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ABSTRACT

Current language policy planning in Ireland was examined as part of a larger study of the language behavior of groups with access or exposure to more than one language. Language can be seen as a resource to ethnic groups primarily in their competition for access to the goods and services of a nation. The norm for groups in prolonged contact is language shift, not maintenance or maintained group bilingualism. The tendency of ethnic groups in contact with a contemporary nation-state is to form four distinct types of social mobilization (ethnicity, ethnic movements, ethnic nationalism, and geographic nationalism) which under certain social conditions result in differential language maintenance and shift. In Ireland, language policy planning and language planning are both in place. Language revitalization is a more recent concern. The Bord na Gaeilge, established in 1978 to promote Irish, has recommended seven strategies for reversing the shift to English: central planning; state and public leadership for real impact; expansion of networks and structures of usage; increasing Irish visibility; ensuring service through Irish in the Gaeltacht; new instructional syllabi and methods; and innovative communications. This paper argues, however, that these efforts are unrealistic and unlikely to be successful, and that Irish as a living language may eventually disappear. A 62-item bibliography is included. (MSE)

Language Revival: the Case of Irish

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INTRODUCTION

This paper, which intends to examine present day language planning efforts in Ireland, is part of a much larger study on language maintenance and shift (Paulston, 1987, 1990). The study examines a number of case studies, of which Irish is one, in order to explore a theoretical framework which will allow us to explain and to predict the language behavior of groups who have access to or are exposed to more than one language. I consider such an understanding vital to helpful educational policies and to successful language planning in general.

The paper consists of two parts: a) an outline of the theoretical framework, and b) the case of Irish and present day language planning efforts.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Introduction to the framework

What generalizations can we make about language policies in multilingual states and how can we predict success and failure? We know that the possible linguistic outcomes of the prolonged contact of ethnic groups are basically three: language maintenance, bilingualism, or language shift. Bilingualism may also involve the spread of a lingua franca, an LWC (language of wider communication) like Russian in the USSR, Spanish in Latin America, or English in Europe and other parts of the world. An understanding of language

maintenance and shift and of the social conditions under which they occur constitutes a major means for understanding not only language policies which attempt language revitalization such as Ireland's, but also those which seek to regulate the interactions of ethnic groups within a modern nation-state. A language policy is not likely to be successful which goes counter to existing sociocultural forces. The difficulty lies in understanding and identifying which are the relevant social determinants of maintenance and shift. First, however, I want to digress from maintenance and shift in order to look at language and religion as social resources.

Language can be seen as a resource which is available to ethnic groups in their competition for access to the goods and services of a nation. All groups do not avail themselves of language as a symbol in their fight for independence or economic shares or for whatever goal they see as in their best interest. When they do, language can be a very effective power base as the nationalistic movements in Europe in the last century bear witness to. Language loyalty was so often romanticized during these movements, that one does well to remember that there is nothing inherently "natural" about group language loyalty, but rather that it is often a deliberately chosen strategy for survival.

Mohammed Kabir documents these points in his dissertation on "Nationalistic Movements in Bangladesh" (1985). His claim is that the economy is the crucial factor in bringing about change in a nation,

and as change occurs, so do members' loyalties and their bases therefore. Members choose political identity and mobilize strategies depending on their particular demands. So language, ethnicity, and religion are available resources and are chosen as identity bases variously over time as strategies to achieve specific demands.

Bengal, Kabir's case study, was populated by the same ethnolinguistic group, roughly half of whom were Muslim and the other half Hindu. Eventually the Hindu group came to dominate education and agriculture. In 1905 Bengal was split into East and West Bengal against the opposition of the Hindus, and in 1912 Bengal was reunited, this time against the will of the Muslims. The 1940 Lahore resolution granted Pakistan sovereign status so Muslims could have a separate homeland, and consequently the East Bengali claimed Muslim status to join Pakistan and become free of Hindu competition. But power became concentrated in West Pakistan, and the Bengali had little or no share in education and other social-economic spheres. In spite of the Bengali constituting 54% of the population, Urdu was the only national language of Pakistan, and this time the language controversy was the beginning of the separatist movement. Muslims in East Bengal joined with Hindus in separatist demands based on Bengali linguistic identity, and Bangladesh achieved independence in 1971 as a linguistic unity. To date, no one has raised the point of a united Bengal, because, Kabir points out, neither group (Hindu or Muslim) perceives reunification to be in

their best interest. Indeed, almost all group language behavior can be explained on the assumption that people act in their own best and vested interested. [This assumption does not always apply to religious groups, at least not in any obvious way. The Hassidim and the Amish both reject mainstream definition of "best interest" as socio-economic advantages and limit access to education in English, although in different ways, as one means of instead focusing on "best interest" as inner salvation.]

We see then an example of a group, East Bengal Muslims, who when they perceived such action best suited to their purposes and demands, claimed religious status and identity and Pakistani nationalism, later linguistic-ethnic nationalism and separatism and, at present, status for Bengladesh founded on religio-linguistic identity. Throughout the course of the last hundred years, language and religion have been available resources, variously utilized in the battle for survival in a harsh world.

Other ethnic groups are not very different from the Bengalis. When they see learning the national language well and fluently in the best interest of their children (and there are social institutions available like the schools and the church, which can help them do so), there are very few problems associated with the educational policies for minority groups. Within the single city-state of Singapore with her four official languages and three major religions, there is little sign of ethnic strife or educational problems (Crewe, 1977). In fact,

the ex-colonial English is favored as medium of instruction by many (McDougall & Foon, 1976). The simple explanation is to be found in Singapore's very strong and expanding economy. There is enough of the good of this life to go around for everybody, and competition takes place on the basis of individual qualities, not along ethnic lines.

But when these same ethnic groups instead of socioeconomic opportunity see stigmatization, discrimination, economic exploitation or systematic unemployment, they are perfectly likely to use the original mother tongue as a strategy for mobilization. Language boundary maintenance reinforced with religion is an even stronger tool. The Turks in Europe have frequently followed this latter process (Sachs, 1983). It is not that mainstream members and those from assimilated former ethnic groups like the Poles and the Slovaks in Pittsburgh don't face difficulties in a declining economy; it is rather that they don't feel a we-they injustice and antagonism and also that they have (through language shift) lost language as a resource for mobilization strategy.

The basic point to be made is that ethnic groups use language when available as a social resource when it is to their advantage to do so, not otherwise. The original Baku paper examined some case studies to illustrate this point and others that follow from it. The comparison of case studies is probably the most fruitful approach to the study of language and ethnicity, of language maintenance and shift at any theoretical level. In addition to the search for causal

factors, another major task is to identify and eventually typologize "under what social condition" maintenance and shift takes place.

The framework

The major point about multilingualism, which is not readily recognized in the literature, is that maintained group bilingualism is unusual. The norm for groups in prolonged contact within a nation-state is for the subordinate group to shift to the language of the dominant group, whether over three generations or over several hundred years, just as is happening in Ireland. Where shift does not take place, there are identifiable reasons of which the major two are lack of incentive (usually economic) and lack of access to the dominant language; another one is that the political unit may not be a nation-state as is the case with the federated soviets.

The mechanism for language shift is bilingualism, often with exogamy. Groups will vary in their degree of ethnic maintenance and in their rate of shift, of which one major influence is the origin of the contact situation. Voluntary migration results in much faster shift than does annexation or colonization. Other factors are continued access to a standardized, written L1 with cultural prestige and tradition in contradistinction to a non-standard, non-written language of no prestige. Sacred languages are also a factor. Ethnic groups also vary in their ethnic pride or ethnic stubbornness, which groups Spicer refers to as persistent peoples. This is a topic that

deserves work in the future as it will provide exceptions to some of my present generalizations.

I have discussed elsewhere at length a theoretical framework for explaining and predicting the language behavior of ethnic groups in contact within a contemporary nation-state (1987) and will merely touch on it very briefly here. The proposition is that linguistic groups form four distinct types of social mobilization: ethnicity, ethnic movements, ethnic nationalism and geographic nationalism which under certain specified social conditions result in differential linguistic outcomes of language maintenance and shift.

Ethnicity.

Royce defines ethnic identity as "the sum total of feelings on the part of group members about those values, symbols, and common histories that identify them as a distinct group. 'Ethnicity' is simply ethnic-based action" (Royce, 1982:18). There is in fact little power struggle and not much purpose with ethnicity and so the common course is assimilation and concomitant language shift. Ethnicity will not maintain a language in a multilingual setting if the dominant group allows assimilation, and incentive and opportunity of access to the national language are present. The immigrant groups to Sweden (with the exception of the Finns) are a very good example of this point. Voluntary migration, access to public schools and thus to the national language, and economic incentives in the form of available

jobs all contribute to assimilation and language shift. The very liberal Swedish educational language policies of mother tongue instruction will not succeed in bringing about L1 maintenance and will at most contribute to a few generations of bilingualism before complete shift to Swedish.

The Indian groups of Peru is another example of ethnicity and language shift within a nation-state. The shift is infinitely slower than in Sweden, and we can identify such factors as colonization, much less economic incentive and more difficulty in access to Spanish because of geographic isolation which contribute to that slower shift. We also need to consider the stigmatized status of things Indian and the cultural definition of race. The rewards clearly lie within Hispanic culture, and under these conditions General Velasco's language policies and bilingual education and Quechua as an official language clearly failed in stirring up national consciousness, in bringing about a sense of nationalism.

Ethnic Movements.

The major differences between Ethnicity and Ethnic Movement is when ethnicity as an unconscious source of identity turns into a conscious strategy, usually in competition for scarce resources. An ethnic movement is ethnicity turned militant, consisting of ethnic discontents who perceive the world as against them, an adversity drawn along ethnic boundaries. While ethnicity stresses the content

of the culture, ethnic movements will be concerned with boundary maintenance, in Barth's terms, with us against them. It is very much a conscious, cognitive ethnicity in a power struggle with the dominant group for social and economic advantage, a struggle which frequently leads to violence and social upheaval. Many ethnic movements have charismatic leaders, probably always born a member of the ethnic group, but they need not have an intellectual elite or a significant middle class.

Ethnic movements by themselves probably cannot maintain a language but will effect rate of shift so that the shift is much slower and spans many more generations. Peru has Sendero Luminoso, the terrorist Maoist Shining Path movement, but its leadership is university educated and functions in Spanish. More importantly, their claims are not drawn along ethnic boundaries but rather along social class. Ireland has its terrorist organization, the IRA, which also functions in the dominant language, i.e. English, and I doubt that it can be considered an ethnic movement.

Nationalism.

Shafer concludes that it is impossible to fit nationalism into a short definition (1972:5), but I will attempt to identify some salient features. Cottam insists that nationalism is best interpreted as the manifestation of nationalistic behavior and a nationalist is seen as "an individual who sees himself as a member of political community,

a nation that is entitled to independent statehood, and is willing to grant that community a primary and terminal loyalty (Cottam, 1967:3). Group cohesion to the end, goal-orientation of self-determination, a perceived threat of opposing forces and access to or hope of territory are characteristics of all national movements.

The improvement of one's own lot in life or at least of one's children's is probably a common goal of all national movements; the motivation is one of perceived self-interest, a self-chosen state. Very often nationalism takes place as a protest against oppression, against the common enemy, whether it be against a (dominant) group within the same nation or against another state. The Armenian movement in the Nagorno-Karabach area is probably best understood as an expression of ethnic nationalism.

Goals in national movements, besides general independence, tend to be quite definite and specific. These goals are often legitimatized by or based on historical past events or conditions. During the Finnish school strike in Stockholm during February of 1984, when Finnish parents kept their children out of school in support of their demand for Finnish medium schooling in kindergarten through university level courses, the reason given was that Finland is bilingual in Swedish-Finnish and that Sweden should reciprocate. It is a demand legitimized on the national law of the ethnic immigrant group and its past history and is much more characteristic of nationalism rather than of ethnic movements which

tend to base their claims on a rationale of equity with others within the nation-state.

A national movement must have a well developed middle class in which condition it differs from ethnic movements. Alba's (1975) anecdote of the Catalan workers who considered issues of language immaterial is representative. "We don't care if we are exploited in Castilian or Catalan," was their rejoinder, and they aligned themselves with the workers' unions and the socialist party rather than mobilize themselves along national lines. Without a stake in property, nationalism is not perceived to further one's self-interest.

Ethnic nationalism and geographic nationalism share many features, and the major difference is probably the same as Hans Kohn outlines for "open" and "closed" nationalism. In ethnic or closed nationalism the ethnic group is isometric with the nation-state. The emphasis is on the nation's autochthonous character, on the common origin and ancestral roots.

Finland is an example of ethnic nationalism, and I have frequently heard it remarked in Sweden that Finns are much more nationalistic than Swedes. As I have commented, the demands for Finnish linguistic rights, made not so much by the immigrants themselves as by official Finnish organizations, may be best understood as an expression of nationalism rather than ethnicity.

Kohn calls "open" nationalism a more modern form; it is territorially based (hence geographic nationalism) and features a

political society, constituting a nation of fellow citizens regardless of ethnic descent.

In ethnic nationalism, language is a prime symbol of the nation but that it is not necessarily so with geographic nationalism. Actually the United States does not even legally have a national language. At the same time, although one cannot change one's genes, one can learn a new language, and in a nation which does not care about genes but uses language to define membership, as does Catalonia, learning the new language obviously held both practical and symbolic significance: knowing the national language became the hallmark of membership and in-group state.

Catalonia exemplifies a nation which sustained language maintenance in spite of prohibition and prosecution. The monolingual Spanish medium schools were not successful in bringing about shift from Catalan to Spanish although they were successful in establishing widespread bilingualism. The educational language policies were not successful because they went counter to the prevailing social forces of strong economic incentives and geographic nationalism and stubborn pride all of which favored the maintenance of Catalan.

LANGUAGE PLANNING IN IRELAND

Introduction

This section of the paper intends to examine present language planning efforts in Ireland. Status planning, i.e. planning concerning language policies, is well in place. With the establishment of the Irish Free State in 1922, Irish was declared the national and first official language. Educational policies are generally accepted with Irish being taught in the primary schools and as an optional subject in the secondary. Corpus planning, planning the linguistic forms of the language such as standardization of the grammar and the lexicon, has also been in place since the late fifties, based primarily on the Connacht Irish dialect (Macnamara, 1971:73-74).

Rather, the concern is with language revitalization. This concern goes far back in Irish history, but in recent times the main center of such language planning efforts is the Bord na Gaeilge, established by the government in 1978 for the promotion of Irish. An Coiste Comhairleach Pleanala (The Advisory Planning Committee) of the Bord na Gaeilge in 1988 published their second report, entitled The Irish Language in a Changing Society: Shaping the Future (ILCS). This report on the Irish language situation documents the shift to English and suggests strategies for reversing the situation. It is primarily these strategies or remedies I wish to discuss in this paper.

Background

The Irish people was originally Irish Gaelic (mostly referred to as simply Irish) speaking with a culture and literature that go back over a thousand years. The Anglo-Norman invasion of 1172 overturned the traditional life of the country even though the early settlers seem to have shifted to Irish, except within the Pale. As Edwards writes:

> The Statute of Kilkenny (1366) demonstrate the power of Irish and the apprehension of the threat it posed to English. The thirty-six regulations (written incidentally in Norman French -- a telling indicator of linguistic realities) were intended to keep English settlers from adapting Irish ways, and covered everything from speaking in English to riding in the English manner. (1984: 268)

By the seventeenth century English rule was oppressively in place and a gradual shift to English, increasingly the language of status and power, began. By 1851, when the first census to take account of language was held, only 5% of the population identified themselves as monolingual Irish speakers (Macnamara, 1971: 65) and today all native Irish speakers are bilingual. (CLAR, 1975: 3) The present percentage of native speakers of Irish varies with the source; Fasold claims that the 1961 census indicates that between two to three percent of the population are native speakers (1984:278) while ILCS states:

> Recent surveys would suggest the proportion who use Irish as their first or main language to be something around 5%, but because the use of Irish changes over the life-cycle of

> individual bilinguals, the proportion who at some time in their lives used Irish relatively intensively might be 15%. A further 10% or so of the population use Irish regularly but less intensively in conversation or reading. As opposed to these relatively low ratios of spoken or active use of Irish, the ratios of passive use, primarily listening/watching Irish language radio and television programmes are considerably higher. About 25% of the population watch some Irish language program weekly and up to 70% watch such programmes at least occasionally. These levels of use clearly suggest that there is a reservoir of bilingual potential in the community which is not being realized in spoken use. (1988:32)

And that is exactly what the report identifies as the basic problem: in spite of the educational policies of teaching Irish to all school children, English is primarily spoken. "The central problem, however, is that popular use of the language (Irish) has remained at a low level and current indications are that there is contracting further in some important respects" (ILCS, 1988:x).

Language Planning Efforts

In spite of a number of government involvements[1] aimed at restoring the Irish language, the present situation is one of a very far gone language shift; indeed, as the first seven chapters of the ILCS report predict, the disappearance of Irish as a living language is a very likely possibility. (Presumably the symbolic importance of

Irish will continue so it will continue to be studied and learned much as Latin and Hebrew have been for centuries.)

What efforts then are being undertaken to halt this situation? Bord na Gaeilge in its 1989 report Key to the future of the Irish Language (KFIL) introduces itself as the state language planning authority to express and link state policy with all groups involved with Irish. "The Bord is language planner, catalyst and co-ordinator in its task of developing a bilingual Ireland" (1989:3). It lists as its objectives: 1) to plan, guide and depioy the appropriate resources for the implementation of a comprehensive strategy for the creation of an effectively bilingual society in Ireland by the end of the century, and 2) to further develop public support for the view that some ability in speaking Irish is a key factor in Irish identity (1989:5), reflecting the two social functions of the Irish language: communicative and symbolic. They identify seven strategies to do this: central planning, state and public leadership for real impact, expand networks and structures of usage, increase the visibility of Irish, ensure service through Irish in the Gaeltacht, a teaching revolution (new syllabi and methods) and innovative communications, like radio and TV programs, newsletters, and special events such as Gaeilge '89, a week long of seminars, music, arts, and cultural events (the report specially features a public lecture by Joshua Fishman).

Among Bord na Gaeilge's listed achievements, resulting from their Action Plan for 1983-86, are the increased number of All-Irish school and playgroups, increasing Irish proficiency of trainee teachers, broadcasting in Irish increased, developing a planning framework which involved other organizations and rekindled interest, and making the proposed bilingual objective clear to the public.

The Bord also lists as an achievement its Advisory Planning Committee's publication of The Irish Language in a Changing Society which it points out "has been acclaimed as the most important analysis and assessment of the language to date" (1989:11). It quotes the 1988 report:

> The fact is that Irish, by far the less widely spoken of Ireland's two languages, appears to be highly valued by the majority of the population as a symbol of Irish identity and of the separateness of its people.
>
> What is needed now is clear public realization of the central goals and strategies that must be pursued in order, at least, to halt the current drift and ideally, to translate passive ideological support into greater ability...and this greater ability into usage.
>
> Both state and voluntary effort continue to be needed, to formulate and implement policies which would extend and secure usage.

Current needs
1. to refashion a new concept of modern Irish identity incorporating an ideological rationale for Irish
2. a popular cultural movement and,
3. the state to assume an active role in fulfilling its own declared commitments to the language.

It appears to be at the level of usage that the most intensive policy efforts are now needed (1988:11).

Discussion

Basically I think that the Irish language planning efforts are doomed to failure. These are my reasons.

The very goal of "the creation of an effectively bilingual society" (Bord na Gaeilge, 1989:5) is unrealistic. Group bilingualism[2] is unusual. As I have stated earlier the norm for groups in prolonged contact within one nation is for the subordinate group to shift to the language of the dominant group, either over several hundred years as with Gaelic in Great Britain and Ireland or over the span of three generations as with the European immigrants to the United States.

The mechanism of language shift is bilingualism, often but not necessarily so with exogamy, where parent(s) speak(s) the original language with the grandparents and the new language with the children. Many Gaeltacht [3] parents now choose to bring their

children up in English and many out-migrating young men and women marry monolingual English speakers.

Language shift is often considered as an indicator of cultural assimilation, of loss of the values of the original culture. ILCS does consider "Irish as a marker of cultural identity. However, there is no isomorphic relationship between language and culture, nor is language maintenance necessary for culture and ethnicity maintenance, as Lopez (1976) documents for the Chicanos in Los Angeles. In other words, it is possible for groups to maintain their own ethnic culture even after language shift, as we see in groups like the English Gypsies and many Amerindian tribes. The report claims that "the Irish language has an integral and creative role to play in a modern definition of Irish identity" (1988:91). Certainly it could play such a role, but my point is that in the likely absence of the Irish language, Irish identity can be just as strongly defined through the medium of English. After all, Synge and Yeats and Joyce wrote in English and none will deny their Irish identity.

We know that the major linguistic consequence of ethnic groups in prolonged contact within one nation is language shift, but what is less understood (really not studied at all) is the degree to which such groups keep their communicative competence[4] rules and apply their own cultural rules of appropriate language use to the new language. How Irishly do the Irish behave in English? We know virtually nothing about this aspect of language shift, but it is easy to speculate

that a slow shift as in Ireland is more likely to guard cultural ways of using language. Indeed, ILCS remarks on the aping of English styles by yuppie (not the report terminology) Irishmen.

This shift only takes place if there is 1) opportunity and 2) incentive for the group to learn the national language. Henry the VIII clearly saw the need for opportunity to learn and ordered the Irish children to school in order to learn English. The National School system, established in 1831, was called the 'murder machine' of Irish (Edwards, 1985:54). The two major kinds of incentive is economic advantage and social prestige, and both have been and are at work in Ireland. One third of the manufacturing is owned by outside multinational corporations, and as a member of EEC, Ireland is discouraged by economic forces from intensive ethnic boundary maintenance. Also, through modernization and industrialization of the economic scene, social prestige has changed from ascribed to achieved status in which Irish plays no part. All social factors argue for complete shift to the dominant English language.

Where shift does not take place, it is for three major reasons, and none now are salient in Ireland. 1) Self-imposed boundary maintenance, always for reasons other than language, most frequently religion as with the Amish. Irish serves no particular religious function as does Hebrew, nor did the Catholic Church serve as a unified defender of Irish as she did in Catalunya for Catalan.

(There were ofcourse individual priests who did). The Catholic Church turned to English, and Irish became associated with Protestant proselytizing societies.

> The general view seemed to be that it was better to save souls than Irish and, as priests were often managers of primary schools the language was often actively discouraged there (O'Donnell, 1903). (Edwards, 1985:54).

2) Externally imposed boundaries, usually in the form of denied access to goods and services, especially jobs. Historically such boundary maintenance existed as in the Statues to Kilkenny which had the effect of excluding the Irish from the Pale, but at that time Irish was strong. Today, the economic market encourages English. Geographic isolation is also a form of external boundary which contributes to language maintenance. As ILCS points out: "Irish has survived in the Gaeltactai largely because they were economically and geographically peripheral areas" (1988:1). 3) A diglossic like (Ferguson, 1959) situation where the two languages exist in a situation of functional distribution where each language has its specified purpose and domain, and the one language is inappropriate in the other situation, as with Guarani and Spanish in Paraguay (Rubin, 1968) or with Modern Standard Arabic and the mother tongues in the Maghreb (Grandguillaume, 1983). ILCS discusses the network versus the domain model of bilingualism and is quite convincing in its documentation of the network model for Irish usage, which it predicts is likely to lead to shift or more exactly the non-maintenance of Irish.

Current Needs

Ideological rationale for Irish

ILCS argues that a priority for Irish language planning is a restatement of "an authoritative, ideological rationale for defending and taking pride in the language" (1988:91). They point out that Irish as highly valued by the majority as a symbol of Irish identity and claim that it is because Irish has served this function that the country has remained, to a degree, a bilingual society. At the same time, elsewhere in the report, they cite the Directors of CLAR, Brudner and White:

> Language attitudes in Ireland, while highly structured, internally coherent, and superficially correlated with language usage, do not appear to exert any independent effect on the individual's own language behaviour (1979:65).

In other words, people may perceive of Irish as having a very high symbolic value for the nation without at the same time being willing or able to use it in daily discourse.

While the report is searching for an ideological rationale for Irish, it denies the need for nationalism. "Irish peoplehood would be expressed in a universalist rather than particularistic or insular terms. This means not so much affirming an Irishness because of singularly Irish characteristics, but doing so in a way that would contribute positively to the evolution of the community of nations"

(1988:92). Not surprisingly, the report continues with a disclaimer that it cannot undertake the task of outlining such a modern philosophy of Irishness, but that they feel it essential for the establishment of a bilingual society. The report is absolutely right in seeing the need to motivate the people to want to take the trouble to learn and use Irish, but Irish identity and modern philosophy will not provide that motivation. They also tie the ideological rationale to motivating the generation of a popular cultural movement.

A popular cultural movement

ILCS calls for a populist cultural movement, mobilized around conceptions about a modern Irish identity. "If it were sufficiently attractive, particularly to young people, it could help to diffuse hostility to the language and encourage the translation of speaking ability into usage" (1988:94). What they are calling for is a form of social mobilization strong enough to carry a revitalization of Irish. In my previously discussed work on linguistic consequences for ethnic groups in multilingual settings (1987), I identified four types of social mobilization: ethnicity, ethnic movement, ethnic nationalism, and geographic nationalism.

Ireland is in a bind. Of these four types of social mobilization only nationalism is strong enough to work for maintenance or revival. However, it is an unavoidable fact that nationalism as a social phenomenon is a stigmatized behavior in present day Europe

for reasons of historical events during the last century. It is understandable that a region that has experienced the excesses of National Socialism and found economic recovery in a united Europe hesitates to again encourage nationalism.

The report frequently alludes to the Canadian situation as a model. The reversal of the language shift situation in Quebec is a clear case of nationalism to the point of separatism, where the adversity toward the Anglo population is the rallying cry for the Francophones. A perceived threat of opposing forces is a defining characteristic of most if not all national movements. Today Ireland lacks that sense of urgency for language survival.

Another case frequently alluded to is the case of Catalan where language legislation is cited as a causal factor for its maintenance. But the very same legislation has done nothing to halt the shift to Spanish for Gallego and Basque within the same nation. Rather, the cause for maintenance of Catalan has little to do with legislation and is instead due to the dominant economic situation and deep-seated nationalism of Catalunya (Paulston, 1987). In short, without a very urgent sense of nationalism, I doubt that any cultural movement based on 'modern philosophy' will have any chance for maintaining, less creating the use of Irish.

The state to assume an active role

ICLS encourages state intervention in three areas: 1) legal and administrative changes, 2) infrastructural provisioning and planning and 3) the social organization of Irish usage.

The report calls for the development and legislation to secure equal legal status of Irish and English. Although Article 8 of the Constitution sets out the constitutional standing of both official languages, it does not detail practical legislative provision, and in fact the current standing of Irish is dependent on case law rather than on legislation (1988:93). They clearly see the problems. "While, in theory, state directives on policy are conceivable, the reality is that a certain level of popular consensus about the aims of policy is essential if policy measures are not to cause public resentment" (1988:93). Status language planning in a democracy does demand popular consensus or at least a majority consensus, or the party will be voted out of power. Countries which have successfully used legislation to enforce language choice like Algeria (from French to Modern Standard Arabic) and Tanzania (from English to Swahili) have been one party nations. Even then, the social conditions favored such a choice, including a strong sense of nationalism.

The report mentions another very interesting point about legislative provision. Legislation inevitable interprets rights as attaching to individuals rather than to groups or collectivities:

> A point worth bearing in mind here is the ineffectiveness of much legislation which is couched in terms of individual rights, when it

> encoun· rs threat to a good which is common rather tnan individual. A pertinent example would appear to be the laws governing planning applications by non-Irish speakers to build houses in existing Gaeltacht areas. Under the law, neither the objectives of Gaeltacht policy, nor the threat to the survival of the minority language community, can be used as legitimate objections to such applications. Individual rights take precedence over a common good (1988:95).

The real question, for which I have no answer, would seem to be: What does it take to mobilize popular will so that it supports legislation enforcing the use of Irish? Given a choice between economic well-being through instrumental use of English and ideological use of the Irish, most Irish already seem to have made that choice, and consequently legislation is of not much use.

The basic principle of infrastructural planning demands that all state agencies be able to use Irish and that there be "no barriers to the use of Irish by the general public in interacting with any of the major public service departments or agencies, in particular health, social welfare, education, training, environment and agriculture" (1988:96). It seems a sensible demand similar to Canadian legislation, but in practice it won't work. The basic principle of language choice in encounters between individuals is quite theoretically uninteresting: you select that language in which both have the best proficiency. I speak English with my husband because my English is better than his Swedish, a totally practical matter. Similarly, if a Gaeltacht peasant,

bilingual since birth, goes to an agricultural agency for help and meets an anglophone agent who studied Irish in school ten years ago, it would be totally unnatural for them to speak Irish. This is the reason for the CLAR report finding, cited in ILCS (1988:99), that "even in designated Irish sections of Departments," Irish was rarely, if ever, spoken in the course of the work (1975:345).

Under the heading of Social Organization of Irish Usage, the report calls for the State to become involved in active promotion and organization of use. They point out that in recent years the State increasingly regulates social and cultural as well as economic organizations, mostly by the provision of public money. This function could be used to encourage the recipients to enhance the use of Irish. There could also be institutional parallelism in such social domains as taxation, social welfare and education. They also call for "positive discrimination" in the forms of capitation grants to schools and extra resources to all-Irish schools.

This brings up another difficulty with the proposed strategies. Official bilingualism with parallel institutions for a country like Ireland where all speak English is an expensive undertaking. The Bord na Gaeilge 1989 report calls for a yearly budget of 1,030,000 (US$1,514,100.00) excluding the expenses of teaching Irish in the public schools. There is of course no price on national pride and identity, and it is for the Irish people to decide how they spend their

money. However, given the highly unlikely chance of success, the Irish language planning efforts seem a waste of energy and money.

Conclusion

This paper has discussed present language planning efforts in Ireland for the revitalization of Irish. I have argued that these efforts are not likely to be successful and that the eventual disappearance of Irish as a living language may well happen.

NOTES

1. 1958, A commission of the Restoration of the Irish Language; 1965, 1966, 1969 White Paper; 1975, Committee on Language Attitude Research; 1978 Bord na Gaeilge; 1980 White Paper (Edwards, 1984:272).

2. By group bilingualism I mean a group where all or most of the individual members are bilingual. This is not necessarily true of countries which legally recognize more than one national language. For example, German speaking Swiss do not typically speak French and Italian as well.

3. The Gaeltacht in western Ireland is the only area which still retains a 'critical mass' of native speakers of Irish. Edwards estimates that there may be 50,000 regular Irish speakers left (1984:271). The maintenance of Irish in the Gaeltacht is obviously crucial to the survival of Irish as a living language.

4. Dell Hymes has coined the term communicative competence (1972) to include not only the linguistic forms of a language but also a knowledge of when, how and to whom it is appropriate to use these forms. Communicative competence includes the social meaning of the linguistic forms, and Hymes points out were a man to stand on a street corner and utter all and only the grammatical sentences of English (Chomsky's definition of linguistics competence), he likely would be institutionalized.

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