



PART 1

History of Sociolinguistics





Ferguson and Fishman: Sociolinguistics and the Sociology of Language

Bernard Spolsky

1.1 INTRODUCTION

To introduce this handbook, the editors map out the gestation of sociolinguistics by focusing on six of the ‘founding fathers’: William Labov, who pioneered a school devoted to showing the relevance of social determinants of variation for linguistic theory; Basil Bernstein, the British sociologist whose work on class-related ‘codes’ led to a brief flirtation with American sociolinguistics; Dell Hymes, whose adaptation of Roman Jakobson’s theory of communication (Jakobson, 1960) shaped the ethnography of communication and educational linguistics and who molded sociolinguistics by editing several pioneering volumes and the flagship journal *Language in Society*; John Gumperz, founder of interactional sociolinguistics; and Charles Ferguson and Joshua Fishman. All except Bernstein (although he was invited) attended the Linguistic Institute in Bloomington in the summer of 1964, the landmark event that launched the field. All (except Bernstein again) served on the Committee on Sociolinguistics of the Social Sciences Research Council, established in 1963 to plan the 1964 seminar and that operated until the early 1970s. All participated in the many conferences and publications which fashioned sociolinguistics in those years, and each continued to publish for the next 30 years, expanding their own interpretations of the field. My task in this chapter is to describe and assess the specific contribution of Ferguson and Fishman to the ‘study of language in

its social context’, and to explore the nature of the discipline that emerged, trying to explain why it is sometimes called ‘sociolinguistics’ and sometimes ‘the sociology of language’, terms occasionally used interchangeably (Paulston and Tucker, 1997)¹ though elsewhere (Bright, 1992; Gumperz, 1971) clearly distinguished.

I shall also mention founders omitted from the selected six, such as William Bright, Allen Grimshaw, Einar Haugen, Uriel Weinreich and Sue Ervin-Tripp² who were also pioneers. Haugen was, by 1963, a senior scholar: after 30 years as chair of Scandinavian Studies at the University of Wisconsin, he was about to take up a chair in Scandinavian and Linguistics at Harvard. He had taught a course on bilingualism at the 1948 Linguistic Institute, and his book on the Norwegian language in America (Haugen, 1953) established him as the leading authority on bilingualism and language shift. He was the first linguist to write about the ecology of language, the title of his 1972 collected papers (Haugen, 1972). His study of Norwegian language planning (Haugen, 1966) was a groundbreaking work.

A second major publication in 1953 was that of Uriel Weinreich (1953a), a seminal work that is still regularly cited as the basis for understanding language contact. Fishman (1997c), a friend of his³ from Yiddish youth movement days, summarizes his work in sociolinguistics, starting with an undergraduate paper in Yiddish on Welsh language revival (U. Weinreich, 1944), his doctoral dissertation on Swiss bilingualism, a study of

the Russian treatment of minority languages (U. Weinreich, 1953b), and the beginning of the language and culture atlas of Ashkenazic Jewry published a quarter of a century after his premature death. Fishman recalls a paper that the two of them did not write in 1954 on the societal nature of language; Weinreich's draft was too linguistic and Fishman's too sociological to negotiate a common version. Weinreich visited the 1964 Linguistic Institute, delivering four lectures on semantic theory (U. Weinreich, 1966). His theory of semantics, Fishman suggested, was 'profoundly cultural and socio-situational', and so a comforting antidote to the anti-sociolinguistic theory that Chomsky was establishing.⁴ Weinreich had a strong influence on many of the founders, not least on his student William Labov. Labov (1997: 147) stresses the contribution to his own development made by a teacher not much older than him and especially the importance of Weinreich's part in writing a paper which explained the relevance of sociolinguistics to the understanding of language change (U. Weinreich, Labov and Herzog, 1968).

A third founder was Susan Ervin-Tripp who joined the Committee on Psycholinguistics as a graduate assistant. Her distinction between compound and coordinate bilingualism (Osgood, 1954) led to much research and controversy. Based at Berkeley after 1958, her interest in child language acquisition cross-culturally brought her naturally into sociolinguistics (Ervin-Tripp, 1973). She also joined the Committee on Sociolinguistics in 1966 (Ervin-Tripp, 1997).

The task I have been set in this chapter is made more complex by the need to distinguish individual contributions from joint work and both from the working of the *Zeitgeist*,⁵ the difficult to document formation of a consensus on next steps in a scientific field. All of the scholars I have named were already actively engaged in what is now describable as sociolinguistic research and publication before 1964. Shuy (1997) notes that Fishman first taught a course called 'Sociology of Language' at the University of Pennsylvania in 1956 and continued to teach it at Yeshiva University. Huebner (1996) that the term 'sociolinguistics' was first used by Currie (1952) and picked up by Weinreich (U. Weinreich 1953a: 99) and in articles in *Word* which Weinreich edited.⁶ The classic paper on diglossia (Ferguson, 1959) appeared there. At the 1962 LSA Linguistic Institute, Ferguson taught a course with the simple title 'Sociolinguistics' and repeated it the following summer and in the 1965 academic year at Georgetown University. In 1964, Fishman had just completed his pioneering study of language loyalty in the USA (Fishman, 1966).⁷ Labov had published his Martha's Vineyard study (Labov, 1962) and was completing the New York dissertation

(Labov, 1966) that continues to encourage study of socially-explainable language variation. Gumperz and Hymes were editing the papers from the 1963 American Association of Anthropology meeting (Gumperz and Hymes, 1972), which remains a foundation text. Even without the seminar, research and publication in the field were by then well underway. Bloomington 1964 was a milestone rather than a starting point, but a significant one.

1.2 FISHMAN MEETS FERGUSON

In his introduction to the festschrift for Ferguson's 65th birthday (Fishman, Tabouret-Keller, Clyne, Krishnamurti and Abdulaziz 1986: v), Fishman⁸ recalls his first contact with Ferguson: 'It took almost a month for Charles Ferguson and me to realize that we were living next door to each other during the Summer Linguistic Institute of 1964 at Indiana University.' They had communicated briefly before that; during the summer, both in the seminar that Ferguson chaired 'primus inter pares', and with Fishman taking Ferguson's course (101 Introduction to Linguistics), they became 'neighbors, colleagues, students (each acknowledging the other as teacher) and close friends, roles we have enacted, either repeatedly or continuously ...'

In May 1963, Fishman was not on the original list of scholars to be invited to Bloomington, which included Gumperz, Haugen, Immanuel Wallerstein⁹ or Paul Friedrich, Steven E. Deutsch¹⁰ and Dell Hymes. In December, William Labov and William Stewart,¹¹ both about to finish their degrees, were added; a month later, Fishman was also invited (as were Heinz Kloss¹² and Basil Bernstein, all three considered sociologists rather than linguists) (Committee on Sociolinguistics 1963-). Fishman had not been sure that he would be included – his only relevant publication was an article on the Whorfian hypothesis (Fishman, 1960), although he had earlier published articles on Yiddish bilingualism, pluralism and minorities, and was just finishing his first major **opus** (Fishman, 1966) which was to set the path for the host of studies of minority language maintenance and loss that now dominate the sociolinguistic research field. He later (Fishman, 1997a) recalled that he was at Stanford rewriting Fishman (1966) when he first heard about the 1964 seminar and was encouraged to apply by Einar Haugen, also a fellow at the Center for Advanced Studies in the Behavioral Sciences. He phoned Ferguson whose article on diglossia he knew; Ferguson 'seemed a little cool on the phone' but accepted the application. Ferguson quickly came to appreciate

Fishman's potential contribution: in a letter written in 1965 trying unsuccessfully to persuade Fishman to stay on the Committee of Sociolinguistics, he wrote, 'Of all the members, you are most probably the only one whose primary interest is in the field of sociolinguistics, and your publications in the field have been the most extensive. You are concerned with both "macro" and "micro" and with relating the two' (Committee on Sociolinguistics 1963-) (letter from Ferguson in Ethiopia dated 25 November 1965).

Fishman did not know what the seminar was going to be like, but he was willing to put up with a hot uncomfortable summer in Bloomington in order to be with 'a community of like-minded scholars'. When the seminar began, Fishman found the sociologists – including himself, 'a refurbished social psychologist' as he noted (Fishman, 1997a: 88) – to be in a weak position because they did not know each other and did not have strong interests in common. Only Fishman, Kloss and Lieberman had published or were ready to publish about language. The anthropologists and linguists had met before, most recently at the 1963 AAA meeting and at the May UCLA meeting. There was a major gap between the two groups and, partly because of that, Fishman returned to his earlier preference for calling the field the sociology of language.¹³ He complained that social problems were not emphasized in Bloomington, and that only annoyance greeted his reference to 'the fact that people were willing to kill and be killed for their beloved language was being completely overlooked' (Fishman, 1997a: 93).¹⁴

At Bloomington and after, a close personal and academic relationship quickly developed between Ferguson and Fishman. Fishman's statement about their friendship has been cited: Ferguson (1997: 80) respected not just Fishman's extensive empirical studies but his potential for theory-building:

I tend to be pessimistic about formulating a basic theory of sociolinguistics; possibly I am unduly pessimistic. I would think that if Fishman put his mind to it, he could probably come up with a kind of theory. Of course, it would tend to focus on macrosociolinguistics (sociology of language), like the books he has written on ethnicity and nationalism and so forth ...

For Fishman, Ferguson remained his main teacher of linguistics.¹⁵ While their research paths diverged, with Ferguson firmly on the linguistic and Fishman firmly on the sociological side, their early conversations and continuing association had a major influence on the growth and shape of the field.

1.3 ORGANIZING A NEW FIELD

Left to work alone, there is little doubt that the founders of sociolinguistics would have continued their individual scholarly paths investigating the complex relations between language and society, and the structure and interplay of the two systems evolved to deal with the evolutionary inadequacies of human physiology, rejecting the ideology established in mainstream linguistics by Chomsky's lack of interest in meaning and his focus on the competence of an 'idealized monolingual'. Each of them had come with a different goal and was attracted by a different inspiration. William Bright, for instance, had been trained in American Indian linguistics by M. B. Emeneau and Mary Haas, both of whom continued the interest of Edward Sapir in language in culture; he was thus open to influence in writing his first published paper on lexical innovation in Karuk by a lecture on bilingualism from Einar Haugen in 1949 (Bright, 1997: 53). In India on a two-year post-doctoral Rockefeller fellowship, in the course of conversations with Ferguson and John Gumperz, he 'became aware that a field of sociolinguistics might be developed' (Bright, 1997: 54). In her obituary of Bright in *Language*, Jane Hill (2007) cites Murray (1998) as believing that Bright, Gumperz and Ferguson were all influenced by the multilingual patterns they discovered in India when visiting Deccan College in Pune in the mid-1950s. John Gumperz (1997) had been trained in dialectology, wrote a dissertation on the Swabian dialects of Michigan, and then spent two years studying village dialects in a Northern Indian community. There, he worked with many Indian linguists and an interdisciplinary team. He taught at the Indian summer Linguistic Institutes in Pune in 1955 and 1956 alongside American structural linguists and South Asia scholars, some trained by J. R. Firth of the School of Oriental and African Studies (Gumperz, 1997). This combination of fieldwork in complex multilingual communities and the opportunity to discuss his work with a diverse group of scholars was, he believes, critical.¹⁶

There were further discussions at the Foreign Service Institute of the US Department of State where both Ferguson and Bright worked in the 1950s. But it was in the early 1960s that formal activity began. In the late 1950s, the Association of Asian Studies formed a Committee on South Asian Languages, which brought together at various meetings Ferguson, Bright, Gumperz and Uriel Weinreich and produced a 1960 special issue of the *International Journal of American Linguistics* on linguistic diversity in South Asia (Ferguson and Gumperz, 1960). In 1959, Ferguson became a full-time organizer¹⁷ when he was

appointed director of the new Center for Applied Linguistics, a position he held for seven years. With support from several foundations, the Ford Foundation leading (Fox, 2007; Fox and Harris, 1964), the Center made major contributions to the development of the International Association of Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (Alatis and LeClair, 1993), the Test of English as a Foreign Language (Spolsky, 1995), and American Indian education. It also organized several linguistic surveys (Ohannessian, Ferguson and Polomé, 1975), including the Ethiopian study (Bender, Bowen, Cooper and Ferguson, 1976) which Ferguson directed, spending two periods of four months each in the field in 1968–69.

Impressed by the successful model of the SSRC Committee on Psycholinguistics (Osgood, 1954), Ferguson proposed in early 1963 holding a seminar on sociolinguistics at the summer Linguistic Institute planned for Indiana University. Through the SSRC, he obtained a grant of \$54,800 from the National Science Foundation to help pay the salaries of senior and junior participants. The summer seminar, building on an earlier May 1964 UCLA meeting to which Bright had invited ‘“the usual suspects”’: Haugen, Ferguson, Gumperz, Hymes, Labov and others’ (Bright, 1997: 55) and whose papers were later published (Bright, 1966), pinpointed according to Shuy¹⁸ (1997: 30) ‘the creation of modern sociolinguistics’.

Thom Huebner (1996)¹⁹ summarizes the major activities of the Committee after 1964. In 1966, there was a conference on the language problems of developing nations which established language policy and management as a major component of sociolinguistics (Fishman, Ferguson and Das Gupta, 1968). In the opening paper, Fishman starts with a discussion of ‘sociolinguistics’: ‘Interest in the sociology of language can be traced back quite far . . .’. Modern sociolinguistics was not the direct heir, but ‘a byproduct of very recent and still ongoing developments in its two parent disciplines, linguistics and sociology’ (Fishman, 1968b: 3). The stronger interest had come from linguistics. Fishman’s own approach becomes clear in the concluding essay (Fishman, 1968a) in which he explored the relationship between such issues as selection of a national language, adoption of a language of wider communication, language planning concerns, and goals for bilingualism and biculturalism. In his own contribution, Ferguson recognized that many of the topics discussed could be dealt with ‘by the conceptual frameworks used in the study of social organization, political systems, or economic processes’ (Ferguson, 1968: 27), but they depended on understanding of language, such as the questionable belief that a language is backward or needs purifying or modernizing.

In 1966, the Committee supported a workshop on teaching sociolinguistics and a project on the acquisition of communicative competence. The manual for cross-cultural study of child language (Slobin, 1967) that resulted has guided much international research (Ervin-Tripp, 1997: 73). In 1968, Dell Hymes organized a conference on pidginization and later published a collection of papers on pidgins and creoles (Hymes, 1971). The following year, Grimshaw (1969) arranged a meeting to look at language as sociological data as an obstacle in cross-cultural sociological research. Continuing work on child language, in 1974 the Committee sponsored a conference on language input and acquisition (Snow and Ferguson, 1977) which led to extensive and continuing research on language socialization (Ervin-Tripp, 1997: 74).

The Committee and Ferguson also supported the foundation of the journal *Language in Society* edited by Dell Hymes in 1972; he was succeeded as editor by William Bright. Ferguson (1997: 86) confessed that he had opposed Fishman’s plan to start his own journal, but admitted he was wrong, as *Language in Society* and *The International Journal of the Sociology of Language* have both been productive but different. Ferguson did not found a new organization for sociolinguists,²⁰ and the two major annual conferences NWAV²¹ and the Sociolinguistics Symposium²² came later; but his organizational work in the 1960s played a major role in forming, consolidating and publicizing what is clearly one of the more fruitful fields for the study of language.

Fishman too was an organizer, but one who did not like meetings: his main managerial activities were the planning, direction and interpretation of major research projects, and the encouragement of an impressive body of publication by scholars throughout the world. I have already mentioned the language loyalty study whose publication paralleled the burst of research in the early 1960s. Shortly after, he started work (with funding from the US Office of Education) on the equally influential study of bilingualism in a New Jersey barrio completed in 1968 and published three years later (Fishman, Cooper and Ma, 1971); among his colleagues were Robert L. Cooper and for a year John Gumperz. In the 1970s, while he was in Jerusalem, he conducted a study of bilingual education for the US Office of Education (Fishman, 1976). Also while he was in Israel, with a Ford grant and the help of Robert Cooper and others, he prepared his pioneering study of the spread of English (Fishman, Cooper and Conrad, 1977). During this time, in cooperation with Charles Ferguson and a number of international scholars, he was working on what is still the only major empirical study of the effectiveness of language

planning processes (Rubin, Jernudd, Das Gupta, Fishman and Ferguson, 1977).

Apart from significant funded research projects, Fishman's most important organizational activity has been as an editor. The first venture was a collection of readings on the sociology of language (Fishman, 1968c) which marked out his claim to be the prime exponent and arbiter of the field. Noting the success of this volume, a leading European linguistics publishing house, Mouton of The Hague (now Mouton de Gruyter of Berlin), invited him to start a journal and an associated book series. *The International Journal of the Sociology of Language (IJSL)* first appeared in 1973, celebrated its centenary issue 20 years later, and has reached 194 issues in 2009. While about one out of six are 'singles' issues, the main feature of the journal is the breadth of its internationally edited thematic issues, ranging from the sociology of language in Israel (the first issue celebrating Fishman's time in Jerusalem) to the latest, a double issue on the sociolinguistics of Spanish. *IJSL* has served as a powerful instrument for encouraging international study of sociolinguistic issues, and constitutes an unmatched library of descriptions of sociolinguistic situations all around the world. There have been innovative approaches, including the 'focus' issues in which a scholar is invited to present a long paper on a controversial topic, such as bilingualism and schooling in the USA or the origin of Yiddish, and a number of other scholars are invited to write comments.²³ The journal, like all the other journals in the field is publisher-sponsored and susceptible to marketing pressure: Fishman (1997b: 239) interprets the absence of organizational support as evidence of the 'professional marginalization and tentativeness of the field' although one may hope that as a result of technological developments, producing the 'long tail' that Anderson (2004, 2006) described, if publishers were to drop the journals, there would be web-based alternatives to fill the gaps. Paralleling the enormous contribution of *IJSL* to sociolinguistics has been the related book series edited by Fishman: some 96 volumes published by Mouton now carry the 'Contributions to the Sociology of Language' imprimatur.

In addition to these two major projects, Fishman has planned and edited a distinguished body of edited collections. Macnamara (1997: 175) testifies that the special issue of *The Journal of Social Issues* that he edited on 'Problems of Bilingualism' in 1967 was largely the work of Fishman, who asked him to be editor 'mainly to give a beginner a leg up'. There are many other volumes giving evidence of Fishman's work as organizer and developer: two follow-up volumes to the *Readings* (Fishman, 1968c, 1971) and its companion Fishman (1972b); one on language planning (Fishman, 1974); another

on writing systems (Fishman, 1978a); one on societal multilingualism (Fishman, 1978b); a bilingual volume on Yiddish (Fishman, 1981); a second on language planning (again shared with a more junior colleague) (Cobarrubias and Fishman, 1983); an innovative collection of papers on the first congresses of language revival movements (Fishman, 1993b); a significant collection dealing with post-imperial English (Fishman, Rubal-Lopez and Conrad, 1996); and, most recently, a collection on the sociology of language and religion²⁴ (Omoniyi and Fishman, 2006).

While their contributions to the field were different, it is easy to see how impoverished sociolinguistics would have been without the organizational work of Charles Ferguson and Joshua Fishman. If each of them had been willing to sit quietly in his office, conduct and publish his individual research, and ignore the challenges and efforts of providing leadership and encouragement to others, their individual scholarship would still have had a considerable effect, but their extensive work as organizers of meetings and publishers of other people's research played a major role in shaping the field as we know it.

1.4 SEEKING A COMMUNITY OF LIKE-MINDED SCHOLARS

The terms *sociolinguistics* and *sociology of language* both suggest a bidisciplinary approach, a blending of sociologists and linguists in a combined effort to see how language and society are related. In spite of his early failure to write a joint paper with Uriel Weinreich, Fishman still believed in the 'community of like-minded scholars' (Fishman, 1997a: 88) that he hoped to find in Bloomington who could rescue him from the isolation he had felt working between the disciplines. He was soon disappointed. He knew only two participants from before, Einar Haugen and Leonard Savitz, a sociologist he had known at the University of Pennsylvania. He knew of Kloss (whose address he was able to give to Ferguson), Gumperz (whom he had met and read), Labov (whose papers Uriel Weinreich had given him), and Stewart (he had read his paper on multilingual typology – a 1962 paper he reprinted as Stewart (1968)). The sociologists were not just outnumbered (eight to five), but, except for Kloss, had not yet published anything that could be considered sociolinguistics, hardly knew each other, and did not have strong interests in common; the anthropologists²⁵ and the linguists had interacted before and were more at home in a seminar conducted as part of a major linguistics event. All knew linguistic theory, while none of the sociologists did.

The two groups thus formed 'two cultures'; Fishman (1997a: 91) refers specifically to methodological gaps, as when he was asked for his corpus (and quipped in return that you don't need phonology to explain the causes of World War II), and Gumperz, presenting his pioneering paper on code switching (Blom and Gumperz, 1972) in Hemnesberget that highlighted a conversation he had heard at a party, was asked why he had not carried out statistical tests.

Of the sociologists, Lieberman, who was about to publish a paper on a bilingual city (Lieberman, 1965, 1997), edited an early journal issue with important papers on sociolinguistics (Lieberman, 1966) and continued to carry out research and publish in sociolinguistics for some years (Lieberman, 1981). He writes (Lieberman, 1997: 164) that he was particularly influenced by Ferguson, who had 'a passionate commitment to the field ... labels were irrelevant'. He believes that 'few could match Ferguson in the breath of this overview'. Eventually, he 'drifted away' from sociolinguistics which he felt unlikely to be of much interest to sociology. He suspected that the work of Joshua Fishman was having less influence on American sociologists than on sociologists overseas or on other disciplines.

Leonard Savitz had been a fellow-student of Allen Grimshaw at the University of Pennsylvania, and Fishman (1997a) reports he met him there and suggested to him that they produce a set of 'sociological readings' concerned with language. His field was criminology and the sociology of crime, so that the suggestion was not taken up.²⁶ Chester L. Hunt was a sociologist who had carried out research in the Philippines and who wrote a paper at the seminar (Hunt, 1966). Neither continued to work in sociolinguistics.

Heinz Kloss considered himself not as a sociolinguist but rather an 'authority on ethnic law' (Mackey and McConnell, 1997: 301). Fishman, who found his interest in language, nationality and minorities very appealing, included a chapter (Kloss, 1966) in his book, and was a member of the board that recommended appointing him to the staff of the International Center for Research on Bilingualism at the University of Laval. Many of his proposals, such as the distinction between status and corpus planning, have become key concepts in sociolinguistics.

There was another sociologist who must have provided Fishman with more support. He refers to Allen Grimshaw as 'in a special category by himself', not a member of the seminar but attending it regularly. Grimshaw (1997) says that his initiation to language science was through Savitz. Grimshaw had become interested in language and social contexts during a visit to India in 1961. He writes: 'I was an informal participant in many of

the activities of the seminar and gave a talk to the group about ways in which knowledge about language might eliminate sociological questions; it was not long before I became more closely involved' (1997: 101). This involvement included membership and later chairmanship of the Committee on Sociolinguistics, organization of a conference (Grimshaw, 1969), and publication of a number of papers that were later collected by Dill (Grimshaw, 1981).

Ferguson (1997: 78) acknowledges that the sociologists made important contributions to the Bloomington seminar but on the whole left it to anthropologists and linguists to develop the field. The participants each had different points of view: Labov wanted to make linguistics more relevant while Fishman wanted to improve sociology. For Ferguson himself, 'sociolinguistics was just a loose label for phenomena relating language to society'. Over the years, most did not change their opinions.

Looking back, one can speculate that it was not just lack of knowledge of each other's methodologies that kept the fields apart, but a fundamental gap between the issues that concerned them. I recall that in the 1960s, Noam Chomsky would regularly dismiss an argument as 'not interesting'. With rare exceptions, the topics that interested the linguists did not interest the sociologists, and vice versa. One solution was to train 'real' sociolinguists. In his analysis of the interdisciplinary problem, Shuy (1997: 18) notes the problem of training new scholars in two fields: 'Social scientists did not want to give up anything to get linguistics. Nor did linguists want to give up anything to get social science'. Appended to two of Fishman's edited volumes (Fishman, 1978a; 1978b), there is a description of 'A graduate program in the sociology of language', with equal number of courses and credit in linguistics, sociology of language, and sociology. It describes the kind of programme he hoped to build at Yeshiva University and proposed at the Hebrew University, combining the new field with a solid basis in the two parent disciplines. It just didn't happen – at Yeshiva, the Language Behavior Program chaired by Vera John-Steiner lasted 10 years, and at the Hebrew University it never started – and in a later paper, Fishman (1991b)²⁷ once again makes a convincing case for the need for sociolinguists to know sociology and sociologists to respect the significance of language. He puts it strikingly: 'Sociology, too, although far less messianic in its promise, is chained and waiting, somewhere in its own disciplinary provincialism, waiting to come to sociolinguistics, to broaden and deepen it somewhat and to enable it to live up to its name' (1991b: 67).

One sociologist who did appreciate Fishman's work was Kjolseth (1997: 145) who reports that

Fishman, in 1966, organized a one-day meeting on sociolinguistics after the sixth World Congress of Sociology, which led to the formation of the Research Committee on Sociolinguistics of the International Sociological Association.²⁸ Kjolseth was president until 1974 and other members of the board were Fishman and Kloss, 'If I had to select one outstanding figure from among the several true giants in our field, I would point to Joshua Fishman'. The 1992 conference was to discuss the 'interface between sociology and linguistics'.

But the gap between sociology and linguistics has remained much as noted by Fishman at a meeting in Bright's home in the summer of 1966: sociologists were interested in linguistic variables, but not linguistics, while linguists were interested in broad social contextualization, but not in sociology. Shuy (1997: 15) cites this from Hymes (1966) and remarks that it was still true. Fishman (1992: viii) characterized sociolinguistics after three decades as 'a province of linguistics and anthropology, and a rather provincial province as well'. In spite of this, Mallinson (2009), who was trained in both sociolinguistics and sociology, has traced parallels between studies in the two disciplines and outlined ways in which they might collaborate.

How should we define the field that has emerged? One approach might be a content analysis of the more than 300 papers and posters accepted for the 2008 Sociolinguistics Symposium in Amsterdam, but the great variety makes clear the wisdom of Ferguson's belief that no single theory is likely to emerge. There is not even a clear distinction possible between the macro and the micro – in fact, SS17 set its theme as 'micro and macro connections'.

The lines were already drawn at Bloomington in 1964: Labov trying to explore what social elements needed to be added to linguistic theory to account for variation and language change; Gumperz seeking to analyse discourse in social contexts to establish the nature of social interaction; Hymes and his followers exploring communicative competence and sociolinguistic ecology and its educational implications. Where do Ferguson and Fishman fit into this picture?

1.5 FERGUSON AND FISHMAN AS SOCIOLINGUISTS/SOCIOLOGISTS OF LANGUAGE

Ferguson was a brilliant linguist, applying his keen analytical abilities to discover and explore a variety of systematic connections of language to society. In an autobiographical sketch (Ferguson, 1995), he explained how he came into linguistics

and the 'constructive tension between academic and activist activities'. He grew up with a strong interest in languages, encouraged in part by his German-speaking grandmother who lived with his family, the various languages associated with his religious upbringing, and his school teachers. He learned Latin, French and German at high school. At the University of Pennsylvania, he added Greek, Modern Hebrew and Old English. Completing a BA in philosophy, his graduate major was Oriental Studies; he studied Moroccan Arabic verbs and the phonology and morphology of Bengali. Zellig Harris was his graduate adviser. With support from the Intensive Language Program of the American Council of Learned Societies, he continued to study Moroccan Arabic and developed teaching materials for spoken Arabic. Inspired by a visit of Roman Jakobson, he saw the value of uniting psychological and linguistic approaches to the study of child language. In 1947, he accepted a position at the Foreign Service Institute working with Henry Lee Smith. While there, he wrote an unpublished paper on Arabic politeness formulas in 1955 and published an article on Arabic baby talk (Ferguson, 1956). However, it was his classic paper on diglossia (Ferguson, 1959) that was his first major contribution to sociolinguistics, and, according to Huebner (1999), his best-known work. There have been several reprints and translations into Italian, Spanish, Romanian, German and Portuguese. In the article, he suggested that a full explanation of these special situations would help 'in dealing with problems in linguistic description, in historical linguistics, and in language typology' (Ferguson, 1956: 2). Since then, a retrospective paper (Ferguson, 1991) notes, there have been hundreds of articles and a score of books on the topic, most of them referring directly to the paper; a review (Hudson, 1992) lists over 1000 items. In revisiting that classic work after some 3000 items had been published (Fernández, 1993), illustrating and applying and manipulating and modifying and confirming the original model, Ferguson (1991) clarified his original intention: his goal was to describe a particular language situation that was just one slot in a fairly elaborate taxonomy of language situations. From that taxonomy, principles and a theory would emerge. He could have chosen other 'clear cases' such as the creole continuum or the standard language with dialects but chose diglossia. In confessing weaknesses in the paper, the first that he mentions is his failure to specify that he was talking about speech communities. He could have been more precise in explaining what the term variety meant. Nor did he explain fully the notion of linguistic distance. He should also have recognized that these cases of diglossia existed in a larger situation, as described

by Stewart (1968). He did not describe the existence of attitudes to intermediate varieties, nor did he clarify the importance of the power differential in the choice of varieties. This first major paper and the clarification 30 years later help us to understand Ferguson's view of sociolinguistics: namely, the identification of mutually-illuminating aspects of language and society.

In later papers, he studied other language situations: he identified and analysed genres such as baby talk and sports announcer talk and politeness; he studied variation and change in a number of languages; and he wrote on important aspects of language planning. Thus, while his primary concern was with the micro, linguistic end of the continuum, his involvement with social concerns led to work relevant to language management concerns. As Huebner (1996: 7) notes, he was not constrained by a single theory but open to constant revision on the basis of new data and was eclectic in data collection and analysis. Huebner describes Ferguson's favourite approach as starting with a small piece of language in a social context, or with a small case study, and building gradually with additional examples a more comprehensive theory. His special quality was a consistent search for relationships between language change and language development, between language universals and individual differences, and a study of the process of conventionalization that build language systems. All this tends to place him at the micro or sociolinguistic end of the continuum, but he recognized and worked at the macro end too: his work on the Ethiopian survey (Bender et al., 1976) involved him in the study of sociolinguistic situations, and his papers on language and religion and on language policy and planning clearly could be defined as sociology of language.

By his own account, Fishman's motivation was narrower than Ferguson's although the way he pursued his goals led him into wider areas and encouraged a broad range of research. His language loyalty volume (Fishman et al., 1964) was completed before the Bloomington seminar. He discussed the ideas behind it with Haugen, who wrote the introduction to the printed version (Fishman, 1966) and praised the book for its positive approach to the immigrant, welcomed the introduction of the concept of ethnicity, and hoped that there would continue to be studies of 'language shifts and resistance to them' in other parts of the world. In the preface to a book (Fishman, 1991c) a quarter of a century later whose title echoes Haugen's words and ably meets his challenge, Fishman recalls a conversation in which Haugen asked if he did not find working with minority languages to be 'full of sadness'. Fishman replied by referring to the job of doctors, who treat patients even though they understand all will

eventually die. Now, after a decade of teaching medical anthropology, he recognized that his answer to Haugen had been inadequate: modern medicine aims not just to combat illness, but to cultivate 'wellness', and to do this with the understanding that it depends on the patient's cultural view of wellness; in the same way, he had come to believe that a sociology of language must aim at ethnolinguistic wellness, depending for this on theoretical knowledge based on the preferences of specific ethnolinguistic speech communities.

Minority and endangered languages were at the core of his work. In an autobiographical essay, Fishman (1991a) notes that he grew up in a typical sociolinguistic setting in Philadelphia, the elder child of Yiddish-speaking immigrants.²⁹ What was not typical was that his parents were language activists deeply committed to Yiddish and successful in transferring their zeal to Fishman and to his sister.³⁰ He started writing for Yiddish youth journals, publishing his first story at the age of 12; two years later he became editor and publisher of his own journal. At school, he learned Spanish and became a passionate stamp-collector which stimulated his interest in other countries. He had been, he claims, a sociolinguist 'unwittingly' for 30 years before he went to Indiana, and suggested the term, on the model of psycholinguistics, as early as 1953–54. Roger Brown rejected the term, so he continued to refer to his work as the sociology of language: he taught a course with that name in 1960. At Pennsylvania, he majored in history with a minor in Spanish; at Columbia, he was persuaded to complete a doctorate in social psychology. He returned to teach at the University of Pennsylvania in 1958 as an associate professor of psychology and human relations. Two years later, he was awarded a long-term research grant by the Office of Education to study the 'Non-English Language Resources of the United States'; he took the grant with him to Yeshiva University, his lifetime academic home. His personal goal, at the 'supra-rational level', was to find out if any languages were in a stronger state of preservation than Yiddish. He feels his work in sociolinguistics to be peripheral: it is 'either macro-sociological, historical or quantitative' and with no concern for 'corpus (phonology, syntax, discourse etc.)'. It is at the same time 'Yiddish-centric' with conscious efforts to maintain a scientific perspective by studying other cases and languages. Apart from Yiddish, his main topical centres have been minority communities and languages, ideological, emotional and political expressions of ethnolinguistic cultures, and applied aspects of language maintenance and ideology, concentrating mainly on status planning, although he has recently reiterated strong support of efforts to maintain the purity of a language (Fishman, 2006).

Conscious all the time of a possible bias that his love for Yiddish might produce, he spent his career learning about other languages and their situations, whether by visits which took him (commonly supported by his wife, Gella Schweid Fishman, a scholar of Yiddish education in her own right) from the Arctic³¹ to the Antipodes,³² lecturing and establishing close personal relations with the language activists whose languages he wanted to see preserved, or by his extensive career of editing. Thus, he endeavoured to avoid 'a Yiddish-centric view of the sociolinguistic enterprise' (Fishman, 1991a).

1.6 CONCLUSION

Summing up, in addition to their unmatched organizational contributions to the development of sociolinguistics and the sociology of language, Charles Ferguson and Joshua Fishman have each staked out pioneering claims to major sectors of the study of language in its social context. How important are they to contemporary sociolinguistics? A citation search using Google Scholar shows that Fishman has many more hits than Ferguson, mainly for books (*Reversing Language Shift* tops the list; among his papers, a 2007 paper on Whorf is the most cited, with over 100 hits). Most of Ferguson's hits are papers, starting with over 1000 for diglossia, followed by 260 for baby talk, 140 for foreigner talk, and 100 for politeness. Fishman's topics and methods have perhaps produced more followers, in particular with the political relevance of language loyalty and loss. Many scholars working on these topics are in the field of education, while Ferguson's followers are more strictly in the narrower field of sociolinguistics. Additionally, the strength of Fishman's following is shown in the large number of tributes in festschrifts and birthday celebratory conferences. Perhaps this is a mark of his longer publication list; it also reflects the fact that he has continued to develop his ideas and approach, while Ferguson's strength was in innovative recognition of topics of sociolinguistic relevance. Obviously, there is no point in trying to award grades; each has made (and Fishman continues to make) major contributions to studies of language in society. Without their scholarship and leadership, the field would have been thinner and weaker.

NOTES

1 Paulston and Tucker (1997) is a wonderful treasure for students of sociolinguistics, preserving

the 'memories and reflections' of the scholars who were involved in the early years.

2 One founding mother at least then; Paulston (1997: 3) called attention to the 'appalling dearth of women in the early days of sociolinguistics' which has now been rectified, in part in language and gender studies. She also recognized that most of the scholars involved in the first years were American; this too has changed, as could be seen by anyone attending the 2008 Sociolinguistics Symposium in Amsterdam.

3 Fishman was also a student of Uriel's father, Max Weinreich, and translated his major study of the Yiddish language (M. Weinreich, 1980).

4 I recall Weinreich's presentation as the most polished of the half dozen sets of plenary lectures given at Bloomington. Fishman (1997a,b: 310) recounts that Weinreich met the members of the sociolinguistic seminar and remarked on their variety of approaches: he believed the new field would "have to contend with at least as great a diversity of topics as he and I had unsuccessfully tried to contend with a decade earlier."

5 Tucker (1997: 320) uses this term and notes two characteristics of the climate of the period which contributed to the growth of sociolinguistics: a sense of the social justice aspect, and a view of its relevance to politics and government. Both led to an insistence on the importance of language in use.

6 Paulston and Tucker (2003: 1) report that Nida (1949:152) was the first linguist to use the term 'sociolinguistics'.

7 The Preface to Fishman (1966) was written by Einar Haugen in July 1964 and dated at Bloomington Indiana. The report was first available as Fishman, Nahirny, Hofman and Hayden (1964).

8 Fishman is one scholar who has not hidden his personal views or the personal history that lay behind his research, as will become clear.

9 Then a professor of sociology at McGill University.

10 A sociologist at the University of Oregon.

11 Stewart (1930–2002) worked at the Center for Applied Linguistics in the 1960s, when his major contribution to sociolinguistics was a study of Gullah, an Afro-American variety of English, which established the Creole base for Afro-American vernacular English. He was on the faculty of the City University of New York for 25 years, and continued studies of Creoles and the implications of his findings for the teaching of reading to black children.

12 Kloss (1924–87) was a regularly-cited German scholar, the knowledge of whose Nazi past, recently disclosed (Hutton, 1999), shocked those who had known him and admired his work: see the loose-leaf addendum to *The Early Days of Sociolinguistics* (Paulston and Tucker, 1997) written by the editors and by Fishman and also the footnote (1) to Fishman (2008): 25.

13 He published two introductory readers with the same publisher, one with 'sociolinguistics' in the title (Fishman, 1970) and two years later, a revision with the 'sociology of language' (Fishman, 1972a). In later correspondence with Eldridge Sibley, SSRC staff for the committee, he said he'd rather it be named 'committee on language and behavior in social contexts' (Committee on Sociolinguistics 1963–). The program he set up at Yeshiva University with Vera John-Steiner and Vivian Horner was called the Language and Behavior Program.

14 A contrasting view was presented by Friedrich (1997: 98), for whom a strong memory is the acceptance by sociolinguists of the fact that 'language forms and patterns are always politically charged and are always ensconced in sociopolitical contexts that should not be avoided by a scientific fiction', in contrast to the ironic fact that Chomsky's 'linguistics and that of his immediate followers has remained by and large deaf and mute to the political'.

15 The other two significant teachers he mentions are Irving Lorge for quantitative studies and Max Weinreich for Jewish folklore.

16 Allen Grimshaw (1997) also reports that his interest in sociolinguistics dates from a visit to India in 1961.

17 Fishman (2001a: 864) notes Ferguson's 'unusually broad range of well-developed interests and a highly significant number of organizational accomplishments'.

18 Roger Shuy (like me) was at Bloomington in a post-doctoral seminar on Computation in Linguistics directed by Paul Garvin (Garvin and Spolsky, 1966), but because he had been trained in dialectology was, I am confident, aware of the sociolinguistic seminar; he later directed the first major sociolinguistic program at Georgetown University.

19 Ferguson's articles are easily available thanks to the work of two scholars who edited collections, Anwar Dil (Ferguson, 1971) and Thomas Huebner (Ferguson, 1996).

20 He was President of the Linguistics Society of America in 1970 and of the International Association for the Study of Child Language from 1973 to 1975.

21 The 36th annual conference of NWAV (New Ways of Analyzing Variation) was in Philadelphia in 2007.

22 The first meeting of the Sociolinguistics Symposium in the 1970s in the UK marks the growth of sociolinguistics in Europe; after 2002, the Symposium began to meet elsewhere in Europe and met in Amsterdam in 2008, with over 300 contributors.

23 Fishman is singularly open to inviting comments on his own work too. In one book (Fishman, 1991c), he presented a complex and original theory of language maintenance and loss that has been widely discussed; 10 years later, he updated his own theory (Fishman, 2001b) and published comments

and criticisms from 16 scholars with knowledge of the cases he had studied in the 1991 book.

24 The important place religion plays in their work and their lives is another connection between Ferguson and Fishman, distinguishing them from the secularism common in Western scholars.

25 American anthropology, it should be noted, included linguistics as one of its four main fields alongside ethnography, archaeology and physical anthropology, which meant that anthropologists were trained in general linguistics.

26 His obituary notes:

At times, however, his consuming intellectual curiosity led him **far afield**. To note only one example, he was a pioneer in sociological interest in language and in what came to be called sociolinguistics. He gave a paper on the sociology of language in 1963; the following year he was a participant in the SSRC-sponsored seminar held in conjunction with the Summer Linguistic Institute of the Linguistic Society of America. (emphasis added)

27 The paper is reprinted in Hornberger and Pütz (2006).

28 This continues and was renamed as the RS25 Language and Society of the ISA in 2007. Jenny Perry, current secretary of the RC wrote to me (personal communication):

We decided on a change of name because we felt that 'Sociolinguistics' might sound a bit limiting as far as prospective new members were concerned. We conducted an online vote on the five most popular suggested names for change from all our members. Since the name change we have captured a more diverse membership.

29 Ferguson was also born in Philadelphia. His maternal grandparents were German speakers, and he would hear his grandmother speaking a variety of it with an elderly neighbour (Ferguson, 1995).

30 In turn, Joshua Fishman and his wife Gella have devoted much time and effort to passing on their enthusiasm for Yiddish to their children and grandchildren.

31 One paper (Fishman, 1993a) was presented at a conference in Tromsø.

32 His book (Fishman, 1991c) includes a chapter on Māori.

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