

REVIEWS

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OFELIA GARCÍA, RAKHNIEL PELTZ, HAROLD SCHIFFMAN, & GELLA SCHWEID FISHMAN, *Language loyalty, continuity and change: Joshua A. Fishman's contributions to international sociolinguistics*. Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters, 2006. Pp. xii, 180. Hb \$89.95, Pb \$34.95.

NANCY HORNBERGER & MARTIN PÜTZ (eds.), *Language loyalty, language planning and language revitalization: Recent writings and reflections from Joshua A. Fishman*. Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters, 2006. Pp. xiii, 259. Hb \$109.95, Pb \$44.95.

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In the 15 years since the publication of the festschrift that celebrated his 65th birthday (Cooper & Spolsky 1991) and the focusschrifts that gave room to all who wished to join the celebration (Dow 1991, García 1991, Marshall 1991), Joshua Fishman (henceforth F) has continued to publish prolifically, as the updated bibliography prepared by his wife for Garcia et al. attests, and to attract

followers, as these two volumes and the activities celebrating his 80th birthday have confirmed. The personal nature of these two books is suggested by the portraits on the covers: the cover of *Language loyalty, continuity and change* shows F as a 79-year-old, and *Language loyalty, language planning and language revitalization* shows the 18-year-old high-school graduate. The two books overlap somewhat in coverage: The first provides a 50-page review of the 55 years of what they call “Fishmanian Sociolinguistics” by two scholars who worked with him in the latter part of his career, and an essay on his contributions to Yiddish studies by Pelz. There are two extra pieces in this book: the updating of the bibliographical inventory (growing from 700+ items in 1991 to 1,200 or so in 2006), and a delightful and highly personal essay by F in the style (but quite independent of) the blogs that the Internet has made regular features of modern intellectual life.

The Hornberger and Pütz volume is a more traditional collection of recent papers, published in the past 20 years, dealing with four of F’s major current interests – the nature of sociolinguistics, the possibility of reversing language shift, the threat of globalization, and Yiddish as a holy language. In addition, the editors present a 25-page interview with F that includes fascinating memories of his early days building the new field and of the sources of some of his ideas. Present-day young sociolinguists and future historians of the field should be grateful to the editors and publisher of this usually ephemeral material for making available this vivid human portrait.

It is the very humanity of his work that marks F as special. At a time when the mainstream of linguistic studies is still pursuing the task of building abstract grammars of idealized languages that might account for brain processes or be used to build computer simulations of language, F continues to be more interested in speakers than in speech, and at a time when the obvious general trend in language affairs is for large languages to gobble up smaller ones, F continues to favor the underdog and to search for ways that minority languages might survive, not out of some theoretical concern for ecological diversity, but because of his genuine love of small languages sanctified by the communities that still speak or once spoke them.

The first section of Hornberger and Pütz presents four previously published accounts of F’s work as a sociolinguist. The first paper explains that he grew up in an environment of Yiddish activism that stimulated his lifelong fascination with the complexity of human culture and of its multinational, multicultural, and multilingual nature. His early academic training was in psychology, although he hoped that he would be able ultimately to specialize in language. He sees his background in Yiddish and psychology as providing him with a peripheral view of sociolinguistics, accounting for his interest in “marginal groups, neglected languages, forgotten individuals, overlooked possibilities and outmoded or societally downgraded concerns” (37). He acknowledges his “Yiddish-centric” view of sociolinguistics, but defends it by regularly testing his hypotheses against the

many other cases with which he has become intimately acquainted in a lifetime of study and academic travel. Apart from his ongoing work in Yiddish, he sees his main topics of interest as the resilience of minorities and their languages, the close ties between language and ethnicity, the nature and possibility of language planning, and the necessity of a variety of methods for studying social science. As a textbook writer, he has seen his main challenge to be to teach sociology to sociolinguists. In a concluding section, he notes that he has worked throughout his career in a university (Yeshiva University) without a department of linguistics or graduate work in sociology, leaving him alone but free to work on major research projects or to spend time on leaves or sabbaticals at other major universities; it is in those visits that his influence as a teacher has been most felt.

The second chapter in the section is a brief personal account of F's experience at the 1964 Bloomington seminar commonly believed to mark the birth of American sociolinguistics. There, a group of five sociologists and seven anthropologists and linguists spent a summer exploring their quite different views of the new field, which soon divided itself into two: sociology of language (assumed to be led by F himself) and sociolinguistics (typically the variation studies pioneered by William Labov). No strong theoretical overview developed, but the participants formed a valuable network of connections that stood them in good stead when they returned to their home institutions.

The third chapter deals again with the nature of sociolinguistics, arguing for the major contribution that sociolinguistics and sociology could make to each other, if only the two fields would recognize each other; both, he suggests, are chained and waiting for a messianic release "to usher in an internal age of happiness and enlightenment."

In the fourth chapter, F reargues various aspects of the debate on the nature of diglossia, defending his inclusion within the concept of two distinct languages rather than the two varieties of the same language originally proposed by Charles Ferguson, and arguing for the value of a unified theory of societal multilingualism. These four chapters show F as a self-aware scholar, constantly questioning his own (and others') theories and conclusions. They stress the personal and the way that F has been in constant productive (but never acerbic) debate with colleagues and predecessors.

The second section contains five chapters on language revival, starting with the 1991 seminal presentation of his model of Reversing Language Shift. Here we see F the scholar in support of language activism, particularly when it is conducted by the weaker side in the David vs. Goliath struggle for language maintenance. This grows out of his detailed studies of language shift and his regular interactions with language minorities throughout the world. Basically, what emerges is a parsimonious analysis of minimal steps that can assure maintenance, an honest recognition that few groups or governments know how to develop a workable strategy, and a determined encouragement of those willing to continue the struggle.

The third section moves on to confront the principal enemies of the small powerless languages – globalization and the related spread of more powerful languages. The four chapters, published in the last decade of the 20th century, are elegant restatements of the arguments for the essential human values of small languages and the difficult task facing their speakers if they wish to maintain their traditions and language in the modern world.

The fourth section opens with a fascinating discussion of how Yiddish, the vernacular variety that so long provided the daily communication for European Jews for whom the sacred language was Hebrew (or rather Hebrew-and-Aramaic), became after the Holocaust sacred both to those Ultra-Orthodox Hassidic Jews for whom it now serves as a defense from modernism and secularism, and also to the secularist Yiddishists for whom it is sanctified as the language of most victims of the Holocaust and of the culture it destroyed. The final chapter applies this approach to other languages, and finds strong support for the notion that the “secularized monolingual sociocultural world,” for all that it is the dominant approach of Western scholarship, is in fact a “distinct minority” in a world where “religion impacted societal bilingualism” is the norm. This clearly reflects F’s own voyage from secular Yiddishism through scientific rigor to “(‘modern’- or neo-) Orthodox Jewish traditionism” (Hornberger & Putz: 45), and provides a basis for his continuing quest to find connections between faith (in religion and in small languages) and science.

The self-awareness and intellectual growth presented in this selection of recent work (and multiplied for those who will take the time to read even a sample of his other published books and papers, not to mention the major items still in press), helps highlight the difficulties faced by Garcia & Schiffman in their 50-page overview of his work. It is a useful summary, drawing attention to the main outlines, but there is no space for detailed analysis. In the same volume, Peltz has 35 pages to review F’s work in Yiddish, drawing attention to its potentially great value and regretting that it has not yet received the attention it deserves from others in the field.

It is too early, I am happy to say, to attempt to sum up F’s contributions to sociolinguistics. Whereas Labov has worked to add the social dimension to linguistic theory (regrettably with little effect on the mainstream), F has celebrated the language dimension in human society, carrying ethnolinguistics or the ethnography of communication to unexpected heights. His continued productivity promises us more evidence of his major impact on sociolinguistics.

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- J. CLANCY CLEMENTS, THOMAS A. KLINGLER, DEBORAH PISTON-HATLEN & KEVIN J. ROTTET (eds.), *History, society and variation: In honor of Albert Valdman*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2006. Pp. vi, 304. Hb €130.00 / \$156.00.

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This edited collection celebrates Albert Valdman's contribution to research on creoles. Its 14 articles grouped into three broad themes provide a good overview of the diversity of current research and research perspectives on French creoles. The introduction outlines Valdman's career and achievements as an academic and teacher, and summarizes each article.

Section 1, "History," begins with T. A. Klingler & Nathalie Dajko's article on the documentation of Louisiana Creole in areas cut off from the current center of its usage. Investigating three currently rare features, they demonstrate that the data from the periphery support 19th-century patterns and the hypothesis that French-like features in current Louisiana Creole arose later due to contact with varieties of Louisiana French. Marie-Christine Hazaël-Masieux explores the challenges and insights of historical documents written in a creole. First, despite being scarce and sketchy, they provide evidence that creoles are continuously changing and emerged gradually. Second, despite uncertainty about their origin, they record obsolete forms and processes of development. Finally, despite a fair amount of variation, they attest to the relative grammatical stability of creoles. The article does not discuss what variation may tell us about the sociolinguistic structure of (early) creoles and the relative importance of language-internal and contact-induced change, both topics of current interest. Pierre Rézeau investigates the lexical entries in a Languedocien-French dictionary punctuated with "numerous lengthy digressions about the language, flora, fauna, and customs of the West Indies, and especially of Saint-Domingue." (p. 47). Focusing on new creations, regionalisms, and borrowings, he demonstrates how an analysis of such sources provides a unique insight into life and language usage in the colonies. Clancy Clements's paper argues that we need to posit a grammaticalization–lexicalization continuum because there is sufficient evidence that while lexical