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Thesis title: Teach Yourself^P Language Learning Through Self-Instruction Manuals in Nineteenth-Century Scandinavia
Qualification: PhD
Date awarded: 02 June 2010

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Abstract

To learn a foreign language from a self-instruction manual (teach-yourself book) is not as easy as the publishers will have us believe. Despite this, the genre has endured for many centuries. This thesis argues that the robustness of self-instruction language manuals is due to their ability to adapt to the personal circumstances of their readers. By surveying ordinary nineteenth-century Scandinavians, it is established that they turned to self-directed learning as a consequence of social and economic developments in the region.

At the time, early globalisation was felt in terms of increased travel and trade. As a consequence, people needed to acquire foreign languages for the purpose of everyday communication. Because this area of second language acquisition was practical and took place outside formal education, it has not been accepted as part of the history of applied linguistics. I argue that ‘utilitarian language learning’ deserves to be included as an example of the current theory of autonomous learning. I also draw the conclusion that autonomy is actually one of the reasons why self-instruction manuals are not as effective as traditional language teaching, because the learners take charge of their own learning process and as a result often suffer from lack of motivation and opportunities to practise the language. I do, however, maintain that the works themselves are not inherently inept. The nineteenth-century methods were actually an improvement upon existing methods by focusing on the spoken rather than the written language.

Finally, I investigate why abstract notions of language, culture and identity were not present in works that could essentially disseminate elitist ideas to the general population. I argue that because the genre was highly commercialised, the authors deliberately chose to exclude topics that had political undertones and the potential to alienate parts of the readership.

Teach Yourself?
Language Learning through Self-Instruction Manuals in
Nineteenth-Century Scandinavia

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October 2009

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Acknowledgements

Writing this thesis would have been a less enjoyable experience without the help of a few individuals to whom I am entirely grateful for their continued support and advice. Professor Andrew Linn, with his vast knowledge of and enthusiasm for the history of linguistics, has always been on hand to read drafts and re-drafts, providing useful comments and suggestions. The initial stipulation behind this research project was that it had to draw significantly on the resources of the British Library's *Hannås Collection of Scandinavian Dictionaries, Grammars and Linguistic Literature*. The British Library can be a daunting place for a new researcher, but my experience of the institution has been completely positive and this is thanks to the Curator of Scandinavian Collections, Barbara Hawes. She has been there since day one with advice, allowing me access to the collection and supplying endless photocopies whenever time constraints prevented me from visiting the library myself. Always genuinely interested in my progress, she has provided many welcome coffee breaks during long days in the reading room. Finally, thanks to the University of Sheffield's Excellence Exchange Scheme, I was fortunate to spend a four-week period exploring the archives of the University of Wisconsin-Madison and the Wisconsin Historical Society. This experience helped me enhance my research skills and the resources found there have been invaluable to this study.

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Aims

This thesis has three principal aims. The first is to argue that in nineteenth-century Scandinavia,¹ the genre of self-instruction language manuals (here referred to as popular language works, see 2.1.1) was the only language learning option for a large number of ordinary people to whom formal education was not available. Language teaching methodology in nineteenth-century education has been studied extensively (e.g. Howatt and Widdowson (2004); Richards and Rodgers (2001)) with most attention paid to the dominance of the grammar-translation method (section 2.1.1). Alternative approaches to institutional language teaching are rarely mentioned because many of them were practised outside formal education. This study will highlight the importance of a genre of language manuals, popular language works, whose history of catering for the needs and skills of non-specialist language learners has so far received little scholarly attention.

This brings me to the second and related aim directed at the history of applied linguistics and its lack of interest in language teaching manuals which are deemed ‘non-scholarly’. The large majority of authors of popular language works had practical teaching experience, and an awareness of the common problems encountered by language learners is evident in their works. Yet, because these self-instruction manuals were aimed at ‘[satisfying] commercial,

¹ While the three Scandinavian countries, Denmark, Sweden and Norway, are all represented in this study, particular emphasis is placed upon the latter in several instances due to the provenance of the Hannås Collection.

practical and popular requirements' (Gremmo and Riley 1995: 154) and formed part of hugely profitable publishing enterprises, they have historically received far less attention than 'proper' linguistic works despite reaching a large number of readers. I will be suggesting that applied linguistics in fact has a lot to gain from studying these works and that the notion 'popular' does not necessarily have to be negative. This is based on the belief that utilitarian language learning (a term used in this study referring to the acquisition of foreign languages by ordinary people outside formal education, see 2.1.3) was actually an early manifestation of the current and widely accepted theory of autonomous language learning, broadly defined (by Holec who first coined the term) as the 'ability to take charge of one's own learning' (Holec 1979: 3).

This thesis is the result of research based on the *Hannås Collection of Scandinavian Dictionaries, Grammars and Linguistic Literature* held at the British Library – a diverse and eclectic collection of linguistic works published in Scandinavia between 1587 and 1975. Having such a rich source of mainly popular works at my disposal has brought me to the realisation that non-scholarly writings about language are generally sharply separated from scholarly efforts. This has created two separate spheres of language works. The first is written by scholars for scholars and often influenced by more general ideological currents at the time. The historical-comparative linguists of the early nineteenth century, for example, were inspired by the application of typology in eighteenth-century biology and botany and looked for features which could be systematised taxonomically when studying the language families of the world.

As language is a highly emotive subject it has also been used to further various political causes and is often to be found at the centre of nationalist

disputes. In nineteenth-century Scandinavia, the two strong ideological currents of National Romanticism and Pan-Scandinavianism both had linguistic issues on their agenda, the former particularly evident in the Norwegian language planning debate and the latter a political element surrounding discussions of orthographic reforms. These two currents can be amalgamated into a broader discussion of language, culture and identity in the period under investigation, and a consideration of why this factor was not prevalent at all in popular language works is the third and final aim of this study. Emigrant phrasebooks (Chapter 4) and travel guidebooks (Chapter 5), the two specific types of popular language works on which my research focuses, offered an excellent opportunity for the intellectual elite to convey either a national or regional identity to the readers. Moreover, the process of learning a foreign language in itself entails some degree of getting to know the culture of the country in which the language studied is spoken and would more than likely make readers contrast and compare this newfound information with their own culture. However, identity is markedly absent from popular language works, and I will suggest in Chapter 7 that this was because the reasons behind utilitarian language learning were so anchored in the day-to-day life of ordinary people that ideological currents were too abstract and too far removed from this practical need for foreign language acquisition. This will also support my statement above that non-scholarly language works were deliberately kept separate from scholarly writings because they had to appeal to the broadest audience possible and as such had to remain non-ideological.

1.2 Globalisation and communication

The nineteenth century in Scandinavia was a period of unprecedented economic and social development. Over the course of less than a hundred years, large parts of the region underwent industrialisation and a restructuring of the social class system. A vital element of this process of modernisation was an increase in communication with foreigners and an urgent need for second language acquisition arose. A new kind of language learner came into being – one for which the educational systems did not cater – and as a consequence, alternative methods of language acquisition emerged.

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, we live in a world which feels increasingly ‘smaller’. Transport and communication take place at ever-improving speeds and the number of people moving across the globe at any one time is constantly on the rise. Spheres of power such as business and politics that used to be distinctly domestic are now being supplanted by multinational corporations and trans-global associations. All these developments are often attributed to ‘globalisation’, characterised as ‘the compression of the world and the intensification of consciousness of the world as a whole’ (Robertson 1992: 8). Inherent to globalisation are trade, migration and travel – all activities that require communication in foreign languages. The beginning of globalisation can be traced back several centuries, but it was not until the nineteenth century that this mobility of people and products intensified so much that it can be called the driving force behind second language acquisition by ordinary people.

Prior to the nineteenth century, Scandinavia was an underdeveloped, economically backward and relatively isolated region. Primarily due to industrialisation and a general improvement in living standards all this changed

and new language learners who were largely uneducated and more importantly, not accustomed to learning foreign languages at all, emerged. How these ordinary people learnt foreign languages is an unexplored paradox in the history of applied linguistics; we know that they did learn foreign languages, but we also know that general education did not teach these languages. Chapter 3 will examine the provision of foreign languages in education and explain why there were no suitable institutions to which ordinary Scandinavians could turn in their pursuit of foreign language acquisition. In section 3.3 it will become evident that one of the main reasons why utilitarian language learning became so popular was the disjunct between the languages taught in schools (classical) and the actual languages needed in everyday communication (modern European, especially English).

Formal education reflected the old societal structures. Previous Scandinavian isolation had meant that only a limited number of people needed to communicate in foreign languages. As part of displaying a cultured and civilised background, the upper classes were generally expected to be familiar with German and French, and through their education they also studied Latin and Greek. The clergy and other specialised professionals, such as lawyers and doctors, were another group expected to master the classical languages. As for modern foreign languages, these were in particular useful for merchants and the military. All of the above each formed their own independent sectors in society and it was very rare for anyone outside these segregated communities to learn a foreign language. Languages were not taught in the schools of the lower classes. This was due to their main aim being to equip children with only the most basic intellectual skills and that there simply was no need for it (section 3.3). The

majority of lower class Scandinavians in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries were impoverished farmers who would never come into contact with a foreigner. This changed with increased communication and modern foreign languages suddenly became one of the practical skills needed by the general population, but their struggle to gain acceptance in education was hard-fought as discussed in Chapter 3.

1.3 The language learners

The large-scale societal restructuring in nineteenth-century Scandinavia had both positive and negative impacts upon the people of the region. The number of entrepreneurs and private businessmen grew, and the existence of a capitalist middle class was to become significant in the history of utilitarian language learning (section 3.2). As their enterprises prospered their economic and political influence also increased. The initial decades of Scandinavian industrialisation from the 1830s to the 1860s represented a period of optimism and belief that the progress it brought was a vehicle for social mobility and the middle class was the main benefactor. However, not all people of Scandinavia shared this enthusiasm and the lower classes in particular felt the negative effects of economic progress. In other more industrialised countries, they were exploited and forced to endure appalling living conditions in the growing cities and towns, but this was not exactly the case in Scandinavia. The majority of the population still lived in rural areas and it was not until the twentieth century that the urban landscape developed on a noticeable scale. Yet, agriculture also began to rely more and more on machinery and mechanised production processes, and, as a result, less manual labour was required. Other advances such as improved

nutrition and disease prevention meant that the population was growing and it was in rural areas that this increase was particularly felt. A typical farmer could no longer adhere to the age-old system of granting a piece of land to his grown-up sons, and the younger generation was suddenly faced with the prospect of never owning their own land or finding employment with larger land-owners. As reports of the first pioneers in America began to filter through with their descriptions of acres and acres of arable land just waiting to be cultivated, many young people made the decision to emigrate (section 4.2).

Just as the capitalist middle class had realised the importance of foreign languages, and in particular English, for their continued success as businessmen, the young emigrants knew that they would somehow also have to learn this language if they were to prosper in America. However, they had even less time and money and did not have the advantage of practising the language in their everyday work, so the self-instruction language manuals they required had to be even more basic and easy to understand. Emigrant phrasebooks quickly became extremely popular and entrepreneurs grasped the opportunity to incorporate the language teaching element into a full guide to the journey ahead (section 4.6). By including a section with advice on what belongings to bring, how to purchase tickets for the journey, and what to do upon arriving in America, these works made themselves indispensable even to those who were not too concerned with learning English in advance. As will be discussed in Chapter 4, the development of phrasebooks mirrors the emigration movement itself. While the early phrasebooks were complete guides to an unknown and perilous undertaking (section 4.5), the later ones reflected the fact that emigration had now become a common occurrence and much information was to be obtained

from relatives and friends both in Scandinavia and America (section 4.3). The phrasebooks published towards the end of the nineteenth century were more concerned with the language rather than the practical aspects of emigration (section 4.6), and the sections of dialogues and phrases were expanded to reflect the establishment of communities and national institutions in America.

The increase in exchanges with foreigners was not only in an outward direction and a large number of foreigners began to visit Scandinavia in the nineteenth century. The concept of leisure tourism again had its roots in Britain, and the majority of visitors to Scandinavia were English speakers. These visitors were attracted by the unspoilt nature of Scandinavia and came to experience a way of life which had been lost in their home country (section 5.2). Again, enterprising individuals seized the opportunity to make financial gains from the growing stream of visitors, and they understood that being able to speak the visitors' language would only benefit them. A certain cultural sensitivity was also evident from this early beginning of tourism, and travellers were advised to have some knowledge of the language of the country they were visiting:

Some previous acquaintance with the languages of the countries of the North which he intends visiting, will materially conduce to the pleasure of every traveller, whether his object is mere novelty or the acquisition of a knowledge of the habits, manners, and customs of the people among whom his wanderings may lead him.

(Anon. 1839: 4)

Travel guidebooks, a sub-genre of popular language works, generally took great care to provide their readers with phrases and dialogues (section 5.4.4). These guidebooks quickly became part of the tourism industry and certain publishing houses came to dominate the market (section 5.3).

1.4 Autonomy in language learning

Classroom-based learning has been the traditional choice among most foreign language learners for a long time. To a large number of learners, however, and particularly adult learners, this option is not available. They are restricted by financial circumstances, time constraints or a lack of educational establishments catering to their needs. Furthermore, many learners of foreign languages are not as privileged as we are in the contemporary western world and do not have the means to access language schools or tutors. The most obvious example of such a learner is the migrant who has no previous experience of studying foreign languages but is suddenly faced with having to learn the language of his/her new country. Europe and America have traditionally been the main areas for incoming migration and vast resources have been spent on providing language teaching for migrants. Yet, with the current global recession it is likely that funding for such projects may be cut, and migrants will be expected to learn foreign languages on their own. In conjunction with this, we need to consider the other kinds of foreign language learners who do not usually receive any kind of help with their learning. The businessman or the casual tourist wanting to communicate with foreigners are expected to take control of their own language learning process as the (successful) outcome of this will only benefit them personally. When left to their own devices, many turn to the only viable option – self-directed learning and the various self-instruction manuals available. This was exactly what happened in the nineteenth century, but those concerned with language teaching methodology today have failed to recognise this historical continuity and as such are missing out on learning from past experience.

Utilitarian language learning has been dismissed because it is perceived as non-scholarly. This is mainly due to its place outside formal educational and its use of self-instruction manuals which have been the subject of much ridicule. Yet, as one of the fundamental elements of applied linguistics is to devise solutions to real-life problems, it is strange that the discipline seems to be neglecting this real and quite widespread problem, and more importantly one which has been around since before applied linguistics itself of which this study is evidence. This is particularly evident in Britain where applied linguistics tends to gravitate towards language teaching as its main area of activity. In many other countries applied linguistics is a lot more varied discipline and embraces several sub-disciplines not affiliated with language teaching (e.g. discourse analysis, pragmatics, language policy and planning). The current study is therefore an attempt at redressing the balance in British applied linguistics by reiterating the more general principle of the discipline – to ‘investigate practical, everyday problems related to language and communication’ as formulated by the *Association Internationale de Linguistique Appliquée* (AILA).² The strong focus on language teaching in this country has meant that works which do not fit modern-day theories of language teaching and learning are struggling to gain recognition, and popular language works published today are still the subject of rather disparaging comments in the applied linguistic literature. Gremmo and Riley (1995), for example, characterise it as ‘a cranky affront to educational common sense’ (Gremmo and Riley 1995: 152). Jones (1998) similarly notes that: ‘package-led self-instruction [...] is rarely discussed or researched, and pronouncements on it tend to be disparaging’ (Jones 1998: 380). Jones is one of

² <http://www.aila.info/about.html> [accessed September 2009].

the few advocates of the need for more research into self-instruction manuals and has pinpointed the fact that the problem might not be with the actual language teaching methodology but with the negative image this genre has:

[...] the only paper on self-study I have seen at an academic conference was billed as a “fringe-paper”! Admittedly, many teach-yourself courses, especially in the less popular languages, do look dusty and antiquated compared with the methodologically up-to-the-minute, glossily-printed classroom courses constantly rolling off the presses for the major European languages. On the other hand, experiences of the vagaries of methodological fashion should warn us that newer is not necessarily better in all respects.

(Jones 1993: 453-4)

The negative image of the genre will be difficult to shed, but there do seem to be some positive developments which could prove beneficial to utilitarian language learning. The theory of autonomy in language learning first emerged in the 1970s when scholars working within English language teaching (ELT) began to question the traditional teacher-student setup in classroom-based learning. The notion was in particular developed by teacher-researchers at *Centre de Recherches et d'Applications Pédagogiques et Langues* (CRAPEL) at the University of Nancy in France. Autonomous language learning came to describe ‘people’s *ability* to take charge of their own learning’ (Smith 2008: 395) and was in practical terms referring to the opportunity CRAPEL offered adults ‘to learn a foreign language in a resources centre, free from teacher direction’ (Smith 2008: 395). The then director of CRAPEL, Henri Holec, has published extensively on the subject and most recently described the development of autonomous language learning as follows:

What had started as a limited variation in practice empirically put together to loosen the constraints of teacher-directed group learning has now become a fully-fledged alternative outlook on language learning and teaching based on alternative definitions of the relationships between teaching and learning and between learning and acquisition and in which theory and practice are

concerned with both the development of learning competence and the provision of self-directed learning environments.

(Holec 2008: 3)

A 'self-directed learning environment' would today refer to a self-access centre with computers, audiovisual equipment and maybe the occasional book, but just because it had a much more limited meaning in the nineteenth century does not mean that it did not exist. A self-directed learning environment then would only involve the learner, a place of study and a self-instruction manual – there were no other options. This is why this study argues that utilitarian language learning was an early example of how autonomy in language learning can be manifested. The growing emphasis on technology in the implementation of autonomous language learning today is a sign of the theory's ability to adapt to the developments of its time. In the nineteenth century, advances in printing technology which enabled mass production of relatively cheap books enabled the genre of popular language works to grow immensely.

Autonomous language learning is a dynamic academic field. For instance, when AILA launched its *AILA Applied Linguistics Series* (AALS) in 2008, the first volume published was on learner and teacher autonomy (Lamb and Reinders (2008), *Learner and Teacher Autonomy: Concepts, Realities and Response*). Another instance of current activity is the *IATEFL Learner Autonomy Special Interest Group* (LASIG) founded in 1986 and run by *The International Association of Teachers of English*.³ This study hopes to be able to contribute to a field which has only recently begun to explore its history.

³ <http://www.learnerautonomy.org/> [accessed September 2009].

Autonomous learning as a whole is synonymous with independent learning but can take place within the confines of an educational institution, though with minimum teacher intervention. This is especially true today, but the learners under investigation in this study can be characterised as full autonomous learners as they had no input from teachers or tutors at all. This feeling of autonomy was actually very much in tune with the spirit of the age. People were now experiencing the notion of autonomy in their private lives but were still feeling a degree of isolation from the benefits enjoyed by the upper classes. By starting a business or emigrating to better their lives, they took control and transferred this experience into their learning process. Furthermore, acquiring skills previously preserved for the upper classes made them feel that they had begun to break down traditional class barriers.

The literature on autonomous language learning acknowledges that it is essentially dealing with an age-old phenomenon but has failed to study in detail what can be learnt from this. A statement like 'second language acquisition predates institutionalised learning by many centuries and even in the modern world millions of individuals continue to learn second and foreign languages without the benefit of formal instruction' (Benson 2001: 7) is often encountered, but even though it is recognised that researching their experiences would be beneficial to the field as a whole, this is rarely followed up. This study argues that utilitarian language learning was an early incarnation of autonomous language learning that encompassed the same concepts (learner control and self-directed learning, to name a few) and utilised the same resources (self-instruction language manuals). Applied linguistics should therefore not dismiss

an area of language learning simply because it is perceived as non-scholarly and look at what benefits these early phenomena can bring to the current discussion.

1.5 Teaching materials and learning process

Ordinary Scandinavians learnt foreign languages because it was personally advantageous to do so. The popular language works they consulted belonged to a highly commercialised genre where publishers often put profits before quality. They targeted the somewhat naïve language learners with catchy titles that promised that the language could be acquired at amazing speeds and with almost no effort at all. Yet, despite their obvious faults, popular language works have remained a consistent part of the market of language teaching courses and are still published in great numbers today. It could be claimed that they simply belong to the ‘market of good intentions’ (a market from which the modern diet industry also benefits), but it would be too easy to reach this conclusion and leave it at that. Very little research has been conducted into their role as language teaching manuals so the case studies in Chapters 4 and 5 will go some way towards redressing the balance.

A detailed study of the teaching methodology of popular language works must include ideas from current academic thinking, and it has been acknowledged that one of the main problems associated with foreign language acquisition outside formal education is the lack of opportunities to practise the spoken language (Jones 1993: 455). The same problem was encountered in the nineteenth century, and despite its longevity, we are still struggling to devise a viable solution. It appears, therefore, that the genre – even though it is still immensely popular – is suffering from the same stigma that it did in the

nineteenth century, but is this due to its lack of quality or because it is impossible to learn a foreign language from a teach-yourself book? Jones (1998) argues that ‘the problem with teach-yourself [...] may not be in the materials but in the learning process itself’ (Jones 1998: 381). This learning process usually entails the opportunity to practise the spoken language, but with book-based learning this is not possible. The lack of practice was particularly acute in the nineteenth century with the absence of audio equipment and the attempts to explain pronunciation through the means of transcription systems are therefore analysed in 6.4.

In Chapter 6, emphasis will also be given to the fact that many popular language works actually pre-empted developments at institutional level. It will be shown that their claim that language teaching should start with the spoken language was echoed by members of the late nineteenth-century Reform Movement, in essence practical linguists, who used their knowledge of phonetics to devise new and more effective language teaching methods (section 6.5).

1.6 Thesis outline

Chapter 2 introduces the key concepts used in this study: popular language works, practical language study and utilitarian language learning (section 2.1). It then considers history from below and outlines why this methodology can be beneficial to researchers of the lives and experiences of ordinary people (section 2.2). Finally, the background and contents of the *Hannås Collection of Scandinavian Dictionaries, Grammars and Linguistic Literature* is described and attention given to some of the works that fall outside

the scope of this study but nevertheless deserve a mention to highlight the variety of the collection (section 2.3).

Chapter 3 provides a detailed background to the status of various foreign languages in nineteenth-century Scandinavian society and education. This is necessary in order to place utilitarian language learning within the overall context of its time. The developments which prompted reform of the social classes and the consequent impact this had upon popular language works are discussed (section 3.2) before outlining the provision of education with particular emphasis on the reasons why it failed the utilitarian language learner (section 3.3). The final section (3.4) is a survey based on the *Hannås Collection* showing how general developments in society were reflected in the popularity of individual languages.

Chapter 4 examines the emigrant phrasebooks and the language learning experience of Scandinavian emigrants. It provides a brief overview of the emigration movement as a whole (section 4.2) before discussing the resources that can enlighten us about how emigrants learnt English (sections 4.3, 4.4 and 4.5). Case studies of emigrant phrasebooks can be found in the second part of this chapter (section 4.6.) and concludes with an evaluation of how this specific type of popular language work contributes to the genre as a whole.

Chapter 5 has a similar structure to Chapter 4 and is concerned with travel guidebooks. The historical development of travel and tourism, and in particular how learning the language of the country the traveller was about to visit became a part of displaying a cultured and civilised manner is discussed (sections 5.2 and 5.3) before moving on to the case studies of nineteenth-century travel guidebooks (section 5.4).

Chapter 6 focuses on the acquisition of the spoken language. It examines why the methods used in formal language teaching were unsuitable for the utilitarian language learner (section 6.2) and makes a connection between the current theory of autonomous language learning and second language acquisition in the nineteenth century (section 6.3). The case studies analyse the transcription systems found in the popular language works and how these can help us understand the enduring difficulty of teaching anyone not trained in phonetic transcription how to pronounce a foreign language (section 6.4). Finally, the discussion of how the spoken language became the concern of linguists at the end of the century (section 6.5) will lead to the conclusion that the popular language works' treatment of the spoken language was their most innovative contribution to the history of applied linguistics (section 6.6).

Chapter 7 broadens the discussion to include more abstract notions of language, culture and identity. The factors which had an impact upon the emergence of individual national identities in the nineteenth century are considered (section 7.2), and the marked absence of the notion of identity in emigrant phrasebooks and travel guidebooks is explained (sections 7.3 and 7.4). Finally, the idea that a regional identity (pan-Scandinavianism) was also emerging is considered and examples of its influence, in popular language works and upon scholars who called for a common Scandinavian orthography, illustrate why the movement never gained support among ordinary people (section 7.5).

Chapter 2: Concepts, Methodology and Material

2.1 Concepts

As this study is concerned with a genre of language works which have been investigated by very few historians of linguistics, a detailed definition of the key concepts is provided in the following section. For the same reason, there is no common agreement on terminology and the terms used here are by no means universally accepted. The explanations below will clarify why the terms chosen are representative labels of the phenomena they are describing. More elaborate or erudite terms could have been concocted, but in line with the practical and unpretentious nature of the topics under investigation simple and matter-of-fact labels have been preferred.

2.1.1 Popular language works

Grammars and phrasebooks as self-instruction manuals have been known to us since the Middle Ages. The Christianisation of Europe also meant teaching Latin to speakers of other languages and the pedagogical challenges associated with this formed part of a drive to find the most efficient language teaching methods. Medieval language scholars remodelled and supplemented the elementary Latin grammars with paradigms and examples; thus creating a distinction between grammars of the *Schulgrammatik* and the *regulae* type (Law 2003: 65-91). If parallels are to be drawn between nineteenth-century popular language works and the medieval grammatical tradition, the *Schulgrammatik* grammars are most similar to popular language works in that they emphasise the

use of examples and exercises, whereas the *regulae* grammars are considered more as reference works. This distinction between types of grammars also marks the beginning of a division between practical and theoretical language works, though this was never completely achieved and even in the nineteenth century we find that most works still combine the two.

The next big step in the development of language teaching manuals came with the increased status given to the vernacular languages, most notably with the printing of vernacular Bibles in the sixteenth century. A degree of legitimacy had now been given to the vernacular languages and despite continued Latin dominance, a very slow process of phasing out Latin in favour of the vernacular languages had begun. By the nineteenth century, the time had finally come for modern foreign languages to end the dominance of Latin. Popular language works were just one example of this development by completely rejecting Latin as a language of relevance to their readers.

More generally, several other practical developments impacted upon the rise of the vernaculars and the expansion of the genre of popular language works. Industrialisation affected printing and technical advances lowered the cost of production making books affordable for the ordinary population. These new consumers of books could not and did not want to read Latin, and it was obvious that they wanted books to be written in their own language. Another development which meant that there was a new group of readers in the first place was that widespread literacy was now commonplace. Reforms of the education systems had been successful and most Scandinavians were now able to read and write (section 3.3.2).

Most popular language works from the nineteenth century were successors to the grammar-translation method which had originated in Germany in the 1780s (see Howatt and Widdowson 2004: 151-7). This method taught grammar in small steps with accompanying exercises and students usually learnt enough to be able to read the literature of that language. The main difference, therefore, between works of this type and popular language works was that the former ignored the spoken language, whereas the latter were quite determined to teach their readers to speak the foreign language and not just read it. This resulted in a particular challenge – how to best devise guides to pronunciation without established symbols of transcription – and it was one which the authors of popular language works did not always meet successfully (section 6.4.1).

The grammar-translation method was completely dominant in schools, but outside this formal setting we do find some contemporary language works based on limited grammatical theory. The authors claimed that their methods were practical and would make language learning a lot easier than it had been before. Two of the better known representatives are the Germans, Heinrich Gottfried Ollendorff (1803-1865) and Franz Ahn (1796-1865). Ollendorff made use of a theory of interaction. He would provide a question in the foreign language and based on the words given in that question it would be very easy, he claimed, for the learner to answer that question using the words available and inverting the interrogative to a declarative. In Ollendorff's own words: 'My system of acquiring a foreign language is founded on the principle, that each question contains nearly the answer which one ought or which one wishes to make it' (Ollendorff 1843: v). While this was indeed an innovative method which tried to remove itself from the grammar-translation method, it has later

been accused of being ‘a kind of manic interrogation’ (Howatt and Widdowson 2004: 162) because of its intense question-and-answer style and it did not really take into consideration that not all communication takes place in form of questions and answers.

Ahn’s method was more straightforward and comparable to the methods found in the popular language works. He believed in practice before theory and largely ignored grammar in favour of phrases, dialogues and translation exercises. While Ahn of course wanted his approach to be effective, it was often the people who adopted his method in their own works who made the exaggerated claim that it would make the learner completely fluent in the desired foreign language. The publishers of Ahn’s works were also to blame and their eagerness is a sign of the commercial strand to the genre of popular language works. To persuade the buyer to choose this work over another through clever use of publicity and self-promotion was an integral part of the market for popular language works. One publisher, for example, in his preface to *Ahn’s New Practical and Easy Method of Learning the German Language* (1864) wrote that:

The pupil, who cannot procure a teacher of the German language, may with confidence follow the accurate instruction as well as the interlineal pronunciation, laid down in the work, and he may rest assured that his German will be understood where he goes – nay, will be superior to that which many students obtain from incompetent or careless teachers.

(Ahn 1864: 4)

The teaching of modern foreign languages in schools did leave a lot to be desired in its disregard of the spoken language, and popular language works were a viable solution to alleviate this shortcoming. Many teachers were unsure of their own pronunciation and up until very late in the nineteenth century, or

even the early twentieth century, actually speaking the language in class was completely ignored in favour of written translation exercises. This was also the main point that the Reform Movement of the late nineteenth century objected to in their criticism of language teaching methodology (see Howatt and Widdowson 2004: 187-191). They all had a background in phonetics and believed that language teaching should start with the spoken language (section 6.5). Their efforts resulted in the Direct Method of language teaching in which it was believed that ‘total immersion in the target language [was] conducive to rapid progress in communicating’ (Adamson 2006: 607). In practice this meant that that native language was not used at all in the classroom, grammar was taught by induction, and the spoken language was practised by question-and-answer exercises.

Based on the background given, popular language works can be described as works with an overall practical aim in mind which were in use outside schools and universities. They are a crucial part of the overall history of practical language study and were indispensable tools in utilitarian language learning – both notions discussed below.

2.1.2 Practical language study

As outlined above, different approaches to the teaching of foreign languages emerged in the nineteenth century. An assessment of popular language works must therefore include their impact on the development of these language teaching methods. The majority were in essence reactive responses to earlier and, in the opinion of the scholars behind the new methods, ineffective approaches to language teaching. Common to them all was that the notion of

‘practical’ and this can be interpreted in two ways: referring to the method itself, i.e. that extensive use is made of language exercises for ‘practice’, or the way the study of languages is approached, ‘practical’ thus being the opposite of ‘theoretical’. In modern linguistics generally, there is a distinction between theoretical and practical with the former usually consisting of the four sub-disciplines: phonology, morphology, syntax and semantics (in more defined characterisations, phonetics and sociolinguistics are also sometimes included under this heading). The main aim of linguistics is to develop theories and methodologies for the study of language – often based on abstract ideas and a concern with developing universals applicable to all languages. Practical linguistics, or to give it its more modern name, applied linguistics, is the application of linguistic theory to real-world problems. So even though the distinction between the two may imply that the former is more concerned with theory than the latter, this is not the case. Both use theories, but whereas theoretical linguistics often remains at the hypothetical stage, applied linguistics actively tries to develop solutions to common problems encountered by language learners. Today, we see the same processes taking place in the fields of academic research and innovation. Innovation can occur as a result of research but does not necessarily have to. Nineteenth-century linguists were aware of this distinction as Henry Sweet wrote in *The Practical Study of Languages* (1899):

[...] it is important to realize [...] that the practical study of languages is not in any way less scientific than the theoretical. The scientific basis of the practical study of languages is what may be called ‘living philology,’ which starts from the accurate observation of spoken languages by means of phonetics and psychology, and makes this the basis of all study of language, whether practical or theoretical.

(Sweet 1899: 1)

The works investigated in this study were all trying to make utilitarian language learning easier and more accessible and they therefore belong firmly to the canon of applied linguistic works. As applied linguistics as an academic discipline did not really exist until the twentieth century, it is more appropriate to refer to the work undertaken by the scholars investigated in this thesis as ‘practical language study’ rather than applied linguistics. Yet, this does not in any way diminish their achievements as they were, just as applied linguists today, devising solutions to the real everyday problems of their readers.

Throughout this study, emphasis will be placed on this practical aspect. Popular language works were practical in the sense that they were not trying to teach grammatical theory and that their readers would be able to use their language skills in everyday communication. This is mentioned time and again in prefaces and introductions. In his English grammar from 1808, *Försök till en praktisk lärobok för svenska nybegynnare i Engelska språket* [Attempt at a practical grammar for Swedish beginners in the English language], the author Peter Moberg (1747-1824) indicates as early as the title that this is a *praktisk* [practical] grammar. He further stresses in the preface that this work will help the reader acquire a *praktisk kunskap* [practical knowledge] of the English language (Moberg 1808: viii). Niels Julius Eibe (1803-1882), the author of *Cursus paa 100 Timer i Engelsk* [A Course of 100 Lessons in English] from 1873, similarly recognises that new teaching methods have been developed to accommodate the utilitarian language learner of his time. He has chosen to follow Ollendorff’s method and based on his own teaching experience assesses this as an excellent approach ‘in any language teaching which has *practical*

education as its main purpose' (Eibe 1873: no p.n.; my emphasis). He further adds that:

The method, which aims more at a material than a scientific gain, must particularly be perceived as recommendable for future merchants as well as those who come into closer contact with foreign countries or foreigners. The easier and increased interaction between the nations means that nowadays one learns the living languages in order to speak and write them; it is more relevant to be proficient in, rather than to know, a language.⁴

(Eibe 1873: vi)

What he essentially means is that the modern learner needs a practical working knowledge of a language and has to be able to communicate orally with speakers of that language. Studying grammar in any detail is irrelevant to those who need it in their working lives and for 'material gain' such as the utilitarian language learners.

2.1.3 Utilitarian language learning

Another part of the assessment of popular language works is their importance as self-instruction aids for non-specialist learners in the general context of their everyday lives. This introduces the notion of 'utilitarian language learning'. The basic definition of this is: to learn a language via self-direction and without the aid of a teacher. It also means learning by adults as opposed to learning by school children or young students. The use of the term 'utilitarian' also implies that the language was acquired as a means to an end. There is limited literature on the development of utilitarian language learning,

⁴ 'Methoden, der mere tilsigter et materielt end et videnskabeligt Udbytte, maa især ansees anbefalelig for tilkommende Kjøbmænd saavel som for Enhver, der kommer i nærmere Forbindelse med Udlandet eller med Udlændinge. Det lettere og forøgede Samqvem mellem Nationerne gjør, at man stedse mere lærer de levende Sprog for at kunne tale og skrive dem; det kommer mere an paa at kunne, end paa at kjende et Sprog' (all translations are my own, unless otherwise stated).

but the situation in Sweden has been described by Bratt (1984) and it is safe to say that almost identical processes took place in Norway and Denmark:

Adult language education was commercialised [and] promoted with the promise of teaching the individual interested in language to read, write and speak a foreign language, yes, even to think in the language in question in a short period of time. These courses were launched by enterprising language teachers in cities abroad and transferred to Sweden in the shape of learning manuals which had the teaching built in and therefore were well suited for self-study. Rejected by the majority of schoolteachers because of their pronounced practical and non-scientific character, for many adult learners these manuals became the way of learning the English language.⁵

(Bratt 1984: 213-4)

In their *History of English Language Teaching*, Howatt and Widdowson (2004) characterise the market of utilitarian language learning as one ‘related to practical needs and interests which by-passed the school altogether’, and that because this kind of learning was dismissed by the educational establishment ‘as ‘trivial [...] students were forced to depend on self-instruction materials’ (Howatt and Widdowson 2004: 132). This description fits the popular language works of the nineteenth century and the conditions of that period particularly well. Further education did not accommodate learners in the practical study of relevant languages, and the proponents of classical education were downright dismissive of these needs (section 3.3.1). The perceived ‘non-scientific’ nature of popular language works made utilitarian language learning the subject of much ridicule. Its opponents singled it out as being too simple and accused it of not equipping learners with the appropriate mental skills. As a fairly new

⁵ ‘Vuxenundervisningen i språk blev kommersialiserad [och] marknadsfördes med löften om att på kort tid lära den språkintrösserade läsa, skriva och tala ett främmande språk, ja, rent av tänka på språket i fråga. Sådana kurser lanserades av driftiga spåklärare i storstäder utomlands och överfördes till Sverige i form av läroböcker som havde undervisningen inbyggd och därför lämpade sig väl för självstudier. Försmådda av flertalet läroverkslärare på grund av sin uttalade praktiska och ovetenskapliga karaktär blev dessa läromedel för många vuxenstuderande vägen till det engelska språket’.

innovation, it also lacked the substance and authority that language teaching in schools had built up over a long time.

Utilitarian language learning can to a large degree be compared to autonomous language learning today. Again, I have deliberately chosen not to use the latter term in relation to the nineteenth century because it did not come into common use in applied linguistics until the 1970s (section 1.4). However, because autonomous language learning essentially refers to the learner taking control of his/her own learning process and actively selecting the materials used in this process without advice from a teacher, there are strong parallels between this and utilitarian language learning. More recently, the notion of autonomy has been strengthened with advances in interactive learning environments and it is essentially possible for a learner to study a language in complete isolation from other people. This was not the case in the nineteenth century. It is true that basic language skills could be acquired through the study of popular language works, but at some point the learner had to seek out opportunities to practise the spoken language and this is where the shortcomings of utilitarian language learning become evident. Many learners would consult popular language works in the beginning of the learning process and would often have no interaction with speakers of the language studied. Their first encounter with foreign speakers would therefore often prove disappointing because they suddenly discovered that they were not understood due to poor pronunciation or they lacked sufficient grammatical knowledge to construct independent phrases (this was particularly evident among emigrants, see section 4.4). However, this is also a common problem today among language learners who have not practised the spoken language sufficiently, and autonomous language learning has recognised

that this problem is not due to the materials used, but the actual learning process. In the initial stages, self-directed learners progress at the same rate as learners receiving instruction, but this progress stalls when the language is not practised in everyday communication (Jones 1998: 381).

2.2 Historical methodology

The growth of social history in the last half century has made many scholars conscious of the fact that there is an alternative to the traditional top-down paradigm in historiography. In their dissatisfaction with the so-called ‘history of events’, social historians have sought to explore a different approach to history-writing which does not place emphasis on political and military events and on the deeds of great men. During that process, the concept of ‘history from below’ was conceived and will be discussed further below.

2.2.1 Alternative historiography

Social historians were not the first to react against the dominance of the history of events and their ideas and methods can be traced back to the Enlightenment. Inspired by the French philosopher Voltaire, European writers and scholars objected to the existing paradigm by introducing a new form of history called ‘the history of society’. This was a form of history that would not be confined to war and politics as had traditionally been the case (Burke 2001: 6). Following on from that, the nineteenth-century French historian Jules Michelet lamented the fact that historians and artists were portraying the

common people inaccurately. In his *Le Peuple* (1846),⁶ he claimed that because he shared the same roots (both his parents were from large peasant families), his depiction of the ordinary people was more genuine. Based on that he was able to call attention to the often forgotten positive qualities of the lower classes:

[...] our great writers [have in general] turned their attention to the fantastic, the violent, the grotesque – the exception; and not having deigned to acknowledge that they were painting the exception, their readers, especially foreigners, have believed they were exhibiting the rule. They have said “Such is this people.” And I, sprung from this people, I, who have lived, laboured, and suffered with them – who, more dearly than any other, have purchased the right of saying that I know them. – I come now to defend against all antagonists of the personality of The People. This personality I have not taken on the mere surface, or in its picturesque or dramatic aspects. I have not viewed it from without, but have studied it by experience from within.

(Michelet 1846: iii)

In his writings, he called for an alternative approach to the writing of history narrated from the point of view of the common people. Yet, Voltaire and Michelet were for the most part unsuccessful and only a minority of scholars followed in their footsteps. The existing historiographical paradigm was too strong and entrenched in the mainstream thinking of the time to be overturned. The very nature of the Enlightenment also contributed to the lack of impact of such ideas put forward during this period:

In short, the Enlightenment believed above all in *progress*. As such, it rested on broad consensus revolving around a critical (but also a self-congratulatory) posture towards the present, a preparedness to examine other cultures (both contemporaneous and from ‘mankind’s history’) for what could be learned, and a confident belief in the possibility of ‘progress’ – all this in the name of ‘Reason’. Unsurprisingly, within this broad consensus, different views and theories abounded on politics, economics, religion, and morality – and intelligent and knowledgeable as were many ‘enlightened’ intellectuals, no singular, innovative, comprehensive works of ‘philosophy’ emerged to summarise, tie together, and dominate the field.

(Lemon 2003: 170)

⁶ Here read in the English translation, *The People* (London, 1846).

Around 1900, more objections to the study of the history of events were voiced, this time from across the Atlantic by the American historian Frederick Jackson Turner (1861-1932) who in his seminal work *The Significance of the Frontier in American History* (1893) argued that ‘the frontier experience of the American people in the nineteenth century played a vital role in the making of an American national character and the shaping of American controversy’ (Ridge 1988: 6). Turner again stressed the fact that ordinary people are more than just passive subjects in history; they do to some extent affect and, in some instances, change the world in which they live. Turner remains an influential figure in American historiography, but it was another three decades before a European movement with similar ideas emerged and, more importantly, a movement which was to finally have a lasting impact on the way we write history today.

2.2.2 The *Annales* School

The one movement which has had the biggest influence on the development of history from below began in 1929 at the University of Strasbourg with the launch of the journal *Annales d'histoire économique et sociale*. Under the co-editorship of the French historians Marc Bloch (1886-1944) and Lucien Febvre (1878-1956), this journal was to become the mouthpiece for the *Annales* School in calling for a new interdisciplinary approach to history. From its outset, the School launched a bid for intellectual leadership in the fields of economic and social history (Burke 2001: 21). The journal moved to Paris in the mid-1930s and adopted its current name *Annales: Economies, Sociétés, Civilisations* in 1946. With the name-change followed a

change of emphasis which meant that ‘it would not confine itself to social and economic history, but would rather pursue the ambitious goal of a comprehensive science of history or even of a history of the human sciences’ (Stoianovich 1976: 43). The *Annales* School has continued to develop ever since, led in the middle part of the twentieth century by Fernand Braudel (1902-1985), and still today enjoys the status of being a respected school of thought in historiography.

2.2.3 History from below

The core idea of the *Annales* – that everything has a history which deserves to be told – is one which has been adopted and elaborated upon by proponents of history from below. Braudel described *histoire globale*, or *histoire totale* as it is also known, as ‘[aimed] at bringing people and individuals to the center of attention and noting all the realities that impinge upon them, including their own collective realities, and all the realities that they in turn affect’ (Stoianovich 1976: 115; quoting Braudel 1966: 520). Braudel’s notion of *histoire globale*, combined with the growth of social history, contributed to the idea that there was indeed a realistic and achievable alternative to the top-down approach. History from below recognises that everything has a past and reinterprets what has previously been perceived as peripheral as central in the course of history. Within linguistics, the rise of historical sociolinguistics in the last decade has meant that there now is a valid forum for the exchange of ideas and a paradigm is emerging for writing sociolinguistic history from below. The

Historical Sociolinguistics Network (HiSoN)⁷ has in the last few years held successful conferences and summer schools some of which I have attended and found thoroughly inspiring. The discipline has also seen the establishment of the online journal *Historical Sociolinguistics and Sociohistorical Linguistics* (the variation in the label indicates that fundamental disciplinary ideas are still being discussed) and the publication of *Germanic Language Histories 'from Below' (1700-2000)* in 2007. *The Handbook of Historical Sociolinguistics* is currently in production with a projected publication date of 2010.

The main influence history from below has on this study is that traditional linguistic historiography can be challenged and attention devoted to language works and their readers and authors, which have so far been ignored by the great majority of scholars. As noted by Vandebussche and Elspaß (2007), the nineteenth century presents us with an excellent opportunity for constructing a history of linguistics from the point of view of the common people. This is because the mass literacy drives in many European countries in this period resulted in a previously illiterate 'silent majority' being transformed into readers, authors, and overall consumers of language literature (Vandebussche and Elspaß 2007: 147-8). By studying popular language works, we gain an insight into the language learning experiences of ordinary people unfamiliar with intellectual study at any level. We are also made aware of the problems the readers' non-specialism posed to the authors and how they tried to solve these problems.

On the other hand, the actual writing of history from below is not as straightforward as it may sound, and this is one of the reasons why some

⁷ <http://www.philhist.uni-augsburg.de/hison/> [accessed May 2009].

scholars have objected to this methodology. The main problem is the lack of credible sources and, as acknowledged in one of the central works on the topic, *New Perspectives on Historical Writing* (2001),⁸ the shortage of evidence is the first obstacle encountered by the researcher. This is because ‘the further back the historians seeking to reconstruct the experience of the lower orders go, the more restricted the range of sources at their disposal becomes’ (Sharpe 2001: 27).

This argument is further supported by Jordanova (2000):

The strength of historical arguments will depend on the available evidence – its nature, quality and quantity – and hence, in thinking about the status of historical knowledge, the complexities of sources and their interpretation is a central question.

(Jordanova 2000: 95)

While everything has a past, it may not necessarily, and unfortunately, have documents or other evidence describing and verifying the validity of this past. This shortfall undoubtedly has an effect on the strength of historical arguments, as pointed out in the above quotation. This does not mean, though, that we should altogether cease writing history from below simply because the evidence to back up our claims is not there on the page; it just challenges us to be more innovative in finding sources. Inventive ways to widen the range of sources have particularly been adopted by historical sociolinguists because they in many instances seek to study the authentic everyday language of ordinary people. While this is not the exact case in this study, where attention is on a process of language learning, rather than the actual language spoken, it has, nevertheless, been necessary to seek out alternative sources in order to construct a viable illustration of this experience. The best examples can be found in personal

⁸ See also Hobsbawm (1998) and Ludtke (1989).

letters and diaries, but ordinary people only became letter writers or diary keepers when something in their lives changed from the ordinary to the extraordinary. The Scandinavian emigrants, for example, have therefore left us with a wide range of sources in the form of diaries and letters, but as will be discussed in Chapter 4, there was relative little evidence of their actual language learning experience in these documents. Personal memoirs, self-published pamphlets or newspaper contributions are also sources worth looking at when constructing a history from below. Yet, these pieces of evidence cannot be considered as completely authentic and must be considered as semi-official because they would in most instances have had their content edited either by the author or the publisher. Despite that, they are valuable in the information they provide on general attitudes of the time, sometimes reflecting a particular view of the state of society. This is especially evident in the social commentaries analysed in relation to foreigners' perceptions of Scandinavia in Chapter 5.

That some assumptions have to be made about the actual experiences of utilitarian language learners is not necessarily negative because 'historians seem to feel more comfortable now with the idea that history has a speculative dimension, which, far from being a weakness on the part of particular practitioners, is built into the subject itself' (Jordanova 2000: 111). The style of history-writing adopted in this thesis is therefore, for the most part, that of a history from below. As discussed above, it will be followed particularly in relation to reconstructing the experiences of the utilitarian language learners in Chapters 4 and 5. At some stages, though, it is necessary to investigate actions and decisions made from higher tiers of society, for example when discussing

educational reforms in Chapter 3, as they were a result of government legislation.

Writing history from below is an exciting challenge, but it is also important to acknowledge its restrictions, and to step outside its framework when needed is a necessary part of successful application of the methodology. Furthermore, history ‘from below’ presupposes the existence of a related ‘above’, and to treat one without the other is naïve and one-sided.

2.3 The Hannås Collection

The research undertaken during the course of this study was funded by a concordat scholarship between the British Library and the University of Sheffield. The majority of case studies and examples are therefore taken from the British Library’s *Hannås Collection of Scandinavian Dictionaries, Grammars and Linguistic Literature*. This Collection was donated in 1984 and named after its compiler, the Norwegian-born bookseller Torgrim Hannås (1916-1998). Through my initial survey of the works in this Collection, it quickly became obvious that the genre of popular language works was so strongly represented that it deserved a lot more attention. From that point on, the overall aim of investigating popular language works and utilitarian language learning in nineteenth-century Scandinavia was established. In defining this aim, some of the other works were instantly excluded because they were not within the scope of this study. The following sections are an attempt to explore the Collection as a whole in order to emphasise its uniqueness as a resource for the historian of linguistics. The Hannås Collection is exceptional because it has been devoted to one single subject – the study of languages in Scandinavia. Of

course, much of its material can be found at other libraries around the world, but nowhere else are these works grouped together or have been compiled with the deliberate aim in mind: to show how Scandinavian scholars over an extended period of time studied and thought about language.

2.3.1 Torgrim Hannås

One of five children, Torgrim Hannås grew up in Bergen, on the west coast of Norway. His father, Torleiv Hannaas (1874-1929),⁹ was a linguist and passed on his enthusiasm for languages and book-collecting to his son. The latter was a specific passion of his and he kept half his salary for this purpose, the rest going to his wife for housekeeping. After his death, his impressive collection of twenty-thousand books was not passed on to his son though, but sold at auction two years later (Collins 1998: web reference). He held a professorship in West Norwegian dialects and his first dissertation as a student was on the dialect spoken in the southern region of Agder in Norway called *Konsonanterne i Hornnesmaalet* [The Consonants in the Hornnes Dialect]. He attended a teacher's college in Kristiansand from 1893 to 1895 and completed his *examen artium* (university entrance exam) in 1899, part of which was an essay written in *Landsmål*, the first in the country. Throughout his life he was interested in the dialects of the Norwegian people. He was a keen collector of folklore and became curator of the *Folklore Collection* at Bergen Museum when this was founded in 1921. The previous year he had undertaken editorial duties on the production of *Norsk Aarbok* [Norwegian Yearbook]. Hannaas has been called 'more of a collector than a thinker' (Alver 1955: 7), but his work still has

⁹ Note that he used the older style of spelling the Scandinavian letter 'å' as 'aa'.

significance in that he ‘was a typical representative of the strong tradition of language scholars who were both scientists and nation builders’ (Nedreliid 2007: 48). His contribution to the history of Norwegian linguistics must therefore be seen in the overall context of the elevation of the vernacular in the establishment of a national identity – a crucial element, particularly in Norway (section 7.2). As for his son, even though he did not produce any noteworthy works himself, it can be argued that through the compilation of his own collection of rare and important language works, his name will always be associated with popular language works in the history of Scandinavian linguistics.

Torggrim Hannås led an eventful life before settling in Britain as an antiquarian bookseller. Having completed his national service in the 1930s, he obtained a degree in German, English and geography at the University of Oslo, but did not manage to complete his doctoral dissertation on Old Norse philology before the onset of the Second World War. He fought briefly in the army before joining the resistance movement. In 1943 he was forced to flee Norway, making a five-day journey in a stolen German boat across the North Sea to Britain. Upon arrival, Hannås was recruited into Norwegian military intelligence, returning for a time to Norway after the war as an interrogator of captured German soldiers.

In 1946 he married the owner of his London boarding house and the couple took up bookselling in 1957 and Hannås soon became Britain’s leading Scandinavian specialist – his catalogues being particularly popular with university libraries. Hannås donated his collection to the British Library in 1984, when the business moved to Winchester in south-west England. It continued

trading until 1993 when the last catalogue (no. 92) was issued and the remaining stock sold. Torgrim Hannås died in 1998.¹⁰

2.3.2 Overview

The *Hannås Collection* totalled nearly a thousand works at its time of donation. After excluding material already in possession by the British Library, it numbered just over seven hundred items published primarily in Scandinavia between 1587 and 1975. The oldest item is a copy of Nicodemus Frischlin's (1547-1590) *Strigilis Grammatica* (1587). The donation greatly expanded current holdings of popular language works and is undoubtedly the most comprehensive collection of this genre in the world. As stipulated by Hannås, and rather unusual for such a large library, all the works are kept together in the underground storage and carry their own shelf-mark (Han.). The Collection was catalogued by Peter Hogg and is today managed by the curator of Scandinavian Collections, Barbara Hawes.

The catalogue describes the Collection's material as dictionaries, grammars and textbooks on particular languages, readers, phrasebooks and monographs on the Scandinavian languages and linguistics in general (Hogg 1994: no p.n.). This sufficiently sketches the main genres found in the Collection, but the variety in these genres deserves to be examined in more detail and, as mentioned above, this examination also provides an opportunity to describe works which are not included in the main analysis of this study.

2.3.2.1 Seventeenth century

¹⁰ Biographical information about Hannås adapted from Collins (1998).

The first item of interest is the language master Daniel Matras's dictionary of Danish, French, Italian and German proverbs from 1633. Matras (1598-1689) was the first professor of modern languages at the Academy of Nobles in Sorø in Denmark and his international dictionaries were the only ones to appear in the seventeenth century in that country (Dodge 1890: 290). The majority of seventeenth-century works were written in Latin and dealt with that language. Yet, a debate which was to become central among language scholars in the eighteenth century, the standardisation of the written vernacular, is represented in one work from 1679. Bishop Henrik Gerner's (1629-1700) *Orthographica danica* was a veiled attack on the priest Peder Syv's (1631-1702) proposed spelling reforms. Syv replied with his *Den danske sprogkunst* [The Art of the Danish Language] in 1685. The disagreement between Gerner and Syv was the first public orthographic debate in Denmark. Gerner was of the opinion that all orthographic norms should be based on previously established written usage and not at all on the spoken language (Hovdhaugen et al. 2000: 87). It is also fair to notice that neither of these two individuals was associated with the university and their efforts, together with the two clergymen, Erik Pontoppidan (1698-1764) and Laurids Kok (1634-1691), went largely unnoticed in university circles (Stybe 1979: 109-10). Over a century later, Rasmus Rask (1787-1832) was to adopt the same progressive attitude to orthographic reform as Syv (Rask 2002: 190) (section 7.5.1).

Another interesting work from this period is a Finnish grammar for Swedes written by Matthias Martinius (1655-1728) in 1689. Finland had come under Swedish rule in 1323 and was from that point a hotly disputed area between Sweden and Russia until the final annexation of the country by Russia

in 1809 (Nordstrom 2002: 64-5). The ruling Swedish nobles had acquired large areas of land in Finland throughout the Middle Ages, and as a result the official written language was Swedish even though about eighty-five per cent of the population was Finnish-speaking. When a national language movement emerged in Finland in the nineteenth century, their dissatisfaction was directed against the Swedish-speaking privileged classes and not the Russian government (Seton-Watson 1977: 71-2). This situation can to some degree be compared to the one of the Danish ruling class in Norway but, whereas the Danes understood spoken Norwegian without great difficulty, the Finnish language was so distinct from Swedish that grammars such as Martinius's were needed to enable communication between landowners and the native population working for them. A solely Swedish grammar was published by Nils Tiällmann (1652-1718) in 1696. This was considered to be the earliest grammar of Swedish until the publication of Ericus Aurivillius's (1643-1702) *Grammaticæ Svecanæ specimen* in 1884, as it was actually written in 1684 (see Linn 2005: 166-7). Unusual for the seventeenth century, Tiällman was aware of the difference between letters and sounds and his 'most impressive contribution to the description of Swedish lies [...] at the level of phonetics' (Linn 2005: 168). That Tiällman was indeed ahead of his time and that phonetic classification remained a difficulty up until the twentieth century is shown in the analysis in section 6.4.1.

2.3.2.2 Eighteenth century

The eighteenth century is much more strongly represented in the Hannås Collection with eight times as many works (around two hundred) than the previous century. Many of these were still Latin grammars and dictionaries as

this continued to be the main language of education and scholarship. The first noteworthy work returns to the orthographic debate mentioned above and is the Bishop Jesper Swedberg's (1654-1753) purist and conservative efforts to defend the older spelling of Swedish as embodied in the first Bible translation from 1541. His *Schibboleth* (1716) has been described as:

[...] one of the best examples of the view that Swedish could be treated as a unified system, a grand package of orthography, grammar and lexicon which needed wrapping up for the good of Sweden and its people.

(Linn 2005: 172)

The orthographic debate and whether the language could be fixed permanently in its current form was also still in full flow in Denmark and Peder Schulz's (1691?-1773) *Danskens Skriverigtighed* [The Correct Danish Orthography] from 1724 was a contribution to this debate. Schulz's work also had an impact on another debate, that of how much detail to include in a grammar. He had attempted to simplify the grammar of Danish, to make it easier to grasp for non-specialists, and introduced the somewhat controversial idea at the time that Danish only had two cases, nominative and genitive. He argued that there was no reason to include the accusative because 'it can't be explained to any Danish man in his own language' (Hovdhaugen et al. 2000: 70). Schulz's bold move first of all signifies a break with the Latin tradition. Vernacular grammar had for a long time deliberately been put into Latin paradigms without consideration as to whether it actually fitted this paradigm. Secondly, it hints at an emerging tendency among some language scholars to consider the needs and skills of their learners which became much more common in utilitarian language learning in the nineteenth century. As for the orthographic debate, it was revitalised in Denmark in the 1740s with a fierce disagreement between the

language scholar Niels von Hauen (1709-1777) and the journalist Thomas Clitau (1694-1754). Their commentaries and language works can also be found in the Hannås Collection.

A central component of utilitarian language learning, the self-instruction manual, also emerged in the eighteenth century. The two earliest works of this kind in the Hannås Collection are for Swedes wanting to learn German. Andreas Heldmann's (1688-1770) *Grammatica germanica svethizans* (1726) and Albert Giese's *Der teutsche Sprachmeister* (1730) are both representatives of this genre. The key element to note is their titles. Phrases such as 'genwägen till tyske språket' [short-cut to the German language] and 'ohne sonderliche Mühe [...] von selbsten gründlich und bald lernen könne' [without particular trouble [...] how someone by one-self can learn thoroughly and quickly] were deliberately put into the titles of self-instruction works in order to appeal to non-specialist learners of foreign languages.

The first work treating the English language is the Swede Lorents Julius Kullin's [no dates] *Et kort och tydeligt begrep af en engelsk grammatica* [A brief and clear concept of an English grammar] from 1744 which was used in teaching English at the University of Uppsala. English was in general not a popular foreign language in Scandinavia in this period and Kullin's work is one of only a few English grammars published in the eighteenth century (the others were Kraak (1748) and Bertram (1750; 1753)).

Of the more unusual Hannås works are two grammars of the Lapp (Sami) language by the Norwegian priest Knud Leem (1697-1774) from 1748 and 1756. Leem was the first to provide a detailed description of Sami and is known as the leading eighteenth-century specialist on Sami language and culture

(see Hagland and Supphellen (2003)). In 1770, a Danish colonist in the West Indies, Joachim [Jochum] Melchior Mogens (1715-1783), published his grammar on the Creole language spoken on the Danish islands of St. Croix, St. Thomas and St. Jans. The most interesting aspect of this rather exotic grammar is the dialogues as they in no uncertain terms show the master-servant relationship between the white rulers and the black slaves. On a more light-hearted note, the debate on how to weed out foreign loanwords from the vernacular attracted an ironic comment from Caspar Rothe (1724-1780) in his small pamphlet *Herr B*** Forslag om det danske Sprogs Indførsel udi Frankerig* [Mr B***'s Suggestion about the Introduction of the Danish language in France] (1755). Rothe claimed that a French art critic by the name of Beaumelle had just left Denmark so in awe of the language and customs of the Danes that he wanted to introduce the Danish language in his home country. French had long been a prestige language in Denmark and by sending young French men to study in Denmark, they could, upon their return to France, introduce Danish words into their everyday speech. It would not be long then before Danish would experience the same high cultural status as French did in Denmark (Kierkegaard 2005: 109-10). Despite its mocking tone, this was actually a defence of loan words and an attempt at explaining how indispensable many French and Romance words had become in the Danish language.

2.3.2.3 Nineteenth century

Having looked at what language scholars wrote about in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, we now move on to the century under investigation in this thesis. In the Hannås Collection, works from this period number

approximately three hundred and fifty, with two-thirds published in the first half of the century. This material can be divided into four main groups, their numbers given in brackets: dictionaries (123), grammars (142), phrasebooks (31) and miscellaneous language works (48). To be included in the Hannås Collection, a work does not necessarily have to be written in a Scandinavian language. Danish, Norwegian and Swedish make up just over a third of the nineteenth-century works, a fifth are in English, and French, German, Greek and Latin works are evenly distributed over the remainder. As for the authors, very few of them were actually academics. Some were former army or navy people, putting their practical knowledge of foreign languages into the popular language works. Many of them were priests, teachers or local civil servants – in occupations that brought them into contact with the utilitarian language learners and they therefore understood the difficulties associated with learning a foreign language.

Grammars constitute the largest group. This is partly due to the fact that any work that has even just a small section of grammatical explanation has been included in this category. The group is therefore a very varied one containing both traditional school and self-instruction grammars. A large number belong to the so-called *lærebog/lärobok* genre. This translates into English as simply ‘teaching book’, but it actually represents a more simplified style of grammatical description, an extensive range of practical exercises and an increased focus on the spoken language in the form of guides to pronunciation. The *lærebog/lärobok* genre and the phrasebooks form the core constituent of popular language works analysed in this study.

The dictionaries can be divided into three separate groups. The first and largest group contains general polyglot dictionaries. In the second, we find specialist and technical dictionaries of which the majority are nautical dictionaries, emphasising the seafaring tradition in Scandinavia and the consequent need these people had for communicating in foreign languages (section 3.2.2). The rest of the works are from the genre known as dictionaries of foreign words. Originating in Germany and generally not common in English (Dodge 1890: 287), this tradition of compiling dictionaries of loanwords can be linked to the eighteenth-century standardisation debate and the obsession, on the part of some scholars, to rid the language of foreign elements.

The phrasebooks constitute the most varied selection of language works. Their explicit aim was enable ordinary people to learn foreign languages as often stated clearly in their prefaces or introductions. The most obvious example is that of emigrant phrasebooks (Chapter 4), but travel guidebooks (Chapter 5) are also included in this classification as the majority contained a section with dialogues and phrases. The former were responding to an urgent need for proficiency in the English language by emigrants, whereas the latter were entirely intended for leisure purposes and took a more relaxed approach to language teaching.

Chapter 3: Foreign Languages in Society and Education

3.1 Introduction

Self-instruction language manuals are not unique to the nineteenth century, but the period is unique in the sense that it provides the opportunity to specifically identify the key influences on this area of language learning. For the first time, there is a clear, uninterrupted development which shows the movement gathering pace as a direct response to outside influences. These influences stemmed from both general societal changes and more specific educational reforms. As established in section 1.2, utilitarian language learning was made viable because of increased communication with speakers of other languages. A much larger number of people now encountered speakers of foreign languages in businesses and on their travels and the self-instruction manual quickly became their preferred choice.

Utilitarian language learners needed to learn English quickly and inexpensively. The authors of popular language works were aware of these requirements and fulfilling them successfully was the way to secure a lasting profitable enterprise. If a work gained a good reputation then the possibility for further reprints and revised editions was much more likely. As part of producing a successful work, the authors had to seriously consider how they could help their readers learn effectively. This impacted positively on the quality of the genre as many authors progressed from merely copying existing reference grammars to developing their teaching methods. In the history of language teaching, these methods have generally been overlooked – maybe because they were developed outside traditional education – but they did fulfil an important

function which the schools did not. This chapter will show how the limited provision of foreign language teaching in schools had a direct impact on the growth of utilitarian language learning.

To lay claim to being a movement which can be compared with other nineteenth-century movements – on the one hand, other practical teaching methods (Ollendorff, Ahn, grammar-translation), and on the other, the late nineteenth-century practical linguists (Sweet, Jespersen and Storm) – utilitarian language learning has to show a continuous, uninterrupted period of development. It does that and this is to some degree due to the generally accepted notion that there is a clear distinction between what was going on in linguistics and language study before and after 1800. Robins (1997) explains:

One can rightly speak of pre-nineteenth-century historical work on languages as sporadic, not because it necessarily lacked insight or appreciation of what was involved, but because people's suggestions and researches remained largely in isolation; and since they were not taken up and developed by a continuous succession of scholars, each new thinker had little to build on or to react to.

(Robins 1997: 190)

Prior to the nineteenth century, Scandinavian language scholars were not only working in isolation from the rest of Europe but also from each other and their publications remained largely unknown. Popular language works were produced in this period, but because of the lack of continuity and development, the genre as a whole never gained momentum. The development is evident in the nineteenth century both in terms of a steady increase in the number of works published and confirmation that scholars were building on already established methods. The latter is particularly true when it came to writing guides to pronunciation – a new element in the popular language works. Most authors, however, recognised that their knowledge of English was insufficient to explain

properly the difficult pronunciation of this language (section 6.4). The advice of native speakers was needed and the pronouncing dictionaries by Thomas Sheridan (1719-1788) and John Walker (1732-1807) were most often cited in prefaces as having been consulted. This acknowledgement of other people's works and achievements shows continuity within the genre.

3.2 Societal influences

The following section discusses the Scandinavian countries and how the changes they underwent in the nineteenth century influenced the production of popular language works. Before embarking upon that discussion, it is necessary to explain what is actually meant by the term 'Scandinavia' and how trying to summarise the general history of a region consisting of more than one country can be problematic. In the nineteenth century, Scandinavia had a somewhat different meaning than today and this is part of the explanation why only Denmark, Norway and Sweden are included under the heading Scandinavia in this study. Various arguments can be put forward for including Finland, Iceland and the Faroe Islands, but their inclusion is dependent on whether historical, political or cultural factors are taken into consideration. Scandinavia has traditionally comprised Denmark, Norway and Sweden based predominantly on their mutually intelligible languages and their similar societal structures. On the other hand, if a classification of Scandinavia is based on linguistic and ethnic grounds, then Iceland and the Faroe Islands must also be included, as their languages belong to the same North Germanic language family as a result of settlement by the Norse Vikings. Yet, Icelandic and Faroese are not readily understood by Danes, Norwegians and Swedes and their remoteness from

‘mainland Scandinavia’ in terms of geographical distance contributes to this perceived detachment.

In an attempt to overcome this classification problem, another term became very popular in the twentieth century, that of *Norden* [the North]. A more common translation is ‘the Nordic countries’, however, the term is still principally used within the region itself. The Nordic countries is now the preferred term as this includes Denmark, the Faroe Islands, Finland, Greenland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden and the coalition is a sign of inclusiveness and co-operation. *Norden* was not in common use in the nineteenth century, so it will only be used in this study in reference to modern phenomena. Furthermore, the Hannås Collection for the large majority contains only Danish, Norwegian and Swedish works so only these countries are investigated. In several instances throughout this study, particular emphasis is placed upon Norway because of its central role in the developments which prompted the production of popular language works. Three of the main topics of this study – emigration, tourism, national identity – all feature strongly in Norwegian history; and the fact that they are explicitly linked with the study of language sufficiently justifies the prominence given to Norway bearing in mind its long-standing dedication to establishing an independent national language (a movement which began in the nineteenth century).¹¹

Elaborating this point about the correct classification might seem a little convoluted to anyone not from the region. Foreigners generally perceive this region as a group of countries so similar that they may well be one single state.

¹¹ The historical context given in this study is mainly to aid non-Scandinavian readers and will inevitably not be sufficiently detailed for anyone with a Scandinavian background. For the latter, I refer to the notes detailing historical references.

Citizens of the Nordic countries regard this as an implausible, and slightly insulting, view, because each country sees itself as a unique, independent nation, priding itself exactly on the subtle differences between neighbours. This difficulty in projecting themselves as independent nations to the outside world is often mentioned as the deep-rooted sentiment lying behind today's strong scepticism towards the European Union all over the region, despite Denmark and Sweden having been members since 1972 and 1995, respectively. Norway has consistently chosen to remain a non-member as a result of public referenda and the Norwegians' strong urge to protect their independence can probably to some degree be explained by the fact that national independence was only achieved in the nineteenth century. The prevailing fear in all three countries is that in a union much larger than the made-up one in which they are put by uninformed foreigners, they will simply lose their individual identities altogether.

3.2.1 Class reform

In history-writing, choosing to write about a specific century poses certain problems because a label such as 'nineteenth century' will have other connotations than simply being the period of time from 1800 to 1899. Movements very rarely fit conveniently with the exact time a century begins or ends. In Scandinavia, the year 1814 was an important turning point in its history and most developments of the nineteenth century occurred after this time.¹² 1814 saw the conclusion of the Napoleonic Wars, a break-up of the long-

¹² For a general historical description, see Jespersen (2004: 140-8), Nordstrom (2000: 73-8) and Pryser (1999: Chapter 13).

standing Dano-Norwegian union and the initiation of a period of re-adjustment. Denmark-Norway had been allied with the defeated French Empire, while Sweden was part of the opposing coalition forces. At the conclusion of these wars in 1814 and as part of the ensuing peace treaty, Norway was forced from one union with Denmark into another with Sweden though the nature of this union was very different from the one with Denmark.¹³ In the next few decades, Denmark had to come to terms with its new position as a minor, politically less influential and economically unstable state, while Sweden was about to experience unprecedented political stability and economic improvements under the newly crowned king, the former French marshal, Jean-Baptiste Bernadotte (1763-1844).¹⁴ Having been in the throes of a large-scale war involving most of the European countries, Scandinavia now entered a period in which it would be 'forgotten' by the outside world and almost completely disappeared from the international agenda. Such a period of obscurity was beneficial for internal, economic and social improvements which all helped lay the foundation for modern Scandinavia. After 1814, Danish and Swedish dreams of becoming great European powers had been severely crushed, and they had to adapt to a marginal and insignificant position in European politics. This gradually resulted in the realisation that an impartial stance actually meant less disruption to national economies and as a consequence, the principle of neutrality which came to pervade the twentieth century was founded.

¹³ 'The union of the two states was of a purely personal character; that is to say, it was a union solely through the crown. Each of the kingdoms maintained its own constitution, its own ministry, its own legislature, its own laws, its own financial system, its own courts, its own army and navy' (Ogg 1916: 574).

¹⁴ Karl XIV Johan, who reigned from 1818 to 1844.

This period of improvement also had an influence on the division of power between the social classes. But it was not only the relationship of power that changed, the classes themselves also underwent an internal transition. In broad terms, traditional feudal society had consisted of the monarch, the nobility, the bourgeoisie and the peasantry. Links to the larger European powers, either by royal, noble or political ties, had always been common and to some degree necessary for such small countries. Ideological currents also frequently reached Scandinavia via the upper tiers of society. The ordinary population was in general isolated from (and ignorant of) what was going on in the rest of Europe. So, when French revolutionary ideas swept the continent in the late eighteenth century, they went almost unnoticed in Scandinavia. In Norway, the intellectual elite did find some inspiration in the claims regarding the natural rights of man, but they felt sufficiently reassured by the liberal constitution of 1814 and the progress made after the break-up of the union with Denmark. Another important contribution to Norwegian patriotic sentiment was the foundation of *Det Kongelige Frederiks Universitet* in 1811 which opened in Oslo in 1813¹⁵. The possibility of obtaining higher education without having to go abroad, usually to Copenhagen, strongly stimulated Norwegian culture and language and encouraged the education of native academics (Popperwell 1972: 22).

In Denmark, the king and his subjects, because of the loss of Norway and the tensions in the German border region,¹⁶ were even more devoted to preserving whatever stability was left. There was no indication of abolishing

¹⁵ See also Collett (1999) and section 3.3.4.

¹⁶ Denmark fought two wars with Germany in 1848-50 and 1864 over the duchies of Schleswig and Holstein (see Jespersen 2004: 22-5).

absolutism because ‘the sympathy of the regime in Denmark to the voice of the people was so pronounced [that] the paternal monarch carefully took stock of the wishes and needs of his beloved subjects and adjusted his style of rule accordingly’ (Jespersen 2004: 51). An absolute monarchy had been introduced in 1660 and because of this the influence of the nobility had been greatly limited. By the time a constitutional democracy replaced the monarch in 1848, the middle class was gaining strength and thus benefited more from this than the nobility in terms of political influence. In Sweden, the union with Norway made it the strongest power in Scandinavia, but also caused disgruntlement in Russia. Having ceded Finland to Russia in 1808,¹⁷ Sweden had to pursue a careful diplomatic balancing act because the threat from the east was no longer across the Baltic Sea but right on their border. King Gustav IV Adolf (1778-1837), who had reigned from 1792, was deposed after the loss of Finland and the nobility drafted the constitution of 1809, eradicating the absolute monarchy. As a result, any subsequent monarch’s power was curbed and dependent on the behest of the nobility. In August 1810, Jean-Baptiste Bernadotte was elected crown prince of Sweden, ascending the throne in 1818 as King Karl XIV Johan. The decision to offer the throne to a Frenchman was made in order to strengthen ties with France and secure their support in case Russian hostilities would escalate.¹⁸

The upper classes were inherently conservative and opposed any attempts at distributing class power more evenly. By the 1830s, the increasingly influential middle class and the better-off farmers began to express dissatisfaction with the current class structure and its bias towards the upper

¹⁷ Treaty of Frederikshamn, 17 September 1809. Result of the Finnish War between Sweden and Russia, 1808-1809.

¹⁸ For more on the political events surrounding this, see Nordstrom (2002: 64-6).

classes. The emergence of entrepreneurs and private businessmen signalled the ascendancy of an industrial and capitalist age. Believing in the power of the private individual, the middle class knew that political authority could be gained through economic influence. This was in direct opposition to the upper classes who had an unwavering belief in their hereditary right to wealth and status. The members of the middle class wanted to improve their standing in society and called for reforms such as tax reductions, freedom of trade, simplified administration and improved public education.¹⁹ The upper classes naturally opposed these demands because any improvements in the rights of the middle classes would have to mean a redistribution of wealth at their expense. Even more worryingly was the fact that as the middle strata grew wealthier, it would be become more and more difficult to continue excluding them from parliamentary and legislative processes.

Despite upper class opposition, the nineteenth century was an age of progress and Scandinavia was eventually modernised by means of a slow-paced industrialisation where many areas still remained largely agricultural. An industrial revolution, as experienced in Britain a century earlier, did not happen in Scandinavia and enabled it to steer clear of the major social problems usually following rapid industrialisation. Change happened with relative ease because of its small-scale societies. Popular movements such as co-operation, trade unionism and social democracy helped bridge the gap between the classes (Derry 1979: 250). Norway and Sweden benefited enormously from technical advances, especially in the processing of timber and iron, and were

¹⁹ For developments in Sweden, see Nordstrom (2002: 73-87); Norway, see Pryser (1999: 175-7 and 211-8); Denmark, see Jespersen (2004: Chapter 7).

commercially aware of the need for adapting their products to market demands. Denmark was mainly reliant on agriculture, having no natural resources of its own, but it also rose to the task of developing better methods of farming and specialisation of products such as dairy and meat.

The final social class to be discussed is the peasantry. The English term ‘peasantry’ is loaded with negative connotations, but is the usual translation of the Scandinavian *bønder/bönder*. However, the lower classes in Scandinavia did not consist of only peasants and there were social differences within the class itself. The land-owning farmers were in general comfortable, provided that their farms were large enough to support their families, whereas the *husmenn/husmænd* [cottars] were incredibly poor. Communities reliant on fishing, hunting and foraging, particularly common in Norway and Sweden, also belonged to the lowest class together with the peasantry, but they have traditionally been largely ignored in history writing because of the dominance of National Romanticism (section 7.2.2).

3.2.2 Impact on popular language works

Modernisation and progress had a marked impact on the rise of utilitarian language learning and the production of popular language works. Improved printing processes lowered the overall cost of production and made books affordable for a large number of people – a necessary requirement if those of limited means were to buy them. Because of educational reforms (section 3.3.2), these people were now increasingly literate and as a response, a large number of inexpensive books targeted at the general population appeared. Popular language works formed part of this new kind of simplified reading

matter which appealed to the broadest audience possible. To keep costs low, they were deliberately kept concise and the authors would address the needs directly by adapting its contents to a particular field of industry or commerce. English was, as already discussed, the undisputed language of commerce and trade and the language most people wanted to learn because the majority of industrial advances came from Britain.

In 1842, the Norwegian C. F. Berg published a work giving advice on English and German business correspondence called *Practisk Anviisning til engelsk og tydsk Handelscorrespondance, med et Anhang, indeholdende Formularer til engelske og tydske Vexler samt Connossementer* [Practical Guide to English and German Business Correspondence with a Supplement, containing Forms of English and German Bills of Exchange and Delivery Notes]. A similar work, *Norske, engelske, franske og tydske Handelsudtryk og Talemaader, til Brug ved Handelscorrespondence* [Norwegian, English, French and German Business Terms and Phrases, for use in Business Correspondence] was published by J. W. K. Jürgenssen in 1855. Another author who was aware of the need for business people to communicate in foreign languages was E. H. Michelsen whose work was published under official patronage by the British Lords of the Committee of Privy Council for Trade. His *Merchant's Polyglot Manual in Nine Languages* (1862) included a preface which in rather dramatic language expressed an awe of the industrial revolution:

The conquest of the physical world by the genius of man, within the present century, surpasses anything that we read of in the Fairy Tales or Arabian Nights. Steam and machines now supplant manual labour and handicraft; rapidity of motion almost outstrips the flight of imagination; the electric spark, which threatens us in a storm, has become the docile messenger of our whims and wants; light, the rival of thought, now fixes and fastens on paper the most fleeting images and scenery, while all the powers of nature respectively seem to obey, like tamed giants, the dictates of infant man [...] These results are

immense, and I have undertaken to unite them, as far as in my power, and put them [...] in relief in a General Manual of Merchandise, in nine European languages. The insufficiency of Dictionaries in general, with respect to the nomenclature in different languages of commercial and industrial terms, is generally admitted, nor has any attempt hitherto been successfully made to produce an almost manual, by giving to every article its proper technical name and appellation, for the use of the mercantile classes in their international discourse.

(Michelsen 1862: v)

The last paragraph of this quotation succinctly states the compelling reasons why certain popular language works were produced. A general shortage of technical manuals, in this case, dictionaries, was hindering communication between people and only by producing more of these would it be possible for people to learn the languages required.

The maritime tradition of Scandinavia and the fact that international trade was conducted mainly via the seas is particularly evident in the popular language works. Dictionaries and phrasebooks devoted to nautical terms were very popular and one example is C. F. Berg's dictionary, *Ordbog for redere, skibsførere og styrmænd* [Dictionary for ship owners, captains and ship's mates] (1860), which followed his business correspondence manual mentioned above. Another dictionary was produced by Carl Henrik Ramsten (1842-1914), a lieutenant in the Swedish navy, and was called *Svenskt och Engelskt samt Engelskt och Svenskt Nautiskt Handlexikon* [Swedish and English and English and Swedish Nautical Dictionary] from 1866. In the preface, he explains that 'our English dictionaries too often lack the words or terms which belong to the language of sailors, even though the few which are included, are often useful for those who on their travels visit waters or places where the English language is

common [...]’²⁰ (Ramsten 1866: no p.n.). Ramsten’s work is incredibly detailed (172 pages), though the actual size of the book is small, so that the reader could keep it in his pocket while working. He uses Walker’s system of pronunciation and is one of the few authors of this type of manual to actually take into consideration the issue of pronunciation. Most authors probably assumed that sailors would have regular opportunity to hear the foreign language spoken and therefore did not need as much guidance in how to speak the language as the emigrants did, for example (Chapter 4). The terms provided are concerned with all aspects of sailing and in the section ‘words of command for ship manoeuvres’, for instance, we are given the following phrases for to ‘make sail’: ‘Watch set port stu’nnsails, Away aloft, Burton on the Topsails yards, Jigger on T. gallant lifts, Haul taut, Rig out, Hoist away. Trice to hand, Lower stu’nn-sail ready for setting, Lizard on the foreyard, Man the boom topping-lift and fore-guy, Top away the lower boom, Man the halliards’ (Ramsten 1866: 158). These specialised nautical phrases reflect the actual practical experience of the author and how this experience was often the main qualification for writing a popular language work. An academic could produce a dictionary rich in etymology and diachronic observation, but he would never have the same knowledge of a sailor’s language as an individual such as Ramsten did and would therefore lack an understanding of what terms and phrases the reader needed.

²⁰ ‘Våra engelska lexicon vidröra vanligen alltför knapphändigt de ord eller termer, som höra till sjömansspråket, hvarjemta det lilla, som är upptaget, oftast är förvara af både nytta och nöja för dem, som på sina sjöresor besöka farvatten eller platser, der engelska språket är gängse [...]’

3.3 Educational influences

The Scandinavian education systems as we know them today are highly regarded and often top the international league tables,²¹ though the regional rivalry sometimes prompts some serious soul-searching when one country lags behind the others. Reforms introduced in the nineteenth century initiated the process of developing high quality, free education for all citizens from elementary to university level. By 1900, several noteworthy improvements had already been achieved. Literacy was widespread, school attendance high and the improved elementary schools with their apt labels, *allmueskolen* in Norway and *folkeskolen/folkskola* in Denmark and Sweden,²² signalled that the state was aware of its indispensable role in providing education for the people. Educational reforms had to come from above, but in the second half of the nineteenth century any changes instigated by the state were increasingly a direct response to pressure applied by the middle classes. They were dissatisfied that practical education that taught vocational skills was still not provided and utilitarian language learning was part of the solution to alleviate this shortcoming.

This complete overhaul of the Scandinavian education systems was by no means unproblematic. Building schools was expensive and new teacher training colleges had to be provided to keep up with the demand for qualified teachers. The improved skills of teachers in turn meant that they had to be given

²¹ Source: OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development) Programme for International Student Assessment, PISA 2006 results. See references for full details.

²² Both terms, 'allmue' and 'folk', refer to the general population, the lower classes and the peasants, previously disadvantaged in education. The term 'allmue' is difficult to translate directly but is an old Scandinavian word referring to peasants, cottagers and other country dwellers. In the nineteenth century it was especially used by Romantic thinkers as a positive reference to the peasant class in contrast to the pejorative 'bønder'.

higher salaries and a decent standard of accommodation. Reforms were not readily introduced and were preceded by a protracted and intense debate. The most essential issues discussed went back to the Enlightenment and concerned the fundamental nature of education and whose responsibility it was to provide it.

3.3.1 The education debate

Pre-nineteenth century, the common perception was that education was a private enterprise and not the responsibility of the state. Integral to that attitude was that if the lower classes were kept uneducated, they would remain easy to govern and not get any unsettling ideas about equality. During the Enlightenment, this viewpoint was challenged and the citizens of a country were now seen as a vital element in the overall composition and well-being of a state. Yet, they could only make a positive contribution to their country if they were made aware of what this entailed. They had to be enlightened through education. The Scandinavian governments were influenced by these ideas and appointed commissions to investigate possible future directions for state education. Besides examining whether the state should adopt a bigger role in the provision of education, these commissions also had to rule on whether education should equip an individual with practical or theoretical skills. They ruled in favour of the state's role but never reached a firm conclusion on the essential nature of education and the skills taught in schools. Following this, moves were made towards expanding the existing school system, but the Napoleonic Wars caused such disruption that the process had to be halted. Education in the beginning of the nineteenth century was therefore still patchy and the Enlightenment had not

succeeded in removing the strong religious influences within it. The majority of teachers were local clergy and the pupils they taught in the local villages were never going to study law, theology or medicine – the only qualifications needed in a pre-industrialised society – so only the most basic subjects were covered in elementary education. As economic stability was again reached in the 1820s, the education debate resumed. There was common agreement that education should be available to all and provided by the state, but proponents of classical, theoretical education were locked in a wrangle with reform-friendly supporters of modern, practical education.

In terms of language teaching, classical education was synonymous with the teaching of Latin. The classicists thought that the study of Latin honed the senses and enhanced mental capacity. Practical skills were unnecessary in education as long as grounded formal training was given and the argument was supported by the following analogy: ‘Once the knife has been sharpened, it can be used for cutting all sorts’ (Eckhardt Larsen 2002: 23). For language learning, in particular, this meant that if an individual had studied Latin grammar, then the acquisition of other foreign languages would be easy. It was believed that the structure of Latin grammar could easily be applied to other languages, but the unfeasibility of this was one of the most common problems encountered in utilitarian language learning.

Classical education faced criticism from several fronts. The humanists drew their main inspiration from ancient Greek civilisation, the greatest in history in their view, and they dismissed the long-standing Latin tradition by highlighting Greek culture and language as superior to Roman military strength. They found historical evidence in the vast amount of data confirming that the

Romans had learnt about grammar from the Greeks, and that they had indeed experienced ‘a lingering sense of inferiority when they compared themselves with the Greeks’ (Law 2003: 58). While their argument was based on philosophical and philological reasons, the middle classes put forward completely different reasons for the abandonment of classical education. Various vocational skills were required in their working lives and the foreign languages they needed to learn were the modern European ones and not a dead language such as Latin. They continually emphasised the irrelevance of classical education to them and as their social status increased, their opinion could not be ignored. The Scandinavian governments finally heeded their call in the 1840s and the downfall of classical education had been set in motion. The classicists’ arguments had not been strong enough to fend off opposition and school reform could now begin in earnest.

3.3.2 Elementary school provision

Utilitarian language learning developed because of a lack of suitable language education for the general population. But what did the Scandinavian education systems actually offer in the nineteenth century? Even though educational reforms were introduced in the first half of the century, in reality the changes took a long time to implement and filter through to the general population. There was therefore a genuine lack throughout most of the nineteenth century in the provision of vocational education and modern language teaching.

The first educational legislations were actually passed quite early, as a result of the investigations in the late eighteenth century, but the governments

did not have the financial means to implement them effectively. Denmark was the first country to legislate on elementary education in 1814.²³ The main improvements as a result of this were the establishment of permanent elementary schools in place of temporary schools [*omgangsskoler*], the introduction of a compulsory school age (between six and fourteen) and the mandatory teaching of basic subjects (reading, writing, arithmetic and religious education). In Norway, the first law which laid down a minimum requirement for elementary schools was the Act of 1827,²⁴ and it was very similar to the earlier Danish one. In Sweden, the first elementary school law, the *Folkskolestadga* [Folk School Regulation] was not introduced until 1842 because of resistance from the large and powerful upper class. Remnants of pre-Enlightenment attitudes were still strong in that country and they saw no need for educating the common people. But due to its lateness, this regulation was the most successful in terms of the short period of time it took to implement. A five-year target was announced and at the end of that period, the number of children attending school had risen dramatically. But the shortage of qualified teachers was now an even more pressing problem and surveys found that each teacher had an average of 130 pupils (Johansson 1992: 15). Similar statistics were published on the outcome of the Norwegian Act of 1827 and though it applied only to rural schools, its success can be seen in that these 7,000 schools 175,000 pupils were registered, a reasonable 25 in each school. School attendance was also high at 95 per cent. The picture was different in the towns where only 81

²³ *Anordning for Almue-Skolevæsenet paa Landet i Danmark* [Scheme for the Folk-Education Authorities in the Country in Denmark] and *Anordning for Almue-Skolevæsenet i Kioebstæderne i Danmark Kioebenhavn undtagen* [Scheme for the Folk-Education Authorities in Market Towns in Denmark not including Copenhagen].

²⁴ *Lov angaaende Almueskole-Væsenet paa Landet* [Law concerning the Folk-Education Authorities in the Countryside].

per cent of children attended school. Illiteracy levels were high and the shortage of teachers was even more acute there. In some town schools each teacher had up to 200 pupils in a class. The recurring problem of the shortage of qualified teachers was a worrying issue in all three countries and played a large part in delaying the full implementation of educational legislation. As a result, individuals who lacked the appropriate qualifications were employed if their experience was deemed sufficient for the job. In the meantime, a popular solution to this problem was the introduction of the monitorial or mutual system of instruction in which the older and most reliable pupils were drafted in to teach the younger ones, thus providing some welcome relief for overworked teachers.²⁵

Once relative consensus on the provision of education had been reached, basic improvements at elementary level happened fairly quickly. This was to some extent a response to the demands of the middle classes, even though their criticism was more specifically directed at further education (section 3.3.3). Yet, any improvement was welcome and a strong foundation in the education system was necessary before further reforms could be introduced. The middle classes understood this, but among the lower classes, and especially in rural areas, there was resentment towards the legislation because their children now had to attend school regularly and for a longer period of time. Children were a vital part of the work force on a farm and if they had to go to school, then hired help might have to be brought in. The peasants could not see the same advantages as the middle classes because they did not benefit from the opportunities offered by industrial

²⁵ Created by the British educationalists, Joseph Lancaster (1778-1838) and Andrew Bell (1753-1832), hence also known as the 'Lancaster-Bell Method'.

developments or experience the upwards social mobility that education brought. The general attitude was that the only reason for school attendance was to prepare for confirmation which then marked the transition to adult life. This attitude concerned the Danish priest N. F. S. Grundtvig (section 7.2.2), a staunch National Romantic, who with his folk high schools tried to make people understand that education was important if they were ever to improve their social status. The enlightenment of the people was of course also an important element of National Romanticism and we see some traces of this in works published for use in the elementary schools.

The Dane David Seidelin Birch (1780-1854) was a theologian, but is more known for his achievements as a teacher and his campaign for an increase in teachers' salaries (Bricka 1888: 284).²⁶ As the author of grammars for the use in the elementary teaching of Danish (Birch (1812); (1817)) his main concern was with an improvement in the quality of Danish-teaching in schools. His most important contribution was the National Romantic reader *Naturen, Mennesket og Borgeren* [Nature, Man and Citizen] published in 13 editions between 1821 and 1854. This work was meant to teach the pupil about his country and its achievements and thereby invoke national pride. The knowledge acquired would:

‘[...] awaken and consolidate *the true love of the father land*, which fills the heart with joy because we are citizens in this country, which makes us willing to watch over and work for this country's luck, willing to set aside own advantages for the common good and to sacrifice life and possessions if necessary.’²⁷

²⁶ Birch conducted his campaign in the Assembly of the Estates of the Realm of which he was a member. As part of the demand for liberalisation and democracy, King Frederik VI established four estates, Holstein, Southern Jutland, Northern Jutland and the Islands (Funen, Sealand, etc), in 1835. Their purely advisory function meant that their influence was rather limited.

²⁷ ‘[...] vækkes og befæstes *den sande fædrelandskærlighed*, som fylder hjertet med glæde over, at vi er borgere i dette land, medlemmer af dette samfund; som gør os villige til at våge og

In Norway, Niels Matthias Aalholm (1811-1894) was a central and influential figure in the cultural milieu of the town of Arendal through his publication of National Romantic poems and folklore stories.²⁸ He made a contribution to elementary teaching with his *Kortfattet norsk Sproglærer* [sic]: *til Brug i Almueskoler* (1835) [Brief Norwegian Grammar: for Use in Peasant Schools]. As the son of a timber merchant, the young Aalholm intended to follow in his father's footsteps and spent a year in France studying the language. When he returned, he opened a book shop, but he soon joined a school in Arendal as a language teacher. It was through this profession and subsequent publications that his name came to be 'known by all educated Norwegians [because] everyone had made acquaintance with his French and German exercises and readers in school' (Jæger and Andersen 1896: 285).²⁹

In Sweden, the expression of National Romanticism in elementary school grammars was combined with a strong influence of general grammar.³⁰ In Carl Ulric Broocman's (1783-1812) Swedish grammar from 1814, the Swedish nation is praised while maintaining the perception that all languages share a universal grammar structure. This work was published (after Broocman's death) by a friend who wrote in the preface that it was published mainly to act as 'suitable tuition for the youth in the mother tongue', and that it

arbejde for landets held, villige til at tilsidesætte egne fordele for det almindelige, og at opofre liv og gods, hvis det er fornødent'. <http://www.nomos-dk.dk/skraep/birch.htm> [accessed October 2008].

²⁸ <http://www.tekstforlaget.no/AAA2003.pdf> [accessed October 2008].

²⁹ '[...] kendt af alle dannede nordmænd; enhver havde paa skolebænken gjort bekendtskab med hans franske og tyske stiløvelser og læsebøger'.

³⁰ General grammar was developed at Port Royal, France, by scholars who followed the ideas of Descartes and the influential work by C. Lancelot and A. Arnauld, *Grammaire générale et raisonnée* (1660).

was ‘proof of the author’s love for everything of his native country’ (Broocman 1814: no p.n.). In the main part of the grammar, however, the influence of Condillac is evident. Étienne Bonnot de Condillac (1714-1780) was a French philosopher who participated in the origin of language debate of the eighteenth century with the second part of his *Essai sur l’origine des connoissances humaines* (1746). He ‘considered that abstract vocabulary and grammatical complexity developed from an earlier individual concrete vocabulary with very few grammatical distinctions or constraints’ (Robins 1997: 154) and we see a similar idea in Broocman’s grammar:

Here we find the oldest verbs of the languages that signify the most simple, necessary, and sensual concepts: *eat, drink, sleep* [...] They belonged to the language before it had any laws and have followed it ever since through all its changes and deviate from each other accordingly in inflection.³¹

(Broocman 1814: 44)

It is problematic to draw direct comparisons between elementary education and utilitarian language learning because the former was a compulsory requirement for children whereas the latter was a voluntary act undertaken by adults. However, the nationalist sentiment of the textbooks used in elementary education was in direct contrast to the popular language works which were a product of increased internationalisation. The emphasis on the nation and the native language was indicative of the Scandinavian governments’ attitude towards foreign language teaching. While not completely dismissive of the need for learning foreign languages (they were after all taught in further

³¹ ‘Här träffas Språkets äldsta Verber, som beteckna de enklaste, nödvändigsta och mest sinnliga begrepp: *äta, dricka, sofva* [...] De tilhörde Språket, innan det ännu vunnit någon stadga, hafva sedan ätföljt det under alla dess förändringar, och afvika derföre naturligtvis i böjningssätt ifrån hvarannan.’

education), they still did not consider this an element of basic education provided by the state.

3.3.3 Further education and English

The National Romantic impulses in elementary education also came to influence reforms of the grammar schools. The rejection of classical education and its emphasis on Latin was a sign of wanting to place more emphasis on the teaching of the mother tongues. Supporters of this reform joined forces with the middle classes in their campaign against the Latin school³² – sometimes referred to as the ‘black school’ because of its antiquated and authoritarian teaching methods. The reason behind the middle classes’ antipathy towards classical education has been mentioned several times, but they were particularly fervent in their opposition to the Latin school. Vocational subjects could not be taught to elementary school children so further education was the only place where a change in curriculum was possible. One of the main aims of the Latin school was to prepare pupils for the university entrance exam [*examen artium*] but the middle classes were not really interested in university education. The *realskole*, a further education institution with less emphasis on classical education, was an attempt to offer the middle classes what they wanted. It would teach modern foreign languages but not offer the *examen artium*. However, it never proved very popular and there are grounds to suspect that the middle classes wanted the prestige that accompanied a Latin school education. When they were influential

³² Latin schools (*Latinskoler*) could be found in most large Scandinavian towns and cities from the Reformation until they were abolished in the early twentieth century (some still exist as private *katedralskoler*). Sometimes also referred to as learned schools, they placed great emphasis on the teaching of Latin, but also the other classical languages Greek and Hebrew. The majority of pupils came from the upper classes.

enough to assert their demands, it was the Latin school that had to change to accommodate them – the provision of a school suited to their needs was not an attractive option for them. The *realskole* did prove, however, that the teaching of English was just as important as the teaching of French and German and successfully introduced it onto its curriculum. This prompted suggestions that the Latin school should follow suit and teach this language alongside French and German.

While it was recognised that there was a demand for English to be taught in further education, the problem was that no one was prepared to abandon another modern foreign language to make room for it. Dispensing with German was out of the question because it still enjoyed much influence and practical use in Scandinavia, having long been a language of culture and commerce. The choice, therefore, boiled down to either English or French. In Norway in 1857, a law was finally passed introducing English in the Latin school but only on a limited basis and it remained an optional subject at the *examen artium* (Sandved 1998: 23). This law was a somewhat feeble attempt at compromise because it was quite obvious that most students would concentrate on the subjects they needed for university entrance and English was not one of them. In short, if the Latin school was going to accept English it would also have to abandon its maxim about the inherent mental benefits of classical education, but English had two major problems as a school subject:

Firstly, English grammar was considered too simple, its lack of conjugations and inflections rendering it clearly inferior, not only to the classical languages, but also to its modern rivals. Secondly, it was regarded as a language of business and commerce and as such unworthy of academic attention; and, being so simple, it need not be taught as anyone could learn it quickly if the need arose.

(Rasmussen 2003: 69)

In Denmark, the Law of 1814 had defined the modern foreign languages taught in further education as ‘German and French, and further English, provided the commercial links of the town could motivate it’ (Nielsen 2000: 123), again emphasising English as the language of the capitalist middle classes. In Sweden, it had been suggested as early as 1807 that the learned schools should provide two separate routes of education – a classical and a civilian one – the latter with the sole purpose of training civil servants. There were again plans for English to be taught as part of the civilian route, but the curriculum was bursting to capacity and the shortage of skilled English teachers was an even bigger problem than the general teacher shortage.

Attitudes towards the English language varied in the Scandinavian countries. Norway was in general inclined towards it because the majority of its foreign exports went to Britain and it was heavily reliant on British grain imports. In Sweden, the main influence had always come from France, and English language and culture were therefore perceived as inferior to French. Writing in her diary in 1814 about Norway (the country with which Sweden had just entered a union) the Swedish Queen, Hedvig Elisabeth Charlotta (1759-1818), referred to the Norwegians as having ‘taken on the poorer characteristics and unrefined manners of the English’ (Barton 2003: 88) through their commercial interaction with them. With the increase in exports of products such as timber and iron, the merchants of Sweden began to require proficiency in English and did not have the same affected reverence of French culture and language as the upper classes did. They were therefore, as in the rest of Scandinavia, the driving force behind the development of utilitarian language learning in Sweden. In Denmark, there was an antipathy towards English mainly

based on historical reasons. The British navy had attacked Copenhagen in 1801 and 1807 and throughout the Napoleonic Wars, Denmark and Britain had been on opposite fronts, but again the merchant community was willing to put aside their historical grudges for the prospect of conducting trade. When an expansion of the harbour in Esbjerg on the west coast of Jutland was discussed in the Danish parliament, one member suggested that this project would not only bring financial benefits but also establish closer contacts with a people who 'are kindly inclined towards us, who are closely related to us, and who love freedom as we do; at least they do not hate us as, I'm bound to say, the Germans hate us' (Rasmussen 2003: 62).

The classicists continued to express a fierce resistance towards English throughout the nineteenth century. As their arguments were proven increasingly irrelevant in relation to the general state of society, they instead tried to claim the moral high ground. They acknowledged that Latin might not be useful in ordinary life any more, but it had great intrinsic value as the basis of European culture and it constituted a unique mental and moral discipline (Howatt and Widdowson 2004: 131). In the end, capitalist beliefs defeated the classicists' objections, and at the beginning of the twentieth century, English was fast becoming a core subject in language teaching. It had, in fact, overtaken German and French in popularity and almost displaced Latin and Greek completely. This meant that universities now focused on English and the increased number of graduates having studied English meant that there was no longer such an acute shortage of teachers. The general shift towards the modern foreign languages also meant that linguists were beginning to be concerned with more effective ways of teaching these languages. Many of their suggestions had certain

similarities with the methods used in the popular language works (section 6.5). As English was now also regularly taught in further education, there was a slump in the production of popular language works and explains why the genre in the twentieth century came to lack the acuteness and importance that characterised it in the hectic period of early industrialisation.

From reading the prefaces to the popular language works, we get a good indication of each author's personal motive behind the work. The majority of them stressed the practical usefulness of the English language. Peter Moberg (1747-1824), a teacher at the military academy in Stockholm, wrote in his English grammar from 1808 that:

The absence of a *practical* grammar in the English teaching of the Cadets gave the incentive to the present attempt: the ultimate purpose with its publication was to give both them and the Swedish youth in general a better manual in this *useful language* than we already have in our mother tongue.³³

(Moberg 1808: vii, my emphasis)

He also further stresses that his work will help the reader acquire a *practical knowledge* of the language (Moberg 1808: viii). Eibe (section 1.2.2) wrote that his grammar was recommended for future merchants 'because of the easier and increased interactions between the nations' (Eibe 1873: vi), and that the Ollendorffian method, which he uses, is 'excellent in any language teaching which has *practical education as its main purpose*' (Eibe 1873: no p.n., my emphasis)³⁴ – thus explicitly explaining the changes in society which had prompted the need for utilitarian language learning. A dialogue in another

³³ 'Saknaden af en tjenlig Lärobok vid Cadetternas undervisning i Engelskan gaf anledning till närvarande Försök: ändamålet med dess utgifvande var att leman både dem och Svenska Ungdomen i allmänhet en bättre hjälpreda i detta nyttiga språk, än vårt modersmål förut ägt'.

³⁴ '[Methodens] Fortrinlighet ved enhver Sprogunderviisning, der har pracktisk Uddannelse til Hovedformaal'.

phrasebook contains the statement: '[...] the English language is now becoming so general, that I am almost ashamed of being ignorant of it' (Anon. 1838: 77). So the main reasons listed by the authors of popular language works for turning their attention to the English language was that it was a useful and practical language, that more people needed to speak it because they were interacting with English speakers and that the English language overall was becoming more and more common in everyday life.

3.3.4 Universities

Scandinavia had four universities in the nineteenth century. Copenhagen (founded in 1479), Uppsala (1477) and Lund (1668) were old, well-established institutions, while *Det Kongelige Frederiks Universitet* (renamed University of Oslo in 1931) in Norway was founded in 1811. In contrast to Denmark and Norway, Sweden did not have a university in its capital, but rather in the cities of Lund and Uppsala, though *Stockholms Högskola* [University College of Stockholm] was established in 1878 and *Karolinska Institutet*, a medical college founded in 1810 gained the right to award the Bachelor of Medicine degree in 1873 (Lindroth 1976: 157). From the mid-seventeenth up until the early nineteenth century, Sweden had also enjoyed the success of the University of Greifswald in the German state of Western Pomerania. Norway had not had its own university while under Danish rule, and the majority of the upper class went to Copenhagen to study. The establishment of a national university was integral to its independence campaign and was a symbol of that process together with the Constitution of 1814. Its teaching strategy was also somewhat different to other universities at the time, pre-empting some of the societal changes of the

nineteenth century. The main emphasis was placed on history, the natural sciences and economics and, as a consequence, less attention was devoted to the classical languages. As Norway was fast developing a system of government managed by civil servants, it needed a university which educated individuals for future employment in state administration (Collett 1999: 31-5). The label *Embetsmannstaten* [the Civil Servants' State] was commonly applied to the system of government implemented in Norway from 1814 to 1884 because decision-making was in the hands of civil servants in light of the limited influence of the Swedish monarch.

In Copenhagen, Lund and Uppsala, tradition was upheld for most of the nineteenth century, building on the historical foundations of these institutions, but the decline of Latin was one which they could not avoid. In Denmark, the Minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs and Education, Johan Nicolai Madvig (1804-1886), a former professor of philology at Copenhagen, had long been a strong supporter of the abandonment of Latin as the language of science, and by the time of the University's four hundredth anniversary in 1879, Danish was now the dominant language in lectures, examinations and disputations. In Sweden, the situation was very similar, but here the middle class was also pressing for the abolition of Latin because they believed that 'the sciences should not be concealed, like some kind of esoteric trade secret, behind a language which was unintelligible to the man in the street' (Lindroth 1976: 124).

While the decline of Latin was a positive development to the general population, it posed a problem for academics when they chose to publish their research in the vernacular languages. In the eighteenth century, the Scandinavian vernaculars had not yet had the wherewithal to operate as media

for academic discourse, so there had been no issue of choosing between these or Latin. As a result, Scandinavian, and especially Danish scholars, had generally been well recognised internationally because they published in Latin, but the ‘movement away from Latin in scholarly life presented a problem internationally, and many Nordic contributions to linguistics passed unnoticed simply because they were written in a Nordic language’ (Hovdhaugen et al. 2000: 139). This continued to be a problem for linguists and there is a marked difference in the international fame of Otto Jespersen (1860-1943)³⁵ who published his seminal work, *A Modern English Grammar* (1909ff), in English and Johan Storm (1836-1920)³⁶ who published first in Norwegian (*Engelsk Filologi* (1879)) and then in German (*Englische Philologie* (1881)). Jespersen was the first professor of English language and literature at Copenhagen from 1893 to 1925 and has been credited with shaping the discipline and laying the foundation for its immense popularity in the twentieth century. The same applies to Storm who was appointed professor of Romance and English philology at Kristiania in 1873. Storm’s knowledge of the English language was acknowledged in Thomas Bennett’s practical grammar from 1862 as he drafted in Storm to write the section on English pronunciation (section 5.3). Jespersen also made a contribution to the market of popular language works with his *Spoken English: Everyday Talk with Phonetic Transcription* (1892). This work was an adaptation of E. Th. True’s *Everyday Talk, being the English equivalents of Franke’s Phrases de tous le jours* (1890) and True is listed as the co-author. Felix Franke (1860-1886) was a German linguist with whom Jespersen

³⁵ For more on Jespersen, see Juul and Nielsen (1989) and Juul et al. (1995).

³⁶ For more on Storm, see Linn (2004).

corresponded until Franke's sudden death from tuberculosis at the age of twenty-five (Kabell and Lauridsen 2004: 2). Jespersen's translation of True's work was a response to a request by the publisher who was 'desirous to make the book still more useful for that purpose [used by foreign students as a manual of English conversation] by the addition of a phonetic transcription' (True and Jespersen 1904: no p.n.). So, similar to Storm's contribution to Bennett's grammar, Jespersen was considered an authority in phonetics and if proper phonetic transcription was to be included in a work one of these authorities had to be consulted.

The establishment of English professorships in Scandinavia was linked to the increased teaching of English in schools and the subsequent need for teachers. There is a direct link between the weight given to a language in popular language works and how the teaching of this language developed at universities and in schools. In the popular language works we see the manifestation of the vernacular as the primary language, as most authors believed that language instruction should take place in the mother tongue and not in Latin. At university level, this was evident in the gradual abandonment of Latin in teaching and dissertations, the growth of Scandinavian chairs and an interest in reconstructing older stages of Danish, Norwegian and Swedish. The emerging subject of dialectology also evidenced a greater interest in the vernaculars.

As for other languages taught at university level, the Romance languages had been taught sporadically throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. As already discussed, French was a language afforded much prestige and the employment of private tutors, the so-called language masters, was

common among the upper classes. The only qualification many of them held was to be a native speaker and they were often poorly treated by their peers. As universities, and in particular the language departments, tried to establish themselves as serious institutions of research in the nineteenth century, the situation proved to be similar to that in Germany, where it was ‘imperative for modern linguists [...] to be seen to be a different breed from these earlier language masters, to be seen to possess scientific competence in a subject which could be recognized as susceptible to scientific study’ (Linn 2004: 158). In Lund, for example, a professorship in modern languages was set up in 1814 on a donation from the professor of Greek and Oriental languages, Mathias Norberg (1747-1826). His donation, however, stipulated that it went to his nephew, Jonas Stecksén (1773-1835). Stecksén occupied this position from 1816, but he was not an academic. He had actually previously been a ship’s captain and had gained a good practical knowledge of English, French and German on his travels (Hovdhaugen et al. 2000: 267). Because of his background, he was not accepted by his colleagues, and not until after his death did this professorship gain an equal footing with the other professorships (Gierow 1968: 341). So the autodidact language scholars were pushed out of universities and some of them turned their attention to producing popular language works. In that sense the professionalisation of the university institution directly affected the increase in the production of popular language works as language learning for practical purposes was no longer considered an academic concern. Some also considered this kind of work an activity which could affect their prestige negatively.

3.4 Language popularity

Based on the above outline of the status of various languages at university level, it is appropriate to discuss whether the authors and publishers of popular language works actually followed the same trends or if they picked up on the needs of the general population before the academic community did. As discussed in section 3.2 societal changes created favourable conditions for an expansion of the market for utilitarian language learning. In general reference to what created a commercially successful book market, the London bookseller, James Lackington (1764-1815) analysed the situation as follows:

The best time for bookselling is when there is no kind of news stirring; then many of those who for months would have done nothing but talk of war or peace, revolutions, and counter-revolutions, etc. etc. for want of other amusement, will have recourse to books; so that I have often experienced that the report of a war, or the trial of a great man, or indeed a subject that attracts the public attention, has been some hundreds of pounds out of my pocket in a few weeks.

(Plant 1974: 57)

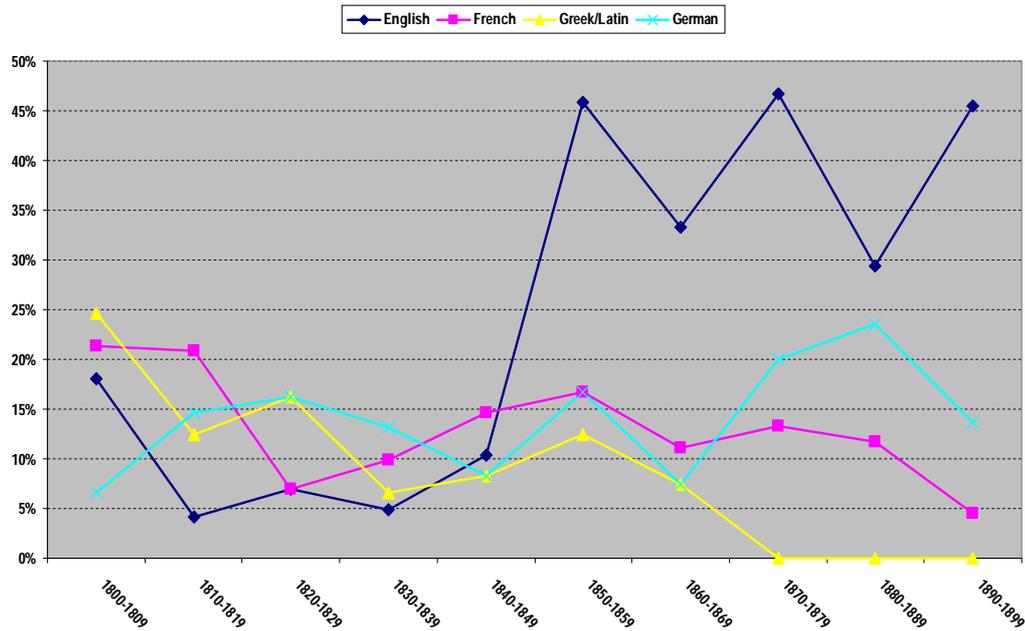
While Lackington was commenting on the situation in late eighteenth-century Britain, a comparison with Scandinavia can be justified, if the late industrialisation of the region and the subsequent development of capitalism are taken into consideration. Returning to Lackington's argument, this furthers the observation that the nineteenth century was indeed a favourable period for the Scandinavian book market. Looking at the Hannås Collection, there was a marked drop in the number of publications in the period 1810-1830, the exact period where the Scandinavian countries were suffering from the economic collapse after the Napoleonic Wars and there would have been plenty of news about the financial state of the countries for people to read. Besides the fact that this also meant that most people suffered from a lack of disposable income to

spend on books, this was also a period where there was no need to resort to other reading matter than what was already commonly available. The 1830s show an increase in publications of about a third compared to the 1820s, indicating that it was not only the Scandinavian governments that were concerned with improving learning through their reforms of and investment in the education systems (section 3.3). The market for utilitarian language learning was also growing as a response to increased demand for popular language works.

3.4.1 The modern foreign languages

English was by far the most coveted language by utilitarian language learners. However, the acquisition of other languages was of course also required by some, and based on the Hannås Collection, the following figures show the popularity of individual languages in Scandinavia. It must be stressed that the following is not a scientific survey and is based on a collection of works compiled on a subjective basis, but the distribution of languages in the Hannås Collection does reveal some very interesting details about the utilitarian language learning market and the impact of historical events on the popularity of a language.

Fig. 1.
The Popularity of Foreign Languages, 1800-1899
Publications by Language as % of Total Published in The Hannás Collection



The most striking result in Fig. 1 is the popularity of English after the middle of the century. Literature concerned with English language learning by far outnumbers all the other languages. While French has a slight increase around the middle of the century, the overall trend is a decline in the number of works published in that language. As previously discussed, the choice was between either English or French when considering changes to the curriculum, there was not room for both languages, and Fig. 1 undoubtedly shows that English replaced French as the favoured language halfway through the nineteenth century. This shift was felt more quickly in popular language works than in education and implies that their authors and publishers were more in touch with the needs of the general population.

In academic writing, it was still not common to publish in English, but as Latin was no longer in favour, academics who wanted their work to be known

internationally had to choose between either German or French. The graphs show that German experienced a bit of a revival in the second half of the nineteenth century while French declined, possibly as a result of this development. German actually remains fairly consistent throughout the period, but there is a relative decline in the number of publications of German language works in the 1840s and the 1860s. There is a direct explanation for this and is not just due to the somewhat ad hoc nature of the data. Denmark fought two serious wars with Germany in 1848 and 1864, the culmination of years of hostility over southern Danish territory and as a consequence, anti-German sentiment in Denmark was rather strong. This sentiment would have been expressed more openly among the general population and the desire to learn German would have declined. Likewise, we can see a marked drop in the publication of English works after the attacks on Copenhagen in 1807 and 1810, so political hostility did have a negative effect on the popularity of a language and the authors of popular language works would have been aware of this. Turning to French, this language and French culture in general enjoyed great popularity in Sweden in the period 1800-1820 because of the optimism associated with the new king. The influence this had on Swedish publishers can be seen in the relatively large number of works published in French. The fact that French did not really suffer a major decline until the 1880s can be attributed to 'cultivated Swedes, who prided themselves on their urbane and cosmopolitan refinement [and] liked to refer to themselves as the "Frenchmen of the North"' (Barton 2003: 88). Most educated Swedes of the time only read French, and English literature was read only in translation. For instance, a seminal work such as Adam Smith's (1723-1790) *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the*

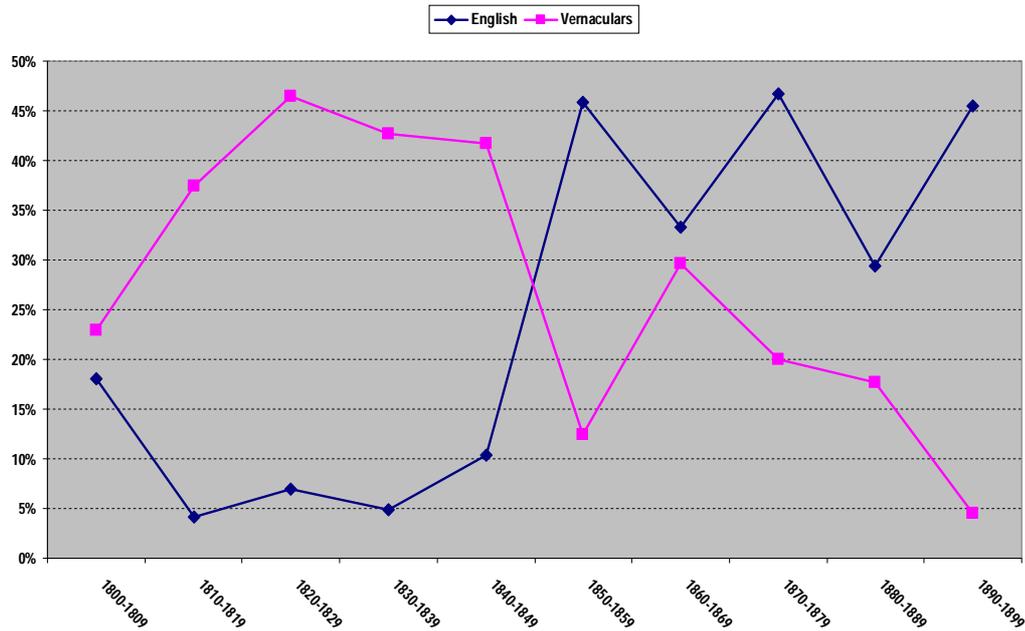
Wealth of Nations (1776) still has no complete Swedish translation and the only reasonably extensive translation appeared as late as 1909 (Heckscher 1954: 207).

Finally, the decline of Latin and Greek is just as marked as the increase of English, and the two trends show that the popularity of one language during this period was at the expense of another. This was to some degree also due to a shift in functionality. Latin had always been the language of scholarship and English the language of commerce. Prior to the nineteenth century, publishing had been dominated by scholarly writings – hence the dominance of Latin, but with an increase in commercial writings, English came to be the dominant language. It became so dominant, that even though French and German remained languages of influence throughout the period, they also began to suffer from the English offensive in the last decades of the century thus showing that popular language works pre-empted what was going to happen in education.

3.4.2 The vernacular languages

Fig. 2 shows in more detail how the authors of popular language works were influenced by the increased international communication of their readers.

Fig. 2
 English vs. the Scandinavian Vernaculars, 1800-1899
 Publications by Language as % of Total Published in The Hannås Collection



At the beginning of the nineteenth century, there was still a lot of concern with standardisation and issuing guidelines on correct orthography. English did not really figure as an important language in this period, thus the low percentage of publications. What is interesting is how the two graphs suddenly cross over mid-century and it appears that the interest in the vernaculars waned (though the language planning debate in Norway bucked this trend). These languages were now perceived as more or less settled in their position as the primary language and scholars did not think that advice on their usage was as necessary anymore. Reaching this position of an almost complete process of standardisation had taken most of the first half of the nineteenth century. The concern with guidelines on correct orthography was irrelevant to the authors of popular language works, but is important in relation to how the intellectual elite thought about language and disseminated their ideas to the general population (Chapter 7). Major dictionaries of the national languages were in preparation, but until

then some individuals had to take centre stage and assure that the written standard was adhered to. In Denmark, for example, the second Danish orthographical dictionary proper, succeeding Jacob Baden's (1735-1804) *Dansk ortografisk Ordbog* [Danish Orthographic Dictionary] (1799), Christian Molbech's (1783-1857) *Dansk Haand-Ordbog* [Danish Dictionary] (1813) was subjected to heavy criticism from Torkel Baden (1765-1849), son of Jacob, and Frederik P. J. Dahl (1788-1864), who rightly found some inconsistencies in Molbech's work. While in great detail listing every single mistake in the dictionary, they also launched a personal attack on Molbech and stated that: 'The one who does not know Latin is not competent to write a Danish dictionary; Mr. Molbech does not know Latin; thus he is not skilled to write a Danish dictionary' (Baden 1833: 3).³⁷ This attitude was rather old-fashioned and conservative and was generally prevalent among language scholars in the nineteenth century. Many were still convinced that Latin had to form the basis of any study of the mother tongues, a direct opposition to the authors of popular language works. On the part of Baden, the issue of defending his father's honour might also possibly have played a part. Molbech not only felt the wrath of Baden and Dahl, he was also engaged in a dispute with Rasmus Rask on the German root of the Danish prefix *ur-* [ancient]. Because Molbech knew that he could not compete with Rask when it came to historical linguistics, he instead chose to play on National Romantic sentiments in his correspondence with Rask. With a hint of sarcasm, he thanked Rask on behalf of 'all lovers and worshipers of the Danish language' for his pedantic explanation of the origins of

³⁷ 'Hvo som ikke kan Latin, han er udygtig til at skrive en dansk Ordbog; Hr. Molbech kan ikke Latin; altsaa er han udygtig til at skrive en dansk Ordbog'.

–*ur*, before adding that one had to be capable of more than simply understanding Icelandic to be qualified to criticise the Danish language. To support his argument he quoted examples from one of the main figures of Danish National Romanticism, the writer and poet Adam Gottlob Öehlenschläger (1779-1850), thus making Rask feel the full force of nationalist sentiment. These somewhat petty disputes among ‘proper’ linguists did not occur among the authors of popular language works because they were not so concerned with personal reputation. They let their sales figures judge their competency. The general population did not really care about these debates on the vernacular languages and were definitely not concerned with establishing the correct etymological root of *ur*-. Their pressing concern was to learn to read and write so they could communicate in everyday life. The same applies to the learning of foreign languages – too much high-brow grammar alienated them and hence was absent in the popular language works. English was the language that the ordinary people wanted and their demand for English grammars and phrasebooks is reflected in Fig. 2.

Overall, this shows that the authors of popular language works did heed the demands of the book-buying public and tried to accommodate their needs. When governments were discussing which languages to focus on in education, they could have turned to this genre and found a really good indication of what the general population wanted.

Chapter 4: Emigrant Phrasebooks

4.1 Introduction

Migration history is an immense topic with corresponding volumes of literature devoted to it and covering such a vast subject area in a few pages will inevitably be rather cursory. A number of works have proven particularly informative in establishing the context to the Scandinavian emigration movement. While they do not specifically examine the language learning experiences of the emigrants, their emphasis on social history helps us understand the everyday lives of ordinary emigrants. Jones (1992) charts the history of this movement from the first colonies up to the twentieth century. Jones examines 'how inheritance and environment interacted once combined in the adopted country' (Jones 1992: 2) and goes beyond statistics by paying particular attention to the social element of immigration. One of the contributors to Vecoli and Sinke (1991) questions why European historians have not devoted much attention to 'the removal overseas of some fifty-five million Europeans', but explains this by the fact that 'European history has been the history of nations and, from this point of view, overseas migration is essentially negative' (Thistlewaite 1991: 21). Conversely, American historians grasped the importance of researching this subject a lot sooner than their European colleagues. In 1900, at a time where immigrants were still arriving in great numbers and the movement could not be assessed as a whole, O. N. Nelson published his extensively quoted work, *History of the Scandinavians and Successful Scandinavians in the United States*. This work charts the history of Scandinavian settlements in America throughout the nineteenth century. Nelson

writes detailed biographies of prominent Scandinavians and displays a thorough knowledge of American Scandinavia. In more recent times, Ostergren's *A Community Transplanted* (1988) has reconstructed the journey to America of a group from the Swedish parish of Rättvik and attempts to 'view the migrant experience from within rather than from without' (Ostergren 1988: xiii).³⁸

Emigration history is not without a few influential Scandinavian scholars and while it is uncertain if they have influenced each other directly, there is a notable vein of ideas from social history running through the majority of their works. Archive materials, such as diaries, letters, departure and arrival records feature as prominent primary sources in their research and form the basis of in-depth analyses of the emigration experience. The first major work of this kind was Hvidt (1971)³⁹ which, by drawing on 58 volumes of handwritten registers containing the personal data of over 300,000 individuals, tells the story of the Danes who went to America from the 1860s onwards (Hvidt 1975: vii). Hvidt's work was the main source of inspiration for the Danish historian, Torben Grøngaard Jeppesen, who in his survey of Danish emigration (2005), praises Hvidt for placing a distinct focus on a subject in Danish historical research which, despite its extent and significance, has only been treated fleetingly (Grøngaard Jeppesen 2005: 17). In Norway, the country which experienced the largest emigration, it is evident that emigration history has gone through a longer period of development often aided by Norwegian-American associations and scholars. The publication in 1939 of Ingrid Semmingsen's *Norsk utvandring til Amerika i det 19de århundre* [Norwegian Emigration to America in the 19th

³⁸ Other scholars who have written extensively on immigration are Theodore Blegen, Odd Lovoll, Arnold Barton and Gunnar Malmin. See references for details on their publications.

³⁹ Here read in the English translation, Hvidt (1975).

Century] marked the beginning of her long and distinguished career as a professor of history at the University of Oslo and helped establish emigration history as an independent subject in Norway. Semmingsen specialised in describing the emigrant experience through the voices of individuals and frequently quotes the so-called America letters (section 4.3) as they, in her opinion, ‘fanned the flames of the desire to emigrate’ (Semmingsen 1941: 75). Another leading contributor to Norwegian emigration history is Orm Øverland who has published several works on the notions of national identity and culture among the Norwegian communities in America. He is furthermore involved in the forthcoming publication of seven volumes of America letters, *Fra Amerika til Norge* [From America to Norway], due to be completed in 2009.⁴⁰ The most prominent scholar on Swedish emigration is Ulf Beijbom, the current director of the Swedish Emigration Institute in Växjö. The Växjö archives contain thousands of records including parish registers, passport journals, census reports and passenger lists (Beijbom 1994: 14). These records have formed the basis for Beijbom’s publications on topics such as Swedish-American ethnicity and group identity, the role of women in emigration, genealogy research and the documentation of emigration history in general.

The two most common terms used in this chapter are ‘emigration’ and ‘immigration’, and a clarification of their use is appropriate. In Scandinavia, the people who went to America were referred to as *utvandrare/udvandrere*, literally translated as ‘those who wander out’. In more recent times, the term ‘emigrant’ has become more frequently used in Scandinavia particularly in

⁴⁰ The first three volumes in co-operation with Steinar Kjærheim. Volumes I-V published between 1992 and 2008. A two-volume English translation is also to be published in co-operation with the Norwegian-American Historical Association.

relation to modern-day economic migration. In this thesis, people who are still in their home country, but are considering leaving or are in actual transit, are characterised as emigrants. Once they have arrived in America, they become immigrants. Even though it would be desirable to restrict usage to just one of the two terms, this is not possible because the phenomenon is examined from both the Scandinavian and the American point of view.

4.2 Overview

4.2.1 Historical background

The earliest modern Scandinavians to settle in foreign countries were the eighteenth-century colonialists in Africa, India and the Caribbean. Colonies were perceived as politically important by most of the major European powers at the time, but Denmark-Norway and Sweden quickly abandoned their foreign settlements because they were loss-making enterprises.⁴¹ There is a sharp distinction to be drawn between the motivation behind colonialism and emigration. Colonialist settlers were usually despatched by their governments to keep native peoples under control and reinforce expansionist policies. Emigrants, on the other hand, were lured by economic incentives and made the decision to uproot independently often against the wishes of their countries' governments. While America undoubtedly received the greatest portion of Scandinavian emigrants, South America also attracted a fair number. The governments there actively encouraged immigration to alleviate the labour shortages caused by the abolition of slavery (Moch 1992: 107). Nineteenth-

⁴¹ For a comprehensive survey of colonialism, see Fieldhouse (1966).

century migration began at roughly the same time as the South American countries gained independence.⁴² In Argentina, for example, ‘the Constitution of 1853 actually gave the foreign born privileges over the native born’ because the government wanted ‘to dilute the country’s Spanish blood as an assertion of their independence’ (Smithies 1965: 17). This was not enough, however, to redirect the stream of immigration from North to South America. In relation to this study, the relatively small number of Scandinavian immigrants in this region is also reflected in the fact that there are no popular language works in the Hannås Collection specifically associated with this phenomenon.

The process of populating the American continent, the largest influx of people in the history of modern civilisation, took place in stages starting with the early period of colonisation, through the ensuing War of Independence (1775-1782), peaking in the nineteenth century, before levelling off in the early twentieth century. From 1790 to 1890, the population of America grew from under 4 million to 63 million, and the Scandinavians have carved out their own little place in the history of this development. Scandinavian emigration is most commonly said to have begun in 1825, then slowly gaining pace, hitting its highest point in the last decades of the century, before slowing down and then virtually ceasing with the outbreak of the First World War. In this period, three distinct phases are recognised. The first phase, the pioneer period, lasted from 1825 to 1865 and is characterised by the emigration of groups wanting to escape political or religious persecution. The second phase is dominated by family

⁴² The difficulty of finding literature on this subject is highlighted by Kritz and Gurak (1979) who explain that ‘[...] there is no major work that provides a comprehensive picture of immigration to Latin America. To obtain an understanding of immigration history in Latin America would require considerable searching of country-specific literature that focuses on broader issues than immigration *per se*’ (Kritz and Gurak 1979: 409). For brief discussions of the subject, see Neiva (1965) and Robbins (1958).

emigration and lasted from 1865 to 1890. The majority of these emigrants settled in the upper mid-western states of Illinois, Wisconsin, Iowa, Minnesota, North and South Dakota and very few returned home. As a result, this was also the period in which Scandinavian-American institutions such as schools, churches and newspapers were established. The third phase, from 1890 to 1914, saw young, single people immigrating mainly to the cities where they would work for a period of time and then return home to Scandinavia.

4.2.2 Motivation

Emigration is motivated by certain factors which can be identified as having either a push or a pull effect. If conditions in the home country are the main cause of emigration, then they can be referred to as push factors. On the other hand, the receiving country can offer incentives or favourable prospects which draw foreigners to settle and in that case, these factors have a pull effect. It can be difficult to determine exactly whether push or pull factors were the main cause for Scandinavian emigration and we frequently find a combination of the two.

Europe experienced a virtual population explosion in the nineteenth century due to a rise in birth rates and a drastic fall in mortality rates. Improved nutrition, increased food stocks (particularly with the introduction of the potato) and advances in disease prevention (introduction of vaccinations against the most common diseases, such as smallpox) all had an impact on these changes.⁴³ The populations of Denmark, Norway and Sweden more than doubled in this period and an increase of this proportion put pressure on resources and

⁴³ For more detailed discussions of these factors, see Baines (1991) and Jones (1992).

infrastructure. Figures from the period 1815-1865 show that by the time Scandinavian emigration reached its second phase in 1865, overcrowding was a significant push factor in certain areas of the region. The population of Norway, for instance, grew from just under 900,000 in 1815 to 1.7 million in 1865, thus almost doubling in half a century. In the same period, Sweden saw an increase from 2.5 million (1815) to just over 4 million (1865), while Denmark experienced the lowest increase from around 1 million (1815) to 1.6 million (1865).⁴⁴ Norway, in particular, suffered from this increase and it was one of the reasons why Norwegians were second only to Ireland in the overall European emigration statistics (Moch 1992: 148-9).

In all three countries, the majority of emigrants came from certain areas of the country – usually the regions most remote from towns. These rural regions' reliance on agriculture meant that a small crisis such as a failed harvest could soon escalate and become critical. Fewer rural Danes emigrated because they had the option of moving to the nearest provincial town where they could find employment in newly established industries. The isolated villagers in the valleys of Sweden and Norway did not have that option, so emigration was the only alternative to life on the breadline (Hvidt 1975: 59). It must be borne in mind, however, that the emphasis on the emigration of rural residents is also simply down to them outnumbering the urban population by a long way. People living in towns and cities did not reach a significant number until the late nineteenth century when industrialisation reached its climax. They then began to experience the same problems with overcrowding and unemployment as the

⁴⁴ Figures taken from Drake (1969: 42).

rural population and we therefore see many of them emigrating after the turn of the century.

The Scandinavian governments did express concern over the number of people emigrating and there was much debate during the peak of the movement in the 1880s on what could be done to curb the rapid increase in people leaving. Official restrictions on movement were never introduced, though they were discussed. Sweden had had a passport requirement until 1860 which meant that people had to report their intention to leave the country to the local vicar. Before abolishing this requirement, the Swedish government despatched representatives to America to survey conditions in view of establishing colonies there. If Swedish immigrants could be brought together in communities initially subsidised by the Swedish state, then it would also be able to reap the benefits once these settlements prospered. There seems to have been more than purely financial gain behind this idea and it has been noted that ‘emigrants could be saved for the native country through their patriotism in emigrating’ (Runeby 1969: 469). These plans, however, never came to fruition, and freedom of movement for Swedish citizens continued to exist. Possibly puzzled by why so many Swedish people emigrated, the Swedish government did launch an inquiry into emigration and its findings were finally published in 1913. The twenty-volume *Emigrationsutredningen* [The Emigration Inquiry] was a very thorough piece of work and identified the main reasons for emigration which were mainly linked to financial concerns, but far too late. In Norway and Denmark, the authorities were less worried by emigration and did nothing to stop it. It was quite common to let undesirables go off to America quietly, but there is also a sense that ordinary people were allowed to leave because the increase in

population was putting strain on national resources. The governments thought in purely economic and political terms, so it was left to intellectuals to highlight the wrongs of leaving your home country (section 3.3).

The economic benefits of emigration in the home countries were quite significant, and eighteenth-century mercantilist principles were slowly abandoned. Previously, a large population equated a large labour force, a valuable national resource, the loss of which would result in a decline in national wealth (Baines 1991: 50). Now, there were simply too many people and unemployment was inevitable. There was not enough land, and new industry could not absorb the excess labour quickly enough. Furthermore, successful Scandinavians in America would often send money back home or encourage relatives and friends to join them. About half of the journeys made to America from Norway and Sweden in 1891, for example, were undertaken with tickets sent from America, and in 1902, one million dollars alone was sent from Norwegians in America to family in Norway (Babcock 1969: 94).

Dissatisfaction with the authorities was a definite push factor and many emigrants resented the unfair treatment they were receiving from officials, inadequate representation in the legislature, and being subjected to high taxes and compulsory military service (Taylor 1971: 3). As for specific instances of political dissatisfaction, they are actually few and far between but have been given a disproportionate amount of attention in emigration history. Examples include the 60,000 Danes (more than a third of the total population in the area) who left North Schleswig after it came under German rule in 1864 because they were being persecuted as an ethnic minority (Nielsen 1987: 59); and the labour movement activists who found refuge in America after clashing with the

authorities, for example, Louis Pio (1841-1849), one of the founders of the Danish Social Democratic Party, who was gently 'persuaded' to go to America after serving his prison sentence.⁴⁵ That focus has been given to events for which we have documentation again highlights the problem of resources in history from below. There were many more ordinary emigrants but they tend to be ignored because their experiences were not documented.

The emigration of groups of a certain religious persuasion, often in opposition to the officially recognised Lutheran churches of Scandinavia, is, however, quite significant in the history of Scandinavian emigration. The first organised group of religious emigrants was fifty-two Norwegian Quakers⁴⁶ who arrived in New York in 1825 headed for the Kendall settlement in up-state New York. Another group came from Helsingland in Sweden and became known as the Jansonists after their leader Eric Janson (1808-1850) who guided them to the Bishop Hill settlement in Illinois. Janson had had an interest in religion from an early age, and as he grew older, he began preaching against the Swedish state church. He declared himself a prophet who was going to build a New Jerusalem in America attracting followers among the local peasants. This brought him into trouble with the authorities, and during the 1840s he was arrested and imprisoned several times. After another incarceration in 1846, he escaped to Norway and then moved on to Copenhagen, from where he got passage on a ship bound for New York. Back in Sweden his followers were still being persecuted under the so-called Conventicle Law of 1726 which forbade congregations in private homes for religious meetings, and when they heard of

⁴⁵ For more on Pio and the Danish workers' movement, see Engberg (1979).

⁴⁶ Also known as 'The Society of Friends', founded in the seventeenth century when it broke away from the Church of England.

Janson's whereabouts, they sold all their belongings and made their way to the new settlement. In the first year, it numbered about four hundred people, running on a strict co-operative principle which proved successful and prosperous. Religion was, of course, at the centre of the community and they soon built primitive places of worship which would also accommodate the training of future missionaries. Similar to other settlements of this kind, Bishop Hill developed into a more ordinary settlement after a while and it became clear that the motive of the leader was essentially economic and philanthropic even though the initial pretext was religious (Babcock 1969: 57). The influx of outsiders also meant disagreement over the rules of the settlement and this proved to be the final downfall of Bishop Hill as Janson was assassinated by such an outsider in 1850. It was finally dissolved completely in 1860.⁴⁷

A religious pull factor was identified as the main reason for Danish Baptists immigrating to Utah from the mid-nineteenth century onwards and converting to Mormonism. The Mormon leaders in Salt Lake City initiated a concerted effort to recruit these Baptists and their large number meant that religious emigration from Denmark was probably the largest in Europe seen in relation to the population of the country (Hvidt 1975: 147). By reducing the uncertainty connected with emigration, they succeeded in recruiting some 30,000 Danes from the early 1850s to the 1870s, but there is no indication that this group was particularly unhappy with conditions at home. Common to the religious emigrants was that they saw an opportunity for landownership and general improvement of their standard of living in America. Their motives can therefore be described as 'religious discontent blended with economic pressure',

⁴⁷ For more on the Bishop Hill settlement, see Nelson (1900: 148-9).

and for the majority, it was actually the case that ‘the prospect of earthly ease was a stronger stimulus than that of heavenly bliss’ (Jones 1992: 93).

4.2.3 Integration

There is a widespread perception that Scandinavians settled in America with relative ease and that they were welcomed everywhere. In an 1891 questionnaire by the Immigration Restriction League, state governors expressed a desire for immigrants of a Scandinavian background for the reason that ‘they were hard working, god fearing and non-radical’ (Furer 1972: 61). The role of Scandinavians in American ethnic history has been compared with the British as both were ‘barely discernible because neither posed a serious economic, religious, political, or cultural problem’ (Archdeacon 1983: 109). The Danish immigrants often come across as assimilating into American society quicker and more efficiently than Norwegians and Swedes, but this is not down to cultural or social differences. The Danes in general came to America later and in smaller numbers, and when they arrived at Scandinavian settlements they found that the land was already occupied and thus had to either move further west or settle on what was left rendering them unable to form coherent Danish communities (Grøngaard Jeppesen 2000: 29). Some Scandinavians did not integrate as quickly as claimed and there were instances of active resistance towards assimilation into American society. Scandinavian-language organisations and newspapers were numerous and promoted the preservation of the native culture and language. The establishment of native-language schools particularly led to clashes with the authorities. In 1888, for example, Scandinavians in Wisconsin and Illinois, joined forces with the Germans and successfully repealed state laws

that did not recognise schools in which English was not the language of instruction (Furer 1972: 59).

National ideals and the preservation of Scandinavian language and culture was ultimately a lost cause as most of the immigrants gave little thought to their heritage (section 7.3). Once the stream of immigrants had calmed down in the 1910s and fresh input was no longer provided from back home, these concepts became more and more peripheral. As the generations came and went, it became increasingly difficult to discern the Scandinavian element in America, perhaps apart from the occasional foreign-sounding surname. Today, their heritage is purely a matter of nostalgia and many enjoy celebrating Scandinavian events, but it has no impact on their everyday lives. Speakers of Scandinavian languages are extremely rare, unless they have taken a specific interest in learning the language of their ancestors. The language was in fact one of the first elements to disappear among Scandinavian-Americans and was almost completely gone by the third generation. Luckily, the linguist Einar Haugen (1906-1994), spent much of his career studying the language of Norwegian-Americans and his works remain the most comprehensive analyses of immigrant bilingualism and how this was manifested in the actual language spoken⁴⁸. Unfortunately, similar extensive studies do not exist of Danes and Swedes and we have to rely on anecdotal evidence of the language they spoke.

4.3 America letters

The desire to emigrate among Scandinavians has been likened to a fever which swept across the region in waves. It would most often start in a single

⁴⁸ See, for example, Haugen (1969, 1975).

village, spread to the surrounding parish, and before long large districts would be caught up in the excitement. In a time where news travelled slowly, the speed of this chain reaction was remarkable. Furthermore, emigration was not promoted by the authorities and the press was generally hostile towards it. The spread of emigration fever was entirely down to ordinary people themselves. People who had already emigrated created ‘a legend of America’ (Moberg (1988)) which had such a powerful pull effect that no one questioned its authenticity. The biggest element of this legend was the America letters written by Scandinavians in America to their relatives and friends back home. A letter would be read many times over, copied and distributed to neighbours and sometimes even printed in the local newspapers. Because the information in these letters came from people known to the recipients, they saw no reason to question it. Rather, the letters were ‘important because [they] reduced uncertainty’ (Baines 1991: 14). Especially in the early period of the emigration movement, some of the letter writers could be likened to local celebrities as their name would be known by a large number of people back home. One of the most popular of these was the former school teacher Ole Trovatten, originally from Telemark in Norway, who had emigrated in 1840. He wrote long detailed letters which people read with great enthusiasm. They firmly believed everything he wrote and would talk about America based on the information he had provided. If anyone questioned them about these claims, they would be dismissed outright with the reply that it was true simply because Ole Trovatten had said so.⁴⁹

The effect of America letters upon emigration cannot be underestimated. Despite stark warnings from people in positions of authority, people refused to

⁴⁹ For more on Trovatten, see Semmingsen (1941: 75-6).

listen and rejected the negative picture painted of life in America. What did they know when they had not even been to America? At least, the America letters were written by people who lived there and knew exactly what it was like. The clergy was aghast with the large number of people leaving and from the onset advised them to stay at home. In 1837, the Norwegian Bishop Jacob Neumann published ‘probably the first book [...] in a Scandinavian language on the subject of emigration to America’ (Malmin 1926: no p.n.). The pamphlet, *Varselsord til de udvandringslystne Bønder i Bergens Stift* [A Word of Admonition to the Peasants in the Diocese of Bergen Who Desire to Emigrate], was printed in newspapers and preached at sermons. Neumann adopted the approach of trying to express some understanding of why especially the poorest Norwegians would want to emigrate. He stressed that no matter what they chose to do God would always be there for them, but he was worried that they would be lost in the American wilderness without the guidance of the church. Many emigrants had similar warnings ringing in their ears and they were concerned by the lack of places to worship. The first major building project in a new settlement was therefore normally the construction of a church. If the denomination was not too important, some chose to join American churches instead, though the Scandinavian clergy, of course, preached strongly against this. Neumann’s pamphlet, only the first of many of its kind, symbolises the division that existed between the educated and non-educated classes (section 7.2.1). The former did not understand why people would want to emigrate and the latter would disparage them for having an idealised and romantic perception of the hardships ordinary people had to go through.

4.4 Language learning experience

The writers of America letters often referred to questions they themselves had had before emigrating and tried to answer these based on their personal experiences. It is therefore safe to assume that the information conveyed in their letters was a direct reflection of the main concerns of a typical emigrant. We would expect the language question to feature quite prominently as very few emigrants had any knowledge of English at all, but interestingly it does not. The problem of how to acquire and communicate in a strange language was never expressed and it appears as if it was deliberately ignored by those already living in America. As most archives only contain letters sent from America to Scandinavia, we have to deduce which questions were asked in the letters sent from Scandinavia to America. If the language question was raised in these letters, it was either not responded to or, probably more likely, never asked in the first instance. In the few instances where the language question is actually asked in letters to relations in America, the common reply would be that learning English was paramount because ‘without a knowledge of English a person can have no dealings with people over there’ (Clausen 1949: no p.n.).⁵⁰ On the whole, the letter writers were more concerned with giving practical advice on the emigration process and tended to avoid personal information, especially if this was negative. As learning the language would have been a delicate subject for those who struggled, it is not actually that surprising that we cannot find many references in the letters.

⁵⁰ Written by the Norwegian Søren Bache who lived in America from 1839 to 1847 to Paul Knutzen in Skien, Norway. Bache was enquiring about work opportunities for himself and his family in America.

In his collection of America letters, *Letters from the Promised Land* (1975), Arnold Barton explains that ‘most immigrant letters have in fact little of interest to relate’ (Barton 1975: 4-5). They are, however, valuable as a resource for the historian of linguistics because the language in them directly reflects the language they actually spoke. As a result of the Scandinavian school reforms (section 3.3.2), most emigrants belonged to the first generation of literate lower-class Scandinavians. At home they would have had little reason to write anything of substance, but now they had to get to grips with expressing their thoughts and experiences in letters if they wanted to stay in touch with people back home. For the first time, we have a resource which gives us the opportunity to study the language of the lower classes, and Barton (1975) describes how this most often came across:

[The letters have] a rough, unvarnished quality [...] with their often outlandish spelling, quirky capitalization and lack of punctuation, their rich admixture of archaic local dialect, solemn biblical turns of phrase, anglicisms and English words and expression, often in quaintly phonetic guise.

(Barton 1975: 5)

The letters are the only source in which it would be directly possible to find out how the emigrants went about learning English. But, as discussed above, their references to language are sparse and do not shed much light on the actual language learning process and whether phrasebooks, for example, were used. Most of the time, the language would be mentioned in passing when reporting on the general well-being of the family. One example is this letter written in 1838 from four brothers in Wisconsin to their father in Sweden:

Adolf has not had a single minute of indisposition since he arrived in the free world; Otto has grown perceptibly; Janne is almost as heavy as I am, and in language he and I are regular Yankees; Adolf and Otto have not yet reached

that state. I give lessons in English reading and writing to my three brothers as often as I have time.

(Barton 1975: 22)

Even briefer is this comment in a letter from a Peter Cassell in Iowa, 1846:

As regards the language, we are getting along quite well. Our children attend school.

(Barton 1975: 32)

Both of these extracts were written by early immigrants, but they show how circumstances surrounding language learning differed. The brothers in Wisconsin clearly did not attend school as the oldest was teaching them English, while Peter Cassell made a point of mentioning that the children were going to school. Most immigrants were in favour of their children attending school and learning English. While few expressed their own difficulties with the language explicitly – though a Danish immigrant, Rasmus Sørensen, did describe trying to speak English ‘like breaking through a brick wall’ (Hale 2005: 15) – they did not want their children to be disadvantaged because they could not speak the language properly and go through the same experience of ‘straddling two cultures and [being] homeless in both due to their linguistic difficulties’ (Haugen 1938: no p.n.).

It would be easy to list several obvious arguments for why the early immigrants found learning the language more difficult. Firstly, the provision of education was sparse and they had to rely on home schooling as the Wisconsin brothers did. Secondly, it was still possible to settle in isolated communities among fellow countrymen and thus not having to speak English. Finally, there were few phrasebooks available – an argument which would suit this study

perfectly, if only it were true. In reality, the process of learning the English language actually remained more or less the same throughout the whole emigration period. Examples from early letters have already been discussed above and evidence of the experience of later immigrants can be found in the database of North American Immigrant Letters, Diaries and Oral Histories.⁵¹ Personal interviews conducted with individuals who arrived in the last stage (after 1900) show that interviewees, just as in the America letters, have to be prompted about their experience of learning English. Most reply that they either went to school, got a job or just learnt it without providing any more detail. One interviewee remembers how her mother learnt English by consulting a dictionary: ‘You’d look up the word in English and then it would give the definition in Danish. Or she could look the word up in Danish and then it would give the definition in English. That’s how she learned’ (Cunningham and Sigrist, Jr. 2003: 560). Another immigrant, the Dane Bergith Mortonson Hansen’s experience was quite typical of both the late immigrants who arrived after 1900 to find work in the cities and the pre-existing knowledge of English they had:

The best thing would be to take the first job I could find until I could get some money together and learn to speak the language fluently. Some day I’ll go back to Denmark and settle an old score with the man who “taught” me English. The only thing I learned from him ran like this: *I can hop. I can run. See me hop. See me run. It is fun, fun, fun.* And I have never found a use for it yet!

(Hansen and Dallett 2004: 44)

To ‘get some money together and learn to speak the language fluently’ probably implies she intended to join an evening class of some sort. This is particularly true when bearing in mind that independent language schools such as Berlitz

⁵¹ <http://www.alexanderstreet2.com/imldlive/> [accessed September 2007].

(section 4.7) had now been established and formed part of the utilitarian language learning market. As for pre-existing knowledge of English, it is clear that she had had some English instruction back in Denmark because, as discussed in section 3.3.3, English was now a common language in general education. However, the quality of instruction must have been questionable as she had no use for the English learnt. The use of short, repetitive phrases as the one cited in this example were very common in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century English readers for children such as William Holmes McGuffey's *McGuffey Readers* and the *Summers Readers* by Maud Summers.

4.5 America guides

The America letters were mainly intended to be read by friends and relatives. They were highly personal and had little relevance to people unknown to the letter writer. The information conveyed was highly localised and, as discussed above, negative experiences were often left out. This can be one of the reasons why there was no mention of how English was learnt, but it was not a negative experience for all the immigrants and they possibly did not consider something that was not a worry to them worthy of a comment. For those who wanted comprehensive, impartial information about America, the America guides were a good option. These guides were most often written by educated individuals, published in book-form and aimed at a wider audience. Due to their more formal nature, they were more likely to portray both the positive and negative sides to life in America. Many of the authors were in a position of authority in their settlements and they transferred this authority to their guides,

for instance by being adamant that prospective emigrants had to learn English if they wanted to succeed.

The first Scandinavian to write such a guide was the Norwegian Ole Rynning (1809-1838) whose *Sandfærdig Beretning om Amerika til Oplysning og Nytte for Bonde og Menigmand* [True Account of America for the Information and Benefit of Peasant and Commoner] was published in 1838 (translated by Blegen (1926)). Rynning targeted his audience in the title and it was exactly ‘the peasant and the common man’ who read his work with enthusiasm. This guide became very popular, and the following description by an immigrant, some twenty years after its publication, stresses the influence it had in Norway:

Hardly any other Norwegian publication has been purchased and read with such avidity as this Rynning’s *Account of America*. People traveled long distances to hear ‘news’ from the land of wonders, and many who before were scarcely able to read began in earnest to practice in the ‘America-book’, making such progress that they were soon able to spell their way forward and acquire most of the contents.

(Blegen 1926: 17)

Ole Rynning was born in Ringsaker in the southeast of Norway. The son of a priest, his parents wanted him to follow in his father’s footsteps, but in 1833 after graduating from the University of Christiania, he abandoned the church and became a private school teacher instead. He immigrated to America in 1837 and settled with fellow Norwegians at Beaver Creek, south of Chicago. Rynning was more highly educated than the other settlers and they particularly relied on him because he was the only one who spoke English. An advocate of emigration, which he believed would help ‘the economically circumscribed farmers and laborers of his native country to find a permanent solution for their difficulties; (Blegen 1926: 5-6), he took his position of responsibility very seriously. Rynning himself had not emigrated out of necessity. He belonged to a

group of people ‘who were leaders and had status in the community, even before the migrations [and who] maintained their position while others continued as followers’ (Ostergren 1988: 233). The leader-follower scenario was common in the early days of emigration, because people did not possess the courage to emigrate on their own. Having been downtrodden most of their lives, the protection that a group with an able leader could provide was reassuring rather than disconcerting.

From the outset, the life of Rynning’s group of settlers at Beaver Creek was not easy. The land had been bought from American land speculators and the settlers had not realised that it was full of swamps and very humid. As a result, malaria was common and most of the settlers died during the first year. Rynning himself was caught out in a serious snowstorm in the first winter there and suffered serious frostbite to his legs and feet. While bedridden he wrote his *True Account of America*. Even when he was suffering, he remained altruistic and objectively tried to advise people in Norway on life in America. His own settlement had been unsuccessful, but he still recommended emigration to Norwegian peasants. One of the few survivors from Beaver Creek, Ansten Nattestad, brought Rynning’s manuscript back to Norway and it was published in Christiania in 1838. It contains thirteen chapters over about forty pages set out in a question-and-answer style. In his preface, Rynning writes that he has ‘endeavoured to answer every question which I myself had [before emigrating]’ (Blegen 1926: no p.n.). Each chapter heading or question indicates the main concerns of a typical emigrant: living conditions, where to settle, how to acquire land and cultivate it, buying livestock, coping with illness and so forth. There is, however, also a clear indication that Rynning is trying to dispel some of the

myths associated with America. In Norway, as in the rest of Scandinavia, opponents of emigration frequently spread false rumours about how dangerous America was. The most common fears among prospective emigrants were based on tales about dangerous animals, brutal and merciless Indians and slave traders dealing in immigrants. Rynning, however, dismissed all of these rumours as pure lies.

The reason why the America guides can be useful for studying the linguistic aspect of the emigrant experience is that they tried to make people understand the importance of learning English. One chapter of Rynning's book carries the heading: 'What language is spoken in America? Is it difficult to learn?' Rynning replies that even though many different languages are spoken in America because of European immigration, English is the primary language and people should not think that they can avoid speaking the language by settling with countrymen. He insists that not knowing the language is a disadvantage, but, on the other hand, is confident that two to three months of daily intercourse with Americans will equip anyone with enough English to get by. He attaches an economic incentive to learning English by adding that until the language has been mastered, day labourers, for example, cannot expect to receive as high a wage as the Americans (Blegen 1926: 26). While Rynning does encourage people to learn the language, he still only devotes one page out of the whole book to the issue, whereas the quality of land and the price of livestock are discussed in-depth over seven pages. He is not alarmed by people just learning the language as they go along and does not recommend studying it before leaving Norway. Crucially, he does not suggest using a phrasebook, but then again he does not advise against it either – a fact which is important for the

discussion in section 4.6. We have to put some confidence into what Rynning wrote as he was the only one in his settlement who had actual experience of learning the language. He knew that the typical emigrant was hardly proficient in his own language in terms of reading and writing so could they really be expected to learn English from a phrasebook? As an educated man, he would more than likely have learnt English the traditional way by studying grammars and this would have made him aware that an uneducated peasant had to approach foreign language learning in a different manner. It is, however, very important to bear in mind that at the time of Rynning's guide, the late 1830s, there were no emigrant phrasebooks available, only traditional school grammars. This genre of self-study manuals was not established until the second half of the nineteenth century, but nevertheless, as discussed in section 4.4, the publication of phrasebooks did not have a substantial impact on the language learning process which remained the same throughout the emigration movement.

As emigration grew, influential figures such as Rynning were not as easily identifiable as they were in pioneer times, but their contribution to the legend of America is evident. When the news of Rynning's death reached Norway, it directly caused a slump in emigration in the next few years until other guides had assured people that America was safe. One of these guides was *Veiviser for de norske Emigranter til De forenede nordamerikanske Stater og Texas* [Pathfinder for Norwegian Emigrants to the United States and Texas] written by the Norwegian Johan Reinert Reiersen (1810-1864). Reiersen grew up in Vestre Moland, near Lillesand where his father was a schoolmaster and sexton at the local church. He attended Arendal Middle School and went on to study at the University of Christiania. He lived in Copenhagen from 1832 to

1837, where he worked as an editor and translator, mastering French, German, English and Swedish. When he returned to Norway, he took over editorship of the newspaper *Christiansandposten* which quickly became known for its pro-emigration stance, publishing letters from Norwegians in America and providing its readers with current and reliable information about America (Reiersen 1981: 18).

Reiersen had planned to emigrate at the beginning of the 1840s, and when some of the better-off citizens and farmers of Christiansand heard this, they thought that he would be the ideal person to find them a place to settle and commissioned him a sum of money for the purpose (Reiersen 1981: 40). Reiersen became a so-called 'advance agent' and left for America in 1843. During his first months there, he wrote his *Veiviser* which was published after his return to Norway the following year. This work was intended as purely informative reading on America and discussed topics such as geography, economy, business and government. In comparison with Rynning, the issue of learning the language was not directly addressed. This could be because Reiersen was more aware of the concept of a Norwegian national identity and was actually concerned that this would be lost unless Norwegians settled together in organised communities (Reiersen 1981: 19). National identity is an abstract concept which was only of interest to intellectuals in nineteenth-century Scandinavia and did not really matter to the general population (see section 7.2). If comparisons are drawn, Rynning was representing the ordinary citizen and his recommendation that people learnt English and interacted with Americans indicates that he was in favour of a high level of integration. Reiersen, on the other hand, supported separate Norwegian settlements which would preserve the

national identity, but interestingly he did not perceive the native language as an integral part of this identity. His standpoint was similar to that of the church, as exemplified by Bishop Neumann's pamphlet (section 4.3), and he argued that the key to preserving the national identity was indeed the establishment of a church. In some Norwegian settlements he had seen the beginning of organised religious activity and called for people like him to organise and guide such cultural endeavours as they could provide: 'the sensible, planned leadership of able, clear-sighted men whom the people respect and trust' (Reiersen 1981: 64). His only reference to language learning indicates that he thought the language should only be acquired to the extent that an individual could communicate with public authorities. He advises older people not to emigrate because they will not gain sufficient proficiency in the language to read newspapers and thereby participate in public life (Reiersen 1981: 203). Young people, on the other hand, will soon 'understand their [the Americans'] language fully, acquire something of their character, and become familiar with their ways' (Reiersen 1981: 203). So in other words, the language is the key to active participation in American society, but the successful preservation of a cultural and national identity is reliant on organised religious and community practices – not the continued existence of the native language.

Upon returning to Norway, Reiersen decided to emigrate permanently. Texas had left a lasting impression upon him and he organised a party of emigrants to settle at Brownsboro in north-eastern Texas. While in Brownsboro, he established a small monthly magazine called *Norge og Amerika* [Norway and America] (first published 1845), which '[served] as a medium for his own and other reports from America and for discussions of social and economic

conditions among Norwegian farmers and laborers' (Blegen 1931: 184). This magazine was also published in Norway and thus served as a positive alternative to the mainly negative reports in the press. The Brownsboro settlement only ever managed to recruit about fifty Norwegian emigrants, and when Reiersen's friend, Christian Grøgaard (b. 1800), who had been expected to lead the colony as a minister and teacher, suddenly died, people stopped settling there. So history again proves that the continued existence of an early settlement was entirely reliant on a leader, and if he died, it fell apart because people did not believe they could make it on their own.

4.6 Case studies

The above descriptions of early American settlements and the individuals who shaped them show us how important leadership and guidance was to the Scandinavian emigrants. Having spent their whole lives in one place, often isolated and remote, without much prospect of changing their lives for the better, most were simply overwhelmed by the thought of the life-change they were about to go through. While emigration was still at a low level, it was fairly easy to find people who would take charge of a settlement, but as the movement grew this became impossible. The phrasebooks, with their incorporated guides to emigration and life in America, attempted to fill this role. Even though a comprehensive survey of the Scandinavian phrasebook market does not exist, we can safely assume that they were bought in relative large numbers considering the number of editions and reprints most of them went through. We also know that phrasebooks were passed around among families and friends, especially to pass the time on the long journey to America, and each copy would

have reached a considerable number of readers. But while the phrasebooks attempted to adopt this guiding role, their main emphasis was of course on making it possible for the emigrant to learn English – a language with which most of them were unfamiliar. As discussed in Chapter 3, English was taught sporadically in further education only and not at all in elementary education. Most emigrants would never even have heard English spoken, and if the ones who could read picked up a traditional school grammar, they would have been faced with terminology utterly incomprehensible to them. The phrasebooks did simplify the teaching of grammar, but still required many hours of study to be understood by the average emigrant, and it is doubtful that many of them had the time or desire to commit to this.

The phrasebooks were usually the only direct means the emigrants had for studying English before they left Scandinavia. The majority were small, easy to carry and intended to be used in the same way as modern tourist phrasebooks. They were clearly targeted at this specific readership and aimed to provide the emigrants with a large English vocabulary relevant to their journey and settlement in America. The phrasebook authors were addressing the challenge of having readers who had an urgent need for learning English, but were unaware of the formal structure of their native language. However, the authors' good intentions were paired with a desire to earn money from their works. They observed how many editions and reprints a popular phrasebook could go through and tried to emulate the structure of these successful phrasebooks. Most of the phrasebooks from the peak publication period of the 1880s onwards, therefore, are very similar in their content and structure. It was not only in Scandinavia that this opportunity was seized. Publishers in America also entered

the phrasebook market as they ‘found it profitable to meet the demands for books of instruction specially prepared for their countrymen’ (Haugen 1969: 49). This commercial aspect has to be borne in mind as it did mean that some authors had little experience of teaching or writing about foreign languages and simply saw the publication of a phrasebook as an easy way of earning money.

The main difference between a modern phrasebook and the majority of emigrant phrasebooks is that the latter included a grammar section. This could indicate that they were intended to be a complete language teaching course whereas modern phrasebooks are aimed at situational contexts and the reader is not expected to be able to generate phrases others than those provided. While the phrasebook authors did by and large favour a simplified style of grammar, most still included a section on the parts of speech and several grammatical paradigms. Some did, however, try to move away from this traditional grammar type. Firstly, they were working with grammars of English, written in a Scandinavian language, both languages whose linguistic typologies are known for not fitting well into a Latin paradigm. Secondly, they had to decide whether lists and paradigms would be beneficial to the learner. It was obvious to them that an uneducated learner would struggle to make analogous comparisons that trained language learners, and especially learners of Latin and Greek, would be. Instead, they focused on providing practical examples, phrases and exercises. The word ‘practical’ is important in this context because it:

[...] appears time and again in nineteenth-century language courses and had an extra meaning it would not carry today. To us ‘practical’ is more or less a synonym for ‘useful’, but in the nineteenth century a practical course was also one which required *practice*.

(Howatt and Widdowson 2004: 152)

While the above quotation does not define further what is meant by ‘practice’, in the context of emigrant phrasebooks, it means practising to speak the language just as someone would practise playing the piano. Language teaching methodology in the nineteenth century was for the most part still focused on the written language, but the phrasebook authors knew that their readers had to *speak* English, and few would have little use of written English, so they tried to accommodate this need (section 6.4).

4.6.1 *Selvhjelp i Engelsk (1892)*

Martin Ulvestad (1865-1942) was a Norwegian immigrant who became known as a historian and statistician on Norwegian emigration. Nothing is known about his life in Norway except for the fact that he came from the district of Sunnmøre and immigrated to America in 1886. Ulvestad taught himself English as he travelled around collecting data on Norwegian immigrants which he converted into large biographical volumes on the history of his people in America.⁵² During his travels, Ulvestad would undoubtedly have formed a good impression of the language skills of his countrymen. His observations and, more importantly, his dismay at the lack of English spoken among the Norwegians resulted in his phrasebook *Selvhjelp i Engelsk. En Lærebog for dem, som i kort Tid ville erhverve sig Kjendskab til det engelske Sprog* [Self-help in English. A grammar for those who in a short period of time want to acquire knowledge of the English language] published in 1892. From the introduction to this work, we get a good idea of Ulvestad’s main objective:

⁵² Ulvestad (1901; 1907-1913).

Generally speaking, knowledge of the English language is the primary condition for success in America; and thus it should be the immigrant's task, the sooner the better, to acquire this knowledge.⁵³

(Ulvestad 1892: no p.n.)

He also acknowledges that because emigrants need to learn English for 'practical use', they can study without a teacher because detailed grammatical knowledge is not essential. He is familiar with other phrasebooks, but he does not seem very impressed with them because they do not make the learner 'want to read, understand what is read, and remember what is read' (Ulvestad 1892: no p.n.). His work is therefore built on the following principle: the word is learnt first (spelling, pronunciation, meaning and form changes) and then studied in connected speech. The structure of *Selvhjelp i Engelsk* is similar to that found in many other phrasebooks. It totals 147 pages and starts with an introductory part containing 'pronunciation rules' (section 6.4.1), then moves on to seven separate sections of word lists and exercises, before finishing with a grammatical section.

4.6.1.1 Word lists and exercises

Ulvestad was a firm believer that boring reading matter would not stick in the mind of the learner and therefore aimed to make his examples used in the word lists and exercises entertaining. Many of these examples were taken from weekly humour magazines such as *The Judge*, *Puck*, *Texas Siftings* and *Life*⁵⁴ because the language in these publications was more representative of everyday speech and more suitable for the readership. Each of the seven sections, which

⁵³ 'Almindelig talt, er Kjendskabet til det engelske Sprog den første Betingelse for at kunne gjøre Lykke i Amerika; det burde derfor være Indvandrerens Opgave, jo før jo hellere at erhverve sig dette Kjendskab'.

⁵⁴ *Life* was published from 1883 to 1936 and is not to be confused with the modern photographic magazine of the same name.

total ninety pages, introduces new words and how to pronounce them in list form, translation and grammar, before finishing with reading exercises. The reading exercises give the translation in one column and the English version in the other, but not a transcription of pronunciation. The following is an example of the English text:

Judge (*bald-headed*): If half what the witnesses testify against you is true, your conscience must be as black as your hair.

Prisoner: If a man's conscience is regulated by his hair, then your honor has not got any conscience at all.

(Ulvestad 1892: 23)

Before reaching this part, the reader was expected to have studied the word list at the beginning which would have explained how to actually pronounce the words. Ulvestad had devised his own transcription system which will be discussed in section 6.4.1, so for now a brief extract of how it looked in the context of the example above will suffice. The word list was set up in three columns, 'English', 'pronunciation' and 'Norwegian-Danish':⁵⁵

| | | |
|-------------|--------------|--------------|
| bald-headed | bald-hëdd'ed | skaldet |
| black | blāk | sort |
| conscience | kān'sjēns | Samvittighed |
| testify | tēs'ti-fai | vidne |
| witness | 'it'ness | Vidne |

(Ulvestad 1892: xviii-xix)

The apostrophe indicates stress on the preceding syllable, while the hyphen is used as a separator between unstressed syllables (see *testify*) and has no impact on pronunciation. It is simply put there to ease the reading of a long word. All verbs were assigned a number, and conjugation of its present, past and present

⁵⁵ Note that Ulvestad did not use the term 'Dano-Norwegian'. This could be due to the fact that he was Norwegian and at this late stage in the nineteenth century had an awareness of an emerging independent Norwegian national identity.

perfect tenses could be found at the bottom of the page without having to consult the grammar section.

The word lists and exercises take up nearly two-thirds of the whole phrasebook and provide the reader with a wealth of words and phrases. However, Ulvestad's approach to language teaching by using real-life examples from contemporary publications can be questioned. While they might have kept the reader entertained, it is doubtful whether it was at all possible to transfer the words used in the example above, for instance, to more everyday situations. Furthermore, the absence of any logical order or thematic division would have made it difficult for the reader to use it as a reference book in which a word could quickly be looked up when the need arose. Most other phrasebooks did not follow Ulvestad's example and we do not see it in modern phrasebooks either as it seems rather ambitious to expect readers, if they were to make any use of these words at all, to memorise them.

4.6.1.2 Grammar

While Ulvestad in his introduction explains in great detail the thinking behind his examples, i.e. that they had to be entertaining if people were to remember them, he only devotes one paragraph to the thinking behind his grammar section. This could be indicative of the fact that Ulvestad did not consider grammar very important. He only explains how the grammar section is presented and that he hopes he has made it comprehensible for 'even those who have no knowledge of grammar' (Ulvestad 1892: no p.n.). Called *Kortfattet Formlære* [Brief Grammar], it is traditional and similar to the grammar-translation method's sections on grammar. It describes the eight parts of speech:

the verb, noun, adjective, pronoun, adverb, preposition, conjunction and interjection, with a further treatment of the article and numerals. For each part, he describes what it is, so a noun, for example, is ‘a word which indicates what something is or is called’ (Ulvestad 1892: 101) using simple language which people would have understood. While Ulvestad for the most part uses Latin terminology, when explaining what a preposition is, ‘a word which is used to tie a noun or noun phrase more specifically to another word in the same paragraph’ (Ulvestad 1892: 135), he also adds the native term, *forholdsord*,⁵⁶ in parenthesis. The reason for this might be that the word *forhold* which means ‘relation’ better explains the actual function of a preposition to a non-expert. Finally, each part of speech has its number, declension or conjugation explained and there is a long list of irregular verbs.

Despite trying to simplify the grammar section somewhat, Ulvestad did not abandon paradigms of Latin terminology and there is nothing particularly innovative in this section. This is, of course, not unusual for an emigrant phrasebook and the structure and content of the grammar section was sometimes dependent on the grammatical knowledge of the author. Perhaps, Ulvestad himself was not too knowledgeable of the intricacies of grammar to attempt a new interpretation of the tried and tested model, but that can only remain an assumption as we do not know anything about his education. Grammar teaching is in general very difficult and notoriously tricky to simplify, so maybe we should not expect the grammar sections in phrasebooks to have undergone a radical overhaul. Perhaps we should instead consider those who left it out

⁵⁶ I have not been able to establish when this term was first used in Scandinavian grammars, though Rasmus Rask seems to have been the first to make consistent use of it.

altogether as being the most knowledgeable because they acknowledged the fact that most emigrants would not spend much time studying the grammar section.

4.6.2 *The Little American* (1887)

The most popular phrasebook series of the nineteenth century was *The Little American*. First published in 1838 by the German Friedrich Wilhelm Günther under the title *Der kleine Amerikaner: Ein leichtes Hilfsmittel zur Erlernung der englischen Sprache nach der neuesten Methode*, this phrasebook was quickly adapted all over Europe in numerous languages. For the purpose of making a direct comparison with Ulvestad in terms of period published, the volume discussed in this section is from 1887 and is the sixth Norwegian edition. Günther is still credited as the main author while the translator remains anonymous. The full title is *The Little American. Den lille Amerikaner. En letfattelig Veileder for Emigranter og Andre, som i kort Tid vil lære at forstaa og at gjøre sig forstaaelige i det engelske Sprog* [The Little American. A comprehensible Guide for Emigrants and Others who in a short Time want to learn to understand and make oneself understood in the English Language]. When comparing it with *Selvhjelp i Engelsk*, it soon becomes evident that there is no marked difference between the two phrasebooks. Being 78 pages, *The Little American* is shorter than Ulvestad's work, but the main aims are the same – to enable emigrants to get a certain grasp of the English language. Their structures are also more or less the same and *The Little American* starts with a guide to the alphabet and pronunciation (section 6.4.1), before moving on to word lists and phrases.

Having introduced the sounds of the English language, a description of English grammar takes up the next twenty-four pages. Again, this section

adheres strictly to Latin grammar by, for example, assigning genders (masculine, feminine and neuter) to the nouns according to the fact that ‘in the English language, gender follows the natural order; all living beings are either *masculine* or *feminine*, and all lifeless things are *neuter*’ (Günther 1887: 7).⁵⁷ In the explanation that follows it is evident that the only two ways to indicate gender in English is by the use of pronouns, for example by referring to a ship as ‘she’ or to use suffixes or prefixes such as -ess, man-, maid- and male- (Günther 1887: 7). When it comes to the declension of nouns, the four cases of nominative, genitive, dative and accusative are used, despite it being obvious that the noun itself does not change its form apart from the possessive -s in the genitive form which has only been added in parenthesis. Furthermore, the lack of explanation of the function of these cases and the omission of prepositions in the Norwegian column must have made it very difficult for the learners to understand this section:

| | | | |
|------|-------------|----------------|-----------------|
| | [Norwegian] | Singularis | [Pronunciation] |
| Nom. | Gud | god | ghodd |
| Gen. | Guds | of god (God’s) | ov ghodd |
| Dat. | Gud | to god | to ghodd |
| Acc. | Gud | god | ghodd |
| | | Pluralis | |
| Nom. | Guder | gods | ghodds |
| Gen. | Guders | of gods | ov ghodds |
| Dat. | Guder | to gods | to ghodds |
| Acc. | Guder | gods | ghodds |

(Günther 1887: 8)

The language used in the grammar section is very old-fashioned and poses the question whether this section had at all been revised since Günther published his

⁵⁷ ‘I det engelske Sprog retter Kjønnen sig efter det naturlige; alle levende Væsener bliver saaledes enten *masculina* (Hankjøn) eller *foeminina* (Hunkjøn), og alle livløse Ting *neutra* (Intetkjøn)’.

first edition. There is again a clear sense that this was a section that the Norwegian author had just translated (possibly) without understanding much of it. In the description of prepositions, for instance, the word ‘imellem’ is translated into the even at the time archaic English word ‘betwixt’⁵⁸ instead of the more common ‘between’ and used in the following phrase:

| | |
|----------------|---|
| Norwegian: | Der var en Strid imellem ham og hans Broder. |
| English: | There was a quarrel betwixt him and his brother. |
| Pronunciation: | Dhehr hvass æ kvaaril betvikst himm ænd his broddher. |

(Günther 1887: 25)

For interjections, more old-fashioned turns of phrase are used and include the following:

| [Norwegian] | [English] | [Pronunciation] |
|---------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| Ak! Desværre! | Alas! | Ælas! |
| O Himmel! | O heavens! | O hevv’ns! |
| O vee mig! | Wo’s me! | Vaa’s mih! |
| Hjælp! | Help me! | Help mih! |
| Lystig! | Chear [sic] up! | Tschihr øpp! |
| Ned med ham! | Down with him! | Dauhn hvidh himm! |
| O Glæde! | Oh joy! | Oh dschoi! |
| Pyt! | Pish! Pshaw! Pooh! | Pisch! Pschaa! Puh! |

(Günther 1887: 26-7)

The main body of *The Little American* contains ‘words which occur frequently in everyday speech’ [*Nogle i Dagligtale hyppigt forekommende Ord*] and these are put into context in the following section of ‘Brief and easy Proverbs and Dialogues’ [*Korte og lette Talemaader og Samtaler*]. That these two sections occupy almost half of the phrasebook is a clear sign that by the end of the nineteenth century, most authors knew that their learners needed less grammar and more words and phrases. Whereas Ulvestad’s words were chosen

⁵⁸ ‘The OED citations for *betwixt* are fairly numerous, beginning in the 900s but falling off considerably in number toward the end of the 17th century; there are only a handful from the 18th and 19th centuries’ (Merriam-Webster, Inc. 1994: 183).

on the basis of his examples, the examples here are divided into themes such as ‘about eating and drinking’, ‘about travelling’ and ‘parts of a town’. As mentioned above, this made *The Little American* easier to use as a reference book for looking up words when needed. This more traditional layout is indicative of the fact that *The Little American* was part of a large European-wide enterprise which had been refined and improved upon over a number of years. As a response to the readers’ needs, phrases which they would really need, particularly in the beginning, dominate this section. So while Ulvestad has humorous stories and jokes, there are actually phrases in *The Little American* which the emigrant could have used on the journey:

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| [Norwegian] Denne Vogn er meget liden. | [English] This carriage is very small. | [Pronunciation] Dhis kærriidsch iss verri smaal. |
| Jeg tror vi sidder begge meget ubekvemt; vil De have den Godhed at sætte deres Ben mellem mine. | I believe, Sir, we both sit in in a very uncomfortable position; will you have the goodness to cross legs. | Ei belihv, sørr, hviv bohð sit in æ verri unkomfortæbel posischen; hvill juh hæ dhe ghudnes tu kross leggs. |
| (Günther 1887: 58-9) | | |
| [At sea] Jeg befunder mig meget ilde. Læg Dem paa Maven, luk Øinene, forbliv rolig i den Stilling, og Deres Sygdom vil gaa over. | I am very sick. Lay yourself flat upon your belly, shut your eyes, remain in that quiet posture, and your sickness will abate. | Ei æmm verri sik. Leh juhrselv flætt oponn juhr belli, schott juhr eihs, remehn in dhatt kveiet pohstshciur, ænd juht sickness hvill æbeht. |
| (Günther 1887: 65) | | |

Once the cramped conditions of the journey and the inevitable sea-sickness had been overcome, it was time for the emigrant to move onto the next section in their phrasebook; the section which enabled them to repeatedly say that they did not understand the English spoken to them:

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| Kan De tale Engelsk? Ikke meget, en Smule. | Can you speak english [sic]? Not much, a little. | Kænn juh spikh inglisich? Naatt maattsch, æ littel. |
|---|---|--|

| | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| De taler for hurtig. | You speak too fast. | Juh spihk tuh fast. |
| Jeg kan ikke forstaa Dem. | I can't understand you. | Ei ka'nt ønderstænd juh. |
| Tal noget langsommere. | Speak a little slower. | Spihk æ littel sloh'r. |
| | | (Günther 1887: 49-50) |

4.7 Evaluation

The first phrasebooks targeted specifically at emigrants began to appear on the market from around 1850 onwards. They quickly became very popular as evidenced by the many editions most of them went through. Their simple structure and ease of reading appealed to many learners and with later additions, such as *The Little American's* 'Practical Hints for the Journey', these works were perceived as an invaluable resource. Their titles also signalled to the readers that learning to speak English was not going to a problem at all. A popular work from the late nineteenth century, *Cursus paa 100 Timer i Engelsk* [A Course of a 100 Hours in English] (Eibe 1873) was surpassed some years later by another work which promised to teach English in only 50 hours (Stenersen 1893). Other phrasebooks, such as *The Emigrant's Interpreter* (Boyesen 1875) and *The American Interpreter* (Walther 1891), wanted to assure the emigrant that this was a ready interpreter at hand when needed. But it is still not clear how central they were to the emigrants while they were learning English. Did the emigrants actually adhere to the authors' instructions and utilise the phrasebooks as a complete language learning course, or did they mostly make use of it as a reference book and a cheaper alternative to a dictionary? That the phrasebooks were popular is without dispute. The fact that they were published in a steady stream over half a century indicates that the phenomenon was not short-lived and that new buyers were continuously emerging. They were published in both Scandinavia and in America and there is

no major difference between the two in terms of structure or language difficulty. One could be inclined to think that the latter would show signs of having been written by individuals who had already learnt English themselves as emigrants, for example by abandoning the grammar section, but this is not the case. This indicates that phrasebook authors actually only had a few options available when structuring and choosing content for their works. This is also evidenced by the fact that modern phrasebooks are still quite similar to those of the nineteenth century, and that innovation is to be found in the ways the spoken language can be practised through the use of audio equipment. Overall, the phrasebook served as a reference book in which the emigrant could quickly look up a phrase or word because of its selective vocabulary, conveniently arranged into themed sections. Most of the emigrants would not have had the time to sit down and study the book in detail once in America, and they were mostly read on the long journey there. They were bought as part of the overall preparation for emigration to show that the emigrant was willing to learn the language of the new country. Yet, as most things associated with emigration proved to be very different than anticipated, most emigrants would not have had much use of a phrasebook once they were in America.

The phrasebooks remained more or less unchanged in structure and content over the period. The only notable development is that they expanded in length as their authors realised that more and more phrases were needed. The fact that pronunciation and grammar sections were not further developed or simplified underlines the lesser importance of these elements in the emigrants' language learning process. Latin terms and paradigms were still used and the grammar of the target language largely ignored. This leads me to believe that the

grammar sections were not at all used by the emigrants. As long as they could make themselves understood, they were not bothered about correct grammatical usage. In their native language they had never had to make any considerations of a grammatical nature, simply because they did not know that it existed, so why suddenly start doing it in English? In some sense, the emigrant phrasebook adopted a similar attitude to that of Maximilian D. Berlitz (1852-1921), the founder of the Berlitz Organization who was of the 'conviction that rules and theories should not be discussed but applied and practiced' (Stieglitz 1955: 300). The majority of Scandinavian emigrants never completely mastered the English language and many were, in the words of Haugen (1969) 'mixed lingual', because they did not '[bother] to keep the two languages separate' (Haugen 1969: 13). Scandinavian lexical words were replaced by English ones but the grammatical structure was not. This is a sign that an in-depth knowledge of grammar was never acquired and that the main function of a phrasebook was to furnish the reader with a rich English vocabulary.

The phrasebooks were not without their critics. While the emigrant leaders urged people to learn English, not one of them recommended the use of phrasebooks, as discussed in section 4.5. However, there was a market for the phrasebooks because they thrived on idealism. The situation remains the same today where the number of people who actually complete a teach-yourself language course is limited. The phrasebooks belonged to a lucrative market of good intentions and the promise on the front cover of teaching the emigrant English quickly and with ease was enough of an incentive to buy it.

Chapter 5: Travel Guidebooks

5.1 Introduction

The present-day nature of the leisure travel industry has its roots in the nineteenth century where many of the concepts of modern tourism were invented. We assume that every destination on earth, within reach of the typical traveller, will have a guidebook written about it. These guidebooks are continuously developing and adapting to consumer demands and now come in various forms such as downloadable podcasts or applications for mobile phones. All these means have empowered consumers when making choices about travel, leaving us less reliant on travel agencies and more able to be independent travellers following our own itineraries. The popularity of the package holiday is declining and we are increasingly rejecting the group tours and ready-made experiences which have been so overwhelmingly popular throughout the last fifty years. In that sense, the concept of leisure travel can be said to have come full circle since its inception in the nineteenth century. Innovative developments in that period enabled the newly wealthy middle class to venture to new destinations and experience sights and activities previously unknown to them.

The travel guidebook plays a big part in this development and its continued success merits its place in the history of popular language works. With tourism history emerging as an autonomous discipline, linguists can contribute to it by analysing the language elements of travel literature. The travel guidebook's predecessor, the personal travelogue as favoured by the Romantics – and made famous by individuals such as Mary Wollstonecraft (1759-1797) (section 5.2.1), Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778) and François-

René de Chateaubriand (1768-1848) – rarely had a practical language element to it and is thus more relevant to the literary historian. One exception is Johan Storm's *De romanske Sprog og Folk: Skildringer fra en Studiereise med offentligt Stipendium* [The Romance Languages and Peoples: Depictions of a Publicly Funded Study Tour] (1871), a travelogue written during Storm's eighteen-month tour of France, Italy and Spain which began in February 1869. As a linguist, it is not surprising that Storm's main aim was to: 'provide a popular depiction of the three Romance peoples' character and of their languages as a reflection of their peculiar spirit' (Storm 1871: no p.n.). Travelogues legitimised travel as an activity of pleasure, rather than one of necessity, as had previously been the norm. In accordance with the main tenets of empiricism and rationalism, travelling out of curiosity, 'became an admired rather than a dubious motive, as the traveler was now seen as a discoverer of the world and a manufacturer of fact' (Leed 1991: 179). The young gentlemen on their Grand Tour (section 5.2.1), for instance, were expected to keep detailed diaries of experiences and observations and many of these were published upon their return.

Why, then, are the nineteenth-century guidebooks important in the history of popular language works? They form an integral part of the genre, alongside grammars, phrasebooks and other self-instruction language manuals, and contribute to our knowledge of how the needs of utilitarian language learners were facilitated in that period. They give us an insight into how commercial language teaching began and how the literature developed and adapted to the readers' requirements. The practical grammars were written, for example, for merchants and navy officers so that they could communicate with

foreign associates. The phrasebooks addressed the needs of emigrants who wanted to learn English quickly, but did not have the necessary intellectual knowledge or financial means to acquire the language in a formal manner. And finally, the guidebooks, while also promoting Scandinavia as a tourist destination, provided their readers with useful phrases which would ease their communication while travelling. In addition to this, by examining the guidebooks closely we also get an indication of how foreigners perceived the countries they were writing about – or, when written by native authors, how they wanted visitors to perceive their country. Other academic disciplines have already acknowledged the guidebook as a valuable resource and it is high time for linguistics to do the same:

Throughout the world, travelers have made observations about peoples and places that are of interest to scholars, and no matter where one works and how one works (as a historian, literary critic, or ethnographer), if one wants to learn about the past or about historical context, delving into travelers' accounts of foreign peoples and foreign places becomes a necessity.

(Brettel 1986: 127)

The secondary literature on tourism and travel entails different aims dependent on the discipline in which it was written. Some works are purely theoretical, with anthropological and sociological surveys trying to determine the psychology behind tourism, such as Leed (1991), Smith (1989) and Turner and Ash (1975). A work from ethnohistory, Brettel (1986), analyses authentic observations in travel accounts not affected by the cultural baggage and preconceived ideas of the traveller (Brettel 1986: 127). Others are more concerned with the commercial aspect of mass tourism and the men who helped create this modern concept, they include Scarlett (1921), Hinrichsen (1991) and Brendon (1991). Finally, some focus on a particular aspect of tourism such as

the guides developed for the traveller to a particular geographical region (e.g. Barton (1998); Koshar (1998); Böröcz (1992)) because they standardise language and other cultural practices, normalise intellectual life and commercialise society in general (Böröcz 1992: 716-7).

Having acknowledged the guidebooks' value as a source, this chapter will analyse and discuss their impact on the genre of popular language works in nineteenth-century Scandinavia. Examples written by both Scandinavians and foreigners are included to be able to provide a full picture of the genre. The Scandinavian works aim to promote the region as a travel destination and are therefore positive and complimentary in their writing (section 5.4.4). The authors are mainly private individuals who stand to gain financially from tourists visiting Scandinavia. They try to project a flattering and appealing picture of the country they are writing about. The foreign works belong to two separate categories, the stereotyped guidebooks which are objective, unbiased and targeted at the leisure traveller and the retrospective travelogues which often entail explicit commentaries by the author on social and political conditions in Scandinavia.

The time and society in which the authors above were writing are put into context in section 5.2. After briefly touching upon the phenomenon of the Grand Tour and examining the experiences of Romantic travellers, the analysis then moves onto the invention of the modern tourism concept and the key people behind it (section 5.3). Narrowing the discussion to the guidebook only, the typical structure of it will be presented and its core elements considered in section 5.4. The central part of the examination will focus on the language

element which, to varying degrees of success, attempted to teach foreigners words and basic phrases in the Scandinavian languages.

5.2 Overview

5.2.1 Historical background

Travel literature has always been a popular genre. Before 1900, for instance, more than 1,600 foreign works were published on Norway alone. The authors came from diverse backgrounds and were sailors, scientists and hunters, all having a tale to tell from their journeys (Scheen 1961: 3). From these accounts we get a sense of how Scandinavia was seen through foreign eyes. In parts, they present a different version of the general history of the region and are crucial because they chart ‘the evolution from necessity for freedom, an evolution that gave rise to a new consciousness, the peculiar mentality of the modern traveler’ (Leed 1991: 14). This section will not attempt to summarise the whole history of travel in Scandinavia, but instead starts with the Grand Tour and the inception of travel in the modern age. It also marks the beginning of British travellers’ dominance in Europe because the industrial revolution came to Britain first and ‘the development of tourism goes hand in hand with industrial civilization’ (Enzensberger 1996: 126).

The eighteenth-century upper-class phenomenon, the Grand Tour, precedes the age of modern tourism. Particularly popular among the British aristocracy, it was considered part of a young noble’s education to undertake a large-scale European journey of substantial duration. During the tour, the traveller was expected to develop social skills and establish networks with other

European nobles. Accompanied by an older guardian or tutor, they followed a trail which typically included France, Switzerland, Austria and Italy. The scale of the Grand Tour was such that ‘by 1785 – just before the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars put an end to it – there were an estimated 40,000 Englishmen travelling on the Continent’ (Feifer 1985: 99). The Grand Tour has been referred to as an ‘anti-conquest’ in a time when Britain’s imperialist force was being felt all around the world, and ‘well-off Britons drew parallels between their nation’s current [strong economic] position and that of the ancient Roman Empire’ (Buzard 2002: 39). Over time, more and more Britons, including women and children, embarked upon European travel. A great many travel memoirs were produced as a result, and one of the most famous was indeed by a woman travelling with a young child. Mary Wollstonecraft’s *Letters Written During a Short Residence in Sweden, Norway and Denmark* (1796) inspired many poets at the time with its theme of a ‘solitary traveller wandering through wild, rugged and remote places, and suffering from the absence and indifference of a lover’ – the ultimate Romantic journey (Tomalin 1992: 228). The Grand Tour did not usually include Scandinavia, but because its history and rugged landscape appealed to the Romantics, it became significant in the development of Scandinavian tourism in the early nineteenth century.

5.2.2 Perceptions of Scandinavia

Barton (1998) has investigated the travelogues of a number of these foreigners who did visit Scandinavia before the age of modern tourism. In his introduction, he raises several questions also applicable to this current analysis. The social and economic aspect is included in the question ‘What conditions

existed at the time in the lands the travelers visited' (Barton 1998: 2)? The questions 'What motives led travelers to find their way to particular regions?' and 'What preconceptions, prejudices and values did confrontations with other peoples and places bring to the fore?' (Barton 1998: 2) both venture into the mind of the traveller and the issue of 'cultural baggage' as mentioned in section 5.1. While travel previously had always been a practical means to an end (even the Grand Tour was to some extent an educational journey), the travellers surveyed by Barton (1998) were pursuing a Romantic quest, an emotional survey of the countries they visited subsequently recorded as poignant impressions in their diaries. They were at first met with scepticism, because 'travel to experience and observe was not always easy to understand' (Barton 1998: 2). This was also a common occurrence in the sciences where scholars travelling around collecting anything from rocks, plants and animals to local dialects were perceived as slightly odd. However, these early collectors helped establish typologies of nature which came to form a core part of many of the sciences. The early dialectologists had similar experiences when travelling around studying varieties of language, but in some cases, such as that of Ivar Aasen in Norway their field work was to become central in language planning reforms.⁵⁹

Fascination with and a longing for the past were the main motives for travel in Scandinavia around 1800. Visitors came to uncover and experience the ancient Nordic past from which they had descended. With increased state control in industrialised societies, this past represented the ultimate state of society. It represented a freedom which was fast disappearing in Western

⁵⁹ For more on Aasen, see Walton (1996), Krokvik (1996), Venås (1996) and Linn (1997).

Europe. Their chosen route had Denmark as an entry point to Scandinavia, and the country's rather unassuming landscape did not arouse much feeling of Norse⁶⁰ spirit in its visitors, so most of them hurried across the islands to Copenhagen from where they could cross over to Sweden and soon explore much more appealing waterfalls, mountains and forests. Having reached Stockholm and the northern parts of Sweden, they entered Norway, the most popular destination. The scenario of breathtaking fjords and isolated valleys and the 'primitive' way in which most Norwegian lived emphasised the glorious past. Denmark was not only less popular because of its lack of beautiful landscapes; it also made visitors feel uncomfortable because it did not offer them the opportunity to get away from civilisation. Furthermore, the absolute monarchy counteracted everything the North was supposed to symbolise in relation to freedom of the individual. Barton (1998) quotes an Andrew Swinton who in his travel account from 1792 strongly expressed his dissatisfaction with the political situation in Denmark:

That nation which first pulled down Roman tyranny, and spread the flame of liberty throughout Europe, now behold every other European nation free, or attempting to be free; while they, driven back into their northern provinces, are again deprived of the natural as well as the political sun. That flame was as suddenly extinguished as it was raised.

(Barton 1998: 174)

The reason why many British travellers in particular chose to visit Scandinavia and not southern Europe, where the evidence of a glorious past was even more pronounced, is that the region took them back to their roots. Many were

⁶⁰ The term 'Gothic' is widely used in the literature but as this refers to the Germanic tribes of the third and fourth centuries and because most nineteenth-century travellers were interested in the history of Viking times, it is more appropriate to use the term 'Norse' or 'Nordic' in this discussion.

interested in the fact that they possibly descended from the Vikings and because of the history of hostilities between the British Isles and Romance countries, they felt more at home in Scandinavia. The ones who took this link to the extreme went further north to the Arctic Circle, the Faroe Islands and Iceland, the 'Ultima Thule' as it was called, and they were particularly interested in 'geological curiosities and rich medieval saga literature' (Barton 1998: 127).

5.2.3 The concept of tourism

1814 has been mentioned as a turning point in the general history of Scandinavia and the same applies to the history of travel and tourism. The British navy's blockade of the North Sea in the years leading up to this had resulted in a rapid decline in travellers to Scandinavia. Romanticism which had spurred on early travellers was also fading and when political and economic stability was again achieved in the 1830s, the focus of travel to Scandinavia was no longer idealistic but rather more commercial. These travellers had a more materialistic view of travel; they had less time and money to spend and were looking to be entertained rather than undertake a Romantic soul-searching quest. Yet, the very decision to go to Scandinavia, instead of the more comfortable climes of southern Europe, meant that the primitiveness of the North was still the main attraction. For the British traveller in particular, Norway was the most popular destination in Scandinavia and remained so throughout the nineteenth century. Böröcz's (1992) so-called 'mental maps' of Europe, devised on the basis of the number of pages two guidebooks devote to each country,⁶¹ illustrate

⁶¹ *Appleton's European Guide Book Illustrated* (1870) and *Satchel Guide for the Vacation Tourist in Europe* (published in various editions between 1877 and 1925).

the difference in popularity of the Scandinavian countries. In 1870 Sweden has 5 pages (0.8 per cent of 659 pages) devoted to it, Norway 4 pages (0.6 per cent) and Denmark 3 pages (0.5 per cent). In the 1925 edition, an overall increase in the attention given to Scandinavia can be seen with Sweden having 30 pages (6 per cent of 499 pages), Norway 33 (6.6 per cent) and Denmark a rather unimpressive, but better, 13 pages (2.6 per cent) (Böröcz 1992: 720-1).

The development of mass tourism was closely linked with an overall improvement in financial circumstances among the middle class. Industrialisation in the tourist's home country had resulted in higher wages, reduced working hours and the availability of funds for rest and relaxation. People could now travel on *vacation* for the first time and because of entrepreneurship, such as the establishment of travel agencies (section 5.3), the attractions of Europe were suddenly rendered open to 'everybody' (Buzard 2002: 47). Similar entrepreneurial endeavours helped improve the standards of hotels and guest houses, road and rail links and leisure pursuits (cycling, walking, fishing, etc.) in the destination countries. The tourism concept was born.

Another Böröcz (1992) survey traces the appearance of the word 'tourist' in various European languages and gives us an indication of when this concept arose exactly. 'Tourist' first appeared in French in 1793 and in English in 1800, probably adapted from the Grand Tour. In Scandinavia, Denmark was the first to use the term in 1824, with Norway following some time before 1892 though the exact year cannot be established, and Sweden was rather late with the first instance recorded in 1934. There is some doubt, however, as to the validity of the Swedish data as the Swedish Tourist Association [*Svensk Turistförening*]

was founded in 1885. Furthermore, the Swede, C. J. L. Almqvist (1786-1846), wrote an article in the newspaper *Aftonbladet* entitled *Hvad är en tourist?* [What is a tourist?] in 1840. This article was written during a stay in Paris where he was determined not to follow the crowds and visit sights and places that everyone else did because this would make him a 'dum tourist' [stupid tourist]. He describes how difficult it is to remain uneducated as a tourist and leave behind the 'manuels, itineraries, conducteurs' which will only lead one down paths trodden by hundreds of thousands before (Almqvist 1961: 46-7). The reason why Almqvist travelled was to get to know living human beings and not to immerse himself in history; he wanted to see the real lives of normal people and not just experience upper class culture (Almqvist 1961: 14-5). This indicates that while the word 'tourist' might not have been in common use before the end of the nineteenth century, its existence was certainly known among learned men in Sweden long before 1934.

Making the distinction between the concrete 'tourist' and the abstract 'tourism', Böröcz (1992) also surveys the appearance of the latter. We then find 'tourism' in Danish in 1909, before 1934 in Norwegian, and, probably directly related to the formation of the Swedish Tourist Association, in Sweden in 1885. It is also important to note that the Scandinavian word 'tur' has a different meaning than its English equivalent. It can mean a walk or ride in the countryside, for example, and does not have to be a trip of a considerable length of time or abroad. So, while the concept of being a tourist and tourism as a phenomenon in itself were adopted into the Scandinavian languages, they would not have been completely alien ideas.

5.3 Tourism entrepreneurs

The first period of modern tourism was mostly concerned with ensuring that the basic needs of the tourist, such as accommodation and travel, were satisfied. However, as going on holiday became more common, there was an increased demand for information from which tourists could pick their preferred destination, hotel and activity. The guidebooks provided this practical information and, at the same time, encouraged the reader to engage with the local population and learn a few phrases in the native language. By informing the reader of common customs and traditions in the destination country, the guidebooks helped prevent embarrassing mistakes or incidents and were (possibly) responsible for portraying a national culture abroad (section 7.4).

The development of European tourism in the nineteenth century is synonymous with three men: John Murray (1808-1892), Karl Baedeker (1801-1859) and Thomas Cook (1808-1892). They were entrepreneurs who quickly cottoned on to the fact that the tourists of their day wanted to travel, but had less time and money to spend than the Grand Tourist.

[They] came to embody the power of rational administration over the many disparate elements that come into play in tourism – railways, custom houses, inns and hotels, currency exchange regulations, and so forth, not to mention the diversity of interests and temperaments among the clientele they served.

(Buzard 1993: 48)

They understood that reliable guides to the most popular travel destinations were the obvious alternative to the biased, subjective and sometimes prejudiced content found in other guidebooks. One such example can be found in a guidebook published as late as 1896, where the author describes the dirt of the Lapp (Sami) people as ‘phenomenal’ and advises anyone not ‘to linger near

them' (Lunn 1896: 60). In stark contrast to the neutral language employed in the stereotyped guidebooks, Lunn's statement gives an impression of a lack of understanding and even outright rudeness towards foreigners and their way of life. Lunn might have been aware of his shortcomings as a guidebook author, as he states in the preface:

We have no wish or intention to enter into rivalry with the excellent handbooks of Murray and Baedeker, and one or other of these books is indispensable to any who wish to make a thorough study of Northern Europe. At the same time we hope that the following pages will be found to contain all that is necessary for – say a month's cruise to Iceland, Norway, or the Baltic.
(Lunn 1896: no p.n.)

While these works do not contribute much to linguistic research on travel literature, they do exhibit much of the peculiarity and unintentional humour which was ironed out in the standardised and homogeneous guidebooks described in the section below.

John Murray III came from a family of distinguished London publishers, the House of Murray,⁶² and produced his first guidebook in 1836. His father even coined the term 'handbook', which came to represent this genre of travel literature, referring to its small size which would fit in the hand or pocket of the tourist (Buzard 1993: 66). The Murrays quickly established themselves as the leading producers of guidebooks, and by 1848 they had more than sixty *Works for Travellers* on the market (see Buzard (1993: 65-72) and Carpenter (2008)). Their first guidebook to Scandinavia was published in 1839 and was called *A Hand-book for travellers in Denmark, Norway, Sweden, and Russia*. The region was still not considered popular enough to have an entire guidebook devoted it, so Russia was also included in this work. The author is anonymous though the

⁶² Founded in 1768 by John Murray I (1745-1793).

preface is signed by a T. D. W.⁶³ who is presumed to be the actual author of the work. This first edition was published in 1,500 copies but did not sell very well, and according to Murray's publication ledgers, 'northern Europe remained on the title list more through a *service* ambition than any expectations of remunerative reward' (Davies 1999: 34). Ten years later a revised edition appeared and now also included Finland (Anon. (1848)). The third edition was published in 1858, leaving out Finland and Russia and instead including Iceland (Anon. (1858)). From thereon, Murray abandoned the touring aspect of his guidebooks and began publishing separate works on each country.⁶⁴ The number of editions published on Norway compared to Denmark and Sweden again emphasises the popularity of the country. Murray, furthermore, launched a series called *The Knapsack Guide to Norway* in 1864, re-published in 1869 and 1870. That the focus was now changing from Scandinavia as a whole to the individual countries indicates that the process of establishing themselves as independent countries was also being noticed abroad.

In direct competition with Murray was the German publisher and bookseller Karl Baedeker whose first guidebooks were published in German and French in 1832.⁶⁵ English editions followed in the period from 1861 to 1926. The Scandinavian guidebooks were published from 1879, the first edition only concerning Norway and Sweden. Denmark was added in 1892, and finally in 1909, the reader had the opportunity to undertake excursions to Iceland and

⁶³ Identified by Davies (1999: 33) as a T. D. Whatley, M.A., but no other biographical information can be found.

⁶⁴ Denmark (with Sleswig-Holsten and Iceland) published in 1875, 1883; Norway published in 1874, 1878, 1892, 1897, 1903; Sweden published in 1875, 1877.

⁶⁵ For more on Baedeker, see Hinrichsen (1991).

Spitsbergen.⁶⁶ After his death, Baedeker's sons continued his business, and the number of guides to worldwide destinations runs into the hundreds. One of the more dubious successes of the Baedeker guidebook was the 'Baedeker raids', German bombing attacks on Britain's cultural institutions in 1942, so named because the targets were all starred attractions in the Baedeker guidebook to Britain (Buzard 1993: 66).

Overall, Murray and Baedeker understood the importance of impartial and unprejudiced guides. They both emphasised the fact that information should be comprehensive, but also brief enough for the tourist to consider all the available options before making a decision according to personal interests. By regularly updating their guides, Murray and Baedeker also understood the significance of reliability and currency of their products, thus creating the modern concept of the guidebook.

A central irony in the histories of the Baedeker and Murray handbooks and of the Thomas Cook company is that all three began with nearly heroic efforts of individual initiative and discovery, undertaken by men who saw themselves as helping to make travel both more accessible *and* more independent; but the way to achieve this goal was ultimately to put those efforts and that desire to work in an increasingly organized, bureaucratic framework.

(Buzard 1993: 47-8)

In 1841, the Derbyshire book salesman and Baptist preacher, Thomas Cook, was travelling on the newly opened Midland Counties Railways when he came up with the idea of organising tours for his fellow worshippers.⁶⁷ From these small beginnings he built a travel empire, unrivalled in the nineteenth century, and still in existence today. What was new about Cook's tours was that he arranged everything for the traveller, devised guidebooks and agreed hotel

⁶⁶ Spitsbergen is a Norwegian island in Arctic Ocean, belonging to the Svalbard archipelago.

⁶⁷ For more on Thomas Cook, see Turner and Ash (1975: 51-9) and Brendon (1991).

discounts. His voucher system meant that the tourist could budget beforehand, an important aspect in a time where the traveller had limited funds. He catered for a growing market among the middle classes and it has been estimated that as early as 1840, a hundred thousand Britons⁶⁸ travelled to Europe every year (Brendon 1991: 11). Cook's business idea was truly unique in its time, and everyone, including the seasoned traveller Mark Twain (1835-1910), was impressed by his services:

Cook has made travel easy and a pleasure. He will sell you a ticket to any place on the globe, or all the places and give you all the time you need and much more besides. It provides hotels for you everywhere...and you cannot be overcharged for the coupons show just how much you must pay...

(Twain, quoted by Turner and Ash 1975: 55)

The spread of Cook's operation to Norway is chronicled in Scarlett (1921), a history of the development of tourism from Scarlett's position as Cook's agent in Norway. The first office of *Cooks Verdensreisebureau* [Cook's World Travel Agency] was opened in Bergen in 1890, on the recommendation of Scarlett, because its western location was ideal for travellers from Britain wanting to tour the fjords on the west coast (Scarlett 1921: 176). *Cook's Guide to Norway, Sweden and Denmark* was published shortly after in 1891 mainly as an alternative to Baedeker which was considered too comprehensive and too expensive for a two-week holiday. It was also felt to lack a proper understanding of the political situation between Norway and Sweden which angered many Norwegians and they begrudged the fact that most visitors were informed by a foreigner's incorrect portrayal of their country (Scarlett 1921: 198-9).

⁶⁸ Total population of Britain at the time was 27 million.

The desire among Scandinavians to write their own guidebooks was often fuelled by these incorrect observations in foreign guidebooks. The main problem was, however, the authors' poor command of the English language. The Norwegian equivalent of Murray, Baedeker and Cook, for instance, was the historian and geographer Yngvar Nielsen (1843-1916) whose *Reisehaandbog over Norge* [Travel Handbook of Norway] was published in twelve editions between 1879 and 1915. Nielsen has been credited with having a great importance for walking tourism in Norway (see Slagstad (2006)), but the English edition of his handbook (Nielsen (1894)) was poorly translated and never gained much popularity among foreigners. Scarlett, who spoke both Norwegian and English, recounted several experiences of British travellers being amused by the native guidebooks and their peculiar English. Once he saw a whole group of English people on the boat from Christiania to England listening intently to someone he identifies as 'the popular actor Terry from London' [den populære Skuespiller Terry fra London] who was reading the following section aloud from a guidebook:

'When you reach Sandviken, you will exit the railway station and go up the hill, and when you have reached the top of hill, you will find the inn where you will become a horse.'⁶⁹

(Scarlett 1921: 199)

The Norwegian translator had mixed up the German word 'bekommen' [to get] with the English 'become' much to the amusement of this party.

Cook was not the first person to see the potential of Norway as a tourist destination, however, and though he cannot be credited with the same

⁶⁹ 'Naar De kommer til Sandviken, gaar de ud af Jernbanestationen og op over en bage, og naar De er kommet op paa Toppen af Bakken, vil De finde Skydsstationen, hvor *De vil blive en Hest*'.

worldwide impact as Cook, the Englishman Thomas Bennett's (1814-1898) impact on Norwegian tourism must be mentioned. Having settled in Christiania, after fighting in the Danish army in 1848, Bennett soon became associated with the British Consulate as an advisor to British travellers in Norway. He also 'did a lot to improve the travel situation in Norway, amongst other things starting up the first taxi service in Kristiania and opening boarding houses on the main routes across the country' (Linn 2004: 145). Thomas Cook did contact Bennett to see if a working relationship could be established, but Bennett preferred to stay independent on the grounds that Cook's mass tourism was not suitable for Norway, where the infrastructure was not able to cope with a large number of travellers. Bennett wanted to serve the travellers content with basic standards and not the spoiled tourist at whom Cook had aimed his business (Scarlett 1921: 75-6). As a teacher of English, he was also the principal author of an English grammar, *Bennetts Præktiske Lærebog i det engelske Sprog* [Bennett's Practical Grammar in the English Language] (1862), though enlisting the help of Johan Storm in the writing of his work to ensure a phonetician's input in the section on pronunciation (see Linn 2004: 144-7).

5.4 Case studies

The guidebooks vary in composition and length and the elements included in earlier works are by no means homogeneous in comparison with, for example, the emigrant phrasebooks. There is a distinct difference between the 'professional' guidebooks of Murray and Baedeker – often referred to as 'stereotyped' guidebooks – and the individual efforts of Scandinavians. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, the stereotyped guidebooks were dominating

the market, and as a result it became increasingly difficult to publish a successful guidebook as an individual. However, a few core elements are always present in the guidebooks due to the topic they are dealing with – to inform foreigners visiting Scandinavia about the region. Some authors chose to include a brief history of each country, most provided lists of the main travel routes and destinations, and there was usually a description of local customs, manners and traditions. Finally, the great majority incorporated a section on language aware of the fact that most travellers would be visiting areas where limited English was spoken.

5.4.1 Historical and social observations

Samuel Laing (1780-1868) was a Scottish travel writer who spent time in Scandinavia in the middle part of the nineteenth century. His observations were published in London in three separate volumes and aimed at enhancing British knowledge of Scandinavia. In his *Observations* (1852) he summarises at length the history of the Viking tribes that came to the British Isles and refers to Denmark as, ‘the home of his forefathers [and] a country peculiarly interesting to the English traveller’ (Laing 1852: v). He explains that in the Danish people the traveller will find ‘some traces of the spirit, energy, and character which so remarkably distinguish the people of England and of the United States from the people of Germany at the present day’ (Laing 1852: vi). Laing’s statement hints at some animosity towards Germany and the current political situation in Europe, bearing in mind that he was writing at the time when tensions between Denmark and Germany were increasing over the Schleswig-Holstein issue. It is also possible to suggest that he was influenced by the Romantic movement and

its fascination with the history of the North, but he had actually directed a veiled criticism towards them in his other work, *A Tour in Sweden in 1838* (1839):

The future historian will probably complain that the English travellers of the present generation, while they lavish the highest talents on descriptions of personal feelings or adventures, or romantic natural scenery, or striking objects in the sciences or fine arts, have left few of the more humble facts or observations, from which he can appreciate and describe the advance of society, in different countries, towards a higher condition in morals, laws, good government, physical well-being, and civilisation.

(Laing 1839: iii)

Laing appears to be a matter-of-fact individual who is more interested in modern developments and the political situation in the countries he is visiting rather than their distant history. He only discusses history if it serves a purpose such as explaining the current conflict between Denmark and Germany. His work on Norway is recommended by John Murray in his handbook from 1839 for anyone who 'is anxious to gain an insight into the social and political phenomena of the modern Norsemen' (Anon. 1839: 48).

Similarly, the guidebooks written by Scandinavians do not dedicate many pages to the history of their countries. This can partly be explained by the fact that National Romanticism came to Scandinavia rather later, but also that the majority of the authors did not belong to the small intellectual elite influenced by this. They belonged to the capitalist middle class and saw the production of a guidebook as a means to financial gain, rather than a vehicle for discussing ideological currents. Instead they focused on the practical and tangible elements which they thought would have the largest commercial effect. In *The Stranger's Guide through Sweden* (1824), for example, the anonymous Swedish author has chosen to call the preface *Advertisement* and in no way disguises the fact that this work is intended to promote Sweden on a commercial

level. The history section is copied directly from another work⁷⁰ and shows that while the author felt that such a section had to be included, no particular political message was conveyed through it as was the case with Laing (1839) above.

The commercial aspect is clearly evident in the guidebooks written by Scandinavians themselves. Louis Eklöf-Hill's *The Traveller's Illustrated Guide of Sweden* (1890) does not have a traditional preface at all, but instead a fabricated letter describing why Sweden is a great country to visit and why this particular guide is the best companion on the journey:

...shire, May 1889.

Dear Lizzie,

Oh I am so glad, I don't know what, but I am going to tell you in a few lines. My own dear Henry asked me the other day at the breakfast-table how I should like to spend this summer. He has long observed my pale cheeks and feeble health, and listened to our doctor's advice as to a change of scene and taking a recreation trip for a few months. As I have repeatedly heard from the Moores and Stephens, besides a great many other who have visited *Sweden*, that it is a beautiful and healthy country, he at once consented, and we are going to start in about three weeks. Oh how delighted I am, I have heard so much about this country, "*the land of the midnight sun*" with its grand cataracts, rivers, invigorating dense *pine forests*, brooks, glades, beautiful lakes and rivulets affording splendid opportunities for fishing excursions.

I have also heard about its fine, stately old palaces and castles, with their historical collections from old times. And, last but not least, the polite and obliging inhabitants, their fine and swift steamers, and the very moderate rates of charges.

If you wish to join us you are quite welcome, but should you start later I'll advise you to procure from a bookseller "*The Illustrated Guide in Sweden*", a true and reliable description of the country.

My heartiest love to you all.

Maud L.....

(Eklöf-Hill 1890: 5-6)

This unashamed promotion of one's own work must be understood in the context of its time of publication. By 1890, Murray and Baedeker's handbooks

⁷⁰ Guthrie, *A New Geographical, Historical, and Commercial Grammar*, published in several editions in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

dominated the guidebook market and for a competing work to have any chance of success it had to use all available means of self-promotion. As we saw with Lunn (1896), he had given up beforehand, but Eklöf-Hill really made a concerted effort to make his guidebook entertaining, providing illustrations which broke up pages of dense, rather trivial text and of course adding *A Small Vocabulary, Very Valuable to the Tourist Unacquainted with the Language*.

5.4.2 Routes and destinations

The second main element included in a typical guidebook was a detailed description of the main travel routes and destinations. As the quality of the road networks in Scandinavia varied greatly, it was important that the traveller knew the best ways to get around. Thomas Cook completely skipped this step by offering pre-arranged tours where obstacles such as impassable roads and sub-standard accommodation were avoided. In the opinion of Enzensberger (1996), the progress of tourism can be illustrated by three of its achievements: standardisation, packaging and serial production. Cook's ready-made itineraries, launched in 1868, meant that from now on 'the trip was delivered as assembled and packaged' and that 'adventure had become something pre-arranged, with all risks eliminated' (Enzensberger 1996: 130). These itineraries were reproduced all over Europe and included the same popular sights and attractions. Through this process of serialisation and standardisation, tourists increasingly followed these itineraries in large groups much to the chagrin of people such as Almqvist (section 5.2.3).

Murray, Baedeker and Cook were trusted because their guidebooks were well-researched and offered reliable information. This was not the case for the

native guidebooks, and Eklöf-Hill (1890), for example, had to ask his readers to simply trust his word whenever his description was somewhat lacking in detail. Describing rail travel in Sweden, he refrains from providing any specific information and instead notes that ‘to describe the scenery of each place or station would be needless repetition *we assure you it is lovely everywhere*’ (Eklöf-Hill 1890: 34, my emphasis).

5.4.3 Customs, manners and traditions

The people of Scandinavia were still relatively unknown to foreigners in the nineteenth century and most of the guidebooks took it upon themselves to describe their common customs, manners and traditions. This was done in order to prevent culture clashes and enable the foreign visitor to join in local activities without feeling completely out of place. In *The Stranger’s Guide through Sweden* (1824), a typical Swedish meal is described in some detail and the author is not best pleased with the Scandinavian drinking culture:

In this, as in other cold climates, the custom of drinking spirits, and particularly brandy, rather prevails too much; even people of fashion, and sometimes the ladies themselves, who by no means deserve an improper epithet, comply with this pernicious custom. Their manner of conducting themselves at a table must have a very singular appearance to a stranger.

(Anon. 1824: 6)

Murray’s handbook similarly notes that: ‘The besetting sin of all northern nations is drunkenness – a vice from which the Norsemen are by no means exempt’ (Anon. 1839: 49). Baird (1841a) chooses to highlight the peasantry when commenting upon manners, thus staying true to the Romantic notions of the peasant as representative of the true national spirit of a country through their customs:

[...] there is a large degree of morality among the middle and lower classes of the people. In this respect these classes unquestionably excel the higher classes of the society, as they are called, including the most wealthy people as well as the very numerous nobility. The peasantry of the entire kingdom sustain an excellent reputation.

(Baird 1841a: 308)

The author of *The Stranger's Guide through Sweden* (1824) is clearly occupied with providing a detailed guide to manners in Sweden and devotes several pages to how to address various individuals ranging from children through to the monarch. In case the traveller should need to write a letter to a Swede, there is also a guide on how to correctly compose a letter to people such as barons, noblemen, archbishops and deans (Anon. 1824: 88). The ordinary tourist, travelling on one of Cook's tours, or using the handbooks of Murray and Baedeker, would never need to know such things, and *The Stranger's Guide* is aimed at the upper classes who would often write in advance to their peers in the country they were visiting to request information or letters of introduction. This practice was common especially in countries where foreign travel was not widespread. In 1820, for example, the retired captain, Arthur de Capell Brook (1791-1858) embarked on a journey from England to Gothenburg, and upon arrival, 'he called on the provincial governor, Count Gustaf Rosen, who provided him with letters of introduction' (Marshall-Cornwall 1978: 250). Further along his journey, 'he obtained a passport to travel in Norway and a letter of introduction from the Norwegian Minister of State' (Marshall-Cornwall 1978: 250). This emphasises the fact that even in the nineteenth century, there was still a marked difference between the traditional traveller and the modern tourist. The guidebooks, therefore, had to aim their contents at a specific group of reader. Detailed sections on history and customs often meant that the work

was aimed at an upper class audience while the stereotyped guidebooks were aimed at the middle classes with both Murray and Baedeker to a large extent abandoning such elements.

5.4.4 *The Stranger's Guide through Sweden (1824)*

From the point of view of the history of popular language works, the most important element in a typical nineteenth-century guidebook was the language section. The majority of the authors themselves by no means considered this the most central part and the section was often appended at the end of a work. There is, however, much knowledge to be gained from examining in detail how they chose to structure their information on the language. What did they consider most important for the foreign traveller wishing to communicate with people in Scandinavia? And how did they approach teaching the basics of a foreign language in a limited number of pages? As Murray's handbook became increasingly popular towards the end of the century, most copied his formula and did not provide language sections at all. Murray usually recommended learning some basic phrases but considered this 'a work of very trifling labour' (Anon. 1839: 5) and assured the reader that 'both the Danish and Swedish languages bear so strong an affinity to the English, that they are not found difficult to acquire' (Anon. 1848: 3). So while Murray did not consider a language section necessary for his handbooks, the majority of the other guidebook authors usually provided a brief guide to pronunciation, a short description of grammar and a list of words and phrases useful on the journey.

As was common at the time, the author of *The Stranger's Guide through Sweden* (1824) was anonymous. The only thing we can ascertain is that this work was written by an individual who spoke English and wanted to provide a guidebook to Sweden. The preface, called *Advertisement*, as discussed in section 5.4.1, does not shed any light on the identity of the author either. Here the aim of the guidebook is explained:

My design is evident. Taking for granted, that the traveller, who for the first time arrives in this country, is unacquainted with the language as well as the way of travelling, manners and customs, I therefore have compiled this little volume for his use. I trust he will excuse the narrowness and vulgarity of the topicks, to which especially the latter part of this compendium (the Dialogues) is confined, they being just such as are wanted for his information; [...]

(Anon. 1824: no p.n.)

This explicitly states that this guidebook intends to teach the reader about the language, travelling and manners and customs. The author also pre-empts any criticism of the work by apologising in advance for the 'narrowness and vulgarity of the topicks', in particular the dialogues. Whether this meant that a language section had to be crude because it incorporated examples of everyday language remains a speculation. If we, however, consider the time of publication it could just mean that the inclusion of dialogues and phrases in travel works was still unusual and the author was apologising for their simplicity. Murray and Baedeker were still unknown within the guidebook genre and personal travelogues dominated travel literature. In this sense, *The Stranger's Guide* was actually before its time and its approach to guidebook writing was to become the standard later on in the nineteenth century. The structure of this work and Murray's *Handbook for Northern Europe* (1848) are strikingly similar. Both start with an introductory section providing general information about geography, climate, natural resources and other practical issues such as

passports and currency. This is followed by a section on travelling, listing the most popular excursions and tours and the easiest modes of transport. The similarities between the works end with *The Stranger's Guide* providing a section with dialogues, while Murray's (1848) does not have a language element to it. Thus, for the purpose of comparison and development of the language element in tourist guidebooks, *The Stranger's Guide* will be compared with a *Norwegian Grammar with a Glossary for Tourists* (1889) published more than sixty years later and written, rather unusually for its time, by two women, Marie Smith and Helene Horneman. This work was published in three editions (1899, 1895 and 1914) and was also translated into German, *Norwegische Grammatik nebst einem Glossar für Touristen* in 1890.

5.4.4.1 Pronunciation

This section was commonly called *The Alphabet* or *Guide to Letters*. In the *Stranger's Guide* there is no attempt at devising a transcription system of Swedish sounds, but it is assumed that the reader knows French as some of the sounds are likened to sounds in the French language. The guide to pronunciation looks in part like this:

A sounds as in the English words *Palm*, all.
D before [sic] *j* is not sounded: *djur*, read your.
E sounds partly as *e* in *men*, or *a* in *name*, and partly as the French *é*.
F before *v*, and in the end of [sic] a word sounds always as *v*: *graf*, *stafva*.
H is always aspirated, except before *j* and *v*: *hjul*, *hvem*, read *yul*, *vem*.
I sounds always as the English *e* in *be*.
O has two sounds, the one as the English *o* in *more*, which is exactly the same as that of *Å*; the other as *u* in *ful*, or very near the sound in the last syllable of *narrow*.
Q is only used before *v*, and both letters are then sounded as in the word *question*.
U sounds nearly as *oo*, or as *u* in *ruin*.
V and *W* have the very same sounds, always as *v*.
Y sounds as *u* in the French word *une*.
Å sounds as *o* in *long*, some.

Ä sounds as a in fable.
Ö sounds as eu in the French word *feu*, or nearest to i before r, as in thirsty,
törstig.
C before the hard vowels is sounded as K.
C before the soft vowels is sounded as S.
G before the hard vowels is sounded as g in God.
G before the soft vowels is sounded as J.
K before the hard vowels is sounded as K in King.
K before the soft vowels is sounded as tj.

(Anon. 1824: 83-4)

This list reveals that the author had given some consideration to these descriptions. As we do not know how familiar the author was with language teaching in general, we can only again acknowledge that trying to describe the sounds of a language without the aid of phonetic symbols was a common problem in the age before any sort of transcription (section 6.4.1). Any shortcomings in this guide are already excused at the beginning of the work where the author writes: ‘I hope also, that the faults of the pen of a Native will be overlooked, provided the information he wishes to communicate, can be understood’ (Anon. 1824: no p.n.). The use of terms such as ‘sounded’, ‘aspirated’, ‘hard and soft vowels’ does indicate, however, that the author did have at least some basic knowledge of the description of sounds or that some time had been devoted to consider how sounds are actually produced.

When comparing this with the *Norwegian Grammar* (1889), it becomes clear that even though this was written specifically with language teaching in mind and the tourist aspect was a side issue, not much had changed over the course of more than sixty years. The section on pronunciation here begins with an introduction in which it is stressed that ‘the pronunciation of several of the letters, is different from the English pronunciation, and must be carefully studied’ (Smith and Horneman 1889: 2). As discussed in the analysis of Ulvestad’s *Selvhjelp i Engelsk* (1892) (section 4.6.1), doubt can be expressed as

to whether readers actually took the time needed to fully understand the pronunciation guide. In this case, to assist the reader, the method of explaining the nature of a Norwegian sound by finding a similar English sound is employed, for example ‘*a* pronounced like *a* in *father*’ or ‘*e* pronounced like *e* in *chemist*’ (Smith and Hornemann 1889: 2). The method is not applied to the whole alphabet and actually the majority simply have a written pronunciation of a single letter, such as ‘*m* [pronounced as] *em*’, ‘*n* [pronounced as] *en*’, ‘*o* [pronounced as] *o*’, ‘*p* [pronounced as] *pey*’ and ‘*q* [pronounced as] *koo*’. The readers are also, as in *The Stranger’s Guide*, expected to have some knowledge of French and understand the pronunciation of Norwegian ‘*ø*’ as French ‘*eu*’. While the readers of this grammar could not be expected to have a specialised knowledge of foreign languages, it seems rather too simplified to inform them, for instance, that the pronunciation of English ‘*o*’ is ‘*o*’ in Norwegian. The authors seem to agree as the next few pages do provide further explanation of how consonants, vowels and diphthongs are pronounced dependent on their word position.

5.4.4.2 Grammar

A grammar section was by no means mandatory in the guidebooks of the nineteenth century. *The Stranger’s Guide* (1824), for example, does not have one at all and it is apparent that many authors did not deem a section on grammar necessary, acknowledging that most readers would not bother with it anyway. In that sense they were more enlightened than the phrasebook writers who for the great majority included a grammar section. Yet, we also have to acknowledge that the scope in terms of language learning was different. The

guidebooks did not claim that their readers would become completely proficient in English whereas this was common in the phrasebooks. Smith and Horneman (1889) have a fifty-page grammar section, but this is because it was specifically marketed as a grammar with the *Glossary for Tourists* added as an appendix. In this work, there is no introductory explanation as to how to use this section and it launches straight into a description of the articles neglecting to define an article or what its function is in language. The description is kept simple, however, and it is possible to gather from it the function of an article even if one has no deeper knowledge of formal grammar. The authors have added several notes throughout this section whenever there is a difference between what they term ‘colloquial’ and ‘literary’ language. This proves that their grammar was specifically intended for readers who would be visiting Norway because they expected them to be faced with situations in which the spoken language would be heard. They do not, on the other hand, give an indication of where one would be likely to encounter the colloquial language and whether it would be wise to adopt these forms.

5.4.4.3 Dialogues and word lists

In *The Stranger’s Guide* (1824), the ‘Dialogues’ are by far the most interesting section of the whole guidebook. This section is commonly the section where it is possible to gain some insight into the author’s aim of the work, besides the obvious one of wanting to provide the reader with a travel guide. It is structured with examples in English on one page and Swedish translations on the page facing it. There is no guide to pronunciation and the dialogues have titles such as ‘With a Customhouse-Officer’, ‘To enquire after an

inn' and 'At a Tavern'. In the dialogue called 'In a Bookseller's Shop', there is a clear indication that travellers of the time were now beginning to ask for books helpful on their journey. The bookseller is asked to send a good dictionary of Swedish and English to the traveller. When the bookseller shows him one, he replies: 'No, this is to [sic] bulky. Have you not got a pocket one' (Anon. 1824: 105-6)? The use of the term 'pocket' shows that Murray some fifteen years later addressed a real need among travellers for handy guides even if he did ignore the language element to a large extent. From a modern perspective, the most useful part of *The Stranger's Guide* (1824) is found at the back of the book where nearly forty pages are devoted to 'A short Vocabulary of such Swedish Words as are in common use'. While full phrases and paragraphs might seem more constructive and provide a more coherent structure, anyone not familiar with a foreign language would usually stick to individual words when trying to communicate in that language. If this section was included on the basis that there would be no grammar section and no details on how to structure a sentence can only remain a speculation.

Smith and Hornemann's (1889) glossary section totals five pages and is a concise list of words organised according to specific themes such as the hotel, meals, clothes, letters, travelling, weather, country, sport, time, days, months and seasons. Again, only individual words and no phrases are provided, but in contrast to *The Stranger's Guide*, the reader might be expected to be able to construct utterances based on the fact that this work also contains a detailed grammar of the Norwegian language.

5.5 Evaluation

The direct aim of travel guidebooks was never to teach a foreign language. They never promised their readers that they would turn them into fluent speakers of a particular language, and in that respect this is where the marked difference between guidebooks and phrasebooks can be found. In this chapter it has therefore not been appropriate to discuss the language learning process of tourists as a comparison with the emigrants in Chapter 4. The overall usefulness of the teaching methods in the guidebooks cannot be assessed to the same degree because the readers did not have the same acute need to acquire the English language. Instead, we have to focus on why the guidebooks included a language element and how the readers would have used this resource. They did to some extent adopt the same approach as Berlitz did later when devising his language manuals:

M. D. Berlitz asked himself the more specific question: *Who* is going to communicate with *whom*? He imagined the following two protagonists in those basic life situations which necessitate oral communication with natives: a) The traveller in a foreign country – tourist, soldier, salesman, or whatever his capacity may be; b) The native who, in his own country, wishes to use the foreign idiom in his contacts with foreigners – i.e. as a customs official, hotel keeper or employer, waiter, airline employee, etc.

(Stieglitz 1955: 301)

In the nineteenth century, few Scandinavians spoke foreign languages. When leisure tourism took off, the first concern was to provide visitors with acceptable places to stay and relatively comfortable modes of transport. The Scandinavians did not expect foreign visitors to speak their language and they employed native speakers, such as Thomas Bennett, to act as interpreters. However, it was, and still is, considered respectful etiquette for a tourist to be familiar with a few phrases in the language of the country visited. The

guidebook authors therefore provided such phrases as a part of the overall package of information about the foreign country. That Murray and Baedeker did not offer phrases in their guidebooks is a sign of the modernisation and specialisation of the guidebook genre. Their works were known for being thorough and comprehensive, but at the same time, they were also popular because they were handy and inexpensive. If all these criteria had to be fulfilled, then something had to give. The language section, therefore, was left out because there was no room for it. As this was a *travel* guidebook, it was deemed more important to include as much information as possible on this element and as a result opened up the market for more specific phrasebooks.

The stereotyped guidebooks were also representative of the general attitudes of the mass tourism concept as a whole. Almqvist (1961) criticised the hordes of tourists following their guidebooks' identical itineraries around Paris and concluded that they would never get to know the real people of this city (section 5.2.3). But these were modern tourists, usually only on a brief one- or two-week visit, and most were eager to see as many of the famous sites as possible. By forming part of a stream of visitors going to the same places where the native population was used to foreigners, there was no need to learn phrases in the foreign language. The guidebooks written by native authors, on the other hand, did include a language section and indicate that a lack of cultural and linguistic diplomacy was indicative of the stereotyped guidebooks and mass tourism in general.

Chapter 6: Learning the Spoken Language

6.1 Introduction

In this chapter the particular difficulty of learning to speak a foreign language will be examined. Reading, writing and speaking are the basic skills required in second language acquisition and whereas the first two can be mastered with some competence without the aid of a teacher, the latter is much more problematic. In language courses today, it is common practice to include audio material which familiarises the learner with the distinctive sounds of the language, but this was not possible in the nineteenth century. Early language teaching methods, of which the grammar-translation method was the most dominant, generally ignored the spoken language and instead focused on writing and translation skills (section 2.1.1). These were deemed the only necessary skills because language teaching was essentially concerned with students being able to read foreign literature. However, with popular language works the immediate objective changed and the learners consulting these works did so because they had gain enough proficiency to engage in everyday communication with speakers of other languages. As a result, the spoken language was now placed at the forefront of their teaching methodology and how this was dealt with in terms of transcription is the topic of this chapter.

A universal system of phonetic transcription was not agreed upon until 1889 with the publication of the *International Phonetic Alphabet* so we cannot expect to find evidence of this in earlier popular language works, but even the ones published after this time seem more or less unaware of current developments. The authors of popular language works were not phoneticians, so

section 6.4 (with the benefit of hindsight) will analyse how their systems of transcription measured up in terms of explaining pronunciation to non-specialist language learners. Their methods are then compared with the more professional methods of the practical linguists and determine whether there were any correlations between the two.

6.2 Second language acquisition

The issue of how to teach a foreign language most effectively has been around for centuries, but the methods applied have changed considerably over the last fifty years or so. This could indicate that language teaching before then suffered from a lack of innovation and while this is true for traditional school instruction, some of the popular language works were surprisingly innovative and refreshing. To some degree this was due to the fact that:

Changes in language teaching methods throughout history have reflected recognition of changes in the kind of proficiency learners need, such as a move toward oral proficiency rather than reading comprehension as the goal of language study.

(Richards and Rodgers 2001: 3)

This is a very important point in relation to this study where it has already been highlighted numerous times that utilitarian language learning emerged as a consequence of a real and urgent need on the part of the learners to be able to communicate effectively in everyday life with speakers of other languages. To them oral proficiency was the main goal.

6.2.1 A methodological change

Today language teaching is considered a subfield of applied linguistics alongside other fields such as language pedagogy, communication, cognition, bilingualism and psycholinguistics. Historically, however, applied linguistics emerged as the institutionalised form of language teaching. In the early days of the discipline, there was no distinction between the process of teaching and learning a language, and it was only around the middle of the twentieth century that a distinct concern with language learning theories came about in the form of second language acquisition (SLA). This has prompted some to argue that the beginning of applied linguistics proper can be placed with the publication of the journal *Language Learning* in 1948. This was the ‘first periodical (though not the first publication) to have the words “Applied Linguistics” in its subtitle: *A Quarterly Journal of Applied Linguistics*’ (Catford 1998: 157). Another central element to early applied linguistics was the concern with pedagogy. The learner was no longer irrelevant and his/her wellbeing and comfort in the learning process were now actively discussed. This also seems to have been one of the main motivations behind the publication of *Language Learning* as its Director, David W. Reed wrote in the first volume:

Periodicals in linguistics, while including many articles of a descriptive nature, are not ordinarily concerned with the pedagogical implications of linguistic science. The present journal, in contrast, will present only those linguistic articles which, at least implicitly, contribute to the improvement of foreign language learning and teaching.

(Reed 1948: 2)

This first volume of the new journal was very much an exploratory enterprise with contributors attempting to set out what the journal hoped to achieve and on which foundations these hopes were built. A. H. Marckwardt’s article on

‘Motives for the study of modern languages’ is a historical outline of language learning and he stresses the fact that circumstances under which the language is learnt have an effect on the kind of proficiency required by the learner. He states that ‘trade and commerce as motives for language study are likely to stress an elementary and practical approach rather than a thorough mastery’ (Marckwardt 1948: 10).

The main difference between earlier and later language teaching methods is that the latter adopted a ‘communicative approach’ which took into consideration the language learner’s knowledge of the language as a whole including phonology, morphology and syntax. The term was officially coined in 1977 by the ethnographic sociolinguist Dell Hymes and was an indication of the fact that:

As the goals of ELT became more concerned with enabling learners to interact successfully with members of other societies, so the exploration of applied linguistics into the components of communicative ability assumed increasing relevance and usefulness to the work of classroom teachers and materials designers.

(Hedge 2000: 46)

Again, we see an instance of applied linguistics not really recognising the history of the discipline unless an accepted term for a phenomenon exists. The ‘communicative approach’ is thus explained to have its roots in the 1970s whereas we have obvious instances of it in language teaching methods around 1900. The best known example is the Direct Method also called the Natural Method. One of the main proponents of this method was the American immigrant Maximilian Berlitz (1852-1921) who was a native speaker of German. He set up the very successful Berlitz Language Schools which still exist today. The main principles of his method were very clear and followed in

all the schools: ‘no translation under any circumstance, a strong emphasis on oral work, avoidance of grammatical explanations until late in the course, and the maximum use of question-and-answer techniques’ (Howatt and Widdowson 2004: 224).

Prior to this the grammar-translation method had been the dominant one. This method was not concerned with teaching the spoken language and focused on drills and written translation exercises. Its main aim was to equip students with the ability to read foreign literature.

Because the so-called ‘superior’ languages like Latin and Greek were taught through the Grammar-translation method only, it became very natural that, when students began to learn a modern foreign language and when the teaching/learning of a modern foreign language first became popular, the same language teaching method was imitated, since the basic goal was not communication but translation of the foreign language into the native language – or vice versa.

(Byram 2000: 251)

However, this method was not really suitable for the popular language works as they focused on the spoken language:

Speaking the foreign language was not the goal, and oral practice was limited to students reading aloud the sentences they had translated. These sentences were constructed to illustrate the grammatical system of the language and consequently bore no relation to the language of real communication.

(Richards and Rodgers 2001: 4)

In any subject with lively methodological discussions, the question of which method is the better will always be raised. The history of language teaching methodology is full of instances where someone has claimed that here is the method which is going to solve all language teaching problems. However, I am not claiming that the methods employed in the popular language works were any better than other methods at the time. Yet, I do believe their success was a result of fulfilling the requirements of their readers by providing dialogues

of everyday language, useful word lists, brief grammar descriptions and, most importantly, a guide to pronunciation when speaking the language. In this study, I have continuously tried to revise perceptions of language teaching methods by highlighting that an evaluation of their quality should be based not just on the method itself but also measured in terms of overall context. This is echoed by Adamson (2006) who argues that ‘no method is inherently superior to another; instead, some methods are more appropriate than others in a particular context’ (Adamson 2006: 605). That is why I have not treated methods intended for use in formal instruction (e.g. grammar-translation and the Direct Method) in great detail because the learning experience of students in traditional school settings cannot be compared to that of self-directed learners.

6.3 Autonomy in learning

The issue of how to teach a foreign language most effectively has been the subject of an extensive and prolonged debate ever since language teaching entered formal education. For most of this period, however, the learners have been largely ignored in these discussions. Today, we are fully aware that not all people acquire new skills in the same way and acknowledging the individuality of each student is one of the main concerns of the modern pedagogue. Throughout this study the emphasis has been on the learners and how they acquired foreign languages through the means of popular language works. The supplementary information about why these ordinary Scandinavians needed to acquire foreign languages provides us with a complete picture of the typical nineteenth-century utilitarian language learner.

The distinction between teaching and learning is an important one to make. The popular language works might be called teaching manuals, but the word ‘teaching’ implies a certain degree of dynamism – an act undertaken by someone for the benefit of someone else (hopefully). If no one reads a teaching manual it is not fulfilling its purpose and that is why the learner is so important in this respect. The recipient of instruction is of course central to all teaching situations, but it is only recently that this has been recognised. The theory of autonomy in language learning was discussed in sections 1.4 and 2.1.3, and it was stressed that letting the learner take control of the learning process can be a constructive strategy. In non-formal educational settings this is often the only option anyway, but now it is also believed that there are benefits to be had from abandoning the traditional teacher-student setup in education. Again the success of self-direction depends a lot on the individual learner and, as we saw in Chapters 4 and 5, true autonomy may not always be achieved. This is due to fact that ‘a self-instruction context for learning does not automatically equate with learner autonomy but autonomy may arise and develop within the learner as a response to the specific demands of a self-instruction context’ (White 1995: 209). Some learners, when put in charge of tasks such as problem-solving and information-gathering without the guidance from a teacher, will resort to more inventive and personalised ways of completing these tasks whereas others will not. The utilitarian language learners were given the tools to become autonomous, i.e. popular language works, but not all of them rose to the task and they are the ones who ultimately failed to use these manuals in a constructive manner. We cannot therefore lay the blame entirely for the variation in language proficiency among readers of popular language works at the door of the works

themselves. As discussed previously, the grammar sections did not differ much from formal teaching grammars of the nineteenth century and limited consideration was given to the utilitarian language learners' non-existent knowledge of formal language structures. Acknowledgement of the learners' basic language skills was only really evident in one section and that was the one that dealt with speaking the language. This was where the authors of popular language works recognised that a departure from traditional language teaching methodology was necessary if their readers were to acquire the everyday communicative competence they so desperately needed. Some were more successful than others and this was partly down to the systems of transcription devised, but also, and more generally, because 'the provision of speaking practice appears the toughest nut to crack' (Jones 1993: 455) – a problem still prevalent today.

6.4 The spoken language in popular language works

The majority of authors of popular language works acknowledged that to successfully acquire a foreign language, the spoken language had to be mastered first. This was later to be reiterated by the practical linguists who used their knowledge of phonetics to incorporate this into new methods of language teaching (section 6.5). The creator of the Audio-Lingual Method, Charles Fries, was also of the belief that: 'The basic problems however in the early stages of learning a language are first, the mastery of the sound system – to understand the stream of speech, to hear the distinctive sound features, and to approximate their production [...]' (Fries 1948: 12-3). Yet, despite showing a real concern with the acquisition of the spoken language, some authors of popular language

works were better at implementing methods acting upon this concern than others. One of these was Niels Stockfleth Schultz (1780-1832) who explained in the preface to his *Practisk engelsk Sproglære* [Practical English Grammar] from 1807:

[...] pronunciation must be learnt by the sound [i.e. by listening] and cannot be made clear by rules alone, at least not in English which has such a different pronunciation from ours, and where the same sound is often realised by the use of different symbols and – vice versa – each vowel has various sounds. Even the method used in many dictionaries where alternative symbols are used to make each syllable's unique sound known is [...] absolutely not sufficient enough to make oral instruction unnecessary for a beginner.⁷¹

(Schultz 1807: vii)

Schultz was a typical representative of an author of a popular language work in terms of life experience. From 1809 until his death he was the residing chaplain at Church of Our Lady in Trondheim while teaching free of charge at the local *realskole*. Before that he had served in the Danish army and took part in the defence of Copenhagen in 1801 and 1807, turning to private language tutoring in Copenhagen thereafter.⁷² It was during this period that he published his *Practisk engelsk Sproglære* (1807), long before attention was directed towards the spoken language in teaching. His practical teaching experience seems to have made him an early reformer in terms of understanding the need for an established system of transcription. Schultz understood that in order to acquire the correct pronunciation of a foreign language, the learner must be able to hear the language spoken out loud by a skilled speaker.

⁷¹ '[...] Udtalen maae læres ved Lyden, og kan ikke ved Regler alene tydeligen fremstilles for Øiet: allermindst i det Engelske, der er saa forskjelligt i Udtale fra vort, og hvor ofte den samme Lyd udtrykkes ved forskjellige Tegn, og – omvendt – enhver Vocal har forskjellige Lyd. Selv den i mange Dictionairer forsøgte Maade, med andre Tegn at gjøre enhver Stavelses særegne Lyd kjendelig, er [...] aldeles ikke tilstrækkelig til at gjøre mundtlig Underviisning heri unødvendig for den første Begynder'.

⁷² http://www.sn1.no/nbl_biografi/Niels_Schultz/utdypning [accessed April 2009].

Other authors realised the shortcomings of their systems and tried to preempt future criticism by pointing out in the prefaces that the pronunciation had caused them great difficulty. One wrote: ‘More than usual toil has been spent on working out the Teaching of Pronunciation, the most difficult subject in the whole language’ (Moberg 1808: vii).⁷³ Some admitted from the beginning that to even begin to explain English pronunciation was almost pointless because ‘there are so many exceptions that to list them all would confuse rather than guide beginners’ (Bruun 1808: 1).⁷⁴ In his *Hjælp Dig selv! Nøgle til paa egen Haand at lære at tale og skrive det engelske Sprog* [Help Yourself! Key to learning to speak and write the English language independently] from 1896, the language teacher Kristian Dahl tried to reassure the reader that ‘the best thing is, of course, to speak correctly, but the next best thing is to make oneself understood [...]’ (Dahl 1896: no p.n.).⁷⁵ Dahl was actually one of those authors who did not rely on Sheridan or Walker and instead came up with a system of his own. This resulted in a rather ad hoc approach to pronunciation, especially considering its publication at the very end of the nineteenth century where a certain standard in popular language works could be expected due in part to the influence of phonetics.

Martin Ulvestad (section 6.4.1) also discusses how best to display English pronunciation in his preface and refers to this as an ‘unsolved task’ (Ulvestad 1892: no p.n.). He notes that in the various methods employed so far (thus displaying a knowledge of contemporary works), only native letters have

⁷³ ‘Mer än vanlig möda har blifvit använd på utarbetningen af pronunciations-läran, det sväraste ämne i hela språket’.

⁷⁴ ‘Undtagelserne ere saa mange, at Anførelsen af alle vilde snarere tiene til at forvilde end veilede Begynderne’.

⁷⁵ ‘Det bedste er naturligvis at tale ganske korrekt, men det næstbedste er at kunne gjøre sig forstaaelig [...]’

been used, but English has too many different sounds for this to be sufficient. In his opinion, ‘phonetic’ symbols (*Lydskrift*) would be more logical to use, but they are not suitable for self-study as they would require the reader to understand the system without any instruction. His solution is to use accented letters for foreign sounds and native letters for sounds that are the same in both languages.

6.4.1 Systems of transcription

The attention to detail given in the guides to pronunciation varied greatly, but one of the indicative factors of whether serious consideration had been given to the system of transcription used was the recognition that there were too few letters in the Latin alphabet to sufficiently represent the sounds of the English language. Schultz (1807) recognised this in a detailed section on sounds, and in particular in his treatment of the vowel sounds, because here we ‘[...] see the incompleteness of the English alphabet’ (Schultz 1807: viii).⁷⁶ Starting with the letter ‘a’, he explains that this has ‘four different sounds, of which æ (short or long) must be considered the main sound’ (Schultz 1807: ix).⁷⁷ This short ‘æ’ is then put into context and a list of words in which it occurs is provided (adapted from Schultz 1807: ix):

- 1) In single-syllable words ending in one or two consonants: *at, an, has, man, hand*;
- 2) In polysyllabic words where ‘a’ is unstressed: *etérnal, géneral, barbarian*;
- 3) Where ‘a’ forms an initial unstressed syllable: *abide, alóne, abúse*.

⁷⁶ ‘[...] sees især det engelske Alphabets Ufuldstændighed’.

⁷⁷ ‘[A] har fire forskjellige Lyd, af hvilke æ (kort eller langt) er at ansee for Hovedlyden’.

There is no explanation of the use of accents, but we can assume that they are there to indicate primary stress. As for the sounds in question, the first example refers to the sound realised in modern phonetic transcription as [æ] and the second and third to [ə] (providing that Schulz is referring to the final ‘a’ in ‘barbarian’ and not the first). The long ‘æ’ can be found (adapted from Schultz 1807: ix):

- 1) When a single consonant is followed by a silent ‘e’: *ale, face, fate, name* (though not *have*);
- 2) When a word ends in a stressed syllable: *paper, lady, favour, navigation*, (though not *father, master* and *water*);
- 3) In particular when it precedes *nge, gue* and *ste* as in *change, strange, plague, haste*.

We are also told that this long ‘æ’ sounds the same as the French ‘e’ in *être* and *tête* – a rather superfluous piece of information if we remind ourselves that the learner would probably have been as unskilled in French as in English, if not more so. The third realisation of ‘a’ provides us with a brief description of how to actually produce the sound: ‘as our *aa* [modern Scandinavian *å*], though with a sound, which is nearing *a*; it is produced by opening the mouth a little more than we usually do when pronouncing *aa*, and then letting the sound touch that part of the palate closest to the vocal tract’⁷⁸ (Schultz 1807: ix). This sound occurs (adapted from Schultz 1807: ix):

- 1) Before *ll* or a single *l*, which has been reduced from a double *ll*, as *all, wall, small, also, almost*;
- 2) Before *lk* where *l* is mute as *talk, walk*; before *lt* as *malt, salt*;

⁷⁸ ‘Som vort *aa*, dog med en Lyd, der noget nærmer sig *a*; den frembringes ved at aabne Munden lidt mere end vi sædvanligen gjøre for at udtale *aa*, og ved at lade Lyden træffe den Deel af Ganen, som er nærmest Talerøret’.

3) Usually after *w* when it is not followed by a consonant and a silent *e*, so *war*, *warm*, *warn*, *water*.

From the examples and the detailed explanation of how to produce the sound it is clear that the third sound which is represented in orthography by the letter ‘a’ is the open-mid back rounded vowel [ɔ]. Schultz has correctly identified that the English sound is little less rounded than the Scandinavian one and produced in the uvular area (‘that part of the palate closest to the vocal tract’). The existence of the International Phonetic Alphabet has made it so much easier for people familiar with it to communicate about sounds and quickly refer to a particular sound. The label ‘open-mid back rounded’ does not even have to be used, we could just say cardinal vowel number six and it would be clear which sound we were talking about. Without today’s established terms, descriptions of sounds tended to become convoluted and vague, and if the basic skills of Schultz’s readers are also taken into consideration, it is understandable that these descriptions were very difficult to phrase. The fourth and final realisation of ‘a’ occurs in (adapted from Schultz 1807: x):

1) Before *r* in single syllable words as *art*, *far*, *bar*, *tar*,

2) Before *lm* and sometimes before *lg* and *lve*, in *psalm*, *calm*, *half*, *calf*, *calves* (*l* is mute) and in several other words such as *father*.

After explaining each vowel sound and its various allophones in the same manner as above, Schultz moves on to the diphthongs. This is again very thorough and takes great care to explain any exceptions:

Note: The English pronunciation of *i* is often very unstable, and linguists themselves disagree [on its pronunciation] [...] In relation to making it easier

for beginners, I have in the Grammar indicated *i* with an accent ` , when it must be pronounced as *ei*.⁷⁹

(Schultz 1807: xvii)

So, the sound [ai] is symbolised by ‘ì’ in orthography and should be pronounced as ‘ei’. Again this is not particularly clear especially considering the fact that in the Scandinavian languages ‘ei’ would have several different realisations dependent upon whether it was spoken by a Dane, a Norwegian or a Swede.

Towards the end of the vowel section, Schultz reveals that he has not devised this section completely independently. Guidance has been obtained from Sheridan’s *Pronouncing Dictionary of the English Language* and this work is recommended ‘to anyone who wants a good guide to pronunciation’ (Schultz 1807: xxv). Making use of pronouncing dictionaries such as Sheridan or Walker was a common strategy among the authors of popular language works. Their proficiency in the spoken language would never have been as good as a native speaker and there is a marked difference in quality between the ones using existing guides and the ones who attempted to devise their own.

Dahl’s *Hjælp Dig Selv!* (1896) phrasebook is an example of the questionable quality found in some of the popular language works. His aim was to provide brief and very concise guide for emigrants and has omitted all grammar and syntax, leaving 24 pages of dialogues and glossaries and taking the simplification of language teaching to its very extreme. In the preface, Dahl displays a rather relaxed attitude towards learning the language and states that if the reader ‘*just about* memorises the words’ (Dahl 1896: no p.n., my emphasis), then that should be enough for them to be used correctly when the need arises.

⁷⁹ ‘Anm. Den engelske Udtale af *i* er ofte meget ustadig, og Sprogforskerne selv stemme ikke overens. [...] For at lette Begyndere Vanskeligheden i denne Henseende, har jeg i Grammatikken betegnet *i* med en Accent ` , hvor den skal udtales *ei*’.

As mentioned, there is no detailed guide to pronunciation so the reader will have to deduce for himself/herself how the words should sound in English. It starts off fairly straightforward with the pronouns: ‘ei, hi, shi, it, wi, Ju, di [I, he, she, it, we, you, they]’⁸⁰ (Dahl 1896: 5), though the letter ‘i’ has already been assigned to three different sounds [i], [ɪ] and [eɪ]. Dahl has also adopted the old Scandinavian use of a capitalised ‘you’ in polite and respectful speech and notes that ‘in English there is only one word for the forms of address Du and Di [De?]: you say Ju to a child and Ju to your Principal’ (Dahl 1896: 5). A little grammar is provided on the following page where the tenses of the verb ‘to have’ are listed: ‘Ei hæv, Ei hæd, Ei hæv hæd [I have, I had, I have had]’ (Dahl 1896: 6). Some adjectives are also on this page, so for the Danish-Norwegian words ‘slet’ and ‘smuk’, we have ‘bæd, fein (hændsom, bjutiful) [bad, fine (handsome, beautiful)]’ (Dahl 1896: 6). In some instances the pronunciation guide is quite off the mark even when allowing for a non-native English speaker’s idiosyncrasies, and we get transcriptions such as ‘tu pæ’ and ‘tu kjængs’ for ‘to pay’ and ‘to change’ [‘at betale’ and ‘at vexle] (Dahl 1896: 6-7). Overall, the way the transcription is limited to so few letters results in phrases such as ‘Is d miit diir in dis siti [Is the meat dear in this city]’ to which one could reply, ‘It is diir bøt fish ænd pork is kjiip’ [It is dear but fish and pork is cheap]’ (Dahl 1896: 6-7).

Dahl’s phrasebook was aimed at emigrants and many of them did speak a heavily accented English. The system employed by Dahl might appear to incorrectly display English pronunciation, but it was actually a quite accurate

⁸⁰ The Dano-Norwegian translation has been left out from the following examples to ease reading of this section.

representation of the English spoken by many Scandinavian emigrants. From that point of view, it is a valuable historical record for those interested in the language of Scandinavian-Americans. Despite us being able to highlight this phrasebook's shortcomings from a modern day point of view, there is no doubt that Dahl thought his phrasebook was useful for emigrants wanting to learn English, and he definitely thought that his readers would acquire some proficiency in the language. He even furnished the reader with a phrase for scolding fellow emigrants who had not yet mastered the language and as a result could not take part in community activities conducted in English: 'Vei du Ju never go tu kjærk? Is it bikaas Ju dount ønderstænd d inglisj længuitsch [Why do you never go to church? Is it because you don't understand the English language]' (Dahl 1896: 14)?

In the discussion of *Quousque Tandem* below (section 6.5), it is mentioned that the teaching of pronunciation should make use of phonetic symbols. Schultz did this and applied the symbols available to him at the time as best as he could. Dahl, on the other hand, represents the untrained authors who, nevertheless, were not discouraged by their lack of expert knowledge. Both approaches must be included if we are to properly assess the advances the genre has made and both types of works are integral when trying to portray the variety found among popular language works.

Considering its popularity, it is perhaps most surprising that *The Little American* (1887) (section 4.6.2) does not use a system of transcription similar to Schultz or Ulvestad, but instead relies on the same method as Dahl by using the standard alphabet to describe pronunciation. The provision of the sounds of the

individual letters in the English alphabet is considered sufficient for the learner to be able to put these into larger word contexts.

| | | | |
|-------|---------|-------|-------------|
| A. a. | eh. | N. n. | enn. |
| B. b. | bi. | O. o. | o. |
| C. c. | si. | P. p. | pi. |
| D. d. | di. | Q. q. | kjuh. |
| E. e. | i. | R. r. | ærr. |
| F. f. | eff. | S. s. | es. |
| G. g. | dscih. | T. t. | ti. |
| H. h. | ehtsch. | U. u. | juh. |
| I. i. | ei. | V. v. | vi. |
| J. j. | djcheh. | W. w. | döbb'l-juh. |
| K. k. | keh. | X. x. | eks. |
| L. l. | ell. | Y. y. | hvei. |
| M. m. | emm. | Z. z. | sedd. |

(Günther 1887: 1)

There is, however, some further clarification of the pronunciation of difficult sounds and this is the author's only attempts at a description of how to articulate a sound. Describing the fricative 'th', its 'soft' and 'hard' (referring to voiceless [θ] and voiced [ð], respectively) qualities are distinguished and the direction of air stream and tongue position are explained:

To make the hard sound of *th*, in *thunder* for example, one directs the tongue as if wanting to pronounce **d**, but instead of doing this, one has to press it firmly against the upper row of teeth, and then, after firm pressure, release the air with a list, at the same time as one swiftly pulls the tongue backwards, and straightens it upwards somewhat; both rows of teeth have to almost touch each other, and the mouth be opened only a little.

(Günther 1887: 6)

Though the effort must be admired to explain the pronunciation of such a complicated sound without an established set of phonetic terms, it does raise the question whether reader would have understood such an explanation. Ulvestad similarly attempts to explain its pronunciation, but keeps his explanation somewhat briefer: '**th** has a sound which is produced by putting the tip of the

tongue against the front teeth in the upper jaw and pronouncing t' (Ulvestad 1892: 4) which would yield a sound akin to a dental plosive.

As discussed in section 4.6.1, Martin Ulvestad had actual experience of the language spoken by Norwegian immigrants in America. The pronunciation section in his *Selvhjælp i Engelsk* (1892) could therefore be expected to display signs of this knowledge. However, as stressed several times, we cannot always blame the authors of popular language works if their transcription systems were not perfect because they simply did not have the established symbols which we benefit so much from today. As mentioned in 6.3, Ulvestad did devise a rather complicated system of accents because he was of the opinion that phonetic symbols would prove too difficult to learn for the typical emigrant. The letter 'a', for instance, has five different sounds represented by the following symbols: *ǎ, ä, å, ą* and *ä*.⁸¹ These symbols are then put into actual words:

1) 'ǎ' occurs in words such as *rat, fat* and *add* and is pronounced 'short as æ in Norwegian *Bræt, tæt*';

2) 'ä' is 'long as in *Arv, Arm*' and can be found in the English *card, art* and *arm*;

3) 'å' is the sound in *grass, mask* and *fast* and should be pronounced as 'a in *Hast* and *Fast*';

4) 'ą' occurs in *hall, small* and *form* and it sounds as the Norwegian 'aa in *Kaal, Naal, Straal*';

5) 'ä' should be pronounced as a 'very short Norwegian a or a very short aa' (though we are not told which one) and can be found in words such as *what, was, not* and *lot*.

The fourth example is evidence of the fact that Ulvestad did consider sounds to be independent of letters as the use of 'o' in 'form' did not prompt him to claim that it represented a different sound than in 'small' and 'hall'. It is not only the

⁸¹ All examples in the following section are taken from Ulvestad (1892: 3).

realisation of vowels, however, that Ulvestad has thought about, and two words from the preceding section ‘what’ and ‘was’ show to what degree he had given thought to detailed pronunciation, transcribing the former as ‘h^uatt’ and the latter as ‘^uas’, thus the superscript ‘u’ symbolises the modern [w]. Another two sounds which Ulvestad takes great effort to explain in detail are ‘ò’ and ‘o’. The former can be found in the English words ‘come’, ‘done’ and ‘much’ and has the equivalent symbol of [ʌ]. In pronunciation the sound is ‘almost as a very short ø, but it also has somewhat of a short aa sound’. The common central vowel [ə] is represented by the symbol ‘o’ and, according to Ulvestad’s explanation, it ‘sounds almost as a very short ø’, but the sound is ‘so short that one can almost call it a closed sound’. He does not explain further what he means by closed sound, but it could be inferred that he means the sound is highly reduced and must be realised with the least amount of effort.

We have no evidence that Ulvestad was aware of what was going on in linguistics at university level, but it is fair to assume that he would have been unfamiliar with the practical linguists simply based on the fact that he was in America. His main motivation was not that he had found it difficult to teach the pronunciation of English to non-specialists, but that he had heard many instances of a limited command of English among his countrymen when he travelled from settlement to settlement. Ulvestad’s guide to pronunciation is comprehensive and great care has been taken to explain the correct realisation of a sound. Yet the reader’s knowledge of English and the fact that most had never even heard it spoken must be remembered and therefore makes one wonder if this system of accents did not just confuse the reader. Studying on one’s own also requires a lot of self-discipline, and the danger that the reader would simply

have skipped this section, eager to learn some words, is one that has to be considered very likely. For the modern day reader, however, the system is refreshing and shows good signs of understanding phonetics and is a considerable improvement on other pronunciation guides at the time.

6.5 The spoken language in linguistics

In the late nineteenth-century the new science of phonetics gradually began to have an impact upon language teaching. The idea of utilising phonetics in the teaching of foreign languages was prevalent both in- and outside of Scandinavia, and it has been suggested that a specific Anglo-Scandinavian School was actually formed on the basis of this idea (see Linn 2008). This movement and the reforms it proposed are important in relation to the development of popular language works because the teaching of the spoken language was the biggest obstacle they had to overcome and any guidance from phoneticians was welcomed. Among the many scholars involved the debate were two of the most prominent Scandinavian linguists of their time. Otto Jespersen, the professor of English at Copenhagen, has been described as a ‘reformer – not only of language teaching in the schools, but of the scholarly languages at the university level’ (Christoffersen 1989: 5) because he was particularly critical about the dominance of Latin. Combined with his interest in the practical application of language teaching, Jespersen succeeded in reforming modern language teaching with his extremely popular methods. These methods were in stark contrast to his famous, but rather dense work, the seven volume *Modern English Grammar on Historical Principles* (1909ff) which would not have been appropriate reading matter for most of his students. The common

problem for language teachers at Jespersen's time was that they did not know how to pronounce the language they taught and (indeed) many did not deem it necessary to have that skill. In his campaign against English teaching based on Latin grammatical principles, Jespersen stressed the need for phonetics to be incorporated into language instruction. He wrote in his *How to Learn a Foreign Language* (1904):

We want to have some phonetics introduced into our schools, because theory has convinced us, and experiment has proved to us, that by means of this science we can, with decidedly greater certainty, and in an essentially easier way, give an absolutely easier pronunciation in a much shorter space of time than would be possible without phonetics.

(Jespersen 1904: 143)

Jespersen had long been a campaigner for a change in direction in language teaching. His translation of Franke in 1884 (section 2.3.4) was the beginning of a 'crusade', in Jespersen's own words, which fought for 'the use of phonetics and the transcription of sounds, as little translation as possible, sensible grammar and not too much of it, namely the meaningless repetitive phrases' (Jespersen 1938: 33). Though his contribution to applied linguistics is the most relevant in relation to the current discussion, his other achievements also deserve a mention. He wrote on language evolution, child language, devised a phonetic transcription system for Danish and was the creator of the artificial language *Novial*. He was internationally recognised, unusual for Scandinavian linguists at the time, lectured in the United States and became one of the first Europeans to be elected an honorary member of the *Linguistic Society of America* and was for a time also president of the *Modern Language Association* (Falk 1992: 465).

His colleague in Norway, Johan Storm, was also responsible for the modernisation of the teaching of English and designed the English course which students at the University of Christiania were to undertake for many years to come. As a gifted phonetician, he was very aware that the learning of a foreign language required a good knowledge of its pronunciation, and in his book *Engelsk Filologi* (1879) Storm emphasised two important requirements for teachers of foreign languages: they should display good pronunciation and be able to speak the language with some fluency (Sandved 2000: 105). He also took part in the Norwegian language reform debate as ‘a merciless and unceasing critic of both sides’ (Linn 2004: 121). Even if his involvement was not always appreciated at the time, it has today been acknowledged that his ‘claims concerning variation, stylistic inconsistencies, and differences between the spoken and written language were documented by extensive and thoroughly analyzed material from Norwegian literature’ (Hovdhaugen et al. 2000: 239). Storm has often been characterised as a difficult figure, but no one could fault his linguistic work which was always very detailed and well researched.

Applied linguistics therefore achieved real prominence with the coming of phonetics, as argued by Hovdhaugen et al. (2000):

An important factor which contributed toward promoting an interest in “applied linguistics” was the reform of the school system in which the classical languages Latin and Greek were gradually replaced by English, French, and German during the last decades of the nineteenth century. This created a need for new pedagogical methods in language teaching and above all for more insight into practical phonetics, a field that had been largely ignored.

(Hovdhaugen et al. 2000: 156)

The importance of phonetics in language teaching was also highlighted by Henry Sweet (1845-1912) when he commented on the existing language teaching methods:

But none of these methods retain their popularity long – the interest in them soon dies out. There is a constant succession of them: Ollendorff, Ahn, Prendergast, Gouin – to mention only a few – have all had their day. They have all failed to keep a permanent hold on the public mind because they have all failed to perform what they promised: after promising impossibilities they have all turned out to be on the whole not better than the older methods. The methods I have just mentioned are failures because they are based on an insufficient knowledge of the science of language, and because they are one-sided.

(Sweet 1899: 3)

It is obvious that in language teaching in the late nineteenth century, there was at least an indirect exchange of ideas between academics and non-academics. This gives credence to the popular language works and their efforts at teaching the spoken language based on texts alone. Jespersen and Storm both had the opportunity to interact with their students and give oral examples of the pronunciation of English, but the authors of popular language works did not have that option. As many of the works were also published before phonetics really began to have an influence on language teaching, they were faced with a really difficult task of describing the sounds of a language without the aid of established symbols.

In 1882, the German linguist Wilhelm Viëtor (1850-1918) published his famous pamphlet *Der Sprachunterricht muss umkehren! Ein Beitrag zur Überbürdungsfrage von Quousque Tandem* [Language Instruction Must Do an About-Face! A Contribution to the Debate on Excessive Pressure on our Children, by *Quousque Tandem*]. The pseudonym *Quousque Tandem* was later to be adopted by the Scandinavian reform movement which included among

others Jespersen, Lundell, Storm and Noreen as its members. Their involvement in the reform of language teaching meant that:

Until the likes of Sweet, Storm, Jespersen and the German Eduard Sievers (1850-1932), there had been nobody professionally qualified to judge language teaching methods and materials from an informed, linguistic point of view. When these linguists began to consider currently available methods and materials in the light of their own insights into language and into the modern languages, they were horrified.

(Linn 2002: 35)

The Quousque Tandem movement, the Anglo-Scandinavian School and the Reform Movement were all discourse communities which had the study of the living language and its practical application in language teaching as their main objective.⁸² They believed that the teaching of pronunciation could be aided by using phonetic script and that too much grammar should be avoided in the beginning. If we turn our attention to the popular language works, it soon becomes clear that many of them were to some degree following the above principles before they had even been coined. They believed that the spoken language should be at the centre of practical language teaching and acknowledged that to master the spoken language, a degree of teaching of pronunciation had to be included. They also dismissed the importance of detailed grammatical description during the early stages of language acquisition. Again, their main problem was that their methods could not be explained with the help of a teacher. This led many of the authors to acknowledge that mastering the pronunciation of English would require interaction with a native speaker. The section above shows that well-structured and informed works were indeed published before the practical linguists came along. The practical

⁸² For detailed analyses of *Quousque Tandem* and *The Anglo-Scandinavian School*, see Linn (2002; 2008).

linguists' influence was probably not really felt in any of the popular language works of the nineteenth century, but serves to highlight that the problems both groups were trying to solve in terms of pronunciation were in essence the same.

6.6 Same idea – different methods?

Looking at the authors of popular language works and the practical linguists in a historical perspective, it is relevant to discuss the question of who influenced whom. This might appear to have an obvious answer as many of the popular language works were published before the practical linguists emerged at the end of the nineteenth century, but many also overlapped, and it remains to be concluded whether the popular language works were uniform enough in their methods to claim that they represented a brand new approach to language teaching, or whether there were just a few that were completely innovative and similar to the practical linguists' methods. Quentin Skinner discusses the danger of placing too much emphasis on a particular doctrine implicitly conveyed in a text:

Besides this crude possibility of crediting a writer with a meaning he could not have intended to convey, since that meaning was not readily available to him, there is also the (perhaps more insidious) danger of too readily "reading in" a doctrine which a given writer might in principle have meant to state, but in fact had no intention to convey.

(Skinner 1969: 9)

There is no doubt that the authors of popular language works intended to simplify the teaching of foreign languages, but it is by no means certain that they were thinking along the same lines as Jespersen, Sweet and Storm who, based on their expert knowledge of phonetics, explicitly stated that the teaching of foreign languages must start with the spoken language. It is actually unlikely

that the authors of popular language works had much knowledge of phonetics considering their ad hoc approach to pronunciation as shown in section 6.4.1. Perhaps it is more apt to state that the popular language works provided an opportunity to test teaching methods on people who were less likely to notice their shortcomings before the 'real' experts came along and systematised these methods, thus minimising the risk of putting one's reputation at stake. They were the ones who defined the doctrine and not the authors of popular language works.

The context in which the popular language works were published was to a large extent different from the context of the practical linguists' publications. The former were produced at a time when there was no other alternative for the general public, with no access to tutors or private education, to acquire a foreign language and we can see this shortage of alternatives in the questionable quality of many of the works. The practical linguists, on the other hand, did work at a time when private language schools were becoming more common, standardised language teaching manuals were emerging, and people in general were receiving better free education, so they had to adopt more expert methods firmly grounded in scientific study.

Chapter 7: Language, Culture and Identity

7.1 Introduction

The primary aim of popular language works was to provide a self-instruction language manual suitable for inexperienced language learners. How that aim was implemented in terms of structuring these works to the specific circumstances of the readers (i.e. emigrants and tourists) has been the central issue in the preceding chapters. This interplay between the works and the readers, however, occupies only one dimension of the history of popular language works. To properly assess the genre as a whole its role in intellectual history generally must be examined. Nineteenth-century language study was dominated by the emergence of historical-comparative linguistics. This was also the case in Scandinavia where most linguists were engaged in the diachronic study of the national languages. The Hannås Collection gives a good representation of this situation by containing not only popular language works, but also key works by scholars such as Ivar Aasen and Rasmus Rask. The Collection therefore also provides a framework for an investigation into the activities of the Scandinavian academies, and in particular the Norwegian one due to its compiler being Norwegian. Language study in the nineteenth century was strongly influenced by the general intellectual climate of the time which was dominated by National Romanticism and the establishment of unique national identities. This was above all evident in Norway where the process of asserting a particular Norwegian identity completely separate from the previous Dano-Norwegian one was the main task of Norwegian intellectuals (section 7.2). Hence, because of this strong dominance of national identity in the works

of the academies, it is pertinent to investigate whether this was also the case in the popular language works – works which have already shown to be reliable indicators of general political and social developments of their time.

The connection between language and national identity has been discussed extensively by, for example, Anderson (1991), Hobsbawm (1992), Edensor (2002) and Gellner (2006). It is generally acknowledged that national identity is ‘a cultural construction, not a fixed objective reality, but an ongoing and changeable process’ (Woolf 1996: 8) and does not evolve in the same natural and organic way in the ordinary population as the spoken language does. The main instigators and executors of this process are members of the intellectual elite who choose what elements of the national language and culture to include in this identity construction (section 7.2.1).

In the context of the nineteenth century, a discussion of national identity must include the emergence of nationalism. Nationalism as a political ideology goes back to the late eighteenth century and French revolutionary ideas of liberty and equality. The term ‘nationalism’ itself has two inherent meanings. Firstly, it is a doctrine about the character, interests, rights and duties of nations; and secondly, it can also be an organised political movement, designed to further independence and national unity (Seton-Watson 1977: 3). Nationalism also implies the existence of a defined nation-state in political, territorial, ethnic and cultural terms. At the time of the French Revolution, there were only a few nation-states in Europe that fulfilled these criteria: Portugal, the Netherlands, Great Britain, Spain, France, Denmark and Sweden. However, only two of these were ‘monoethnic’ (Portugal and the Netherlands), whereas the rest were ‘multiethnic empires’, encompassing groups of different ethnicity and language

within their borders, but they can still be defined as nation-states because they possessed an advanced national culture and a literary language (Hroch 1996: 10). In relation to this study, this fact is interesting because two of the Scandinavian countries, Denmark and Sweden, were so-called old nations with history, culture and language reaffirming their right to exist. Norway, on the other hand, had not been independent since the Middle Ages, but in the nineteenth century, numerous claims to its historical right to independence emerged from nationalist historians such as P. A. Munch and Rudolf Keyser (section 7.2.2).

Because nationalist currents were primarily targeted at the ordinary population, it is important to consider whether they feature, either explicitly or implicitly, in popular language works. Did intellectual thinking have an impact on the authors of popular language works at all? Again, we need to bear in mind the overall context in which these works were written and it is evident that factors such as intended audience and the author's principal objectives had an influence upon the content of a work. Utilitarian language learning developed because of the authorities' inability or unwillingness to provide language teaching for ordinary people and this was an indication of the political and intellectual elites' lack of understanding of the needs of the general population. The authors of popular language works, on the other hand, recognised the large number of people who wanted to acquire foreign languages for practical reasons. It is no secret, however, that many were motivated by the money to be made from successful works and this chapter will discuss whether they deliberately avoided any political elements which could alienate their readers.

7.2 National identity

Language has always played an important part in the formulation of national identity. The printing of vernacular Bibles during the Reformation was the first recognition given to the language of ordinary people. Despite this, Latin continued to dominate and we need to look to the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries for the next step in the restoration of vernacular languages. At this point, the old structures of power, the king and church, were replaced by Enlightenment-inspired elected governments. As a result, the monarch (in the countries where monastic power was retained) acknowledged that in order to rule alongside elected representatives of the people,⁸³ he had to communicate in a language they understood. The impact was felt in the relative decline of the classical languages and the influence of the church. The clergy realised that their traditional role of mediating between the vernacular and Latin, between earth and heaven, so to speak, was now obsolete (Anderson 1991: 15-6). Their supremacy had been taken over by the intellectual elite who now ‘impressed their character most firmly on the European nineteenth century’ (Hobsbawm 1992: 23). They redirected the focus away from religion and instead attempted to instil a feeling of common pride in national culture and language among the lower classes.

7.2.1 Identity construction and diffusion

Nationalism has and will always entail a strong political element and thus lies outside the remit of the principles of history from below as discussed in

⁸³ Of the ones who had the right to vote at least; widespread electoral participation was still another century off.

section 2.2. Yet, when it is incorporated into the more intangible and equivocal concept of national identity it becomes the constituent which often triggers the establishment and expansion of a national identity among the intellectual elite.

All theories of nationalism, whether they are political, anthropological or sociological, include the language element in their formulations. In works such as Anderson (1991), Hobsbawm (1992), Barbour and Carmichael (2000) and Joseph (2004), the importance of language in nationalist ideologies is highlighted. If there are no linguistic barriers separating the citizens of a nation, then states and national movements can mobilise certain feelings of collective belonging in their nationalist policies, also called proto-national bonds (Hobsbawm 1992: 46). The prefix 'proto' implies that these feelings were already present before political factions explicitly began to take advantage of their potency in mobilising people. In Scandinavia, Swedish and Danish were established vernaculars and their continued existence was not threatened, but in Norway the original Norwegian language had been marginalised during the four centuries of Danish rule. The written language and the language spoken by the officials and the intellectual elite was Dano-Norwegian.⁸⁴ It was only among the rural population and the lower middle class (though this was very small) that dialects descended from Old Norse were spoken. Thus, Norwegian calls for independence throughout the nineteenth century were always accompanied by the issue of language reform in terms of restoring Norwegian as the official language (section 7.2.2).

Whereas language is important to all people, regardless of their education and social status, national culture is usually irrelevant to the majority.

⁸⁴ For more on the history of Norwegian (including its variations), see Torp and Vikør (2003).

Gripsrud (1994) supports this statement by arguing that ‘the construction of cultural identity is always an intellectual enterprise’ and because ‘ordinary folks normally don’t care very much, intellectuals as a rule have a hard time convincing people about the relevance of these identity constructions’ (Gripsrud 1994: 220). There is, however, a distinction to be made here between high and low culture, or elitist and popular culture. Popular culture is prevalent among the lower classes and is kept alive by them through folklore, traditions, habits and customs. It was exactly this culture which National Romantics proclaimed to be the ‘true’ culture of a nation. But this does not mean that ‘ordinary folks’, as Gripsrud (1994) calls them, suddenly had a say in the construction of a cultural identity. The elites adopted only the elements of popular culture useful to their cause and in effect created a new popular culture different from the original popular culture. Jones (1992) has described the strategy of establishing their art, literature and music as *the* cultural heritage of the nation, as a most valuable and insidious means for transmitting their beliefs, values and ideas to the subaltern classes and thereby securing their pre-eminence (Jones 1992: 239).

At this juncture it is important to stress that while elites commonly are the *creators* of a national identity by choosing appropriate elements of popular culture for their moulding of a national culture, they are not always necessarily the ones responsible for the *transmission* and *diffusion* of this culture to the lower classes. Culture and language, as discussed above, are codified by the elite, but the task of making the common people aware of their importance is left to the middle class, in particular the local civil servants, the clergy and the schoolteachers. This is especially relevant because exactly these individuals were the authors of popular language works. If an idea was not adopted and

diffused by them, then it would not gain popular support and this is why the idea of a national identity was not conveyed to the readers of popular language works.

7.2.2 National Romanticism

National identity can be difficult to separate from the specific intellectual ideology of National Romanticism and it is not necessarily constructive to do so. In Scandinavia, especially, the intellectual elites were rather small and we often find well-known National Romantics engaged in national identity construction. The terms may therefore be used interchangeably to refer to a concern with national language and culture. In Scandinavia, National Romanticism was influenced by the German philosopher, Johann Gottfried Herder (1744-1803), the main inspiration behind late eighteenth-century German National Romanticism. Herder believed strongly that the cultural values of nation were to be found among the *Volk* [people] and not among the *Gelehrten* [educated]. He praised the people's culture, their poetry and songs, because they revealed 'a creative and natural expressiveness, common sense, and moral dignity that [made] them superior to the products of an intellectual elite separated from the people' (Lunn 1986: 493).

National Romanticism was particularly strong in Norway where the re-discovery of Norwegian culture and language was the main interest of many nineteenth-century intellectuals attempting to further the independence cause of the country. The historians Rudolf Keyser (1803-1865) and Peter Andreas Munch (1810-1863) were keen to show that Norwegian history was just as important as its neighbours', indeed, superior in their view (Thorkildsen 1994:

195). As co-founders of *The Norwegian Historical School* [Den norske historiske skole], they supported a representation of the country's history which had the express purpose of developing and reinforcing a national consciousness (Sørensen 1994b: 30). Any developments in language study supporting their cause were greeted with much enthusiasm. This is clearly evident in Munch's review of Ivar Aasen's grammar of Norwegian dialects from 1848:

This book, which is under review here, is not only an adornment for our literature, but it is a national work, which the entire nation can be proud of. Because it shows more than any other similar work the genuine and pure Nordic nationality of the Norwegian people; it demonstrates that the very ancient Old Norse language, more than 1,000 years old, is still very much alive among the people, with a genuine original ring that you can't even find on Iceland.

(Munch; quoted by Hovdhaugen et al. 2000: 132)

An even earlier work which encourages Norwegians to take an interest in their language is *Glossarium Norvagicum* (1749) by the Danish Bishop in Bergen, Erik Pontoppidan (1698-1764). He points to elements of the old Norwegian language still being spoken by some of the population and notes that when he came to Bergen he was surprised to find that '[...] many words in everyday conversation with the common people [Almuens folk], especially peasants and fishermen were as unknown to me as I feared my words were to them' (Pontoppidan 1749: 11).⁸⁵ Pontoppidan shows a clear awareness of the variation in the language spoken by the ordinary people and the (Danish) upper class and is concerned with the lack of mutual understanding. He also observes a marked difference between the dialects spoken in the east and in the west of Norway, and explains that is having trouble understanding the latter. The reason

⁸⁵ '[...] mange Ord i daglig Tale med Almuens Folk, særdeles med Bønder og Fiskere, vare mig ligesaa fremmede, som jeg frygtede at mine Ord maatte være dem'.

is that the western region is more geographically isolated and has received fewer foreign visitors, so the language has had fewer foreign influences. He has, however, found evidence of German having an influence on the Bergen dialect because of the many German merchants in residence there.⁸⁶ One example is the numerals which are constructed in the same manner as German numerals: ‘Femtie, Sextie, Syttie, Ottetie, og Nittie’ as compared to the traditional Danish ‘Halvtrediesindstive, Tredsindstive, Halvfierdesindstive, Firesindstive, Halvfemtesindstive’ (Pontoppidan 1749: 18). Pontoppidan is clearly worried that if Norwegians do not study their mother tongue now, then the language will become even more difficult to re-discover for future generations because foreign elements will replace the native ones (Pontoppidan 1749: 22).

Another work from the Hannås Collection, published in Sweden in 1766, shows a similar concern among scholars there with the changing language. In the preface to his *Swenskt Dialect Lexicon* [Swedish Dialect Lexicon], the author Johan Ihre actually refers to Pontoppidan’s work discussed above, possibly indicating an early exchange of ideas across Scandinavian borders. He again emphasises the language of ordinary people and states that the comprehensive study of a language must include more than the language spoken by royals or people in the capital. The peasants’ language, for example, has been subjected to fewer foreign influences and as such is more akin to the ancient language in terms of purity (Ihre 1766: no p.n.).

In Denmark and Sweden, less emphasis was placed on the national language in the construction of a national identity simply because it was not

⁸⁶ From the thirteenth to the seventeenth centuries, German merchants from the Hanseatic League resided in Bergen in great numbers. Nesse (2002; 2007) has written extensively on the linguistic consequences of this.

under threat as it was in Norway. The main impressions of National Romanticism in those countries can therefore be found in art and literature. In Sweden, for example, *Götiska Förbundet*,⁸⁷ a literary society founded in Stockholm in 1810 and its journal *Iduna*⁸⁸ were ‘the main sources of this emerging construction of a national identity’ (Stråth 1994: 57). In Denmark, the agrarian reforms of the 1780s (see Østergaard 1993: 38) had given the wealthier farmers considerable political influence. As a result, their culture was already enjoying some degree of prestige. However, the more lowly peasants and cottars were still to be enlightened about their national identity, and the main driving force behind this was the writer and priest Nicolai Frederik Severin Grundtvig (1783-1872) who:

[...] transformed the old rules of conduct and norms of behaviour from the old agrarian society into a coherent national utopia, that the values of the ancient peasant society were promoted to common Danish values, and thus to an important element of the identity.

(Jespersen 2004: 213)

Grundtvig was also engaged in an educational campaign which came to affect all of Scandinavia through the construction of the so-called folk high schools [folkehøjskoler]. He believed that improved instruction in the mother tongue would enable the lower classes to participate in the national and *folkelige* life. ‘Folkelig’ means ‘of or for the people’, but is often translated as ‘populist’ in English and ‘völkisch’ in German with ensuing negative connotations. This is not the case in Danish, where ‘folkelig’ suggests ‘an informed, responsible, tolerant participation in the exercise of power’ (Østergaard 1993: 217).

⁸⁷ ‘The Gothic Society’. Central figures were the poets Esaias Tegnér (1782-1846) and Erik Gustaf Geijer (1783-1847).

⁸⁸ Named after the Old Norse mythical goddess Iðunn.

Grundtvig was dissatisfied with the current state of the Danish education system and its emphasis on teaching classical languages at the expense of general education of the lower classes, particularly the peasants. The first folk high school was established in Rødding, Denmark, in 1844 and Grundtvig called for:

[...] a new awareness of what it meant to be a free people with self-determination, a culture as well as a language of its own [...] it was high time that a school be built where the emphasis rested not on academic systems, alien cultures and foreign tongues, but on the mother tongues and the spirit of the North.

(Mortensen 1977: 12)

It is important to mention the folk high school movement as an expression of national identity because it stressed the importance of the mother tongue. In Denmark, it was particularly successful and the peasant class benefited from this because it helped them establish their own independent culture. This is also relevant in relation to the discussion of why national identity did not feature in the popular language works (sections 7.3 and 7.4). Ordinary people did not appreciate the artificial cultural construction of the intellectual elite and instead chose to celebrate their own genuine culture if they were given the means to do so. Folk high schools were also founded in Norway and Sweden, but they never became as popular as in Denmark. In Norway, their aims were similar to those in Denmark and they were particularly popular among supporters of *Landsmål*, possibly because the institution served as a vehicle for expanding this particular variety. In Sweden, however, the movement was interpreted differently and the first folk high schools were founded by individuals who supported pan-Scandinavianism (section 7.5).⁸⁹ Today, this

⁸⁹ For a discussion of folk high schools in Norway and Sweden, see Coe (2000: 34-6).

institution is seen as something very Scandinavian and its holistic approach to education is still popular among people of all ages.

7.3 National identity in emigrant phrasebooks

Chapters 3 and 4 analysed emigrant phrasebooks and travel guidebooks on the basis of their explicit function as language teaching manuals, but it was not considered whether they conveyed the concept of national identity to their readers. In the American immigrant communities, for instance, the Scandinavians were for the first time faced with the notion of being ‘Swedish’, ‘Norwegian’ or ‘Danish’ as opposed to ‘German’, ‘Italian’ or ‘American’. Here they had a unique opportunity to assert their national identity in an environment where exactly the national background of immigrants was the only thing that separated them from their foreign neighbours. Yet, it does not seem that they did so and one of the reasons could be that this was not encouraged in the phrasebooks. National identity is as a matter of fact completely absent in the phrasebooks, but why was it not considered important by the authors? One possible explanation is that the authors knew that national identities among American immigrants actually differed from the one created by the intellectual elite back home (7.2.1). Thousands of miles away and suddenly liberated from the norms of the home country, they instead created their own national identity: a mixture of stereotyped national customs and adopted American traditions. Why this fusion of two cultures took place has been discussed by the American historian, David Gerber (1989):

Immigrants cannot be said to possess some primordial consciousness of themselves as members of an ethnic group. Nor can it be said that a feeling of ethnic identity arises suddenly, *ex nihilo*, upon emigration. The immigrants’

internal understanding of possessing a group identity comes as a result of existential fusing of Old World cultural inheritance (language, religion, values, beliefs and expressive symbols) and New World experience.

(Gerber 1989: 188)

Because the Scandinavian national identities did not emerge as fully formed until the end of the nineteenth century they did not have much influence on the immigrants in America. They instead chose to create their own unique Scandinavian-American identity. The fact that different manifestations of national identity existed among Scandinavians at home and in America emphasises the point made above that a national identity is not a product of a primordial consciousness, but rather something that can be created and altered to support a particular cause.

Culture is quite a vague notion and the more highbrow elements of it included in a national identity construction, such as art and literature, were irrelevant to ordinary people. The only element they were really interested in was the language and this became particularly clear among Scandinavian immigrants. Ostergren (1988) has observed that:

Although a trans-Atlantic interchange of people and ideas between the mother parish in Sweden and the daughter communities in America continued throughout the period, a thorough and complete identification with the past in another place slowly eroded and was replaced by something more symbolic, such as the observance of special celebrations or the struggle to preserve the language.

(Ostergren 1988: 245)

The only tangible thing the immigrants had in common was their language. They might have shared some common cultural values and traditions, but these would often vary from region to region. The language, however, (discounting dialectal variation) was their common ground and the one they often chose to emphasise in their national identity. Newspapers, for example, were published

separately by Norwegians, Swedes and Danes, and the few who thought that combining the three into a joint publication would be more financially sustainable always failed quickly. Pan-Scandinavianism (section 7.5) was not a popular notion among ordinary people.

The only concession among immigrants in terms of language use was when people from various regions in Denmark, Sweden or Norway settled together. Dialectal variation could be strong and the immigrants would often have to adapt a more standard variety of the national language to communicate effectively. This was particularly evident among the Norwegians who had very distinct dialectal differences and a popular newspaper cartoon of the nineteenth century, *Han Ola og han Per*, was very successful in portraying the difficulties Norwegian immigrants had, not only with understanding English speakers, but also fellow countrymen. The author Peter Julius Rosendahl (1878-1942), the son of early Minnesota pioneers, gave his two main characters, Ola and Per, ‘a special identity by providing them with different folk dialects’ (Buckley and Haugen 1984: 28). Ola was a highlander, short and stocky and in possession of good sense, whereas Per was a lowlander, tall and lanky and a fantasist (Buckley and Haugen 1984: 30). Their dialects were directly chosen to represent their personal character. In the newspaper strip, as among Norwegian immigrants generally, the standard language was still Danish. This was the language they had been taught at school, and they were staunch opponents of *Nynorsk* when it was introduced in Norway – they thought it would never work. The newspapers in America followed the views of their readers and continued to publish in Danish, fearing that they would otherwise lose subscribers. In the churches of the Scandinavian settlements and at the colleges training clergymen, the

language also continued to be Danish. The language situation among Norwegian-Americans basically remained unchanged from 1850 onwards:

Those who can still speak Norwegian speak a more or less modified country dialect; those who can write it write the official Dano-Norwegian of the nineteenth century. There is a spoken language and an institutional language, and this linguistic dualism is one of the outstanding facts about the Norwegians in America.

(Haugen 1938: no p.n.)

This linguistic conservatism might help us understand why national identity did not find support in the immigrant communities. If they were not even in favour of language reforms meant to acknowledge the language of ordinary people, why should they adopt an artificial construction by intellectuals with whom they had nothing in common?

7.4 National identity in travel guidebooks

As the phrasebooks were aimed at helping immigrants integrate, it is perhaps not so surprising that national identity does not feature in them. The travel guidebooks, on the other hand, were undoubtedly a medium which would be perfect for transmitting the individual national identities in Scandinavia. However, again it is remarkably absent. Travel guidebooks normally promote the cultural heritage of the country in question and this was also the case in the nineteenth century, but national identity was only implicitly conveyed. There is no doubt that foreign travellers to Scandinavia were attracted to certain aspects of the region's history and culture, but did they form an impression of the national identities there? Laing (1852) comments on the concept of 'nationality' and defines national spirit as:

[...] the tie which binds together the individuals of a community into a nation animated with a common spirit of patriotism and love of their country, its laws, institutions, independence, and honour [...].

(Laing 1852: 9-10)

Baird (1841a) has similarly got an impression of the Danish people which can be characterised as a description of their national attributes, if not a specific national identity:

Taken as a nation, the Danes must be pronounced, we are confident, a remarkably honest people. And this is especially true of the peasantry, or country population. The agricultural and village population of Denmark may be called a virtuous one.

(Baird 1841a: 308)

The travelogues of Laing and Baird enlighten us on how foreigners perceived the typical national characteristics of a people, but to say that this was as a result of a deliberate projection of a national identity is probably taking the argument too far beyond its logical conclusion.

There is definitely an indication that foreigners writing about Scandinavia had an idea about the differences between the three countries, though some were quick to dismiss this difference as a right to political independence:

The truth is, that instead of this subdivision, Denmark, Sweden and Norway, should form but one kingdom. Their inhabitants are of the same original stock; they speak essentially the same language; they are, almost to a man, of the same type of Protestant faith, (the Augsburg Confession,) and if united heartily, would form a very powerful kingdom.

(Baird 1841b: 104)

Others were more understanding of the strength of nationalist sentiment, particularly in Norway. Murray's guidebook (1839) displayed an awe of Norway's ability to withstand pressures from Denmark and Sweden and praised the proud conduct of the Norwegian people:

[...] it is in a social point of view, that Norway possesses the most powerful charm – to see a nation, scanty in number and limited in resources, “forcing a churlish soil for scanty bread,” in a chill, inhospitable climate, without internal sources of wealth, or the more powerful and continuous supply arising from foreign commerce; who, though they have never succeeded in forming themselves into a distinct and independent state, have yet in all ages, preserved their national feelings, true and unimpaired; [...]

(Anon 1839: 47-8)

The native authors of guidebooks were aware of these foreigners’ preconceived opinions and they chose the dialogue sections to comment upon this. In *The Stranger’s Guide through Sweden* (1824) (section 5.4.4), a dialogue about a traveller who is asked what he thinks of the country and its people is included. He replies, ‘the country, I must confess, ranks very high in my opinion; and as to the inhabitants, I find them brave, hospitable, honest, and loyal’ (Anon. 1824: 126). Naturally, the author does not provide a dialogue with an opposing point of view because who would express criticism of their own country especially if tourism was the industry from which he made a living.

It is very difficult to firmly maintain that a certain national identity was projected in the guidebooks. It is true, however, that the native authors were keen to give their readers an overall positive impression of their country, but this was probably more due to the fact that they wanted to attract more visitors and, of course, sell as many books as possible. They kept their works light-hearted and refrained from passing political or social comment. Similarly, the Murray guidebook in the main stayed objective and neutral in issues of politics and even advised its readers if asked ‘to what political party in England you belong’ to ‘either evade the question, or say that you have left all politics at home’ (Anon. 1839: 3-4). Baird (1841a, b) and Laing (1852) were more direct in giving their opinions on the state of society in Scandinavia, but their works cannot be

characterised as typical guidebooks and, more importantly, they were foreigners looking at the region from the outside. Overall, the guidebook genre tried to portray Scandinavia as a region in which the traveller would have a positive experience when sightseeing and interacting with the local population, but this would be expected in works aimed at promoting tourism and is not a deliberate attempt at transmitting the elite's notion of national identity.

Edensor (2002) has called for the exploration of 'nationalism and national identity in its mundane manifestations' and adds that 'what is missing [...] is a sense of the unspectacular, contemporary production of national identity through popular culture and in everyday life' (Edensor 2002: 12). Popular language works were vehicles for these mundane manifestations of national identity, but it is evident that they were not utilised in this manner. Any evidence found is more based on stereotypical national characteristics and is not a representation of a coherent, unified national identity. This supports the argument that national identity was an elitist construction which did not find much support among ordinary people. National identity was never really expressed in popular language works because the authors were not members of the intellectual elite and they knew it would be of limited interest to their readers. These works were produced to appeal to as many people as possible, and the safest way to ensure this was to refrain from strong political views.

7.5 Regional identity

As discussed in the previous section, many leading Scandinavian intellectuals of the nineteenth century were National Romantics and thus antagonistic towards the concept of 'Scandinavia'. Today, it is perfectly

acceptable to be both a nationalist and a supporter of increased Scandinavian cooperation. This acceptance is markedly different from the prevalent attitude in the nineteenth century where communication between the countries was limited. The ideological current of pan-Scandinavianism was supported by people who campaigned for increased interaction between the Scandinavian countries. This also included a concern with language and in particular making communication easier. But the authors of popular language works again rejected another intellectual product by not including it. In fact, not one example of pan-Scandinavianism can be found in the emigrant phrasebooks or the travel guidebooks. There are separate reasons for this. As the travel guidebooks were works intended to draw visitors to a specific country, it would not have made much sense to even mention neighbouring countries in them. The native authors knew this because they benefited financially from tourism, whereas the foreign authors (e.g. Murray and Baedeker) did generally publish works including all of Scandinavia. As for the emigrant phrasebooks, it was briefly mentioned above that pre-existing notions of identity among immigrants, either national or regional, were quickly replaced by a Scandinavian-American identity, so a pan-Scandinavian identity did not have time to develop. Nelson (1900), who had first-hand experience of how the Scandinavians behaved in America, argued that even these national identities did not exist for very long: 'After a few years in this country, and very often not even among the emigrants on board of the ship that brings them, can any distinction of the separate Northern nationalities be detected' (Nelson 1900: 51-2). The Norwegian violinist, Ole Bull (1810-1880), who achieved international recognition and toured America several times, did not believe in pan-Scandinavianism either and his view as follows:

‘Scandinavia, gentlemen – may I ask where that land lies? It is not found in my geography; does it lie perhaps in the moon’ (Babcock 1969: 15-6)?

Again, notions of identity appear to have been products of the intellectual elite and they were the only ones which interpreted cooperation among Scandinavians as a sign that a common identity could be established. Ole Munch Ræder (1815-1895), a Norwegian lawyer who was given a government stipend of fifteen hundred dollars in 1845 to carry out investigations of legal procedures in foreign countries, wrote extensively and enthusiastically about pan-Scandinavianism. He arrived in New York in the early summer of 1847 and returned to Norway at the end of 1849. Because he had seen how Danes, Norwegians and Swedes lived comfortably alongside each other in America, he thought that this could also work in Scandinavia with a proper union between Sweden-Norway and Denmark. He even suggested names for the union, either ‘The United Scandinavian States’ or ‘The Scandinavian Union’. Ræder’s impressions of how the Scandinavians co-operated in America gave an impetus to his dreams of a pan-Scandinavian union. However, he was somewhat at a loss as to why this peaceful co-existence had not resulted in a common identity:

[...] the characteristic qualities as well as the sentiments and traditions on which their distinct nationalities are based are by no means blotted out. I do not find among them anything approaching “the Pan-Scandinavian idea”.

(Malmin 1929: 70)

In his opinion though, it was because it was such an abstract idea that ordinary people could not understand it. If they were guided by people who knew better, (i.e. intellectuals such as Ræder himself) then they would soon realise the

benefits of pan-Scandinavianism and embrace the idea despite their natural apprehension (Malmin 1929: 221).

A perfect example of the limited appeal of pan-Scandinavianism to ordinary people is the failure of the Scandinavian-American newspaper *Skandinavia* launched in 1847 in New York:

[...] it employed both Danish and Swedish in its columns and allotted about equal space to information about Norwegian, Danish, and Swedish affairs, emphasizing news from the Scandinavian countries [...] *Skandinavia* does not seem to have gained a firm foothold, perhaps because it failed to take a definite political stand, possibly because its tone was Pan-Scandinavian.

(Blegen 1940: 288)

We similarly do not see the establishment of common Scandinavian churches or schools and even today each country has separate historical associations in America.⁹⁰

The rejection of pan-Scandinavianism by emigrant phrasebooks and travel guidebooks does not mean that all popular language works rejected the idea outright. The Norwegian politician, historian and philologist, Ludvig Kristensen Daa (1809-1877), was behind an early popular language work aimed at promoting pan-Scandinavianism.⁹¹ His pan-Scandinavian stance often brought him into difficulty, for example when he in 1849 accused P. A. Munch (section 7.2.2) of displaying anti-Scandinavian historicism in his history of the Norwegian people. He favoured a common Scandinavian orthography and had as early as the 1840s called for a meeting discussing orthographic reforms. He was therefore an obvious participant in the Stockholm meeting in 1869 (section 7.5.1).

⁹⁰ A quick survey of place names in America also reveals that there are only three 'Scandinavia's' whereas there are numerous 'Denmarks', 'Norways' and 'Swedens'.

⁹¹ For biographical information on Daa, see Meijer and Westrin (1906: 1040-2).

His *Svensk-Norsk Haand-Ordbog* [Swedish-Norwegian Dictionary] (1841) was part of his attempt to improve communication between Scandinavians. The main purpose with this work was to make Swedish literature more accessible for Danes and Norwegians in a period where it was more common to read English, French or German literature. It is interesting to note that he refers to the language spoken in Norway as 'Norwegian' and, possibly deliberately, avoids mentioning Danish at all. He has also 'endeavoured to make room [in the dictionary] for all peculiar phrases in the Norwegian spoken language which are understood and in use everywhere in Norway' (Daa 1841: iv). It cannot be ascertained for sure if this is an acknowledgement of his critics, who found him too pan-Scandinavian, but it does indicate that he was in favour of the development of a separate Norwegian language and possibly thought that people who agreed would buy his book.

Daa places emphasis on the spoken language and adopts the forward-looking view that it is here the natural development of a language takes place and not in the artificially constructed written form. His experiences from Norway must have influenced him in reaching this conclusion. He uses a different orthography to the commonly accepted one and explains that it, apart from two major modifications, is identical to the system Rask had put forward in 1825 and 1826 (section 7.5.1). In his opinion, Rask's system is best suited for the purpose because it is built on his strong knowledge of the Scandinavian languages in particular and comparative linguistics in general. Where Daa deviates from Rask is that he uses 'Aa' instead of 'Å' because printing works in Norway were still using Gothic fonts which did not have 'Å'. Daa seems highly irritated by this shortcoming: 'As long as this distasteful medieval decay of the

Latin alphabet's austere beauty is not abolished, then it will be difficult to use both accents and such compound symbols as Å' (Daa 1841: ix).⁹² The second change from Rask is one which Daa refers to as a 'real difference in opinion' and concerns his use of 'Kj', 'Gj' and 'Skj' instead of Rask's soft 'K', 'G' and 'Sk'. He argues that Rask's rule of assigning each individual sound a unique symbol, which can be pronounced in only one way, is not adhered to when he writes 'Kær' with a single 'K', but 'Kjende' with 'Kj'. The initial sound of these two words is the same and should therefore have the same symbol – in Daa's opinion this should be 'Kj'. Furthermore, the introduction of Rask's symbols would result in the Danish language removing itself further from Swedish because *känns* in that language sounds more or less the same as *kjende* in Danish (Daa 1841: x-xi).

The overall ease of access for Scandinavians to each other's literatures, making mutual understanding easier, is one of Daa's main aims (Daa 1841: v). Daa was in favour of a united Scandinavia, though he seems to have been thinking in more cultural than political terms. He argued that aligning the orthographies would 'strengthen their literature and Nordic nationality' (Daa 1841: vi). Daa is not denying the fact that a common Scandinavian orthography will be difficult to implement. People who for so many centuries have been politically separated and hostile towards each other will find it difficult to rise above prejudice and instead unite in literary endeavours. Mutual cooperation would concede elements of their nationality and so far the signs of this have been poor. The way forward for language scholars is to follow in Rask's

⁹² 'Saalænge man ikke har faaet afskaffet denne Middelalderens smagløse Fordærvelse af det latinske Alfabets simple Skjønhed, lade baade Aksenter og saadanne sammensatte Tegn som Å sig vanskelig anvende'.

footsteps and portray the same international frame of mind that he did. A linguistic congress, similar to the ones already held by the natural sciences in Scandinavia, would help iron out the differences in Scandinavian orthography and would be the first step towards greater unity (Daa 1841: xi-xii). As a participant himself, Daa would have been thrilled that his request was achieved nearly thirty years later in Stockholm in 1869.

7.5.1 A common orthography

The establishment of a common Scandinavian language was one of the stronger and more feasible ideas of the pan-Scandinavian movement. The biggest difference between the written languages was in orthography and serious suggestions for eliminating these were made by senior officials from Denmark, Norway and Sweden. These discussions reached their peak in the 1860s and culminated in a meeting in 1869, but by that time the standard languages in Denmark and Sweden were already too fixed and Norway was more concerned with its own language reform debate for anything concrete to be agreed.

Det nordiske Retskrivningsmøde/Det Nordiska rättstafningsmötet [The Nordic Orthography Meeting] took place in Stockholm in 1869 from the 25th to the 30th July.⁹³ Reasons for moving towards a common Scandinavian orthography were for one that both Denmark and Sweden would be able to introduce simpler orthographic rules compared to the ones already in existence. Secondly, it was claimed that the current spelling rules overshadowed the actual likeness between the spoken languages. They, in effect, erected a wall between the Scandinavian people, resulting in limited literary interaction. By introducing

⁹³ Summaries of the meeting can be found in Lyngby (1870) and Hazelius (1871).

an orthography that made the languages more alike, literature would make a gain by increasing its number of readers (Lyngby 1870: 4). Among the scholars attending the meeting were from Sweden, Carl Säve (1812-1876), professor of Nordic languages at Uppsala, Mårten Birger Richert (1837-1886), Säve's successor at Uppsala, Theodor Wisén (1835-1892), later professor of Nordic languages at Lund and Knut Fredrik Söderwall (1842-1924), Wisén's successor at Lund; from Copenhagen, Svend Grundtvig (1824-1883), professor of Nordic philology, Johannes Kok (1821-87), priest and language scholar, Søren Bloch Thrige (1820-1901), head teacher, and Kristen Jensen Lyngby (1829-1871), professor of Nordic philology; and from Norway, Sophus Bugge (1833-1907), professor of philology at Christiania, Henrik Ibsen (1828-1906), author, Knud Knudsen (1812-1895), teacher and language scholar, Jacob Løkke (1829-1881), teacher and grammarian and the aforementioned Ludvig Kristensen Daa.

The changes they discussed were divided into those affecting both languages (i.e. Swedish and Danish-Norwegian) and those affecting the languages individually. The importance of Old Norse was pointed out several times in the outline of the proposed changes. When a marked difference between the languages existed, the decision on which language's spelling was the more correct was based on the Old Norse root. Not many of the changes were implemented, however, though some were included in later reforms in the twentieth century. Usually a proposed change would be dismissed by stating that it had been decided to retain the current spelling, but that it, of course, would be desirable to change it in the future. Often this was justified by the fact that the common people could not be expected to understand a change in spelling which was based on etymology or historical roots of a word, thus indicating that

linguistic Pan-Scandinavianism, as with intellectual and political pan-Scandinavianism, did not have many supporters among the general population.

Many of the changes suggested at the meeting in Stockholm had already been proposed by Rasmus Rask in four pamphlets published in 1825 and 1826.⁹⁴ While still at school, Rask had contemplated reforms to Danish orthography and in a short essay from 1806, he suggested discarding the Gothic alphabet in favour of the less crinkly [snørklet], as he put it, Latin alphabet which separated Danish from other European languages (Rask 2002: 194). The most important aspect in relation to orthography, according to Rask, was that it should be based on a scientific foundation. The spoken language could, and should, not be changed in the same way because it was the product of a natural and organic development and belonged to the people who spoke it. The written language, on the other hand, was only a reflection of the spoken language, artificially constructed and could therefore be changed on the basis of rational principles (Rask 2002: 195). This standpoint was not positively received by his peers at the time. Christian Molbech, a long-standing rival of Rask's, was outraged at his proposals and fiercely attacked him publicly, drawing on nationalist and romantic sentiments in his arguments. That Molbech had also written the previous 'official' guide to Danish orthography (Molbech (1813)) would have done nothing to ease his outrage. In a letter to the German linguists and famous brothers, Jacob Grimm (1785-1863) and Wilhelm Grimm (1786-1859), Molbech complained that the only tangible product so far from Rask's trip to Russia and Asia which had cost the state enormous sums was an orthographic theory of the *Danish* language. But he was not satisfied with just that allegation and added

⁹⁴ Compiled in Rask (1826).

that it was public knowledge that the king had once proclaimed that he wondered why the only result of Rask's travels was a nought above the a [referring to 'å' instead of 'aa', as suggested by Rask] (Rask 2002: 199). There was much hostility towards Rask's reform because: 'Many felt it as a stab in the heart that Rask wanted to take their old letters away from them. As one of them said: My orthography is my soul' (Rask 2002: 201). The debate was therefore heated and Rask was the subject of much ridicule, but he got the last laugh when many of his changes were proposed at the meeting in 1869. Science had prevailed over irrational nationalist sentiment and once again Rask had proved too modern for his time.

A common Scandinavian orthography was therefore never introduced and any changes since introduced have been on an individual national basis. The main reason is the strong opposition with which reforms was met everywhere, both among intellectuals and the general population. Everyone perceived alleged shortcomings of their language as a direct criticism of their national spirit. This was very much in tune with National Romanticism and shows that the intellectual elite did at least succeed in disseminating some sense of national pride based on the individual languages to the common people even if their ideas did not feature in the majority of popular language works.⁹⁵

⁹⁵ The situation today is of course very different, where there are distinct pan-Scandinavian or pan-Nordic flavours to the policies of the various language councils.

Chapter 8: Conclusion

8.1 Recognising utilitarian language learning

Applied linguistics has failed to give appropriate recognition to utilitarian language learning and popular language works. This is despite the fact that they fulfil one of the central objectives of the field: to devise solutions to real-life practical problems associated with language and communication. Even in general historical descriptions of the development of language teaching methods, this large area of second language acquisition is omitted. The grammar-translation method is commonly referred to as the dominant language teaching method from its emergence around 1800 until well into the twentieth century (2.1.1), and while this was true in formal education, there were many people to whom institutionalised language teaching was not available as established in Chapter 2. These utilitarian language learners were actually the beneficiaries of teaching methods which differed from grammar-translation and took into consideration their specific needs as language learners – though some were more successful than others, of course. Remnants of the grammar-translation method can be found in popular language works, but this is because ‘there was no other foreign language teaching method *generally* known at the time’ (Howatt 1984: 131, my emphasis) and as noted in section 4.6.1.2, their approach to the teaching of grammar was one which was often remained more or less unaltered.

The communicative needs of the utilitarian language learners emerged as a result of nineteenth-century social and economic changes and as such it had not previously been necessary to cater for this kind of learner. The grammar-

translation method was deemed suitable for school instruction but was hopelessly ineffective in a self-instruction language manual intended to teach a kind of language that could be used in general conversation. The authors of popular language works, and in particular those who had actual practical experience of teaching languages, were aware of this and began to focus on the spoken language. Chapter 6 examined this new-found emphasis on the spoken language and described the various transcription systems found in the popular language works. It also suggested that this pre-empted developments at university level towards the end of the nineteenth century, when the practical linguists advocated exactly the same strategy based on their knowledge of phonetics.

The methods of utilitarian language learning could not have replaced traditional language teaching methods because of the completely different educational settings in which they were applied. Despite some authors of popular language works claiming that their works could replace, and even improve upon, the instruction received from a teacher, this is not the case when examining the movement in a historical perspective. The often implausible claims put forward by authors and publishers of popular language works in terms of the speed and ease with which the learner could expect to acquire a foreign language have been a long-standing bugbear among the genre's opponents. Yet, these claims still exist today and as argued by Roberts (1995) none of them have borne close scrutiny and rest on ambiguities just as a lot of other advertising does (Roberts 1995: 127). This has also been one of the reasons why applied linguists perceive self-instruction language manuals as unworthy of serious consideration. They know that it is not possible to master a

language over a very short period of time, but their disdain could be put into positive use. Instead of just dismissing the genre, they could combine their enthusiasm for autonomy in language learning with a real concerted effort to actually improve the genre. I have so far not found any explanations as to why this is not happening and the limited research into self-instruction language manuals (Roberts (1995) and Jones (1993; 1998)) only echoes my call for closer co-operation. Perhaps if the genre made genuine progress from the input of experts and became a lot more effective then the need for language teachers would be greatly reduced and applied linguistics would be undermining its own foundation. The relationship between applied linguists and language teachers is a reciprocal one, the former relies on the latter to test its methods, and I believe that this has led to a rather closed network in which only ideas and undertakings that benefit the discipline itself are accepted by the mainstream.

The argument above ties in with another aim of this study: to challenge the traditional perception in applied linguistics that the practical study of languages is not scholarly enough to merit recognition. Even second language acquisition with its main emphasis on the learner (section 6.2) failed to recognise its historical precedent when it emerged around the middle of the twentieth century. However, to many people this manner of gaining proficiency in a language was the only option available – a situation which also prevails today. Of course, the various modes of learning have changed and technology has provided many more opportunities for independent study, but they in are in essence built upon a foundation which consists of earlier popular language works and their methods. One of the main findings has been that if we look beyond the catchy titles of the popular language works aimed at enticing the

reader to buy the product, some good language teaching methodologies can be found.

This study has made it clear that the theory of autonomous language learning addresses many issues also applicable to nineteenth-century utilitarian language learners. I have deliberately not called the learners under investigation in this study ‘autonomous language learners’ because it is a modern term that restricts itself to the actual learning process and does not take into consideration the motivations behind learning the language (migration, trade and travel) which were fundamental to the movement’s popularity in the nineteenth century. There is no doubt that utilitarian language learning and popular language works deserve an inclusion in the history of applied linguistics, perhaps not as part of the mainstream, but definitely as a strong current running alongside the more acknowledged methods of language teaching. They can help us evaluate why we are still making the same mistakes today when it comes to providing language learning opportunities for non-specialists.

8.2 Why popular language works ‘failed’

Chapters 4 and 5 concluded that popular language works rarely lived up to their claims of teaching the language quickly and with ease. The travel guidebooks can be excused to some degree as they never claimed to teach a foreign language comprehensively. The main idea behind a travel guidebook was to provide travellers with information about the place(s) they were visiting and the language section was a mere appendix. This does not mean, however, that we should not call them popular language works because by including a language section, they did indicate an intention on the part of the reader to

acquire at least a basic command of the foreign language. It is also important to remember the language-historical context in which the guidebooks were published. English was not a lingua franca as it is today and it was common to visit a place where only the native language was spoken. Visitors, therefore, had to have a much deeper knowledge of the foreign language if they were to communicate with the local population at all. The main difference between travel guidebooks and emigrant phrasebooks can really be found in relation to the circumstances under which they were intended to be used. The travel guidebooks were more informal and reflected the less pressing needs of their readers. A few communication problems during a two-week holiday in Scandinavia were to be expected whereas the emigrants' future was often dependent on how quickly they could learn English.

So why were the emigrant phrasebooks not more effective in teaching foreign languages than the travel guidebooks? To some extent they probably were, but it all depended on how meticulously they were studied. The elements required to learn English were present in the phrasebooks and the pronunciation, grammar and dialogue sections had been given great consideration by the authors. Yet, the readers were not equipped to get the full benefit of the information provided. Having received very little education, they were not used to acquiring knowledge without instruction and many of the concepts needed to learn a foreign language were completely unknown to them. Grammar is only useful if one understands concepts such as analogy and the application of paradigms. Of course, most of the grammar sections in the phrasebooks could have been improved if less Latin terminology had been used and structured in accordance with the typology of English; however, this is indicative of the

transition period in which the popular language works are found. Real improvements in grammar teaching even at school level were not achieved until the twentieth century with the introduction of native terminology and a move away from the Latin tradition. The authors of popular language works did not have any templates of simplified grammar teaching on which they could base their own grammar sections and hence the lack of innovation in these sections.

The real indication that popular language works formed part of a change in foreign language teaching was the new-found emphasis on the spoken language as analysed in Chapter 6. However, it was not until the linguists with a strong interest in phonetics emerged at the end of the century that the spoken language was really codified in terms of sounds and symbols. One of the characteristics of the authors of popular language works was that they had practical teaching experience and had therefore been faced with the problem of explaining how words should be pronounced to their students. The main difference now, of course, was that this explanation had to be done in writing and without the opportunity to produce sounds as examples. Again, the shortcomings of the pronunciation guides are in part due to the lack of precedents and the specific kind of learner that the utilitarian language learner was. Any development in the history of linguistics must be analysed on its own merits and according to the overall context of its time.⁹⁶ In hindsight it is easy to dismiss the pronunciation guides in the popular language works as too rudimentary, but we have over a hundred years of the phonetic study of languages at our disposal. Any contemporary teacher trying to explain the

⁹⁶ See Koerner (1995: 13) for a discussion of the importance of the principles of contextualisation, immanence and adequation in linguistic historiography.

sounds of a foreign language by the use of letters to students not familiar with phonetics would resort to the same methods as the authors of popular language works because there is no other way. We can therefore deem the phrasebooks ineffective, but by no means unimportant, when they are assessed in the overall context of the development of foreign language teaching. They were trying to solve a problem to which there were no current solutions and this is one of the key principles of applied linguistics.

8.3 Identity and language

Chapter 7 broadened the discussion and examined the relationship between language and national identity in the context of both popular language works and the activities of the Scandinavian academies. One of the attributes of popular language works was that they were produced as a direct response to the needs of the general population. The ‘us against them’ attitude displayed by authors and readers also meant that ideological currents, generally irrelevant to the ordinary population, were very rarely included. Even National Romanticism and pan-Scandinavianism, both movements which had language as a central element of their ideology and occupied the work of many Scandinavian intellectuals, failed to make much of an impact upon popular language works because this genre was concerned with the everyday lives of ordinary people.

There were different reasons why National Romanticism and pan-Scandinavianism were not included in the popular language works. National Romanticism has often been characterised as a movement which dominated all spheres of the arts in nineteenth-century Scandinavia. Yet, this was not exactly true as the discussion in section 7.2.2 revealed. In Denmark and Sweden, the

movement failed to reach the same popular heights as in Norway due to the history of those countries. They were established nation states which did not need their native languages to be elevated to a higher level as part of a campaign of asserting independence. Furthermore, in Denmark the peasant class had benefited from reforms which gave them much political influence and it was no longer representative of the idealised, idyllic picture of the peasant painted by the National Romantics. In Norway, language was used as a tool by intellectuals, but because of the unique situation with the official written language being Danish, a long process of language reform was only just beginning in the nineteenth century and it was too complicated and unsettled to have any relevance in a popular language work. National Romanticism tried to infuse a sense of pride in national language and culture, but its somewhat inward-looking attitude did not quite tally with the main aim of utilitarian language learning – to look beyond the native country and learn a foreign language.

Pan-Scandinavianism could have been expected to have had some impact upon popular language works with its objective of increasing communication and interaction between Scandinavians, but it did not. The idea itself just did not appeal to the general population and it did not help either that its supporters among the intellectual elite dismissed people's antipathy as a case of not understanding the idea properly. In part due to the success of National Romanticism, national identities were being formed in Scandinavia which proved to be resilient from the outset. The historically fragile relationships between Denmark, Norway and Sweden meant that most people had an inherent wariness towards their neighbours and the thought that the three countries could

simply unite was too far-fetched. By the time popular language works were established as a genre, the idea had almost run its course and it was too political to include any of its notions in a popular language work. The one setting where pan-Scandinavianism could possibly have flourished, among the immigrants in America, also showed no signs of this happening. Again the gulf between the intellectual elite and the ordinary people became evident. Commentators on Scandinavian settlements in America had expected to see pan-Scandinavianism flourish in an environment where strength in numbers was needed, but instead the age-old squabbles continued to exist.

The few language works which have a pan-Scandinavian theme were written by intellectuals and we saw that individuals such as Ludvig Kristensen Daa, for instance, was subject to much criticism from National Romantics (section 7.5.1). The final attempt to bring Scandinavians closer together in terms of language was the Nordic Orthography Meeting in 1869. The idea behind the meeting was that if the differences in the orthographies of Danish and Swedish could be eliminated, then it would be easier for ordinary Scandinavians to understand the actual likeness of their languages. However, the proposals came too late to have any lasting effects and the orthographies today are just as different as they were then. Maybe if this meeting had been held half a century earlier, the situation would have been different, but that remains pure speculation.

The overall impression to be gained from the failure of national identity to have an impact upon popular language works is that their authors were acting as filters between the intellectual elite and the general population. Abstract ideas and concepts would be coined by intellectuals, but if they were to be adopted by

ordinary people someone had to convert these ideas and concepts into a format that could be understood by ordinary people. Because the authors of popular language works were essentially engaged in a money-making enterprise, their works had to be profitable and they were not interested in advocating any ideas which could alienate their audience.

8.4 Further research

This study contributes to the history of linguistics by enhancing our knowledge of a genre of language works which has so far been deemed largely outside the canon. The dominance of historical-comparative philology in the nineteenth century tends to overshadow all other types of language work in that period. Within Scandinavia itself, there has been a recognition that language scholars were actually working on a variety of topics during that period, but internationally this has failed to achieve much attention. This is partly due to the fact that events in Norway tend to attract the most interest from non-Scandinavians scholars and as these events are highly nationalist and unique to the political situation of the time, it has been difficult to draw general parallels with the rest of Europe. Popular language works, on the other hand, were an international phenomenon as we see them replicated all over Europe in a multiplicity of languages (particularly in the countries that experienced high levels of emigration in the nineteenth century). Industrialisation had similar effects upon the ordinary population in many countries and the needs met by utilitarian language learning were a consequence of industrialisation. This provides scope for a larger scale study of popular language works and utilitarian language learning covering all of (western) Europe.

For the history of applied linguistics, more specifically, this study has shown that innovative language teaching methodologies did emerge and that the grammar-translation method was not the only method available. However, this has remained unexplored because these methods were found outside of formal education. I am pleased to say that the applied linguists to whom I have suggested this idea tend to agree and acknowledge that more effort needs to be directed towards the study of non-institutionalised language teaching. It is to be hoped that historians of linguistics can manage to emphasise the fact that applied linguistics has a history (something that is usually ignored) which should be inclusive and draw parallels between the past and present.

Throughout this study it has become evident that the main subjects of investigation were ordinary people who do not usually feature in linguistic history-writing. Historians of linguistics often struggle with the concept of history from below because our central object of investigation is language. The act of speaking is an activity which cannot be captured satisfactorily in print and as such presents a problem to anyone studying language before the age of audio recording. However, with the ascendancy of historical sociolinguistics in recent years, the idea that much information can be captured from written resources has been given legitimacy. As discussed in Chapter 2, the nineteenth century is a particular fertile ground for research due to the social changes that occurred in that century. The educational reforms which resulted in widespread literacy in Scandinavia were outlined in Chapter 3, and a few examples of how ordinary people put their newly acquired literacy to use were given in Chapter 4 where quotations from America justified the claim that little thought was actually given to the language learning process by Scandinavian immigrants in America.

Writing history from below is a challenge and admittedly specific resources on people's experiences with self-instruction language manuals are few and far between. If this research project had had a longer lifespan, more personal experiences of the language learners would undoubtedly have been found, but as always a wish can only be expressed that more scholars would turn to alternative resources and explore further how ordinary people encountered foreign languages through the means of self-instruction manuals.

This study is in reality an amalgamation of several topics which could be the subject of independent research projects. It has aimed to offer a contribution to the subject of language learning by non-specialists, but has been restricted to the specific period of the nineteenth century and Scandinavia as a particular region. Evidently, there is scope for researchers to conduct similar studies on other European countries. Moving further back in time than the nineteenth century might prove difficult as the number of popular language works decreases significantly, but the area of specialist dictionaries, as briefly discussed in Chapter 3, is one resource with a long history, and especially the maritime dictionaries have been published for centuries.

Another topic with a vast array of resources is emigration. The phrasebooks could form part of a large-scale study including earlier colonial works and, of course, other European languages. Others might be interested in the immigrant newspapers which are a valuable resource of the language of ordinary people due to the high level of reader contributions. Chapter 4 touched upon how the speed with which immigrants learnt the language depended on social factors such as age, community and gender. This suggests that there is scope for further sociolinguistic study in this area. One such example is the

segregated Mormon communities in Utah which a large number of Scandinavians joined from 1850 onwards. The Mormon leaders were keen for people to sever ties with their past, and the Scandinavian Mormons learnt English more quickly than their counterparts in other areas of America. The Mormon Church also has excellent archival records, both general census information and personal diaries and journals, which could be utilised to examine how social networks had an influence upon the learning process.

The tourist guidebooks examined in Chapter 5 belong to another area of research which deserves more attention. The history of tourism is a growing subject (e.g. new journals, academic conferences, internet forums, etc.) and the field would benefit enormously from a history of guidebooks/phrasebooks. This could include a range of European languages and analyse perceptions of national culture and identity over the course of the last five centuries. It is also a genre with which most ordinary people are familiar and would offer an excellent opportunity for researchers to engage with the broader public in a process of knowledge exchange.

Finally, I would like to issue a plea for other researchers to utilise the resources found in the *Hannås Collection*. It is a fascinating source of information for anyone interested in the history of language study and I by no means claim to have exhausted all available avenues. I do hope that this study has highlighted how lesser-known works sitting in libraries all over the world can be used to enhance our knowledge of the history of linguistics and contribute to current thinking within linguistics as a whole.

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Note: the order of the Scandinavian alphabets has been followed, i.e. ä/æ, ö/ø, aa/å follow z.

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