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Introduction: Multilingual Behavior in Youth Groups*

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The study of youth language, particularly the language use of bilingual or multilingual children and adolescents, does not have a long history in Scandinavia. The year of 1985 saw two publications that introduced the field into Scandinavia. One was Kotsinas' proposal that the Swedish spoken by immigrant adolescents in the cities and particularly in certain areas around Stockholm could be described in terms of creolization. Kotsinas had already in her 1982 dissertation described the Swedish spoken by Greek-speaking immigrants (and, in fact also one Polish-speaking) as pidginized Swedish, so the step from there to the creolization hypothesis was not very long. In 1988 two Kotsinas articles appeared which further developed this line of thinking and proposed that the Swedish spoken by young citizens with immigrant mother tongues, the so-called *Rinkeby Swedish* could be described as a new variety of Swedish. This leads to a distinction between *accented* second language production and *immigrant* varieties of the Scandinavian languages as second languages. Kotsinas discusses eight criteria for categorizing the Swedish spoken by young second language users as a dialect. She finds that the Rinkeby Swedish does not fulfill all criteria, but also that its function as a social, ethnic, and age marker makes it reasonable to consider it a social dialect or a group variety. This is particularly relevant for speakers who can choose to speak Swedish without the features of Rinkeby Swedish. To them, Rinkeby Swedish is either a style or a group variety which they can select or deselect according to circumstances. The problems raised by Kotsinas inspired studies elsewhere in Scandinavia, and also outside (e.g. Quist 2000, Nortier 2000). This has become one important direction of Scandinavian sociolinguistic work with the bilingual behavior of teenagers. Quist specifically refers to her debt to Kotsinas in her discussion of a similar phenomenon in Denmark, a stylized immigrant Danish which seems to be developing in and around Copenhagen. Quist is also inconclusive with respect to the status of the Danish spoken by primarily young men of Middle Eastern descent. It is possible that we are witnessing

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a potential future sociolect of Danish, but it may also be a temporary phenomenon, i.e. the situation in Copenhagen resembles that of Stockholm a decade ago. It is further characteristic of both places that some, although very few, majority adolescents acquire (some of) the features which characterize this stylized immigrant Danish. In certain instances this leads to *crossing* in Rampton's (1995) terms. A slightly different phenomenon, namely loans into Norwegian from languages such as Punjabi and Turkish, has been reported by Aasheim (1997). It is important in this connection that this modern urban Scandinavian language use has profound implications for the marking of social relations between on the one hand their speakers as groups and on the other hand the surrounding societies. This is not only relevant in Scandinavia, but also in several other European cities (for instance, London: Rampton 1995, Sebba 1993; Hamburg: Auer & Dirim 2000, Utrecht: Nortier 2000). The study of the adolescents' oscillation between what is otherwise considered several different varieties or languages has led to an increased understanding of the mechanisms of both ingroup-outgroup linguistic marking and negotiation of social relations between ingroup members. The systematic use of different languages or varieties is just one linguistic means at the disposal of the adolescents, and the studies in this field have – at least in Scandinavia – had close relations to the general study of youth language (cf. Kotsinas et al 1997, 1999, Stenström et al 2000). The hitherto only comprehensive publication about youth language in Scandinavia (Kotsinas 1994) discusses both the linguistics aspects of teenage language, particularly discourse markers, and the identity marking functions of the specific teeange language features. The UNO project and its workshops have also included a large body of work in the field of multilingualism.

The other major work to appear in 1985 was Sally Boyd's dissertation which deals with the survival or disappearing of ethnic minority languages in Sweden. Later studies, such as Boyd et al 1994, Necef (1996), and Jørgensen (2000) deal with the same issue. By and large there seems to be agreement that the immigrant minority languages are under heavy pressure in all of Scandinavia, and everywhere there has been a fierce public debate about the role of the minority languages in the educational systems. The most detailed discussion we find in Brox 1994, Hvenekilde 1994, and Hyltenstam et al 1996.

Boyd is also interested in code choice and code-switching patterns. She establishes a set of principles of language choice in conversation among bilinguals who share two languages (1985, 157-191). Boyd's study has been followed by a string of code-choice and code-switching studies that concentrate on structural aspects of code-switching (e.g., Türker 2000) as

well as pragmatic ones (e.g., Andersson 1993, Andersen 1994, Jørgensen 1998). Boyd distinguishes between principles of *appropriateness, consistency, least effort, skill, reference group, power,* and *mutual ethical consideration.* These principles guide the language choice of individual speakers according to circumstances. Boyd criticizes Fihman's concept of domain-determined language choice, and her contribution is a step in the direction from the classical sociolinguistic view of language variation as effects of social structures towards a social constructivist-inspired view of language variation as a means of negotiating social relations. This view – inspired by Rampton (1995) and others - is represented, although with some hesitation, in works such as Esdahl (2001), Madsen (2001), Cromdal (2000), Jørgensen (red, forthcoming). In these studies the concept of linguistic power wielding, parallel to Boyd's principle of power, is studied in detail, and it appears that code-switching is increasingly used by bilingual children and adults with growing competence in their second language (and with growing age which basically amounts to the same in most of these studies). Esdahl also attempts to determine a relationship between *focus* and code choice, similar to Boyd's principle of appropriateness, but finds that it plays a less important role than the use of code choice for negotiation of social relations. Thus the study of code choice and code-switching is a second important direction of Scandinavian sociolinguistic work with the bilingual behavior of adolescents. The methods employed range from Boyd's questionnaires over Andersen's discourse analytical approach to Steensig's (2000) careful CA approach. The pragmatic studies of bilingual teenage behavior since Boyd (1985) have given us insight into the practices of bilingual, particularly minority, children and adolescents, but there are also studies of the introduction (or, as some would have it, the intrusion) of English words and phrases into the majority Scandinavian languages (cf. for instance the UNO reports, Kotsinas et al 1999, Stenström et al 2000, Drange et al forthc.).

The insights we have gained from the study of minority bilingual behavior is fruitful also in our understanding of majority teenage bilingual behavior. Møller & Jørgensen (forthc.) have found that the young informants in their study do indeed practice, with great joy, mixing English into their Danish, but they distinguish this clearly from the total substitution of Danish by English. The latter is the target of active, if not directly aggressive, resistance. The group formations of Herlufsholm boarding school follow nicely along the lines of school medium: those who are taught in English, who often do not speak Danish as their mother tongue, who therefore use a lot of English in their everyday lives, are deliberately cast as outgroup members by the students in the Danish-

medium line of the school. And noticeably: A purported lack of will to function in Danish on the part of the English-medium students is almost unanimously cited as the reason for the social rifts between the groups.

In short: The study of teenage bilingual behavior in the Scandinavian countries, triggered as it was by Kotsinas and Boyd, has given us much insight, and promises even more fruitful insight, into the multilingual reality which Scandinavia is facing – dragging its feet or not. The papers in this volume bear ample evidence to this claim, and I thank the contributors for their willingness to participate, and for their excellent co-operation in bringing about this publication.

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