Thomason, Sarah and Terrence Kaufman
1988 *Language Contact, Creolization and Genetic Linguistics*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Thompson, Edward P.
1991 *Customs in Common*. London: Merlin.

Thompson, John B.
1990 *Ideology and Modern Culture*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Williams, Glyn
1992 *Sociolinguistics: A Sociological Critique*. London: Routledge.

Woolard, Kathryn
1989 *Double Talk: Bilingualism and the Politics of Ethnicity in Catalonia*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

1992 Language ideology: Issues and approaches. In: Kroskrity, Paul, Bambi Schieffelin and Kathryn Woolard (eds.), *Language Ideologies*. Special issue, *Pragmatics* 2: 235–249.

1998 Introduction: Language ideology as a field of inquiry. In: Schieffelin, Bambi, Kathryn Woolard and Paul. Kroskrity (eds.); *Language Ideologies: Practice and Theory*. New York: Oxford University Press, 3–47.

Woolard, Kathryn and Bambi Schieffelin
1994 Language ideology. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 23: 55–82.

# Locating power: Corsican translators and their critics

*Alexandra Jaffe*

## 1. Introduction

In 1989, a translation of a French novel, *Knock*, into Corsican by the Corsican writer and translator Jean-Joseph Franchi ignited a small but intense debate in Corsican cultural and literary circles. The debate was on the nature of translations from French into Corsican, or rather, about the various ways in which such translations could be politicized and made to symbolize power relations on a wider historical and societal level. This debate spilled over into the public domain, and received considerable media coverage. Translators and their critics shared fundamental assumptions about language, identity and power but disagreed about the function/outcomes of translation in the project of resistance to French language domination. This disagreement rested in part on their contrasting focuses on language-as-system versus language as practice/experience. Yet the analysis I will provide in this paper also shows that in some respects, translators challenged the insistence on a monolingual-monocultural norm and its essentialist view of relationship between linguistic, political and cultural identity. Translators also resisted the hobbling of personal artistic freedom imposed by the politics of language in contexts of minority language revitalization. Personal freedom became a metaphor for collective liberation, and suggested a model of resistance that located power in the prerogative to set and choose criteria of value.

In this paper, I use this debate over the politics of representation on Corsica to explore how enactments of linguistic and social identity are shaped by ambient ideological structures, and how "dominant" ideologies of language and identity can be resisted or transformed. Analysis of this debate over the value of translations illustrates John B.Thompson's general point that the minority experience and acceptance of dominance is not uniform; that we should not assume that the social reproduction of relations of inequality involves or requires perfect consensus (1984: Chapter 2). In the translation debate in Corsica we can see the ample space for dissent and contestation created by local interpretations of dominant ideas about the connection between language, identity and power.

Corsica is one of the many places in Western Europe where there has been language shift away from a "regional", predominantly oral language (Corsican) towards the official, written language of the state (French).[1] In the early seventies, the Corsican ethnonationalist movement was the catalyst for efforts at language revitalization. The philosophies and strategies of the past thirty years of Corsican language activism have been shaped by a number of ideological and political forces. These include macro-level language politics: the influence of dominant European ideas about the link between language, cultural identity and nationhood/autonomy. They also include how these broad themes have been translated into specific French language policies. Corsican language activists have also been influenced by academic explanations about the causal connections between French language policies and popular language attitudes and linguistic practices.

A central element of what I am labeling as "dominant language ideology" is the conflation of language, culture and national identity. This is the foundation of Western European "cultural nationalism", in which having a unique language is proof of a unique culture, which in turn legitimates claims to political sovereignty (Hobsbawm 1990; Anderson 1983; Balibar 1991; Grillo 1989). The influence of this dominant language ideology is evident in numerous postcolonial contexts and in many places in the developing world. It is also one of the most widespread scientific ideologies of language: as Blommaert (1996) points out, many linguists and sociolinguists involved in language planning in multilingual contexts subscribe to an "organic" model of language and culture, and to the assumption that linguistic/cultural homogeneity is "normal".

In Western Europe, France has one of the longest histories of using the dominant language as a symbol of political/social incorporation and exercising State control through what Cameron (1995) calls "verbal hygiene". Not surprisingly, therefore, political resistance to French domination in Corsica has been played out on linguistic and cultural terrain. Corsican nationalists made the Corsican language a centerpiece of their claims on peoplehood and political autonomy. As Handler (1988), Gal (1989) and others have pointed out, when language plays this key role in the legitimation of political boundaries, it is not language as communicative practice that is invoked, but rather language as a bounded, pure, autonomous code. In other words, in the European politics of language, there is a monolingual norm and an essentialist philosophical bias (cf. Lüdi 1992; Blommaert and Verschueren 1992).

All of the actors involved in the translation debate were self-labeled *culturels* ('culturals'): teachers, linguists and writers who had been actively involved in the promotion of Corsican language and culture for years. In these circles, the sociolinguistic concept of diglossia had been widely circulated, and constituted the baseline for both their understanding of the processes involved in language shift and their strategies for the revitalization of Corsican. Diglossia described the hierarchical, oppositional relationship between Corsican and French. It indexed language practices (specifically, the exclusion of Corsican from the powerful public sphere) as well as language attitudes. These were intimately connected, for the dominance of French in education and public life and the restriction of the use of Corsican to informal and family domains led many Corsicans to view the languages as *intrinsically* intimate/solidary (Corsican) or distant/powerful (French). When Corsican intellectuals wrote and talked about a "diglossic mentality" they were referring to the way that this compartmentalization of values effectively reproduced and legitimated Corsican's low status. Diglossia was seen as the outcome of both the practical and the symbolic domination of French, which not only had enormous pragmatic value but was also the center of French ideologies of moral and civic virtue (Lüdi 1992; Weinstein 1990). Reversing language shift thus involved tipping the balance of power between Corsican and French in order to simultaneously influence attitudes and practices.



How does one tip that balance of power? One major trend in Corsican language activism was to claim/build for the minority language the attributes and domains of power from which it had been excluded. This is why *writing* assumed such an important role in the process. Writing in Corsican was central to a number of strategies. First of all, the writing of grammars, orthographies and dictionaries played a key role in the construction of Corsican linguistic identity and legitimacy. These texts "proved" that Corsican met conventional and dominant criteria of "languageness": that it had internal unity and structure, and was clearly differentiated from other linguistic codes. Secondly, because the power of French was reflected in its command of public domains, writing in Corsican also played the critical symbolic role of displacing the sole dominion of French in literary, public and official contexts. All Corsican texts could be seen as game pieces in a war for symbolic territory. In the context of French language ideology, the production of written literary texts had particular value as a legitimation of Corsican's claim to be a real language. As late as 1991, during a debate over a proposed law on Corsican language education, a non-Corsican senator who was critical of the measure said: "*Mais où sont vos Rimbaud?*" ('Where are your Rimbauds?') in a reference to the lack of a literary tradition in Corsican that was clearly made to disparage Corsican's language

status. It is here that we begin to see the crux of the disagreement over the status of translation. Translation contributed to the corpus of written documents in Corsican, but it did not contribute to the goal of establishing an independent Corsican literary tradition.

## 2. The political nature of translation

There is an underlying political dimension to all translations, for each act of translation posits a relationship of power (whether equal or unequal) between languages and cultures. In contexts which are by definition hierarchical, the political significance of translation is heightened. Well before the postmodern critique of ethnographic practice, Crick (1976) underscored the issue of power in his definition of anthropology as "translation-for". By this he meant that translation is never neutral: it is an ideologically-grounded interpretation which is intimately linked to issues of power and legitimacy of the translator/anthropologist and his/her discipline (1976: 166). Gupta (1990) also points out the ways in which the process of cultural translation serves to ratify the authenticity of the anthropological construction of "self" and "other". Writing about translation in another context in which power relations are imbalanced (colonialism), Rafael points to "the fact that translation lends itself to either affirmation or evasion of the social order" (1988: 211). Translation is by definition a commentary on power relations, a point also made by Klor de Alva (1989: 143).[2]

Thus translation is metalinguistic and metacultural activity which makes explicit contrasts and conflicts between modes of discourse and models of linguistic value and power which are able to remain buried or implicit in much of everyday life and in some other forms of writing. The interpretation of the "meta" message of translations in contexts of ethnic and/or linguistic militancy takes place against two backdrops: (1) knowledge of the role and meaning of translation in conventional contexts and (2) knowledge of cultural and linguistic hierarchies.

As for (1), most translations are done in order to make a document accessible to people who cannot read it in the original. A translation that openly violates this pragmatic, communicative function acquires a certain metalinguistic force: it insures that the translation will be "read" as a political statement. Given the fact that not all Corsicans speak or read Corsican but all Corsicans speak and read French, translations from French to Corsican actually narrow, rather than broaden the reading audience and thus constitute one of these open violations. In the preface to his bilingual French-Corsican book *Cavalleria Paisana*, Rochiccioli (1982: 9) writes:



"To write in French and hope to be read is a form of optimism. To write in Corsican and cling to the same hope is to dream in vain." In the case of the translation of *Knock*, the metalinguistic dimension is not just part of the message; it *is* the message.

As for (2), there is a precedent for the successful political use of symbolic translations by other Western European ethnic minorities. Typically, ethnic militants have made an issue of translation of official and legal documents into the minority language as a way of asserting their right to cultural and linguistic difference and the government's responsibility to legitimize their language and culture. These translations of the key forms and legal texts of government bureaucracies are counter-symbols which draw on the dense and powerful associations of power, rationality and value of the dominant state. The Welsh nationalist movement, for example, has successfully imposed a parallel Welsh-language structure of forms and documents (Khleif 1980). This is also true of the Basques (Urla 1987), the Catalans (Woolard 1989), and the Québecois (Handler 1988).

However, this particular brand of militant translation has been very little used in Corsica, probably because nationalist or autonomist parties have never had political control. There was a brief (and I suspect, not entirely serious) production of Corsican identification cards, but no other official forms have been translated. In sum, attempts to create official documents in Corsican have been sporadic and have usually met with apathy or disapproval from the political class.

Thus the symbolic literary translation that sparked the debate was not building on a base of existing militant practice. No one had any experience of the social effects of such translations. Translators and their critics brought a variety of theoretical perspectives to their assessment of what translating from the dominant to the minority language did to the existing imbalance of linguistic power. The critics of translation looked at translation from a macropolitical perspective: they interpreted its symbolic value from within the diglossic model. The translators argued from the "bottom up"; they used the micropolitics of their own experiences as a metaphor for sociolinguistic relations of power in translation.

## 3. The critics

In a magazine article devoted to translation, Santarelli wrote (here and elsewhere in the paper, translations from French and Corsican are my own):

> [for many people, translation is] a dangerous symptom of a serious psychological complex that keeps Corsican literature in a state of infantile dependence on its French "big sister"... a destructive force which prevents it from finding its unique voice ... with Corsican creation in crisis, translation is an evasion of the facts: the language is moribund. It is premature to waste time and energy on translating foreign works while Corsican literature is only in its first stammerings...
>
> (Santarelli 1989: 21)

An angry reader wrote in to amplify on this theme, stating that the "soul of the nation" was best served by documents created in its own language, and called translation "imported foreign philosophy, the reproduction of outside identity". "If Corsican culture is sterile", he concluded, "then better not to deceive ourselves with translations, and to wait with patience for future literary harvests of genuine identity" (Anonymous 1989).

It is obvious that these criticisms have nothing to do with the author's creativity, the artistic validity or the cultural fidelity of the text of the translation. They stem from the knowledge of a political context in which

> translation has been largely a one-way street: the small nations hasten to translate all that is worthwhile of the great nations' literature into their own language but not vice versa ... Small nations cannot afford to be parochial and ignorant, while the great, it seems, can. And do.
>
> (Boldizsar 1979: xi)

The interpretation of translation primarily as a symbol of defeat in a cultural power struggle was expressed in less extreme terms by the literary editor of the Corsican page in the island's weekly magazine. He argued that in the current sociological context, only page-by-page bilingual editions of translations had pedagogical value and that only translations of works that had not been translated into French had philosophical merit. Translation in any other form was simply a "trap" into which minority languages in "diglossic" situations were often lured. Like the other critics, he assumed that the primary motive for translation was to prove the value, or raise the stature of the language in the idiom of power. "*Scrivi tu è scrivi toiu, O Ghjuanghjasè*" ('Write of yourself and of your own, O Jean-Joseph') he wrote, advising Franchi not to waste his considerable creative talents on more translations (Fusina 1989b: 61).



It was true that Franchi had translated Montesquieu and other French classics, and could be suspected of being motivated by the hope that some of the status and legitimacy of the original text would rub off on the minority language. But he had made no particular claims for the greatness of *Knock*; one of his primary motivations for choosing it, he wrote, was that it was widely read in schools (Franchi 1989b). In Franchi's view, translating a familiar text was pedagogically useful. But the ordinariness of the original text was a much more subtle and specific issue than the ones the critics were engaging. They were using Franchi's work as emblem of all translation from the French, and they interpreted his motives against the backdrop of the history of Corsican language planning. That is, as language activists themselves, the critics had often heard arguments such as: "Corsican has no grammar —it has no literature— it is incapable of expressing abstract ideas" from both Corsicans and French as a way of rationalizing French language dominance. They also knew that there was already a long (and I would argue inevitable) tradition in Corsican language activism of countering such arguments by attempting to show that Corsican met French criteria of linguistic value. They recognized that this form of resistance to French left the French-Corsican hierarchy undisturbed, since France and French were still the sources of authority.

While all the translators vociferously denied that they were using the French texts as entrance exams for Corsican legitimacy, some of their comments suggested otherwise. For example, D. Geronimi was challenged during a literary gathering to explain why he had translated *Waiting for Godot*. One of his responses was that the translation served to "put the language to the test". In his written rebuttal to criticism of his translation of *Knock*, Franchi phrased the value of translation in these terms:

> You say that Corsican is concrete? Certainly, and this is its opportunity to bring to European consciousness this mass of images and sensations which until this day have remained *literally virgin*.
>
> (Franchi 1989b: 59, italics added)

Here, "literally" can be translated as "literarily"; for the virginity of Corsican has to do with the written, not the oral tradition. Franchi's statement is based on the cultural norm that attributes superior status and value to written genres, and suggests that the value of the Corsican language is virtual until it is put into writing, which allows it to be measured and assessed in some wider social context. I do not want to make too much of

these comments, because they are only part of a complex set of linguistic and social motivations that I will expand on below. But I do believe that they reflect an underlying tension of experience. That is, all Corsican writers, in their natural desire to legitimate their activity, have only French literary precedents to turn to. As Niranyana puts it, people in postcolonial contexts live lives that are already always "in translation" (1994: 38). One could argue that for any educated Corsican, French literature was an inevitable point of reference for all acts of reading and writing (including in Corsican); that even when they wrote original works and did not translate, the implicit comparison between the hegemonic French literary tradition and Corsican literary production was unavoidable. We can see this in the remarks made by Jacques Thiers in a newspaper interview regarding the publication of his book *A Funtana d'Altea*, in Corsican. He refused the label of "novel", because

> being able to write a novel in Corsican is seen as one of the ultimate proofs of the dignity of our language. But do we really need to have novels to believe that Corsican is a distinct language? This is why I prefer to say that my book is a story. Corsican writers do not write in order to show that Corsican is a language.
>
> (Cerani 1991)

The critics of translation viewed any use of French as the source language as an implicit acknowledgment of the superiority of French. They wanted to exercise power by policing the boundaries of the Corsican literary corpus. Given the power imbalance between French and Corsican, it was important to withhold from French any ownership of the "source" text. Translators challenged this reading of the authority of the source text, offering a reverse reading of the relations of authority between source and target language. Rafael provides the groundwork for this sort of reading in his discussion of the relationship of translation to social process. Translation, he writes, "arises from the need to relate one's interest to that of others and so to encode it appropriately ... it thus coincides with the need to submit to the conventions of a given social order" (1988: 210). The translators took the position that translation into the minority language encoded a *reformulated* social order in which habitual relations of power were reversed and the "minority" language was established as the set of conventions to which the majority language had to submit. They claimed that this symbolic empowerment of Corsican was heightened in translations for which there was no practical need, since historically, the "need" for translations in either direction had been defined and imposed on the minority by



dominant linguistic and social groups. That is, they were arguing that in their translations, the power balance was on their side since French was being used for Corsican purposes.

## 4. Translation as practice: The translatable and the untranslatable

The translators' reformulation of the power structure was based in part on their experience of the constant tension, in the act of translation, between what can and what cannot be translated; between the power of the translator to breach chasms of linguistic equivalence and the power of language to resist this forced journey from one culture and frame of reference to another. This tension is central to much of the abundant literature on translation, in which the proof of the translators' skill lies in their ability to recognize its limits: to identify what cannot be completely successfully communicated across languages and cultures. In a volume entitled *Small countries, great literatures*, the editor remarks in the introduction that "*Latva, lasnak* is untranslatable. *Seen, seeing* appears incomplete in English, while the Hungarian has disarming force" (Boldiszar 1979: ix).

Writers on translation always return to the topic of the untranslatable. Rabassa (1984: 24) comments on the untranslatability of local experience of words. He gives the example of the problem the name of a tree posed in a translation he made from Spanish to English. The tree, which has no English counterpart, was identified by its Mayan name in the Spanish text. None of the available choices of translation seemed satisfactory. The local flavor and exoticism connoted by the linguistic contrast of the Mayan name in the Spanish text could not be faithfully reproduced by using either the Mayan or the Spanish name for the tree in the English text. The experiential equivalent (a tree called by an exotic, indigenous name in English) would be geographically inauthentic. In a similar vein, Tedlock (1989: 167) writes about the untranslatability of names in his one act play dramatizing the translation of *Popol Vuh*. The characters debate whether or not a proper name in a Mayan text that means "crocodile" in Nahua should be left in Mayan or written "crocodile" in English. And Eva Hoffman (1989) reflects on her sister's adult decision to use her Polish name in her English life jars her ear:

> Its syllables don't fall as easily on an English speaker's tongue. In order to transpose a single word without distortion, one would have to transport the entire language around it.
>
> (Hoffman 1989: 272)

It is the knowledge of the "entire language" and culture that translators are reminded of by failures in translation. In one respect, their mastery of two codes and movement between them emphasizes linguistic and cultural boundaries. This is the "going across" in the experience of translation. When translators talk about the untranslatable, they often reinforce the notion that each language has its own "genius", an essence that "naturally" sets it apart from all other languages and reflects something of the "soul" of its culture or people. Three comments by Franchi illustrate this point. In a magazine article in which he discussed translation, Franchi used, and then reflected on his use of a Corsican idiom. He wrote: "Quant'au reste, inutile de *'piattassi daretu un ditu'*... tiens! Comment dit-on cela en Français?" ('As for the rest, it's useless to "*hide behind a finger*"... tell me, how do you say that in French?') (1989b: 58). In a fieldwork interview, Franchi also told me an anecdote which emphasized the role of translation in maintaining the integrity and boundaries of both languages in question. He recounted that he had "faithfully" translated Yves Morel's song *'Tu ne me quittes pas'* into Corsican for a Corsican singer. The singer, he said, had then "ruined" the translation by "Corsicanizing" the original music and singing so that the words, so clearly articulated in the original version, were unintelligible. Here, Franchi emphasized the translator's obligation to render the *essence* of the original —the relation of words to music, the tone, the style— in a manner that was also faithful to the structures and style of the target language. In another part of the interview, he took up the topic of language boundaries once again, asserting that the very nature of Corsican guaranteed a distance between source text and translation. He explained that because Corsican is less standardized and more archaic than other latinate languages, a Corsican version of a text would never be "a simple copy of the original" that he claimed one would find, for example, in a translation from French to Spanish.

But the "untranslatable" is also a momentary failure, for translators often do arrive at felicitous translations. These successes are made possible by translators' knowledge of the social, contextual and experiential grounds of meaning in the two languages and cultures that they broker. The process of translating heightens and hones the translator's experience of cultural and linguistic mastery. Translation requires what the Corsican poet Biancarelli described to me as "*un œuil intermédiaire*" ('an intermediate eye'). For him, translating was a rich source of self-knowledge and creative stimulus; it was a metalinguistic experience, an orchestration of the tension between two sets of metaphors. Translators also talked about the exercise of the imagination that translation provoked in the search for a phrase, a



tone or a style that they might never have considered in the absence of the requirement to shuttle between two worlds of discourse.

There is another sense in which translation was particularly empowering for Corsican writers. They were able to experience what Roland Barthes calls the "*jouissance*" ('pure pleasure') of the text which comes from playing with or violating norms of style, grammar, register and so on *in Corsican*. I emphasize this because this "*jouissance*" can usually only be experienced in languages with a written tradition. A writer who creates an original text in Corsican cannot violate a norm because there are hardly any (except for the hegemonic French norms); today, even Corsican spelling norms are contested. Translation gave these authors a chance to activate the sociolinguistic elements of oral style that, because of the small corpus of Corsican literature, were largely unexploited. In the translation of *Knock*, the characters were given identities and Corsican dialects from distinct microregions. As a stylistic strategy, the author was playing off the reader's understanding of the social connotations of accent and dialect and regional identity in *both* French and Corsican. This was one of the reasons why it was important for the text to be familiar: it allowed a wide public to appreciate his stylistic strategies. Reviews in the paper printed bits of the dialogue, asking "what do you think of character x speaking as if he came from Sartène?" The point is that the meaning of the author's use of Corsican dialects was sharpened and focused by its relationship with the French work; a similar strategy in an original Corsican work might not have had the same resonances.

Furthermore, as another translator, Jean-Marie Arrighi, pointed out to me, translation provided a unique opportunity to experience that "*jouissance*" without risk for Corsican. This was because translation provided the writer with an outside language of norms which could be violated, thus sparing the fragile oral code from a form of play it might not withstand. That is, there were norms in Corsican, but they were uncodified norms of usage; in Arrighi's words, "one does not feel free to break with those norms which it is still a question of trying to save."

In the arguments so far for and against translation, we can see that translation does not just reflect static relations of social power; it is a forum in which linguistic and social authority is discursively constituted. And, as Balibar writes (joining to some extent the translators' position), "it is in translations that the weaker partner appropriates the language of the stronger" (Balibar 1987: 19). This point is illustrated in Rafael's (1988: xi) elegant analysis of the meaning of translation for Tagalogs and Christian missionaries. Seen from a Tagalog perspective, translation of Spanish texts

and discourse was a way of domesticating the forces of Spain and Christianity, it was "a process of demarcation and appropriation" which subverted the notion of linguistic consensus.[3] Similarly, Crowley (1996: 118) notes that for Irish Protestants, the translation of the Bible into Irish was a way of taking popular control of the word of God; it was a form of liberation from English social control.

We can readily draw the analogy with the Corsican case, where translators saw themselves as appropriating linguistic space and the critics of translations took the latter perspective, substituting the authority of French for God's will. In the Corsican case, we can also note the tension (in the translators' discourse) between adherence to an essentialist model of language which emphasizes the naturalness of linguistic and cultural boundaries and the expression of a sense of personal pleasure and identity in which Corsican and French are not separated but integrated.

Another important theme in Corsican translators' defense of their craft was that producing or reading translations involved an intense and simultaneous experience of both the universal and the particular in a way that emphasized cultural interactions rather than cultural boundaries. Several translators emphasized that the positive experience of the particular was generated by a *dialogue* with another culture in the act of translation. For example, in the literary forum mentioned above, Geronimi declared: "I translated *Waiting for Godot* because I am not Becket. I wanted to write it as if Becket were Corsican, as if he had never known another language than Corsican." Franchi justified his translations in similar terms: "so that the [Corsican] language has the chance to know, to experience the works in question" (1989b: 59). Santu Casta, who translated *The Little Prince*, said in an interview in *Kyrn*, "All cultures are intertwined. It always does good to go and see and try to understand the ways others see life, the world" (1990: 35). Often, translators selected their source texts because their relevance to Corsican society. Biancarelli, for example, chose to translate *Waiting for Godot* for its theme of the absurd, for the confrontation between tradition and modernity and the conflict and confusion of identity that he felt characterized Corsican society. A similar theme (as well as the book's familiarity) had motivated Franchi's choice of *Knock*. On another occasion, Biancarelli had translated Gabriel de Lorca in order to explore cultural rather than thematic resonances.

Very explicitly, the translators rejected the exclusionary logic of minority self defense —the wholesale rejection of all that is "foreign", especially if it comes from the dominant culture. They insisted on the "link with the outside" (Geronimi), "the impossibility of living in autarchy," and



the necessity of "rubbing up against other writers and cultures" (Biancarelli). In the introduction of his translation of some short pieces by Woody Allen and John Steinbeck (from the French) for the radio, Petru Mari (1986) wrote to an imaginary skeptical audience:

> Yes, of course our literature is able to produce the same pearls as any other ... what do you say? That we don't need anyone? Yes, but if we want to do without them, they will certainly do without us ... what do you think of that?
>
> (Mari 1986: 1)

All of the translators insisted that this relationship with the other was not a dependent one.

## 5. Walking the line between alienation and empowerment

Crowley writes that

> The monoglossic language, at once familiar and foreign, necessary but felt to be alien ... presents the colonial subject with a problem: how to engage in that language without, in using the oppressor's language, reinforcing one's own dispossession.
>
> (Crowley 1996: 51)

This dilemma is a fundamental one which is not perfectly resolved for those who defend the practice of translation. One response to this dilemma is to emphasize non-equivalence in the form of the text. James Joyce, Crowley adds, did so by using the dominant language in such a novel way as to make it new and make it his. What we find in the Corsican context is a move by several Corsican authors to avoid labeling what they did as "translation". Petru Mari (cited above), Jacques Fusina (who had translated an opera and several song lyrics), and Santu Casta (who had translated *The Little Prince*) all insisted that they only "adapted" or "interpreted". While it was not necessarily the case that "adaptations" were more different from the original texts than "translations", using the term "adaptation" stressed the significance and the authenticity of the final text in Corsican terms, rather than its fidelity to the original. Mari made it clear that for him, the question was less what translators could do for the original than what the original could do for them. The foreign voices in the text might be "imported" (as one of the attacks on translations had claimed), but they were firmly in the representational control of their importers. Mari com-

mented that he had not invested a great deal of time in the mechanics of translation: "I did it quickly," he told me, "with an ear for how these pieces would work on the radio for a Corsican audience."

The preface to Grimaldi's (1989) bilingual collection of stories (*U stringagliulu di sigolu*) is a strong expression of non-equivalent adaptation philosophy. Although this is not a completely parallel example (the author wrote the original in Corsican and had someone else do a French version), the description of that version is illustrative here:

> [it] is neither a direct translation, nor even an adaptation ... the French text is born out of the Corsican one, without being dependent on it; there is no hierarchy in this musical piece, where the two versions are like point and counterpoint.
>
> (Fusina 1989a: 5)

Here, we can note that the rhetorical force of the emphasis on equality and independence in "adaptations" depends on the contrast with "translations", and thus reinforces the association of translation with linguistic hierarchy.

Some of the authors mentioned so far —Franchi, Fusina, Biancarelli, Geronimi— had superlative command both of written French and written Corsican. They belonged to the very top echelon of the Corsican bilingual intelligentsia. Their exceptional linguistic facility was a vital ingredient in the experiences of personal linguistic empowerment which served as the basis for their judgments about the sociolinguistic meaning of translations.

The experience, and the meaning of translation was rather more ambiguous for those who could not alternate between the two written codes with the same agility. Perhaps the most reflective and self-conscious of these was Jean-Marie Arrighi. He had translated some official reports of the Regional Assembly's Cultural Council, of which he was a member. He did this because he was committed to the principal of using translations as a way of legitimizing Corsican in the political domain. His experience of translating, however, was ambiguous. To be sure, the process highlighted the difference between the two languages. But it also underscored his very different levels of mastery and experience of Corsican versus French. As he tried to translate, he realized that his abstract thoughts were in French; he could only voice them in Corsican with great and painful effort. Translation made him struggle with his French intellectual heritage; although he rejected its powerful, authoritative and authoritarian linguistic ideology, his entire academic identity and practical consciousness was a function of his experience in this system. For Arrighi, creating an abstract, intellectual



document in Corsican was a difficult exercise in which he inevitably reworked French models of expository prose in his head. If Arrighi used his experience of translation as a metaphor for its political significance (as the previous translators did), it was the dominance of French and the weakness of Corsican in public, literary domains that prevailed.

Another question raised for Arrighi by his experience of translation had to do with the nature of the linguistic and cultural divide between Corsican and French. From a political perspective, using Corsican in official domains (and thus, creating new registers in the minority language) was a step forward in a process of linguistic development and legitimation. But from another more emotional and experiential vantage point, this "new" Corsican had no cultural resonances. As he translated, Arrighi sometimes had the impression that he was forcing Corsican into a mold which had no intrinsic value in the Corsican universe. Was a bureaucratic Corsican a "deformation" of Corsican? Was it recognizable *as Corsican* to the average reader? In these questions we can see a reflection of the workings of the diglossic model: the compartmentalization of domains of practice and experience is translated into judgments about linguistic essence. That is, the things that Corsican and French are habitually used to do are read in the popular imagination as part of their inherent capacities.

Arrighi translated the documents because of his conviction that occupying public space with Corsican was important. But his own experience told him that he could not completely control or predict the effect of these symbolic translations on popular attitudes. On the one hand, it was possible that texts such as the ones he produced could be the catalyst for new understandings and acceptance of different registers of Corsican. That is, they might chip away at the logic of diglossia, with its polarized and essentialized identities. On the other hand, the texts might be dismissed out of hand as irrelevant and/or "not Corsican". At the time that Arrighi wrote, it was very difficult to gauge the results of any piece of writing in Corsican, since the reading and writing public was so very small.

One of Arrighi's responses to the dilemma posed by the imbalance in his mastery of written Corsican and French was to write the Corsican version first. He did this to insure a radical difference between the two texts; in particular, to prevent himself from producing a text with Corsican words and French linguistic and conceptual structures. Writing the Corsican text first forced him to ask himself, "how would one *think* this in Corsican?" and finding an authentic Corsican voice to express those thoughts. This voice was partly his, partly his ancestors'; Arrighi himself had not thought these abstractions in Corsican before. Ultimately, he said that his experi-

ence of writing these documents was linguistically integrative. He noted that expressing the abstract in a language he had only known as concrete was a way of rediscovering the inherent metaphorical nature of all signs for abstractions, rediscovering the "*pensée sauvage*" in the language of reason and owning them both, in their simultaneous sameness and difference.

But Arrighi did acknowledge that for the inexpert translator, it was indeed the source document and language that dominated. This, I believe, is the nature of most bilingual Corsicans' experiences of translation in their everyday lives. When older speakers of Corsican heard people make errors in French or in Corsican, they often attributed them to failures in translation. These failures of translation were interpreted within the framework of their experience of French language domination and the stigma attached to speaking Corsican. Thus "not being able to find the right words" in Corsican was a form of linguistic alienation that also symbolically highlighted the power of French to erode minority language competence. But the converse, "not being able to find the right words" in French, was seldom seen as proof of the uniqueness and authority of Corsican; it was experienced as a failure to command French that was personally embarrassing and disempowering.[4]

The potential for translation to highlight linguistic alienation is illustrated quite dramatically in a class of "surrogate" translations. One author and illustrator of children's books, Francette Orsoni, does not write in Corsican, but said that she "felt in it"; her stories emanated from childhood images of the village and the world of the fantastic; both of which she associated with Corsican. She created a rudimentary text in Corsican, gave it to a "specialist" friend and collaborated with him over the Corsican turns of phrase, which came "naturally" to him. Even though they did not "come naturally" to her, she represented them as her latent Corsican voice: she knew when the Corsican text was "right".

Another writer (Mattei 1971) had a book of poems he wrote in French translated by a friend in much the same fashion and for the same reason, although his edition was bilingual, with Corsican and French versions printed on facing pages. Mattei, however, made no claims for his own Corsican competence. In a poem thanking his translator, he wrote:

| | |
|---|---|
| *Je remercie Nicole* | I thank Nicole |
| *Qui sait avec adresse* | Who has the skill |
| *Et avec délicatesse* | And delicacy |
| *Utiliser ses connaissances* | To use her knowledge |
| *N'importe qui* | Not anyone |
| *Ne peut traduire de la poésie* | Can translate poetry |



| | |
|---|---|
| *Je dis que la langue maternelle* | I say, the mother tongue |
| *Est à celle adoptée* | Is to the one I use |
| *Qu'une flamme moderne* | Like a modern light |
| *Est au feu de cheminée* | Is to the fireplace's fire |
| *Elle est froide et fade* | It is cold and pale |
| | |
| *Et sort de moi toujours* | And always comes out of me |
| *toujours forcée* | forced |
| *De toutes ses articulations* | In all its articulations |
| *Cette langue sans chaleur* | This language without warmth |
| *Me fait peu envie* | Hardly attracts me |
| | |
| *Comme un fruit hybride* | Like a hybrid fruit |
| *Issu des pires conjonctures* | Born of the worst circumstances |
| *On m'a toujours reproché* | I have always been reproached |
| *Le français de mon écriture* | For writing in French |

Both Orsoni's and Mattei's works are a curious blend of alienation and intense connection with the language and its cultural resonances. The alienation is particularly striking in Mattei's poem, where he characterizes the language that he commands in writing (French) as "forced", "cold" and culturally inauthenticating. There is also Mattei's use of the metaphor of the "hybrid fruit" to describe his own mixed identity. Far from exploiting the association of horticultural hybrids as a positive source of genetic resilience, Mattei represents hybridization as a disastrous genetic aberration. This metaphor shows the strength of the monocultural-monolingual norm, with its images of linguistic and cultural purity: hybridization equals bastardization. These two authors' very desires for surrogate translation invoke an ideology in which the value of the final product is called into doubt: is not the "translated" text a hybrid one?

Surrogate translators were also sometimes used in the nationalist press, and the end results were no less ambiguous than the texts described above. An editor of an autonomist newspaper told me that he felt a political obligation to print serious articles in Corsican. But he and most of the members of his staff did not feel they were competent to write such Corsican texts. The editor tended to draw on a pool of specialists, sending them a French text to turn into a Corsican piece. These same people were called upon to produce Corsican pamphlets and program announcements for political events. The meaning of these translations can be interpreted in a number of different ways. On one hand, the fact of translation was very thinly dis-

guised. The common knowledge that there was a handful of language specialists producing in Corsican emphasized the marginality of writing in Corsican even amongst people who were politically committed to Corsican language and culture. In this sense, these translations drew attention to the lack of fit between political will and linguistic practice, as well as to the power imbalances between French and Corsican that were the causes of the belated development of Corsican literacy. On the other hand, the translation created Corsican linguistic space whose meaning was not entirely bound to the context of its production.

## 6. Representation and representativity: Politics versus creative license

As we have seen, translators' discussions of the meanings of translation often revolved around their personal experience of translating. In many cases, translation was experienced as a rich arena of creative practice, a source of self-discovery and heightened metaphorical awareness. The nature of the criticisms of translation show, however, that cultural production in Corsica is often cast and always interpreted as political. Writing in Corsican entails social responsibility to represent and promote Corsican culture and language; personal, creative, artistic fidelity takes a distant second place.[5] For a Corsican writer, all creative choices in the process of writing –the use of French versus Corsican, genre, register, topic, spelling– are also political and ideological positions about the nature of Corsicanness.

The political facet of minority expressive culture often coincides with Corsican writers' and artists' personal and political agendas; an overwhelming percentage of Corsican expression is both politically-oriented and focused on Corsicanness. To take a popular example, there is the following commentary from a record jacket of the group *A Filetta*, whose very name (the fern) is "a symbol of tenacity and rootedness".

> the themes taken up are meant to be representative of the joys, the sorrows, the suffering and also the hopes of our people. In them, we denounce repression, the abandonment of the terrain, the loss of our language ...

The moment writers or singers strayed from this path, however, they risked being seen as traitors by other cultural militants. On a personal level, this pressure was fatiguing and frustrating, and ran counter to individual expectations of artistic liberty and the pleasures of self-expression. This was



brought home to me one day in a conversation with Fusina, one of the key figures from the "seventies generation" of linguistic militants. As we parted, he said that frankly, he was "just tired"; tired of having to represent something, tired of being a symbol. He just wanted to write, for himself. We can find echoes of this sentiment in comments made by Geronimi (the translator of Becket) and Thiers (the author of numerous works in Corsican and French). Challenged to explain why he had translated from French in the literary meeting alluded to above, Geronomi enumerated all the social justifications for translation. Repeated questioning from the audience then drew a slightly defensive response: "I did it for me, for my pleasure", he said, looking around the room in a way that dared anyone to challenge his right to textual "*jouissance*" and self-representation. Similarly, in the newspaper interview cited above, Thiers' response to the journalist's query about why he wrote a book in Corsican was:

> Pleasure! pleasure! When we speak about Corsican ... we speak about its ruined state, its protection, and of sacrifice. Certainly, there is little to rejoice in, but should we refuse our enjoyment and never speak about the satisfaction and liberation we get from expressing ourselves in Corsican?
>
> (Cerani 1991)

In addition to being an assertion of individual rights, the translators' claim that they translated for their own pleasure had a political and ideological foundation. In fact, I would argue that it was through staking a claim to artistic freedom that Corsican translators proposed their most radical reworking of concepts of linguistic power.

Specifically, the translators appeared to be aware that the social ideology of art reflects relations of power; that the relentless insistence on cultural representativity and fidelity to the exclusion of any other form of expression was in itself evidence of a "colonized" mentality. Translating was a way of demonstrating a new confidence in Corsican language and identity by acting *as if* it were a language of power. Powerful languages are threatened neither by other languages nor by individual activity. Waiting, as the one critic recommended, for Corsica to produce a body of literature that could stand up to French was a denial of the value of both Corsican linguistic history —an oral tradition— and of present-day literary activity, with the normal range of talent and genres it represented.

It is in this sense that the personal experience of power in translation from French into Corsican had a unique political weight. It has to be remembered that most of these writers had not come by their mastery of two

languages painlessly. For those who learned French for the first time in school, the first translations they experienced were violations of categories of identity and knowledge embedded in their knowledge of their mother tongue. The shock caused by these translation experiences is well documented, as it occurs in most immigrant contexts. Thus, as Eva Hoffman writes (1989), these were translations in which

> the signifier [is] severed from the signified ... "river" in Polish was a vital sound, energized with the essence of riverhood, of my rivers, of my being immersed in rivers. "River" in English is cold —a word without an aura.
>
> (Hoffman 1989: 106)

Even personal names, the most intimate link of language and self, are strangely altered in this first translation of cultures in school. Richard Rodriguez remembers his first day in an American school, his first extended contact with English:

> The nun said in a friendly but oddly impersonal voice, Boys and Girls, this is Richard Rodriguez. (I heard her sound out: *Rich-heard Road-ree-guess*). It was the first time I had heard anyone name me in English...
>
> (Rodriguez 1982: 11)

And Eva Hoffman recounts the day she and her sister are given English versions of their Polish names:

> My sister and I hang our heads wordlessly under this careless baptism ... the twist of our name takes them a tiny distance from us —but it's a gap into which the infinite hobgoblin of abstraction enters. Our Polish names didn't refer to us, they were us as surely as our eyes and hands. These new appellations ... are not us. They are ... disembodied signs pointing to objects that just happen to be my sister and myself.
>
> (Hoffman 1989: 105)

This symbolic violation, for Hoffman, for Rodriguez and, I suspect, for Corsican writers, heralded their entry into a world they had to obsessively translate —a world of words that they had to possess, precisely *because* they had been cut off from the resonances of those words as children. It was a quest, as Rodriguez says, for an a sense of identity and individuality



in the public language, a desire to belong in order to escape undifferentiated otherness. For Hoffman, liberation from the need, and then the desire to translate, signaled the end of her personal sense of alienation. For Rodriguez, this liberation took the form of being able to use the public language to address an anonymous reader, to write about intimate subjects —in short, to dissolve his diglossic experience of Spanish and English. In a sense, Corsican writers can be seen as taking up translation from French as a way of asserting this sort of liberation. Rather than working within dominant structures of value by reversing the habitual identities of source and target language, they took hold of the power to define the meanings of linguistic acts, and declared their translation into Corsican a demonstration of their freedom from the *requirement* to translate (possess) French and a manifestation of their desire to possess Corsican. That is, they defined power as the prerogative not to censor those acts that could be interpreted as powerless.

## 7. Conclusion: The perils of asserting virtual power in written genres

What is the difference between asserting this sort of power through literacy and literature and asserting it in oral practice? By way of answering this question, let me contrast Petru Mari's translation of Steinbeck's and Woody Allen's plays for radio with some of the other kinds of documents we have considered.

First of all, Mari's published text was a by-product of a translation that had been intended for purely oral consumption. Mari told me that he had only published the translation at the urging of one of his academic friends. In the original broadcast, the textual and foreign origins were clearly subordinated to the entertainment value of the spoken piece. Moreover, since the original texts were in English, they were not accessible to most Corsicans in the original. They were not, therefore as purely symbolic — and hence, as political— as Franchi's translation of *Knock*. They required no prior knowledge of the originals; their meaning and value was not dependent on a bilingual consciousness or a literary background. They were accessible, therefore, to a majority of radio listeners. The political was also de-emphasized by the programming patterns at the radio station. Broadcasts alternated between French and Corsican throughout the day, in all varieties of programming. This meant that the choice of language in any one broadcast did not carry particular ideological weight. Because of this language policy, listeners could enjoy the programming throughout the day

without having to have perfect competence in Corsican. And the fact was, there were many Corsicans who could enjoy a radio program in Corsican who were not capable of or interested in reading a Corsican text. The radio, in other words, played to the sociolinguistic reality of the island.

In contrast, the literary translations were premised on the existence of a fairly sophisticated, or at least, a strongly motivated audience. The sophisticated reader, like the translator, would experience the translated text as the expression of universal themes as well as a celebration of Corsican linguistic and cultural particularities. Since the meaning of the translated text would be located in both French and Corsican worlds, as well as in the dynamic space of movement between them, the sophisticated reader would be able to savor, alternately, a divided and an integrated cultural and linguistic heritage. The experience of reading would constitute a new experience of linguistic hierarchy, for the relations between French and Corsican would either be leveled or reversed.

The problem was that there were so very few of these sophisticated readers to write for. The translations in question were thus written for a virtual audience. This meant that these translations were simultaneously writing *as if* Corsican were a language of power (that had nothing to lose from translation) and *as if* Corsican were a language of widespread, everyday literacy in Corsican society.

The latter fiction, it seems to me, is what made the social and symbolic status of translation on Corsica so volatile, so precarious. Part of this has to do with the way that the emphasis on the written rather than the oral risks what Bourdieu and Boltanski (1975) call "the fetishism of language". As Bonn puts it, one of the fundamental paradoxes of writing in a minority language is that:

> a project which makes out to be looking for a place in which to express being as identity ends up looking for this place in the quest itself: in writing ....a "place" which is impossible to seize and hold ... identity becomes confused with the desire for identity ... is the existence of discourse *of* place whose function is to refer to itself possible?
>
> (Bonn 1985: 193)

We can easily recognize the way that French-Corsican translations magnify the self-referential quality of minority literature. Bonn suggests that such a discourse can never truly be about *place* —shared, embodied, situated experiences of identity. Writing about cultural "places" can be complex, ambiguous, unresolved; the boundaries and borders can be fuzzy and loose.



Expert translators found such a place in the dynamic of translation, but for most Corsicans, the location of translation was a detached and abstract domain.

Here it bears reiterating that it was the experience and the intellectual consciousness of diglossia that made literacy and literature so important in Corsican militant circles. Diglossia was a result of symbolic and practical dominance; writing was therefore inevitably interpreted from within this framework.

In the translation debate, we can see some of the consequences of this implicit framework of experience and interpretation. First, there is the powerful hold of "essential" linguistic and cultural identities; as we have seen, concepts of linguistic "essence" and boundaries permeate the arguments of both translators and their critics. Embedded in this linguistic and cultural essentialism is a logic of oppositional identity. At least at some level, translators like Franchi were attempting to transcend this logic. But they did so on terrain that was almost exclusively defined in terms of that logic: writing was defined as a place for displacing French control.

Here, the self-referential quality of purely symbolic translations was a handicap, since it drew attention to power relations of literary production and consumption. As we have seen in the examples of (mild to extreme) linguistic and cultural alienation, translation from the dominant language automatically invokes the experience of linguistic hierarchy. Arrighi's example also illustrates that when writing is detached from vital social practices and exists purely as a symbol, it is the macropolitics of diglossic relations that often prevails. Because of the depth and intensity of Corsicans' shared experiences of powerlessness, subtle representational strategies of expert translators are swept aside by simple, oppositional meanings. In recognition of this, we find Arrighi turning to translation tactics (doing the Corsican version first) that ensure radical difference.

The translation debate underscores an old idea: how critical it is for ideological and political control to be instantiated in everyday practices. As Corsican activists certainly know, French language dominance has been embedded in multiple ways in Corsican social life. This has been difficult for Corsican language activists to replicate for Corsican, for unlike the French state, they have had no access to economic, institutional or political coercion to further the cause of the minority language. Translators tried to locate power in the prerogative to deny and transcend linguistic hierarchy, but did not have a strong enough base of consumers to instill this new vision of power in lived experience. The mere presence of French in the ghost of the original overshadowed the political implications of the transla-

tors' craft, and as a result, the non-apologetic, non-dependent aspects of literary translation were only perceived by a very few. In the absence of a healthy spoken language and a sophisticated reading public which is literate in two languages, translation in Corsica was left with contested, virtual value —a pale "as if" in the face of a problematic reality.

## *Notes*

1. See for example Khleif (1980) on Welsh, Woolard (1989) and DiGiacomo (this volume) on Catalan, Boyer (1991) and Garavini (1988) on Occitan, McDonald (1989) on Breton, Urla (1988) on Basque.
2. Klor de Alva also observes that the politics of translation "are more likely to be configured by the unspoken and usually unperceived assumptions making up the reigning ideas and exegetical rules that guide the translator" (1989: 143).
3. Although, from the point of view of Spanish missionaries, translation was an act of linguistic appropriation and an exercise of power for different reasons. They saw translation as the illustration of the "natural" relationship of the world and God's will: "the promise of a fully transparent language ruling over linguistic diversity" (Rafael 1988: 7).
4. Gobard views the inability to translate as one of the foundations of diglossia and linguistic alienation. He writes: "To know two languages apart from one another, without being able to translate one into the other, is precisely the diglossic situation that risks to end in the different specialization of each of the languages" (1976: 179). See also Bourdieu (1982: 64).
5. This is revealed in the nature of three out of six questions asked of Santu Casta, the translator of *The Little Prince*, in a magazine interview: (1) *Traduttore, traditore?* ('translator, traitor?'), (2) Why translate from a language everyone understands to one that only few do?, (3) How does the text you chose relate to Corsican culture? (Anonymous 1990)

## *References*

Anderson, Benedict
1983 *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso.

Anonymous
1989 Letter to the Editor. *Kyrn* 193: 4.



Anonymous
1990 Traddutore, traditore? *Kyrn* 336: 35.

Balibar, Etienne
1987 La langue de France exercée au pluriel. In: Vermès, G. and J. Boutet (eds.), *France, Pays Multilingue*, Vol. 2. Paris: L'Harmattan, 9–21.
1991 The nation form: history and ideology. In: Wallerstein, Immanuel and Etienne Balibar (eds.), *Race, Nation, Class: Ambiguous Identities*. New York: Routledge, Chapman and Hall, 86–106.

Blommaert, Jan
1996 Language planning as a discourse on language and society: The linguistic ideology of a scholarly tradition. *Language Problems and Language Planning* 20: 199–222.

Blommaert, Jan and Jef Verschueren
1992 The role of language in European nationalist ideologies. In: Kroskrity, Paul, Bambi Schieffelin and Kathryn Woolard (eds.), *Language Ideologies*. Special issue, *Pragmatics* 2(3): 355–375.

Bonn, Charles
1985 Entre ville et lieu, centre et periphérie: La difficile localisation du roman algérien de langue française. *Peuples Méditerranéens* 30: 185–195.

Bourdieu, Pierre
1982 *Ce Que Parler Veut Dire: L'Économie des Échanges linguistiques*. Paris: Fayard.

Bourdieu, Pierre and Luc Boltanski
1975 Le fétichisme de la langue. *Actes de la Recherche en Sciences Sociales* 1: 2–32.

Boldiszar, Ivan
1979 *Small Countries, Great Literatures?* Budapest: Publishers and Booksellers Association.

Boyer, Henri
1991 *Langues en Conflit: Études sociolinguistiques*. Paris: L'Harmattan.

Cameron, Deborah
1995 *Verbal Hygiene*. London: Routledge.

Casta, Santu
1990 *Principellu*. Ajaccio: Akenaton è Squadra di u Finusellu.

Cerani, Daniel
1991 A Funtana d'Altea: Un récit de Ghjacumu Thiers. Interview in *Le Corse*, 27 July.

Crick, Malcolm
1976 *Towards a Semantic Anthropology: Explorations in Language and Meaning*. London: Malaby.

Crowley, Tony
1996 *Language and History: Theories and Texts*. New York: Routledge.

Franchi, Jean Joseph
1989a *Knock*. Ajaccio: Editions La Marge.
1989b Editorial: Lingua Corsa. *Kyrn* 210: 45.
1992 Interview. *Études Corses*, 29–36.

Fusina, Jacques
1989a Preface to *U Stringagliulu di Sigolu*, by Lisandrina Grimaldi. Bastia: Scola Corsa.
1989b Editorial: Lingua Corsa. *Kyrn* 203.

Gal, Susan
1989 Language and political economy. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 18: 345–367.

Garavini, Fausta
1988 Quelle langue pour la prose d'oc contemporaine? *Lengas* 24: 33–88.

Gobard, Henri
1976 *L'Aliénation linguistique*. Paris: Flammarion.

Grillo, Ralph D.
1989 *Dominant Languages: Language and Hierarchy in Britain and France*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Grimaldi, Lisandrina
1989 *U Stringagliulu di Sigolu*. Bastia: Scola Corsa.

Gupta, Akhil
1990 Translation and the politics of writing. Paper, American Anthropological Association Annual Meeting, New Orleans.

Handler, Richard
1988 *Nationalism and the Politics of Culture in Quebec*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.

Hobsbawm, Eric J.
1990 *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Hoffman, Eva
1989 *Lost in Translation*. New York: Penguin.



Khleif, Bud
1980 *Language, Ethnicity and Education in Wales*. New York: Mouton.

Klor de Alva, J. Jorge
1989 Language, politics and translation: Colonial discourse and classic Nahuatl in New Spain. In: Warren, Rosanna (ed.), *The Art of Translation*. Boston: Northeastern University Press, 140–158.

Lüdi, Georges
1992 French as a pluricentric language. In: Clyne, Michael (ed.), *Pluricentric Languages*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 149–177.

Mari, Petru
1986 *Scritti d'Altrò*. Bastia: Stamperia Sammarcelli.

Mattei, Francescu
1971 *Febre Maligne*. Ajaccio: Cyrnos et Méditerranée.

McDonald, Maryon
1989 *We Are Not French*. London: Routledge.

Niranyana, Tejaswini
1994 Colonialism and the politics of translation. In: Arteaga, Alfred (ed.), *An Other Tongue: Nation and Ethnicity in the Linguistic Borderlands*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 35–52.

Rabassa, Gregory
1984 If this be treason: Translation and its possibilities. In: Frawley, William (ed.), *Translation: Literary, Linguistic and Philosophical Perspectives*. Newark: University of Delaware Press, 21–29.

Rafael, Vicente
1988 *Contracting Colonialism: Translation and Christian Conversion Under Early Spanish Rule*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Rochiccioli, Natale
1982 *Cavalleria Paesana*. Paris: ERTI-LECERF.

Rodriguez, Richard
1982 *Hunger of Memory*. Boston: David R. Godine.

Roseman, Sharon
1995 "Falamos como falamos": Linguistic revitalization and the maintenance of local vernaculars in Galicia. *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 5: 3–32.

Santarelli, Paule
1989 Traddutore, traditore? *Kyrn* 200: 21–22.

Tedlock, Dennis
1989 The translator: Or, why the crocodile was not disillusioned. In: Warren, Rosanna (ed.), *The Art of Translation*. Boston: Northeastern University Press, 159–174.

Thompson, John B.
1984 *Studies in the Theory of Ideology*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Urla, Jacqueline
1987 *Being Basque, Speaking Basque: The Politics of Language and Identity in the Basque Country*. Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Berkeley.
1988 Ethnic protest and social planning: A look at Basque language revival. *Cultural Anthropology* 3: 379–394.

Weinstein, Brian
1990 Language policy and political development: An overview. In: Weinstein, Brian (ed.), *Language Policy and Political Development*. Norwood, Ablex, 1–22.

Woolard, Kathryn
1989 *Double Talk: Bilingualism and the Politics of Ethnicity in Catalonia*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

# The ideology of dialect in Switzerland

*Richard J. Watts*

## 1. Introduction

The purpose of the present chapter is not to identify and analyze a specific language ideological debate, but rather to sketch out the genesis of a language ideology which, in the European context, appears to be unique to Switzerland and which I shall call the "ideology of dialect".[1] Although all the elements which I discuss as being germane to this language ideology have been around in one form or another for several centuries, it is not until the time of World War I that we begin to recognize those features which tend to be associated in general with a language ideology, and it is not until after World War II that we can justifiably categorize them as constituting an ideology. Among those features we can list the following: the symbolic representation of "national" identity in the pre-modern and modern nation-state by a highly codified standard language variety, the degree to which a language variety is "prescribed" as legitimate within the educational system and the non-print media, the ways in which a language variety can be infused with the values of cultural and political resistance toward potential invasion, etc.

Hence my principal argument will be that a language ideology can only be recognized as such when the time is ripe for it to appear, although the major features of that ideology must already be in place as a coherent system of communal myths. In section 3, I therefore deal with the historicity of ideologies in order to discuss the reasons for the emergence of a language ideology, the length of time during which that ideology holds sway over the minds of community members, and the degree of resistance to change and adaptation that the ideology displays.

Obviously, the ideology of dialect in Switzerland has given rise to a wide range of debates both within the dialect communities, and between them and other ethnolinguistic groups in Switzerland, and as I unravel the threads of the ideology, these debates will be touched upon. It is not my purpose to focus on any single debate in detail. However, in the final section I will briefly indicate how three of these debates (one revolving around the resistance of French native speakers in Switzerland to the functional