is only identifiable over 'longish stretches of text' (Denison, 1965, p.3). Registers of the kind portrayed by Halliday et al. as open systems are not assignable to different linguistic systems (which makes them less identifiable) and they can therefore only be related to 'situation types' in a selective and tentative way. Moreover, the selection may progressively create a situation, and not be determined by it (McIntosh 1965).

1. His views here and in the book of which he is part-author seem to be in contrast.
Finally, as Pride has pointed out, the process is circular, since the linguist determines style etc. by some personal criteria of his own, and then uses register to predict 'extra-linguistic features' (1969a, p.72-3). This is of no use to the social anthropologist or sociologist, who finds that linguistic classifications have been naively pre-determined in exactly the same way as 'language' and 'dialect'.

The analysis of field, mode, etc., does however indicate at how many levels social choices may operate, and how difficult it may be to separate social from other principles of selection. But it suggests that any attempt to correlate linguistic with extra-linguistic features will simply produce two parallel lines that never meet.

I think nevertheless that the term register is useful, even if it is not formally definable. Where function is constant, it can adequately delimit a language variety: the language of advertising has been interestingly examined by Leech, with a Firthian presentation (1966). An analysis of this kind may well be of sociological interest, but it will be primarily a linguistic study. Other linguistic approaches are suggested by Pride, particularly the analysis of 'speech functions', or the ways of making requests, orders, ending a conversation etc. etc. Working in English, it is

1. c.p. Joseph Wright on English dialects in 1905: 'the working classes have their social scales, just as the upper classes' (p.vi).
B. Firth *(1934-51*)

**CONTEXT OF SITUATION**

1. PARTICIPANTS RELEVANT FEATURES OF ACTION
   i) persons ii) personalities
   i) verbal ii) non-verbal

C. Halliday *(1964)*

**CONTEXT v. SITUATION**

- Chaotic Mass = SUBSTANCE
- LINGUISTICS
  - Phonology
  - Grammar
  - Lexis
- Semantics  (CONTEXT)

CONTEXT is the extralinguistic aspect of word meaning; SITUATION is extralinguistic aspect of word use, defined by REGISTER.

**REGISTER**

- Mode of discourse
- Field of discourse
- Style of discourse

REGISTER = intersection - fullest description of REGISTER i.e., in terms of all three dimensions.

Malinowski knew the work of Wegener, who, according to Firth, distinguishes situations according to the relationship of verbal and non-verbal - for speaker only. MEANING is illuminated/supplements/given by 1. PRECEDING CONTEXTS 2. 'SURROUNDINGS' 3. MENTAL ASSOCIATIONS of the words.
easier to intuit the situational purposes of such locutions; for an anthropologist the task of discovery would be double.

5. Hymes: The Ethnography of Speaking

A situational approach comparable to the Neo-Firthians' has developed, quite separately, in America. It will appear by comparing Figs. I and II that both movements have their origin in European psychology, but the psychological models have been overlaid with social features. This can be seen especially in Hymes' adaptation of Jakobson's schema. Jakobson's is a linguist's attempt to deal with speech functions (see Pride 1969A, p.54), while Hymes has tried to enlarge the model for anthropological use (1962).

His focus is the speech event, but his subject-matter the speech economy or repertoire of a group - the speech community.

'Every speech event involves (1) a Sender (Addressee); (2) a Receiver (Addressee); (3) a Message Form; (4) a Channel; (5) a Code; (6) a Topic; and (7) Setting (Scene, Situation).'

(p.110).

The ethnographer should investigate the membership of these categories in any group. Sender and addressee may differ, some people and some objects may or may not be talked to, etc.; message form may be stylized; channels include whistling and drumming; and

1. This is true, indirectly for Malinowski's scheme - see Leach's account of his debt to H. N. (1957, p.121).


3. I discuss here Hymes's 1962 article, (with page references to it as in ed. Fishman, 1968) and do not refer as fully to the later.
The Code factor is a variable.... the range is from communities with different levels of a single dialect to communities in which many individuals command several different languages.

So far the list corresponds to Jakobson's, but his 'Context' is divided by Hymes into Topic and Setting, the former to account for 'indigenous categories for topics', and the latter because 'the Setting factor is fundamental' - but 'difficult'.

Hymes points out that

'we accept as meaningful such terms as "context of situation" and "definition of the situation" but seldom ask ethnographically what the criteria for being a "situation" might be...'

He himself makes no offers except that again native terms may be a guide, as they are for speech events.

The allocation of communication among behavior settings differs from group to group: what, for example, is the distribution of required silence in a society...?' (p.109)

(Hymes also notes the different possible means of non-linguistic communication, and non-communicative linguistic behaviour). 'The allocation of communicative means also may differ......' (means = 'modus') '.... within a group, what are instances of speech events? What classes of speech events are recognised or can be inferred? What are the dimensions of contrast, the distinctive features, which differentiate them? (This will include reference to how factors are represented and functions served.) What is their pattern of occurrence, their distribution vis-à-vis each other and externally (in terms of total behaviour or some selected aspect)?'

footnote 3 cont. from p.104....variations upon it, e.g. 1964b, 1966, 67. The fundamental orientation has not changed, and it is the 1962 article which is primarily referred to by those interested in the ethnography of speaking. There is much of value in the later articles, however.
Hymes' 'speech event', as his list of examples shows, is very like 'register', except that it is clearly labelled from the point of view of the speakers, and not of their language. 'I know no structural analysis.' (p.110). Speech events can be discovered by their indigenous names, ranging from 'inaugural address' to 'couldn't get a word in edgewise'. (In fact, all the examples are from spoken languages, and also from American culture).

I have set out Hymes' presentation at length in order to show its comprehensiveness. Bright complained

"we still have no "ethnography of speaking "...for even the simplest kind of community"

(1966b, p.185)

But this is as much as to say we have no full description of any language. Mitchell's article, with all its finesse, shows how small an area can be explored in linguistic depth at a time. It seems to me much more fruitful to regard Hymes' work as a programme, a teaching aid (this is not intended as an insult) which will make people aware of the dimensions of the problem and offer them a focus for particular investigations. It is not really an integrated theory of the sociology of language. Hymes though, apparently now intends it to be a theory of parole ('speaking')¹ - the

¹ Unless one realizes that speaking = parole, the name is misleading. It suggests that Hymes ignores the significance of writing and written styles (I don't think he does, though his emphasis is all on the speech event). It has also been understood as a theory of the speaker, at the expense of the listener: by :oidjeska, (1967, p.183), who criticizes this emphasis in American linguistics generally.
linguistics of parole left uncompleted by Saussure, or the structure of performance dismissed as structureless by Chomsky.

I have already put my objections to this conception of parole, and I think it a pity that a desire to measure up to Chomsky (presumably) has led Hymes to return to his 1962 title instead of developing the approach of 1964 - the American Anthropologist volume edited with Gumperz under the title 'Ethnography of Communication'. However, it is Gumperz who is most interested in the social focus of communication. Hymes intended the word 'ethnography' to proclaim allegiance to the cultural anthropologists working on semantics and methods of componential analysis (see Hymes, 196b, pp.13-15). An ethnographic theory is not a social theory at all; it is 'a theory about description, about how to describe what a society looks like' (Hodjeska, 1967, p.5).

Herein lie the defects and uses of Hymes' schema to social anthropologists. It is much superior to the neo-Firthian approach in its replacement of observers' categories by the actual usage of the subjects:

'There must be a study of speaking that seeks to determine the native system and theory of speaking' (1967, p.15).

Hymes has offered many example to illustrate the diversity of such theories, and the ways in which usage often disproves common assumptions about language behaviour. Often this information is only given casually by the investigator - as when Ronald Cohen explains that
parties of Kanuri women admiring a new baby, instead of talking about it to its mother,

'talk to it in sing-song voices about its kindred... by constantly referring to these new relationships during the infants' first few months people close to the family affirm to themselves and finally to others the fact that many relationships are different, now that the new baby has arrived safely' (1967, p. 59).

It appears that the fiction of baby-talk is utilised to work out these new relationships, but this is not quite clear, nor whether they are conceptualised by women only. But the social insight was gained by noticing the verbal 'oddity' - to the investigator - of an otherwise familiar situation.

Hymes emphasises that it is no use

'simply to take separate results from linguistics, psychology etc.... and seek to correlate them.... we must call attention to the need to investigate directly the use of language in contexts of situation so as to discern patterns proper to speech activity, patterns which escape separate studies...' (1967b, p. 23)

Without such ethnographic data, no reliable generalisations can be made, or theoretical questions about the social uses of language be asked. Salisbury wrote an account of multi-lingualism in New Guinea which he had noticed as a social anthropologist (1962).

1. Since 'baby-talk' is widely reported (see e.g. Ferguson, 1969) and Bynon (1963) gives evidence of the extreme antiquity of some Berber 'baby' forms, it would be interesting to know more about these Kanuri 'sing-song' voices.
It had occurred to him that this state of affairs, though common, was hardly referred to in the literature. Multilingualism was cultivated as part of the general one-upmanship ethos of the villagers. Translation of speeches etc. occurred even though people present understood what had been said: it gave weight and dignity and emphasised that this was a public situation. (One could compare the role of court linguists in Ghana).

Salisbury gives us part of an ethnography of speaking, which also shows how language difference may be sustained in order to distinguish exogamous groupings, and exploited in local power struggles. That is, he passes from face-to-face speech events to social analysis. He also demonstrates how speech community and society are together extended and bounded. Beyond the value of data for its own sake is its explanatory value: the main objection to the 'ethnography of speaking' is that it is not designed for social theories. It can, however, Hymes suggests, focus on the question:

'of what a child internalises...while becoming a full-fledged member of its speech community. Or, it is a question of what a foreigner must learn about a group's

1. These sociological points seem misunderstood by Pride (1969a, pp. 43-4).
verbal behavior in order to participate appropriately and effectively in its activities.'

(1962, p.101)

The learning here is a mixture of verbal and non-verbal: one must know the right intonation, the right style, the right clothes, stance, etc. etc. It is often pointed out that one cannot learn a foreign language without learning these points as well. Social anthropologists have to pick them up, albeit unconsciously, in order to succeed. If they formalised their intuitions they would come up with a model of communicative competence, though it would not necessarily represent the informants' internalisations, any more than a generative grammar 'is' inside one's head.

1. Consider, for example, the 'social meaning' of the words "Why don't we take in a flick and then have some supper at my place? There's probably something in the fridge". Patrick Campbell (1967) provides an entertaining 'ethnography' for this which nevertheless takes for granted a good deal of the social situation (including the age-range) of the speaker. Not only the foreigner but the member of another social class is unlikely to understand all the implications of this communication. The alert lady listener makes use of many small cues, listed by Campbell. Without these she is unable to evaluate the weight of any covert invitation, which leads to difficulties when outsiders make apparently similar suggestions...

2. C. P. Christophersen's advice to foreign language students in his inaugural at Oslo, to identify with life in a particular English county (1957), with the views expressed in his inaugural at Ibadan - a problem in language learning discussed in Part II of this thesis.

3. Unconscious anthropological know-how was considerably discussed at the A.S.A. Conference on Linguistics and Anthropology, 1969. Albert (1964) has pointed out the advantages of formulating the likely areas of learning beforehand.

Although it seems likely that linguistic rules and paralinguistic rules may not be distinguished by users, the fact that they are used independently makes me dubious of the further suggestion that 'there are indications that persons behave in accordance with rules of social interaction whichlike the rule of grammar, function below the levels...
Such rules, however, can well be charted in an 'ethnography of communication,' which has as one's object of study 'a community and a correlated communications matrix' (Hymes 1961, p. 385). But analyses based on speech events are not miniature replicas of speech economy, where the emphasis should be on intra-group communication as well as internal. I discussed this problem in the last chapter. Even though Gumperz has been aware of the problem, he has not been able to devise a useful mode of the relationship between 'speech community' and society.

'Speech community' has commonly meant to linguists the matrix in which 'a language' operates (Robins, 1959, 179); self-contained as 'a social system'. But since it is now recognised that a speech-community is not homogeneous, we need to know not just 'who speaks to whom', when, in what language etc., but the nature of these exchanges, their social significance, the relative

Footnote 3 cont. from p. 110...of consciousness. If this is the case then linguistic and social categories are phenomena of the same order; and moving from statements of social constraints to grammatical rules, thus represent a transformation from one level of abstraction to another within a single communicative system (Gumperz, 1967b, p. 231).

This is Geertken's theory of 'ethnomethodology', see discussion on p. 69 above.

1. Cl. Bloomfield: 'A group of people who use the same system of speech signals is a speech-community' (1933, p. 26). By equating monolingualism & society, on the assumption that a speech community is an undifferentiated whole (see p. 23-4 above), Deutsch 'proves' that monolingualism is necessary for successful nationalism. I discuss the validity of this 'proof' in the next chapter.
weight and importance of groups inter-communicating. The two main sociolinguistic approaches so far do not demonstrate these facts very clearly. Transactional approaches, evaluation of status and role styles, remain small-scale and face-to-face in level.

The other sociolinguistic approach, that of determining domains, is also insufficient for the social anthropologist. A domain is a socio-cultural construct abstracted from topics of communication, relationship between communicators, and locales of communication.

(Fishman 1965, p.75).

Devised to elicit patterns of dominance configuration, and therefore account for 'language maintenance and shift' in multilingual areas, the theory of domains in practice merges informants' and anthropologists' categorisations, and thus prevents social insight (c.p. the critique by Pride, from a slightly different viewpoint, 1969b). Yet even domain analysis makes clear how complicated the patterns of interaction can be, and how communication does not fit 'ethnic group' in any simple way. It is clear, too, that besides the studying the distribution of groups with their patterns of communication, we must take into account the relative "weight"

1. e.g. Gumperz, 1967a. These approaches are reviewed by Pride 1969a and 1969b. Tanner (1967) need to expound her 'ethnography' in such social terms (pp.15-16).

2. Since the term is derived from componential analysis it will reflect 'cultural' premises, c.p. Liddesdale's critique, etc.
of the language varieties spoken, and their functional power.
This will not necessarily match the status of the speakers in any simple way.
CHAPTER FIVE

LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT AND GROUP IDENTIFICATION

1. Language and Identity

'Without speech there would be no community of men. Yet there is no more serious obstacle to such community than the diversity of speech'

(Cassirer 1944, p.130).

'My own guess is that our propensity to murder is a backhanded consequence of our dependence on verbal communication; we use words in such a way that we come to think that men who behave in different ways are members of different species'

(Leach 1968, p.32-3).

These widely-held commonplaces about language reflect widely-felt experience. At the same time, we can find negative instances of the kind I have already cited: examples of community over-riding diversity of speech, and even of peoples accepting the 'others' who speak - and behave - differently. It is also quite possible to have a civil war with those who speak the same language and share the same culture. Languages themselves are equally paradoxical; I have described how swiftly they can be rejected, and yet again and again languages hang on tenaciously - 'languages are tough and take a lot of killing' (Spencer, 1963, p.27).
An illustration of this double quality occurs in the history of Byzantium. After the division of the Empire, Greek swiftly became the official language and 'within the space of a generation Latin was known only to a handful of scholars' (Tamara Talbot Rice, 1967, p.95).

'Yet still today in parts of Turkey, Iran and Arabia, the old link with Rome endures and the word Ruin, meaning Rome, is quite often applied to the region of Constantinople or to the people coming from Europe' (p.20).

We find in the histories of language change a similar tension between innovation and conservatism. Studies of multilingualism have therefore been a major subject to linguists who found language contact a new problem area.

It has been necessary to show that there is no automatic loyalty to one's "own" language, that there are even plenty of people who do not know which is their 'mother tongue' - many Malaysian students could not decide, when asked by Le Page (1962, p.146, 1964, p.21-2). Such facts call in question many educational assumptions, particularly about the necessity of teaching through the mother tongue (see e.g. UNESCO's Monograph on Fundamental Education, 1953). At the same time, language loyalty does exist, children do grow

1. Gellner, writing of the Atlas, mentions a local belief that the original inhabitants were 'cave-dwelling Portuguese' (1969, p.175) a similar tribute to a once powerful civilization.

2. As opposed to genetic analyses in which 'it is of the essence of historical method to assume that innovations, borrowings, and any sort of discontinuity in the history of a language or a word are exceptional' (Gleason, 1959, p.24).

3. Objections to this monograph were put by Bull (1964); see also Le Page, p.21.
up in monolingual environments, and these facts too can be investigated.

Obviously the language through which one becomes socialized and in which one learns to think is 'home'; and where a monolingual repertoire is learnt, the 'signifiers' and the 'things signified' may seem one and the same. But as I have suggested, children can internalise complex repertoires, and learn from the first that there are alternative signifiers. Maybe the Whorf Hypothesis is most fascinating to monolingual mother-tonguers, who have had to overcome their early belief by conscious effort.

Crucial as the influence of the first language learned undoubtedly is, nothing has I think been proved of ways in which character or belief could be due to a particular language. The content, i.e. the meanings that the words in the language carry for its users, can be examined in this way, but the logical implications of a particular syntax or morphology are much less responsive to preferential comparison. Plenty of people have believed in the possibility of grading languages in this way, but their results can be attacked. Indeed it has become a part of the linguists' creed to assert that all languages are equal, that none are "primitive", that all can be made to say what anyone wants. However, very large numbers of people still do not believe this.

It seems to me that more enquiry could be made into the valuations people do in fact make of languages. The valuations I
mean are not simply the social evaluations of the language's speakers. These are complex enough, and always have to be taken into account. The valuations I mean are of the language as a whole, both as it may be regarded by its own speakers, and by the people to whom it is available as one of a choice of languages. The level of subject matter is 'a language', accepted as such, although contrasted sub-divisions of it may also be discussed. The focus is on languages first, instead of their speakers, (bearing in mind all the caveats already made in earlier chapters).

2. The inequality of Language varieties

Fishman, discussing the question of 'language maintenance and language shift', has claimed that

'we very much need a more refined understanding of the circumstances under which behaviors toward language and behaviors toward the group are related to each other in particular ways'

(1967, p.443).

Missing from this list is any discussion of the language itself - or indeed of the make-up of the group. The interplay of factors is more complicated even than Fishman suggests. I have already pointed out that all items in a repertoire are not necessarily equal, and all repertoires are not equal either. While it may be right to ignore conventional valuations of 'language, 'dialect' and so forth, it is equally a mistake to act as if language varieties
are qualitatively differentiated only in terms of 'behaviors towards' them. Language varieties can be differentiated on other grounds. The point was made by Tanner, in the quotation I have cited already on p.64.

Tanner went out of her way to make this point, since there is a deep bias in linguists against rating languages themselves. They have their scientific detachment to consider, and most of the opinions of linguistic value held by laymen are so patently linguistically erroneous that it becomes a duty to expose them. Moreover, there are liberal principles at stake: linguists, like social anthropologists, feel they have a duty to show that "savage peoples" are not so backward, stupid or savage, and have created languages which prove this. A virtue has been made of the absence of literature in them: 'the primary interest of the linguists is in spoken language' (Greenberg, in The African World, 1965, p.316). This stress has resulted in a neglect of written language; by treating it as a secondary characteristic or mirror of speech, American linguists, in particular, have falsely simplified

1. In this mainly historical survey of linguistics, Greenberg gives a limited and old-fashioned role to the linguist, who apart from offering language descriptions may be interested 'in the determination of the role of language in the transmission of culture from one generation to another (enculturation) and from one culture to another (acculturation)' (p.427). Leaving aside the neglect of the sociolinguistic problems, the role of written language precisely in these two areas is obviously important and will be discussed in Chapter 6 and in Part II. Greenberg discusses sociolinguistic questions more freely, in ed. Kuper, 1965a. Cp. also Berry 1967, but neither discuss the importance of literacy.
Languages, then, differ in the number of uses to which they can be put: both the topics that can be discussed in them, the range of tone and style their speakers can command, and the uses they have in the world at large, as languages in which diplomacy, scientific information, buying and selling etc., can be carried on. While it may appear that the value of the language here is simply instrumental, and not due to any intrinsic quality of the language itself, it is not quite true that such value derives solely from the skills, prestige and power of those who speak or write the language. Le Page has commented that 'there is constant interaction between the way that people feel about 'the language' and the form 'the language' takes.' (1968, p.198). On a wider scale over time, 'the language' has forms and styles available to the user, there are things he can and cannot do in it. Literary critics who study the interaction of content and form may be highly subjective, but they nevertheless distinguish levels of language ignored by the linguists, and verbal qualities which sensitive readers value, arising in particular languages.

1. This is an oversimple account itself. But, while there is now much more awareness of written styles, many American linguists still minimize the differences from speech and their importance. Chao's is an interesting exception to the general run of textbook treatments. (1968).

2. This is a generalisation much truer of the structural linguist (see Lessing's attack, 1951) than of those interested in stylistics, or in semantics (like Professor Ullmann). It is also an American trait - European linguists, e.g. in Romance studies, have paid much more attention to the literary language.
The study of the history of a language, from the point of view of its users, shows us most clearly how a language is often felt to be both more and less than a social marker, or a world view, or an instrument perfectly adapted to its purpose. Languages can be consciously altered and frequently are, not just by nineteenth century nationalists or twentieth century linguistic engineers. Beyond all the pragmatic or patriotic reasons for such alterations, there are the deeper, ritual ways in which people may handle their language, jealously guarding its purity or casually opening it up to foreign loans. Whether one could discover a neat correlation of such handling of language with the handling of other symbolic systems I do not know, but it is this sort of correlation with culture that seems most likely, not at the level of structure fixed long before.

3. Abstand and Ausbau Languages

Heinz Kloss has distinguished the ausbausprache, or 'language by development', from the abstandsprache, 'language [defined] by distance.'

1. A discussion of this point must be in historical terms: no achronic generalisation from an 'ethnographic present' can be made, since it is processes of change which are being examined. Languages are the product of, perhaps, both purist and expansionist phases, and both may be due to a complex of social, external, ideological pressures. But the analogies with Mary Douglas's analysis of body symbolism are very tempting when one observes the way that some purists cling to the sanctity of their language as a - supposedly - closed system.

The abstand concept derives from the spoken language and the ausbau from the written standard (1967, p.33).

These distinctions are useful, though language making can occur without literacy - amongst a chain of dialects distinguished by language distance, selection, 'levelling' and development of one rather than another can occur, if political and social conditions favour it. (For a clear examination of this process, see Halkiel, a) and b), 1964). Language making is of course much helped by the existence of a written version - and an education system to disseminate it. The clearest contrasts between abstand and ausbau probably are to be found in Africa and Asia today, where the problems of administering to a modern-style state intensify the need for a writeable ausbau language, whereas before a multilingual repertoire sufficed for communication between networks of small clusters of authority.

That there is however no simple binary division between abstand and ausbau is clear from brief examination of any of these African and Asian cases. 'The Yoruba speaking peoples' have been said to be united more by language than by culture (Forde, 1951, p.1). They are still not united politically, but the long-standing existence of a written language offers many of the common access to 'Yoruba' culture and thinking of all kinds. ¹ At the spoken level there is an

¹. The written language was based on Samuel Broder's & Yoruba dialect (Rowlands, 1963). The extent to which literacy has permeated Yoruba urban life can be sensed from Urap-Faraha's review (1963). But appears from the I.L.C'atoria Report on Education in a Rural Area of Western Nigeria (March, 1967) that Universal free primary education in the West is, in the countryside, 'little more than a pretence'. (Details in West Africa 26.2.66.)
'abstand' situation, but some dialect levelling, some beginning of a standard Yoruba is apparently emerging. It may, however, be Yoruba with a considerably number of English loans, judging by the long history of purist complaints.1

To give an example for S.E.Asia, Tanner, whose study of Indonesian repertoires and their use I have already mentioned, shows how the University-educated Indonesians she studied used Bahasa Indonesia as a neutral tongue. Viewed rather as 'a language' than as a set of repertoires, it is clear from her account that this is expanding in range and flexibility as a carrier of nuance, whereas Javanese (for instance) is becoming crystallised into a fixed ranking style.2 Indonesian lacks subtlety in its formal range, one can be more elegant in Javanese, but equally in Javanese there is no colloquial mode like 'Djakarta slang'.

1. A.Jolasoa, a contributor to the West African Pilot, 27 May, 1939, commenting on an earlier article on Yoruba, objected to the incidence of loan words - often it was 'at least 40%' English. By his quotation of phrases like 'Experience ti noti gain lati North' it appears he is referring to bureaucratic code-switching, malaranci as it has been nicknamed in 'the North' (Kirk-Greene, f.o.). This is a widespread phenomenon - for an East African parallel, see Whiteley, 1967, p.127. Purist objections also come from Rowlands, 1963 - surely an over-pessimistic forecast of the death of Yoruba-and Ojo (1966, p.234). Neither of these writers carefully distinguish the 'ethnography' of these loans, which are not presumably used equally by all Yoruba.

2. For a description of these see Geertz, 1960 (reprinted in ed. Fishman, 1968). But it appears from Peacock's account of popular drama in Java (1968) that there is still plenty of vitality in Javanese 'low' style, though Indonesian is developing there.
Bahasa Indonesia has been deliberately developed from a Malay-based lingua franca and one can judge its success by the way in which it is gaining its own momentum, with which it will not only reflect new elements in Indonesian society, but may also lose its neutrality. As it becomes used more freely, and widely, it may become, by this very acclimatisation, tied to function or user like all the other varieties in current Indonesian repertoires - assuming that there is no complete levelling-out of Indonesian society. In other words, languages reflect the divisions of their users, but, in their range of tone and style may produce qualities which do not simply match those divisions. There is interaction between 'the language' and the people who use it.

Lingua francas are languages which are used for communication between people of different language\(^1\), even a third language, common to none of the speakers. In this function they may spread with snowballing rapidity.\(^2\) Bahasa Indonesia is an ausbau language based on a lingua franca; other lingua francas have developed into languages of wider use without such deliberate engineering. I discuss this point further in connection with pidgins and creoles. The point for the moment is that *lingua franca* is a name indicating function. Other peoples' first languages ("L1" for short, as 'L2' stands

\[\text{1. The original \textit{Lingua Franca}, and the question of "mixed" contact languages are discussed in Part II.}\]

\[\text{2. In migrant situations there is 'a dynamic quality to the spread of a lingua franca. It tends to accelerate after the initial stage is passed,' and thus it may get chosen as a medium in schools etc., further widening its functions - and its forms. (Greenberg, 1965a, p.52).}\]
for 'second language') may be utilised — though they are likely to develop their own differences in form as well as in ethos in such use.

At the same time, anyone who learns a lingua franca which is also used as a major culture language, particularly someone who can become literate in it, and thus get access to the books printed in that language, has advantages over the man whose lingua franca is simply a local language with no uses in administration, in higher education etc. That is, in Tanner's words, languages differ in the number of specialised varieties which can be used, and one can reasonably grade them "objectively" according to their range.

The paradoxes that occur in considering the value of languages are illustrated in a paper by Armstrong, who on the one hand stresses the richness of many vernaculars - 'Yoruba is an endless ocean' - and on the other points out

'To be confined to Spanish is to lag thirty years behind the times in science, engineering, business, and scholarship generally — despite the really vigorous industry with which the Spanish-speaking peoples translate works...To be confined to Arabic is at least fifty years behind the times...'

(1963, p.65)

English, French, German and Russian have become carrier languages, irrespective of their national ties - although of course the strength and extent of their main speakers caused them to be so. But as Armstrong does not quite make clear, one needs a wider knowledge of the language than its appropriate technical registers as well as previous practical knowledge of the subject, in order to profit from specialised reading in one of these L2s. Teachers in Africa have had ruefully to acknowledge this (and the ghost of Malinowski must be chuckling and rubbing its hands).

Content, form, function, and the meaning of words in use - their context, their users and recipients - it is often hard to separate these in making any useful judgements about a language. Great writers do enrich the languages they use, (whether great oral poets and orators do so well we cannot surely tell) and languages accelerate as much as the societies of their users. English itself provides one of the most interesting examples of this process. The re-emergence of the humble vernacular, replacing the invaders' language, is a familiar story, but the sociological details of the shift have been

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1. The identification of the French language with French civilization and culture is notorious, but recent emphasis is partly due to a sense of minority, in a world where its "mother tongue" speakers are few in number compared with English and indeed the other major European languages - 63 million, compared with 120 million German. French speakers are favoured for jobs while it is the language of the Six; if the British join, English is likely to replace it. (Sampson, 1968, p.265-6). Support of French is thus a political act; see also Alexandre's detailed account of de Gaulle's eventual takeover of the concept of 'Francophonie', begun by Bourguiba and Senghor (1969).
less examined. One can learn from Baugh (1959) of the increasing isolation of French, steadily diverging from the Continental language,¹ (a feature familiar to students of pidgins and creoles), but by the end of the thirteenth century it was a social accomplishment, a second language for the upper classes (for whom text-books on it were written), and by the end of the fourteenth century English had largely replaced French as the language for writing in.¹

4. Language development and the significance of literacy

The history of English up to the fifteenth century is of the development of certain English dialects in a multilingual environment, and their considerable simplification through the influence of bilinguals. The second major phase is fascinatingly described by Richard Foster Jones (1953). It is the story of a revolution in the written language, which therefore much affected spoken varieties of English. In the sixteenth century, the English themselves deprecated their language

¹. See Baugh, pp.160ff. This "degeneration", which suggests a bilingual or multilingual environment, meant that Anglo-Norman was a joke abroad, so that 'one might well feel some hesitancy about speaking a language of which one had to be slightly ashamed' (p.163); the Hundred Years' War divided Britain further from the continent, and the Black Death brought the rulers more in touch with the lower classes, because of their scarcity value. These factors seem as important as social identification with the English, though undoubtedly Norman children learnt English from their servants, and probably a somewhat pidginised French (Haugen's guess, 1950).

². A fifteenth letter to the king code-switches in mid-sentence: 'Hscript a Hereford en tresgrauente haste a trois de la cloche apres noone la tierce jour de Septembre' (p.180, f.n.3). But this form of cont...
in exactly the terms still applied to African vernaculars — their incapacity to express complex ideas and so forth. By borrowing from French and Latin, by imitating the constructions of the authors they translated, English writers increased the power of the language to cope with new ideas from dominant Europe, and by so doing speedily gained confidence in its powers.

The interaction between spoken and written forms in English has thus been profound, for over a thousand years, even though the proportion of literates must have been small until comparatively recently. Of course, one makes such statements on the basis of

footnote 2 p.126 continued........... 'malamanci' is due to using a different language to write in, see Pidal, quoted on p.128 below, and the next chapter. 'After 1450, English letters are everywhere the rule' (p.183).

1. English eclecticism has remained, though Christopher Hill describes a surprisingly long history of belief in a myth of the Anglo-Saxon past and 'the Norman yoke'. The Levellers wished the language to be 'purified of Gallicisms' (1955, pp.80-1) and the laws to be in English. (This is a case of resentment by those unable to understand specialised varieties of language). Purism has never succeeded in English, but the movement did promote interest in Anglo-Saxon, and ally Puritanism and the plain style.

2. Translations seem common in developing literary languages, so they might be encouraged in Swahili, before worrying too much about the emergence of creative writing (c.p. Whiteley 1969, p.126).

written texts, with very little idea of genuinely unlettered speech was like, but on the evidence of Joseph and Elizabeth Wright (and Joseph Wright remarks that he did not learn to read and write till he was nearly grown up (1905, p.vi)) at the beginning of this century the dialects preserved many of the words of the literary language. The emergence of a language from such interaction can be illustrated well from French. Pidal, wishing to attack the notion of the irresistible force of the 'conscience collective', points out:

\[\text{\'cette idée universellement admise pour l'\'état actuel et présent d'un idiome nous devons l'abandonner lorsque nous examinons le problème sous l'angle de l'histoire. Si nous étudions avec soin, du VIIe au XIIe siècle, les arides documents notariaux dont le latin, truffé de barbarismes, permet de déceler les origines et les progrès très lents d'une évolution phonétique romane, nous remarquons une foule de formes, en hésitante évolution, qui luttent entre elles pour s'imposer dans l'usage... deux courants culturels qui se heurtent, jamais à celles de forces sociales mystérieuses et inconscientes. Nous voyons toujours un individu, le notaire qui écrit en luttant contre son latin déficient, tantôt dans un apparente tension écartée, tantôt en s'abandonnant à la négligence de l'expression vulgaire.}\]

(1960, p.14).

1. And written language is not 'functionally dependent on its spoken equivalent' (J. McIntosh, 1956) who claims that its analysis for the most part preceded that of spoken language but it was usually carried out with numerous side-glances at certain tempting aspects of the 'underlying' spoken language. The result was a sort of compromise in which full justice was rarely done to the facts of the written language and in which special prominence was given to some aspects of spoken language and (necessarily) to some only; this has remained generally true... '(p.37, n.2).

2. E. Wright 1913, e.g. pp.85-89. In dialect, she says, 'all normal features have fuller sway than in the standard language' (p.121).
The struggle which Pidal describes is between a language used for writing and language(s) used for speaking: we cannot tell from the documents exactly how the notaries, or their illiterate neighbours, spoke. Nevertheless, it shows how significant the existence of a written form of language can be. The whole topic of literacy is of interest to social anthropologists, and I devote the next chapter to it. In the remainder of this chapter, I shall refer to it in the contexts of group identity, prestige and linguistic nationalism.

While linguists have taught that 'a written language is typically a reflection, independent in only limited ways, of spoken language' (Gleason, 1961, p.10), large numbers of students of literature have had to discuss Gray's remark 'the language of the age is never the language of poetry'. The differences between written and spoken English are becoming better understood by linguists, at the very time - ironically - when they are becoming less consistently distinct than before, perhaps ever before. But these differences have never been of the same order as in Sinhalese:

1. Auerbach has reflected comprehensively on the reciprocal changes in the status and style of Latin at the same period. (1965).

2. With the development of recording apparatus, spoken language can now be analysed, as in Randolph Quirk's Survey. Earlier attempts to describe actual usage, like Fries' pioneering American English Grammar (1940) had to be based on written data, such as letters, and it is clear that even the most artless and ill-educated of his writers used expressions which belong to the written mode (and for which colloquial alternatives existed).
The written language - the language of the Press and literature - is different from all forms of the spoken language [both in phonology and in grammar]. The equivalent of the written form is never spoken except in reading, so that the situation in Sinhalese is different from that of Arabic which has often been cited as a comparable case. The written language is, nonetheless, regarded as the 'correct' language, and school grammars are designed to teach this version over a period of five or six years... [it is] a second language in any respects.

(De Silva, 1967, p.6).

This is an example of a diglossic relationship (to extend Ferguson's account, op. cit. p.67 above), in which two styles, often characterised as High and Low, subsist together, the one used for formal occasions and for writing, the other homely, informal, and frequently contempted by its own users. The stable co-existence of these styles has been presented as the puzzle: why should the 'Low' variety survive? It seems to me that the 'High' style is better characterised as the learned style (in both senses of the word);

1. Ferguson has pointed out that his original formulation was based on 'social factors, or factors of function rather than structure... as soon as we try to define socio-linguistic situations in terms of linguistic structure, we find ... that the same kind of structure can be used for different purposes in different speech communities, and vice versa.' (1963, p.173).

2. Sociolinguistic investigation might reveal how far the high and low styles distinguished by middle English writers had diglossic connotations.

3. The allocation of 'H' or 'L' features, however, is not likely to be predictable simply on these criteria, even in so pronounced a dichotomy as the Greek usage (Householder, op. cit.). He contrasts the unequivocal choice of style for writing with the variable spoken usage (pp.130-1).
its use requires education and is thus a status symbol. This in turn makes people humble about their own usage, but theirs after all, is the basic first language and it thus has every chance of survival. In England, the corresponding index of education was the Latin tag, but this has gone out of use within the last thirty years.¹

A diglossic situation, then, implies social stratification, formal education, and above all literacy, through which the distinctiveness of the 'High' variety is maintained, since one must be taught to read and write. The division made, other values can be symbolised through it. Where the social situation is such that purists support the 'High' variety - as for instance, they do, with rather different motivations, in both Ceylon and Greece - a classical standard can be invoked, preserved or even fossilised by writing, and inimical therefore, to all creativeness.²

1. It still appears, for instance, in the editorials my father wrote forty years ago for a Malayan newspaper, in a style which now seems remote to him. The tempo and tone of even "quality" journalism has been quite transformed within recent years.

2. Hence much bitterness at the colonels' decision to extend it as a teaching medium (see above p.66, f.n.2). They apparently believe that people who use the classical style will behave like heroes (according to Miss J. du Boulay, an anthropologist who has been working in Greece). But the values - and the political consequences - of this choice are of course more complex... There is one example of a writer using a stilted official style to advantage, though in a multilingual environment: this is Kafka, but his was a message of despair, not of hope (for an account of Prager Deutsch and Kafka's views on language see Kafka, 1963, pp.9-10, also Steiner 1967, pp.69-70).
5. Linguistic Nationalism.

The 'High' variety in diglossia is an ausbau variety but sometimes a complete language can be shaped, 'engineered', for, as an expert on Norwegian language planning has pointed out, 'given sufficient motivation, language like any other social phenomenon can be deliberately guided and changed' (Haugen 1959, p.15). The circumstances in which this has occurred however, tend to be very different from those in developing countries which may now consider standardising a national language. It has been claimed that 'nationalism is a doctrine invented in Europe at the beginning of the nineteenth century' (Kedourie, quoted by Gellner, 1964, p.151), this certainly seems true of linguistic nationalism.

Sapir remarked that the Romantic movement

gave to folk speech a glamour which has probably had something to do with the idealization of localised languages as symbols of national solidarity and territorial integrity

(1949, p.87).

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1. In theory, but in practice the old dialects may survive beneath.

2. Nevertheless Indonesian is one of the most successful creations. This may well be due to the useful slot it could fill, as evinced by its choice for neutral use.

3. Though Jakobson claims that 'the Slavs were the first and only ethnic unit to start a new national cultural language in the early Middle Ages' (1945, in ed. Fishman 1963, p.586.)
Certainly the nineteenth century German linguists felt this.  

The story of standardisation in the centre and east of Europe is an extraordinary one of languages 'arbitrarily chosen, sometimes by a single individual' (Auty). The choice was often of an archaic variety, written down, as Czech was for instance, between the fourteenth and seventeenth centuries. The language makers were often known to each other (Auty); they communicated with each other in their common language, German, the language of the Empire, and this culture language was their model. German itself, as is well known, developed a standard written form only slowly, and the intensity of German linguistic nationalism must be attributed partly to the need for unity, rather than be considered an expression of it.

This indeed seems to be the normal sequence in linguistic nationalism. Fichte claimed that

\[ \text{"Wherever a separate language is found there is also a separate nation which has the right to manage its affairs and to rule itself."} \]

(1967, p.27).

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1. Jespersen traces their philosophy at the beginning of his *Language*... (1922). See especially p.41, for Jacob Grimm's beliefs.

2. Talk given to the Oxford University Linguistic Circle, 24.3.69. Professor Auty pointed out that tension has often resulted between the written and spoken varieties. The impetus was always a literary one, in the sense that a written version was to be developed, not created.

3. Martinet has pointed out, too, that 'ces écoles linguistiques telles qui faisaient la preuve que leur langue pouvait servir pour l'expression de leurs pensées les plus originales, ont eu recours à d'autres langues, l'anglais, le français, l'allemand, pour assurer a ces pensées toute la cont...
His words are quoted by Inglehart and Woodward, (1967, p.27) who have per contra several examples of the deliberate revival of 'an antiquated, archaic or primitive speech' 'at least partly to provide an audience and a constituency."

Languages are as much created to justify nationality as the other way round. A significant recent example entirely in the nineteenth and early twentieth century tradition, is Macedonian, whose history has been described by Lunt (1959).

"Before 1940 the very term "Macedonian language" only occurred in the writings of certain professional linguists... and a few political dissidents" (p.19), but by the autumn of 1945 it was the medium of instruction at every level in what is now the province of Macedonia in the federation of Yugoslavia. Used in the Occupation for the partisans' pamphlets, it was developed from the distinctive West Macedonian dialects. This development was possible because the Balkans are without sharp linguistic frontiers but their people have long been accustomed to distinct grouping by alien powers. Indeed the previous speech of 'the Macedonians' was closer to the Bulgarian dialects, but the language was not built up from this base since the

f.n.3 continued from p.133...diffusion qu'elles méritaient' (1967, p.3). The new languages were thus analogues to German (usually) into which they could be translated.

1. For Kloss, the perfect example of an Ausbau language (1967, p.31).
Bulgarians, welcomed as invaders in 1941, proved a disillusionment. The language was also differentiated from Serbian for historical political reasons.

Yet the very success of their language is bringing trouble to the Macedonians. They are finding it progressively harder to communicate with other Yugoslavs; their linguistic-cultural independence may lead to political dependence and isolation within their own country.

Language has been described as 'not primarily a means of communication but a means of communion'. (e.g. by Le Page, 1964, p.9). In Macedonia this is true in that communion has developed at the expense of communication. The conflict is often difficult to resolve; for many states indeed it is impossible to pick out one language as a 'rallying symbol' let alone to be able to use it internationally.

Thus Sapir's guess of 1933

that following the recent tendency to resurrect minor languages, there will come a renewed levelling of speech more suitably expressing the internationalism which is slowly emerging,

proves oversimple, perhaps sociologically naive. Social anthropologists,

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1. Lunt notes that Bulgaria officially remained reluctant 'to admit any possible non-Bulgarian feature, in Macedonian Slavic forms of speech.' (p.25.f.n.3) The Times correspondent in Vienna reported (2.2.63) that the Yugoslav Government had lodged a formal protest after the Bulgarian celebrations of the nineteenth anniversary of the Treaty of S.Stefano (by which for a year Bulgarian territories included Yugoslav Macedonia). These Communist states have thus still not overcome their old territorial disputes backed by linguistic claims.
for instance, should not be surprised that the present great pressures towards linguistic conformity seem to create opposing pressures to small-scale identity.

Linguistic nationalism may result in schism or war; but evidently the language riots of India and Belgium, the separatism of French-Canadians, are not caused by language differences alone.

One commentator thought that language provides

'as it were a focus of attention to a problem which can appeal more to the emotions and sentiments of ordinary people than is the case with the more prosaic questions of international economics.'

(Rundle, 1946, p. 53.)

But in these countries language is an index of the speaker's political and economic positions, and social status: and as this gives it increasing symbolic power, so does it measure the differences less rationally, until all issues are reduced to binary terms, e.g. "Flemish" or "French", or "English as an official language - yes or no?"

6. Linguistic Nationalism in Africa

When one considers the particular conditions of much nationalism in Europe, where peoples with a long consciousness of identity strove for social, political and economic independence, one sees similarities with decolonisation in Africa, certainly, but also a great many

1. The American right for identity is only superficially like the African one, and the attempts to destroy particularism by decriying multilingualism (see ed. Fishman [1968]) encouraged monolingual assumptions like Deutsch's which do not necessarily seem to the African on whom they are imposed.
differences. The role of language making, and the kind of material on which the language makers could work, is significantly different. The predictions made about nationhood and integration in the new nations have been wrong presumably because the predictors did not realise the extent to which they were conditioned by European and transatlantic myths and realities. These also lead them astray in their assumptions about language loyalty and the role of communications in nation-building.

I have already criticised Deutsch's assumptions about the homogeneity of a speech community, which lie behind his main point, reiterated in the preface to the second edition (1966) of his 1953 book:

'The nation-state, it seems, is still the chief political instrument for getting things done. The main basis of its power is, now more than ever, the consent of the governed; and its consent is easiest to obtain and keep among populations with the same language, culture and traditions of nationality.'

(p.4)

Inglehart and Woodward, who wished to test Deutsch's theses about language, attempt to predict political (in)stability from the assumption that political separatism depends on

'(i) the level of economic and political development attained by the country in question.

(ii) the degree to which social mobility is blocked because of membership in a given language group. This second factor is related to the first, in that it appears to be particularly critical in societies in the transitional stages of early industrialism.'

(1967, p.28)
Countries are classified as e.g. 'transitional' by criteria such as newspaper circulation. They find that 'linguistic pluralism, in and of itself, is a poor predictor of political stability' (p.44), and they prefer their second factor.

Inglehart and Woodward are, on their own terms, critical of Deutsch's theses, but even their terms can be criticised further. Nigeria, for instance, makes their table as a transitional/relatively unstable country. This is due to its literacy; but the newspapers whose circulation attests this are mostly in English. Nothing simple about the country's linguistic pluralism can be deduced from this fact, except that a fairly effective language of communication exists. Nor does it seem likely that Nigerians found their own languages a prime stumbling block to advancement; rather it was a question again of gaining a knowledge of English. Ibos were not hated because they spoke Ibo any more than Jews have been hated simply for speaking Yiddish. A language can become, because of its complexity of levels and diversity of function, the most potent symbol system of all, but it becomes so because it can condense in itself many pressures and signs of identity.

1. The language of course in which the leaders of the Federal Military Government and those of Biafra had long been accustomed to talk in together.

2. Before the coup of January 1966, there was hostility to the proposals that a knowledge of Hausa should be compulsory to Northern civil servants; this was seen as a deliberate block to advancement, not by Ibos, already used to Northernisation, but by non-Hausa speaking peoples of the North. This was also a part of the discrimination policy of the N.P.C. against non Hausa, non Muslim peoples.
It is perfectly possible for language to be used in this way in Africa, and for small units it has already been so - I have quoted some examples from Wolff, and another illustrates my point perfectly; revisiting parts of S. Nigeria, he found great eagerness for his orthographies:

"In their fight for political recognition the hinterland peoples [of Abua, Chual and Ogbia] are using language as a weapon and as a symbol of ethnic identity.... The trend has been away from national or even regional unity and towards diversity and particularism."

(1967, p.24)

This example also shows that linguistic separatism is often not a cause but a symptom of exclusion from political and social power (in contrast to Inglehart and Woodward's sequence).

Macedonian became a language because the Macedonian people, already defined as a group in opposition to others, were united in wishing further signs of their identity, but it was possible to create and promulgate a standardized form so quickly because of widespread education and radio and forms of printed communication. The linguistic allegiances in such situation seem entirely different from the African ones already quoted, where it is not true that

"the tenuous and fragile unity of the new states, most explosively illustrated in the Congo, is constantly menaced by divisive groups based primarily on linguistic allegiance."

(Passin in ed. Fye 1963, p.97)

A truer view of linguistic nationalism should be taught to overseas students from these areas, and their expatriate advisers. It seems that Chief Awolowo drew his philosophy 'that the chief
distinguishing characteristic of a nation is language' (1968, p.235) and the consequent need for linguistic states, from his reading. But the power of such homogeneity is double-edged indeed, as the example of the Indian states shows. Any politician who wanted to operate at a national level should surely discourage the situations which favour smaller-scale linguistic nationalism.

Apart from the development of all languages at all levels, the other language development suggested for Africa is the choice and standardisation of a national language. When it becomes apparent that this is unlikely to happen in many countries, commentators tend to give up, quietly consigning Africa to Deutschian doom. Yet the history of one language that is being extended nationally, Swahili, shows that it can do so without having to destroy multilingualism. This is clear from Whiteley's very full and illuminating account of the history, the implications and difficulties of language making as part of nation-making in Tanzania (1969).

1. Judging by his Bibliography and quotations. See also his remarks in 1966, pp.97-98, from which it looks as if linguistic nationalism at this level was encouraged by politicians in order to unite their followers. In the Second World War, small scale identity was in favour, and consequently articles on the subject showed its power favourably, see Jakobson, op.cit., and Deutsch, 1942, in ed. Fishman, 1968.
Language may develop in Africa as it has in India and the 'big' and 'little' communities described by Redfield, where one can trace levels of communication between small groups of people at village level, between these and the city dwellers, who again may communicate, if merchants, scholars or administrators, with members of other conurbations far away, and so on. Language varieties here serve different purposes and are developed to different extents. Unless and until literacy (and concomitant education and transport links etc.) increases a great deal, this is the most likely development for African countries, and one to be encouraged.
1. Literacy and Language Standardisation

Languages become enriched by the development of written styles; "speech and writing are two organs for the expression of meaning, originally co-ordinate and mutually independent" (Bradley, 1928, p.186): these statements were implied in the arguments of the last chapter. They are not the reasons for which literacy, the ability to read and write, is so fervently advocated for 'development' and 'modernization'. Literacy in this case is thought to be an instrument of thought only, a skill when mastered, inevitably causes communication.

The complex of values which can be magically assigned to literacy is nicely summed up in a definition by the 'Inter-American Seminar on Literacy and Adult Education' (c.1949):

"Literacy, considered qualitatively, is the ability to read and write with comprehension and to improve one's life so as to benefit the community"

(quoted by Jameson, 1950, p.945).

Social anthropologists have paid little attention to these community welfare benefits, but they have recently been presented with the claim that scientific thinking is dependent on literacy, which thus truly distinguishes the civilised from the primitives.1

Literacy in any of these senses is obviously important to any sociological discussion of language, but they all have to be differentiated. Different aspects may be relevant, for instance, to the making of national languages. Language uniformation can occur without literacy; a major aim of the European language makers, however, was to replace an alien written language with their own. Theirs was already a literate world, with a tradition of formal education; a standard language once developed, it could be taught through the schools. This in turn affected the spoken form (as in the Macedonian case).

In Israel, both spoken and written languages have been developed out of a "dead" or rather, ritual, language. The success of Hebrew encourages many who feel that a common language will increase national identity, but a special feature in its success must be its neutrality, in a polyglot country of immigrants. In contrast the examples of Wales and Ireland show that the co-existence of a world language weighs heavily against complete revivalism.

Quite different, apparently, is the encouragement of literacy per se, as part of education, and to facilitate government. However, the question immediately arises of the dialect to be chosen as the literary medium, the orthography, the provision of literature - all

1. Clearly, to take an African example, Swahili could not have gone half so successfully as a national language (not a first language) without the prior literary standardizations of the East African Swahili Committee. (see Whiteley, 1969).
subjects which turn out to be fraught with sociological difficulty, similar in kind to those of creating a standard language. And, while it may be hoped that when first reduced to writing there is no divergence of style, the new content, for which writing was supposed to be necessary in the first place, inevitably causes such divergence very quickly. I discuss this point again below.

1. Innis and Havelock: two theories about literacy and communication

Literacy campaigns are attempts to connect more people to 'the modern world', to put them in touch with a global, progressive society. Language making has the same purpose, at a more sophisticated level; the aim is to get members of one's country to participate in civilisation independently and not through the medium of a learned language. Such hopes can go awry, as we can see. But the explanatory theories of literacy are directed at the effects of literacy in a non-literate world. They are historical explanations, therefore, and as such may not be applicable to modern conditions. If they rest only on the assumption that making a script and developing the use of records uniquely stretches the mind and develops the capacity for scientific

1. As Garvin, for instance, discovered, (1959) - literacy itself demands a concept of standardisation. Contrast English, where this concept extends to phonology. 'The best speakers of standard English are those whose pronunciation and language generally least betray their locality' (Sweet, 1908, p.7).
thought, they are unsatisfactory, since some similar capacity
must be presumed in the people who can be taught to read and write.

The first anthropological approach to literacy is the long
exploratory essay by Goody and Watt, \textsuperscript{1} The Consequences of Literacy
(1963), which has been reprinted in the symposium on 'Literacy in
Traditional Societies' edited by Goody (1968). Before discussing
this, I will refer briefly to the ideas of two writers who influenced
Goody and Watt, since they raise important issues to
social anthropologists.

The Canadian economic historian, H.A. Innis, considered that
empires developed according to the efficiency of their communications.
They developed with literacy, and their structure depended on the
tensions between the limitations and potentialities of the media -
Babylonian tablets, Egyptian papyrus, modern paper etc. - and the
struggle for control of these media. For instance:

'\textit{the characteristics of clay favoured the conventionalisation
of writing, decentralisation of cities, the growth of
continuing organization in the temples, and religious control}'
(1950, p.33),

while

'\textit{the highly sensitive economy built up in relation to newsprint
and its monopolistic position in relation to advertising
hastened an emphasis on a new medium, notably the radio, which
in turn contributed to a large-scale depression}[\textit{in the U.S.
and Canada, who were major newsprint suppliers}] (p.204).

Innis believed that 'the tendency of each medium of communication

\textsuperscript{1} Watt is a specialist in English literature, with interests in the
sociology of literature.
(is) to create monopolies of knowledge to the point that the human spirit breaks through at new levels of society and on the outer fringes' (p.141). He thus distinguishes kinds and levels not of literacy, but of the media of writing and their users. The content or message is not differentiated as between oral and literary, nor is there any suggestion that the practice of reading and writing altered the users' ways of thought so as, for instance, to invent new technologies and alter the shape of empires that way.

Innis presents a powerful case for the instrumental power of literacy, and its role in enabling technological development, not least by the mobilisation of men and resources in urban-centred empires. His generalisations and simplifications are based on solid evidence, though the potential dangers of an often sweeping approach are realised in the writing of his junior, Marshall McLuhan. But his own view of media rests at considering them as channels, whose nature affects the whole shape of societal networks and the concentration of power. Literacy itself is power, and people struggle to win control over its use and transmission. It is in this light, as I have implied, that we can view diglossia,

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1. Incidentally, McLuhan's point that nationalism in Europe is closely associated with the rise of mass-produced books is hardly novel (the point is made, e.g. by Goed, 1958, p.24). But his further claim that 'nationalism didn't exist in Europe until the Renaissance, when typography enabled every literate man to see his mother tongue analytically as a uniform entity' (1969, p.60) typically overrides the real facts of dialect differentiation (inter alia!) through which few literates used their mother tongue in writing until very recently.
and all styles of writing which are conventionalised into esotericism.\footnote{An interesting example is Chinese, which is usually presented as a history of conservatism through a script. But, as Chao points out, 'until the vernacular literary movement started in 1917 by Hu Shih... everybody wrote, so far as grammar and vocabulary went, in a language two thousand years older than the one they spoke' (1968, p.10). Consequently the Christian literacy movement, for instance, reached even slave girls, 'because their books were not 'in the literary style and vocabulary, but in the everyday life of the people' (Su-Ling, 1953, p.218, herself the product of both a traditional and a Western education).}

Otherwise, Innis essentially views literacy as an 'enabling factor' in the sense argued by Gough in contrast to Goody and Watt:

'I am inclined to emphasise ecology and external and external political and economic relations as causal factors in the development of political systems rather than the spread of literacy' (1968, p.80).

She doubts, that is, their suggestion that literacy of itself creates change by a cognitive revolution - by domesticating 'la pensée sauvage' and creating scientific thought. For this point of view, it is important to distinguish differences between oral and written codes, and in levels and kinds of literacy, such as are ignored by Innis. It should also be noted that Lévi-Strauss himself has not made literacy a key to development. He points out that literacy came after the neolithic revolution; its regular function is to extend power over men. Thus though Lévi-Strauss may attribute different characteristics to literacy from time to time, it remains constantly evil, because of this instrumentality.
'If, in order to establish his ascendancy over nature, man had to subjugate man and treat one section of mankind as an object, we can no longer give a simple or unequivocal answer to the questions raised by the concept of progress.'

(1959, in 1969, p.31).

Literacy is hardly touched on by Levi-Strauss, except in relation to this tragic paradox. His savage thought is distinguished by its methods of classification and information storage. Nevertheless it is remarkably similar in some ways to the 'preliterate thought' postulated by E.A. Havelock.

Just after reading Havelock's Preface to Plato, I was fascinated to find a sentence by Senghor, one of his many descriptions of negritude.

'The sense of communion, the gift of myth-making, the gift of rhythm, such are the essential elements of Negritude, which you will find indelibly stamped on all the works and activities of the black man.'


These are precisely the features by which Havelock recognises Greek oral culture, summed up in the word mimesis - the poetry which Plato banned from his Republic. Havelock thinks that Plato did not mean by this the creative imagination, as we might think, but the traditional Greek system of education - by which knowledge, law, culture were transmitted by the poet/bard and assimilated in the sensual participation which is a performance, - or so Havelock presumes oral transmission

1. See Tristes Tropiques passim; note also comments reproduced in New Scientist 15.1.70.
must take place, for it be effective.\footnote{1} Communion, rhythm, myth - Plato was trying to replace these features by rational argument in which the subject is separated from the object\footnote{2} - essential before what we consider philosophic thought can take place. This in turn entails learning from the book, which exists as a distinct repository of wisdom instead of being recreated in the self.

Havelock offers an explanation of great interest, instead of circular references to the Greek soul or spirit (one could note that Senghor, who relies also on this circularity, is the product of a traditional classical education). Havelock's reconstruction of an oral culture is a challenge to anthropologists - is this actually how communication occurs in non-literate situations still examinable? Interestingly too, he considers that the preliterate is a bricoleur:

'\textit{the living memory...slowly discards what has become wholly irrelevant. Yet it prefers to remodel rather than discard. New information and new experience are continually grafted on to the inherited models}'

\cite{p.122}.

\footnote{1}{Havelock refers in his preface to the necessity of using social anthropology, and specifically connects Lévy-Bruhl with this theory of transmission by performance (p.ix) but neither this author or other anthropologists appear in the Bibliography.}

\footnote{2}{Cf. Senghor on negritude's being 'informed by intuitive reason... which...expresses itself...through that self-surrender, that coalescence of subject and object' (ibid) and similar comments in Senghor,1965.}
But there are several objections to Havelock's thesis. His own "proofs" are perhaps the weakest; he measures 'literate thinking' by the proportion of abstract vocabulary in use, (pp.v, vi) but as Lévi-Strauss pointed out at the beginning of The Savage Mind, neither this nor disinterested intellectual experimentation are confined to literate communities. Indeed, the creation of language is itself such a fundamental act of abstraction that verbal literacy hardly seems such a grand departure. (Havelock does not really discuss at all the abstraction of mathematical symbolism, which seems a far more important contribution of the Greek world to science).

Nor can we make such a sharp difference between literate and illiterate learning. The internalising, recreative learning by doing remains fundamental: it is only the use of detached reference to a store of information which is special to the literate.¹ And, of course, we do not have to go to Africa to find Senghor's 'intuitive reason'. We all participate in the object² by symbolization:

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¹ And "learning one's lesson", including learning bits of the book orally, has survived tenaciously. Havelock's distinction indeed points up the "oral" quality of much schooling still. I take up this point again, in Part II, when discussing the development of Western education in Nigeria.

² See Senghor, 1965, e.g. pp.29-35 for further illustration of this feature of Negritude.
and the advantage of literateness is that in writing one can exploit the resonances of sense and literary allusion, (and of sight as well as sound by using the ideographic qualities of writing and layout). Sustained creative fiction is of course an alternative to objective analysis which in a Havelockian dichotomy would belong to oral culture, and yet in the form for example of the novel, it is a product of a literate world.

A comment in passing by Mary Douglas, has led to a point in support of Havelock. She is discussing the difficulties of maintaining an ordered society in a pre-literate community:

'without forms in triplicate, without licences and passports and radio police-cars they must somehow create a society and commit men and women to its norms' 

(1966, p.92).

She suggests that modernization is marked by increasing differentiation, and this promotes self-awareness.

But we could think of the primitive world as a densely complex one in which all the non-human parts are communicating just as individuals do; not so much a confusion between personality and the inanimate as a need to make sense of the world by assuming that anything in it must have a message for one, with consequently multifarious attempts at decoding. The sense that messages are recordable for reference means, as Havelock pointed out, that one loses the pressure always to internalise them,¹ and thus develops the sense that

¹. This may in turn develop self-consciousness, the detachment of subject and object, which both she and Havelock consider the prime feature of modern consciousness, but it hardly explains it.
information is available and exterior, lodged in a book or a
document - in a few, similar channels and codes - so that one no
longer has to seek it at the source. We cease to keep our ears
cooked for the music of the spheres.

3. Restricted Literacy

So far, I have ignored the problematic details of what literacy
is. Not only is it as hard to measure as intelligibility, and for
the same reasons; it is also 'a complex skill applicable to a wide
variety of purposes'. The comment is Albert Lord's, reviewing a
situation in which two traditions, one of oral and one of written
literature, have co-existed for a thousand years. Reading and
writing are separate skills, not always known together, and all
sorts of limitations may exist on the scope of their use. The
contributors to ed. Goody (1968) have analysed some of these
restrictions as they have operated in some parts of Asia and
Africa: clearly they have existed in Europe as well.

1. The Southern Slavs have had a written literature since the ninth
century, but this did not apparently affect the pattern of oral
composition until the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Lord quotes
this remark from Dow, while discussing Greek literacy (Lord 1960, p.150).
2. Cipolla (1969) provides a useful introduction to the history of
European literacy. Apart from the difficulties of measuring this for
the past (see also Schofield in ed. Goody for English literacy), one
is struck by the very high level of illiteracy until the eighteenth
century and often beyond: 'as late as 1850 about half of the adult
population in Europe could neither read nor write' (Cipolla, p.55).
Another interesting point is that the geographical distinction
between the literate Roman and the illiterate German world, dating
back to the fifth century, is still reflected in the literacy figures
at the end of the nineteenth (p.41, p.18).
Tambiah, for instance, describes a Thai village, 'poor, until recently remote, and little-stratified' (p.87) which has nevertheless a complex literate system — although it would probably be, as he says, ignored by "modernisers" altogether. The scripts, and the dialects in which they are written, mostly come from outside; one notes however extreme differentiation, with each medium tied to a particular purpose of reading, copying, chanting etc. There seems to have been virtually no assimilation with 'modern' literacy as taught in the local school and required for administrative dealings. Hence one may say that the meaning of each literate act is a compound one; to the enactor, the purpose of the communication, the medium, and the message are united in his mind.

This seems a clear example of what Goody and Watt called 'restricted literacy'. However, as the accounts of their fellow contributors show, there is no simple point of distinction between this and a free, creative literacy, such as they hypothesise for technological progress and secular thought. Even in Tambiah's village, secular and religious literacy meet in the *mae lum* singers (for whom incidentally, 'the oral and written traditions are not separate but supplement each other' (p.116); their literacy seems still nevertheless to be tied to certain sorts of production.2)

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1. Note Tambiah: 'Judging from educational techniques in the village today, the method has not changed appreciably; children collectively repeat aloud in unison and memorize.' (p.95) One assumes that differentiation is thus perpetuated and extended by the formal school system.

2. Actually, I think the picture may be obscured by the omission of modern school literacy, and the purposes to which it is put in the village.
It may be, however, that many literates all over the world use their skill for equally circumscribed purposes, but this is less obvious (to a modern Western observer) because they are pragmatic and not religious. The contrast drawn by Meggitt in New Guinea actually illustrates this: in contrast to the magical value of literacy, in the cargo cults, the highlanders' regarded literacy simply as a means of securing employment with Europeans (p. 307). They have also begun to use their literacy (in Pidgin English) for letter writing.

'I have read a number of these letters and have found them to be characteristically Enga in content, style and sentiment; they are prosaic and effective communications of information, giving facts, asking questions and offering advice'

(p. 308).

It seems to me that though the Enga are ready to accept 'the mundane use of writing', which will of course make adaptation to Western ways more easy, their concept of literacy is still very limited. We are familiar with the cargo-cult material which shows how difficult it has been to convince the coastal peoples of the pragmatic uses of literacy. It may prove equally hard to educate people who believe it has no other uses.

These and the other examples in Goody's volume lead me to set the concept of 'restricted literacy' on its head, and consider it

footnote 2 continued from p. 153... Tambiah shows the diversity of the singers' material; it may be that in a complete account of literacy in the village we would see that "traditional" and "modern" usage has in fact converged in the person of the [sic] singer.
as the norm, not the limiting case of literacy. 'Full' literacy -
creative, secular etc. - would then be a particular, exogenic development.
Kathleen Gough shows that one cannot divide the two kinds of literacy
as simply as Goody and Watt had done. China and India have a great
literacy tradition, but in some (though not in all) ways it could
be called 'restricted'. All the African cases in the book (basically
of literacy in Arabic) are restricted.¹

According to Curtius, the book was a metaphor for the world
in the Middle Ages in Europe, and

'a comprehension of the world was not regarded as a creative
function but as an assimilation and retracing of given facts;
the symbolic expression of this being reading'

(1953, p.326).

Certainly the Greek spirit of free enquiry did not continue through
the authority-minded middle ages. It seems much more that 'full'
literacy is a result of a secular world-view (to make a shorthand of
a complex bundle of concepts), and not its cause. For possessors of
many of the world's belief systems, literacy is a religious technique,
or a purely secular one limited to certain pragmatic ends. Literacy
as a means of developing thought will not necessarily emerge from
such restricted situations, and I think different reasons must be
sought for the verbal and the non-verbal aspects of such literacy,
although verbal literacy may be an enabling factor for the

¹. Bloch's suggestions for the way in which literacy in Madagascar
became unrestricted form evidence which would support my argument.
transmission, and hence expansion of the non-verbal (c.p. claims by Goody & Watt, p.68).

4. Literary Languages and Innovation.

Goody and Watt's original paper raises questions which were not, naturally, all tackled by the other contributors. One deliberate exclusion much limited the scope of their enquiry - 'the introduction or development of the secular school' (p.25, F.N.3).

This topic was understandably felt too big for inclusion, but its omission encouraged the neglect of a very important aspect of literacy: the identity of the literary language and its connotations. Goody indeed claims that

'the advantage of studying non-European forms of literacy is that one has a better chance of isolating the effects of the technique as distinct from the content of writing, though clearly such an aim can never be fully realized' (ibid).

However, the division is not simply a twofold one: one has to consider also the language of the content, since literate communication uses a second-order symbol system.

One of the most striking features of literacy is that it has so often been introduced through a foreign language, so that literates have had to be bi- or multi-lingual. It is, says Auerbach,

'no unique or fortuitous phenomenon (that) an educated public almost always possesses more than one language and often takes a particular foreign literary language as a model for the development of its own.'

(1965, p.249)
Often the literary language is the language of the conqueror, and always there is a complex of values attached to its acquisition. We are here looking at examples of the phenomenon described at the beginning of the chapter, that of introducing non-literates to a literate world. All the African cases described in ed. Goody are of this kind, so the choice of language is clearly important in these societies as well.

'It is your own language, but you write in a foreign one.'

(Sartre, *Words*, 1964, p.114)

Sartre's comment is true at different levels. One may claim that writing is different qualitatively from speech, or more modestly that it has its own stylistic rules. At the lowest yet most fundamental level, however, writing is an act of transcription and one has to learn the language of the alphabet, master the rules of spelling, or commit to memory thousands of characters. It is hard for the literate to recall how letter and speech became linked, laboriously in the mind, or the joys of creating and recognising words. The writing system which we master is of course not only foreign to us, as beginners, but historically the fruit of thousands of years of experiment and tradition in Europe and the middle East. It is not a product of (for instance) the English nation at all.

Whereas writing systems may not perhaps, because of this great diffusion, attach the learner to any specific national
situation, the language in which he learns to read and write may be entirely part of a foreign way of life, and firmly associated with a chance of advancement, progress, and a widening of horizons. I have already referred to diglossic situations for which literacy is a means to social advancement and culture, even though the conventionality and conservatism of the literary language is a bar to creativity and enterprise. But I have not looked at the manifold linguistic and literate consequences of religious activity.

It has often been pointed out that the major religions of the world are religions of the Book. There are many examples in ed. Goody of ways in which religious literacy, while not leading to any "modernising" consequences, nevertheless gives its possessor access to new ideas, and a means of participating in a culture wider than his local one.

1. Of course scripts may be the focus of violent emotion and nationalist symbols as well. C p. The Chinese case for the symbolic value of the script, or the way that Serb and Croatian are said to be languages divided by script. See De Francis (1950) and discussions in ed. Goody.

2. English may be a highly "literary" or "literate" language but it is hard to discuss literacy in it, since (for instance) there is no adjective which means 'in writing', 'reading-ful', 'writing-ful' etc. I have chosen to extend literate, since literary seems to have even more specific connotations, but it is not a satisfactory alternative.

3. The choice and development of particular dialects by missions (sometimes in competition with one another) has been very important in Africa, indeed, missionaries have been most important as linguists and in reducing languages to writing. (For a history of missionary linguists and bibliography, see Wonderly and Nida, 1963) As my main aim is to examine the use of English, the consequences of missionary choice of languages for evangelisation and scripture translation are not fully discussed.
Literacy in Africa can hardly be studied without taking into account the values accruing to different systems of language-and-writing. Despite all the pressures towards Arabic in the Islamic areas of West Africa, it seems generally true that its use has become more instead of less 'restricted'. Whereas in the past it considerably influenced spoken language (for instance Hausa), now the impact of radio and newspapers leads to the calquing of English constructions as well as the assimilation of English loan-words. In fact English has become to other languages what Latin once was to English: an aid to getting out of a backwater.

'The Latin tongue being so copious and plentiful, so darke and doubtfull, so necessarie and fruitfull, that no nation, no people, no trade, no vocation, but feele what discommodities issue from the ignorance of the same'  

(1573, Quoted in Jones, 1953, p. 24).

This account of the role of English in West Africa has a rosy simplicity which would be much modified in detail, but I hope it brings out the important features of literacy in Africa: especially the significance of the language medium and the inevitability of interaction between spoken and written language. The first point has always been recognized by those in authority. The Hausa case is

1. Loan words, and the Arabic influence in Hausa has received considerable attention: see especially Greenberg 1947 and Hiskett 1965.

2. Not only of course in Africa. Its importance as a lingua franca all over South Asia is attested, and I have already referred to French fears of its influence, also expressed elsewhere in Europe.
particularly instructive. Amongst the administrators who opposed Western education in the North, Temple openly acknowledged that, since learning to read and write English had 'as a natural corollary, European habits and customs' (1913, p.219), so Koranic education encouraged subservience to authority. This fact, and not religious belief, prompted the Emirs' opposition to the missions (pp.214-5).

This practical objection to English was glossed over by other administrators, who upheld the virtues of Arabic as a culture language.¹ In opposition to them, educationists like Victor Murray fought to extend the teaching of English in Africa, relating its role to that of Latin as a carrier of culture and ideas, and a model for indigenous literatures. Educationists have had to choose between two ideals, to which one could apply Haugen's description of the Norwegian languages: 'one of them claims to be the more civilised, the other more Norwegian'.²

¹ An exception was H.S.T. Edwardes, who commented in the Sokoto Annual Report for 1921 that 'Arabic is as valuable to them as a cultural agent as Greek is to us - and about equally useful as a means of earning a living' (Kaduna Archives, 1959/1922). This remark was furiously blue-pencilled on receipt. Unfortunately, his views were in other respects anathema, so these comments would carry even less weight.

² Quoted by Whiteley as appropriate to the problems of developing Swahili (1959, p.115). Of course this conflict, which dogs all educational argument in Africa, is part of a deeper conflict of ideology. Ironically, the current tendency to sneer at the Western impact in Africa is often due to beliefs very similar to those of the Indirect Rulers.
In all the debates between the merits of education through vernacular and metropolitan languages, the influence of the metropolitan language, particularly as a written source of the unwritten vernacular, has not been greatly studied, except in relation to loan words. Yet, although they may not alter as dramatically as the Romance languages, African languages are probably changing as fast as English in the time of Caxton.

'In addition to being afflicted with a sincere modesty, 

...Caxton must have been aware of the difficulties presented by an unstabilised vernacular. He was keenly conscious of the confusion arising from dialectal differences and also of the rapidly changing nature of English, which fact moved him to declare, a short time before his death, that the language of his youth was then unintelligible to him. These considerations could hardly have failed to breed in him distrust of the mother tongue...'

(Jones, p.5)

Students in Nigeria have remarked to me that they hardly understood the language of the old men: this is probably because their schooling has removed them from an environment in which proverbs become the clichés of conversation.

Although the development of English offers so many interesting parallels to the development of standard literacy languages in Africa today, there are also significant differences which make it

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1. See above for loan-word studies for Hausa. Parsons (1959 and 1962) discussed the influence of English. Whiteley (1963) gives examples of loans in Swahili with bibliography, to choose two languages only out of a very large field. Students of English at Ahmadu Bello University, Nigeria, have produced interesting papers on the different aspects of English in Nigeria.

2. Alexandre discusses this point (1967, p.13); for an account of allusive use of proverbs in Igbo see Achebe, in Whiteley 1964a p.vii).
impossible to predict much from either the English situation or the rise of Romance Languages in Europe. It is sometimes suggested that varieties of English will come to diverge so much from American or British standards that they will emerge as independent languages like the Romance ones. One can compare and contrast the picture painted by Auerbach. He considers that Latin and the vernacular languages continued to interact until Charlemagne, trying to get a roughly correct form of Latin stabilised for official use, 'irreparably severed the bond between written Latin and the popular Romance tongues' by the 'Carolingian Reforms' (p.119).

In consequence,

'for the next three centuries all intellectual life in the West, and most of it over a much longer period, was expressed in a dead language, almost entirely cut off from the life of the populations and understood by very few.'

(p.119).

But in Africa it does not seem so retrograde to maintain some reference to 'International English', at least in its written forms, since the culture that it bears, the rapidity of change and the weight of the media in English - books, radio, television - all mean that 'the life of the populations' will be more in touch with a live and changing world language. This point has always to be borne in mind when one is trying to measure the admittedly minority function of English in "black" Africa and the intellectual isolation of its users there.
In the second part of this thesis I will look at this function in more detail, analysing some of the uses of English in Nigeria. In considering these, especially in literate communication, one must take into particular account the importance of models, and of stereotypes for imitation.

5. Models, Stereotypes and Collective Representations

Evans-Pritchard restated more powerfully the arguments of Levvy-Bruhl, by suggesting that 'pre-logical' thinking was due not to 'mystical participation', but to the shape of the collective representations which express 'the values given to phenomena by society' (1933, in 1970, p. 51). When people become literate in an alien language they are exposed to new collective representations, which they interpret in the light of their own. It follows that when they begin to write, the conventions that they follow will be modified by their own experience. The same words may be used with different meanings, or (to use a different communicative focus) the stereotypes of form+content that they encounter will modify their own expression. This process of adjustment,

1. This also is an argument against the 'havelockian' theory of pre-literate mimesis, and supports my point that it is the nature of the collective representations, and not the accomplishment of recording them in writing, which is crucial to the degree of attention to phenomena and the reasons for this attention (to use Evans-Pritchard's terms, (p. 51, 1970).
(commonly studied by students of literature) is naturally very acute where the two sets of collective representations are hard to match, and are complicated by a pattern of literate conventions, which intervene between the two spoken systems.

'I realise that this insistence on the tenacity of conventions, on the role of types and stereotypes in art, will be met with scepticism by those who have not worked in this field. The more we become aware of the enormous pull in man to repeat what he has learned, the greater will be our admiration for those exceptional beings who could break this spell and make a significant advance on which others could build' (1960, pp.24-25).

What Gombrich has taught us of the nature of visual art is just as true for all writing. It is true of other forms of behaviour, as we know, but writing shares with visual art particular properties of permanence, and transmissibility independent of the conditions in which it was produced.

In the succeeding chapters, when I describe the transmission of an oral, or non-literate language, 'Pidgin', I shall consider the agents of transmission, the people who are models for other learners of pidgin. For literate and literary 'types and stereotypes' I will use the word form. The emphasis is on the form or structure of the stereotype, but this will carry with it elements of content and meaning.

1. Although they are often consider only the stereotypes and collective representations of "serious" literature.
This I can illustrate by recalling one's early attempts at writing in a foreign language. In my first French essays 'le soleil brille, les oiseaux chantent' because I did not know how to say what the weather was really like. When I taught European secondary school girls in Kenya, I often found that they would write in English terms. Asked to describe their Kenyan home, it sometimes appeared as a quaint cottage, with roses flowering out of season — descriptions drawn from some literary source by children who had hardly ever been to England. They wanted their description to be dignified and appropriate: they needed help in setting about this unnatural labour of verbalising their experience.¹

In the same way, more articulate people may still string together ready-made phrases, 'like the sections of a prefabricated hen-house', as George Orwell put it in his article on 'Politics and the English Language' (1961, p.306). Academics who write in English as a second language often use their phrases in a slightly

¹ England has a complicated sort of prestige to Kenya-born children, and written language has more authority than spoken. To an African, 'English' subjects may seem more appropriate for writing about in English (though primarily he may be limited by an England-centred vocabulary). These are all factors which affect the choice of form. People with a narrow range of articulacy (with 'restricted codes') will particularly need stereotypes to help them out. Hence, on the other hand, a British primary-school teacher improves reading skills by making her children tell, verbalise their experience. If you get a child talking, Dr. Forsyth said, "you get him reading..." Children tell themselves into literacy' by Brian Forsyth, Times, 13.5.83).
off-centre way, betraying the way they have been learned only in limited contexts. It is like walking on an uneven floor. 'Native-language' writers set their phrases together more smoothly, but one may still have to dig them up to get at the original experience beneath.

All communication depends on a common code-book, and the sets of conventions that have to be mastered include rules for presenting argument, writing 'essays' and so forth. To revert to an earlier point, the spirit of intellectual enquiry is not generated by the act of writing, but its communication is due to sustained collective endeavour towards an effective form.

We are now learning more and more of the complexities of perception and of the environmental or culture-bound conventions that determine what we see. Our perceptions can, however, be expanded not just by 'life' but by art, as Gombrich has so brilliantly

1. Pathetic evidence of this is found in examination answers, especially of course by those not trained to the right code.

2. Which of course need not be verbal. The ability to abstract and transmit information by plans, maps, diagrams, graphs etc., is equally important to technological advance. The illiterate Polynesians devised sophisticated ocean charts. (The Chadwick's in their volumes on oral literature, also attest the Polynesian sense of history - another feature often associated with literacy. (1940, vol.III, p.232).

3. In life of course as our experience changes we learn to evaluate space differently - as Turnbull's pigmy friend began to learn to judge distances on the savannah plains (1961, pp.227-3, p.232). See also Gregory (1970).
shown. The same is true for literature. One of the most suggestive attempts to relate changes in perception to the conventions of literature is Erich Auerbach's *Mimesis*. He does not, unfortunately, distinguish between literary and oral forms, but he tries to show that shifts in social consciousness can be made through literature as well as simply being described through it.

Auerbach considers, for instance, that the Western tradition of Western imaginative literature has developed from a fusion of the classical and the Judaeo-Christian traditions. The immediate particularity of the heroic epic is enriched by a sensitivity to individuals, changing and developing through time.

> For it is only during the course of an eventful life that young men are differentiated into full individuality; and it is this history of a personality which the Old Testament presents to us as the formation undergone by those whom God has chosen to be examples.

(1953, p.15)

The stress of individual life, and the value of describing it at all, let alone the value of humble lives - Western literature proclaims such values because of a religious world view. This view is not necessarily shared by the attentive Western reader, but he is trained partly by that reading to 'see' events in the same way.

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1. As my references should make clear, this is of course a different sense of *mimesis* from Havelock's.
2. Basically an oral form: see Lord, (op.cit.)
It is not surprising that some of the conventions entailed are foreign to African readers. But there is no reason why they should not learn them and thereby enlarge their perceptual range. The difficulties that occur are common to all experiences:

'All culture and all communication depend on the interplay between expectation and observation, the waves of fulfillment, disappointment, right guesses, and wrong moves that make up our daily life....'

(Gombrich, 1960, p. 60)

Indeed, this process of tension and growth is already occurring, not only receptively but creatively. I look at the development of Nigerian literate communication in the second part of this thesis.

1. They may, that is, find the literary convention more difficult if they do not share the value system with which it is associated. It seems probable that Achebe, for instance, succeeds in creating a presentation of traditional Ibo society through a Western form - the novel - because his own upbringing was Christian.
PART TWO

CHAPTER SIXTH

THE DEVELOPMENT OF PIDGIN LANGUAGES

1. Linguistic and Sociological Approaches

In the second part of this thesis, I investigate the growth and development of particular languages in West Africa - pidgin or creole languages - and the impact generally of English, in Nigeria. To do this, I have to face the theoretical problems discussed in Part One - they lie behind even the wording of my first sentence. What is a pidgin language, or a creole one, and are they independent languages? Are their histories unusual, or particularly amenable to sociological description? I hope to show that study of my subject, from the standpoint already developed, in turn affords refinement of the theories.

We have no way of looking at the beginning of a language, but can sometimes date the beginning of new languages, which have arisen because the speakers of language A and the speakers of language B, wishing to communicate, have developed language C, which shares features of A and B, but is identical with neither. This, briefly, is the linguists' explanation of a 'pidgin' language, a
classification term derived from a number of known examples. Furthermore, there are other languages, similar in structure to these 'pidgins', which are no longer simply lingua francas, but the first and only language of their speakers. These languages are classified as 'creoles', from the name they often bear (Krio in Sierra Leone, Crioulo in Portuguese Guinea, the French créoles of the Caribbean). These must be expanded versions of pidgins, which therefore represent an earlier stage in historical time.

Even as they stand, these definitions of pidgin and creole point to topics which are of interest to social anthropologists, since they raise questions of social identity and of communication between very different groups. Linguists themselves have declared that sociological understanding is necessary, presumably because they have looked at languages which arise in specific historical situations of apparently violent or dramatic nature: such as the growth of pidgin English between master and slave, or between seaman and native on some exotic shore. The very name pidgin is an unsolved mystery, but it was certainly used for the contact language of the China trade in the nineteenth century, which was said to be perpetuated to keep the foreign devils at arms' length.

1. This judgment is made on sociological grounds: that a largely black population is speaking a largely European language.
2. The 'standard' definitions in recent works: e.g. the Voegelin's (1964), Le Page (1964), Hall (1966), The distinction is in fact a recent one, see in ed. Le Page, (1981).
Pidgin languages have consequently been studied by people whose imaginations were caught by social detail, and creole languages in particular have attracted crusading attention from linguists who wished to convince their speakers that they spoke a perfectly proper language and not just a "broken" or "ungrammatical" version of a metropolitan language. This entailed equal value being given to 'pidgin' structures, but these were depreciated somewhat as languages, by being assigned limited lives and functions, in contrast to the all-round adequacy of creoles.¹

When studied carefully, however, pidgins and creoles did prove to be of considerable linguistic interest. They posed problems of genetic relationship and language mixture for orthodox historical linguistics, and as examples of speedy linguistic change, they call in question any estimate of a regular change-rate, such as that developed for glottochronology.² Only such of these languages, as are European-based have been looked at in any detail,³ and their status as distinct languages has naturally been in question: but their lexicons are of interest to etymologists.⁴

1. See e.g. Hall passim, and also Berry's defence of Krio, e.g. 1962.
3. One exception is Sango, but this a language with definitional problems of its own: see below.
4. For example, see Ross's study of Pitcairnese (1964).
At first sight it appears that pidgins are beautiful examples for sociolinguistic theory: a specific sort of social setting produces a specific sort of language. But obviously, before one can be certain of this, both sides of the correlation need thorough description, and also wider comparison. Do other languages show pidgin features? Are there comparable social situations in which pidgins did not arise? And what exactly are these social situations anyway? They have after all, been labelled by linguists and historians, and have not received direct anthropological attention.\footnote{I do not know of any social anthropological studies directed particularly to the 'pidginizing process', though Herskovits paid considerable attention to pidgins in Turin and West Africa. Sociological studies of relevant situations exist, e.g., Patterson (1967) and H.G. Smith op.cit., for the West Indies.}

The distinction between pidgin and creole, as a sequential relationship, contains a mixture of sociological and linguistic assumption; is it matched 'empirically' by distinction either of function or of form?

2. The Description of Pidgin Languages

There is not yet any agreed linguistic definition of a pidgin. Stewart maintains a definition\footnote{'Creolists' in fact use 'pidgin' and 'creole' examples indifferently to illustrate their comparisons, so I use pidgin here in a sense acceptable to them, before dismissing the distinction further, below.} which was often put forward before the recent spate of interest and research in the subject: a pidgin derives its vocabulary from one source, but its grammatical structures from another. (1968, p.539). This would mean that it is 'hybrid' or

\footnote{Repeated from the earlier version of this typology (1962). This definition is accepted by Ferguson, for his own typology (1962).}
'mixed' in a way that many linguists have claimed is impossible. Therefore, a good deal of work on pidgins turns out to be a debate on genetic relationships. I think social anthropologists can afford to remain naif about this problem of linguistic kinship theory, but should they wish to discover exactly what contribution was made by either side to a pidgin, they are likely to be disappointed. Though there is little doubt about most lexical items, grammatical structures are much less certainly assigned.

Hall says,

'...Three times I have begun work on a pidgin or creole language (Neo-Islenesian, Sranan; Haitian Creole) with the determination to find in it a non Indo-European structure, and each time the language itself has compelled recognition of its basically English or French pattern, as the case may be' (p.58).

The question was debated in issues of Word at the end of the fifties, and Weinreich concluded 'that the Creoles seem to manifest is extensive loan translation, or calquing, in their grammar' (1958, p.377). Similarly, Ross has stated that 'a pidgin is Basis affected by Substrate, not "Basis plus Substrate"' (1962, p.244).

1. The classic view of genetic relationship can be gathered from Gleason, op.cit, p.115 above. A more discriminating analysis is given by Niles (1966) but counter-examples of hybridisation do exist: I refer below to Whiteley's (1960). For a critical discussion of the underlying principles, see also Ardener, 1969.

2. Though even with some of these may be debate, if, as is often possible, etymons exist in both sources. The choice made by the linguist seems to depend on whether he wants to stress the indigenousness or the metropolitan affiliations of the pidgin.
Following these arguments, I make the working assumption that West African Pidgin English manifests a relationship of this kind. The point of course is important for the sociology of pidgins, since it influences any judgment about how pidgins began. I return to this point later. One must limit such hypotheses, however, to certain named, given examples which do fulfill the conditions in Ross's definition: 'in pidgins, the mixing is of a *weltsprache* with one or more exotic languages...and...the *weltsprache* is always dominant' (p.243). It appears, however, that there are other, comparable, languages which manifest neither the *weltsprache*:exotic relationship, nor the dominance:subordination outcome.¹

Pidgins have more often been identified not simply from the type of source (though this has usually fitted the Ross criteria) but also from a cluster of features which appear, with some different combinations, in both 'pidgin' and 'creole'-type varieties. I think the earliest list of these was made by Addison Van Name, in an article, 'Contributions to Creole Grammar' of 1869-70. Since some modern linguists seem to think creole studies began with Hall (though he fully acknowledges the work of Schuchardt),² I would like to call attention at its centenary, to this thorough and in many ways 'modern' study.

1. And in following Ross's analysis I do not mean to imply that the structure of West African Pidgin necessarily replicates the power relationship that has usually been assumed to hold between the two communicating groups who created the pidgin.
2. Van Name's article precedes the works of Schuchardt in Hall's 1966 bibliography. It does not appear there, but is cited by Rons (1953).
Van Name considered in detail the French creoles of the Caribbean and Mauritius, the English taki taki of Surinam, Spanish and Dutch Caribbean Creole, using both written material and informants. Amongst the common features he noticed were:

- Nasalisation (which he attributed to African influence);
- Simplification of vowel systems;
- Loss of the article (or its replacement by an emphatic form, e.g. Latin ille, illa > French le, la);
- Loss of gender and singular/plural distinctions;
- Verb inflections, often replaced by particles, such as na, ka, te, or of words like Sp. caba = finish to indicate completed action.

He pointed out that syntactical relations were indicated by word order, emphasizing the 'constructive powers' of creoles; he also instanced ways of indicating mode and aspect. He noted the use of words meaning more and less to indicate comparison, and the prevalence of de and na as prepositions.

1. The only English creole that deserves the name (p.125), though he does give some illustrations from Trinidad, and also from the Southern States, e.g. nuna for 2nd pers.pl. (compared to Surinam).

2. Discussing its absence in Cuba, due to the influx of 'native speakers', he quotes a source of 1649 which implies its earlier presence. Some of his 'Spanish' material is also Portuguese, e.g. caba which has a very wide distribution (listed by Hall, p.121).

3. There is a comprehensive documentation, including grammars, and a clear appreciation of the non-literate quality of creoles.
176.

The features noted by Van Name have been reported by later workers, and for English and French-based creoles outside the Caribbean. Furthermore, there exist a number of Portuguese creoles, which are also similar. They survive in West Africa (in the Portuguese empire) and in parts of the Far East. Many more Portuguese creoles are known to have existed earlier. In addition to defining pidgins/creoles in terms of consistent patterns of reduction and simplification, attempts have been made to explain these features historically, as a single development which spread throughout the Portuguese empire of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. All later pidgins, according to this theory, would be descended from one original.


As the case for a Portuguese proto-pidgin rests, in one version, on its original development in West Africa, and as Portuguese pidgin certainly pre-dated English based-pidgins there, I discuss the impact of Portugal in detail in the next chapter. However, I discuss the general theory briefly here. Besides considering its 'explanatory' implications, I can conveniently draw attention at this point to further important 'pidgin' languages.

The Portuguese empire extended from North Africa to Japan, and although relations with the local populations differed from place
to place, there were certain common features. The Portuguese established fortified factories, and they often expected to spend their lives abroad. Consequently, we find them not only 'alternately fighting, trading and fornicating with the local inhabitants', (Boxer 1961, p.35), but also settling down and raising families.

The Portuguese settlements, with their half-caste populations, and equally déraciné Christianised natives, were presumably the nurturing places of pidginised Portuguese, which often survived long after the decline of Portuguese power. Indeed, there are still communities using the language today, for instance in Malacca.

Boxer considers that the Dutch, who soon conquered most of the Portuguese possessions, preferred to keep their distance by not using their own language with colonial subjects, and so were content to use the Portuguese lingua franca already established, but even if they were not, it was sometimes/popularly entrenched that even their own households preferred to speak it. As for the British, they too found it necessary to work through established channels.

1. In this account I rely primarily on Boxer, (1961, 1969), but it will be seen that evidence from particular language studies, including my own findings for West Africa, tend to confirm his conclusions (which are drawn much more from Asian and Brazilian evidence). The Christian converts, however, were far fewer in Africa.
4. Records exist of young Englishmen being advised to learn Portuguese pidgin for work in India up to the early nineteenth century (see Boxer, 1961, p.52).
but gradually their power so completely eclipsed other European nations' that English-based pidgins came into use, modelled, however, on the Portuguese ones.

Imperial expansion in the nineteenth century gave a great impetus to English pidgin lingua francas. Chinese Pidgin English was not confined to the treaty ports:

'During a five year's residence in New South Wales,
I have had ample opportunity of hearing it spoken by Chinese merchants and tradesmen'

(Lentzner, 1891, p.x).

It may thus have formed a model for the pidgins of the Pacific, now expanding so successfully in New Guinea.

1. It was presumably its familiarity to the British China Squadron (see Glanville, 1862, p.126) that made several items of this pidgin part of English: can do, chin-chip, no fear, sin-sang, that's our pidgin, etc. (see Glanville, and Ideland's Pidgin-English Sin-Song, 1876).

2. Hens (1953) cites the fact that Lentzner's book is not in the B.N.I. as evidence that the British refused to acknowledge 'Colonial English'. It is, however, in the Bodleian. Many of Lentzner's Australian sources appear in Partridge as cockney/thieves' slang: examples from other areas are mostly a hotch-potch collection from miscellaneous reading.

3. This is one of the most thoroughly described pidgins, and I shall have occasion to refer to it again for comparison with West African data. Although few words in it are Portuguese, the structural features closely resemble the Afro-Caribbean ones. Of the Portuguese words, some, pidgin and rashl may come direct from Chinese pidgin or simply be part of sailors' vocabulary; but kolwuk (fowl) is a regular early Portuguese loan. (see next chapter), though I have not seen it identified as such before (words from Murphy, 1934).

For an interesting spectrum of current views on N.G. Pidgin (often in contrast to Hall) see the issue of New Guinea on the subject (1963).
This account pushes Portuguese influence as far as possible, illustrating the historical links it is possible to make.

But in contrast to this, one can make an equally extreme case for the spontaneous generation of pidgins, wherever a need for communication between speakers of very different languages arises. Pidgins have been reported which seem to have no Portuguese connections: Chinook jargon in North America, Russomorsk, Korean Bamboo pidgin, etc. Railway navvies in Europe are reported to have developed a pidgin, with Savoyards as the recognised interpreters (Terry Coleman, 1963, p. 201). Few of these have been examined by linguists, but there is plenty of evidence for such nonce or makeshift languages. Reincke has illustrated the process from an account of a ship's crew:

'Living and working together, each sailor picks up the words of his companions, until, after two months or so, all men aboard have acquired a working knowledge of about three hundred words common to all the crew...

(Condensed from Traven, 1944, p. 535).

The point is that though this language is called 'English' it actually contains many words from the languages of e.g., the speaker who has the most need to use some article, which then by consensus is 'called' by its name in his language.

I think if one takes both the shorthand of temporary communicators and the power of stereotypes in human behaviour into account, the similarity of so many pidgins can be accepted and explained,
and such an explanation allows us to handle the undeniably influential Portuguese pidgin¹ as part of the sequence of schematization.

By this I mean that people attempt to deal with new experience by applying the most relevant pieces of knowledge they already possess, just as they try to understand it in terms of their preconceptions. When we add the human tendency swiftly to structure and conventionalise any recurrent situation, (Sprott 1952, p.18), we can see how seamen or traders, for instance, are likely to try out on new contacts the behaviour they have already established for similar situations. The “English” spoken on Pitcairn Island, to give an example, shows many pidgin features. It was undoubtedly developed by the initial group of Bounty mutineers and Tahitians. There is no direct connection with a Portuguese pidgin, but neither, on the other hand, was there necessarily a “spontaneous” development as described by Ross et al.:

"the interaction of Tahitian and English from which Pitcairnese was born was certainly a most dramatic one. Thus, in an instant, the distinction between the parts of speech in English and almost its entire flexional system were swept away" (1964, p.142).

When we consider the long history of coastal pidgins by this time, and the habitualised shore-going behaviour of seamen, who

¹ I deal with this in detail in succeeding chapters.
might well have met pidgins before,¹ it seems clear that they
might have attempted to converse in a "pidgin" from the beginning.
In fact there had been a considerable period on Tahiti beforehand,
during which a contact lingo could have been structured.

'might' and 'could' will, I am afraid, continue to qualify my
history, because it has to be built up by circumstantial evidence.
The languages remain, but few records were kept of the
illiterate and unimportant people who made them. But this, after
all, is the common history of languages, and it is the co-existence
of pidgin/creoles with languages whose history can be traced through
texts, which shows how little we can be sure of any language's
pre-literate history:

'if a form of Negro-English developed into a traditional
independent form of speech, we might have an absolutely
uninflectional form of speech, of evident English origin
from the point of view of comparative philology, which
if we had no means of tracing back its history continuously,
we might regard as the result of normal inner development'
(Sweet, 1901, p.86).

¹ In fact Midshipman Edward Young had done so: he came from St.Kitts,
and contributed to Pitcairnese a creole word, more which is Spanish
or possibly Portuguese in origin. (Cassidy lists it as Portuguese,
1967). See Ross et al, p.50, etc. The 'onomastic reserve' of the
Portuguese was 'world-wide' (Ardener, 1968, p.117, note 32): the
spread of seamen's language thereafter is clearly as wide. One example:
'square face' has been extended to mean 'bottle' in New Guinea
pidgin and Trader Horn speaks of the Old Coasters (in West Africa)
who 'fell to the fever or killed themselves with square-face'.
(1927, p.97).
English itself shows pidgin features, which are indeed to be expected from its social history, but for many other languages we cannot trace a comparable pattern of ebb and flow, simply because there are no texts.

4. The Pidgin Situation.

So far, I have discussed pidgins in the terms "given" by linguists. Pidgins have been implicitly defined by the coincidence of three criteria:

a) social situation: trading, slavery;

b) socio-linguistic situation of contact in this situation between 'Europeans' and 'natives';

c) linguistic results: the European language is restructured, simplified especially, in the direction of the native language.

This definition obviously contains very diverse elements. Under c), there is not complete agreement as to the extent of the restructuring; there are also 'pidgins' which conform otherwise but in which the European language is not the base (e.g. Chinook jargon). Moreover, pidgins and creoles, are, as I have said, treated as one in order to define the restructuring, but distinguished under b) since creoles are languages used internally, instead of
From the sociological point of view, a) obviously could cover very varied situations, and b) raises the query, could not similar contacts occur between non-Europeans? Europeaness does not make a unique social category, even though from its effects it is often practicable to treat it so.

This treatment of 'a language' is also very different from that described in my earlier chapters, where languages are treated as items in a repertoire, and users select their variety according to purpose. One would assume, in such a framework, that the 'same' variety could be used by different speakers as a first language or a lingua franca or for some situations, and not for others - in a multilingual setting, the concept of 'mother-tongue' may be irrelevant.

Actual cases show that this approach is a practicable one in looking at pidgins. Considered as a language, Cameroons pidgin English is used in all these ways. If one looks at individual repertoires, however, one may find a broad continuum of usage, from "standard English" to pidgin forms which the native Britisher would find.

1. For the contradictions inherent in the official pidgin: creole descriptor see e.g. Berry (1962) who begins by saying 'there is little in a pidgin or creole situation that is linguistically sui generis...what is obviously different...is not so much the languages but attitudes toward them' (p.219) and then says 'what seems especially unfortunate in the Sierra Leone situation is the (wilful?) equation of creoles with pidgins'(p.221) - which he has by now distinguished. Incidentally, Nafei . criticises Berry's distinctions (1962, pp.63-5).

2. Several African pidgins have in fact been identified as such. One, (Sango) I discuss below, for a brief description of another see Alexandre, 1962, and his general survey, 1967.
unintelligible. Where there is a diglossic co-existence between British/Universal English and local speech, usage may be extremely fluid, as is clear from the example I have already quoted of language in British Honduras (Le Page, 1963).

Besides looking critically at the linguistic categorisations through which pidgins and creoles have been approached, it is also possible to explore the second component, b), to see whether any comparable examples can be found of language-making in a contact situation. In Part One, my examples were of stable multilingualism. Distinct groups were found to have been in contact, often over a long period of time, who actually seem to maintain their distinctness through language— for despite a good deal of 'interference', the varieties used did not merge. It appears, however, when one looks at the process of communication between such groups, that they have made different sorts of linguistic adjustments in order to understand each other more easily.

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1. The degree to which one can manipulate these variations depends, of course, on one's consciousness of them. Many Cameroonians, for instance, think they are speaking English (Ardener 1967, p. 330). For an amusing text, in which both pidgin English and Pidgin French are used for controlled stylistic effects, see Alexandre, 1967, pp. 158-159. The audience here would not conform to a 'pidgin' versus 'creole' classification, either.
In the Indian case examined by Gumperz, the differences between varieties turned out to be far fewer than had at first appeared, and the speakers (who are after all near neighbours, in the same environment, with a largely similar culture) seemed to operate a single syntactical system, with two sub-systems at the morpho-phonemic level. In the tri-lingual village described by Denison, different varieties were used internally (cp. 'register') as well as externally, which reflects a certain economy, if we contrast a situation in which one manipulates a large stylistic range in one language, and then has to add extra varieties to communicate with others outside.

These are the two major ways of maintaining multi-lingualism. If two communicating communities merge socially, or the social advantages of one variety become overwhelming, one of the languages will probably be given up.

What then are the circumstances in which an additional variety develops? A pidgin, for instance, despite its appearance as a simplified version of an 'old' language, is usually recognised as a new variety by its speakers.

Some interesting descriptions have been made of situations in which it appears that a new language is in the making. In the

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1. Henfrey records this happening in British Guiana, with Indians going over to creole English. This was occurring at all ages, but Baxter's account (1966), of a shift to Somali from Doran shows a perhaps more common age distinction - it is the young who are shifting. Sometimes a cyclical pattern occurs, when the older revert to the 'home' language: this may be occurring in Denison's example.
Copperbelt, 'Town Bemba' has been described by Richardson, and Sango is a comparable language of the Central African Republic. In a sense, both these varieties are to be defined negatively: they consist of forms which are not the home language. The boundaries therefore shift from individual to individual, though there is some common ground.

Sango is a spreading lingua-franca, a way to upward mobility for those who start at the bottom, i.e. without good French. Town Bemba is even more detached from the rural background, and it is the town-dwellers' new lives which call forth so many imaginative word-coinages. Such innovations are not recorded for Sango, which nevertheless is becoming a language for town-dwellers and school-children. To some extent, then, it must be fulfilling the functions of 'ID', which is a badge of identity, the more necessary in such a demanding, unstable environment.

1. 1961,2;3. See also Epstein, 1959.
3. This is of course quite a common linguistic phenomenon; c.f. the definition of 'standard English' by Sweet op.cit., p.104 f.n.l.
4. This is of course quite a common linguistic phenomenon; c.f. the definition of 'standard English' by Sweet op.cit., p.104 f.n.l. Siconelli describes 'such anomalies as Creole whose native dialect is Kikongo, using Kongo as their standard language, and herbs, whose native dialect is Kongo, using the Kongo variety of the standard' (1962, p.22). If there is an agreed norm, inadequate attempts at matching it may result in hypercorrection, but in Sango individual idealisations lead away from standardization in actuality.
4. Haugen elicited in the discussion on Sanarin (1966) that it had only about 420 words. This gives it a 'classically pidgin' look, especially as it is also said to be a pidginised version of 'a vernacular language of the same zone' (p.109).
Enterprising slang and neologisms occur even in 'stable' and 'traditional' places, as studies of Hausa show, but they usually filter through from sub-groups like the army and schools, which arouse the same tense pride as life on the Copperbelt - or 'high life' in West African towns, where the members are linguistically diverse, the lingua franca chosen is neutral-to-positive in prestige, English in schools, Bemba on the Copperbelt, and 'in this connection the ethnically and linguistically very heterogeneous nature of the army, road-gangs and other adventitious groups using Hausa as a lingua franca must not be forgotten, nor even the often prolonged and intimate contacts of the prison-yard' (Parsons, 1962, p.193).

Bemba was chosen as a lingua franca for social and political reasons (see e.g. Richardson discussing Samarin, 1966, p.207), not because it was easy to learn. It is described as one of the most complicated Bantu languages, especially in its verbal system, and 'although no regular trend has emerged to eliminate a complete set of tenses...[non-Bemba] simply use tenses which are often incorrect in Bemba but comprehensible in To - a kind of indeterminancy which may eventually lead to an extensive levelling-down process.' (Richardson, 1962, p.192).

2. 'A multilingual group is a hotbed of multilingual slang' says Vildonec, recalling prison and refugee camps (1963, p.230). Amongst his references is an article by Georges Straka on 'L'argot tchéque du camp de Buchenwald'.
Some levelling also occurs in other areas, and tone is lost.

By virtue of such simplifications, TB is clearly comparable to accepted pidgins, especially as the extent of simplification in any contact language obviously depends on the degree of congruence between the source languages. A Bantu system of prefixes, affixes and suffixes may survive in a lingua franca used by Bantu speakers, but Europeans who use it tend to drop them. One should, I think, avoid using one particular type of result as a defining case.

On the other hand TB has also been defined largely in terms of its neologisms. Jespersen specifically distinguished slang from makeshift languages, which

'are an outcome of linguistic poverty; they are born of the necessity and the desire to make oneself understood.... while slang expressions are due to a linguistic exuberance

(1922, p.234).

1. This can be seen in 'Ki-Settla', the Swahili used by Europeans. But it probably preceded their arrival, and an already stabilised pidgin lingua franca was picked up from non-Swahili servants etc. (see Cust 1903 II, p.337 reporting the principles of Steere). This may account for its 'Portuguese Pidgin' features, e.g. krisha ('finish') + verb stem to indicate past tense.

I venture also the naive observation that it is quite easy, by contrast, to Bantuise English, just as it is to talk pig-Latin and other children's secret languages, and this makes the example of hybridisation recorded by Whiteley seem less impossible to me than it does to some linguists, who perhaps underestimate the sociolinguistic pressures in this particular multilingual setting.

2. I would not agree with Jespersen's limitation of slang to supernumerary expressions - 'the individual creating them knows perfectly well the ordinary words for the idea he wants to express' (ibid.)
If, however, we think of a pidgin as arising when mutually unintelligible speakers want to converse, then all terms agreed between them represent gain. The conventional pidgin:creole distinction represents a process of simplification (pidgin) followed by one of expansion (creole). The example of TB is better suggestive, I think, of how the two processes may go on together.

How far innovation extends, or how soon stabilisation occurs, will depend on particular circumstances. The burgeoning novelty of 'TB', which is also reported for other African urban centres, reflects a fluid, open social organisation, in which a succession

1. Actually this dichotomy has been criticized as over-simple by several writers who otherwise accept the pidgin creole distinction, e.g. Ikari, (1970).

2. Reinecke, in his pioneer, but still very interesting article (1937, in ed. Yonas, 1964), approaches 'marginal languages' sociologically, and divides them into trade jargons, planation creole dialects, and settler creole dialects. But, since more recent work has undermined these distinctions linguistically, we must also reconsider their value as sociological criteria. I discuss the relationships which may lie behind the outcomes observed by Reinecke, in the ensuing chapters.

3. e.g. Poloné's account of Lubumbashi Kumbili (1953) and La Fontaine's of Kinshasa (1970). La Fontaine says that the children of Kinshasa often speak this lingua franca as a first language, in preference to their parents' languages.

4. Richardson says that 'grammatical simplifications and linguistic indeterminacy are the counterparts of new social systems which, while reorganising the old tribal life, give rise to situations where the old rule cannot be applied' (1952, p.193). This is dangerously near the 'cultural phoneme' theories discussed in my first chapter. While it is true that an indeterminate lingua franca can develop in a heterogeneous community, such an unstable collection of people can equally use a much more stable and bounded lingua franca, if one is already available. The spread of pidgin English far and wide over West Africa is an instance of this.
of young people come to try their fortune in the big city. Richardson notes that usage can best be learnt from *laska-manta*, the 'painted ladies', another new feature of urban life. We may assume that their children will speak TB to each other and also perhaps to their parents; this may well be the point at which TB's structure will become determinate.

The creoles or pidgins which developed in West Africa, in the Caribbean, and North America, would by comparison be more quickly stabilised as a limited environment. Slave plantations offered no incentive to the bubbling 'savoir-vivre' expressed through TB; indeed the limitations of slave experience are reflected in the vocabularies and stylistic range of their languages. On the West African coast, European traders and seamen met the natives — usually the middlemen and interpreters (who were often of mixed blood) — in a pattern of relations which changed very little for four hundred years. Such contacts were the source of innovations, certainly, but what strikes one is the degree to which they were institutionalised. However, even if the coastal castles of the eighteenth century, say, were hotbeds of slang, it is not identifiable in the pidgins of today.

These pidgins, however, are often used in situations clearly comparable to that of Town Bemba. Readers of Cyprian Ekwensi will recognise Richardson's picture of competitive fashion and self-conscious
modernity in People of the City and Jazua Nana. Lagosians use an established pidgin for their lingua franca, but it is probably just as rich in slang. Again, pidgin is the prevalent tongue on the plantations of Cameroon, worked by migrants from many tribes, who typically form liaisons with local women (Ardener, 1962). These again can 'carry' the language, and their children often speak it as their 'mother-tongue'.

If we look at 'pidgins' and 'creoles' in the wider social (and linguistic) context of the examples I have given, they cease to fit tidily with the definitions mentioned in the beginning of the chapter. A 'new' lingua franca is one solution to the problem of communication in a multilingual setting. It seems most likely to arise when the participants are heterogeneous (instead of being members of well-defined and structured groups). If some of them become cut off from their original language group, the contact language is likely to become their only tongue. This of course happened to the negro slaves, but also it happens in urban and planation situations, which suggests that the language develops especially in a domestic setting, and between children as much as, or more than, between adults.

1. Slang, always ephemeral unless it 'settles down' into a language, will vanish in a non-literate milieu, but the slang which has been recorded, of better-educated groups in Nigeria (who frequently talk pidgin amongst themselves), gives an idea of how 'innovatory' pidgin may be. The slang of Nigerians is not necessarily more witty or imaginative than that of other countries, but compared with that of England or America (including Negro slang) it seems markedly outward-looking. Enahoro mentions a wartime nickname for local gin, 'Timoshenko' ('a man of iron') (1955, p.57). This is very characteristic creation, c.p. 'Katanga' and 'Greenland' (girls' university hostels) and the many similar examples given by Kirk-Greene, op.cit.
These points are illustrated, and refined, by the history of the European-based pidgins of West Africa. I call them all pidgins, without distinction, because the conventional 'pidgin-creole' distinction proves to be irrelevant. Once developed, a 'pidgin' may be used for any purpose - as a lingua franca or a mother tongue, or simply one variety in a multilingual repertoire. In West Africa, for instance, pidgins could often be called 'father-tongues': they must have survived in co-existence with the vernacular language, which was spoken with mothers' kin.

It is not at all clear, in fact, that there can be a 'pidgin phase' in the conventional sense: an initial stage of inefficient language learning which provides a corpus to be transmitted to the children. No linguist has watched a pidgin come into being, but the comparable situations cited suggest a richer and more complicated pattern to language growth. Attention to the social relations of the groups whom we know did create pidgins, as far as this can be reconstructed and deduced, is the only other way to understand what could happen linguistically. This I attempt in the next chapters.

1. The choice of name is thus somewhat arbitrary, but I choose pidgin because it is the usual Nigerian name, and I am focussing particularly on Nigeria.

2. Goodman's account of a Japanese-English pidgin (1967) is of interest but the very circumscribed bits of communication he describes do not amount to a pidgin in the postulated sense, i.e. in which some new, creative sentences can be generated, not just a signalling system.
5. **The status of pidgin languages**

Linguists who are giving increasing attention to creole languages maintain that inherently there is little to distinguish creoles from other vernaculars: what inhibits their introduction into schools is an unfavourable attitude based very often on little more than social prejudice.'


In calling pidgins 'languages' I follow modern linguists who have

I think shown satisfactorily that the material they examined formed

a consistent, institutionalised means of communication, which can be used alternatively to the systems of base language. However,

while linguists have been able to disprove the common assertion that pidgins have no grammar, they have had less success in persuading people that pidgins can be treated as independent languages.

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1. This is a more modest and limited description than the committed creolist would admit, and put in rather different terms. Descriptions of pidgins, like those of other languages, are idealised and standardised, and only en passant may one get a sense of the fluidity of realisation which apparently often occurs. This is however, an important and significant feature of pidgins, and I discussed it in Chapter 2. In practice one may have to suggest that there is a continuum of forms between 'standard' and 'pidgin', and this shows that the creole is not a fully developed, complete language (in the sense developed in Chapter 5). This remains just as true where the shift between the two extremes is abrupt and discontinuous (as is claimed for French and creole by Stewart 1962 and Taylor 1961); the situation is then comparable to the trilingual pattern described by Denison. Historically, the difference has come about through the puristic concepts of French which are perpetuated at all levels of the population, and have no doubt been an important model to creole speakers.
'Social prejudice' is not so easily dismissed. It is part of the sociolinguistic data, and may prove to have some reasonable foundation. 'Creole language areas' as DeCamp has remarked, are 'a special type of multilingual community' (1962, p. 227) and as such are linguistically multi-focal, to use Whiteley's useful phrase. Where the base languages are English and French, as in most of the pidgin situations which have received much detailed (including educational) attention, the functional imbalance of the two varieties is so great that it is hard to imagine how a pidgin could struggle free of the influence of its Big Brother, which is bound to continue, not only as a source of neologisms but also as a means of access to an international world.

The current relationship between such a pidgin and 'its' world language thus tends to be a diglossic one. Diglossia is a complex answer to a complex problem, and for all its drawbacks, the extremely long history of some diglossic relationships suggests that it has been found a valuable answer. One cannot confidently cite the emancipation of English (described earlier) as a guide to the possible development of creoles, because the influence of English (including the culture and technology it carries), seems so much more powerful and pervasive than that of Latin or French four hundred years ago.

1. Lasting in some cases over a thousand years (Ferguson, 1964, p.435).
2. A better comparison is the relationship between American and British English. In 1783, Webster confidently expected 'a language in North America, as different from the future language of England, as the modern Dutch and Swedish are from the German, or from one another' (Grupp, 1923, p.9).
Nor can one dismiss as negligible all the objections that have been made against pidgins. As one Australian remarked at a recent Seminar on New Guinea Pidgin, they have a bad background, just like Australians have, but similarly, this does not matter very much. Their users today seem much more likely to recognize kinship with a prestigious world language than with a past of Blackbirding or slaving. Much more important are the vocabulary and syntactical limitations that have impressed so many observers. These may be less than has been popularly supposed, but Pride (for instance) examining the texts which Hall put forward to prove the viability of pidgins/creoles noted a 'well-nigh crippling absence of lexical refinement' and difficulties in expressing subordinate or modifying relations that boded ill, he thought, for effective teaching (1969, p.96).

1. And note the comment of another participant: 'It is most surprising for a disinterested observer to realize that the rather plain fact that Pidgin and English are in reality not rivals, but allies, and are complementary rather than mutually exclusive, has not been more widely recognized' (Turn, 1969, p.31).

2. This may not be true of all situations, and in America, for instance, the 'deficiencies' of Negro speech, which can be plausibly be explained as an underlying pidgin, are apparently still a matter of shame to even Black Power activists (according to Dr. D. Dalby, at a St. Antony's seminar, Oxford, Hilary, 1970).

3. And note a propagandist's revealing comment: 'I have designed and tested a method of teaching foreigners to speak and understand Surinam Creole in 12 lessons of a half-hour each' (Voorhoeve, 1962, p.238, f.n. 8).
The difficulty of developing pidgins, so often with 'ordinary' vernaculars, is that those most conscious of their deficiencies, and competent to remedy them, do their thinking in English and need to keep up their competence in that language in order to work efficiently in the responsible posts which they are likely to achieve. It is not easy to introduce new concepts into a language, even when it is syntactically sufficient. The question of how much the speakers of a pidgin may hold a distorted or constricted view of the world, because of their language, is a vexed one, and it lies partly out of my terms of reference. There are some interesting sociological points to note, however. It is clear that, for the creators of the cargo-cults, pidgin and even literacy did not dissipate native preconceptions about European behaviour - they even seem to have strengthened them. Pidgins might well be classified separately from other forms of bilingual communication on the grounds that they offer a common medium to people who will endow it with very different meanings;

1. Most of my comments refer to English based pidgins. The same appears to be true for French, but I do not know the current status of the Portuguese based pidgins vis-à-vis the metropolitan tongue.

2. This point is illustrated by Whiteley, discussing the use of trade-union terminology, in which 'simplification both of terminology and objective appeared to be a characteristic feature' (1969, p.115). See his pages following, and the earlier discussions, esp.1961, and 1967. It is all the more difficult to imagine how such a limited language as Sango can be used as a national language.

This could be expressed schematically:

![Diagram](image)

**FIGURE III: New Guinea Pidgin**

In contrast the cases of stable bilingualism I have discussed seem maintainable because peoples A and B largely share the same world view, and can say 'the same thing' through different languages. (This semantic equivalence may be matched by formal equivalences.)

On the other hand, we cannot identify the 'pidgin' and the 'vernacular' view. Over thirty years ago, Estesia remarked that there was a distinct pidgin ethos, recognized by native speakers:

>'I suspect that in quite a short time the individuals of each group adopt special norms of behaviour in their contacts with individuals of other groups, and that these special norms of behaviour will be classified in terms of complementarity or symmetrical patterns' (p.13). (The Europeans stereotyped the natives, despite their huge diversity, as 'coons').

Much more recently Hall, who above all wishes to stress the indigenes of Pidgin, which he dignifies with the name Neo-Melanesian, revealingly comments that it is also known as *tok maitran*. This makes one suspect that the obscene or humorous connotations of so many New Guinea words, even though transformed by semantic extension, may still be sensed by New Guinea speakers, and affect their evaluation of the language. This must surely be so for more sophisticated users.

1. Hall, 1966, p.5. It is fair to point out that even his comments were clearly felt by some of the New Guinea conference contributors to be already out of date.

2. Of the type *kugummun* = spoil, frequent also in other pidgins, French or English based. Note also *kund* (native child, youth).
If one looks at New Guinea Pidgin as a piece of language building, it proves to be a startling work of *bricolage*. Almost any phrase, it seems, that dropped from the white man's table, can be turned to account. It is like an assemblage of handy objects in an African market, all made out of old tin cans. One cannot help thinking how restricting such a code must be, since such words cannot be called arbitrary signs. West African Pidgin looks much less 'displaced' but the difficulties exist there too.

Pidgin languages lack the high redundancy which characterises most natural languages, though one could set against this the comments of Johnson Abercrombie about the use of technical language:

> 'in developing language for scientific purposes, we need to keep in mind the values of words of many meanings in facilitating the association of schemata, a function which a technical language consisting only of words of precise and unambiguous meaning cannot so easily serve.'


and

> 'It seemed that the students preferred to use words of richer meanings, even if they are ambiguous, than more narrowly defined ones.'

(p.130).

1. Even down to *oliebd! oleman!* (Murphy, vocabulary).

2. I base my remarks on an examination of Murphy (1954). It appears that pidgins have expanded a good deal, and it would be necessary to fully compare later acquisitions, before coming to any further conclusion. Moreover, Murphy naturally gives pidgin as used with Europeans - only part of its use. But note his comment: 'We did not teach, and are not teaching Pidgin English to the natives. They taught and are teaching us!'
Pidgins indeed might be the winners by the application of Jespersen's dictum that

"that language ranks highest which goes farthest in the art of accomplishing much with little means, or, in other words, which is able to express the greatest amount of meaning with the simplest mechanism." (p.324)

But this definition does not clearly point up those resources in tone, style and vocabulary which I have mentioned as contributing to the value of languages. Judged by such criteria, pidgins have functional limitations which encourage continued recourse to complementary varieties. This fact is also important in their history, if we want to estimate their uses in carrying culture and ideas, or try to investigate what sort of communication took place between their very different users.

1. Interesting support for this argument is provided by a psychologist, Marc Greenfield (1966, in ed.Price-Williams, 1969). In a careful and sensitive study of the concepts of conservation held by Senegalese children, she found that the most 'backward' group were the school children in Dakar (compared with bush children, schooled and unschooled). She hypothesised that 'linguistic' conditions produce this poverty of perceptual description in city children. Wolof as spoken in Dakar has become much simplified, owing to its status as the African lingua franca there. And, indeed, the descriptive language of the city children was less varied than that of their rural counterparts, particularly the school children. (p.229).
CHAPTER EIGHT

PORTUGUESE, 1440-1750

1. The Explorers

"Statesmen, soldiers, sailors, and missionaries, men of action, men of strong feelings have made world languages. They are built on blood, money, sinews and suffering in the pursuit of power."

(J.R. Firth, 1924, p. 71).

Portuguese does not even appear in most lists of 'world languages', but it has been spoken as far across the world as Arabic or English, and remarkably out lived the Portuguese imperium though it suffered many sea changes. During the second half of the fifteenth century, the Portuguese worked their way down the west coast of Africa, and rounded the Cape on their way East. By the time their European rivals achieved their West African landfalls, about a hundred years later, a systematised pattern of trading with the Africans had developed, and this included some communication in Portuguese.

How did this occur, and what form did the language take? The
investigator can bitterly echo the remarks of Gust, that

'the value...of information would be much increased
if the traveller, confessedly not a Linguist, would state
by what means he communicated with the people'

(Vol. 1, 1633, p.17).

One wishes to know this of virtually every traveller, at all
periods.\(^1\) Equally, however, they do give information which can
be best accounted for, or can only be explained, as due to local
informants, so that we can deduce that some means of communication
existed.

The Portuguese did not go all unprepared to savage shores.

African slaves had been seen in Mediterranean Europe since the
Middle Ages. The Moors, by whose agency they had been sold, were
not finally expelled from the Iberian peninsula till 1492. Boxer
says that the Portuguese undoubtedly learnt a good deal about the
African hinterland from informants in Ceuta, which they captured
in 1415.\(^2\) Hair (1966a) lists the early attempts of the Portuguese
to capture potential interpreters, as soon as they realized that
Arabic was not spoken by Berbers and 'Blacks'.

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1. Including from some anthropological accounts, still.
2. Boxer, 1969, p.10. Also he notes that some Catalan and Mallorcan
maps of the fourteenth century, such as that made for Charles V of
France in 1375, show a surprisingly accurate knowledge of the Western
Sudan region and the routes 'to the land of Negroes in Guinea',
(but below the Gulf of Guinea). Jewish merchants were apparently
the source for these.
From Cadamosto (whose first voyage began in 1455) we get the most explicit details. At Arguin, where there has been contact—warring contact—for fourteen years, the details he reports had presumably been learnt through a negro interpreter, such as he mentions at Budomel (: E. of Cape Verde) (1937, p.35). Sailing past the Cape, to the estuary of the Solum and Jumbes Rivers,

'we cast anchor, and debated whether we should send ashore one of our interpreters—for each of our ships had negro interpreters on board brought from Portugal, who had been sold by the lords of Senegal to the first Portuguese to discover the land of the Blacks.

The slaves had been made Christians in Portugal, and knew Spanish well...'

(p.55)

They managed to get someone to interpret when they arrived at the Gambie, and were still understood at Casamansa, 25 leagues south, but at the Rio Grande they failed to communicate.

'Reflecting that we were come to a new country of which we could not learn anything, we decided to continue further would be useless, for we judged that we should be continually encountering new dialects, and should not be able to achieve any good results. We accordingly decided to turn back.'

(p.76)

This is the clearest account of the Portuguese methods. The violent aggression which marks the first voyages is not entirely wanton or exemplary: captives are always sought to be taken back as potential interpreters. They were well treated in Portugal, and baptised, though on return they sometimes defected. Azurara also gives an account of Johan Fernandez who stayed on at Rio D'Ouro to find out more—presumably he must have learned something of the
Linguistic communication in the Gambia enabled Diogo Gomes to learn (c1457) that the natives came there from all quarters, and to gain information about gold mines, of Timbuctoo, Gao and the Saharan trade routes. He in fact spoke with one 'Saracen' trader there. (1937, pp.53-5) Such contacts must have been sought to find speakers from farther communities, pilots, etc. (Gomes indeed hired one negro as a pilot). It was not by chance, one feels, that the Portuguese eventually found their way up the right river and stumbled on Benin - some chain of interpretation, and the existence of far-ranging trade-route inland, led them to plan their explorations further down the coast, even if they did not succeed in learning much about the hinterland.

De Barros claims

'at this time [1470's] the trade of Guinea was already very current between our men and the inhabitants of these parts, and they carried out their business in peace and friendliness, without those varlike incursions, assaults and robberies which happened at the beginning' (1937, p.107).

This is probably too bland a picture, since according to the Esmeraldo de Situ Orbis [c1505-8] 'the natives are hostile' down to the Congo, except perhaps on the Gold Coast. Nevertheless they are amenable to trading and their wants known; we may judge that by 1500 African-Portuguese trading relationships had been established - suspicious and hypocritical but based on the expected: a modus vivendi.
Even though so little can be gleaned of the details, one can grasp from the Portuguese material the main features of their initial contacts. It is not a picture of Portuguese adventurers versus African tribesmen, collectively making a joint language—das Volk dichtet. Instead Africans are, individually, taught some Portuguese, and they interpret between black and white. A good deal of trading can be accomplished silently, but the Portuguese wanted more than a minimal contact language—they wanted to ask wide-ranging questions, and get detailed replies—for which much more linguistic expertise was necessary.

One cannot suppose that this level of communication was always achieved, or that the freed interpreters retained their command of Portuguese when the return of the ships was uncertain and infrequent. And, for simple trading, a very limited common language will do, as any one who has bargained in foreign markets knows. We can, in fact, reconstruct something of such a language, from vocabularies recorded not by Portuguese but by their later rivals, the English and French.

These vocabularies indicate limited, specific interests: trading and eating, sex and slaves. The vocabulary required for these activities in fact overlaps. I set out below entries which occur at least twice in the vocabularies collected by Toverson in 1555 at St.Vincent (T1) and Elmina (T2); by James Darbot at Old Calabar in 1699 (B); the 'Leers' vocabulary published in 1665, of the Rio del
Rey's Cameroons area (L); by Atkins, 1720-1 with no provenance, but mostly from the Gold Coast; and finally 'Langaige de Guynée' collected at Sestos about 1516 (P), which has a rather wider range than its successors, including words for 'sea', 'wind', 'oysters', 'house' and so forth.

**Verbs/Commands**

Greetings
- be gone: TI, T2, A, L
- give me: TI, B
- hold your peace: T2, B
- sleep: B, L
- eat: B, A
- come: F, L

**Exclamations**

agreed/very well: B, A, F
no good: F, L

**Trade Items (including foos)**

- beads: F, S, L
- basins: T2, S, B
- grains: TI, F (malagueta)
- knife: TI, T2, L
- ivory: T2, A ('elephants' teeth,'etc.)
- hens/fowls: TI, B, S, F, L

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1. Torrerson's voyages are in Hakluyt, Carte's in his brother's book (1732), the Latin vocabulary appears and is discussed in Ardener, 1960. According to Dalby and Hair (1961, p.100, f.n.3) Torrerson's vocabulary is more likely to come from the R.Fangvin.

2. One must note however, that Atkins records some items as being spoken elsewhere e.g. 'You dide you kickstavoo' at C.Pisurado, and I consider this possibility of dispersion from the Gold Coast in the next chapter. One other item, rice = malambade actually comes from the Isles de Les.(Koelle (1854) gives falle banda, cooked rice).

3. Dalby and Hair, 1961, give details and commentary.

4. Note that 'dash' seems to be first recorded by Torrerson at Mina but as 'thank you' (dashoo dashoo). This verb (da dash) is recorded by Hutton, 1821, as dash to thank.
cloth A, B, T2, T (as article of clothing)
man 2L
woman B, L.

These vocabularies contain a further number of commands:
bring, fetch, show me, speak, how much?, barter, wait...
and other trading items: gold, guns, iron bars, bread, fruits...
The much longer vocabularies included by Barbot for particular areas include the same material, with even more specific aids to the buying of slaves and sex.

Two points of linguistic interest emerge from a study of the vocabularies, and the other odd verbs and phrases quoted by the early travellers, including the Portuguese. First, that they can mostly be assigned to specific areas, and to African languages being spoken at the same places today - these identifications have been made by Ardener (1968) and by Hair (1967a, b, and 1969). The second is that some of the items are African, but not of the same language as the rest, others are Portuguese. Taken comparatively, with not only the vocabularies and individual words and phrases but using also data from present day coastal pidgins and Caribbean sources,

1. Schneider's Cameroon Creole Dictionary, First Draft (1960) (S) and Cassidy's Dictionary of Jamaican English (J) have been examined, also Cassidy's other articles and further material which is specifically acknowledged.
one can pick out a 'common pool' of terms which came to be the
agreed forms for certain items, and were used by traders, and later
by slaves, wherever they went.

Examples of such terms are:

cokoroko: hen (Portg.) 1 West Africa - also in New Guinea Pidgin.
faka: knife (?) it appears in several coastal languages. 2
pickin: child/small: world wide distribution, past and present. 3
grandy: large (Portg) formerly W. African and China, still in
W. Indies. 4
fino: good! (Portg) survives in many coastal languages. 5
bombo: (? Fante) pudeenda: given by (A), still in Caribbean. 6
kakataroo: (? Fante) killed/dead: given by (A), still in Caribbean. 7
kola: the nut - early became the accepted name. 8
basina: (Portg) altered to English 'basins' of course, but survives
for 'bowl' etc. in Krio and Carareoons Pidgin (8).

1. Christophersen (1953) first examined this. It seems to have gone from
modern pidgins, but Burton notes cokoroko: i.e. cock-crowing time
(the 'Anglo-African' equivalent of an 'Angl' phrase) (1965, p.103). Tylor's
copy of this book, in the Oxford Institute of Social Anthropology's
Library, contains a brief note of French creole proverbs from Trinidad.

2. Kr. A. Andrews points out that if this is a loan it must be a very
early one, since the stem -ok- has already been subjected to the Balzer-
sound-change (loss of k in certain positions) which the leers vocabulary
itself confirms. Op. Drasbav, 1935, who suggests it may be an early
loan into Portuguese.

3. This very well known pidgin word (Portg. paguana) appears first as
part of place-names. Terra Fekina (B. Faries, 1602) Canareoons Fokkera
(Dapper, 1624, confirmed in the original 'Negiar' edition); and in its
diminutive form, diiniminini-lo (Philipp. 1457). According to Weisz, the
first attestation of this diminutive is the mid 18th century Chinese
pidgin cited by Van Veys: 'dinschi grandi hole, dinschinini hole?'
(hola = whose). In present-day Trinidad, the dimin. is used for 'small'
(Wilson, 1/30, letter in A.B.F., 1847, p.51-2).

4. Noted by (A) and in Beschuyt, it also was used by Antwerp Duke in Old
Calabon, late 1550s (ed. Nieuke, 1954), appears in 5, and also in the
Portuguese-English Chinese pidgin (mid 16th C) cited by Van Velie (1911).

5. Drasbav, 1935. Note fine, fine! in current pidgin (also in l).


7. See p. 205 above. Lenneva recorded this for the West Indies together
with folk etymology, (kikateroo = kick the bucket). Not 5.

8. See Hear 1957/6, p. 32.
The list could be considerably longer — I add kola as an example of the African terms investigated by Hair. The others are items for which I have noted interesting references, following the lead of Christophersen, who in two pioneering articles (1953, 1959) examined the history of well-known items of Coast English, including 'palaver', 'dash', and 'juju'. Many other terms common in earlier accounts of the Coast have, however, disappeared. The Portuguese terms of rank and office, familiar through the eighteenth century—like caboccer, aloaid, fidalso, brasso and grometta — have all disappeared with changing conditions of contact.

What, however, does this detail tell about early linguistic contact?

One point to notice is that the vocabularies are not all 'common pool' entries. Some can be almost entirely assigned to a particular African language. But it is interesting to compare two near-contemporary lists for the same area (roughly) — Barbot and Leers. The latter is a careful attempt at rendering Duala and Dixik forms, whereas the largely unidentifiable entries of Barbot look much closer to a trading jargon — a larger number are 'common pool', and even if not appearing

1. Grometta survived in Sierra Leone until 1920 at least (N.J. Wright, 1954, p.136). It is odd that the word (a free servant) was always used by English in this form, and not their own cognate grommet, but this perhaps was too specialised (as a sort of apprenticeship boy, see CND).

2. Hauny (1952) notes several of these and other Portuguese terms as now archaic in Senegal, though again, some, like sigurra (white man's concubine — used by Moore and Vungo Park on the Gambia) survived until about 1910.
in other vocabularies suggest an attempt at pidgin Portuguese,
e.g. fai-fay: to truck, barter.¹

To'erson's vocabularies show the same mixture of Portuguese,
local and 'pool' words, and these are of course early examples,
which were offered to the first non-Portuguese whites. It looks
as if an agreed jargon became stabilised within the first hundred
years of contact (probably indeed much sooner, but we have no earlier
references) and this common currency received additions and emendations,
particular from English-like the dial, or vulg. bubby, breasts, which
is given by S., and remains in the Caribbean,² or the unexplained chup³

¹ Note also cua cua for cloth, c.p. S. kwara-kwara: cloth with long
stripes, and wa-ana: bags. Kwa-kwa: 'good and Fair'(s), might be
related to kwa: slave (Moore, 1735) - but such attributions must be
largely guesswork. As Ardener suggests, sina ('Hunt' in L) looks
like sincene: 'show me' in B (it will be seen that there are a number
of these words - often wrongly translated - in the vocabularies).
(Hair convincingly suggests Duala senjia, hear, listen). Similarly
lobbesje (L) and labouche (B) for women.

² Cassidy gives quotations to show how this was acceptable Jamaican
English when it was already vulgar in Britain: c.p. Adams (nd, of late
18th.C.,voyages) who gives the navigational mark for Benin as 'the cock-
up-bubbles' from 'their imperfect resemblance to mama' (p.92).

³ Christopher森 cannot explain this word, thinking its appearance
too early for an English derivation (S. gives chat chat, eat) but the
Portuguese did not trade at Old Calabar (Ardener, 1968) and this may
possibly be an early English contribution.
which, in limited circles, has achieved a very wide distribution. 1

This agreed jargon was what new visitors to the coast would hear, and be offered, and particular enquiry was necessary to elicit the local language. In the case of new items, of course, like 'basin', a desirable European importation, no other word was available, and it became an assimilated loan in the local language, like *canisa*, the Portuguese 'shirt', which must be one of the most widely spread loans there are. 2

It is in the local, coastal languages, however, that we find a degree of Portuguese, and a range of it, not revealed at all in the European word-lists. In fact, there is not much overlap between the two kinds of source. One investigation of the loans in Sierra Leonian languages concluded:

1. I say 'limited circles' since while 'chop' and 'chop-box' are widely known, I think they are confined to army/colonial expatriates etc. - c.p. many Anglo Indian terms which have similar users, as against *bungalow* which has entered the general language.

2. Extending to India-kaniz is the top half of women's tunic and trousers; and, merging with another, English word, *coronation* = loincloth in Krio (see E.P.Jones 1959 who misses the Portuguese connection). Such assimilations make it hard to find the original source of a non-European term like *feke*, and possibly *shika* (gold) and the terms for European-beke, *rak vakara*, which appear in Nigerian languages but were taken to the West Indies, (Fr. beke, Eng. *bulga*), each with a folk etymology, as has beke in Nigeria (from *bakka* of Lokoja, a supposition which can be rejected, as K. Williamson has pointed out, because of its appearance in Koelle 'with a sound-change to boot' (1966, p.152).
# FIGURE IV

THE DISTRIBUTION OF EUROPEAN SETTLEMENT, GUINEA COAST c1550-1750

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Senegal</th>
<th>Coree</th>
<th>Gambia</th>
<th>Cachou/Bissau</th>
<th>St.Leona/Sherbro</th>
<th>'Grain Coast'</th>
<th>'Gold Coast'</th>
<th>Whydah</th>
<th>Benin/Gotto</th>
<th>Bonay, Calabar, Cameroon</th>
<th>S.Tomé &amp; Príncipe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1550-1650</td>
<td>P F D E</td>
<td>P F D E</td>
<td>P F D E</td>
<td>P F D E</td>
<td>P F D E</td>
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<td>P F D E</td>
<td>P F D E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1650-1750</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>t</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key: P = Portuguese, F = French, D = Dutch, E = English
- *t* = black ‘Portuguese’, Dates when white Portuguese ceased settling
- e = discriminated broadly between castles and larger fortified posts
- t = from smaller factories, lodges; independent traders
- t = from smaller factories, lodges; independent traders
- *t* = black ‘Portuguese’, Dates when white Portuguese ceased settling
- t = from smaller factories, lodges; independent traders
- t = from smaller factories, lodges; independent traders

**NOTES:**

1) **Incidence of Europeans:** This diagram is an attempt to show, in a very broad and generalised way, the distribution of European settlement during the first 300 years of contact. It does not show the incidence of ships which, depending on the political status quo, might call at any of the points named and be of nationalities other than the four nations listed.

2) **Density of Settlement:** The names listed are ‘ports of call’ commonly recorded in the literature, but they are again simplified and selected; nor do they represent equal density of settlement (e.g. the two isolated posts on the Grain Coast with 30 odd forts on the Gold Coast, and their attendant lodges).

3) **Attestations:** Isolated Europeans may well have settled without record. In the ‘Rivers’ column, the Dutch entry is that in Brus (1624, p.39). I think regular European use of *hulks* is post 1750. For a discussion of the earliest visits of ships see Ardenner (1968).

The entries on the Diagram are derived mostly from Page (1965), Ryder (1959 and 1965) and Lawrence (1965).
What West Africa wanted from the Portuguese was not necessarily, or even principally, that which was useful. Beads of many different kinds, clothes in great variety, horses, even guns, were wanted not for their usefulness, but because they represented wealth, prestige and power. Snobbery was a greater lubricant of trade than salt or sugar. 

(Bradshaw, 1965, p.34).

We can also assume from these loans that there were bilingual Africans with a good understanding of Portuguese, and this implies ability to use a language, its syntactical resources, suches is not necessary to deal with traders on the level reflected in the European vocabularies. That is, these do not of themselves prove the existence of a pidgin, in the terms already discussed, which is why I refer to a jargon. The African language loans, however, seem to imply a familiarity with Portuguese which could indicate the existence of a pidgin.

2. Sources for Portuguese Pidgin: the Langaodos and the Lingua Franca

In the 1460s, the Portuguese began to colonise the Cape Verde islands, and Santiago ('St.Jago' in English accounts) became an entrepôt for the mainland and for metropolitan trade. Slaves were brought from the mainland, and with the years Caboverdians made their

1. In the sense of a group of specialised terms used by a profession or other self-contained organisation.

2. A good many of 'common pool' terms apparently are found in West African Portuguese Crioulo today, but 'an overwhelming proportion of spoken Krio, at any level, is derived from English' (Bradshaw, 1965, p.61), and there are very few Portuguese items in S.
way across to set up as independent traders, reaching as far as Sierra Leone.¹

The existence of these men is known because their independent trading operations were considered a threat to the monopoly of the Crown, which tried vainly to curb them—with as little success, apparently, as its Dutch and English successors, who were equally unable to stop interlopers on that vast coast. The Caboverdians were joined by some degradados—criminals, outcasts, and altogether they formed many little settlements, the one at Cacheu continuing as a Portuguese centre to this day.

'Those of them who went completely native, stripping off their clothes, tattooing their bodies, speaking the local languages, and even joining in fetishistic rites and celebrations, were termed tangos-uegos, or langaics.'

Boxer, (1963, p.31).

At the same time, these people were obnoxious to officialdom for their control of trade by acting as middlemen, so that, even though they sometimes aided French and English against Portuguese interests, their access to local chiefs was too useful for them to be treated with legal severity.

All this happened during the sixteenth century, when foreign competition was steadily increasing, but the Portuguese interest still continued, in the great fort at Elmina, on the islands of São Tomé.

and Principe, and at Benin, where however, no settlement was allowed. It is clear from the reports of English and Dutch visitors that Portuguese was at first the medium of communication with the natives at these places, but what sort of Portuguese is not reported until the end of the seventeenth century.

At this period the following information is given by Barbot:

(At Sierra Leone): 'most of the Blacks about the bay speak either Portuguese or Lingua Franca, which is a great convenience to the Europeans who come hither, and some also understand a little English or Dutch'

(1732: p.105).

At the River Junk (near Sestos) the trade is in the hands of the English but the language broken Dutch and Portuguese, and on the Gold Coast.

'Many of the Coast Blacks speak a little English or Dutch and for the most part speak to us in a sort of Lingua Franca or broken Portuguese and French'

(p.249).

The same pattern occurs at Fida (Thydhah), although here 'some few are very perfect in French' - and the French can more easily understand 'that Lingua Franca or broken Portuguese (p.339). In Benin, where the Portuguese influence is waning, but still significant, the brokers (Mercaders and Vendors) 'speak a sort of broken Lingua Franca' (p.360).

A little later Francis Moore, who had worked on the Gambia 1730-33, wrote an account of his experiences, and described the
'Creole Portuguese, a bastard sort of Portuguese, scarce understood in Lisbon...[which] is sooner learnt by Englishmen than any other language in this River, and is always spoken by the Linguists, which serve both the separate Traders and the Company'.

(p.39)

He gives a word list which is largely Portuguese, even though he claims to have learned Mandingo.

I will return to the general language situation at this period in the next chapter, but give these quotations as the earliest indications of changes in the language, changes which are supported by the descriptions of Portuguese pidgins in Asia, both in the eighteenth century and as they exist today, and at the Cape, where the Dutch apparently used a Portuguese pidgin with their slaves. Whinnom has discussed the history of a Portuguese pidgin in the Philippines, developing into a Spanish pidgin in the period 1574-1606 (thereafter more correct Spanish was dominant). Finally, there is Crioulo, the Portuguese pidgin language spoken in Portuguese Guinea (often as a first language but also as a lingua franca) and on the off-shore islands - Cape Verde Islands, S. Tômé, Principe.

How did this Portuguese creole develop? The documentation for West Africa does not of course reflect its development in any way - it follows the waves of economic interest in the area. That evidence

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1. e.g. in Malacca, Hancock, 1970.
2. Kindersley, 1777, p.16. I discuss Valkhoff's argument that this was the model for Afrikaans in the next chapter.
we have of pidgin growth - anywhere - suggests a very speedy stabilisation. Besides Thimmon's example of a Spanish pidgin, there is also the case of Surinam where an English based pidgin also became established within thirty years. I shall discuss this example later. An additional complication, however, is that 'established' is an ambiguous word, for we are not certain in either case that the pidgin developed \textit{ab initio}. It might have been taken over as a working Portuguese pidgin (in the Philippines case) and then used as a medium of communication with local women and the half-caste children.

Conditions in West Africa fit quite well with the 'pidgin situations' I outlined in the last chapter. Europeans, and from the Cape Verde islands probably mulattoes too, settling in some isolation, but by no means all going completely native, use their double language skills with African affines and European traders. It is the children who are the focus of change. Amongst the many explanations of pidgin languages - that they are simplified by the conditions of contact, that they represent baby-talk by contemptuous adults, and so forth, the notion of pidgins being partly real baby talk, developed to and by children, has been less advanced, because of the constant notion that pidgins are established in temporary contacts by adults, particularly by adult men. The facts all seem to point differently. Chinook jargon was

\textsuperscript{1} See above, p.159. One cause of fluctuation is the co-existence of other styles, particularly metropolitan ones.
used between squaws and their *voyageurs*, (Raimecke, op. cit. p. 538)\(^1\); Afrikaans quite possibly developed between Dutchmen, their concubines and children; the crucial point of development of English-based pidgins in the Caribbean seems to have been when numbers were relatively small and white foremen and indentured labour were living fairly similar lives to the slaves, and closely involved with them.

I am not saying the pidgin is simply baby-talk, but that some of the simplifications noted have been rightly seen as baby-forms, and wrongly attributed to adults only. Baby-talk in this sense, is conventionalised talk to small children;\(^2\) the children themselves may develop different forms. It is not the only cause of the reduplication which is also noted as a feature of pidgins, and which has often been considered evidence of their Africanness. Reduplication, as Thun has shown (1963), is a universal phenomenon, and has universal uses of intensification, reinforcement, playfulness and insult. It is much more frequent in English 'dialects, slang and older literary language' (p. x) than in the standard.\(^3\) It is, on all these counts, a likely ingredient in a contact language.

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1. All my previous illustrations fit. Even the railway navvies were notorious for their relations with wives, women and families who lived with them 'on the line'. I have already referred to Haugen's suggestion that Middle English was developed between Norman children and Saxon servants.

2. See the account of Ferguson op. cit. and the conclusions of Thun (1963).

3. A point also made by R. H. Wright, op. cit. H. R. Aronson suggests that ideophones in particular are lost in literate language. See Evans-Pritchard, 1962.
Thus, although the necessities of trade gave some vocabulary items to Pidgin, it developed as a language amongst the resident traders and their half African families. It may even have begun on the Cape Verde Islands, a mixed, fluctuating community, and been taken to St. Tomé, also colonised from the end of the fifteenth century, and with an increasing slave population. Usages at all these points, and in the Gold Coast forts and in Benin, would be utilised, merged and standardised by the men who travelled between them, the Portuguese traders, sailors and officials, and especially their negro servants and slaves, who from the beginning were taken the length of the 'Portuguese seaborne Empire'.

1. W. Günther (at S.C.I.S., London, June 12th 1969) suggested an alternative history for the languages still spoken on Sao Tomé and Principe. He believes they developed independently of other pidgins and that after a period of 'chaos' and gesture, 'broken Portuguese' was re-developed by the slaves as a language unintelligible to their masters. I think this hypothesis is objectionable at every point. The island pidgins resemble other Portuguese pidgins closely, and it seems most curious to alter syntax, but retain the Portuguese lexicon as a means of deception: itself an unlikely act considering the known extent of miscegenation, and all the comparable evidence I have detailed. The problem of how people pick up the base language in a pidgin is not yet solved, but I think it must be a two-way process, with terms becoming agreed by both sides, often re-shaped by the 'receivers' who are thus also makers.

As for secret slave languages, the obvious source would be an African language. This we know was used in (secret) ritual, both in the Caribbean and in Brazil. D. Dalby makes a good case for African code words in the United States, even if his 'Telof' attributions can be challenged in detail (Times, 12.7.69 and subsequent correspondence).

2. Coates (1966) mentions the African slaves of the Portuguese who communicated (in Portuguese) with the first English at Jamestown in 1637. These were more likely to be West Africans but they also went West, even in the nineteenth century (see Koelle, 1854).
It will be noticed that Barbot refers not to 'Creole' but to 'the Lingua Franca' as being used on the Coast, and he in fact recommends travellers thither

'to learn languages, as English, French, Low Dutch, Portuguese and Lingua Franca'

(1732, p.11)

and the local languages if they propose to stay long. The Lingua Franca has a long, but undocumented history; it is probably the generic name for a series of Mediterranean contact languages, from the time of the Crusades until well into the nineteenth century. Captain Harryat talks of it as a tongue familiar to the Navy in the Napoleonic Wars. Mr. Midshipman Easy's friend Gascoigne uses it to make love to a beautiful Countess in Tetuan - unfortunately no specimens of the conversation are given! But with an example from Molière,

1. The only detailed evidence I have found published is Kahane, Kahane and Tietze: The Lingua Franca in the Levant (1953). This very learned study actually only covers 'Turkish Nautical Terms of Italian and Greek origin' - the material has now to be recovered from current languages by reconstruction. It is perhaps the double burden of Romance and Arabic learning necessary which has made this a little studied area (the sources usually cited are secondary). The Levantine terms have not passed into West Coast vocabulary, but then they are very specialised.

2. Reinecke said that the Lingua Franca was killed by the steamship, but one would imagine that if mixed populations remain, so would mixed languages. Some confirmation of this is provided by Patrick Leigh Fermor's account of a Greek-Arab girl from Aleppo whom he met in Martinique, speaking 'the queerly gutturled and corrupt Greek of the type one hears in many terms of the Levant seaport and hinterland' (1950, p.57) (with Arabic gutturals).
one can span two hundred years. In *La Bourgeois Gentilhomme* (1670)
the 'Turkish' spoken by the 'lufti' is Sabir, another name for
a Mediterranean pidgin:

'Se ti sabir,
Ti respondir;
Se non sabir,
Tazir, tazir.
Mi star lufti;
Ti qui star ti?
Non intendir:
Tazir, tazir...'

(Act IV, sc.V)

As a footnote to the edition I have used the words of H. Jules
Guillaumont in the *Journal de Paris*, 30th June, 1873:

'at Alger... on parle une langue qui n'est que le tour de l'olifbe.
La premiere fois qu'on entend les Arabes vous apostropher dans
celangage pittoresque: Si ti sabir, ti respondir! on se tâche
pour voir si l'on n'est pas sur le plancher du Théâtre
Français...'

(1833, p.179).

The West Coast natives did not necessarily speak Lingua Franca,
rather it was comprehensible to them (it will be seen that 'Sabir'
follows the 'rules' for 'Basic Pidgin')!

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1. A current modern scientific interlanguage is surprisingly similar:

'In le epocha da satellites, computatores e astronavigation, un
lingua international deve basar se rumar le parole usate per physicists, chiostres, bioligistes e astronautas...!' cited by a letter writer in the
*Observer*, 17th November 1962, as an example of 'a neutral reading medium
at a scope of world conferences'. This 'interlanguage' is of course
not a pildgin, but a kind of *Sidow* Average Romance in the line of
most such languages e.g. Esperanto & Hogben's InterGlossa (1943).
However, Barbot's information is a reminder that the Portuguese explorers could well have taught a 'Lingua Franca' type of Portuguese to their captured negroes, and they and the other early sailors and traders could have attempted to use the natives with whom they communicated the sort of behaviour, including linguistic behaviour, that they had already learned on the shores of the Eastern Mediterranean. I have already mentioned this application of schemata and transmission of stereotypes when discussing the Portuguese influence on pidgins, in the last chapter. In this theory, one would push back the source still further—and indeed, could regress beyond the Lingua Franca to the mists of antiquity.

There are thus four possibilities for the origin of a Portuguese pidgin: 1) the Lingua Franca or Sabir, 2) the communication of mixed groups of various kinds, including the children of Portuguese and Africans, 3) the trading jargon of the coast and 4) the 'Law of Least Effort' which should tend to create pidgin forms where communication is urgent, but difficult. All have been advanced as single causes; none of them can be proved; all seem to be compatible and complementary possibilities. But I think that the language 'gets going' as an independent, creative means of communication in what could be called a long-term environment, i.e. not in temporary though perhaps recurrent trading situations, but domestic ones, where a wider span of communication is needed, and children can internalise, and recreate, the pidgin forms as parts of a developing
3. Contact Relations: the Black Portuguese

Whatever the major cause of pidginization, the success of Portuguese Pidgin as a continuing medium of communication must be due to the relations between communicators, and the values that they put upon the language. It was obviously in Portugal's interest to be on amicable terms with the Africans, hence the policy of taking not only potential interpreters but also emissaries and chiefs' sons back to Portugal and treating them well there. Otherwise, there is no evidence that the Portuguese behaved more graciously or agreeably than other Europeans. The Africans quickly learned to distinguish the men of different countries, and also to play off one against another. But they could expect ruthlessness and contempt from all of them.

At this level, then, there is hardly that sympathy and consensus which is popularly believed necessary for communication. I have already pointed out however, that a common language does not necessarily indicate political or social unity. Languages are, however, means to creating identity, and it is for this reason,

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1. That is, the pidgin develops as one variety in a multilingual environment, not as a single mother tongue imitated from a lingua franca.

2. So that by 1540 Purchas' source could offer the generalisation 'The Guineans esteem well of the French ill of the Flemish and not well of the Portuguese' (Purchas, 1613, p. 396). They playing off began, for instance, as soon as Lorson tried to trade.

3. In this respect, Dower has shown that the Portuguese despised coloured people as much as other Europeans did, and consistently limited their rights in the colonies.
I believe, that Portuguese Pidgin survived so long in West Africa. 1

Francis Moore, whose description of Portuguese Creole on the Gambia I have already quoted, distinguished "Handincoes, Joloiffs, Foolez, Floons and Portuguese" (p. 29). The Portuguese settlements were separate, and they lived in 'square houses'. They called themselves Christians, and were visited yearly by a priest from the Cape Verde Is. Moore treats them as if they were a separate tribe; in other areas they were just 'Portuguese' distinguished more by economic and vocational criteria than by colour, since they were pre-eminently middlemen and interpreters. John Henton noted in his Journal for 1750 at Bunce Island (Sierra Leone)

'I have had no appearance of trade today, the white men being all exhausted and I have not seen one Portuguese since I have been in the river' (ed. Martin and Spurrell, 1962, p. 13).

1. That is, outside Portugal's colonial aegis: - inside, it survives still.

My conclusion tallies with Bradshaw's, except that the social emphasis is different:

'...any of the free men who went to Portugal returned to trade on their own account, and they together with Portuguese exiles and adventurers, formed a nucleus of highly influential people who encouraged the spread of Portuguese as the accepted language of trade on the coast and along the rivers. It was the early development and constant recruitment of a cadre of fluent speakers which gave such extensive and lasting currency to the Portuguese tongue; the initial advantage gained by the Portuguese in being the first foreigners to make maritime contact with West Africa would not of itself have ensured that the language would have continued to flourish when the ships of other nations superseded Portuguese vessels at anchor off the favourite trading points.' (1965, p. 7-8).
Since the Portuguese were distinguished by their surnames, they evidently stressed their partrilineality, though in matrilineal areas they presumably acted like the British-named dynasties in Sierra Leone and on the Gold Coast, who also maintained their matrilineal links. Since the only contemporary definitions of the mysterious 'common pool' word tanga maos suggest 1) that they are negro followers of the lançados and 2) lineages, serving an ancestral cult, it seems to me possible that the name indicated Portuguese who had gone African to the extent of founding a family, or being in one, that was considered comparable with the other local descent groups.

In so far as they were Christians however, they must have been excluded from full participation in society. Moore is explicit about their religious claims, though he, like most other English observers, is scornful of them - the early accusations of Portuguese officialdom that they were fetichists at heart are re-echoed. In fact, of course, they were likely to believe in both systems. But by the time

1. Often only a Christian name is given, but surnames also are found, e.g. in Moore, 'Seignior Antonio Voss' and 'Tombe Hendez' who is in fact 'son of the late King of Barsally by a Portuguese woman' (p.88). According to Gamble, descent among the Wolof can be either matrilineal or patrilineal (1957, p.44).

2. See Pyke, 1964, p.62and cp. the family of Richard Brew of Cape Coast, whose history has been traced by Priestley (1963). Lloyd reports the same practice amongst the Itsekiri in modern times (Bradbury & Lloyd, 1957, p.191.)

they were written about, in the first half of the eighteenth century, the black 'Portuguese' were becoming insecure. In a manner reminiscent of the Anglo-Indians, they were touchily, even desperately anxious to be considered Portuguese and not African.

For a considerable period, Portuguese Pidgin had been for these communities not only a sign of indent$ but itself a means of maintaining it, since they owed their privileged position as traders to their ability to deal direct with Europeans, using their language as a lingua franca. However, during the second half of the century, English became the lingua franca of the coast, except in a few areas (I discuss the process in the next chapter). The 'Portuguese' added this language to their repertoire and continued to act as linguists, but as Portuguese pidgin became less valuable, and their links with the metropolitan country ever more tenuous, the communities seen to have lost their distinctiveness.¹

That they survived so long² suggests that, however brutal and contemptuous the Portuguese appear as colonisers, their language and culture was valued, particularly by those whose stranger fathers

¹ Gray remarks, of the Gambie, that though a Portuguese settlement at Bitang was mentioned in 1735, in the latter part of the eighteenth century 'the Portuguese, black and white... ceased to exist... as a separate race'. 1960, p.15.

² Anl op. Boxer, 1861: 'It was the Maraisian and the half-caste, or even the slave women, who kept alive the use of the Portuguese language in places like Batavia, Malacca, and Ceylon, which were under Dutch control', p.61.
had perhaps excluded them from full membership of society. Instead the 'black Portuguese' built up an identity of their own, claiming some kinship with a wider world of civilisation, a larger than local religion, technology and language. In this, as well as in their commercial success, they resemble other 'stranger' communities, but since their matrilineal links were recognised, they could eventually merge with them.

The societies into which they merged were not however, 'traditional' ones, and it is through such groups as 'Portuguese', too easily considered as marginal, that coastal communities developed, out of their contacts with the Europeans, new structures and a different ethos. In an overwhelmingly black country, too, mulattos, even if vulnerable to suspicion from both sides, were not isolated into a no-man's-land community on the margin between rulers and ruled, like the Anglo-Indians or the Cape Coloured. From the point of view of language, however, they were separate units, providing an invaluable reservoir, a live language transmitted down generations, which both black and whites could learn as a lingua franca, and use as a model for other pidgins, such as French and English.

1. It is interesting to compare them with the Lebanese, who apparently were moving briefly toward 'Portuguese' status, until they began to bring out Lebanese wives and then repudiated their half-caste offspring and African kin (see Khuri, 1965).

2. Though, as all our information comes from white sources, it is not certain that Africans disliked mulattos as much as was claimed. Such dislike no doubt increased with black competition in trade, or from those who resented their control of trade.
1. **Languages in competition with Portuguese**

Although Portuguese Pidgin was the lingua franca of the West Coast of Africa, Africans there learnt other European languages well before the time of Barbot's survey. Lok and Towrons in the 1550s imitated the Portuguese by stealing natives away to England, and bringing them back to be friendly interpreters. The French also became active at this period. When the Dutch joined the trade toward the end of the century they found places where French was spoken a little besides Portuguese, as on the Grain Coast and Gold Coast, while on the River Senegal, by reason of the diverse trade,

'soo kunnen sy veel talen spreken, als Spaens, Enghels, Franchoys ende Duyts'

(De Mareses, 1602, ed. Haber, 1912, p.7)

Here, as on the Grain Coast, the French were the dominant traders, so that conditions favourable to a French pidgin may have existed - at Grand Castos the French post was nicknamed Paris (De Mareses, p.12). At the same time, individual Africans travelled far and wide on the coast, and they might know a European language quite well. Ardener (1968) quotes from Samuel Brun (1614) who knew at
Cape Mount the wife of the local king; she spoke good Dutch, having been brought there by a Dutch supercargo from the Cameroons.

This piece of information is a good example of the chanciness which besets all judgement of the European linguistic situations on the coast. It is only by the odd reference such as Brun's that we know of many places of European settlement; still less frequently are the comings and goings of individual supercargoes recorded. Yet such information radically affects one's conclusions. Rules of communication undoubtedly grew up, were accepted, passed on to new traders...their historian today can sense them, but has little data to go on. A further complication is that the one constant feature in all accounts of the coast, almost up to today, is plagiarism. Any confirmatory detail is therefore automatically suspect.

Such is the background of Fig. W, which does nevertheless show up, in a very broad way, the pattern of contact on the coast, which in turn gives pointers to the linguistic patterns. For a pidgin language to be established I assume that there should be a number of speaking Europeans, one language in conditions of co-habitation and prolonged contact with an African group, who may

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1. When I read Kenneth Jackson's *Language and History in Early Britain* the 'atmosphere' was very familiar. Again, a way of life has to be deduced from a very few clues. Jackson has been able to show that the history deducible from linguistic evidences is much more cultivated and structured than their paucity might lead one to suppose.

2. The deficiencies of West African sources can be grasped from Ardener's careful unravelling of one of the traditions they have imposed: 1968.
themselves be heterogeneous. Certainly it will spread in such a population, but it cannot survive and develop without a 'reservoir' of fluent speakers, who have an interest in using it greater than fragmentary trade contact.

For this reason, it is necessary to look in the period after the establishment of a Portuguese pidgin, to the pattern of settlement by other powers, in order to see how it was that English gradually replaced Portuguese as the lingua franca of the coast, during the eighteenth century. It will be seen that the French concentrated their attention at a few points only, and though they were at times powerful, in retrospect the English are seen to have been further flung, even before they were the dominant traders. A French pidgin is to be expected, but so far as I know its history has not been studied. It is generally affirmed that French pidgins do not exist now; even given the pattern of French education, this is a curious fact, especially as French 'creoles' developed so widely. 1

If French pidgins did not spread because French influence was geographically limited we might by contrast expect a Dutch pidgin to do so, since the Dutch successfully challenged the Portuguese everywhere, not just in West Africa. Such a pidgin

1. One might compare the Portuguese of Brazil: Freyre offers unconvincing arguments to explain why pidgins forms did not survive (1956, p.313-481) whereas one of the slave recollections in et. Curtin (1967) indicates that the slaves did speak a pidgin there. (p.228). One could say that the white element in Brazil has been large enough to ensure the eventual dominance of a more or less standard Portuguese - this has not, however, been the case in the former French colonies of West Africa.
might lie behind the English calqued upon it, but there are no references which give evidence of this. In contrast, there is Boxer's strong assertion that the Dutch in Asia continued to use Portuguese Pidgin, and in Surinam they maintained the use of Pidgin English to the slaves. It can be suggested therefore that whatever the acquirements of individual Africans, (like the Cameroonian woman, Maria, already referred to), in areas of Dutch settlement the general policy was to continue with Portuguese. It looks as if this happened in Umina, from odd references in Bosman (1967, p.153, p.199).

The Dutch in the castles seem to have had their lives regulated sufficiently for a policy to be enforced, and one can add to the reasons against the development of a Dutch pidgin the apparent absence of independent traders, interlopers, and pirates, such as the English produced (like the Portuguese before them) from the end of the seventeenth century on.

A major point is that the period of Dutch dominance was relatively short. It did not last into the beginning of the eighteenth century, when English and Portuguese are generally given as the commercial languages of the Gold Coast. It seems from Barbot's account that English was well established there, and this fits in with Davies'.

1. The quotation from De IJares gives an idea of the possibility of this: the sailors' language in the Binschoten collection is generally easy to follow, closer to English than modern Dutch.

2. Rams, 1953, p.87; and at the Cape, Kinkersley, op. cit. The Dutch also discouraged the use of their language in Indonesia.
remark that

'If the Gold Coast was to be subjected to a European power, it had already by 1700 become likely that either Britain or the United Provinces would become that power.'

(1957, p.250)

It was the Royal African Company's policy to encourage the use of English by Company slaves, and there is evidence that their slaves on the Gambia spoke English even while Portuguese was still necessary for trading on the river (Smith, 1744, p.16). The same informant remarks that at Gambia Crux (on the Grain Coast) a man in a canoe paddled out and

'he answer'd us after his way, that they had too much Goats, too much Hogs and Hens'

(p.107).

This piece of pidgin dates from 1726.

The uses of pidgin expanded in this second phase - the rise of an English Pidgin. The volume of trade was increasing, and therefore the need for skilled local labour - to maintain the forts, handle the slaves for export, and man the sloops, shallops and yachts that were used extensively for trading away from the main bases. On the Windward Coast (including the Grain Coast) the trade was either by these local boats or by ships coming directly

1. Instructions to the R.A.C. factor at Bunce I. in 1702: 'You are to use your utmost Endeavour to make them Christians and to speak the English language only'. (R.A.C., 1955, p.59) Only a qualified and cautious recourse to the Portuguese [goople] is advised. The Company was trying to cut out competition from them and from the English independent operators who settled in the area in some numbers - 'loose privateering blades' (Atkins, 1737, p.40, writing of 1721).
from Europe. The latter method is described for instance by Phillips (1634) the former by John Snoek (given by Bosman as a supplement).

It is clear that the agents of diffusion were African speakers, who could use pidgin not only for communication with the Europeans, but also with each other. Slaves, and gromettas, the hired freeman, travelled far and wide; Gold Coast natives seem to have been especially well-travelled, and are mentioned in influential positions at Whydah. Unfortunately it is not known when the Kruboys began their long association with European shipping, but during the eighteenth century they began those travels which have taken them to England, America and South West Africa. Since, although some of

1. By 1630, the R.A.C. was consigning more goods to the Windward Coast than any other (Davies, 1957, p.222). Thereafter, privateers and pirates made the trade more hazardous.

2. Phillips complained that neither English or Portuguese was understood at St. Paul's River - though the town where they traded, eight miles up river, was 'roy andreoo's' which suggests a vanishing Portuguese influence. (1746, p.207). Snoek describes one James near Sanguin, who spoke 'a mixed Jargon of English and Portuguese' - this (1702) was a period of shifting linguistic allegiance.

3. e.g. by Phillips, 1746, p.232-235. It looks as if Atkins may have had a Gold Coast informant on the Grain Coast.

4. There is little Kru ethnography. Praenkel (1966) reviews what there is but can only state (on the basis of local enquiry) 'it was during the height of the slave trade that individual Kru began travelling up and down the coast on the trading vessels' (p.156). She appears to mean by this the later part of the century. She does not cite travellers' tales, which are likely to be the only source of more detailed information. According to Lloyd (1949, p.19) they acted as linguists in the late eighteenth and the nineteenth century. The standard Gold Coast historians do not refer to the date of the Kru communities there. I refer to their position in Sierra Leone in the next chapter.

5. See, amongst many references, Allen, 1840; Parson, 1940; Harsh, 1944; Praenkel, 1966.
then settled in these places, the Kru gangs were solely masculine, and they normally came back to marry in their villages, they appear to be the one group who maintained and transmitted Pidgin English purely as a lingua franca. Shipboard contact with European pidgin speakers, would, however, provide continuous reinforcement.

Other influential Africans who spoke English were the linguist(er)s, who

'are Natives and Freemen of the Country, whom we hire on account of their speaking good English, during the time we remain trading on the Coast; and they are likewise brokers between us and the black merchants'.

(Inelgave, 1754, p.172; see also his other references. His voyages were from 1704 onwards).

Coxer Williams remarks that in eighteenth century Liverpool there was an employment register for linguists: 'The position was often held by "ladies of colour"' (1357, vol.1, p.10). Like their counterparts ashore, these bilinguals were sometimes uneasily placed, this time between the slavers and the slaves. The captain of the Rainbow reported after his voyage in 1758 that the slaves had killed his linguister, Dick, a freeman, who had himself been allowed to whip a sailor (who afterwards died), because he had jeeringly claimed that he would be sold on arrival at the West Indies (Donnan, 1930, Vol.17, pp.370-2).

As the triangular trade increased, so did the numbers of English-speaking slavers, and of new slaves who did not know English at all.
A small but not insignificant number of free Africans travelled regularly on this route, visiting both Liverpool and Caribbean or American ports. The relationship between the pidgin English of the coast and the Caribbean creoles obviously becomes a question to be asked. Bound up with it is the problem of how far, and in what ways, English and French-based pidgins are related to Pidgin Portuguese.

2. *Reflexification* and the *Sabir Theory*

It has been suggested by several that one Portuguese *Proto Pidgin* lies behind the African and the transatlantic ones — and behind it of course, may lie the Lingua Franca. The question is how did the Portuguese pidgin get diffused in the Caribbean, and under what circumstances was it replaced by the other languages that are or have been spoken there? Since 2.1. Thompson suggested a pattern of common descent, there have been a number of studies of what is often called comprehensively *The Sabir Theory*, though of course several distinct topics are involved: the existence of a Sabir model, the existence of a Portuguese proto-pidgin, the

1. I have used much of the material which has appeared for comparison, but I do not cover in detail the history of French-based pidgins.

2. 1961. Thompson suggested that Sabir was i) used by the Portuguese in West Africa, ii) creolised in their factories and settlements and iii) carried as a pidgin to the Far East. See page 221 above for a modified version of this hypothesis.
conditions of diffusion, either of a Portuguese or any other pidgin, across the Atlantic.

It has been quite confidently stated that Pidgin Portuguese was learnt by the slaves of Africa, while they 'languished in the barracoons' waiting for shipment. The source of this assumption is Van Vijk (1958), who basing himself in turn on an article by S.Jenkman, gives evidence that Dutch slavers were using 'portugues costeno' in Africa in the middle of the eighteenth century - a fact which I have amply corroborated. That the slaves also learnt it, however, is not proven. At the late period in question, indeed, they clearly did not - that was the reason for needing a linguist on board. Nor is there any evidence that the linguist gave language lessons to the slaves on the way over. 1

The period of transmission must in any case have been much earlier. English and French pidgins were clearly well established in the Caribbean by the mid eighteenth century 2 - and the pidgin English of Surinam must have been developed before 1700. 3

The most likely source of a Portuguese Pidgin seems to me the Portuguese themselves. According to Rens, the first Caribbean slaves

1. It was reported that the Portuguese did this on their Angola-Brazil run, but the reporting itself implies a contrast with the slavers of other countries.
3. Since the colony was ceded to the Dutch in 1667 and remained thereafter in their possession. The last shipboard of English settlers (and their slaves) left in 1680, and after that these were very few Englishmen left (Rens, p.26, and P.n. 34, pp.34-5).
came from Spain and Portugal (1953, p. 6); when Jamaica was
captured by the British in 1655, the Spaniards had had slaves
there since 1515; Barbados was first settled in 1625, and for
twenty-five years was open to slavers of any country — in this
period Pidgin Portuguese could have been the lingua franca. In
the period between the Union of the Spanish and Portuguese crowns
in 1580 and the increase of Dutch power in the Caribbean, the
Portuguese were influential there.

An alternative suggestion is that French and English Pidgins
were carried across the Atlantic: this is of course possible,
since Portuguese pidgin was not the only pidgin being used on the
coast before the middle of the eighteenth century. But much
more careful research would be necessary of the times and places
in which slaves were kept for long periods on shore, and under
whose guardianship. The slaving experience is too easily generalised.

1. Barbados would be a key point for the development of English
pidgin, but the comments I have read present a contradictory
picture. Le Page quotes a source of 1667 that "now there are many
thousands of slaves that speak English" (1960, p.18) but in 1680
the planters there objected to its use as a lingua franca (W. Williams,
1944, p.43) and Ligon could not communicate very much with the slaves
(some of them from Portugal). (1657, pp.52-4).

2. There were also a substantial number of Portuguese settlers,
including Jews (Le Page, 1960, p.6).

3. This for instance is the view of Ian Hancock (personal communication)
but he has not proved their transmission.
There were barracoons in Senegal in the 1670s, and in the Cellinas in the nineteenth century. The horrible conditions under which the slaves were kept at Tydah were not at all favourable to learning a pidgin.  

Some slaves did on the other hand always spend a long time on board while the ship made up its complement, cruising up and down the coast, and then I suppose, a few of them could have picked up some pidgin from the crew, which sometimes included free natives. But, as I shall suggest below, there is circumstantial evidence that the transatlantic pidgins developed on the plantations.

In discussing the rise of an English pidgin in West Africa, I ignored the question of its relationship to Portuguese pidgin. The original corollary of the 'Cabir Theory' was the 'Relaxification Theory'. The speakers of Portuguese pidgin, it was suggested, (e.g. by D. Taylor, 1566), replaced the Portuguese lexis by English or French, as is also suggested by the continuing existence of Portuguese 'survivals'. I have already referred to the ensuing controversy, which centred on the genetic affiliations of pidgins.

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1. According to Chartier (1567, p. 65), the linguists here (Lartock) might have spoken a pidgin with the slaves - French pidgin? Portuguese pidgin?

2. See the account of the 'trunk, as it was called (another 'pool' word) by Phillips, who was there in 1598 (1746, p. 214).

3. Or while it anchored in the river, as at Old Calabar from the last part of the seventeenth century.
One can provisionally accept Hall's claim that the pidgins he has examined have a *Weltsprache for base*, without rejecting, as he does, the possibility of some relexification. It is accepted that these pidgins have phonological features derived from African languages, including sometimes tone. Just how much of the syntax of a pidgin, simplified and restructured as it seems to be, must be derived from a certain language is a point on which linguists do not agree, and one wonders how profitable it is to approach them in this way. Chomskian linguists who are interested in syntactic universals would surely find pidgins useful test cases.

1. Or rather, he accepts some relexification, but claims that English based pidgin cannot have developed 'from' Portuguese Pidgin. It does not follow, as he claims, that relexifiers are offering 'simply a somewhat more sophisticated version of the old notion that a pidgin or creole is simply "a native language spoken with European vocabulary"' (122).

2. Even among African speakers, however, 'non-African' distinctions are attempted (Jafeni, p.154ff, confirms this): pidgins do not replicate African phonemic systems.

3. Hariton (1988) points out that this has rarely been analysed in pidgins, but describes it in Jamaican Creole, often said to be a dialect of English only. Mr. Ardener says that Cameroons pidgin is tonal.

4. The earlier remarks of Jesupersen, too, can be set against Hall, that 'the grammar of [French creoles] is for all practical purposes identical with the grammar of those two varieties of English which we have previously examined in this chapter', [Chinese pidgin and Beach-la Jar, with examples of W.African pidgin, collected from the Belgian Congo] (1922, 226).

5. Pidgins may perhaps indicate how syntactical rules are developed. Dr. A. Kroenenfelt (now of Univ. of Calif. Riverside) has suggested to me that McNeill's 'pivot words' approach, developed to explain the child's acquisition of language (1966), might be relevant to the discussion of pidgin syntax.
Neither of the extreme postulates which I referred to in
the last chapter (namely that all pidgins are genetically descended
from Portuguese/Lingua Franca or that they are independent creations,
amtomatically producing similar forms because of the similar situations)
looks much like my reconstruction of the West African pattern of
development. At the key points for English pidgin, it is
clear that Portuguese Pidgin was already spoken. Indeed, on the Gold
Coast, which I have suggested was the most significant 'reservoir',
Portuguese clearly survived strongly alongside.

Some of the 'Portuguese' linguists undoubtedly added English to
their repertoire; they, and the sailors who began to make
themselves understood in English, were not creating a new situation,
merely extending the old one. The Africans in particular were like
Gumperz's villagers, handling new morphophonemic material on the
basis of the old rules. The Europeans reinforced forms by understanding
and repeating them, as well as adding some themselves. The process
was the same as that postulated by Le Page for 'pidginization':

'The speakers of one language acquire - frequently under
some economic duress - the rudiments of another language:
its basic vocabulary. They tend to pronounce these words
according to the phonemic and morphemic patterns of their
own language....'

(1964, 40)

1. To select one example, there is the treacherous Antonio, a principal
in a melodramatic incident of mulatto villainy and European superiority
retailed by Smith (1744).

2. In the 'pidgin:creole' sequence.
For 'their own language' read 'Portuguese Pidgin'. Some attempts are made (as with any L2) to master the foreign sound system; Le Page's account generally, however, fits better the development of a secondary pidgin than it accounts for the creation of 'pidgin' in the first place. The secondary pidgin gets going where a primary pidgin is already strong; it, may, like English, become more useful than the primary pidgin, which gradually dies out, or it may not survive very long itself, if it has a restricted circulation - like Danish pidgin on the Gold Coast.

Not only does this hypothesis fit the known facts, it also avoids the unimaginable situation of a Changeover Day which the pure relexification theory ultimately implies. There are strong resemblances between Portuguese and other pidgins; it is hard to imagine how else they could have come about, in terms of real life. Beyond the initial schematization is the English pidgin's development as an independent, creative language, and this would take place in the same conditions as those which produced the primary pidgin. Hence, again, the strong growth on the Gold Coast, with its mixed garrisons.

1. This explains why there is a time lag between the onset of British power and the general use of an English pidgin.

2. Noted by Christophersen (1953). The same could have happened to Dutch or German - the essential for survival as a lingua franca is the maintenance of the pidgin as a major variety for one source group, the 'linguistic reservoir'.

3. Discussing the different arguments put forward at the Uppsala Conference on Pidgins and Creoles, 1966, Professor Hyrcus considered 'the argument for a Portuguese pidgin, relexified, and the common, yet non-Indo-European features of the Caribbean creole, remain striking' (letter 15.4.69).
and concubinage conditions - also found on the Gambia and in the area which is now Sierra Leone.

It is likewise feasible that a Portuguese pidgin model in the Caribbean was used to develop a Pidgin English (or French) which speedily became accepted as the contact, and subsequently the only language of the slave population. Such details as exist of the earlier conditions in Jamaica show it to have been very similar to other pidgin situations such as I discussed in the last chapter. The overall numbers were small and the proportion of whites high, in comparison with the pattern established throughout the eighteenth century. Many of the whites were virtually slaves themselves, transported after the Monmouth Rebellion or indentured under harsh conditions. The need for a common language with the Africans was greater than it became when only orders had to be given to the field hands; but by that time, they too in fact spoke pidgin English.

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1. c.p. Greenberg's account of lingua francas, op.cit. Up till the last, there would of course be first generation slaves for whom Pidgin English was only a lingua franca.

2. As detailed, for instance by Le Page (1960, p.17ff). Similar conditions prevailed in the other islands.

3. House servants (and their child charges) created the classic creole situation, analysed by Velhoff, 1960. The word itself seems to mean the young thing (animal) brought up in the house of its master (often its father); in this situation pidgin is developed and transmitted, though the white children will be taught a metropolitan variety as well, and be highly motivated to pick it up from white adults, as a mark of race.
The first two generations are the crucial ones for the establishment of a pidgin: so we may decide from the evidence of Surinam and the Moluccas, where terminal dates prove that this is a long period. In both these cases, too, the pidginisers were thrown together on their own. In Surinam, small and informal groups of white masters and their slaves worked often in isolated conditions; on Ternate, the garrison was left to itself for fifty years until finally evacuated to Manilla (Chinnom, 1956, p. 7), their descendants maintaining distinct linguistic communities there. Possibly in Surinam, and probably in Ternate, Portuguese Pidgin was used to begin with.

Vallof's study of Portuguese Pidgin and Afrikaans in South Africa gives useful comparisons for Caribbean and West African pidgin history. He has found a fair amount of evidence that Portuguese Pidgin was used as a contact language for slaves throughout the eighteenth century, and into the nineteenth as a language of the slaves alone. He assumes that Afrikaans developed as a secondary pidgin, modelled upon Portuguese Pidgin, and used particularly in the 'creole' conditions under which 75% of the children born to slave mothers were half-castes (1960, p. 232). 'Afrikaans was born at an early date in the bosom of the Coloured community, of which it is still the mother tongue' (ibid, p. 233).

1. 1966. This incorporates a lot of the material in his series of three articles in 1965.
Valkhoff's theory is naturally obnoxious to Afrikaaner linguists, who have not however produced an explanation of the many pidgin features in Afrikaans that fit with all the comparable material for other pidgin languages. Nor can South Africans allow themselves to remember their miscegenating days, when society at the Cape was heterogeneous and socially fluid (Valkhoff, 1966, p.206), though the creole pattern of familiarity and contempt has been noticed ever since in the rural Afrikaaner's relationship with his natives.

3. Contact societies

R.L. Stevenson evokes in his story The Beach of Falesá a setting very familiar to the reader of West African accounts. The trader-narrator cannot speak the native language and relies on pidgin, in which he communicates with his 'illegally married' girl. Stevenson conveys very clearly his combination of stock anti-nigger clichés and actual unarticulated sympathy and affection for the people with whom he lives. The West African traders appear like this: bored, brutal and indifferent, certainly, but not all so ignorantly contemptuous of the local people as is sometimes supposed.

1. Although Afrikaans has not been really 'creolised' in the way the creole linguists would like, with a literature, an enriched vocabulary and so forth, these features can be seen quite easily in comparison with Dutch, and they are not simply 'Low Dutch' features.

2. The pidgin is close to Hall's, which confirms Stevenson's customary sharp observation. There is an interesting reference to 'Old Captain Sandall, the father of the beach' that shows Nigerian beach = trading place to be a 'pool' word, perhaps spread by sailors, though Cranville records it simply as sailors' slang for 'ashore'.
Men living in isolated factories or lodges depended on their own wits and manner to keep them safe and successful. A Mr. Buckridge, the agent at Winneba, embraced by the local queen and joking with her in her language (Phillips, p. 226) is a cheerful contrast to the pathetic Nicholas Owen diverting himself by writing a Journal and making shell pictures. Francis Moore, despatched from St. James's Fort to an outstation up the river, records violent and drunken incursions by a local chief, but he also visited his neighbours. Richard Brew, who flourished at Cape Coast c. 1725-1777, made important trading and political marriage alliances, was known for his understanding of Fanti society and language, and built Castle Brew to surpass any family house he had experienced in Ireland, with pictures, elegant furniture and a gentleman's library (Priestley, 1969).

It is difficult to remember that these men were also slave-traders, but consideration of their death-rate shows how fatalistically they must have rated their own chances of survival. Life on the plantations was perhaps something they managed not to know about: the slaves they knew as people lived in much less desperate conditions.

1. 'Nic. Creu,' who recorded that 'my diet is vain, and my clothing is not sumptuous', was another Irishman. The alternative to being a slave dealer was, to him, much worse one of being a soldier or a sailor — another reminder of the brutality of the European world, with slavery less extraordinarily horrible by contrast.

2. Isert, of the Danish Company, became an Abolitionist after visiting the plantations (Laurence 1963, p. 43). But the ships' captains, and the freemen and linguists, cannot have had such qualms.
Most observers painted a satiric picture of sexual mores on the Coast—whether European or African. But as we might expect, the records show a more diverse picture of behaviour than the travellers' stereotype. Even they record a Governor of Cape Coast who 'doted' on his 'wife' (Atkins, 1737, p.24) or mention passionate scandals which sound like other, later, expatriate situations (Phillips, p.218). They do not both to notice the lives of humbler men, but amongst the wills written down at Cape Coast in the first quarter of the eighteenth century, 'William Calvert, gunner, leaves 'to my Wench what Gold I have in my Chest, and four Gold rings' (all he has of value). Abraham Cross begs protection for his three sons and one daughter: 'My eldest son Quainner (?) I intended to leave him my heir'; the youngest, Coffeee, he wants to become a free servant.¹

Many children were not only recognised by their fathers, but if they could afford it, sent home for their education. We can learn from Margaret Priestley's fascinating study that the descendants of Richard Brow continued to stress their patrilineal as well as their matrilineal affiliations, and maintaining an interest in Western

¹ P.R.O. T70, 1499. The wills of Margaret's Cooke and Elizabeth Shakeshaft, who both died in 1712, and whose effects were to be sent home, shows that there were European women in West Africa (their marital status is not given). See also Moore's reference (p.73). In this Lawrence (1963) is inaccurate, as also in his often quoted remark: that 'no Europeans before the nineteenth century is known to have spoken an African language' (p.66) Those who did are of course least likely to appear in travellers' accounts, but I have noted some of the eighteenth century men who did. Bosman was another.
education, and a tradition of literacy, continued to thrive until, in the earliest period of British rule they reached their apogee as local residents, magistrates, and merchant princes:

'They were the products of another age, when trade between equals had been the dominant feature, uncomplicated by questions of humanitarianism or religion' (1969, p.157).

By illustrations come from English accounts of the eighteenth century, but they match other, earlier accounts from other countries. Europeans and the natives with whom they came in contact developed a relationship of mutual distrust and mutual need, as Margaret Priestley's remark indicates. Europeans testify to the sharpness and suspicion of the natives and admit its necessity. The tone of trading is set by this comment from a factor to his masters in the R.A.C.:

'The trusting of blacks I take to be so great a sin that I think it hardly to be forgiven, and I can't help thinking it next to that of using them ill... Those are his friends and his masters that dashes him of tenest and always (in negroes English) does him well.'

The Europeans were sustained by a sense of their own superiority and a contempt for the Africans, whom they frequently did use ill, but they did not take up a lofty racialist stance, they worked in small communities where they had to know a number of natives individually.

1. Davies, 1957, p.369: this is a letter from John Snow, 31st July 1705, which Davies quotes as an appendix. 'Trusting', however, means giving large sums in credit: Snow is actually urging better relations with 'people that are not so nice but would be glad to be courted with a kindness very dunstable' [straight-forward] (p.367).
They were themselves very much a minority and outside the few big forts had little power to back them and none of the certainty of punitive action which sustained Europeans in the later nineteenth century and the colonial period. They may have felt themselves the lords of mankind but they were not taking command of it — interference in local politics was all they could encompass, by bribery, intrigue and alliance. While these conditions continued, the Europeans' image of Africa was significantly different from that of the imperialist tradition which we have inherited.

The small communities in which pidgin was born and for which it became the means of communication were thus black and white. Although it is hardly necessary to stress the point here, nothing could be less like the still common picture of rapacious white men devastating the coastline and carrying off the terrified inhabitants by force. Certainly this happened, but the basic pattern was trade (not only in slaves) i.e. the exchange of goods, and values in a structured institutional manner. The code for this communication was pidgin.

1. Certainly the Europeans had superior weaponry, and used 'maxim-gun politics' from the beginning, but as Mary Kingsley was later to insist, individual traders depend on 'good will'. Before the nineteenth century there was no British Squadron to back this up. It is, indeed, a tribute to the African host communities that the Europeans were so generally accepted.

2. I discuss this tradition in the next chapters.

3. A picture created by the guilt of Europeans and now propagated in Africa and America to avoid African guilt.
4. Strangers and Guests: African viewpoints

Since all the information we have about African reactions to European traders comes from European sources, one can only make the most tentative reconstruction of them. A central piece of evidence is pidgin itself, with its strongly 'Weltspache' appearance. That led to the choice of the Europeans' language, when they were so few, and its eventual adoption by many had hardly any connection with Europeans at all?

So far I have stressed the equality between black and white, which is also suggested by the disapproving notice, by visitors, of the degree to which Europeans accepted local beliefs in the supernatural. These are reports of this during the whole period of contact. 1 Mutuality of legend probably extended beyond the often reported belief that Europeans and Africans believed each other to be cannibals. 2 On the other hand, their relationship was markedly unequal. Continuous contact was maintained, but of a very different nature from the contacts of bilingual New Guinea tribesmen or neighbouring communities in India.

1. From the official Portuguese reports already mentioned, to the late nineteenth century (e.g. by Burton, 1863, p.197). Of course this is partly the necessary line for a Christian to publish, and may be all the sharper for the survival of similar beliefs at home. But it also implies considerable acceptance of African values. The surgeon Atkins was astonished and angry to find his own medicine rejected in favour of fetishes and amulets (1737, p.95).

2. Related to this, but not the same is the 'mirror image' dependence reaction revealed in the structure of so many millenarian and revolt movements, e.g. in the military hierarchies set up 'underground' (in Caribbean slave revolts, the Indian Mutiny, dau dau, etc.)
Such groups are roughly equivalent in strength and culture, and often seem to organise a pattern of periodically suspended hostility, which allows them to communicate as well as fight, sometimes even to marry. Europeans in West Africa were likely to make an imbalanced and not reciprocal relationship. Though so few, they were from the beginning 'admired', in the older sense of the word, for their wealth and technological mastery. The gods favoured them, it could be seen, by letting them have such gifts.¹

Commercial exigency was obviously a prime reason for using a European language: Africans could attract trade by this knowledge — it was, as Barbot said, 'a great convenience' not to have to learn a host of African languages.² So often Africans were already multilingual that they were quite prepared to pick up another language — their facility was also commented on. However, this language took on a life of its own, had sometimes indeed to be learned by visiting traders.³ It clearly at this stage belonged to the contact relationship, to the collusive band of blacks and whites and mulattoes whose lives were bound up together in the trade.⁴

¹ cp, Purchas, 1625, p.343.
² Europeans were not encouraged to learn the languages they wanted to know — those spoken by the inland tribes they wanted to trade with. Similarly the inlanders were forced to do their business through the middlemen-interpreters. Hence pidgin had also a convenient exclusive function.
³ In view of the current sound system of pidgin (also notable in the Caribbean) it is surprising that early visitors did not mention the phonological difficulties of pidgin.
⁴ Particularly, that is, the slave trade.
At the early stages of contact, however, (and one must remember that new contacts continued to be made, as the traders moved into new areas), the Africans forced the problem of handling strangers, getting into relation with outsiders. Hamilton Grierson, exploring the solutions which have been made to this universal problem, concluded that

"the stranger is still regarded as an enemy, but is treated as a friend for a limited time, and for a specific purpose" (1903, p.24).

Brought into a group’s own world order, the stranger became less dangerous. One notes the frequent choice of a particular protector or agent to deal with the European, and the provision of a woman for him; both suggesting fictive matching or incorporation in a group.

The need for making a one-for-one relationship of this kind is borne out by the continuous history, all along the coast, of name-taking. This has several forms. Besides being an attempt by Europeans to translate local honorifics and terms of hierarchy, or to make gestures of contemptuous flattery, these names often indicated the men particularly involved with the whites, the accredited agents, so to speak. An early instance is noted by Jobson, describing

1. Grierson’s is a comparative review, combining classical solutions (as seen in the etymological connections between hosts, guests and enemies) and wide contemporary reading.
his ascent of the Gambia in 1620:

'Ducknor fano would needs be stiled the white mans Alcaid; I took it kindly, and put about his necke a string of Christall and a double string of Currall. A solemn cry Alcaide, Alcaide was proclaimed'

(Purchase 1625, p.525).

Atkins gives an interesting account of name-taking at Cape Lopez which suggests that Africans might, by identifying the 'strangers' with themselves, make them into 'guests':

'Many of them have borrowed names from the Europeans that have put in here, and are pleased when you will adopt them to wear such a Cognizance of your Remembrance, they do not solicit this favour until after several views, that they see something to be admired, or that the person asked, has a fancied sympathy of Temper, or likeness with themselves'

(1737, p.198).

To-day's historians, anxious to counterbalance the traditional picture of white power, can easily show how limited it was, and how Africans hated and despised the Europeans. But, as all the details I have given show, this is likewise too simple a picture. Admiration and envy are also revealed. Names, like the European finery which was so consistently desired, are symbols of the wealth and status which Africans tried to take on themselves. Europeans seen often to have been considered outside the natural order (despite the evidence of their all-too-human failings); it is reasonable to suppose that even more than their names and their clothes, the acquisition of their language could be a means to achieving some of this supernatural power.
CHAPTER TEN

1. Europeans in Nigeria: before 1750

The first record of an English voyage to West Africa is
Windham's in 1553. Led by a renegade Portuguese, they reached famous Benin, but

[of sevenscore men came home to Plimouth scarcely forty, and of them many died]

(Hakluyt, VI, 1904, p.151).

On Towerson's third voyage (1577) the men refused to go there. Thereafter, further voyages were made, but it never became a major British sailing point.

There were never any forts in the Gulf of Guinea and very few trading posts. The Portuguese surveyed most of the rivers, and traded up some of them: they were able to send out small vessels from their islands. Bars and shifting sandbanks made navigation difficult; it appears that they did not trade at Old Calabar because the Cross River was unnavigable before about 1650.1 Benin, of course,

was considerably visited, but the coast to the west in the
Bight of Benin did not become popular till the eighteenth century.¹
To the east, New Calabar had a long history of contact² with Dutch
and English traders, who also visited the rivers of Cameroon and
Gabon, down to Angola which remained a centre of Portuguese influence,
and Congo.

Conditions on the 'Leeward Coast' were poor for Europeans:
they might have to wait many months anchored in a malarial river
for their complement of slaves, and navigation was always difficult.
Nevertheless, the movement of trade over time was steadily east,³
and by the middle of the eighteenth century the great demand for
plantation slaves could be met more easily from the Gulf of Guinea,
since ships and navigational aids had become more efficient.⁴ Thus
at the time of Abolition the area of present Nigeria was a focus for
English interest: it was also a particularly good source for slaves

¹ Then Lagos becomes a principal slave mart, visited particularly
by the Portuguese (see e.g. Adams, n.d., p.24).
² Recorded from the early seventeenth century.
³ The great increase in Delta slaves during the second half of the
eighteenth century, particularly after the French monopolized the
Slave Coast (including Whydah) is conveniently demonstrated by
Fatterson, 1967, p.125-134.
⁴ Taylor’s history of the ‘Haven-Finding Art’ ends in the 1770s,
with the Longitude solved (1756), but an earlier period of great
improvement was c.1600-1650 (pp.215,225).
because of the Oyo and Fulani wars.¹

Before this period, then, the mainland between Yhydah and Cape Lopez² was empty of permanent European settlement, and no communities of black Portuguese developed there. But, while the pattern of contact is less favourable to the growth of pidgins (see Diagram, p.211) communication still took place. In Benin we know that a form of Portuguese was the medium, and Portuguese speakers also came over from S.Tomé and Príncipe. George Kingston, who kept a journal for the R.A.C. of a voyage to 'New Callabar' in 1677, comments that prices were settled 'after a long discourse' with the king, but does not of course tell us the medium.³ The Barbot vocabulary for Old Calabar, already discussed, is not informative.⁴

1. In the last, considerable period of slave-trading, slaves were drawn from far inland, not just in the 200 mile-deep coastal belt suggested by Herskovits (1938, p.399). Their provenance can be traced through Hocell's inquiries (1594).

2. I take this as a convenient boundary point, and do not discuss contact below it. The coast-line of present-day Nigeria is, as will be seen, not an arbitrary cut-off, but it has to be regarded in the wider context of the Cameroons and Dahomean trading areas. The lower rivers were often known together in the nineteenth century, as can be seen, for instance, from Trader Horn's memoirs.

3. P.R.O.: T70, 1213. The writer is mainly concerned to demonstrate his probity and efficiency to his employers (the R.A.C.) in face of mounting slave losses. As another slaver put it, 'after all our expectations to be defeated by their mortality' (Phillips, p.233).

4. It suggests, however, a European imposed jargon.
While it is possible that an English-based pidgin developed independently in this area, it will be seen that plenty of models existed, and not only Portuguese ones, since the captains had themselves experience of trading further up the coast, or employed people who did. Stays were prolonged, as I have said—Barbot refers to a ship spending ten months in Old Calabar. One would assume that selected natives would be taken to Europe, since this happened throughout the history of coastal contact (and is frequently recorded in the heyday of Delta trade). Given the strong tradition of lingua francas on the coast, it seems likely that the models for an English pidgin came from the areas I have already described. The influence is possible in this direction: it is much less likely that Pidgin English spread from the Calabars.¹

In contrast to the paucity of earlier detail, there is a good deal of evidence of Pidgin English in this area from the second half of the eighteenth century onwards. This indeed tends to obliterate detail of other pidgins. For instance Dike says that Brass was a Portuguese enclave from 1650-1850 (1956, p.52) but in the 1830s, ¹

¹. This is in contrast to Forbes's account: that 'at Old Calabar, and in the other trading centres of the Oil Rivers, there developed... a jargon... [which Europeans adopted and carried] from place to place on the West Coast where it merged with other jargons, similarly developed, to become in the eighteenth century a fairly standardised pidgin English' (1956, pvi8).
apparently 'most of the Brass people can speak a few words of English!' (Laird and Cliffield, 1857, Vol. II, p. 146). Had English completely replaced Portuguese Pidgin as the lingua franca? The Portuguese, aided sometimes by returned slaves from Brasil, had a final spurt of trade in the mid nineteenth century, and they had been active in Lagos before the British annexation (1852).

But it is not clear if they maintained Portuguese pidgin, or if this had survived the coastwide establishment of Pidgin English as the lingua franca of trading.¹

Whatever form of pidgin existed in the seventeenth and early eighteenth century, thereafter Pidgin English became widely known.² Its spread was clearly due to the great increase of the slave and the 'legitimate' trade: its existence proved very useful to the

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¹ There are 15th C. reports of Spanish, Portuguese, French speakers all along the coast, but not of a standard pidgin in these languages.

² Orson remarked that on the Gaboon River 'they nearly all speak English with fluency, and among the many that daily came on board there was not one who did not at least understand it' (1833, p. 313). As he also remarks that this knowledge was confined to men, one must conclude that it was a lingua franca sustained by the degree of European trade. It is clearly pidgin in records (also at Cebnada, and on the Cameroons River). The very early spread of Pidgin in the Cameroons, which was being used in the markets of the grasslands before 1614 (see Lisot, 1953, p. 23) and in 1834 noted by Fichtig as a 'virtual vernacular' (Ardener, 1952, p. 37), is partly due to the convenience of a lingua franca in an exceptionally many-language area. Its spread in Nigeria must be seen as part of this growth, reinforcing it and being reinforced by it.
missionary, soldier and administrator as they in turn moved into
the areas so long known to the traders, and beyond them, creating
the colony of Nigeria.

2. Pidgins and Literacy: Developments in the Rivers

Towards the end of the eighteenth century, another important
development occurred in Nigeria - African literacy in English.
In Old Calabar, some of the traders learnt reading, writing and
accounts. Besides using their skill to write to English merchants,
one of them, Antera Duke, kept a diary. He thus began to use literacy
freely, as a means of self-exploration and expression, and this was
in an African environment, not a European one.

This is clearly a significant development, and it raises the
questions, why not before? And why now, in Old Calabar? Of course,
the Efikas were not the first literates on the coast, and, as usual,
information is at the mercy of the chance reporting, but there is
considerable European reference to this literacy, besides the
fortunately preserved documents.

Together with the many Africans and mulattos educated in
Europe, there had of course been educated literates on the coast,
particularly at the well-known school on Cape Coast Castle, at one
time taught by a local-born priest, Philip Cuaque.¹ These people proved important innovators, as I have already suggested. But there was little success in getting local, free Africans to the school. It is often suggested that literacy and Christianity did not spread because traders were not motivated to teach or to preach, but the Gold Coast evidence is enough to show that this is not sufficient explanation for the rejection of literacy.

There are references to literate landingoes throughout the period of contact, so while one must remember that

'...the total effect of the pax colonica, as much involuntary as intended, was to promote the unprecedented expansion of Islam.'

(I. Lewis, Introduction, 1956, p.82),

there was still quite a lot of opportunity for Africans to see literacy in action. There are references, by Europeans, to the natives' wonder at the magical power of the whites to convey information, make action occur, by writing on a piece of paper. Bosman records a myth from the Gold Coast remarkably similar to those of the cargo-cults: God offers two brothers a choice between books and gold; he who chooses gold is the ancestor of the blackmen, doomed to serve the literate Europeans. Although the succeeding writers

¹ There is an interesting account of him in Curtin (1967), which includes other literate accounts by Africans (unfortunately normalised by their editor). Cuque's first wife was English and he eventually ceased to be fluent in any African language, 'depending on the services of an interpreter' (p.111).
who quote this story are probably plagiarising Bosman, it has quite recently been recorded amongst the Limba people of Sierra Leone.  

European crops and fruits were very early planted in West Africa, and quickly achieved a considerable distribution; European guns were always eagerly sought; why did not literacy become a sought-after good? The answer must stem less from the practical difficulties of procuring materials and teachers than the complex of assumptions brought out in Chapter Six, the inherent resistance of so many world-views to unrestricted literacy, and the limiting forms of the literacy that is accepted: not only is it the particular skill of the white man, it is useless simply for his particular purposes. The men who accepted literacy at Old Calabar belonged to a thrusting mercantile society which had developed through Atlantic trading with the whites, who were received there in considerable state.

1. Finnegan, 1967, e.g. 261-3. There are also compensatory versions: 'In several of the stories rice farming is shown to be the destiny of the Limba given them by Kanu (God) in contrast to the books and money given to the white men, or the Koranic knowledge of the rulers' (p.8). This is the kind of 'restrictive thinking' that I am adducing against the spread of literacy.

2. Following Godrich: 'I believe indeed that methodologically it is always fruitful to ask for the reasons which made a culture or a society reject a tool or invention which seemed tangible advantages...' (1969, p.51).
At the period in question, the Heads of Houses dealt with the slaves on terms of equality, as is evident from Arteria Duke's Journal. This was before the time of the palm-oil ruffians, or the power of the British government which could be invoked to guard the sacred names of trade, law and order. The Efik traders enjoyed the fruits of European technology, and reading, writing and book keeping were felt to be part of them.

In this atmosphere of confident materialism the pragmatic uses of literacy were accepted, nor was it felt solely subservient to the European ethos, which indeed the Efiks partly shared. That gave them a slight edge on their neighbours of Bonny and New Calabar, is not so easy to determine,\(^1\) But the society was particularly ready for European influence,\(^2\) and open to the practical uses of Western

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1. Except that at Old Calabar there was rivalry between different Houses and the 'new men' who succeeded in them, whereas slaves were integrated into the Kalabari lineages, which exerted a much more 'traditionalising' force (see Horton, 1969). Perhaps similar investigation would explain the lesser interest in literacy at Bonny, which was not ruled by the Efikpe Society, and yet was much less welcoming to the Presbyterian Mission School than either Old or New Calabar (see reports in C.I.M.S. papers, C.A.307.)

2. At any rate for the secular influence of English slave traders. There is an interesting account of Old Calabar in 1603, from Henry Nicholls, who was sent there by the African Association as a jumping-off point for exploration. First, he was sent to Liverpool because 'there is rarely a period that there are not at Liverpool, Calabar negroes sent there expressly to learn English' - though it appeared they knew nothing of the interior. Nicholls died before going inland, but having made himself to 'a great degree master of the Language of the Country' (details in ed.Hallett, 1964.)
education. Adams' account is well known:

'...any of the natives write English, an art first acquired by some of the traders' sons, who had visited England, and which they have had the sagacity to retain up to the present period. They have established schools and schoolmasters, for the purpose of instructing in this art the youths belong to families of consequence' (n.d. p.43) (of voyages between 1786 and 1800).

It was also claimed that supercargoes were teachers, and that some traders could not read print but only handwriting. All were probably taught to write standard English, not pidgin, which is not surprising, in view of the separate skills of written styles, discussed in Chapter Six. A letter from Grandy King George, to the Liverpool merchant Ambrose Lace,¹ is mostly written in quite 'good' English:

',...but this Bishop and Jackson consoluted not to let him slave with out he payed the same Goomey that thy did thy sent him out of the River so he went to the Camorrooms...'

but when he addresses 'merchant Lace' directly, he drops into pidgin, as for instance in concluding,

'I did as you bob me for Lett's when this tend' con I no chop for all man for you bob me no Chop to times for bimbi I back to much Coyr For Cooy...'

(p.543)

¹ Transcribed with several others from Calabar by Gomer Williams in his history of the Liverpool privateers, etc. (1857).
Antera Duke’s style is more consistent, but it seems as if when he is using a Pidgin word or "European" concept, the whole phrase tends to take a Pidgin form, almost as if he were recalling a spoken form. One entry shows the variations possible:

7.3.1705.

'About 6 a.m. at Aqua Landing with a fine morning, so I go down for landing after 10 clock we go chop for Igbo Young House Liverpool Hall and after 12 o'clock Day we see new ship met com & com to till his will not com here. Did go to Coonroom so Duke say 'very well, go away please.'

["About 6 a.m. at Aqua Landing with a fine morning, so I go down to the landing. After 10 a.m. we go chop (have a meal) at Igbo Young’s house Liverpool Hall and after 12 noon the new ship’s name comes to tell us that he will not come here but go to Cameroons. So Duke says, "Very well, go away please"."

(published translation)

Duke’s diary is particularly interesting, as the first instance we have of Pidgin recorded by an African (not a European).

But it cannot be assumed of course, that this is what he spoke; the results are a mixture of written and spoken forms, like the early "French" described by Fidal (see Chapter Five). One recognises 'go chop for Igbo Young House' and the general reliance on 'for'; the 'am' is a literary form and the all-purpose 'so' may be due to the need of a relator in writing, not so used in speech, while 'berry' and 'news' are clearly aural spellings.

But elsewhere there are many more forms which are Pidgin, thus

1. See also S. Ardener (1963) for other writing by Cameroonians.
making the Diary of more interest than Ikenzi suggested - he thought that it could be

'merely an honest failure on the part of the author to write standard English'

(1965, p.73).

Ikenzi, like other African commentators, has been at pains to point out that the pidgin spoke to Europeans was not the same as that spoken amongst Africans. Obviously the European style was very limited and stereotyped, as the dialogues quoted in so many reminiscences show. Nevertheless, many of these stereotype forms are still found indigenously; the problem is how far Duke used the African's pidgin of the period, and how much he was affected by familiarity with standard written and 'native speakers' spoken English forms, - which possibly were more generally used in Calabar at that date.

Yet another problem thus raised by the Old Calabar material is why 'correct' English did not spread further, if there were influential persons speaking it, in a small community. Instead, it appears that the Rivers became the 'home' of Nigerian pidgin, though no studies have

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1. It is quite often said that this still happens. However, it appears that the differences in syntax etc. are not so great as is felt; this indicates that the consciousness of presenting a stereotype for the European is considerable, and probably the language is felt to be a manifestation of this. The distinction is thus sociological more than linguistic and (as usual) attempts to differentiate pidgin, Irio and different dialects will be so also (c.f. Berry, 1952 and 1962).
been made of its use there. But in fact 'identification and motivation, not exposure, are what count' (Hymes, 1962, p.6). It is (or it ought to be) a commonplace that 'prestige' factors do not operate in any simple way, and this can be supported by evidence from West African pidgins, for, besides the many European visitors, there were always Africans on the coast who had received education in Europe.

It was not these privileged, clearly often powerful people who moulded pidgin, however, and one must therefore assume that the models were the middling sort of people, the mulattoes, skilled slaves, freemen and women (and the European crews with whom they came into contact). I have already referred to the linguists and the Krunen, who were certainly used in the Delta by the early

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1. Isefeni's is a study of phonology and not centred in the Delta. Anthropologists working in the area have had little to say about pidgin, e.g. Jones who simply says that today many speak two local languages, pidgin and English (in which they are literate) (1963, p.19). Lloyd similarly mentions pidgin, without stating its use (1957). Was it for instance, used in the home by the "mixed" Itsekiri couples he mentions? (p.190).

2. Discussing the failure of many schoolchildren to speak the standard, which they hear on TV and radio as well as in school. I discuss this point in relation to Nigeria in the next chapter.

3. Of course many mulattoes were educated abroad: I am referring more to the 'black Portuguese' and poorer half-castes.

4. 'European' indeed, since pidgins would often be foreign languages to many slavers, who thus reinforced basic, stereotype forms.
nineteenth century. The minority may, however, be influential through their education, Calabar remained a centre of literacy even when it was no longer an important trading centre. Its educational ascendancy was due to the work of the Presbyterian mission, invited to settle by the leaders of Old Calabar in 1843.

3. **1850: expansion begins**

1850 is a convenient round date for the beginning of an entirely new phase of Nigerian history. At this date, the C.I. S. had established a mission at Abokuta, and were moving into Yorubaland; Lagos was bombarded and occupied in 1851; in 1849 Beecroft had been appointed H.I. Consul for the Bights; above all, perhaps, the success of the 1854 Niger Expedition proved that malaria could be beaten by quinine. In 1859, the Niger Districts Protectorate was set up, and the Amalgamation of Northern and Southern Provinces in 184.

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1. The Hope Caldwell Training Institute was well-known for higher education. Calabar was the only place outside Lagos to have a regular newspaper, until Azikwe began his provincial dailies in the 1940s.


The last two dates are a reminder of the steady increase in British jurisdiction. But, from the point of view of the 'image of Africa' in Europe, an equally significant date is 1337 - the Benin Massacre. For three hundred years, the few people interested in West Africa could read accounts of it which, for all their faults, are remarkably informative and matter of fact, compared with the lurid stereotypes produced in late Victorian and Edwardian fiction, or even some missionary material. The coastal traders, involved from the earliest days of contact in complicated negotiations with local authorities, and bound by complex systems of fees and dues, never believed that the natives were savages who lived in a state of complete anarchy and disorder, even if they did not understand how authority was maintained.

During the nineteenth century, the relationships between black and white became more varied. Many peoples hitherto unfamiliar with Europeans came under their rule, and Europeans with very different interests came to West Africa. All were affected, directly or indirectly.

1. 'The image of Africa...was largely created in Europe [between 1790 and 1830] to suit European needs' (Curtin, 1966, p.125). See Hillen, 1950, and the D.Phil. thesis of Dively (1964) for studies of this stereotyping, which is also discussed by Curtin, in a wider context (1964). King's description of Benin (1935) includes a well-documented history, but the popular stereotypes of West African negroes emphasised their savagery and lack of history. April (1965) has shown that since missionary work depended on donations from home, missionaries were urged to melodramatise their work, so as to titillate the reader.
by the technological revolution in Europe. (It was MacGregor Laird's steamship service, to take one example, which greatly facilitated movement between Britain and West Africa).

Europeans went to Nigeria with preconceptions which were an amalgam of their own world-views and the impressions sent home by their predecessors, while the Africans, whose views are of course less well known, had similarly modified stereotypes of the Europeans. Something of the complicated sequence of this interaction must be understood for the evaluation of their communication, though judgments are inevitably over-simple ones. Quite apart from the considerable changes that occurred between say 1870 and 1900, when the Europeans drew further away from the Africans, 1 one has to recognise that the new generation of missionaries and administrators who moved into Nigeria c.1850 were abolitionists, of wider sensibility than the slave traders, while at the same time the profits of the trade in the Delta and Dahomey seem to have encouraged potlatch displays of sacrifice and cruelty. 2 These facts alone divided the European

1 Notably by withdrawing authority from Africans, and replacing them by Europeans. I discuss this phenomenon below.

2 All writers seem to agree that little was done with the wealth from trade except display. Slaves were objects of wealth and their sacrifice a display of status. Dike notes that the West Indies interest prevented the sale of cotton and sugar machinery to Old Calabar (1936, p.114). Burton pointed out the similarity of the notorious Customs at Dahomey to contemporary public executions in Liverpool in 1865, (1936, p.233). But a public conscience was growing in Britain and was applied to Africa. T. Perham stresses that the 'psychology of administration' in S. Nigeria was formed by a 'sense of revulsion from the natives' caused by accounts of their cruelties (1937, p.22); this sense of shock had not been communicated by the slave writers on West Africa, because they shared the brutality themselves.
and the native, who so long had sustained a collusive community, and consequently strained the community of meaning in pidgin.


To understand the nature and role of pidgin in the period of British expansion, it is necessary to go back in time, and consider the history of Sierra Leone. While Antura Duke was compiling his Journal, the first settlers at Freetown were trying to survive. They were English speaking, and they had been put on a shore with a very long history of European contact. The successive promoters of the Sierra Leone scheme were agreed in hoping that the settlement would develop into a new African society, generating 'civilization' to transform Africa.

The composition of the first new Sierra Leonians has been calculated as follows:

- 65 or less survivors of the Black Poor (ex. U.K.) 1737
- 1131 Nova Scotians 1792
- 6550 Jamaican Tarcons 1800

But c.37,000 freed slaves (25,000 moved on as 'emigrants') by 1840. (From Buckleyński, cited by Hargreaves, 1982). As well as local Africans speaking English, there were Kruzen in the colony from the earliest days, playing a significant part in it, and settling
down in Kru Town. 1

Despite the predominance of recaptives, English - a pidgin English, 'Krio' - soon developed as the main language. This is hardly surprising. The polyglot and disoriented freed slaves came ashore to a mission-organised environment, dominated at first 2 by the Settlers (including the Maroons and Nova Scotians), all speaking English, which was also the language of religion 3 and government. E.D. Jones concludes that the main characteristics of Krio were fixed by the middle of the nineteenth century.

This seems very likely - even a late date if we think of Krio as a further variety of pidgin, and not essentially new (though the particularly Sierra Leonian features would develop in the second generation of users). Some of the 'recaptives' never learnt very much English. Jones probably overemphasises the importance of the

1. Frye, 1962, esp. pp. 78, 125, 135, 192. The linguistic influence of the Kruinen has not received attention. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries they appear to have been important diffusers and standardisers of pidgin.

2. Porter, 1935. The Liberated Africans had overtaken them by 1880, chiefly through their readiness for trade and Western education (p. 44 fn. 1). It appears at the beginning Maroon and 'Settlers' distinguished each other by their speech (Rankin, The White Man's Crown, 1836 cited by Jones, 1962) but this reference supports implications of hostility between the groups without proving much linguistic distinctiveness.

3. Apparently Krio was sometimes called German-English, from its use by German missionaries. This suggests they might have encouraged - and learnt - pidgin as a medium. It was German policy to do so in New Guinea and the Cameroons.
Llaroons, although they were significant models. Since Cassidy concludes from the specimens in Dallas' *History of the Liaroons* (1933) that it was the same as ’Jamaica Talk’ today (1951, p.20), Maroon English would be even closer than 'Nova Scotian' to the local varieties of pidgin. From the 1840’s onwards, Sierra Leonians played an important part in Nigeria. Many had come from there in the first place – Ibos sold from the Delta, or, in the greatest numbers of all, victims of the wars in the Yoruba areas, with the Fulani and the king of Dahomey. Some were dissatisfied with life in Sierra Leone, or wanted to go home; others were recruited by the Government and Missions to work in Nigeria on contract or pensionable terms. They were Christian converts and they were educated: many schools had been

1. Berry (1959) recognises four sources: the Lingua franca, Caribbean & U.S. Creoles, W.A. Pidgin (including Hausa influence) and Standard English. As a 'creolist' he would distinguish Ibo from pidgin today.

2. Maroon would be a fairly conservative form of Jamaican Creole.

More than one Caribbean observer has found Iboe very familiar. ‘I felt a thrill as I recognised the dialect’ remarks Braithwaite, a Guyanan (1963, p.70). Similar feelings of recognition are recorded by a Jamaican, Hillard Johnson (1951). Ian Hanock, working on Ibo, has found that ‘the lexical and grammatical correspondences between Ibo and Gharan [of Kurnan] are great, not just where English-derived words are concerned... but in their shared African lexical content’ (letter 4.2.69).

3. Yoruba today: then Cyo, Egbaland, Ibadan, etc.

4. Not all - some stayed Muslim. I discuss their Christianity below.
established in Freetown (Fourah Bay College dates from 1827). The missions and the government alike needed such men, and they continued to be employed in Nigeria for many years.\(^1\)

I will discuss the Sierra Leonians further in the next section, but mention before that one other 'expatriate' source of importance, the West Indians. Richard Kendall came to Old Calabar to start the Presbyterian mission after seventeen years' service in Jamaica. He had no pretensions to linguistic skill, and he continued to use the 'Negro-English' he had acquired there without ever recording any differences in it from pidgin,\(^2\) though phrases like 'bless the buckra pick-anmny' (1833, p.426) sound very un-West African! However, he evidently made himself understood, and so must his (black) West Indian assistants have done. West Indians were prominent schoolmasters, and the West Indian Regiment was sent to West Africa in the nineteenth century.\(^3\)

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1. According to Coleman (1956) 'as late as 1936, outward remittances by native foreigners totalled 2345,075 p.a., which exceeded Nigeria's average prover annual expenditure on education' (p.157). The number of 'native foreigners' (principally from Sierra Leone and the Gold Coast) declined steadily from 1921 on, however.

2. As is shown from the beginning of his reminiscences: 'having spent the most of his life teaching the A.B.C. of religion to the children of Ethiopia, and chiefly in that peculiar dialect called Negro-English' (1863, Preface).

3. Bye, 1863, p.561. They were raised to fight in the American War of Independence. As diffusionists, consider the information of Whitford, recalling an army officer, lonely in Lagos: 'he was obliged, unless addressing the better-educated class of West Indians, to speak Pidgin-English to his amy' (1877, p.192).
Sierra Leonians and West Indians diffused pidgin and standardised it. It is important to recognise that the new European presence in Nigeria was very largely mediated through these men. Most of the teachers and mission agents were not European. And as the trading firms expanded, and the administration, they needed clerks, agents, interpreters. Gradually, native-born and educated Nigerians could carry out these tasks, but meanwhile 'educated foreigners' fulfilled them. Many of the 'Saro' - the returned Sierra Leonians - were of course native born anyway. And it was the children of this foreign-educated group who helped to make up the first generation of the Nigerian-educated.

5. Christianity and English

The Ikiks of Old Calabar accepted missionaries as the price of education - and education meant to them skills useful to traders. Many of the Sierra Leonians had so successfully imbied the ideals of their teachers that they accepted the burden of bringing civilization and Christianity to their fellows - and ceased to be


2. This is clear from the Reports of the mission schools, where often the children of 'our people' were the most attentive pupils. Later, clerks in the North resented the absence of schools for their children (I discuss this point again below).
popular when they expected to do so independently of the whites.\textsuperscript{1}

The Europeans and their gifts were, in both cases, distinguished, and this was galling to the donors.\textsuperscript{2}

A very interesting instance of this distinction occurred in the history of Abeokuta. Founded about 1330 as an Egba resettlement, after dispersion through the Yoruba wars, this developed as a 'heterogeneous society' (Biobalu, 1957, p.26) including

'two to three thousand Sierra Leone emigrants, mostly Egba, once given up as lost but now returned with new ideas and skills, and all grateful to the English who had redeemed them. Abeokuta soon became a symbol of hope of Christian missionaries in Africa'

(Ajayi, 1965, p.35).

It became a mission centre. The CMS missionary, Comsend, saw its economic and political importance, and became persona grata with its chiefs. But he was also a jealous believer in white missionary leadership. From 1365, a Saro-led government began to reform the state into a 'Western-type, literate community, but at the same time pursued an anti-British policy (Lagos had been annexed in 1352). The advisory Egba United Board of Management even proposed in 1368, that all education should be through the medium of English. Yet in 1367 there had been a rising against the missionaries:

\textsuperscript{1} As is now well known, 'Africa for the Africans' is a slogan dating back at least to 1365 (Tappert, 1965, p.177).

\textsuperscript{2} This is not intended as a flip remark. The 'educated natives' aroused in the British a whole mythology of shame and hatred which severely affected their attitude to administration. I discuss this in succeeding chapters.
their houses (but not those of converts) were broken into and their libraries destroyed, together with the printing press for the C.M.S. newspaper, Ile-Ifehin. Later, Europeans were forbidden to enter Abeokuta territory without a permit. The contradictory actions at Abeokuta are in a way motivated by the same assumption. The destructive urge - 'Burn but his books!' - and the imitative one both assumed that power lay in language and literacy. And this was perfectly true even at a straightforward pragmatic level - which accounted for many Nigerians' readiness for schooling. The missionaries' views were not so simple, and the fundamental contradiction between the two views had important results for education, which I discuss in the next chapter.

The prime aim of Protestant missionaries was to preach the Gospel - God's Word. The logical consequences of this view were put forward by the pioneer American Baptist in Nigeria, Sower:

1. In their claims for compensation, these losses were described as 'stolen' (C.M. 01/2/92). Furniture and clothes were also taken. Ile-Ifehin was the first Nigerian newspaper, founded in 1850 and soon followed by an English edition. According to Kayeoff, however, African contributions were very few (1963, p.117).

2. This summary is derived from Diobahn and Ajag. The role of Abeokuta was complex and important in the period of growing British involvement in Nigeria. Kayeoff also discusses Abeokuta affairs in her very useful analysis of Soro influence in Nigeria (1963).
'To establish the Gospel among any people, they must have Bibles and they must have the art to make them or the money to buy them. They must read the Bible and this implies instruction.'

(cited in Ajayi, p.126).

It was generally believed, however, that the hearts of the people could best be reached through the mother tongue, and much of the earliest work on Nigerian languages was done by missionaries, who endeavoured to produce Bible translations for their congregations. For this reason, too, the CMS insisted on vernacular literacy, and sometimes made it a condition of getting lessons in English.

For practical reasons, however, the native pastors had to be literate in English as well. At first, all the emphasis was on their ability to speak and teach through a native tongue. The Minute on the Constitution of the Anglican Native Dioceses on the West African Coast, drawn up at the time of Samuel Grotherr's consecration in 1869, includes the interesting detail, in considering ordination:

'It appears desirable that for some years, none should be ordained without knowledge of the English language and English Bible. As a native literature is formed, this restriction may be relaxed.'

(Ajayi: Appendix, p.277)

1. Ajayi (p.108) points out that even the Roman Catholics tended to conform to the pattern, (Protestant, mainly Evangelical) partly because of their late arrival on the conversion scene.

2. Some of the first material was Yoruba, produced with enormous energy by Samuel Grotherr. I have already mentioned the secular influence of this.

3. See e.g. CMS 10.03.15/21: 'Rules and Regulations for the CMS Elementary Schools, Grafton and Districts ... 1909.'
But in 1910, the C.I.S. rejected the idea of a 'vernacular' clergy. Among the many reasons for this shift in attitude was the belief that 'civilization' could not exist without an 'advanced' means of expression. Fritchard's linguistic anthropology gained wide currency, and it became a respectable academic tenet that African languages were primitive. In contrast therefore one could believe that the English language 'seems of itself to raise the person who is acquainted with it in the scale of civilization' as a missionary wrote in 1862 (Ajayi, p.139).

Quite apart from these beliefs, however, the trend was to more and more English. Now that written and spoken communication were in question, pidgin and 'standard' English cannot be separated as part of communication, although of course their differences could be very important. But much communication between black and white was spoken only - and for this pidgin was an important medium.

1. See Webster (1864, p.126) who, (passim), gives a clear account of the prestige of English among both Toruba and English clergy, and the movement towards vernacular clergy in independent churches, 1830-1890.

2. This is of course a belief that fails hard. It is interesting in this connection to examine the view of Dust, whose two volumes The Unseen Languages of Africa (1883) develop a fascinating conflict between his low opinion of the negro and his involuntary growth of admiration at 'their wonderful languages' (1, p.165). Part of his exasperation is due to his uneven evidence, for he was a very orderly man. Largely by personal correspondence with every missionary, traveller, etc., he could hear of, he built up a good deal of perceptively presented information about African language, among which he included English, both in its 'patetic' form as (potentially) 'the vehicle of Higher Instruction and Superior Culture'. (1, p.165).
The first Presbyterian missionaries, working in an area where many spoke pidgin, seen little bothered by its deficiencies. Waddell spoke "Negro English" and in his gloss to the Vocabulary of the Old Calabre Language (1819) he moves casually between standard English and modified pidgin. He also hoped that English would become a great uniting language in Africa, as Latin had been for Europe.

Waddell often used his 'Negro English' as an intermediary language, getting a native speaker to interpret his message in it, into English. It was for such interpretative needs that pidgin was so much used. One tends to imagine that when the Europeans first moved inland, there was a dramatic confrontation between black and white. In fact, the European presence was usually interpreted to the natives by other black men. Whatever the language of the guns fired by punitive patrols, the other voice with which the white men spoke, telling of the peaceful objects of the great white queen or her god, had to be translated in words, and the vital intermediaries might be returning emigrants or traditional middlemen or people from rival communities.

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1. The Bodleian copy was owned first by George Duke and has interesting annotations in pidgin, including unregenerate scribbles, like 'I curse you Damned son of a bitch'.

2. The slow fierce pattern of pacification, especially in the South East, is described by Anene (1963). Troops remained in Kpot Ukpane until 1933 (Delliher, 1953).
groups who had been 'pacified' earlier.

All administrators relied on interpreters, who might easily abuse their power. Since they often communicated with them in pidgin, this cannot have increased their respect for the language. Nevertheless, it was there, available, and much easier for a European to pick up than a native language. Useful as it was, the great increase in its use did not make it more popular or valued. Pidgin served to express the common values of black and white slavers, and indeed, as I have tried to suggest, it had considerable wider uses, but it had not developed to explain totally new ideas - to reconcile, even, opposing world views.

Pidgin, in short, could be a dangerous medium. For the whites, as their reminiscences and travelling accounts show, it was comic evidence of African incapacity; for many Africans, on the other hand,

1. Some evidence of this from the African side, as provided by Fortna, 1937. Administrators might blame the barrier, but it continued to exist. Court messengers and interpreters became a new power element (the clashes between black and white in Schab's historical novels are in fact precipitated by over-severous and corrupt messengers, often from a hostile clan). For the natives, therefore, pidgin English was a very desirable language.

2. Even in the North. See Temple, 1918, p. 291, who points out some of the mistakes that occur when an administrator does not realise that pidgin meanings are different from the 'standard' ones.

3. Similarly Swahili was available in East Africa, and Mughals in India. Such availability seems to override any deliberate choice of "ruler" or "subject" language.

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The Sierra Leoneans who came to Nigeria and members of the Police and Army 1 could use pidgin amongst themselves - and all the other people from a variety of tribes who found themselves working or living together for the first time, in the new conditions of British rule. Besides the barracks and the police posts, there were offices, schools (and later, universities); the 'saban garis' (strangers' towns) of the North, and the new urban centres of the South; there were new opportunities for labour away from home.

The pattern is of course familiar - these are the conditions in which Tong Bebe and Sango are developing. But in this case there is a lingua franca already, neutral in multi-tribal conditions, 2 even a means of new identity. 3 Throughout their history on the West Coast,

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1. Although a good many troops were Hausa and there was interest, quite early, in learning their language (Noman's A Hausa Pidgin Book) and Traveller's Valparaiso (1677) was used for training of Hessus). Templeton & Clark attest the early use of pidgin in the "soldiers" (1664, p.11). Its use is also mentioned by Gerald Miles, in his memoirs of army life in E. Nigeria before 1914 (Rhodes House, mss.Afr.5375).

2. With 'positive' prestige connotations, since English is a valued social asset, as, often, European clothes, technology, etc.

3. It may be a language of communication between 'mixed' families and a first language for the children (Eisenh, 1965, p.85). Cyprian Inomn emphasises its use for one's own identity (e.g. in Ijaw lans). I discuss his use of Pidgin in Chapter 13.
Pidgins were indices of novelty, and often material success. Nowadays, pidgin retains its innovatory connotations, but at a lower social level: the picture is complicated by requirements for literacy and ability in 'international' English, and this poses problems in education.
In Nigeria: The Linguistic Sequence

Politics begin

Independence

Literate in English

Indigenous Writing

Portuguese

English Pidgin

Figure A
Chapter Eleven

ENGLISH AND LITERACY IN NIGERIA BEFORE 1914

1. Education and the influence of the minority

In the nineteenth century literacy replaces pidgin as an innovator's skill. The pidgin English speaker remained useful, but soon better jobs were available to those who could read and write English. This pattern continued: Margery Perham estimated in 1937 that a clerk could earn from five to ten times as much as a peasant farmer (p. 359). There is still a regular correlation between level of educational qualification, status, and salary; today's undergraduate bears the burden of his family's hopes (and fees) invested in him: his degree should ensure such an increase of wealth for him...and for them all.

Of course literacy has not been universally necessary. Little is known about the educational attainments of wealthy traders, except that even though they have had little schooling themselves, they want it for their families.\(^1\) It has in the past been perfectly possible to

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1. See reports from Nigerian Institute of Social and Economic Research. Harris and Rowe note for instance that where in the first generation of sawmillers education reached Standard VI, their sons were getting secondary and professional qualifications (1966).
build up large businesses without literacy or bookkeeping ability.¹

The rich, vulgar, pidgin-speaking Chief is almost a stock figure of
fun in the novels of (well-educated) Nigerians; but it is mockery
tempered by a sense of his ruthlessness and power, particularly in
politics.

Such figures were not presumably envisaged by the British
administrators who tried to develop 'traditional leaders' and refused
to let educated Nigerians take any official part in 'tribal'
government.² From the beginning, in fact, the literates, regularly
stigmatised as 'unrepresentative' of traditional tribal opinion,
affect ed the local balance of power by their very presence, both
because they were used by the illiterate rulers, and because they
polarised opposition to them.³ Whatever the opinion of the local

1. And may well continue to be possible in the long-range, internal
trades which have been even less investigated. See Cohen, 1969 for
an account of the conditions under which Hausa cattle-trading operates,
including the exclusive use of Hausa language.

2. In the South this might be due to praiseworthy attempts to
understand local forms of rule. In the North, as is well known,
preservation went to the lengths of making movement from the South
difficult, and by segregating Southern natives who were allowed to
live there. Because of these policies, including the limitations on
missions, much of the comment is less generally applicable to the then
Northern provinces.

3. Again this is not so true of the North, where most literates
were tamed by being made employees of the N.As. with patronage
ultimately in the hand of the Emir. Moreover, English literacy
figures for 1952 are estimated by Dudley as 2% of the population over
seven (compared with 17.4% in the West and 16% in the East) (1968,
p. 72-3.) Before 1966, when the drive for educational expansion had
not made its full impact, opposition came from the few Northerners with
higher education - who continue to be from the Lower North - e.g. Yorubas
(see Dudley, p. 224).
administrator, the teacher/catechist (usually the same person) had to
to the villagers double status as one in communication with the white's
God as well as their Government.

T.M. Aluko's novel One Man One Wife dramatises the complications
that could ensue when Christian beliefs started to work in a village.
His story is in accordance with other evidence.¹ And when the Teacher
Royasin gets dismissed by the Mission, he finds more power - as well
as more money - by setting up as

'Ade Royanson, Esq., Public Letter Writer and Notary, 
Friend of the Illiterate, Advocate of the Oppressed, 
Chartered Journalist. Special Correspondent to the 
Nigerian Recorder'.

(1967, p. 126).

He becomes a big fish, but it is still only in a very small pool, the
village. But simply by establishing schools, the British showed the
villagers that there were alternative ways of life. The village
schoolmaster is usually labelled by educationalists in terms of his
defects. Perhaps a more perceptive assessment was made by Victor
Murray:

'He has in his head the lessons he has made his own, and
the memory of what is, for all its crudity, an intellectual
and religious society. These are his whole stock-in-trade
for creating a new world'.

(1929, p. 90).

¹ One caveat however against using fictional material in support
of an argument is that the views of illiterates there are not
necessarily those held by the illiterates themselves, since the
writers are successful literates.
Some of my students in Nigeria came on Goldsmith's portrait of a village schoolmaster with unexpected delight: it was so true, they cried, to their own experience.¹

'The village all declar'd how much he knew; 'Twas certain he could write and cypher too... While words of learned length and thundering sound Amaz'd the gazing rustics rang'd around.'

The missionaries wanted literacy as a necessary concomitant of Christianity. The Government and the trading firms needed clerks. Naturally the pupils saw education as a pragmatic good (although, illogically, they have always been blamed for this); but one must not forget the drama and the dream which also are attached to education. Joyce Cary made the point in his Preface to The African Witch, written after much reflection on his Nigerian service. He rejected the idea that

'education is a natural and 'obvious' right of mankind,... The demand, in fact, that anyone should be educated is purely ethical,... The problem of education in Africa, like all the rest, is full of uncertainties and dangers....They want it at any cost, not because it will give them peace and happiness, but for the same reason that they desire wealth....to satisfy need, to create some glory and dignity for themselves and those they love' ¹

(1951, p. 13).

Politicians have used this dream, which is not yet realized,² as

¹ Not only as village schoolchildren - quite often they had been teachers themselves.

² The dream indeed is unrealizable since the word 'Education' stands for all one's longings and ambitions, and cannot be matched by any content. Universal primary education, in the former Western Region, has proved largely a failure (see the results of an Enquiry, reported in West Africa, 26.2.1968) With results like this, peoples' expectations may get modified.
may be seen from the small numbers which, even now, read books or get more than a few years' primary education. It is easy to overestimate the importance of literate Africans, or the views they expressed in print fifty years before independence, but, if for nothing else, they were always important as embodiments of the dream, and the British unconsciously acknowledged this in their constant hatred of 'agitators':

'...those that learn to read and write; those that go to other countries and return here; and especially the men who serve as soldiers and come back to their own districts, are all ready to challenge the authority of the Chiefs'.

(Governor MacGregor, 1891, quoted in Newbury, 1961, p. 193).

2. The nature of Western education, c. 1850-1905

What, however, was the education that the first Nigerians actually received? In the account that follows, I have not tried to give a History of Education, but instead to look behind the dates and the official figures, to the assumptions of the educationists, and the nature of the education provided. I assume that my conclusions are relevant to later stages as well, because of the great conservatism in teaching methods, and the years of adult life that may pass after one has received such teaching, which yet forms the basis of many adults' views about educational policy.  

1. This is a trite point, but it has particular poignancy in African countries where new problems get out-dated educational solutions, based very often on their leaders' hard-worn experience. (Awolowo's faith in the validity of qualifications, for instance (see e.g. 1966, pp. 76-7) is a natural consequence of his own efforts for education (see his autobiography, 1960).
Until very recently, education in Nigeria has meant mission education. Ajayi has an interesting chapter on 'Civilization Around the Mission House' (1965), in which he shows how the missionaries tried to carry out their ideals of a spiritual education. Examination of the C.M.S. syllabi and choice of text-books shows how thorough-going and rigid a process this was. The aim was to produce good Christians, not good clerks, nor children with a liberal education, in the sense in which British teachers have been trained to believe.

To this end, the texts through which reading and writing in both the vernacular and English were to be practised, were as far as possible sacred texts - the Bible, the Catechism, Dr. Watts' hymns and songs. If not sacred, that is, they were morally uplifting. Lindley Murray's famous Grammar was still being ordered in 1856 (CA 2/062)

1. 'Until 1898, all education was under the direct control of missionaries. As late as 1942 they controlled 99 per cent of the schools and 97 per cent of the students in Nigeria were enrolled in mission schools' (Coleman, 1958, p. 113).

2. The C.M.S. were, apart from the Presbyterians, the first major mission in the educational field, and continued to be an important one. The early Presbyterian and Methodist teaching described by Ajayi is very similar; judging by the accounts in Graham (1966) other Protestant mission schools were less well-organized with more narrowly religious curricula.

3. Particularly his Abridgment. The earliest copy in the Bodleian is the 4th ed. of 1800. It was designed to be learnt by heart, with plenty of examples (of nouns, adjectives, verbs, sentences etc.). It must be added that other grammars, such as Allen and Cornwell's (of 1841, with many later editions) were also used, which would now be considered far too laborious for English children but were reasonably modern in their time.
along with his *Introduction to the English Reader*, a 'Selection of Pieces' calculated to imbue childish minds with love of virtue.

Although this is in many ways an imaginative selection, and even graded, its English would have been quaintly outdated in the middle of the nineteenth century¹ nor was it, of course, designed for non-English speakers.

The C.M.S. brought to Nigeria a collective experience gained from operating charity schools and Sunday Schools, in England, and of course of running schools in Sierra Leone. This was all before the passing of the 1870 Education Act, and of any teacher training as we now know it. The individual missionaries had school management as but one of their duties, which always included preaching, visiting, etc. A 'schoolmaster' (who was not usually English) had likewise to catechise: everybody was expected to help out as they could, and do a bit of teaching as well.

After a dispute about the duties of wives to help in school, Bishop Crowther wrote to the Parent Committee:

"My regulation...was based upon the system in which I was brought up. I was taught to learn my A, B, C, by the wife of a European missionary, and so have thousands been taught by European missionaries in the Colony of Sierra Leone..."  

(CA3 04. Letter from Bonny, 3..11..1876)

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¹ The Bodleian copy is 1820, 17th edition. Most of the extracts are clearly of the eighteenth century. Gay (Fables) Pope and Wordsworth appear, and a dialogue on the horrors of slavery (Murray was a Friend).
Anna Hinderer was a missionary's wife who seems to have made a successful teacher, though her own education had been of its period - informal.¹ She kept her children's interest up with ball-games, picture-books, hymn-singing and her Noah's Ark. But she had the advantage of small numbers and home life, for the children lived with them. In such situations second language learning is easier and the quality of text-books less important.

All teaching, then, must have depended a great deal on the individual teacher, and the teachers worked under great difficulties, ranging from the irregular attendance of the boys to their own ill-health, and sometimes local antagonisms or even warfare. While it appears that a fairly systematic method was developed, geared to such conditions, the odd comment from a practised teacher suggests that the C.M.S. supply of text-books was often too advanced for beginners (which indeed strikes one, reading them now.) The Report of the Bonny School in 1874 concludes:

'In Geography, Grammar and English History etc. there is no marked progress. In my opinion, the little children could better be taught with Scrapbook, as they have no idea of anything!'  

(CA3 07).

Teaching at this stage was necessarily through the vernacular, and yet, apart from any translated text in this, there were no vernacular

¹. Of course, plenty of people have learned to read under such conditions. I was taught to read by my mother, whose only examination successes were in Music and Religious Knowledge.
The other difficulty is suggested by Crowther's address to newly ordained staff in 1872:

'Mr. Smart must see that David the assistant teacher receive lessons daily that he may not be in arrears of the advanced school-boys' (CA3 04).

This was a problem familiar in England - the lack of skilled staff, and it was solved in the same way, by training up pupil teachers, who were simply elder boys (and had to be taught by the already busy masters). It was hardly surprising that, with all these facts to be taken into consideration, schooling meant 'learning by heart'. It was, after all, what the Europeans expected it to mean. This is clear enough when one looks at the text-books, the 'Pinnock's Catechisms' so regularly ordered, and all the other question-and-answers, 'definitions', and mnemonics, provided for this express purpose.

Anna Hinderer describes the progress of her children in terms which one also finds in official reports:

1. By the 1900s, there was a great advance in the format of English school text-books, but I have found nothing for Africa to match an English book produced by J.A. Yates and T. Rajagopalchari for India, in 1908, with sophisticated instructions in phonetic transcription, an account of interference phenomena in Telugu and Tamil pupils, and lots of drills for Direct Method teaching.

2. The Onitsha Code of 1903 (G3 A3/61) sets out the regulations for these teachers, who, with the master or mistress, evidently comprised the staff of most infant and primary schools.
'Four of them now begin to read the Yoruba Testament; all have learned Watts' little catechism which has been translated, and the commandments; two are also learning the English primer; they extremely like to learn English sentences, and the names of things' (1873, p. 81).

Christian and Islamic teachers had in fact the same aim; the word of God must be absorbed into oneself by repetition. Learning by heart was distinguished from parrot-learning, but it tended to be English observers who noted the parroting, more than the Sierra Leonian teachers, whose own education had perhaps encouraged it. Nevertheless, their Journals and reports are in remarkably correct and fluent English⁴ - more so than many Nigerian undergraduates can produce.

The missionaries therefore developed teaching methods which had been tried in similar British conditions of large numbers (especially of adults)², too few teachers, and insufficient materials. Within this framework, they tried to see that a few basic items were taught thoroughly. The C.M.S. Onitsha code, for instance, is much less ambitious than the proposed Government of Southern Nigeria's Education Rules (1903, printed at the Government Press, Old Calabar), but it

1. No doubt the exercise of keeping a Journal kept their English literate fluency in practice.

2. Early missionary effort in Nigeria was directly largely to adults, but Ajayi shows how they found children more rewarding converts (pp. 131-4). In Britain the Methodists long ran adults' classes which offered some opportunity for general education and intellectual awakening; the Evangelical Anglicans of the C.M.S. were similarly in support of adult Sunday schools.
possibly set more achievable goals. Nevertheless, the Government Code has a more enterprising approach, including recitation (of poetry), bookkeeping and shorthand, and advising the use of Blackie's Tropical Readers, (which were simple but lively science readers, produced for Jamaica with 'indigenous' examples of local plants, sugar milling etc.) The C.M.S. objected to this syllabus because of its emphasis on English instead of the vernacular.

It is clear that there is nothing innately African about the uncreative, parroting attitude to knowledge which is often criticised by expatriate teachers today. It was a feature of the Western tradition of education which has only recently gone out of fashion in Europe, and in Africa it has been reinforced by successive generations of teachers, all learning by heart what they have to teach, and uneconomic conditions which still make schooling difficult. 'Education' is acquired cumulatively, and when one has got through a year's quota,

1. A marked feature of the C.M.S. approach is its careful pattern of recapitulation: Standard I: first ten of the '100 Texts', Std II, first twenty, Std III first forty, etc. (The Hundred Texts are Ibo translations from the Bible, printed in a little maroon book, 1879).

2. One writer on West African education has suggested that rote learning was imposed by those whose own education was shaped by the need for careful, routine literates after the Industrial Revolution (Wilson, 1963). This seems likely, but 'learning one's lesson' is a much older concept, and rote learning was also reinforced by the demands of mass education. The concept of education transported to Africa was narrower than the newest in British education of the time, largely through necessity, but also through missionary choice.
one can proceed to the next, if the fees are available. All along the road are the examination barriers and since success is measured by the amount of required information one has learned, such information has an absolute value, irrespective of its usefulness. Small wonder that people value what seem trivial and irrelevant aspects of a 'literary education' when they do not know any alternative. Even physical features of education - the desks, chairs and blackboards - were new and important symbols of advancement.

The system of primary education that developed in Nigeria was perhaps the more powerful for being so simple and so limited. Even literacy was learned orally - and the few books available were texts to be committed to heart. These are criteria of 'restricted literacy', as discussed in Chapter Six. Nor was the practice of this literacy much less restricted. Lower-grade clerical staff, for instance, are

1. One might compare the retention of Latin in post-Revolution Russia, because it had formerly been a preserve of the upper classes. I do not discuss here the attempts to make education 'practical'. Ajayi, for instance, gives the evidence of missionary attempts at craft rather than literary education, and the pragmatic reasons for their failure.

2. Where channels of communication are few, media are powerful. The Director of Health Education in Nairobi (1962) told me that having tried to make a very attractive display at the Annual Agricultural Show (since he knew the problems of perception for Africans unused to diagrams and perspective drawing), he found the crowds around a blackboard, with some scribbled information on it, put up outside at the last minute. Its message was more powerful than the colour photographs within.
normally trained to follow simple instructions exactly, not to be creatively literate. This always produces difficulties when one needs judgment to be exercised as well; Joyce Cary drew a perfect picture of the resultant cross-purposes in his account of Mister Johnson's filing activities, which drove the D.O., Rudbeck, to fury: an epitome of all European fury with African incompetence.  

Where education = literacy = teacher/clerk, a rote-learning education is a relatively suitable preparation for work. In Nigeria, the early prestige of the teacher and clerk reinforced its popularity. Its limitations were not necessarily felt as such, though for a long time, the range of information acquired was limited - some ability to read and write, some Scriptural and Religious Knowledge, simple arithmetic, and of course some English, Grammar, History, 'object lessons' and Geography tended to be supplementary. It is not surprising that all information was based on English examples, considering the difficulties of producing local-interest text-books.  

Both 'Government' and 'missionary' bodies, however, tried to make

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1. I am suggesting that the pattern was established by these, the least-trained. Of course many of the literates achieved positions of independence and authority. Their education, in the broad sense, was likely to be continued through Church work as well as by business activities or administration.

2. Scripture was an obligatory subject consisting of 'fixed portions of the Old and New Testaments'; R.K. consisted of the Catechism, the 'Life of Our Lord' and the 100 Texts (Onitsha Code, Rule 61).
Geography a local subject starting with their own environment. This was happening in the South before Vischer tried to 'indigenise' school curricula in the North. But no doubt it was quite difficult to draw up a syllabus, and available texts like Blackie's Geography of Africa (1902) would have been depressingly unsuitable - this book gives sad evidence of how English children were taught racial prejudice. 'Over most of Africa the inhabitants are ignorant heathen' (p. 17) indicates its tone, but I quote one passage in full because it sums up current English views:

'it was hoped that the freed slaves would show themselves worthy of freedom, and would help to teach and civilise their fellow-blacks. But they have as yet done little good in the way expected of them. With a few exceptions, they do not show themselves much superior to the heathen natives, whom they yet profess to look down on as "common niggers", and are absurdly conceited as to their connection with the white men. The first thing that strikes travellers among them is the laughable manner in which they seem to caricature the ways of the superior race, while keeping all their own ignorance and laziness'. (p. 127)

These 'absurdly conceited' people are the subjects of my chapter -

1. See Graham, 1966, esp. Chapter 5. Vischer had to write his own text-books. Graham gives a comparative account of C.M.S. work, and also of the S.U.M. whose approach was even more narrowly Scripture-centred (e.g. the geography of Palestine only!).

2. I have no evidence that this reader was used in Nigeria. There is a strong contrast between the enterprise shown in bringing out such an up-to-date book for children, based on contemporary accounts, and the absence of nearly all the historical details long known about West Africa, e.g. of Benin.
the educated natives so much needed by the British and yet so fiercely despised. Before discussing the setting of this stereotype and the reaction of emigrants and other educated West Africans to it, I will consider in more detail the teaching of English. Ability to speak and write English was the skill by which the 'educated native' largely defined himself.

3. **English in Education**

Although the scope of Nigerian education has increased so greatly in the last fifty years (and particularly in the last twenty), the words 'education' and 'literacy' are still synonyms. In a country where only 30% of the 'school-age' population are in school,¹ literacy is a positive achievement, but not necessarily a condition of effective participation in society. And, despite all the earlier emphasis on vernacular literacy, English seems to be the favoured language in which to read and write.²

This is a common enough situation, as I suggested in Chapter Six, and many Europeans encouraged English as the language of innovation, and an access to ideas. The Presbyterians at Old Calabar gave great impetus to the use of Efik, by reducing it to writing and translating

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1. Jacobs, 1966. The figure would still be much lower for the North.
2. Certainly this seems so for those with secondary or university education, but it may not be so for those with primary education and much less practice in writing English.
into it, but they were always willing to fall in with their hosts' wish for English and cyphering. Goldie remarks that teaching English 'gave us an attendance at school and provided for us a pleasant and important duty before a book existed in their own tongue' (1890, p. 129).

Although he makes caustic remarks about the 'horrid jargon of the S'a Leone man or the Kruboy' (p. 167) he does not mention it as a difficulty in teaching children who often knew a little of such a jargon already.¹

Elsewhere, as I have already suggested, conflicts occurred between the missionaries, aiming to convert through vernacular literacy, and Africans, aiming to get more money through literacy in English. Since the Administration also tended toward support of English,² the missionaries often had to bow to these pressures in order to get a foothold at all. But the resultant cross-purposes cannot have made education better. Generally, the missionaries' choice of books prevailed, and I suspect that Nigerians' unfamiliarity with fiction

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¹. From dialogues quoted in Anna Hinderer, it is clear that pidgin was spoken to the missionaries in Abeokuta and Ibadan also.
². This was Lugard's view, but after 1914, Temple and similarly minded Residents prevailed in the North, aided by the Hausa-based structure set up by Vischer. In the South, Moor, for instance, was in 1903 strongly in favour of English (Afigbo, 1968, pp. 25-6).
is directly due to the Missions. It has cut them off from many registers of English.

The dispute between vernacular and English of course affected the choice of medium for non-English lessons at primary level; secondary education has always been through English. But many of the attitudes of a child are fixed at the beginning, including the rote-learning pattern. And, since primary-school teachers have taught a 'second language' for over a hundred years, the line of transmission from 'British English' is naturally slender. I have mentioned the fluency of Sierra Leonians; this is not matched by primary school teachers today.

'A second language' can be a misleading name for a variety of spoken English picked up out of school, and as much a part of a multilingual repertoire as the Ibo and Hausa likewise picked up

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1. Shakespeare appears in C.M.S. indents in the 1870s, but apparently for teachers' libraries. In 1901, '25 lines of verse' could be an alternative to text-learning. But even the C.M.S. did not encourage the printing of fiction on its presses (Webster, p. 48). Marie Corelli is still a favoured author - presumably she was admitted by missionaries (see Mahood, 1959). In 1966 I was involved in a project for the teaching of Shakespeare. A draft work book, which drew attention to dramatic points, was sent to a leading mission school for comment. The answers had the overriding caveat that the teachers had conscientious objections to the notion of play-acting.
from one's friends. Pidgin English need not be a bar to standard English, either, if the differences between the two varieties are properly taught. The main disadvantage of the teaching still received by many Nigerian children is that it is given through a qualitatively limited repertoire. The resources of their home language may be very great, but in school they have no chance to develop them; the styles of written English are rich and flexible, but they are not able to use them.

How easy is it to overcome these restrictions, and think freely and flexibly? A sociologist, reflecting on sociolinguistic topics, and in particular, the hypotheses of Bernstein, came up with some

1. A Yoruba colleague of mine, brought up in the Northern mining town of Jos, had this linguistic experience, which must be a common one. In such an environment, the choice of any vernacular as the teaching medium is difficult, and bound not to be someone's 'mother tongue'.

2. Often they are not, because the teacher has a very uncertain grasp of English, and does not know what differences exist. It is the opinion of Mafeni, based on the experience of teaching children in the 'sabon garis' of N. Nigeria, that previous knowledge of pidgin was a considerable advantage to the children; so long as they were not confused by the two systems, they could add on alternative rules quite easily (1965, p. 92).

3. Obviously there are many Nigerians who received much better teaching than this. The easy, competent English of the chief of Ogori, whose records have been used by E. Krapf-Askari, is a tribute to the teaching of the local C.M.S. Primary School, which has produced 33 graduates since 1917. In this part of Northern Yorubaland, English is a valued addition to an already richly varied verbal tradition. (Material given in a seminar, 26.10.68, Oxford.)
relevant questions:

'It seems, in some instances - as, for example, in the use of English by bureaucrats (or others) with low levels of facility in the language - that pressures are generated towards the use of restricted codes, not only in conducting routine business but in the interpretation of policy as well...What of the bilingual in a multilingual society who has limited lexical range but wants to deal with topics requiring considerable manipulation of concepts?' (Grimshaw, 1966, pp. 197-8).

If intellectual training encourages conformity, and is conducted in a conceptually limited medium, the consequent linguistic code is restricted indeed.

Of course, the more limited the uses of literacy, the greater the amount of life outside it: most Nigerians learn the arts of love, politics and money-making outside school (so do most English people). The limitations imposed by their schooling may be less deadening, less important in the full context of life. At the same time, little is gained by such an education, and when the precious English is used officially, it may hamper enterprise. Using it as an 'unofficial' medium - frequently in pidgin - Nigerians can however be inventive and enterprising.¹ Some of their verve has been transmitted into writing, in the 'Onitsha novelettes' which I discuss again in Chapter 13.

¹. Note 'a report by a panel of inspectors which, in 1951, investigated comparative educational standards in the three Regions of Nigeria': 'In Northern Nigeria English remains almost entirely a narrow class subject (memorisation of words without ideas) and fails to develop into a live medium of feeling and thought. In the East and West, English is fluent, frequently inaccurate but alive and experimental' (Jacobs (Supplement) 1966, p. 138).
It is clear that a recognisable Nigerian English is emerging, but only in the same way as say Jamaican English, which is described as consisting of a continuum of styles between 'pidgin' and 'standard', with a common phonological system. Standardisation of phonological features helps speakers from different parts of Nigeria to understand one another, but there are still difficulties in using a language which carries meaning and helpful redundancy by tonicity and a large vowel inventory, in a phonology derived from tonal systems with fewer vowel contrasts.

The weakness of English Language Teaching in Nigeria, the problems involved, all have been discussed many times. There is a full catalogue of faults in a recent survey, the Ford Foundation Report on English Language Teaching, ed. Jacobs, 1966. But sociolinguistic thinking is notably absent there. The Ford Foundation experts recommended psychological research, but neither sociologists nor social anthropologists are mentioned. Although they noticed that 'local language use in Nigeria is surrounded with social, economic and even political implications' (p. 11) it seems not to have occurred

1. See Brosnahan, 1958, Mafeni, and the analysis of Levers, in a paper delivered to the Nigerian English Teachers' Association, Jos, 1966, for evidence that one phonological system is emerging for all varieties of Nigerian English.

2. In contrast to the findings of Strevens (1956, pp. 33-4) that West Africans speaking English had a low level of inter-intelligibility.
to them that English is too.

It is easy to decide what Nigerians need, and assume that they will share your beliefs. Anthropologists know that it is unlikely that they will, and the same is true for the social problems of language. Speakers in a multilingual, pidgin-using environment may think that 'English' is what they hear, and have no inducement to alter it. Even speakers aware of the differences between speech styles may not want to sound affected by using 'British' phonemes. And beyond all the traditions of education that I have mentioned, which work against improvement, are the historical circumstances in which English was first desired, as a skill along with other skills, and not as a medium of intellectual creativity. 'English' is as pidgin was, just another useful variety in a multilingual repertoire.

Many of the British made the mistake of thinking that Africa was a tabula rasa, on which their own notions of civilisation could be freely inscribed. But Africans refused to become simply English Christians, or English democrats. Their use of the English language

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1. c.p. Oldfield, after the disastrous Niger Expedition of 1832-4: 'With the negro there are no prejudices to overcome, no castes to be abolished, no written languages to throw obstacles in the way of Truth, or to the general adoption of the English language' (Vol. II, Laird and Oldfield, 1837, p. 397). Behind much thinking about Africa, India is being silently compared and contrasted. Victor Murray was one educator who, later, saw that Africans would change education even as it changed them, and that this fact negated the theory on which 'Indirect Rule' was based (1935).
has been similarly idiosyncratic. Educational reformers will have to recognise the different assumptions of African users of English before they can hope to alter their practice.

4. The culture-bearers.

I have suggested that present-day attitudes to English, and to the general nature of education, can be traced back to the earliest days of the mission schools. In the case of spoken - as opposed to written - English, the attitudes go back much further in the social history of pidgin. Just as pidgin reservoirs and models were necessary for its survival, so there is a line of models for 'educated' behaviour and also for teaching methods. With the advent of literacy, however, transmission is complicated and enriched by books and newspapers.

Many of the 'Saro' who came back to Nigeria merged into the society from which they had been taken; others sustained a dual allegiance, to the white world and the black. This made the British suspicious of them, while it was often difficult for the recaptives

1. Whereas the Saro who returned to Yorubaland were commonly recognised as a new force, the many Hausa who were similarly repatriated, some even from Brazil after organized rebellions there, do not seem to have made the same impact, though some of them undoubtedly got back to the North. (Others remained in Lagos and worked as soldiers and policemen, in the Gold Coast Constabulary and also as Ashanti mercenaries, see Wilks, 1967.) I have however heard of recaptives who settled down as richer and more enterprising members of their villages. But research could be done on their fortunes and on why they had less innovatory effect than in the South.
to reconcile the claims of kin and church. But on the other hand they could make use of their connections inland for trading. Many of them acted as intermediaries between the British and the chiefs, drafting treaties, explaining their provisions, or transmitting local grievances to the administration. Even the most ‘évolué’ families of Lagos might recognise these local ties: Herbert Macaulay, enemy of the British and yet very much a ‘black Englishman’, campaigned over many years for the restoration of the house of Docemo, and was well born of the ruling House of Oyo (Enahoro, 1965, pp. 74-5).

At the same time, Macaulay’s kin were to be found in Sierra Leone and the Gold Coast, as readers of his newspaper The Lagos Daily News soon discover. This was a common pattern among the Saros. From the beginning success was founded on long distance movement and a wide range of experience. Fyfe has commented on the life of one of them,

1. Thus recaptives found that in order to reintegrate themselves with their families, they were expected to join in ‘idol worship’ and even take on more than one wife. To the European missionaries this was ‘backsliding’ and a cause of disillusion in the hopes of civilizing Africa through the free slaves. The polygamy issue was one cause of breakaway in the churches; see Webster, 1964.

2. Peel, 1968 cites an Egba poem of 1910 which distinguished the Egba clergyman (alufa = traditional office) from the English one, who is classed with the D.O. Peel, a sociologist, ignores the choice of language, which surely must have been important in the Aladura movement he describes (cf. Webster, who pays considerable attention to it). One of Peel’s references (p. 251) implies that the choice of medium in services was a disputable one.

3. Docemo was the ruler of Lagos, forced out by the British when they annexed it in 1852.
Peter Nichols:

'The Kalabari slave boy, sold because his mother is a witch; the pious sergeant pouring out ungrammatical ejaculations about his soul; the taciturn businessman travelling regularly to England First Class on the mailboat. Yet similar transformations mark the careers of all the successful Sierra Leone recaptives' (Fyfe, 1960, p. 113).

Such men forged links of friendship and affiliation as they moved, and when the colonial government needed clerks and skilled artisans, families might have members serving from the Gambia to the Cameroons.

Obviously such a pattern of life encouraged a sense of comradeship. Employees were moved around, and it was the policy to send men out of their home area, so even when local born Nigerians got taken on, they shared this sense of being a class apart from those among whom they lived. Nnamdi Azikiwe was born in 1906 in Zungeru, because his father (from Onitsha) was working with the army: the use of Ibos in the North began early, because there were no educated Northerners.

Coleman, studying the origins of Nigerian nationalism, has pointed out that this sense of unity encouraged the early literates to national, rather than local feeling.² It also produced in them similar

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1. 1958. This is an indispensable source of information on the early literates and the development of their activities. Hodgkin (1956) gives a perceptive introduction to the growth of nationalism, with analysis of the roles of literacy in creating effective organisation for anti-colonialist action.

2. In theory, if not in practice, since at that time (say before 1930) tribal loyalties were not tested in conflict with national ones. Thereafter competition grew for jobs and opportunities for higher education, as the Ibos began to outstrip the Yorubas.
standards and aspirations, since they were products of a similar education, and worked in similar conditions whatever the territory they were posted to. Moreover their reference group tended to be the British, even though they kept up local connections. For all these reasons, one can generalise about them, even though they were individually very different. Nor did the pattern of their relationship with the British change very much between 1900 and 1940. After the war, as Nigerians achieved more political power and eventually independence, the roles of literates became more and more differentiated. T.M. Aluko wrote a second novel, One Man One Maipet, set in the late 1940s: his new counterpart to Teacher Royasin is a lawyer, in conflict with an African D.O. Such are the changes of fifty years.

5. Innovation through literacy: the educated natives' press

In the next chapter I shall consider the journalism of Nnamdi Azikiwe, which was so influential in the nationalist cause. But, as I shall also try to show, in the first years of his editorship, his very successful West African Pilot is remarkably traditional, in the sense that it continues with the opinions and arguments put forward by West African journalists since before the First World War. The independent local press through which a nationalist credo was developed and sustained by the 'educated native' is a phenomenon not found in

1. One can see this clearly in Enaharo's account of his father, and the family's visits to his paternal grandfather (1965).
other African colonies; it is only comparable to India.

I have mentioned the first Nigerian newspaper *Iwe Irohin*, started by the C.M.S. missionary, Townsend. This was a religious venture, and in Yoruba, but it soon had an English edition. In 1863, Robert Campbell, a West Indian mulatto, started the *Anglo-African* in Lagos. Thereafter there was a succession of Lagos newspapers, mostly weeklies, run almost entirely by Saros; one, John Payne Jackson of the *Lagos Weekly Record*, was a Liberian. J. Bright Davies came to the *Times of Nigeria* from the Gold Coast. Both the Gold Coasters and Sierra Leonians developed their own press. It is not surprising, given the backgrounds of the editors and the other reasons I have mentioned, that there was always a considerable unanimity of outlook in the newspapers of British West Africa.

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1. The unique history of British West Africa is apparent from the details of the *Report on the Press in West Africa* (1960). Such publications were virtually suppressed in French territories, by legislation of which Lugard was very envious (1922, p. 80, f.n.2). Considering his hatred of the 'yellow Press' it is surprising that his main reaction was to encourage the production of a paper by one of his supporters - Sir Kitoyi Ajasa's *Nigerian Pioneer*. Two or three early editors were jailed for sedition; even so, the West African Press seems to have been remarkably free.

2. Details discovered by Coker whose revised history of the Nigerian press (?)1968) is full of useful detail; see also the 1960 *Report*...

op. cit. Omu's article deals with early papers.

3. 'Its complete unity of outlook over some most important issues can only be regarded as definitely undesirable.' This is an uncharacteristically muddled comment by Edmonds, whose 1951 thesis on the West African press 1918-1939 gives a wide range of quotation and summing-up. His report of press views is substantially in agreement with Koytoff's, for the press in Nigeria up to 1888 (see e.g. p. 275); corroborated too, by my own reading. I discuss them in the next chapter.
Apart from this, however, each Nigerian paper has an individual, idiosyncratic, character, usually due to the strong personality of its owner/editor (usually one and the same man) whose mouthpiece the paper was. Not until the 1940s were papers established to forward the policies of the new political parties. At 3d or 6d each, issues were not cheap, and the presentation made no concessions to readers with limited reading fluency. It is presumed that the audience was largely a small circle of friends in Lagos. Certainly, Lagos affairs are virtually the only topics of discussion. The only other topic which comes up regularly before 1914, is the administration of Northern Nigeria. Except for the Nigerian Pioneer (generally the exception to the unanimity rule) all the papers publish news of the high-handedness of the British there, towards Southerners - they consequently opposed Amalgamation fiercely.

It appears however that a wider spectrum of readers did have access

1. Though Macaulay led the way in supporting through his paper his 'own' party, the Nigerian National Democratic Party.
2. Some of these were of course very cultivated, well-off men, often educated abroad. But a wealthy merchant, James Otunba Payne, had quite a considerable library, and subscribed to local and overseas journals and reviews, including the J.R.A.I. and Truth (always eager for a colonial scandal with which to discredit the Government). Payne's library is given by Kopytoff, p. 304).
3. The Nigerian Pioneer, unexpectedly, ran a series of 'Rambling Notes' which were actually quite sharp accounts of regional affairs.
4. Who would not, apparently, prostrate themselves before the Europeans crying Zaki! (lion). Most hatred of the educated southerners came from the Northern administrators at this period.
to the press: this can be seen from occasional letters to the editor, and even from the odd local advertisement, especially for patent medicines. These are often in markedly inferior English.¹ Evidence of a wider readership is also, interestingly, available for a paper published in England, the African Times and Orient Review (hereafter ATOR), which is worth a more detailed account.

The ATOR was edited in London by an Egyptian, Duse Mahomed. It claimed to have a wide range of sources:

'Our Correspondents in all parts - Turkey, Albania, Asia Minor, Egypt, British East Africa, Uganda, Zanzibar, the South African Dominion, Nigeria, Togoland, the Gold Coast, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Gambia, the West Indies, the United States, Hayti, Ceylon, India, the Malay States, China and Japan. With this network of sources we shall be able to keep all the non-European races informed of all happenings concerning them, and thus to bring them into a unity of knowledge of conditions which we trust will lead to unity of sympathy and action'

(24.3.1914).

News does not come from quite all of these countries, but the tone and subject matter is fairly represented by this quotation. Until its demise early in the War, the reader could learn of colonial/white oppression in West, East and South Africa, against the American negro, in Egypt etc. Indian and above all Turkish affairs are discussed; and one H. Hermon contributed a series of articles entitled 'Is European Civilization Bankrupt?' There was also a sympathetic series on

1. E.g. for the 'Maculine SEXUAL TONIC...strengthenings the heart' which was regularly featured in the Daily News, with only gradual emendations.
African marriage customs, and books on the cultures of 'subject races' were often chosen for review. Many of the articles are still very readable, being shrewd and well informed. There was also a section in Arabic.

Most of the readers of this journal seemed to be in West Africa and especially Nigeria. Incidents like the 'Zaria floggings' (in which clerks were punished for lack of respect to the Resident) received extraordinary attention, and the case was eventually taken up by Truth, for which the ATOR took credit. Missionaries were also attacked for treating their converts as second-class citizens; presumably the Muslim bias of the review made it a suitable place for publishing such attacks. (The emigrant editors usually attacked Islam). Otherwise, attitudes were similar.

The tone of the ATOR can also be gathered from the directions to correspondents (the correspondence section was called the Arena);

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1. As the editor himself remarks. This was why he later came to Lagos, and founded The Comet, which he edited till his death. He was also involved in the cocoa trade, see Duffield, 1969.

2. The sexual rapacity of Europeans was one other ATOR topic not usually found in West African papers. Besides Southern States slave owners, there is an attack on Nigerian tin miners: 'How can they pretend to love our nigger sisters and hate us'.

3. 'We do not possess our ideas, but are possessed by them; they master us and march us into the Arena, where like gladiators, we must fight for them Solon.'
'We shall be pleased to publish your views if you like us. We shall print your railings if you dislike us. Whether you like or dislike us, you shall be permitted to do battle in the ARENA. Be lucid and concise. Prolonged will be consigned to the waste-paper basket with a kindly firmness, although we may be moved to shed a repentant tear over the destruction of your chaste effusions. Write on one side of the paper only.'

And quite a few Nigerians did write, carefully composing their letters with laborious effort. For instance, one described

'God almighty... if a resident was five feet high when leaving Liverpool for Northern Nigeria, no sooner he gets to Burutu and joins the Government river canoes for up-river, he immediately rises to nine feet if not ten feet, in fact he is another man.'

(21.4.14).

Letters from men with very little fluency in English, together with some indications of a 'borrowing' readership, suggest that the ATQR did filter through to even a few of the humblest literates, who could gain from it some idea of a wider world of civilisation, in which coloured people everywhere suffered. From it, an attentive reader could become quite well-informed on subjects never dealt with by the missionary magazines, perhaps the only other non-Biblical prose freely available.

Naturally, the ATQR, like the West African papers, supported Western education, and fought (in its columns) for more. Vernacular education was rejected as an attempt to hold back Africans. Another attitude can be gathered from this complaint:

1. I.e. of readers who borrowed their copies - and some who did not pay.
'The white man sets up an appalling shout that deafens him "This be bad kernel I go fit tro him for water; I go take you to D.C., he will jail you". The White Man speaks thus to enable his unlettered customer to understand him, and as he has said, so it is done' (..7..14)

I have already suggested that in the 1850s-70s, pidgin was quite confidently spoken by literates. Now, though it was surely still spoken amongst themselves, it is a mark of degradation for a literate to use it openly.¹ In an attempt to prove that they were truly civilized, and with their best models literary ones of a formal and outdated kind, it is not surprising that the educated natives' English was often laborious and ornate. Most of the professional writing of the period is nevertheless 'correct'; more adventurous developments in Nigerian English are described in the next chapter.

¹. After all, as Mafeni convincingly suggests, Sierra Leone Krio was an important model for Nigerian pidgin. 'European's' pidgin was, however, distinguished, at any rate emotionally.
Chapter Twelve

COMMUNICATION THROUGH THE PRESS; THE VOICE OF AZIKIWE

1. The communication of opposition

The British in Nigeria stereotyped the 'educated natives' as detribalised, coastal city-dwellers, vitiated by lust for money and spoilt by the missionaries. They were classified separately from the traditional/unsophisticated natives of the interior, whom the British had a duty to protect. This stereotype has little relation to the facts of involvement between less and more 'educated' from the earliest times of British intervention in Nigeria. The gradual replacement of educated Africans by Englishmen has been frequently noted. The first but not the second Bishop in Nigeria was black, the first but not the second Chief Inspector of Schools...

1. And in other parts of Africa. See Kimble 1963 pp. 88-93 for Gold Coast antagonisms, shared at the Colonial Office. As we can see from the history of the Brew family (Priestley op.cit.), the charge of 'unrepresentativeness' could be quite remote from the facts of social life.

2. The missionaries did not share the last belief, but the other items on the list seem common to all Europeans. Educated mission agents were a threat to missionaries themselves.

3. Samuel Crowther and Henry Carr, both Sierra Leone educated. The shabby treatment of Crowther, which led to his resignation, is moderately told by Ajayi, in the context of the European missionaries' struggles for racial dominance in the 1880s.
An obvious way to justify jobs for the British middle classes was to harp on African inadequacies.¹

The educated natives responded, uselessly, by stressing their claims to civilised treatment; their cultivation, their Britishness, their loyalty. At the same time they tried to inculcate pride in African customs, names and dress, but the attempt to maintain 'British' standards worked against this. One of the reasons for Azikiwe's popularity and power was that he was successfully, 'non-British', writing for instance in unabashedly Nigerian English even though he had a distinguished academic record.²

Of course not many people could successfully claim equivalent standards of education and fluency in English, but the continued existence of wealthy West Africans,³ 'leaders of society', enabled the voice of opposition to be heard, through the press. Though

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¹. I do not attempt to discuss here all the reasons for the struggle for dominance. But it seems to me that the stereotyping of the 'educated native' was part of this struggle, reinforced by the desire of administrators to manage their territories without interference. The refusal to allow the educated a place in the power structure grew out of this: it was not the original cause of their denigration.

². In non-British institutions in America. But his reliance on colonialist assumptions was considerable, as I shall show below.

³. Always a surprise to those familiar with the East or South – see e.g. Perham, 1937, p. 257. They provided the capital and the subscriptions which enabled an African press, and not an expatriate one, at least until the 1930s.
they were later derided for being 'Uncle Toms' or 'black Englishmen',
the claims of nationalism were first formulated amongst this group.
A later generation of activists who had been keen newspaper readers,¹
popularised the message for a new audience, the much larger, locally
based, number of literates which existed by the later 1930s.²

As so often, the stereotypes and actual behaviour of two groups
in opposition to one another are related — the Europeans emphasised
their exclusiveness, their need to maintain the white man's, prestige,³
while they mocked the educated natives' pretensions to exclusiveness,
and at the same time they used such pretensions as proof of
'unrepresentativeness'. On the other hand, the British insisted on
Africans' tribal obligations and the duties to their natural rulers
which immemorial custom should impose on them' (Sir Hugh Clifford,
1920).⁴ This now looks like a desperate attempt to perpetuate

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¹. See the biographies of Enahoro and Awolowo. Azikiwe expatiated
on his journalistic mentors in his early columns in the West African
Pilot. The tradition did not extend to the North.

². This expansion is charted by Coleman, 1958, passim, in describing
the background to nationalism. He perhaps overestimates their pan-
Nigerian affiliations. In the Press of 1919-39, it seems to me that
ethnic differences are assumed rather than stressed.

³. This aim, so often stressed, notably by Lugard, marks the
difference between the Imperial attitude and that of the agents and
interlopers I have described in earlier chapters. Lugard for instance,
insisted on all Natives giving full greetings to Europeans (in Kaduna
Archives File 122/1912 are the details of a Doctor who was hauled up
for a reprimand because his cook had omitted these to a passer-by).
The reaction of the West African press and ATOR to incidents like
the Zaria floggings (p. 310 above) suggests that such insistence did
not win respect.

⁴. Quoted by a succeeding Governor, Sir Alan Burns (1929, p. 68).
aristocratic privileges already fatally undermined in Great Britain. Thus the British rulers were outdated in their own time, whereas the 'yellow press' they so hated now looks fresh, modern, and in the event representative of the movement that prevailed.¹

'Yellow Press' indeed is a misleading name for what tried to be quality journalism and owed nothing to Northcliffe's methods of attracting a mass audience of 'new literates' - who of course existed in West Africa too. J. Bright Davies, for instance, edited the Times as a weekly political review with leisurely but cogent editorials, carefully analysing current problems and putting forward positive solutions. He is distinguished by his 'long-term' approach to subjects which then agitated Southern natives:

'It is therefore clear that the system of Education approved for the Northern provinces can never produce a single Native competent to fill the least subordinate post in the administration until the dawn of the millennium' (17.3.1914).

News items, as they are now understood, hardly appear: Government Proclamations, and with the onset of war, Reuter's telegrams are the nearest to 'news'. The correspondence column, however, is substantial, and closely comparable to the ATOR's.

'News', like 'historical fact' becomes news because it is selected and recorded, and because there is an audience to appreciate

¹ A similar time-lag was observable in the many Kenyan settlers who c. 1960 were out of touch with British (including Tory) opinion, having left Britain before the Second World War.
it. A newspaper in the modern sense needs good communications, trained reporters and a fairly homogeneous readership. These are all still deficient in Africa. The early papers in Nigeria were really viewspapers, and their editors were politicians without parties or power, limited to criticizing Government ordinances, publicizing any Government abuses that came to light, urging more education, constitutional change, the spirit of self-help, the value of African culture and the need for African representation in government.

West African editors took themselves seriously as makers of opinion, and sources of informed opposition. But however sensible or persuasive their arguments, they remained outside the corridors of power. Consequently their rhetoric also remained 'rhetorical': their eloquent denunciations could hurt nobody. But we may wonder if a tradition of invective is a happy one to inherit when political participation develops. Verbal violence in Nigeria became increasingly matched by physical violence, and the clichés of attack, first uttered by Macaulay and John Payne Jackson, became menacing.

1. 'because forms of political activity were, in effect, narrowly prescribed by the constitution and so political change almost of necessity, involved constitutional change' (Edmonds, 1951, p. 132).
2. Editor, followed by his son, of the most radical of the Lagos papers, the Record, a considerable influence on Azikiwe.
with meaning.¹

2. The Press in the 1930s; advertisers and audiences

If one compares issues of the *Times* of Nigeria for 1931² with
those of 1914, the technical progress and intellectual regress is
striking. The 1931 *Times* is recognisably a modern newspaper – a
large daily, with bolder headlines, a few photographs and a variety
of 'features'. It seems at first sight suited to a wider range
of readers than Davies' austerely rational review. But its motto
is symptomatic: no longer an adjuration from Shakespeare, but the
words 'the recognised paper in West African Commercial Circles'.

It is in fact devoted largely to the interests of European commercials –
shipping movements, home leave cars, and local sport.³ The *Woman's*

2. After Davies' death in 1919, the paper passed through various
hands, and in 1926 was reconstituted by the Alakijas, prominent
Lagosians of 'Brazilian' background. (One indeed received his education
in Brazil). In 1947, it was bought by the London *Daily Mirror* Group;
the resultant tabloid soon achieved the highest circulation figures
of any Nigerian newspaper.

1. Even Nigerian students used slogans as shouts to drown unwanted
speakers (like the sheep in *Animal Farm*, see Chapter One above). In
Ahmadu Bello University in 1965-6 the cry was 'Rigging!' (from
election results) which became simply an all-purpose interrupting noise.

3. Jones-Quartey is thus wrong is implying that the British West
African press paid no attention to European social life (1960, Report
p. 33: he is talking about Ghana, but even Zik's *African Morning Post*
reported European activities). But he may be right in saying that
it would have profited from European know-how. Comparison with
contemporary issues of another colonial daily, the *Malay Mail*,
showed up the weaknesses of the *Times*, not least in its inability
to provide a lively reflection of any community interests – even
the European community's.
Section tempts Lagos housewives with ways of cooking breast of mutton, herrings and cheese to keep out the winter cold... other syndicated material, if not so ineptly chosen, is still very dull.

The most striking difference from its predecessor, and indeed from other West African papers of the period, is the nullity of editorial comment. Often less than half a column of comment appears, on some innocuous (and irrelevant) topic like the Wireless for the Blind. One leader on a topic of stock 'nationalist' interest, the superfluity of European staff in a time of financial retrenchment, turns out to be a reprint from the Gold Coast Spectator. One imagines that the paper was bought for reference - for the lists of railway earnings, exchange figures, the First Class sailing lists and the movement of European officers and commercial staff.

The Times illustrates a familiar colonial problem: only European backed enterprises get sufficient capital to pay for the equipment and capital necessary to make an efficient and widespread business. There is now considerable British investment in the West African press. In 1931, the Times management clearly set out to get British support, and not surprisingly captured the best commercial advertising, and Government official notices. But it did

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1. Ernest Ikoli, a distinguished Nigerian journalist, was the Times' first Editor in 1926 but left in 1927 and went to the Daily Telegraph.
not attract the readers who were available (and which did a few years later, subscribe to the West African Pilot). Nor could it be said to educate its readers, or offer any guide to political attitudes, except implicitly to support the most limited of European values.

Radical African journalists on the other hand, had to soldier on with failing presses and poor pay. A would-be reader of the Lagos Daily News in 1931, tempted perhaps by the claim

'The Lagos Daily News
THE PAPER
with a
PUNCH
for the People
We mean to
FIGHT FOR
Higher Education
for Africans in
Nigeria'

might only find a homily in the editorial column (.,'to be slovenly is a Vice which all would do well to eschew..' (2.4.31) or immense transcripts from the Privy Council case of the Eleko of Oyo. Any enemy of Prince Eleko, however humble, was an enemy of Herbert Macaulay ('the Gandhi of West Africa'). One Karimu Kotun was thus a 'political upstart', a 'begotted political parvenue' and a 'swelled headed upstart' all in one report (23.. 7..31).

The Press at this period is not representative of the mass of Nigerian literates, though it still provides a political attitude for them to share. No paper created a mass audience by indentifying its activities or by giving a sense of participation in a movement.
Only 'Lagos society' got recognition in this way, though other provincial centres were increasing their 'educated' population. Nnamdi Azikiwe was to show that communication could be made with such people through the Press. But before discussing his paper, the West African Pilot, I will briefly mention press advertising, which is usually an index of readership in the newspapers of Great Britain or America.

All the papers I have described carried quite a substantial amount of advertising, but it was mostly of a very straightforward kind. Exporters in Liverpool and Nigerian agents listed the goods they had for sale. A few standard blocks appeared for single products like Beechams Pills and Mentholatum. In the 30s the big agencies like G.B. Ollivant, Paterson Zochonis, and the United Africa Co. listed their wares, and the shipping lines increased their coverage. Many advertisements were not aimed at individual consumers, but recommended building materials to contractors. Advertising was angled more at Europeans - with motor cars and whisky to keep out the harmattan, but one could hardly say that the African reader was presented with a lush world view of European luxury.

The arts of persuasion are in fact more employed in clearly

1. In 1931 for instance, both the Times (8 pages) and the Daily News (6) carried about 1/6 advertising, but this was far less than the Malay Mail which was also a much bigger paper (16 pages).
local advertisements, written by Africans and often for them. A Lagos tailor advertised in the Times before the War of 1914-18 with engaging verses. We learn in 1931 that Bandmaster cigarettes are 'making great headway on the Gold Coasts, and...are certainly smoked in Europe, no matter what anyone may say, and BANDSMAN advertisements have regularly appeared in leading London Newspapers'.

I have already mentioned the perennial frequency of patent medicine advertisements. An examination of Nigerian advertisements therefore, does give some indication of African tastes, but they hardly reflect the interest in European fashions which observers have recorded. This was therefore not a phenomenon of literacy, but spread by example and word of mouth.

Even today, Nigerian advertising is mostly confined to simple slogans and strong pictures. It cannot be allusive or ironic, or subtly play off a new approach against an old. But the message of the beer and cigarette manufacturers, that these goods are part of a suave, Westernised, educated, man of power's world, is now found on big hoardings in rural areas as well as in the newspapers. Such an approach certainly sells, but when one considers that the truly

2. 'Power' in the Nigerian English sense of power + wealth + fatness, cleverly exploited by the copywriter and artist. Film advertisers have used pidgin, with success.
popular films are Indian spectaculars, it seems as if Nigerian fantasies of luxury are not simple reflections of Euramerican affluence. This is however a subject which requires much more evidence. But it is clear that pre-war newspaper readers did not choose their reading by the advertisements, for the early Pilot carried hardly any advertising at all.¹

3. The 'West African Pilot'

All commentators repeat that Nnamdi Azikiwe transformed politics and journalism through his Nigerian paper the West African Pilot (hereafter WAP). Many of their examples seem to be drawn from issues of the 1940s and later, when the man and his paper became a significant political force. But within a year of its launching (on 22nd November 1937) it was outstandingly successful:

'We repeat that our circulation is double that of ANY Newspaper in Nigeria. WATCH US GROW.'

(16.7.1938)

In 1939, it was 10,000, then a very high circulation for anywhere

¹ European antipathy and Government opposition always kept the Pilot's advertising income precarious. 'Tom Tinkle', its columnist, once attacked the local Waterworks Engineer for announcing a stoppage in one (unnamed) paper only. 'That paper, as you know, is the white man's paper. Very few Africans buy it, and yet you deliberately sent your announcement to that paper, ignoring the other papers that thousands of Africans read. Why?' (10.9.38).
Azikiwe's political attitudes became perceptibly harsher after the failure of the 'Independence' delegation in 1943, so it is particularly interesting to see how he captured a new readership before the period of the Pilot's greatest notoriety.

Azikiwe's achievements were already well known in Nigeria before he returned to found his paper, and he rehearsed them in detail through his own column, running a serialized account of 'My Odyssey'. He was the first Ibo to get higher education, won by hard efforts, including working his way through college in the United States. He was also a successful athlete. His first full-time journalistic venture had been on the Gold Coast, where he edited the African Morning Post. Found guilty on a sedition charge, he

1. On September 2nd 1939, sales reached 15,200, of which 12,000 were in Lagos alone. Daily Times figures for 1960 are 136,000 (See Behn, 1968, p. 234, which has thorough, up-to-date details of the West African Press).

2. Azikiwe was one of a group of journalists invited to Britain by the British Council. While there he submitted a claim for Independence in 1958 (full independence was actually granted in 1960) supported by all except the Northern delegate, and felt rebuffed by its reception. Coleman says, 'From this time on Azikiwe became increasingly militant in his demands and activities. The year 1943 marked a turning point in his career.' (p.240-1).

3. It is difficult to see the early issues of WAP in this country. They are not held by the British Museum. I was able to see microfilms for 24.11.37 - 29.12.37; 16.7.38 - 11.11.39, held in the Library of the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth.

4. This forms the basis of published biographies, by Ikeotuonye (1961) and in Onitsha publications, e.g. by Ogbalu (c. 1955).
appealed successfully on a technical point, showing his sharpness and ingenuity. He thus came to Nigeria as a successful firebrand. He also brought copies of his testament, *Renascent Africa*, which was given free to registered subscribers of the WAP. I shall discuss this book in detail later.

Judging by the single copy of his *African Morning Post* in the British Museum collection, and the excerpts quoted by one of his biographers, Ikeotuonye, this paper was more revolutionary than the WAP. It carried an energetic, uncompromising motto 'Independent in all things and neutral in none affecting the destiny of Africa.', and lived up to it. There was a steady aim, to attack colonialism with energy and variety. Provincial News items, for instance, turned out to be attacks on the local administration and named individuals

1. 'Inside Stuff' by 'Zik' began here and was carried on in WAP. It carried much of his thinking (including the original articles on which *Renascent Africa* was based), and the items reprinted by Ikeotuonye are some of the sharpest and funniest (e.g. a debate in the year 2936, in which real West African personalities of 1936 discussed the future of their European colony... 'Miss Dinneford Smith agreed that encouragement should be given to their European wards so that in due course they might be able to stand by themselves. She felt that by appointing a European to this position, it would be a practical demonstration that this great African State believed that the Europeans had a future, despite the fact that they lived in a semi-civilized state' (29.9.36, in Ikeotuonye, 1961, p. 244).

2. After his departure, it became glossier and duller, more like the Nigerian *Times*.
within it. There were several columnists, writing in a variety of styles, but generally tending to 'African English'. To re-use a phrase from the paper, it looks as if it would attract 'patriotic and pushy sons of the soil who should be encouraged'.

The Pilot offered a wider range of topics, written by a strong team of writers. 'Zik' thus continued in the way he had begun, on the Post. He continued to write a good deal in every issue, but his paper gained by the variety of voices besides his own formidable, idiosyncratic one. His skill at picking bright assistants has always been acknowledged. He similarly made great efforts to build up a network of sales agents, and to encourage reports from the provinces. There was no regular correspondence column, but letters were often featured as short articles, and amongst the many writers of longer pieces are some later well-known names, e.g. L. Mbanefo, J.A. Wachuku, K.O. Mbadiwe. On the paper's first anniversary, much space was devoted to accounts of the celebrations, including pictures of quite junior staff.

1. Advertisements for these show that they were quite well-paid. Every attempt was made to improve distribution, still a great problem in Nigeria.

2. His father, J. Green Mbadiwe, was a Director of Zik's Press and one of his backers. Amongst the first group of Ibos to be sent to the States for higher education (an event much publicised in WAP) were two of his sons and at least one protegé (Ojike, see his autobiography, 1955 pp. 83-85). Awolowo claims that Azikiwe's sponsorship of this group in the WAP spelt 'tribalism' to his non-Ibo readers (1960, pp. 140-1).
Adekunle therefore managed to suggest that Zik's Press offered careers open to talent, and he clearly made a great number of readers feel that they were 'Renascent Africans', joined in a crusade to create a free Nigeria. WAP was a forum for such young men, who delighted in his slogans: 'Show the Light and the People will find the Way', 'The Editorials Vibrate. The Features Scintillate. And the News Titillates'.\(^1\) Sports reporting was of a standard new to Nigeria,\(^2\) and covered international as well as local events.

The WAP was able to match the presentation and the range of features offered by the Times and serve them in an African context. Besides Sports Topics there appeared regularly: 'Milady's Bower', 'Foreign Gossip',\(^3\) 'Public Opinion', 'Here There and Yonder', 'Poet's Nook', 'Our Literary Alcove', and more irregularly, 'Science Notes', 'Radio News', 'Children's Corner' and odd cartoons, competitions and serials. Zik contributed 'Inside Stuff' under his own name, while the editorials and many 'Business Notes' are clearly in his style.

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1. Originally 'and the News tintillate'.
2. Among the many Zik enterprises was Zik's Athletic Club, of which he was a keen patron.
3. Originally 'Miladies Bower' and 'Foreign Gossips' - 'gossips' is a regular West African form, c.p. modern 'rumours and gossips', which official Government sources are always trying to counteract.
These features are not 'educational' in any obvious way, but often they give miscellaneous information, without which, as Altick has pointed out, the ill-educated literate cannot make sense of what he reads.\footnote{Requests for such information are often handled in Zik's column under the title 'Ask Me Another'. 'Foreign Gossip' often gave odd tit-bits of fact rather than overseas news.} Requests for such information are often handled in Zik's column under the title 'Ask Me Another'. 'Foreign Gossip' often gave odd tit-bits of fact rather than overseas news.\footnote{'Milady's Bower' was moderately well chosen for African women's interests, and the ladies' contributions, tritely sentimental though these now seem,\footnote{aroused great interest among male readers, showing that an advice column would be well received.} aroused great interest among male readers, showing that an advice column would be well received.}

Azikiwe always stressed the value of general reading, and larded his own writing with lists of the assorted great which lend an air of erudition to his prose:

'Think of the names of Stalin, Ataturk, Mussolini, Hitler, Pilsudski, Mosley, Eden, Worley, Rex Tugwell, Matsuoka, Chiang Kai Shek, Gandhi, Nehru'  
\textit{(Renascent Africa, pp.20–1)}

\footnote{1957, p. 372. Amongst the papers remembered by Awolowo in the Staff Room of Wesley College in 1928 was Tit Bits, which apparently was read by high and low in England before the First World War for its fund of facts, interesting to a less broadly educated generation.}

\footnote{Some of the items given are interesting: in retrospect, such as 'Many scientists still laugh at Britain's air-raid precaution plans because they say that real protection would be far too elaborate and costly to be practicable'. (3..12..37).}

\footnote{Particularly comparing with the forthright advice columns so popular in African newspapers and magazines today.}
In the early days of WAP, at least two books are reviewed every week, and two original poems. (Even more literary material appeared in the shortlived Sunday edition). The book reviews were presumably written by the Literary Editor, E.C. Thompson, who appeared also as 'Tom Tinkle' gad-fly writer of 'Here There and Yonder', which commented on the activities of negrophobes and negrophiles and was modelled on the approach of John Bull. The note was personal attack or intimate reproach. For instance, he begs the Governor, Sir Bernard Bourdillon, to invite Africans and Europeans together at Government House:

'Does it mean that the African does not make good company?
Come on good old Sir Bernard, out with it, and let us see if we can help.
Sir, Africans love to meet you, dance with you and chat with you...
Sir, pick out the fly in the ointment and help cross the bridge of segregation.'
(26.10.38).

In contrast to this local comment, the editorials were quite often on world news, especially, of course as war drew closer. When the Russo-German pact was announced, the cry was 'All Hands on Deck' and the Empire was 'worth dying for'.

E.C. Thompson wrote quite differently as Literary Editor, in a straightforward, competent, formal style. The book reviews are interesting and sensible guides to a wide range of authors - novels by Richard Hughes, Ethel Mannin, Hugh Walpole, biographies of Brunel and Edward Lear, Gooch on World War I... The problem would
Azikiwe, however, did his best to encourage African literature. The advertisements of his African Book Company appealed for mss., first for an anthology of African poetry: 'this book should be a medium of expression to interprete (sic) the soul of the African to the world', and then for 'books or booklets with themes on History, Poetry, Short Story and Novel with an African background... African authors will be given special consideration'. I do not know what came of these appeals, but I discuss the poems which were published in WAP below.

At the same time as readers were offered the most generous and cultivated vision of Renascent Africa, they could read familiar accounts of Lagos Society, ('Elites Witness Miss Wilson's Marriage to Mr. Adewunmi'), and learn of the social events, the naming ceremonies, convivial tea parties and transfers of African teachers and clerical staff in townships all over the country. These 'Provincial Notes' might take up an eighth of the eight page newspaper, suggesting how Azikiwe earned a good deal of readership.

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1. According to a petulant schoolmastery article by Sir Alan Burns on the virtues of reading (Nigerian Daily Times Christmas Number, 1933) subscriptions for the Tom Jones Memorial Library in Lagos cost at most 1d a day, but this is still 2/6d a month. It is even now very difficult to buy books anywhere in Nigeria, except for a limited selection (made e.g. by the C.M.S. Bookshops).
loyalty. The clerks were offered intellectual stimulus, but their bureaucratic preoccupations with classification and status were also recognised...

Azikiwe's attitude to local politics was equally unrevolutionary. Much has been said of his 'radical new departures' but at this period he continued to support the traditional aims of the educated natives, from constitutional change to the value of African culture. Coleman considers that he learned a lot from the American negro press (p.223), but his roots were firmly in the West African one. When it came to picking up useful tips, of course, he could learn from anyone, including the producers of his rival 'The European Daily Times' as he once nicknamed it. Similarly he presented the familiar themes of maladministration, injustice to Africans, and questions of the Lagos municipality etc. in novel and lively fashion, with a bolder and more familiar touch. It is hard, though, for the modern newspaper reader to visualise this as the wildly sensational stuff it was obviously considered to be by Europeans.

It is difficult to know what new attitudes Azikiwe could have

1. A nice example of the bureaucratic ethos comes in a local ad. for a dance given by the Aurora Club, 'Decent Ladies have been invited to suit whatever grade you are' (15. 7. 38). Besides the Government and commercial employees there were also about 10,000 mission teachers, who had been forced to accept a salary cut in the Depression and were ready to support an aggressive nationalist policy (see Coleman, p. 127).
taken, since he saw clearly the impotence of the Legislative Council, which was the only constitutional outlet for Africans, and they were nearly all 'safe' Nominated Members.¹ His own involvement in nascent political parties is not clear from the WAP, which certainly does not cover all the politicking that went on. In practical politics, as opposed to exhortation and denunciation, one gets the impression that the hard news was carried by word of mouth.

In one respect Zik's exhortations were more detailed and cogent than was common, since he understood economics better than his contemporaries, for whom law was still the high status profession. He had learnt the problems of under-developed countries, and the economic pressures that could be put on them, from his study of Liberia (Liberia in World Politics (1934)) and the Business Notes are full of cogent arguments and practical advice to Nigerians to learn to compete with European big business.

The WAP was the best advertisement and example for Zik's preaching, since it was a large-scale, successful African-run business. Not only did he write for, edit, and administer a daily paper, and get for it the most modern equipment in West Africa, and see that illiterate compositors and young, often ill-trained staff

¹. He recorded Legco debates in detail, however, and threw the support of the WAP behind his favoured 'elected' candidate.
produced clear, accurate copy, he had to find its finances and cope with all the difficulties of getting newsprint, machinery, and news itself into Nigeria. Discussing the problems of indigenous journalism and the pressures which firms and Government could exercise, Azikiwe comments:

'And we were discredited abroad and we were unable to purchase printing materials on credit. Thus we decided to buy subsidiary companies which should be able to advertise in our Newspaper at cost, and at the same time extend credit to the Zik's Press... And the following subsidiary companies were founded: Nigerian Paper Co. Ltd. (suppliers of newsprint and printing papers; Nigerian Printing Supply Co. Ltd., (suppliers of printing materials); African Book Co. Ltd. (stationers and booksellers and book publishers) and Nigerian Poster Co.Ltd., (advertising)

(22.11.38)

Zik's financial enterprise was well broadcast by bold advertising in the WAP, and as here, by taking readers into his confidence.

Despite all the difficulties of getting world news, WAP readers got quite a lot of information about events in Europe - and equally important, about events in other parts of Africa (Ethiopia was

1. Advice to would-be contributors was sometimes offered:—
   'Written matters of purely public interest, educational items, sports news, constructive criticisms and such articles as are calculated to conform with the principles and creed of Zik's Press Ltd. will be given preference in our columns'. (10.11.38).

2. Amongst the ventures advertised was Zik's Penny Restaurant, though it is not clear if this ever came into being.

3. A useful account of the difficulties placed in the way of African newspapers, and still encountered, especially in the use of white news agencies, appears in Ainslie, 1966.
naturally a subject of interest). Coverage came partly from Zik’s own wide reading and unparochial attitudes. After reading Mein Kampf in 1934\(^1\) he consistently warned his readers against Germany and reported Nazi views on colonisation.\(^2\) Thus his audience, like that far smaller band of ATOR readers, could claim to be well informed — aware of world events as well as their African heritage of art and history.\(^3\)

When Sir Donald Cameron returned to Nigeria as its Governor, he deplored the lack of communication that he found between ruler and ruled, in contrast to Tanganyika. By this he meant that there was

‘no means of opportunity of making any public statement, there was no unofficial public opinion of weight at the capital, and there was no newspaper to which importance could be attached’

(1939, p. 74).\(^4\)

Obviously he ignored ‘educated’ opinion as completely as Lugard.

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1. According to Edmonds, his review swung Gold Coast editorial opinion against Germany (pp. 216-217).
2. A panic occurred in Nigeria in 1938 (Mr. Ardener tells me the rumour appeared in the Nigerian Gazette) when rumours spread that it would be handed over to Germany as part of an appeasement deal. In 1914, ATOR readers were similarly aware of atrocities in Togoland, which led the editor to prefer the British as colonisers.
3. Azikiwe referred to a forthcoming book on African figures in history, but I do not think it was ever published.
4. He is describing Dar es Salaam on his arrival.
But it is true that no newspaper before the *Pilot* created a voice which represented a very significant part of the population - the only 'public opinion' that existed at national level.¹ In a country as big as Nigeria, even educated opinion was difficult to collect from the capital - Azikiwe later built up independent provincial newspapers instead. But literates who were leading action in the provinces by working in tribal improvement unions,² were also organising branches in Lagos. All this level of opinion could be tapped by the WAP, but it is unlikely that Sir Donald Cameron would have trusted it.

4. *Registers of Nigerian English; the impact of Azikiwe*

It can be seen that even if a Nigerian literate read only newspapers, he would be exposed to a variety of topics and styles, wider than he would find in a popular British daily today.³ Styles

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1. A point also made by Perham in 1937, though her only solution was that the educated natives should be integrated into the N.As. She says in the 1962 Introduction on the 2nd Impression that 'I never imagined that (unity) would come as shock treatment imposed from above by the new party organizations'.

2. 101 of these joined the NCNC in 1944. Their role in bridging the 'illiterate' and 'literate' world has often been discussed, see e.g. Coleman, p. 158.

3. It is difficult to offer British comparisons. Apart from Zik's personal style and the aggressive attitude of opposition, the WAP, like other Nigerian papers of the time, was much more like a current English local paper, with its pages of W.I. meetings, local advertisements and reports of court cases, and some items of world news included.
vary according to the competence of the writer as well as his individuality, for, although the regular editorial staff are fluent and assured, quite often laboured and uncertain short pieces appear. What are the main stylistic influences that a Nigerian reader would have absorbed?

The first point is that all contributions are in English. In 1938, Azikiwe ran a Sunday edition, surviving only a few months, which usually contained a page or so of short columns in a variety of Nigerian languages, and even Gold Coast ones. It was many years before Sunday papers became financially viable in Nigeria, so we cannot judge the success of vernacular writing from it, but Azikiwe did not transfer the vernacular columns to the daily editions. It appears that literate readers in the South always preferred to read their paper in English.

Although writers like Azikiwe and 'Tom Tinkle' deliberately attempt colloquial effects, they do not use pidgin, nor does this

1. 'I was perambulating after a return from the days' business... (2.8.38) 'the brim of the edge is trimmed with a small wrinkling edge to soften the somewhat stereotype glory effect' (of a hat)
6..12..37. Incoherence is rare, awkward verbosity commoner.

2. The languages changed from one issue to the next, but usually contained Ga and Panti (most of the technical staff came from the Gold Coast); Ibo, Yoruba, Hausa, Edo, Ijaw, Itschiri, Sobo, Urhobo.

3. Government sponsored papers in the North were in the vernacular, in the South a modest Yoruba tradition survived, principally in religious journalism (now largely financed from abroad).
appear in other columns. The only pidgin I noted was in a short dialogue quoted in 'My Odyssey', when Zik meets a Sierra Leonian in the States. They obviously drop into it in nostalgia, but even so Zik quotes himself as mostly talking standard English. Otherwise one would not guess that pidgin existed in Nigeria. It certainly never made a newspaper column as in Sierra Leone, or later Cameroon.\(^2\) We can conclude that it was humiliating for a literate to admit to its use.\(^3\)

One can recognize that literary ambitions lay in quite the opposite direction, in writing poems. An example by Azikiwe himself gives a good idea of what Nigerian newspaper poems were, and are, like.\(^4\)

_To Africa_

This Paradise of stately palms,  
Oh wonderland of God!  
The chanting winds in tropic qualms  
Now soothe thy wearied sod,  
Whilst Phoebus glows mid heavenly psalms  
In its supernal nod.

1. Of course, Zik is showing his ability to talk in a Sierra Leonian's language, but he does not suggest it was a 'foreign' one.

2. See Jones (1957) and Kisob (1963) for details.

3. C p. this remark from a contributor to Nancy Cunard's anthology Negro, in exactly the same tone as the ATOR correspondent op. cit., (of the insulting white habit of) 'speaking to him in the low pigeon English while he replies with pure, sound, grammatical English and denying him all etiquette' (Utchay, 1934, 766).

4. It is fair to say that Osadabey (q.v.) wrote the odd poem in pidgin, but in ironic-comic tone, as the voice of the uneducated man.
For leaders not alloyed by gold
Or tricks of mortal man,
With faith we plead that thou should mould
The soldiers of our clan,
To fight the wrong against thy fold,
With might, to serve thy plan.
Protect us from designs of hate,
And wiles of those who lead;
May we repeat the will of fate
If bondage be our meed.
And from the womb shall emanate
A just and gallant breed.

(New York, 1930).

Azikiwe later became somewhat defensive about his poetry,1 but
this example heads an adulatory biography of him (Ogbalu, c. 1955);
it is still an admired type of writing to all except the most
sophisticated, as can be seen by Nigerians' pleasure in Africa Sings
by Chief Denis Osadabey, sometime Premier of the Mid-Western
Region.2

Many of the verses in this volume first appeared in WAP, under
the pseudonym 'Osadenis', as did similar attempts by many other
hands: 'Ode to the Niger'...'O Gentle Sleep'...'I will Dare'.
One of the most prolific contributors was in fact English, J.M.
Stuart-Young ('Odeziaku'), who had been contributing verse to West

1. Nevertheless, he economically uses parts of it in the prose
of Renascent Africa, finishing 'Behold the chanting wind amidst
topic qualms as it soothes the wearied sod of Africa! And you can
realize the circumstances which make Africa sleepy.' (p. 302).

2. Achebe makes the hero of No Longer at Ease write a poem in
this vein when he is homesick in England. Later he tears it up,
because he objects to its callow sentiments (and not its style).
African papers since before the First World War. His best efforts are more supple than the Nigerians', and he could command a wider variety of styles and forms, including Kiplinesque monologues not usually attempted by them, probably because they demand easy familiarity with English speech styles. Otherwise, he wrote entirely in the same vein, and must have been an important model.

It is easy to find fault with such derivative verse, now so totally out of fashion, but it is after all an achievement for an African L2 speaker to keep to English verse rhythms, or to use the blank verse which he had been taught was England's glory. It is, too, controlled writing, which attempts to keep in one particular style, and that a 'high' one. There are indeed still many careful poets of this genre in England, publishing at their own expense, or composing 'In Memoriam' verses for provincial newspapers.

Readers of WAP, however, were subjected to a far more eclectic

1. An interesting character, poet, novelist, 'palm oil ruffian', patron of the Onitsha Literary Circle. He was much honoured in WAP and his death in 1939 received a great deal of publicity in the paper.

2. The same phenomenon occurred in Indian verse, see the many examples quoted by Iyengar (1962). One must add, too, that the main literary models available were hymns - whose influence on many mission-educated Nigerians was as intense as on D.H. Lawrence. There is one 'different' poem in WAP - sent from Spain by Langston Hughes. Its free slangy style would probably seem totally novel, not to say unsuitable, to patriotic poets.

3. e.g. at Stockwell's, Ilfracombe, who published the work of Osadabey, and a good many other West African books, including Azikiwe's Liberia in World Politics. I have not been able to obtain details of the terms etc. from the firm.
prose eloquence from Nnamdi Azikiwe. It was this, above all, that made his paper so popular - as I have said, his message was not at this period new, but the medium was. Quite a few people have written books on 'African writing', but they ignore what must be by far the most widely read, and widely influential writers, the leaders of nationalism. ¹ Azikiwe became a successful politician because he had already built up a following through his journalism, from the lieutenants who also worked on his papers to the youngmen ² who repeated his slogans and built up the Zikist Movement to spread his philosophy.

Events therefore proved that Zik had been right in his conviction that the way to move an illiterate country was by through literates:

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¹ Wauthier (1966) covers non-fiction as well as fiction, in the French tradition of examining la littérature engagée. But he deals with content rather than expression. The bibliographer Ramsaran confined himself to listing 'literary' works, though he believed that 'historical, political, descriptive, evangelistic and journalistic writings of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries have combined with the matter of the present time in giving substance and form to African literature of the decades since World War II' (1965 pp. 33-4).

² To use the West Africanism for a class or sector of the population which Azikiwe specifically addressed, and which was especially important in post-war political movements. The Establishment of literacy, to the extent of reading a newspaper, in this group is thus a very significant innovation in Nigerian history. It should be emphasised that RA was a rousing sermon to the youngmen, telling them to ignore their seniors and realize that the future of Africa lay in the hands of youth, not age as before. It was a trumpet call and not a specific programme.
'Not oblivious of my handicap, in this century, there is no better means to arouse African peoples than the power of the pen and of the tongue. True it is that Japan has become materialistic, yet the people were first aroused from their deep sleep. The Press is an avenue. Schools are also important, but the Press is a much wider and more potent avenue for this particular mission. And the pen is said to be mightier than the sword.'

(Renascent Africa, p. 17).

It was through this book that he spread his message, supported by the day-to-day pieces in the WAP. If one wants to look at the ideas which animated him, the best source is Liberia in World Politics (1934), an academic work with only occasional 'Zikisms'. But Renascent Africa (hereafter RA) and WAP must be examined to see how that message got across.

A famous seventeenth century preacher, Richard Baxter, found that he had to sacrifice his intellectual pleasure in succinct argument if he were to succeed in moving his congregation:

'The more I have to do with the ignorant sort of people the more I find that we cannot possibly speak too plainly to them. If we do not speak in their vulgar dialect, they understand us not. Nay if we do so, yet if we compose those very words into a handsomeness of sentence, or if we speak anything briefly, they feel not what we say. Nay, I find, if we do not purposely dress out the matter into such a length of words, and use some repetition of it — we do but overrun their understandings, and they presently lose us.'

(in Powicke, 1924, pp. 283-4).

Azikiwe had to extend and build up on the 'vulgar tongue' of his audience, while the demands of a hectic life probably encouraged the
repetitiousness recommended by Baxter. Otherwise, he fulfilled the preacher's requirements, even to using print in many ways like an oral medium.

One can illustrate the most obvious features of Zik's style from this passage ('My Odyssey')

'...Then I explained to her the difference between a General Police and an Escort Police. I pointed out to her that we wore boots but they were barefooted. And I told her that I was one of Captain Barlow's favourite students and there were great prospects for me in the Gold Coast Police Force.

And she wept.

She begged me to leave my job and return home with her.

I told her point blank that since I had enlisted to serve His Majesty King George V, his heirs, successors etc., for five years it was not within my power to vitiate the agreement, and if it were in my power, I would be indisposed to do so, for I had learned to regard the Police as my future career.

And she wept and wept again. And tears flowed almost incessantly.

Then, like Coriolanus, I knelt down beside my mother and begged her to forgive my foolishness...

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1. Its success can be calculated by the fact that 'The Saints' Everlasting Rest' is an item in the early CMS booklists, and owned by individual missionaries.

2. Azikiwe was never a preacher himself, but he has testified to the influence of sermons upon him, and his progress from one church to the other, including the Salvation Army, Pastor Russell's (Later Jehovah's Witnesses) and later M.R.A. testifies to a response to emotional forms of faith.

3. The description by Ong (1965) of the 'oral residues' in Tudor prose style, drawn from a tradition of rhetoric and apothegms, would largely fit Renaissance Africa.
Here are the one sentence paragraphs, visually separate but strongly linked by coordinate conjunctions, which are like a visual rendering of a dramatic speaker's pauses, besides being easy to read. The cumulative pattern of the writing, which often looks jerky and clumsy, is also a mimicry of spoken speech — cumulative not only within a short section, but also over longer stretches — from chapter to chapter (RA) or from day to day (WAP). It is not surprising that to find Azikiwe was a good public speaker.1

It is because of the repetition that the 'big words' are manageable to the understanding: his five 'Zikist Postulates', Spiritual Balance, Social Regeneration, Economic Determinism, Mental Emancipation, and National Risorgimento, can become slogans, incantations, while the meanings they stand for are hammered home by being repeated often in different ways. This is a frequent method. Compare for instance,

'What though I shout of liberty and freedom? What though I rant of oppression? What though I grumble against evil; yet I delight in perpetuating evil to mankind so as to predominate. I oppress. I repress. I depress. I impress. I coerce. I blackmail. I hit-below-the-belt. I bite behind the back, for I am what I am — jealousy, the green-eyed monster'.

(RA, 234).

and

'the only peace and goodwill the African has known are the family tree of oppression, repression, depression, and other forms of forcible impression'.

(p. 283).

1. See the account of the tumultuous crowds at his lectures in Lagos in 1934, where he set out the gospel of Renascent Africa — as described by his enemy, Awolowo. (1960, p. 87).
Newspaper readers did not get this homilectic tone continuously (not least because there were so many other styles in an issue) but there were always likely to be touches of emotional exhortation and dramatization, leavened by a certain dry self-mockery, as in the 'My Odyssey' extract quoted above. And while Zik shifts his tone, and attempts a variety of voices, including colloquial American, one will almost always find an example of the exuberant verbosity and neologism which evidently delighted many readers.

Azikiwe had an audience who could respond freshly to words, and to Biblical and Shakespearean allusions - for whom these would be delightful recognitions, not clichés. To them the pattern of sentences would be a new experience, far removed from the styles taught in school or in the office.

'They (the Germans) aim beyond the seas like others do. They trade. They play. They think. They hate. They war. They revenge. And they remember.'

(WAP, 24.11.37).

It is often said that Azikiwe 'blinded his readers with science' impressing them with roll-calls of learned names. This is probably true, but he also flattered any knowledge the reader already had.

1. When recalling incidents during his nine years in the States, or trying to explain the manoeuvres to American politicians, or when updating a fable: 'And Joseph wept because Benjamin had gone the way of all flesh. And he said unto Benjamin, 'Return her money to her or else I will disclose the deal' (AMP, in Ikeotuonye, p. 236) Azikiwe shifted styles fairly consciously, but to his readers of course it might all equally be additions to one's word-hoard.
And though he talked so much of African regeneration, his examples are almost entirely drawn from English literature and history.

Azikiwe indeed is in many ways a 'colonialist' and draws many of his ideas from the West. Even while pointing out the evil of the Liberians' attitude to the 'aborigines', he advocated more immigration to Liberia, especially from the States, to bring in skills and ideas. And his constant appeal, most specific in RA, is to the youth, the new generation, who are (most untraditionally) going to be important, instead of their elders. Azikiwe himself, by his education as well as his attitudes, avowedly differentiated himself from his father's generation of loyal, correct, and conscientious clerks.

Although, as we have seen, he took care to offer many features on the WAP which would appeal to this older generation, it was the young to whom he became a cult-figure, in the several meanings of that word. He was imitated and quoted from. Europeans probably underrated him because of his Nigerian English, but the 'youngmen' loved it for reasons forcibly put by Ikeotuonye:

'One of the by-products of the quintessence of Zikism is the spirit of literary freedom which his journalism fostered in the young people. It is probable that had Nigerians followed the literary strictness of the English grammarians in Nigeria, much would have remained unwritten, and a literary inferiority complex would have smothered the growth and development of our already poor social thought. He unchained the minds and tongues of the youths and made scholarship, no matter how superficial and pretentious, and power of speech, which his papers call gift of the garb, two necessary conditions of political leadership. Further,
he made ridiculous the unnatural imitations of those who mimicked Cambridge and Oxford literary provincialisms. He sternly refused to Anglicise his speech. He spoke like a Nigerian, and like a Nigerian that is well educated. He had Nigerianised our English long before he preached the Nigerianisation of our Constitution or the Civil Service.' (1961, p. 157).

Criticism of Zik's 'literary freedom' by English schoolmasters did not always succeed; indeed on one occasion it had unintended results. Anthony Enahoro, a pupil at King's College, Lagos, was set pieces from Azikiwe's editorials for grammatical correction. However, he soon became more interested in the ideas they contained, and muses in his autobiography:

'Suppose I had not paid greater attention to their content than to their grammar, and their effect on me had not been so profound...

(1965, p.6).

He was editing one of Zik's newspapers before he was twenty-one.
Chapter Thirteen

SOME DEVELOPMENTS IN WRITTEN COMMUNICATION IN NIGERIA

1. The influence of Azikiwe

'Bookish theorists who point out that talking or writing in English is difficult or artificial or derogatory to our self-respect should ponder a little and realize that the whole adventure of civilization is itself a difficult and artificial drama. Dress, cooked food, machinery, using the telephone, pedalling a bicycle, blood transfusion, injection of medicines into the human system, all, all are difficult and artificial, and in a way sin against Nature and offer an affront to human dignity and self-respect' (Iyengar, 1962, p. 11).

Iyengar's defence of Indian writing in English is a reminder that in Nigeria, too, the language was only one of a number of innovations, and Nigerians could not call it their own until they had passed through a period of imitation, of assimilating English forms of writing along with Western dress, transport and medicine. This was a voluntary assimilation, often distressing to Europeans who respected

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1. Achebe, defending his use of English for writing in, quoted James Baldwin: 'perhaps the language was not my own because I had never attempted to use it, had only learned to imitate it.'
African culture, and tried to maintain it in African education.

Chief Awolowo recalls in his autobiography that a headmaster who tried to encourage the use of the vernacular and the local dress in school was thought to be slowing down 'our progress... but now I think he was a great pioneer' (1960, p. 65).

As Azikiwe and later others realised, the price of imitativeness was lack of self-respect, hence the value of Azikiwe's writing in a familiar mode. He gave a lead to young would-be writers, as much as forms to copy. Since he enlarged rather than altered the scope of Nigerian English, one cannot confine his influence to mere imitation, though of course there was plenty of this in the pages of his newspapers. But, as the example of Enahoro shows, his ideas could be

1. They followed the advice of social anthropologists, e.g. Clarke's Yoruba school inspired partly by the views of Lucy Mair (1937, p.x.). Many Africans, however, saw as clearly as Westermann the connection between a vernacular medium and 'the fact...that the Africans are a subject race, and we should be quite clear as to what that means for people who are struggling to rise and become conscious of themselves' (1934, 3rd ed., 1949, p. 138).

2. This is an impression gathered from reading Nigerian English throughout the period and examining a large amount of student English (not all from the Eastern Region), reading Nigerian newspapers etc., 1963-66. As an example, Awolowo recalls a saw in English, admired by himself and his father (who died in 1920): 'to laugh at infirmity or deformity is enormity'. This is exactly the sort of catch-phrase that Zik created to the pleasure of fellow-proverb users, who had also been taught English proverbs and cliché phrases in school.

3. Direct imitation was still occurring after 1960, see e.g. Nwigwe, My Dreams of a Greater Nigeria, (W.A.P. Ltd., n.d.)
potent to those who did not share his prose style.¹

As an example of the forms that discipleship did take, I quote a passage from a biography of Azikiwe, one of several printed in rugged paper-back editions from presses in Onitsha and neighbouring towns:

'Far away in Northern Nigeria was born a babe by an African virgin, in the midst of national darkness and international dangling (2). Little did the virgin mother realise what noble role her innocent babe was bound to play in the reorientation of African outlook amidst the ever increasing burden of imperial pressure... And little did Nigeria ever fathom that a Messiah was forthcoming who should sound the death knell of imperial atrocity and preach the gospel of Nigerian renascence; African redemption and international fraternity to every creature'

(Ogbalu, c. 1955, p.8, cited as by Monger, ex WAP. n.d.).

Azikiwe's period of deification by his followers in the Zikist movement and Zikist church was not due solely to their need for a leader. Zik said in the Introduction to RA, 'I have never claimed to be a new Messiah', but his whole message in that book was couched in Messianic terms:

'one must be willing to be called names and to suffer persecution...the disciple must forsake mother and father and friends, and even homes, so as to leave Nazareth for Jerusalem (3) and proclaim the truth from the Mount of Olives, if even though the goal may be Calvary' (p. 17).

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1. Enahoro describes the efforts of his father, a schoolmaster, to make him fluent in 'correct' English. He was then educated at Nigeria's leading boarding school, King's College, Lagos. Although occasionally pedantic, his English is very competent, correct and easy.

2. = ? But c.p. a sentence in RA, p. 49: 'Woe unto you self-centred leaders who prattle about, dangling torches which are a beacon of destruction.'

3. He also claimed that Africans are not interested in a New Jerusalem, and should seek a New Africa, but his rhetoric often included traditional Biblical language.
He donned a prophetic mantle, used a great deal of Biblical imagery even while trying to separate the message of Christ from its imperialistic missionaries, and even invented his own Beatitudes:

'Blessed is the African who faces his or her fate with head up, chest expanded, hat on, and who strikes his blows from the shoulder, looking at other races face to face, without cringing and subvocalising (2). He is ideal and it were better that millions of traitorous Africans be cremated alive so that one such hero may live' (pp. 43-44).

This heady mixture shows how diverse were Azikiwe's debts to Western thinking, and how aggressive and violent the final gospel might be. It is true that the meaning of the message might be different to different audiences, but as with the adaptation of the Christ story already quoted, one wonders if the use of the myth may not create belief. Certainly Azikiwe's early writing provided models of such rhetoric which were later extended by his followers in the fighting of party politics.

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1. The St. James's version has often been more popular than vernacular translations. There were early demands for English bibles in Cameroon (Ardener, 1968, p.10), and I found that my students were more familiar with the Bible in English - and preferred the sacred text of the Authorized Version. See the amusing short story by Abioseh Nicol (1960) which tells of this belief in Sierra Leone.

2. Judging by the use of this word on p. 193, it means 'thinking too much on the event'.

3. Hodgkin discusses the way in which the Bible and Christian symbols were used by the early nationalists (1956, p. 95). Azikiwe claimed to support the good parts of the Christian message as distinct from the bad parts of missionizing. But he is quite capable of taking over messages of hate as well as love.

4. Cp p.317 above. Cp. Ajao, who, recalling the political slogans of his school-days, insists that 'the pattern of our ideas was clear enough and not nearly so incoherent as the words we used might lead us to suppose' (1962, p.17). This is of course a particularly common feature of persuasive forms of language.
By then, the increase in the readership of daily newspapers was one instance of the extent to which writing in English had become an effective means of communication, between leaders and a wide audience of literates who in turn could influence larger numbers of illiterates. It is at this point one can say that literacy in English is 'indigenised' in Nigeria, however small the proportions of literates are still in the total population.

Messages developed along with channels of communication and with education. The first and second generations of literates developed written styles in the course of journalism, as I have shown, and also in writing local histories, and in keeping minutes and records. Creative writing was largely confined, as I have said, to verse. Although sketches and short stories did appear in the West African press, they were few compared with today. They do not appear in the first two years of the WAP. As we have seen, neither the reading or writing of fiction was encouraged by the missions, and any form of writing demands some familiarity with models, as well as confidence (whether well-founded or

1. The intermediary role of the literates has been noted by political scientists (e.g. by Coleman and Hodgkin, for Nigeria); it is also interesting to consider their role as interpreters to the illiterate and compare it to the sometimes distorting effect of pidgin interpretation earlier.

2. For the extent of such histories, see Coleman's bibliography.

3. A children's serial appears, attributed to 'Uncle Zik' but I do not know that he wrote it.
not) in the writer's ability to control a foreign medium.

The first West African novel appears to be Casely Hayford's *Ethopia Unbound* (1911), and the second, also from the Gold Coast, R.C. Obeng's *Eighteenpence* (1941). Since then, as is well known, Nigerians have taken the lead, not only in producing 'quality' novels, poems and drama, but also in the 'Onitsha novelettes' I have already mentioned, which are locally printed and distributed, for an African audience, and are often in the stylistic tradition for which Azikiwe was an exemplar. I will discuss both kinds of work below, not in full detail, which would be impossible for so large a field, but in the context of themes already developed, especially in the first part of this thesis. Before doing so, however, I will consider a problem common to all African creative writing in English, that of handling dialogue and differences of register.

2. Written styles: the uses of pidgin

All Nigerian writers in English have to decide how to render non-English dialogue. Besides this classic translation problem, they are denied - as a student novelist once pointed out to me - the exploration

1. Their appearance at Onitsha, where there was a very large covered market, was partly a consequence of better printing presses coming into the country and old presses being sold off. Pamphlets had appeared in the West well before this, (1950), but not normally in fiction. In the *African Morning Post*, 4..6..35, there is an account of the author of 'three fast booklets', "Matrimonial Tragedy", "The Illicit Gin Mystery", and "The Dangerous Four" - so the Gold Coast was probably first in the novelette field as well.
of the ironies, comedies and misunderstandings that do in Nigerian life occur with the use of two languages together. There is also a wide discrepancy between the styles of dialogue they can read in books, and the English dialogue they hear and use themselves. This is derived from formal, written patterns of English in the first place, hence the mingling of registers (to an English reader) which characterises so much Nigerian writing, for instances the passages quoted from Azikiwe's.

The highly educated will of course recognise a range of English varieties or registers, but I think that some 'indigenous' registers are recognised, even by the relatively unsophisticated. Orotund oratory is appreciated - Nigerians have testified to the truth of Achebe's scene in No Longer At Ease where the members of the Umuofian Progressive Union are disappointed by the hero's answer to the speech of welcome - faithful to the teaching of his English Department at a British university, 'he spoke "is" and "was" instead of 'English that

1. How to convey, for instance, the nuances of the sophisticated or would-be sophisticated character who laces his Ibo with English expressions?

2. Recently much more effort has been given to teaching oral forms - tag questions and the like - but a few teachers have reasonably suggested that if one's time is limited, a straightforward style which can be used in writing is more useful to the average literate who needs this style for his work.

3. I have also heard that this scene was appreciated by Kenyan school-boys as 'true to life'.

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filled the mouth' (1960, p. 32). On the other hand, all literates can probably distinguish a little between pidgin and non-pidgin, even if in speech they may blur the two.

The resultant high, middle and low styles are exploited even by Onitsha writers of higher primary or some secondary education; that is, they are distinguished and used for conventionalised situations and character types. It is not surprising, recalling the few, uncomplimentary references to pidgin that occur in the press between 1914 and 1939, that it is used as the 'low' style. In Ethiopia Unbound (the first African novel) the Gold Coast Political Officer uses pidgin to his orderly (demonstrating the hated set of insulting behaviours of which pidgin was the symbolic register); it is also used by a ticket collector to the educated African protagonists. In these exchanges Casely Hayford foreshadowed nearly all subsequent uses of pidgin, by naïf and sophisticated writers alike.

One of the early Onitsha romances is Veronica My Daughter by Ogali A. Ogali (Snr.). (The title became a nickname for the genre.)

1. Such as the speech of welcome itself, matched both by contemporary examples and those quoted by Zik in 'My Odyssey' that he received on his return from the U.S. in 1934-5. This suggests a long-lasting, stereotyped tradition.

2. It should be emphasised that some Onitsha writers have been graduates, and their formal education is no inevitable guide to their standard of English. Ogali A. Ogali (see below) claims six years' secondary education, and a brief period as a teacher, before going to the 'Ghana School of Journalism'.
"Chief Jombo - Veronica's Father and Chief Bassey have been represented as "illiterate" hence their low standard of English."

The viewpoint is explicit. The two "illiterates", who are the old-fashioned upholders of traditional marriage, speak pidgin, in contrast to the standard English of the hero and heroine, who wish to marry for love. In another drama, The Joy of Life and its Merriments, serious scenes alternate with low comedy ones in the Shakespearean manner, and the main comic character is the heroine's mother, Madam Tenderly, whose pidgin gets her into ludicrous difficulties when she is preparing for baptism.

'Father Telloff: Madam, who made you?

(Tenderly looks speechless)

Mr Bantu: Answer the question quickly.

Tenderly: They born me for Itoli but I marry Okolo Echimidine of Ikoto, here. Na Udo Ozala juju for Itoli - Town na him make me.'

(p. 17).

This act of social improvement then falls through, to the shame of her self-righteous son.

1. Ogali Ogali controls his styles quite well enough to poke fun, in another piece, at the users of long words - i.e. he makes fun of the High Style. He also achieves a stilted, but fairly 'correct' standard. Other writers' 'standard' is a notional, Nigerian one, not 'correct' at all, very often, but consciously different from 'pidgin'.
In a luscious pornographic morality, Mabel the Sweet Honey that Poured Away, the two girls drop self-defensively into pidgin when discussing sex:

("Young lady you have not told me how you went through that thing last night," Margie asked her. Mabel told her as much as she could. It was interesting. After that Margie laughed and said: "So you don become a full woman now? Hah you don chop-o. Wetin you go give that man wey show how the thing be first?"

"My heart and my whole being," Mabel answered."

(Speedy Eric, p. 51).

But again it is the mother, small children and humble characters who are regularly given pidgin dialogue, though the characters in this tale move more easily in and out of pidgin than in many more serious works. In these and in other novelettes however, pidgin is used for low life characters - for subordinate, flat or funny ones - and signals "illiterate", old-fashioned or comic situations.

Onitsha novelists who want to describe the adventures of 'with-it' young men on the town may attempt film-American styles, but normally their language is the best the writer knows, i.e. not necessarily the

1. Derived now as much from pop-songs, along with the international appurtenances of jeans and guitars of the culture, and also familiar from columns in the press, by e.g. 'Sporting Sam' who used to write a 'man about town's' column in the Daily Times. Elements of this style have a long history - including Zik's Americanisms. American gangster tales, claimed by Offenberg as a source for Onitsha novelettes (p.344 below) may have been influential, but I do not know in what form they would be distributed in Nigeria.
most stiltedly correct but the richest and most impressive. In the
drama, Shakespearean echoes are also inescapable:

'Tom Mboya: Read the letter OH MIGHTY BOLI KANA!
1st Citizen: We want to hear the contents of the letter
3rd Citizen: Woe unto he who wrote the letter
Chief Bolikana: Lessen the noise and let me read it.
Jomo Kenyatta: Who is the author of the letter?
Chief Bolikana: Lend me your ears country men for the contents of this letter is such that no one should miss a word of it. The letter reads

The Governor's Office
REF/7792/50'

(Thomas Iguh, The Struggles and Trial of Jomo Kenyatta, p. 11)

The best known Nigerian authors write much more regular English than the Onitsha writers, since they are better educated, often at a British university. Tutuola is a well-known exception, a genuine original whose English was however, very considerably tidied up, as the illustration from the manuscript on page 24 of the Palm Wine Drinkard (1952), makes clear. The style that so delighted British readers was

1. Cyprian Ekwensi, however, numbers an Onitsha novel among his many works. I omit the (sophisticated) experiment The Voice, by Gabriel Okara, an attempt to use Ijaw word order which has not produced imitations, although it is occasionally powerful. But it is not assimilated Nigerian English.

2. The sentences have been made to run smoothly, the tenses amended.
thus in part the publishers' creation, and of course the same may be true of any published work. From Equiano on, African writing published in England could be improved to suit English tastes. This may still happen, although the biggest sales are now in Africa. Achebe remarked in 1966 that *Things Fall Apart* had, the previous year, sold 800 paperback copies in Britain, 20,000 in Nigeria and almost 2,500 in other places. *No Longer At Ease* sales showed the same pattern.

Part of the great increase in Achebe's African sales has been due to the choice of his books as examination texts. This means that his books will be important models both in style and structure, reaching Nigerians whose only indigenous sources have up till now been Onitsha novelettes and the Press. The same is true of the other Nigerian authors, particularly novelists, now selling in paperback. They offer a range of individual narrative styles, but basically they write in standard English. The central characters likewise tend to speak impeccably well formed sentences. Such is the style of the students in *Toads for Supper*,

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1. Equiano was a slave of Ibo origin whose book of Travels was publicised by Abolitionists. Edwards, in a recent abridged edition, claims that his verse reveals characteristic African pronunciation, but I do not think he proves this.

2. My enquiries to Heinemann as to their policy were not even acknowledged. Some of their more recent publications, e.g. *Efuru* by Flora Nwapa, retain typical Ibo errors, including aural spellings, e.g. 'daughter of a beach', (which also appears conventionally, 'bitch'). But I have informed evidence that in the past considerable polishing up has taken place.
written by the Registrar of a Nigerian university. When they talk to the hall porter, the conversation is in pidgin.

The complete discontinuity of the two styles is not true to life, and in fact the students even at their most correct would be likely to use a much more 'Nigerianised' English. But such dialogue is like the formal English of serious characters in the English novels of the eighteenth century, an appropriate style, not a natural one. Pidgin is used equally conventionally, just as comic cockney or Mummerset is still employed in English novels. Achebe rather laboriously explains how one of his characters (in *No Longer At Ease*) shifts his level of English to suit his listener, but he does not really show this happening. It would of course be a difficult finicking task, and not necessarily a rewarding one, any more then to render a British dialect at length.

There may, however, still lurk, beneath the consciousness of the most aware writer, a feeling that the actual speech-styles of Nigerians seem 'uneducated'. Nor is it easy to distinguish a powerful stereotype of correctness from one's actual usage. V.S. *Nig* paul tells how he was attacked for his rendering of West Indian speech:

'"They must be does talk so by you" one woman said to me. "They don't talk so by me"' (1962, p. 69).

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1. Mr. A. Kirk-Greene has kindly let me see a draft for a forthcoming contribution on English in Nigeria, in which he quotes examples from student letters. The 'Nigerian' elements in these (interference, standard locutions) differs only in incidence from the most naif 'Onitsha' writing. This evidence from informal writing is supported by my own experience with both essay-type and creative writing by students, mainly but not all specialising in English, and their speech styles.

2. Cp the findings in Chapter Three above.
A faint stigma seems attached to pidgin. I have already noted that it is the hallmark of the corrupt big man. Such people may indeed speak it, and even affect it as a political style, but the choice of style also marks off the difference from the author's chosen point of view, expressed through standard English. Indeed in *Jagua Nana*, where pidgin is used much more creatively, Uncle Taiwo, the political boss, is shown as talking 'grammatical English' in face-to-face discussion with his rival.

It is surprising that there has not been more imitation of Ekwensi's imaginative use in this book of a modified pidgin as the language of the city, the expression of its life-style. Much of the power of the story-telling comes from the contrast between the narrator's level, 'correct' tone and the rich exuberance of the dialogue. Apart from one or two unnatural patches,¹ the use of pidgin is artfully consistent and helps to hold the story together. It is also, as I have suggested earlier, a convincing style for the restless new men and women who leave the villages for modern city-life.²

Ekwensi's selection of pidgin to represent varieties of Nigerian

¹ Jagua Nana is given 'standard English' dialogue when speaking Ibo or Yoruba, but speaks in pidgin to her father's old watchman in the village. On the other hand, the smooth Delta people speak English of unbelievable refinement, presumably to indicate their aristocratic status.

² Ekwensi deliberately points out this use on the first page of the novel: 'Like Freddie she was an Ibo from Eastern Nigeria, when she spoke to him she always used pidgin English because living in Lagos City they did not want too many embarrassing reminders of clan and custom'.
English (and standard English to represent vernacular), had already been made by an English writer, Joyce Cary. In *Mister Johnson*, the hero speaks 'the language of the half literate clerk' as English, but any African language is rendered as standard English. Cary therefore bypasses the question of how clerk Johnson from the South would in fact communicate with bush pagans as well as with the Emirate officials and the police, who might use Hausa. Such linguistic problems might, however, trouble a Nigerian reader."

Wole Soyinka, subtlest of Nigerian stylists, has begun to move beyond this convention, and in *The Road* pidgin is used to mark internal shifts of tone and attitude, as well as for set situations like the patter of a lorry-park tout. He can use the resources of 'standard' as well as 'Nigerian' English to create idiosyncratic characters, from Professor to Say Tokyo. Other characters move in and out of pidgin through 'Nigerian' to 'Standard English':

'SALUBI: Anyway, the matter with you is that you are going with passenger lorry. You and these ruffians, you are the same. Me, I don't drive lorry. I drive only private owner - no more no less.

(SIC) SAMSON: Private wey no get licence. Go siddon my friend. (Salubi gives the last button a flourish, straightens himself and looks satisfied.)

SALUBI: As I am standing so, I fit to drive the Queen of England.

SAMSON: One look at you and she will abdicate.

SALUBI: All I need now is a licence. It is only a matter of getting Professor to forge one for me.'

(1965, p. 4).

1. Not that I have heard such criticisms. My description of Mister Johnson's English is by J.P. Clark, (1968) who misses Cary's point and attacks his usage. Note the animus against pidgin.
The result is not a straightforward translation of multilingual switching but the start of a comprehensive way of suggesting it. It will be through the innovations of Soyinka that literate Nigerian English can make serious use of the hitherto despised pidgin and writers create more flexible and subtle stylistic effects.

3. Sociological studies of Nigerian literature

All the evidence I have given in Part I points up the importance of stereotypes and schemata in communication. Not only do we see what we have been trained to see, we create works of art using the conventions we have learned from other works of art. The 'traditional' story-teller tells his tale to an audience at his side, whose responses affect the progress of the tale. Its presentation anyway was determined by their known responses. The reader takes what he can from material which may have been designed for a very different audience, and he makes of it what he can, according to his linguistic skills and his own assumptions. The resulting judgments, as

1. As I think the quotation demonstrates, Laurence is wrong in suggesting that pidgin = 'English' and standard English = Yoruba in the play (1968, p. 64), nor is 'Standard English' Soyinka's only alternative to pidgin.

2. It should be said that the best Nigerian novelists are good at transcribing some of the varieties of Nigerian English, e.g. Achebe's rendering of an old clerk ('Uncle Ben's Story', 1965), or Soyinka's ruthless descriptions of the 'other immigrant' - (more British than the British) when he gets back to Nigeria, like some of the University staff in The Interpreters. Several Nigerian writers enjoy recording the cadences of British expatriates.
any teacher knows, call in question any simple belief in the universality of literature.

The new literate in a second language will find it difficult to recognise the connotations of different styles and in his efforts to write himself, my 'shabby equipment' may be his devastating new weapon: it is all new to him. The very concept of writing a novel, of developing sharply defined characters, let alone the techniques of such presentation, all are learned. African writers, in whatever language they choose, have to create their tradition, and it is not surprising that European novels are as important to them as the classics once were in Europe.

African writing in English has received considerable academic attention, but relatively little of this has been informed literary criticism. Instead, African literature has been scanned for its sociological significance. This is all the wrong way round; one must

1. This is true of 'native language' speakers too, but more obvious in the second language learner with no literate background.
2. As I found out in the English Department at Ahmadu Bello University, 1964-6, where students were required to do some 'creative writing'. The most popular theme, incidentally, was the rags to riches story, in which the hero wins out against obstacles, gets a big salary in the Senior Service (= top Civil Service), and donates scholarships to his grateful people.
3. A point forcibly made by Professor Molly Mahood (Oxford seminar 5..2..70) who pointed out that though bibliographical and expository approaches had been necessary to begin with, African literature now needed to be treated as part of all literature, and judged by standard canons.
not seek for 'cultural meanings' without first carefully giving one's material the very best critical attention, and the most scrupulous look at what the writer actually does. It is quite wrong to assume that African literature 'can provide an ethnographic view of contemporary African society', as one commentator put it, and others have obviously assumed. Literature is part of the ethnographer's material; it requires decoding before one can say what relation it bears to the society of which it is a part. Moreover, to return to a theme at the very beginning of my argument, one must not consider 'society' as a monolithic whole, or set up the author - or his book - in a one-to-one relation with it.

One can illustrate the different approaches of the sociologist (or anthropologist) and the literary critic quite well from studies of the Onitsha novelettes. Ottenberg says (in a review of literature on the Ibo):

'these seem frequently to have been written by school-teachers and headmasters. Often crude in English stylistic usage, and imitations of the West European and American love story or of the "gunman" tale, they provide interesting insights into the effects of social and cultural change on traditional Ibo values and beliefs, and many of them mirror conflicts between old and new traditions'


1. The phrase is Hoggart's. He also emphasises the need for a rigorous initial examination of the literary meaning (1970 vol. I, p. 122).

2. Introduction to Ph.D. dissertation by Schmidt (1965). I shall refer to the defects of her presentation again, since they are explicit results of an approach which is quite common in published works, though not so articulately expressed; see e.g. Gleason (1965) from the same academic stable.
In contrast to this is Ulli Beier's account. He says, for instance,

'The subject matter of these novels and plays can be best described with the West African term "Highlife". Highlife is a reaction against the austerity of traditional life. It is a way of life that believes in pleasure, music, drinking, free love, and ostentatious spending of money. The Onitsha writers speak about this new generation: schoolboys, teachers, drivers, clerks - people who have not yet gone very far in being 'Westernised' but who already find themselves in sharp opposition to traditional ways of life'

(1964, p.7).

Beier's article conveys much more accurately than Ottenberg's remarks the "feel" of the Onitsha novelettes, because he looks sensitively at what they actually say. They do not mirror a conflict - as my discussion on the uses of pidgin should have already made clear, the Onitsha writers put forward a positive philosophy of life, and portray other viewpoints derisively. Opposition is not a theme, but it gives plot material, whereas romantic love is a theme, because as Beier says,

'this new freedom to choose between different ways of life, the freedom to make individual decisions without consulting one's family, are things that excite and stimulate these authors'

(p. 8).

One cannot however be sure that the incidents in the novelettes are true to life. Just as the language follows its own conventions,¹ (which are literate ones) and does not replicate the writers' speaking

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¹. Though some writers must be partly incomprehensible to readers of any nationality, because of their weakness in written English - i.e. they may talk quite adequately; the faults in the Onitsha books are literate ones, strings of unrelated fine phrases etc.
styles, so the situations quickly become stock. At the same time, the
writers are not working in a tradition, they are making it. Writing itself
is an achievement, and an act of freedom which gives them a sense of identity.
Their portraits sometimes appear as frontispieces, straining towards the
camera in the same attitude of dynamic individualism as appears in every
member of a group of 'progressive elements' - the branch members of some
Progressive tribal Union, perhaps - whose pictures so frequently appeared
in the Press before 1966.¹

Situations in the Onitsha love stories are therefore 'romantic'
in the sense that they represent dream as much as reality,² but careful
observation of the dream will show that it is not an imitation of any kind
of magazine love story, nor of the most popular English novelists in West
Africa, Marie Corelli and Bertha M. Clay. Nigerians may enjoy Marie

1. After the first coup, tribal unions were banned. 'Progressive elements'
is a standard phrase for a significant, young, literate, section of the
population, often working away from home, at varying levels of skilled work.
Without overstressing the point, there does seem to be a need to emphasise
their identity among the large numbers of young men who (predominantly)
tried to join (1966) the New Nigerian's Children's Club, conducted on the
simplest 'Hullo Kiddies' style.

2. Op. Beier's description of the Nigerian signwriter (an art-form from
the same milieu as the novelettes): 'Only his romanticism saves him from
vulgarity. The chief influences on his art are cinema posters and
commercial advertising. Yet to him these things are not cheap. They are
transfigured in his mind's eye into symbols of real brightness and glamour.
To him they are the freedom he can now enjoy, the possibility of taking part
in the new life, if only on its fringes' (1966, p. 19).
Corelli's descriptions of high life, but their concept of Highlife is entirely different. Both Marie Corelli and her vapid successor (who writes the most genteel of escapist women's romances) specialise in pure, high-souled heroines and noble-browed heroes: these never met in an Onitsha romance, where boisterous sexuality is common. The writers may cull phrases from these works, but not themes or sentiments.

It is also worth considering what the Onitsha writers choose to write about and what they do not. There are books of varying competence on etiquette, especially letter-writing and English-vernacular grammars. Love letters - always in a high 'correct' style - are often quoted in novels. Often they are sent between schoolboys and girls, and sometimes their teachers. There are booklets which are discussions about love, often a mixture of comment, letters, and dramatic scenes. They have titles like 'What Women are Thinking about Men' and 'Public Opinions on Lovers'. 'Money mongers' are often described and condemned. The foreward to one such book of advice endorses it eloquently:

1. The masculine fantasies in the Onitsha stories are quite unrelated both to Clay and Corelli ones, or to the style of the ladies on English knitting pattern-covers of the forties, which adorn many of the novelette covers.
2. The types of writing I select are the major ones, but the products of local printers are diverse and include vernacular material.
'JEO CONGRATS:

May you allow me to say that this little but effective pamphlet is wonderful. The author, Mr. Joseph O. Nnadozie is creative writer and deserves congratulation. If Mr. Joe Nnadozie is not yet eligible to be called a scientist or a physiologist, he shall in no distant time be qualified.

OKENWA OLISAH
The Editor'

Some of the comments are nicely sharp.

'In church, these unmarried ladies occupy the first seats and when the congregation chants I believe in God, they chant I believe in husbands. They are only bodily present and spiritually absent'

(Highbred Maxwell, p. 5).

The problems discussed in the 'discussion' books are dramatised in the love stories, with titles like 'The Sorrows of Love', 'Saturday Night Disappointment', 'Forget Me Not'.

There are straight biographies of Zik, but most biographies are in dramatic form. The writers may be an important political group in Nigeria, but their dramas are not political polemic. The Struggles and Trial of Jomo Kenyatta, or even The Trials of Jomo Kenyatta, Patrice Lumumba and Jesus Christ: the writer, who is often perceptive about the clash of interest and intrigue, as the titles show is mainly creating a mythology. President Kennedy is a more recent entry to the pantheon. The models are the Bible and Shakespeare, and not of local derivation. Folk

tales are ignored.  

Azikiwe had already turned incidents of his life into heroic set-pieces (see the meeting with his mother quoted above), but the need to create heroes may lie deeper than imitation. Unlike their better-educated brethren, the Onitsha writers do not attempt to use their traditional past for subject-matter or illustration. It is probable that only written sources are felt to be suitable for writing. If another generation of Onitsha writers grows up, it will be interesting to see if they are much affected in style by writers like Achebe, and whether they will choose different themes.

When one looks at the Onitsha novelettes closely they prove to be less simple, as well as less naïf than at first. One senses a homogenous audience, sharing the author's outlook, but despite their local roots, and essentially local themes, the imagery and intended spirit of the writing comes from English literature. Since, however, they have little reading to go on, or training in the art of fiction, and a good deal of ambition to be new and different, the stories they produce are quite unlike any of their English source material. The happy accidents of phrase they

1. I have a copy of My Life in the Bush which is obviously derived from Tutuola, but this again is a literary, U.K. published source. Moreover, despite the author's claim that it has 'the ordinary practical virtue of good English' it is often incomprehensible.

2. Perhaps particularly since the war, novelettes are being produced in the West of exactly the same genre, e.g. Lagos is a Wicked Place (Oniororo, printed in Ibadan).
constantly produce are a joy to the British reader but one must remember that they are often the result of muddle and misunderstanding of a language. Nevertheless, Onitsha novelists and playwrights attempt to create a style.

For a full-length novel by a 'been-to' author,1 with a much deeper understanding of English, who is possibly well read in European literature, the problem has been

'that so far, there has not emerged a strong body of informed native readers and critics to adopt [his novel] and make it their own'


Any foreign audience will need explanations of much familiar to Nigerians - but local peculiarities will only be understood locally. The question of how far a European can understand an Africal novel in English is thus a pointless one.2 But it is worthwhile repeating that it is through European forms, stereotypes, schemata, that the Nigerian scene is perceived. I have commented on the linguistic code through which this communication occurs; the ordering of symbols and of structure is also from a

1. Been to the United Kingdom.

2. The idea of inevitable cultural relativism is, all the same, sometimes put forward, (see e.g. Shelton, 1964a). But he is also naïf enough to believe that Nigerian faults in English, which reveal vernacular interference, likewise indicate constant acts of translation (1964b). While this is a real problem for many Nigerians, Shelton forgets that any communication that works will be used again. I once heard a heavily 'mitteleuropeen' voice at the hairdresser's. The assistant asked her client where she lived on the continent. 'But I am in England since before you are born!' cried the old lady, in indignant surprise.


'European' code-book.¹

This does not mean that such novels are simply derivative, and while they can seem comprehensible to both English and Nigerian readers, they may comprehend differently.² But it does mean that if they are read with critical attention in the context of European literature, their ethnographic message may differ from the ostensible subject matter. (This is of course a familiar critical distinction: subject matter is often different from theme). Similarly before treating all Nigerian literature (say) as a whole, for sociological or content analysis, one must distinguish the different intentions of the writers.

Critics of African literature, whatever their disciplinary stance, talk about cultural conflict as a major theme, just as it has been found in the Onitsha novels.³ The concept is dubious prima facie, and it is not stressed by the writers themselves, who might agree with the late Christopher Okigbo:

'I think all we hear nowadays of men-of-two-worlds is a lot of nonsense. I belong, integrally, to my own society, just as,

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1. A writer can still make something quite new out of old schemata and all his sources are important. I would disagree with the view of Braithwaite, discussing a West Indian author: 'It is not what Mais got from Turgenev or Conrad that is finally important but what he got from the people of Kingston and the way he was able to use it' (1969).

2. Cp. the view that 'what is written has to be recognisably Indian to the Indian writer and recognisably English to the English reader' (Iyengar, p. 20). None of the doubts expressed by academics about language choice are shared by the author: see the contributions in ed. Pctes. 1965.

3. Schmidt, for instance, makes this the sole, major theme of all Nigerian writing. Even a thoughtful literary critic, laurence, (1969) accepts the idea. And note the anthropologist Ottenberg, op.cit.
I believe, I belong also integrally to other societies than my own. The truth is that the modern African is no longer the product of an entirely indigenous culture."

(in Duerden, 1963, p. 28).

The man-of-two-worlds is in fact a European stereotype of the African, perpetuated through white fiction, and the problems of 'culture conflict' have been in a sense imposed on African writers.

It may even be that some writers have believed in this definition of their work, in consequence. *Blade Among the Boys* (Nzekwu, 1962) is usually described as an account of the difficulties of reconciling Christianity and 'traditional' life. Possibly this is what Nzekwu thought he was describing. Patrick Ikenga wants to be a priest, but his people want him to take his place as hereditary head of his clan, and to beget a family... But immediately one can see that this can be a conflict situation in any culture. The demands of celibacy are in fact too much for Patrick: he makes a girl pregnant, and is expelled from the seminary.

This story of blighted hopes is presented as a tragedy, but Patrick's vocation is dubious - he is ambitious to be in the centre, officiating at the *Mass*. What seals his determination to go against his family's wishes is his lucky escape from a bribery charge. He believes this is a miracle! In fact, he is an *homme moyen sensuel*, and though his education is dependent on good behaviour, he does not have to feign belief

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to get it. He is no Julien Sorel, forced by social facts to wear clerical
gblack instead of the scarlet coat he longs for.

Comparison with Stendhal's novel, indeed, shows up the falsity of
any claims that *Blade Among the Boys* is about cultural, ideological or
religious conflicts. It is not clear how conscious the author is of his
hero's self-deception, and this is a major fault in the book. It is, of
course a point of sociological interest: how far are Patrick's values
common in contemporary Nigeria? There is also interesting material about
tribalism at the beginning of the book, but because it has nothing to do
with the plot (details of life in Kafanchan for an Ibo railwayman's son
are probably autobiographical memories), no sociological attention has been
paid to them. 2

Gerald Moore noted in a discussion of *Things Fall Apart* that
'to make out of this boiling hotch-potch [of modern Nigeria]
a coherent social context for a novel calls for exceptional
qualities of organisation and selection'  
(1962, p.66 ).

It is not surprising therefore, that Nigerians looked for a more manageable
theme to start on, distanced by time into simplicity. The coming of the

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1. Since a novel operates on many levels of communication, it can be
translated with some success. For this reason one can reasonably compare
an English version of *The Red and the Black* with a contemporary Nigerian
novel in English.

2. Sociologists did not expect to find 'tribalism', so they did not look
for it. The first novel explicitly on this theme was *Iska*, by that
sensitive journalist, Ekwensi (1966).
white man is such a theme, and the thoughtful writer naturally asks himself what it was really like, this terribly important historical event? If one believes that all African literature gives an ethnographic picture of contemporary society one can be ignorant enough to treat stories like Things Fall Apart and One Man One Wife as evidence of contemporary culture conflict, too. But of course they are not, and Achebe has stressed that this was a historical novel. It would not be surprising if his sources were Meek and Talbot, plus some family remembrance, for this is all he would have to go on. 

In Chapter One I said that 'one can look primarily at the form or the content of messages, but may not ignore the one for the other' (p.20). When some Nigerians began to use English as a medium for exploring their own history, their own consciousness, and the life around them, they took a step which is bound to influence the form of English used in Nigeria, for speech as well as writing, and which will filter down into Nigerians' consciousness as well, though at what speed and with what changes it is impossible to forecast. Consciousness is altered by the form created to express it. African writers who are struggling to create adequate schemata for their perceptions, are often harried as well to lead their

1. Even a perceptive African critic, like Dabo, sometimes lumps all African works together as if they were happening now, and the first missionaries entering the villages (1966). It is however interesting that Nigerian novelists have not come from the traditional 'educated Native' groups of the coastal towns, to whom the arrival of the white man was not a subject of old men's memories, or change, or novelty.

2. Aluko, on a similar quest for the past, was unfairly damned by Beier (1959) because of alleged flaws in his Yoruba religious detail.
people, be committed to the cause of realizing African personality and so forth.  

The attitude of European critics to African writers is important since it influences publishers' policies, as well as the writers themselves. This is why I have singled out for criticism 'sociological' beliefs about their work, but of course if anthropologists are to make use of literature - written language - they must be prepared to examine it with the strenuous, imaginative care that distinguishes the good literary critic, and also to understand his methodology. I have used the word 'sociologist', although the writers I have criticised would probably call themselves 'cultural anthropologists', because they are attempting a sociology of literature. Whatever one means by this term (and it gets various interpretations) one is trying to get from the literature not only a convenient picture of social life, but also the social perceptions of the writer, himself by his writing a maker of society.

1. I have not paid attention to this theme since it has as yet been insignificant in English speaking Africa. 'English speaking West African novelists considered in this thesis are just as much products of British empiricism as their French speaking counterparts are, through Negritude, products of French colonial policy in Africa' (Dabo, 1966, p. 131). Camara Laye was criticised for not being engage enough: if Dramouss was written to satisfy his critics, it is a sad testimony to their success.

2. Escarpit has claimed that the aim of the sociologist of literature is to 'retrace not the history of literature, but the history of man in society by examining the dialogue of the creators of words, myth and ideas with their contemporaries and their posterity, the dialogue that we now call literature' (1965, p. 96). Even though this perhaps over-simplifies the relation between 'author' and 'society' it is a much more complex and rewarding aim than the treatment of literature as a junkpile of ethnographic information, which only has to be sorted out by the diligent research student.
This is a complex task. In the tiny length of time in which the few Nigerian writers have been writing, they have increased not only in technique but in their ability to understand the malaises of the society in which they were living: events have in fact overtaken their sad satires. In such situations the sociologist/anthropologist can only retrospectively assess the writers' sensitivity to social movements. There has hardly been time to study Nigerian literature as evidence of the way the Nigerian world will go: nor is there yet a large enough body of writing to make that a sensible task.

At least, however, the anthropologist can make use of African writing in the same way as many great social investigators in Europe have done, to help them in their interpretation of the world, as a guide and a complementary help to their own studies. That they are written in English should not be a handicap. I hope it is by now clear that I do not think this language indicates that the writer is 'alienated from traditional society'. This view has little connection with realities, and is in fact the old stereotype of the educated native (or 'trousered ape') brought up to date. If the writers can develop, and get published, a flexible English

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1. Nor are their books necessarily palatable to other Nigerians - or even comprehensible to them. e.g. a letter in *West Africa* 9..3..68, attacking 'the sham of what they call "modern African literature"' and praising a Hausa play which is 'really about the people and not a self-indulgent clique', but proves to have a familiar theme - the corruption and ruthlessness of the rich to their inferiors.
which carries social nuance and variation in tone, they may even have an advantage over native English writers, whose ability to look at different layers of society is limited by the burden of social connotation which the language now carries. For Nigerian writers, I think the prospects for English are enviable, and its use is far from being a limitation.

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1. I was interested to find that this is the ground of Hoggart's discussions about doing justice to English society in writing today - the difficulties of finding a tone which does not automatically project middle-class introspection onto the scene (1970 Vols. I and II). When I try to consider what novelists in Britain handle the spectrum of English provincial life, I come up with 'light' novelists, with a writer like Colin Watson, who is protected by the conventions not only of detective fiction, but of farce as well.
Chapter Fourteen
SOME CONCLUSIONS

In the first part of this thesis, I examined some of the fundamental concepts of linguistics and found that terms like langue and competence indicate data which the linguist can select to fit his model of language. However, even the material from which the data is chosen has been pre-selected —'languages' are sociological constructs, and not all their speakers will have the same conception of their extent.

The phenomenon of bilingualism or multilingualism (as this is popularly understood) requires yet another model in order to be described, since terms like 'language', 'dialect' or 'style' may prove to be linguistically equivalent though they indicate different occasions, or purposes, of use. The multiplex variety of language embraces symbolic systems of code, and their interpretations; its use cannot be understood without understanding the social significance that variations in this code have for the speakers. All these facts are important if one wants to understand the contents of their messages.

It is for this reason that I began by suggesting communication as a focus for investigation, since it comprehends different levels of form and content, and is the basic social act, in which language is a part.
I wanted to emphasise these features of communication because of the nature of language, uttered in irreversible temporal succession, creative, and social.

One can conclude from an examination of the recent 'sociolinguistic studies' now appearing that linguists themselves are finding communicative approaches helpful, and that by looking at linguistic variation, instead of abstracting its constants, they may in fact make those constants more comprehensible. This has happened in the study of linguistic change. Variation is also a feature of which language users are more conscious than they are of the constants, which they take for granted, since it is by variation that they recognise individuals and classify groups.

It is in the examination of these structured and structuring variations that social anthropologists could exercise their expertise. I could not give many examples of such work, since most sociolinguistic studies are based ultimately on simplistic social hypotheses, and there is a great range of material which could be studied, in order to see what social uses people do make of language.

Anthropologists are becoming increasingly interested in process and change; language is of prime importance in understanding it. It is itself process; and action happens because of words that are spoken - at the content level this involves seeing how significant symbols are manipulated and communicated; the linguistic usage of any individual is an index of his age and status, and through its alteration (at the level of form, or of individual phrases) he signals and indeed has a particular life-style.
Considering how far we become ourselves through language (and I consider that the thesis of Mead briefly described in the first chapter is basically irrefutable) it is surprising how little attention has been paid to linguistic socialization. The few references to this in the recent A.S.A. volume on socialization (particularly by B. Lloyd and W. Wilder) show how rewarding such study might be. I would hope that a social anthropologist armed with the degree of information provided in the first part of this thesis could easily go beyond the treatments in the A.S.A. volume. It will be seen that the programme outlined by Richards is admirably suited to a communicative approach, though she does not mention language.

I could therefore perhaps emphasise again that I tried to analyse approaches which would be appropriate in any language setting, and indeed to examine definitions and demarcations which should be understood before undertaking any social anthropological study of a linguistic topic, be this of multilingualism or ethno-semantics or symbolic classification. For a large part of his data, the social anthropologist would have to rely on the linguist, but they are both social scientists, and need to understand each other's solutions to theoretical problems. In so far as a linguist is looking at a social anthropologist's world, and in so far the anthropologist is looking at what his subjects produce, and their modes of perception, he must use the linguist's data.

We are familiar with 'the limits of naivety' within which
it is permissible to work, but it must be pointed out that there are
different kinds of naivety involved. I am not a trained linguist,
and realise only too clearly how easy it is for an outsider to be naif
and out of date. Nevertheless it is possible to, as it were, ask
questions of linguistic findings, and see whether one can get satisfactory
answers. And where I had the temerity to be dissatisfied with the
answers I received, I was in fact discovering that the linguists were
naif - it was their social theory that was in question, not my linguistic
expertise.

In studies of communication, as in many other fields of study,
it is impossible to treat 'the social' and 'the linguistic' - or
whatever are the interacting subjects - as 'closed systems' totally
explicable in their own terms, and understood in relationship simply
by correlation. I have already mentioned that this is not true of
linguistics: but a sociolinguistic approach that simply applies
sociological findings is insufficient. Rather, the linguistically
minded anthropologist tries to gain a new perspective, as does the
sociologically minded linguist, to the solution of old problems - or
the discovery of new ones. Focus on a particular aspect, as of some
level of communication, can suitably narrow the field.

Despite the emphasis I have put on questions of linguistics,
I hope it is clear that I regard 'literary' criteria as equally important
for the study of communication and regret the hostility that academic
linguists and literary critics so often show to each others' disciplines.
Content whether spoken or written can be analysed in literary terms, and the advent of writing profoundly alters language. This is most obviously illustrated by diglossic situations, but the impact of literacy in hitherto non-literate areas of the world is obviously very important to sociolinguistic studies, and also to social anthropologists generally.

I have tried to illustrate this impact in Nigeria, and I think it can be shown that analysis of the nature and quality, including 'literary' quality, of literate communication there, is relevant to understanding the Nigerian pattern of political persuasion — and indeed, action. And it cannot be assumed that a list of the arguments presented — or content analysis of the themes included — will explain the effect that Azikwe, for instance, had. What he said was understood as the way he said it.

At this point the investigator cannot tell that he or she reads the codebook to the same effect as the first Nigerian readers. This is of course the great problem of interpreting communication, and its solution would never be complete because reactions are in fact so diverse. At least an understanding that language has these social, symbolic, 'arbitrary' qualities is itself a useful beginning — one sometimes feels that many social scientists are naively about this.

The selection of the history of English in Nigeria brought such problems to the fore, and raised other problems of wide implication.
I conclude, for instance, that in order to understand the state of English there now, one must understand the history of its uses, and this takes us back to the arrival of the Portuguese on the West Coast. In a real sense, there is a continuity and a consecutive development, both of uses and of the relations between users, which makes this truly one history, and yet it is not the history of one language. (Nor is it assignable to one spot of territory). There is even a stage-by-stage sequence of relation between linguistic features, which is greater perhaps, than that between 'Old English' and current varieties of West African Pidgin. While my history points up the difficulties of defining languages-in-time, it also shows that the users' sociological models of language can remain pretty constant even though the code changes.

By tracing the social history of language users, I think one can throw light on the difficult question of how pidgins emerge. Certainly my findings disproved the common explanation of the 'pidgin'-‘creole’ sequence. And it is consideration of the possible repertoires available to pidgin users at different stages which leads me to deprecate the belief that a pidgin variety of language is an all-purpose means of communication.

English is a very significant item in many Nigerian repertoires, and is certainly affecting the forms of other vernacular varieties. This alone would justify its study, but it must be emphasised that it cannot be properly understood without an understanding of multilingualism. Virtually no English speaker is a 'monolingual' in the British sense—even the monolingual Pidgin speaker is unable to communicate with as
many different groups of people as his British counterpart - and the uses and features of Nigerian English, with the values attached to them, are the product of a multilingual environment. This can be understood from the first part of the thesis. The distinctness between the items in such repertoires is so great as to make learning difficult, and English is thus the sensitive item, the one with the most obvious problems attached to it. I have suggested that educationists will not understand these without first understanding social features of differentiation and identity - without, that is, a sociological understanding of language.

The two social aspects of language I have considered most are this one, of identity, and the one I mentioned earlier, of altering society, of initiating action through words. Both can be approached through the literary study of schemata and symbols, as well as by linguistic analysis. Through these approaches one can observe the creative processes of social behaviour, of the ways in which people align themselves, or dissolve coalitions; the way they first signal, then symbolise, ultimately create institutions of unity by linguistic means. This continuous sequence, of society-in-action, seems to me very appropriate for anthropological study, and best analysed through the communicative focus I have tried to present.
1) Place of publication is London unless otherwise listed.
2) Dates in brackets are original dates of publication.
3) Journals referred to, with abbreviations:

A.A.  American Anthropologist.
Africa  Africa
A.J. Sociol.  American Journal of Sociology
A.L.  Anthropological Linguistics
Am. Scholar.  The American Scholar
Am. Speech.  American Speech
Anglia.  Anglia
Anthrop. Q.  Anthropological Quarterly
AIR  African Language Review
Bl. Orpheus  Black Orpheus
Comp. Stud. in Soc. & Hist.  Comparative Studies in Society and History
Critical Quarterly  Critical Quarterly
Eng. Stud.  Englische Studien
English Studies  English Studies
English Studies in Africa
Georgetown Monographs
Hesperis
Human Relations
Ibadan
I.J.A.L.
JHi
J.A.L.
J.An.Folklore
J.Anthrop.Soc. of Oxford
J.Contemp.Hist.
J.H.S.N.
J.Ling.
J.Soc.Issues
J.W.A.L.
La Ling.
L'Année Soc.
Lingua
Linguistics

Georgetown Monographs on Language and Linguistics.
Hesperis.
Human Relations.
Ibadan.
Journal of African History.
Journal of the Anthropological Institute.
Journal of African Languages.
Journal of American Folklore.
Journal of Contemporary History.
Journal of Historical Society of Nigeria.
Journal of Linguistics.
Journal of West African Languages.
La Linguistique.
L'Année Sociologique.
Lingua.
Linguistics.
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<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>Lg.</td>
<td>Language</td>
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<tr>
<td>MN.</td>
<td>Modern Language Notes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Neophilologus</td>
<td>Neophilologus.</td>
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<tr>
<td>New Guinea</td>
<td>New Guinea.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nigeria Magazine</td>
<td>Nigeria Magazine</td>
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<tr>
<td>Phil.Soc.Trans.R.Soc.Lond.</td>
<td>Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London.</td>
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<tr>
<td>NEL</td>
<td>Review of English Literature.</td>
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<tr>
<td>GLIR</td>
<td>Sierra Leone Language Review.</td>
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<tr>
<td>S.L.S. S.S.</td>
<td>Sierra Leone Studies (New Series).</td>
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<tr>
<td>S.N. &amp; E.</td>
<td>Sudan Notes and Records.</td>
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<td>Social Forces</td>
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<td>Spear</td>
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<td>S.A.R.</td>
<td>West African Review.</td>
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<td>Work.</td>
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