

THROW THE COW OVER THE FENCE SOME HAY ONCE

English and Pennsylvania German in Contact

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1. Introductory remarks

This paper examines the question of interference in the light of Pennsylvania German (PG) and English (E) contact in Waterloo County, Canada (approximately 100kms west of Toronto). To get the complete picture of this unusual contact situation, both directions of interference are considered here.

The paper divides itself into four main parts. The first section provides some necessary background details, which are important for understanding the full implications of the findings. The second section examines the question of PG-E interference and the third section the other side of the coin; namely, E-PG interference. Section four is a discussion of these findings. Here it must be stressed, that the research is still very much in its early stages and findings are therefore only preliminary. Nonetheless, what they are already able to indicate about the nature and direction of interference is both instructive and insightful.¹

1.1 Setting the scene

Like any speech community, the Pennsylvania Germans do not represent a totally homogenous group. What exists is a complex design of social, cultural and religious diversity which must be taken into account in any appraisal of the linguistic situation. This is particularly true for patterns of interference.

The PG-speaking group examined here are the Mennonite Anabaptists of Swiss-German origin, who left Pennsylvania for Canada after the American War of Independence. The majority settled in Waterloo County, where they remain today (with the growth of the cities of Kitchener and Waterloo, however, some of the farming population are now moving out into more isolated areas).² Since the 1870s, the Mennonites have been experiencing continued factionalism and the result is now a complex pattern of sub- and splinter groups. These splits result from the question of conformity and the different degrees to which members will interpret the scriptural quotation - 'And be not conformed to this world'. It seems that biblical exactness is an important factor in maintaining their separate status and close sense of community, but, paradoxically, is also a major reason for this continuing splintering. To the outsider, it presents a confusing picture - differences may be as subtle as a different dress or bonnet style, but of course can also involve more serious issues like the question of Sunday School, or adoption of new farming methods, for example.

For convenience, the Mennonite (and also Amish) community are normally divided into two major groups - the *Plain Folk* and the *Non-Plain Folk*. The Plain Folk are religiously the most conservative and are typically both rural and isolated. In Canada, they are known as the Old Order Mennonites (OOMs) or colloquially as 'the horse and buggy people'. They have a

¹ My recent field trip (June-July 1989) to Waterloo County was made possible through the generous support of the Canadian Faculties Enrichment Award. It was additionally supported by an ARC grant jointly held by members of the Linguistics Department, La Trobe University. I am also very grateful to the Mennonite community for their hospitality and especially their time and patience in answering my constant stream of questions. They taught me an enormous amount about their language.

² This move was the direct result of the war - the pacifist way of Mennonite life and the anti-German backlash which resulted on account of the British use of German mercenaries.

very distinctive style of dress which has changed little over the centuries, they drive only horses and buggies, and are opposed to modern conveniences like cars, radios, television, telephones etc.³ Although clearly a purely religious denomination in origin, the OOMs are best now described as a distinct cultural-ethnic group with their own unique traditions, beliefs, customs, social practices and of course language - they are a religious sect but also a distinct cultural- ethnic minority. Not surprisingly, their simple and conservative way of life attracts much attention from the wider community.

The Non-Plain Folk comprise two main groups. The first, the least conservative group, are the so-called Progressive Mennonites (PMs). Their members are generally indistinguishable from mainstream Canadians. The second group are really an intermediate group and could be called Transitional Mennonites (TMs). They include, for example, the Markham Mennonites who follow many of the same beliefs and behaviour patterns as the OOMs but have accommodated more to modern ways. For example, black cars now replace the horse and buggy (earning them the nickname black-bumper Mennonites' - until recently, the chrome on these cars was also painted black). Their dress, like their cars, is plain and without decoration, but not in the same distinctive tradition of the OOMs (for that reason, they are sometimes referred to as Modern Plain; cf. Huffines 1980b).

But this is painting a neat picture of what in reality is nowhere near as orderly. Clearly, the best way to view the situation is as a continuum - from the ultraconservative OOMs through the TMs to the least conservative PMs. It is also possible to plot the different speakers along this continuum. Competence in PG accords generally with degree of religious conservatism. It is not that religion directly bears on the linguistic abilities of these people, but it is on account of what their religion entails. The OOMs are bilingual E and PG. But what is crucial is that this bilingualism has the support of a stable diglossic situation. P0, as the L-variety, is usually only spoken and is the language of both home and community. E, as the H-variety, is read and written and only spoken when dealing with non-PG speaking outsiders.⁴ For the OOMs, language and religion are closely entwined. PG plays a crucial part in maintaining their separate and peculiar status and for this particular group, it is in no danger of dying. Among the Non- Plain Folk, however, language proficiency ranges from fully competent speakers to real semi speakers. But since even the most competent speakers have not the support of diglossia, the situation is an unstable one. Ultimately, the shift to E is a certainty for this group (cf. Burridge 1988 and also papers by Huffines 1980a, Loudon 1987, Moelleken 1983 for a comprehensive account from the Pennsylvanian perspective).

This then forms the backdrop to the following discussion of interference. The term interference is being used here in the more general sense of influence (it is of course not meant to be pejorative). An example of interference would therefore include any prosodic, phonological, grammatical or lexical element which appears in a language on account of contact with another. Some items discussed here have come to be used regularly in the language and for that reason are probably better described as examples of integration. However, because of the difficulty of determining when interference stops and integration starts, I shall describe all as interference.

³ Some accommodations are now being made; for example, in the matter of telephones and refrigeration (see discussion Burridge 1988 and also Hostetler 1980 for an account of the Amish situation in Pennsylvania).

⁴ If you include High German (HG) in this scenario, then the OOMs could well be described as triglossic. They are not trilingual, however. The OOMs can not speak HG unless it is to quote from the Bible. In fact, it seems the younger members particularly can follow very little of a Bible reading in HG. In function, the language is clearly very restricted and in this model would best be described as the classical variety.

The speakers used for this particular study come from all the above three groups of Mennonites and are summarized below. The initial part of the paper, however, concentrates on the more proficient PG speakers and relates specifically to taped conversational data collected from the first two groups only (the ultraconservative OOMs and the less conservative TMs). The paper will then conclude with some discussion of data collected from the modern group.

- a) Old Order Mennonites (OOMs) - 10 speakers
regular use of PG (family, community and work); infrequent use of E (outsiders only)
- b) Transitional Mennonites (TMs) - 7 speakers
regular use of both PG and E
- c) Progressive Mennonites (PMs) - 7 speakers
regular use of E (family, community and work); ability to use PG where necessary

2. Interference from PG in E

In Pennsylvania and Canada alike, there exists a popular perception of the Pennsylvania Germans as speaking a form of mixed English, or what is known colloquially as *Verhoodelt Englisch*. Druckenbrod (1981:10), for example, in the introduction to his teaching grammar of PG states that “when the Pennsylvania German [goes] to speak English (which [is] for him a foreign tongue), he [is] influenced by the German syntax or sentence structure. For some such English as ‘Run the steps once up’ is largely unintelligible unless you know that it’s really the Pennsylvania German ‘Schpring mol die Schdeeg nuff’. This is the reason for many of the so-called ‘quaint’ or ‘cute’ sayings of the Pennsylvania German *trying* [my emphasis] to speak English. ‘Throw the cow over the fence some hay’ is but another example of this process”.⁵

In Canada, evidence for this popular view exists in the form of jokes and anecdotes, where these sorts of ‘quaint’ and ‘cute’ sayings abound. The following are some more examples:

Throw Father down the stairs his hat once

It wonders me if it don’t gif a storm

Becky lives the hill just a little up

Yonnie stung his foot with a bee un it ouches him terrible

Ve get too soon oldt un too late schmart

Clearly, these are examples of stereotyping or ‘popular conscious characterizations (Wardhaugh 1988:137) and they appear in children’s colouring-in books and on tea towels beer coasters, serviettes etc. Like most stereotypes, these are also stigmatized. Stereotypes often do not accurately reflect actual usage, but they usually have some basis in reality. These are historically accurate (cf. section 2.3), but no longer have any validity. As we will see below, there is surprisingly little in the way of interference in the English of these PG-speakers - certainly there is nothing remotely resembling *Verhoodelt Englisch*.⁶

⁵ Much earlier, Frey (1945:86) stated that ‘the English used by the Amish ... has all the earmarks of the type of speech found among any other Pennsylvania Dutch group. It can be briefly described as American English built on a framework of Pennsylvania Dutch phonemic patterns and interjected continually with whole or part loan-translations from the dialect’.

⁶ Studies from Pennsylvania, like Enninger 1984 and Huffines 1980b, 1984 suggest the same - *Verhood Englisch* has become a modern-day fiction.

Without yet taking into account the question of socio-cultural diversity, consider firstly the basic patterns of interference found within the two groups of PG-speakers. These can be arranged into a simple hierarchy of *decreasing* strength.

FIGURE 1: **Interference PG → E**
 Prosodic strong
 Phonological quite strong
 Grammatical weak
 Lexical very weak

2.1 Lexical

The least amount of interference occurs at the lexical level - the few items which could be described as actual lexical transfers from PG to E are confined to untranslatable concepts like *Freindschaft* (which inadequately translates into English as ‘family’, ‘relations’) and words to do with buggy technology, for example.

2.2 Grammatical


Because of the nature of grammar, much more data is always required before anything conclusive can be said - syntactic constructions are not finite and can not be listed in inventories like phonological features. This means that lack of occurrence is not necessarily negative evidence. The findings here, therefore, are definitely preliminary. At this stage, what they suggest is minimal grammatical interference. For reasons which will be discussed later, PG English has, from a prescriptive point of view, remarkably ‘proper’ grammar.


The data show little evidence of the so-called ‘redundant adverbs’, which have become the stereotypes of PG English (cf. earlier examples). The only exception is the adverb *already* which appears in constructions like *I heard that already*. This differs from usual E practice in its use of the preterite tense (instead of the perfect) and in the position of the adverb (*already* would generally appear *before* the main verb).⁷ In addition, findings here suggest a greater preference for final placement of particles, instead of next to the verb (*I ate my dinner up* versus *I ate up my dinner*). This follows the pattern of the equivalent PG construction. However, since both represent alternative patterns for E and are motivated primarily by discourse factors (considerations of topicality, for example; cf. Chen 1986), it really is impossible to say for sure, whether or not this particular word order is any more frequent in PG English than the standard variety of the area. Much more work needs to be done.

2.3 Phonological

Most interference occurs at the prosodic level. In this case, it is a distinctive rise-rise-fall pattern which appears in many different sentence types, including both questions and statements (cf. Huffines 1986 for a detailed account of PG intonation). This pattern can spread across the whole utterance, but more often than not in the data here condenses into the last item, as the following examples show

⁷ This construction also occurred in the speech of some Waterloo County people not of PG heritage, suggesting it may be becoming a feature of that area.

(1)  What are you going to do for your dinner?

(2)  That is my niece.

The next figure shows the segmental features of phonological interference. These are arranged in a tentative implicational hierarchy. For examples, speakers who show the first feature, typically show all other eight features etc

FIGURE 2: **Hierarchy of phonological features**

1.	r	realized as	Ø	
2.	θ		s	
3.	ð		d	
4.	b, d, g		p, t, k	(word finally)
5.	z, v		s, f	(word finally)
6.	ɫ		l	
7.	ʝ		č	
8.	Λ		ɔ, ɒ	
9.	i:		ə, ε	(in unstressed positions)

These patterns of phonological interference distribute quite differently throughout the Mennonite community. Of the two groups being considered here, it is the less conservative TMs (as opposed to the OOMs) who show the *greatest* amount of interference. At first consideration, this appears a surprising distribution. The TMs use more E and have the greatest contact with outsiders and yet it is their E which diverges the most from the standard in this regard. The OOMs, on the other hand, show much less interference. They have none of features 1-3, and show features 4 and 5 inconsistently. Only features 6-9 appear uniformly for all speakers.⁸

In studies coming out of Pennsylvania, there are two features which have additionally been identified as characteristic of PG English (cf. for example, Huffines 1980b, 1984):

10.	v	w
11.	w	v, β

These are probably the two most clichéd features of PG English and the fact that they are totally absent from the data here shows once more how removed *Verhoodelt Englisch* is from reality, at least in the Canadian context. In fact, the only stereotypical feature to show up consistently here is the devoiced version of J. Many of the features which have become stereotyped in *Verhoodelt Englisch* appear in the E found in recent German immigrants to Canada (as you might predict on the basis of a contrastive analysis of PG and E). The question is then, why have they come to be identified so closely with PG English? The answer probably lies in history. Up until well into the twentieth century, the diglossic

⁸ The idea for this hierarchy comes from Enninger's (1984) table showing features of phonological interference found in Raith's 1981 study. The results here show some similarity with both Enninger's and Raith's study (also Huffines 1980b and 1984), although it is difficult to compare findings - firstly, because of the preliminary nature of this present study and secondly, because of different methodologies. Nonetheless, all show the same interesting trend; namely, it is the least conservative groups who show the most interference.

situation which existed in Pennsylvania and Canada resembled that of modern-day Switzerland. PG was the L-variety, as it is still today, and High German was the H-variety - the language of education, worship and (with the exception of some folk literature) all writing. The Pennsylvania Germans were isolated and there was simply no need for them to learn English. One of the prefaces to Home's nineteenth century elocution manual, for example, describes 'their [the Pennsylvania German's] entire ignorance of the English language [which for them] is as much a dead language as Latin and Greek' (p.7) In his manual, Home suggests drills which exercise precisely those aspects of phonology which have now become fossilized in the modern-day characterizations of Verhooft *Englisch*.

3. Interference from E in PG

What is remarkable when we consider interference from the other direction is that it is possible to take the earlier hierarchy and simply reverse it.⁹ This is shown in Figure 3.

FIGURE 3: Interference E → PG

Lexical	strong
Grammatical	quite strong
Phonological	weak
Prosodic	very weak

3.1 Lexical

The number of lexical borrowings into PG is enormous and this is commented on frequently by the Mennonites themselves. But given that they are typically *need* borrowings to express new objects and concepts, this fact should not be surprising. PG has been in North America for well over three centuries and can not meet all current communicative needs. European German no longer represents a viable source of borrowing, so there is no alternative but to borrow from E.

Not all borrowings, however, are of this sort - there are a number of examples which could not be said to arise out of need; fillers like 'anyway', 'in fact', 'well' etc. and examples where an E word has replaced an original German word as in *Fens* for original *Zaun*. Prestige is often given as the reason for unnecessary loanwords (cf. Weinreich 1953:59-60), but clearly prestige can *not* be a viable motivating force within the Amish-Mennonite context. The motivation behind these kinds of lexical borrowings into PG would make an interesting study.

3.2 Grammatical

Grammatical interference also appears strong and some of the most striking examples of it are listed below. As before, however, the nature of syntax causes difficulties. At times, it is impossible to determine conclusively actual cases of grammatical interference - as we shall see, the possibility of parallel but independent development is always very real.

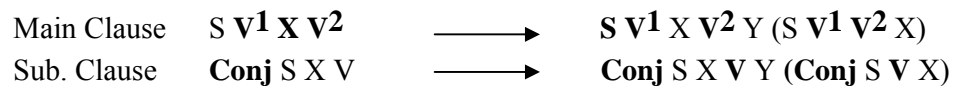
3.2.1 Word order

All Germanic languages have had at some stage in their development a feature of verb placement known as the verbal brace (*Satzrahmen*). In main clauses, this brace construction occurs only in complex tenses. It involves both the finite verb in second position and all non-

⁹ It is interesting to note that this is basically the same pattern which Rayfield (1970) records for a study of English-Yiddish contact. For Rayfield's findings also, similar hierarchies obtain.

finite verbal elements in final position. These together form an imaginary kind of bracket or brace around all other sentence constituents. In subordinate clauses, it involves the initial subordinating conjunction and all clause final verbal elements. These also form a kind of bracket around the other clausal constituents. What is happening increasingly in PG is violation of this brace construction; that is, elements are appearing more and more outside the verbal brace, bringing the discontinuous verbal constituents closer together. This is illustrated in Figure 4 (the verbal brace has been highlighted).

FIGURE 4: **Changes in the verbal brace**



This change is bringing PG syntax closer to the E, although it is impossible in this instance to tell whether E influence is directly responsible. Languages in both the Germanic and Romance families are in the process of stabilizing SVO order and parallel word order changes have either already happened or are currently underway in *all* Germanic languages, including European Standard German. It is quite probable, therefore, that E is in this case simply accelerating a word order already immanent in PG (to use a metaphor often used in studies on ‘drift’ - the seeds of change have already been sown in early Germanic; cf. Koch 1974). Examples like the following, however, suggest that contact with E is at least accelerating this change. What is remarkable here is the nature of the material appearing outside the brace.

- (3) *Es Wedder scheint ungewenlich warm sei do*
the weather appears unusually warm be here
‘The weather appears to be unusually warm here.’
- (4) *De alt Gaul waar am Brawiere far iwwer de Fens tchumpe dadriwwer*
the old horse was on trying for over the fence jump over there
‘The old horse was trying to jump over the fence.’
- (5) *Es is klaar as sel is sei Hund*
It is clear that that is his dog.’

In modern Standard German (and also Dutch), it is unusual for anything other than long adverbial phrases to appear outside the brace (this is how this shift typically begins; cf. Burridge forthcoming). In PG, however, examples like the above involving light adverbials and even core elements like direct objects are common.

3.2.2 The progressive

PG has a progressive tense involving some form of the verb *sei* ‘to be’ followed by *am* (a fused preposition and article; literally, *an + em* ‘on the’) and an infinitival substantive:

- (6) *Ich bin am Bicher lese*
I am on-the books read
‘I am reading books’

Although E influence is probably involved here, this construction is unlikely to be an actual E borrowing. For one, the progressive appears in other Germanic dialects (cp. German *Er ist am Essen* ‘he is eating’; cf. Lockwood 1968: 161-62). Secondly, it illustrates a common enough historical development for the progressive (cp. English - originally, *I’m going on hunting* —> *a-hunting* — *0-hunting*) which means that the chance of parallel but independent development is also very great. The frequency of the construction, however, does suggest

some E influence (cf. also Enninger 1980:346-347 who also suggests this), as well as a new progressive passive construction which has now appeared (see discussion 3.4 below).

3.2.3 Case syncretism

The original nominative and accusative cases have already merged in PG. This must have happened very early in its history, since it is a general feature of southeastern Rhine-Palatinate dialects (cf. Buffington and Barba 1965; Keller 1961). There are now signs that the dative may also disappear, although findings here suggest that this change is not nearly as advanced in Canada as it is in Pennsylvania (cf. Huffines 1989b).

Some dialects of European German have also lost the distinction (cf. Keller 1961). This can not be an inherited pattern, however, since the dative is still used freely among the Canadian OOMs - it is largely the transitional group who are showing the signs of further case merging. The same case syncretism appears in other varieties of German in contact with E (cf. Eikel 1949 and Gilbert 1965 for American German and Clyne 1972, 1989 for Australian German and also Dutch) and structural pressure from E is undoubtedly an issue. However, since this sort of morphological leveling or grammatical stripping' (Markey 1987) is a general characteristic of languages in contact, the actual role played by E is not really clear.

3.2.4 Passive

The data here reveal the following passive constructions for the different tenses in PG:

- (7) Present/Preterite: *De Schtrump s/waar geschtoppt bei der Maem*
the stocking is/was darned by the mother
- (8) Present/Past Perfect: *De Schtrump is/waar geschtoppt waerre be der Maem*
The stocking has/had darned been by the mother
- (9) Progressive: *Blaume sin am verkaaft Waerre beim Kael am Eck*
plums are on-the sold being by-the chap at-the corner

There are three changes which have occurred in the PG passive and which suggest interference from E. Firstly, the preposition *bei* has replaced original *vun*. Secondly, the passive *bei-phrase* now appears outside the brace; that is, *after* the passive participle (cf. 3.2.1 above). Finally, there is evidence of a new passive auxiliary *sei* 'to be' in sentences like (6) which has replaced original *warre/waerre* 'to become' (sentences 7 and 8). Since the verb 'to be' is one of the few verbs to maintain a preterite form (the preterite has otherwise disappeared from PG), this means that a preterite passive is now available. With the original auxiliary *waerre*, the only tenses possible were the present and perfect, as in the following examples:

- (10) *De Schtrump wat vun der Maem geschtoppt*
- (11) *De Schtrump is/waar vun der Maem geschtoppt waerre*

With the verb 'to be' as the new passive auxiliary, the same ambiguity has arisen in PG as exists in E (*the stocking is/was darned*, for example, has both a passive reading and a stative reading). The progressive form (shown in 8) is a new construction and it is interesting to speculate whether it may have developed to overcome this ambiguity.

3.2.5 Infinitival Clause

PG has an infinitival construction involving prepositions *far* 'for' and *zu* 'to' (in Canadian PG *zu* is being used less and less - in fact, younger speakers do not seem to use it at all).

- (12) *Es waar ungeweenlich far de John had Bicher (zu) lese*
 it was unusual for the John hard books to read
 ‘It was unusual for John to read hard books.’
- (13) *Er braucht schtarrige Gleser far sene*
 he needs strong glasses for see
 ‘He needs strong glasses to see.’

These clauses strongly resemble E for-to’ clauses, although they are much more widespread than their E counterparts. It may well be that they represent a direct borrowing from E to replace the original *um-zu* infinitival clause (PG *far* already showed semantic overlap with E ‘for’). The problem here is that a similar construction occurs also in Continental Frankish (cf. Lockwood 1968:154 who suggests that it is a likely calque from the French *pour* infinitival construction). This particular dialect would have been one of the original input dialects to PG. The construction may, therefore, not have originated at all from English (although its frequency suggests at least influence in this regard). And there is even a third possibility; namely, that it is a case of parallel but independent development (cp. Modern Standard German *Es wäre besser für mich, sogleich zu gehen* ‘It would be better for me to go immediately’ - as originally happened in E, the close logical relationship existing between *mich*, the object of preposition, and *gehen*, the infinitival verb, could be expressed by reanalyzing *für* as a complementizer heading a new subordinate clause).

3.3 Phonological considerations

Early borrowings did not have a great effect on the phonology of PG. As discussed above, the speakers were not bilingual PG-E and borrowings simply assimilated to PG phonological patterns. But with the large numbers of borrowings now entering PG, this is changing. For example, ‘pie’ represents an early loanword - some older speakers still pronounce it [boil], although younger speakers are now pronouncing it according to the E structure [p^hei]. Borrowings like this are introducing initial aspirated stops (formerly quite rare).

But one of the most interesting examples of interference involves the rhotic. This is because of its unusual distributional pattern - whereas so far we have seen more intense contact interference between E and PG in the *less* conservative groups of Mennonites, the rhotic involves principally the *most* conservative group of speakers; namely, the OOMs.

Early descriptions of Ontario PG describe it as essentially ‘r-less’ (cf. for example, Kratz and Mimes 1953). The sound is pronounced (as a trill) when it appears before a vowel, and elsewhere as a schwa. But this is changing rapidly, particularly among the OOMs. Before consonants and word-finally after long vowels, it is becoming increasingly common to find an *r* which closely resembles the North American retroflex; for example, PG *Darm* ‘intestine’ is frequently pronounced [da:rm]. And for many individuals there is evidence that the retroflex is replacing the trill in other positions. This is particularly true of the younger and middle age OOMs.¹⁰ If borrowings like ‘car’ were solely responsible for introducing this pattern, this would not account for why the OOMs are ahead of the more progressive groups in this development. It seems that this pronunciation is indeed due to E influence, but actually

¹⁰ There is enormous variety between speakers. This is typical of change in progress and Buehler’s (1977) fluctuating spellings show it only too clearly; for example, *a’ahlich* versus *airlich* ‘honest’; *a’ahbs* versus *airbs* ‘pea’. I have observed that the pattern is strongest among the Canadian Amish. In this case, observation is also backed by anecdotal evidence. The Mennonites often drew my attention to the ‘r-ful’ nature of Amish PG and, when imitating Amish speech, they always pronounced the *r*’s, even where there were none originally!

via written **HG**. **HG** is of course 'r-less, but when the OOMs either read or sing it, they pronounce *r* wherever it is written - and, most importantly, they pronounce it as a retroflex. In other words, since German is not for them a written language, the OOMs read it as if it were E. These special facts would account for why - contrary to all other aspects of interference - the OOMs show greater interference here than the Non-Plain, whose church service is now in E.¹¹

4. Why is this so? - discussion of findings

Why is it that we find precisely these patterns of interference? Genetic or typological considerations are not much help here. Although they do predict that the similarity of the linguistic systems would presumably facilitate easy interference, they can not explain why interference seems to be sensitive to the different levels of grammar and why, in particular, the reverse hierarchies obtain. To account for this we must look elsewhere.

4.1 The acquisition experience¹²

Consider firstly, the different types of contact involved. PG is the language first learned at home and E is generally acquired at school (from the ages of 5 or 6). The direction PG to E, therefore, involves a substratum-type of interference - the transferral of language habits into a second language (so-called 'improper learning'). Such a situation involves potential or actual shift to E (as is currently happening among the transitionals and, to an even greater extent among the progressives). The other direction, however, E to PG, represents actual borrowing - the transfer of items to a group's native language (this is perhaps a more restricted sense of the term borrowing than is usual; cf. Thomason 1986).

The patterns of interference we find in hierarchies 1 and 3 are predictable when we take into account, firstly, these two different types of contacts and, secondly, the order in which each different linguistic level is acquired. Prosody (intonation and stress features) are the first to be acquired and are therefore 'the most deeply anchored' features (McLaughlin 1984). These and segmental features also are acquired during a child's first three years. The acquisition of grammatical features continues until much later, during the early school years, and vocabulary continues to be acquired throughout one's life time. It is not surprising, therefore, that the most 'deeply anchored' speech habits are the ones we find most readily transferred from PG to E (from first to second language) and - to consider the other side of the coin - are the ones which in PG show the greatest resistance to interference from E. Since vocabulary will keep on being acquired as the need arises, then the enormous quantity of loans now entering PG from E is also not surprising - as we discussed earlier, the majority of these are necessary borrowings.

In sum, social setting and the chronology of language learning dictate that in the first instance we have substratum-induced interference, where the intensity of interference is greatest at the suprasegmental and segmental levels. And in the second instance, we have a case of borrowing, which typically begins with vocabulary (cf. Thomason 1986).

¹¹ Louden (1987:31-32) also suggests an interesting possibility - the tendency for the Old Order Amish (and Mennonites) to pronounce the retroflex here may have to do with their incredibly slow - almost syllable by syllable - style of hymn singing. In this case, the retroflex would be much easier to sustain than the trill.

¹² I am grateful to Edith Bavin for her helpful discussion of initial points and for acquainting me with much of the relevant literature.

However, language learning does not predict one way or another for grammar. In fact, it suggests that grammatical interference could well be associated with either one of the types of contact. Research findings support this - it appears that both borrowing and substratum-induced interference can result in grammatical changes (cf. Rayfield 1970; Thomason 1986). Why is it then that grammatical interference is so much stronger from E to PG than in the other direction? The explanation for this seems to lie in other aspects of the childhood acquisition experience. During the early school years, children would not yet have stabilized their PG grammatical structures. For that reason, structures like the passive and the infinitival construction, for example, are particularly vulnerable to E interference at this time (cf. also Costello 1978, 1989 who describes syntactic innovations in the PG of Pennsylvania children). Why the E Structures in particular have such a strong influence, rather than the other way around, follows from the way in which it is acquired in the formal school setting. In Canada, school is an 'E only environment' which admits *no* PG whatsoever (even during recess in the school yard!). There is also considerable prescriptivism attached to the learning of E - a strong emphasis on 'proper English' (cp. Enninger's 1984:13 description of Amish parochial schools in Pennsylvania where this is also the case). Similarly, outside of school, the children's experience of E is within formal contexts only, involving contact with outsiders, and as a written language (they do not have access to the more colloquial varieties of television and radio). All these factors work against PG-E interference. There would be very little in the way of imperfect learning. As Enninger says of Amish English - 'the 'proper English' policy aims at a rigorous suppression of transferences from PG as the Li' (p.21). This would *not* be true of E-PG interference, however. Socio-historical studies of change have shown that linguistic innovations have a much greater chance of taking hold in a language if they attract no attention and no resistance from speakers (cf. Nadkarni 1975:681 and also Loudon 1989, particularly pp.34-35). While there would be considerable resistance to change in E because of the way in which it is acquired, because PG is not standardized and has no written form, people are quite used to variation and are tolerant of it. PG speakers constantly remark on the variation in their language and particularly on 'how E they are becoming' (*wie Englisch as mir sin*). But these comments are never regretful, nor are they ever critical.

The two types of language contact situations (substratum and borrowing) and the acquisition experiences that go hand in hand can account for how the structures are first able to enter the language and take hold, but there is also the additional question of variation within the Mennonite community itself. Why do the less conservative TMs (particularly, the younger members) show more interference than the more conservative OOMs? This is surprising when you consider that the transitional groups use E more often and have much more contact with the E-speaking outside world. The answer probably lies in the different linguistic inputs these groups receive as children. For one, the early acquisition experience of the TMs involves considerably more mixing of the two languages and for many E may well even come to dominate both linguistically and socially. Bilingual studies (cf. McLaughlin 1984, for example) show that both mixed input and imbalance more readily facilitate interference. The OOM children, however, keep the languages separated from start. They acquire the languages successively - PG is well established at home before E is later introduced in the school. No language appears to dominate over the other - each have their own distinct functions. Also important here is the fact that the environment in which the OOM children learn E is a supportive one - something which may seem surprising in a community so intent on maintaining their *separate and peculiar* status.¹³ All of these factors - non-mixed input,

¹³ It is a common misconception that the Amish and Mennonites are totally against any education. This is simply not true - the parents of Old Order children are very supportive of the training given at school. They realize the importance of learning English - after all, successful business with the outside world requires fluency in English, and these people have a keen sense of business

absence of dominance and a supportive environment - have been shown to be important if linguistic structures are to remain differentiated and resist interference.

4.2 Diglossia - rigid compartmentalism

Another important consideration has to do with the aspect of diglossia. I have said the OOM situation is one of stable bilingualism supported by diglossia. The rigid compartmentalism characteristic of diglossia, where languages are used in quite distinct and separate domains, appears to exclude this sort of code-mixing. This is reflected in the weak interference and also the little, if any, actual code-switching.¹⁴

By comparison, the bilingualism of the Non-Plain Folk is not supported by diglossia. For them, PG is showing ever shrinking domains, with English appearing more and more in contexts of usage which were traditionally PG (church services, for example). The breakdown of diglossia typically results in code-switching and general interference which is exactly what we are finding. Observations by Fishman and others support exactly this - 'As role compartmentalization and value complementarity decrease under the impact of foreign models and massive change, the linguistic repertoire also becomes less compartmentalized. Language varieties formerly kept apart come to influence each other phonetically, lexically, semantically, and even grammatically, much more than before' (Fishman 1972:105).

4.3 Ethnic affiliation

The nature of interference is also dependent on additional social and psychological factors. The TMs are in the process of shifting culturally and linguistically to mainstream Canada, but they are not yet part of the mainstream. These people keep close and continual contact with the OOMs and identify very strongly with them. While they share many of the same beliefs and behaviour patterns as the OOMs, however, they have lost the distinctiveness of this group. They no longer have the horse and buggy, nor the extraordinary dress which go to make the OOMs such a strikingly distinctive group. And now there is every sign that they are also losing PG. For these people then, PG features in their E have a value in signalling their **PG** ethnicity. As language attitude studies show, ethnic varieties of the dominant language can be 'powerful markers of ethnic group belongingness' (cf. Giles 1977). But for the OOMs who still maintain hard linguistic and non-linguistic boundaries' (to use Giles' terminology), PG English has no role in ethnic differentiation and they place no value in it (cf. also Huffines 1980b, 1984). For those groups, where these boundaries are softening, however, PG features are becoming important ethnic markers. 'The softer the perceived linguistic and non-linguistic boundaries existing between ethnic groups, the more likely speech markers will be adopted in order to accentuate ethnic categorization' (Giles 1977:274).

4.4 The progressive Mennonites

To conclude, let me say something about the modern group, the PMs, who have not yet featured in the discussion. As implied in the introduction, this group identifies most strongly with the values of the dominant culture and are the most advanced in the shift to E. For them, social and economic advancement is important and can be via E only. They place no value in (and in fact go out of their way to avoid) any PG markers in their E. With the exception of intonation - 'the most insidious form of interference' (Baetens-Beardsmore 1982:62) - they show little in the way of interference. Given that PG is gradually dying within this group, the

¹⁴ The only examples of code-switching among the OOMs occurred during translation tasks - an artificial situation for them, involving both languages. Of course, it was also not usual for them to have someone from the outside speaking PG. My presence necessarily upset the usual strict compartmentalism

lack of interference is predictable. Studies have shown that in this sort of contact (involving influence from substratum in a dominant language), interference patterns only remain as long as the group itself remain bilingual. Rayfield (1970:106), for example, shows that the grand children, even the children, of Jewish immigrants in the USA speak E without any interference from Yiddish. Vogt (as discussed in Rayfield p.106) predicts that interference in French from Breton will disappear when Breton itself disappears. Often it is only intonation features which survive as evidence that what is now a monolingual community has developed from precisely this type of bilingual contact situation.

There are some signs, however, that this may change. It is my impression that in Waterloo County it is suddenly becoming fashionable to have PG heritage. If this does indicate the beginning of an 'ethnic revival' (Fishman et al. 1985), we might actually see these features stabilize and find their way into the E of surrounding areas. Up until now, this has definitely not been the case. For the progressives, PG suffers from all the negative associations of a dialect without a standard and without a written form (cf. Burridge 1988 and Huffines 1980a) and the fear of acquiring a 'PG accent' has been a strong accelerating force behind the shift to E (cf. the problem of negative stereotyping mentioned in section 2).

The PG of the progressive group shows enormous variation, as you would expect of a language death situation (symptomatic of its lack of vitality; cf. Dorian, 1981; Huffines 1989a & b). Competence in PG ranges from the fully-fledged bilingual to the real semi-speaker. As you would predict, the acquisition experiences are very varied for the members of this group and it is difficult to generalize. Many acquire it passively - parents, for example, report speaking PG with their own parents and among themselves but not with their own children (who also show no interest in learning the language). Of course, here too parameters involving socio-economic status, education, age, and sex are going to be crucial. Given these different parameters, members within the progressive group will show to quite varying degrees the effects of contact with E.

5. Conclusions

There have been many linguistic constraints proposed on the different ways in which languages can influence each other. While they do contribute greatly to our understanding of the role of contact in language change, there always seem to be many cases where these so-called universals simply do not hold true. This is precisely because there are crucial social and psychological factors, which the constraints do not take account of. As Thomason (1986) also argues, without precise information about these factors, we can not predict when interference will take place and what the nature of it will be. Phonological, prosodic, or grammatical features can not be considered independently of the context in which they appear. For example, it is simply not possible to say that suprasegmental interference is the most pervasive, or that syntax is the most resistant to influence, or even that influence always begins with vocabulary. This can be crucial when looking at history - so often absence of loanwords has been taken as evidence of lack of contact. If the contact involved a linguistic shift, however, vocabulary would not necessarily be involved at all.

This is not to say that linguistic factors are irrelevant of course. For example, language internal considerations, like the need for borrowing in PG. naturalness and markedness conditions all have a role to play. Closeness of linguistic systems and structural compatibility is also important - and yet, there are cases of interference between even the most divergent of systems. Why? Because there will always be social dynamics involved which play a crucial role in determining what kinds of linguistic features are involved, the direction and also extent of the interference. After all, as Thomason (p.264) points out, interference comes about in the first place on account of social factors and *not* linguistic ones.

Data here, even though preliminary, show quite clearly the importance of understanding the social setting, in order to be able to account for and predict changes occurring in a contact situation. It is the social setting which identifies that, on the one hand, we have a case of substratum interference (PG-E) and, on the other, a case of borrowing (E-PG). Both situations have given rise to very different interference results. Different speakers in the PG community also show quite different interference patterns. One group's bilingualism is supported by diglossia (OOMs) and is a maintenance Situation. The other two groups' bilingualism is without diglossia and involves potential or actual shift. The various groups also show quite different attitudes towards their cultural and linguistic identity. The outcome of contact depends on all these different factors, and not surprisingly, the various members within the PG-speaking community show the results of very different types of changes.

As has been emphasized throughout, this study is still very much in its initial stages. For one, no attempt has been made yet to quantify the data. Another weakness is that it concentrates on the single parameter of religious conservatism, and virtually ignores for the moment other important aspects of the social setting. Within the OOM community, this is probably less crucial - patterns of interference seem to show up uniformly throughout and parameters like the speaker's age and sex do not seem to be significant (but this is something which will need to be checked more thoroughly). But as the discussion has already hinted, this is not the case for the transitional and progressive groups. As you would expect of speakers in the midst of a shift (and in some cases a very rapid shift), factors like socio-economic status, age and education, are going to be crucial.' In short, much remains to be done. Nonetheless, the results so far are encouraging and indicate worthwhile directions for future research.

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