

DIALECT CONTACT AND DIALECT TRANSITION: A CASE STUDY*

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1. INTRODUCTION

Traditional areal dialectology has long recognized three types of speech areas: focal areas having a centre of prestige or power where linguistic innovation is constantly taking place and whence the innovations spread into the surrounding geographical area (e.g., London, New York, Toronto); relic areas where the unique dialect features are slowly receding in favour of an expanding neighbouring focal area, and where the dialect itself is, or is in danger of, disappearing (e.g. Appalachia, the Ottawa Valley); and transition areas where two or more dialects are in contact with the result that competing forms exist side by side. The first two have been studied extensively, and are based securely on a well-developed theoretical foundation; although transition areas have been recognized and vaguely defined since the early days of areal dialectology, study of them has largely been ignored in favour of the other two.[1] As a result, few studies of transition areas exist, and it is only within the last 20 years that these have begun to receive more detailed attention, either in the theoretical realm or in actual studies. However, the work done in this area has been piecemeal. Past researchers working in transition areas have introduced the use of theoretical devices that were originally formulated in other fields, and as a result a theoretical base and a description of study techniques are still lacking; in addition, there is a welter of terminologies that fit the original area of study but do not necessarily reflect the essential nature of dialect contact and dialect transition. It is possible, however, to adapt these theoretical constructs to the needs of transition studies and, as a result of the Point Roberts study, to add to the existing framework a series of principles and definitions that will enable us to arrive at a first approximation of a coherent transition theory. The present work centres on the Point Roberts community at the far western end of the 49th parallel area of the Canada-U.S.A. border, and it attempts to develop a theoretical base for dialect transition areas in general. Many of the techniques used are borrowed from traditional areal dialectology (e.g. the use of one informant per cell) and from sociolinguistics (e.g. the calculation of frequency of occurrence of features in the speech of an individual informant), but some of the techniques are original and have been developed specifically for dialect transition areas.

2. THE POINT ROBERTS STUDY

The course of the transition and the ultimate resolution of the dialect contact situation depends upon a number of social and demographic factors, such as whether or not the dialect contact area evolves an independent identity. For this reason, exclave (or

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enclave) communities are ideal for dialect contact studies. Point Roberts is situated at the tip of a peninsula joined at its top end to the extreme south-western corner of the Canadian mainland and separated from the American mainland by Boundary Bay; the Forty-ninth Parallel runs across this peninsula just south of Tsawassen, B.C., effectively isolating Point Roberts from the rest of the state of Washington. Since there are no intervening land masses between the Point Roberts exclave[2] and the continental United States, and since the community is in daily contact with Canada, it is particularly well-suited for a detailed study of dialect contact. Very few residents of Point Roberts were born and raised there; many have moved into the community from Canada. In addition, there are many summer residents and weekend visitors from the metropolitan Vancouver area, as a major portion of the local economy is devoted to recreation.[3]

Most linguistic diffusion on the border has been in a northward direction, with American dialect features entering Canadian English but little flow in the opposite direction. However, because of the unique position of the Point Roberts community, the usual direction of diffusion is apparently reversed, i.e., Canadian dialect features have entered and are entering the idiolects of the speakers of American English in the community. Three trends in the type and direction of linguistic change in Point Roberts have become evident: the dialect features commonly found in the Puget Sound region of Washington state are less frequently found in the speech of the American informants in Point Roberts; the American informants in Point Roberts are using linguistic features commonly found in Canadian English; and the Canadian informants in Point Roberts do not use the linguistic features common to the Puget Sound area, and have retained their Canadian speech patterns. (These trends are discussed in detail below; see sections 2.1 through 2.3). It is tempting to say that the American speakers are *losing* the typical Puget Sound features and *acquiring* Canadian speech patterns, but we have, of course, no means of knowing to what extent these features were already present or absent in the speech of the individual speakers. All we can say, reasonably, is that judging by these speakers the speech community is tending away from the Puget Sound patterns of thirty years ago (Brengeleman 1957) and towards the established B.C. Lower Mainland patterns of Canadian English (Chambers 1979, McConnell 1979, Rodman 1975). In the discussion that follows, rates for frequency of occurrence are determined as follows: less than 10% is *low*; from 10% to 20% is *fairly low*; over 30% is *common usage*.

2.1 The decline of AE features.

The "recession" of Washington features was present in all the major categories of linguistic variables, although the degree to which a feature was lacking varied from item to item. In the lexicon, for example, **flapjacks**, **griddlecakes**, and **spider** have gone from a low frequency of occurrence to zero usage; expressions such as **Devil's darning needle** and **baby carriage** have gone from fairly low to low, while other items such as **sawbuck**, **string beans**, and **curtains** have gone from common usage to low frequency of occurrence. Two other words, **skillet** and **faucet** have gone from being present in all contexts to being present in only a few, specific contexts.

Morpho-syntactically, there are two items of note. The use of **real** as a flat adverb (as in "real good"), a common feature in the speech of the Puget Sound area, is present in the speech of only a very few of the American informants in Point Roberts. This is an important item, because the American informants themselves have the subjective impression that the absence of this usage sets them apart from Lower Whatcom County, the neighbouring U.S.A. mainland area. A second morpho-syntactic item commonly found in the general Puget Sound area but only rarely in Point Roberts is the use of the prepositions **at** or **in** in the phrase **sick ___ [one's] stomach**. In Point Roberts, as in Canadian English in general, **to** is the preposition of choice.

Seven phonological variables common in the speech of Puget Sound are noticeable by their absence in the speech of the American Point Roberts informants:

1. The pronunciation of **February** as [fɛbyuɛrɪ] is not common among the men but can still be found in the speech of the American women.
2. The bisyllabic pronunciation of words such as **feel** and **real** resulting from use of a syllabic [l] after the vowel nucleus occurs only rarely.
3. The use of the lax variant [U] in the words **roof** and **root** is found only rarely and, in fact, seems to be stigmatized.
4. The frequency of the labio-velar glide [hw] (as in **which** vs. **witch**) has decreased in the American speech of Point Roberts, if Brengelman's 1957 figures are taken as the base from which we are operating.
5. Similarly, the use of [a] in the stressed syllable of words such as **cotton** has decreased in relation to years of residence such that in the case of American women residing in the community for more than 18 years, it has completely merged with [ɔ].
6. The neutralization of the non-high vowel contrasts, i.e., [o] vs [ɔ] and [æ] or [ɛ] vs [e] which Brengleman (1957) noted as being in progress over thirty years ago, has apparently been completed among the American informants of Point Roberts.
7. In addition, the intrusive [r] sometimes found in the words **wash** or **Washington** among speakers in that state was absent from the speech of the Point Roberts informants.

2.2 The presence of Canadian features.

This trait is also seen across all the major categories of linguistic variables. There are five lexical items normally found only in Canadian English that are present to one degree or another in the speech of the American informants in Point Roberts. These include the words **toque**, **fry pan**, (both low frequency) and **chesterfield** (high frequency), and the lack of the definite article in the expression **to university** as in "He is going to university." Also, use of the noun **tap** has gone from a limited set of specific contexts to general usage across all contexts.

The single morpho-syntactic feature adopted from CE is the use of the preposition **to** in the phrase **a quarter to [the hour]**, at the expense of the variants **of** and **till** that are sometimes found in the Puget Sound area; thus most residents of Point Roberts would choose "a quarter to six" over "a quarter of six" or "a quarter till six."

There are numerous examples of the acquisition of phonological variants common to Canadian English. Among the most prominent are:

1. The use of [e] in the stressed syllable of **again**.
2. The use of the variants [ez] and [ɔz] in **vase**.
3. The use of [ay] in (n)**either** and in the unstressed syllable of **genuine** and **fertile**.

4. The use of [i] in the stressed syllable of **lever** and in the unstressed syllable of the prefix **semi-**.
5. Perhaps the most important phonological acquisition among the American informants, however, is the use of the raised diphthongs [ʌy] and [ʌw] before voiceless consonants, i.e. the presence in their speech of "Canadian Raising." This, more than anything else, points to a tendency on the part of the American informants to acquire Canadian speech patterns.

2.3 Acquisition of AE features by native speakers of Canadian English.

It was originally hypothesized that the Canadian informants in Point Roberts would make some changes in the direction of Washington state speech patterns; instead, there is no indication that they have acquired any of these variants. For example, **napkin** has retained the specific feature "paper" among the Canadian women in the community, and has not generalized to the two contexts "cloth" and "paper" as in the American pattern of usage. Nor do any of the Canadian informants appear to use AE lexical items such as **skillet**, or to have adopted the use of **real** as a flat adverb. Instead, there is a noticeable retention of many of their distinctive Canadian features. This is most marked in the realm of phonology. Some of the more prominent examples are as follows:

1. The three variants of **vase** found in British Columbia, i.e. [vɔz]:[vez]:[ves] , are all present in the speech of Canadians resident in Point Roberts.
2. [ay] is used (as described above) in **either**, **neither**, **genuine** and **fertile**.
3. [i] is commonly used in the second syllable of **semi-**.
4. All Canadian informants pronounce **shone** (past of **shine**) with the lax vowel, as opposed to the tense vowel frequently heard in Puget Sound usage, i.e. CE [ʃɒn] vs AE [ʃɔn].
5. Canadian speakers continue to pronounce the word **schedule** with [ʃ] rather than [sk].
6. The letter **Z** is referred to as [zɛd] rather than as [zi].
7. A high frequency of the palatal glide [y] is found in words such as **Tuesday**.
8. "Canadian Raising" is present in the speech of all the Canadian informants in all possible environments. This last feature, probably more than any other, points to the fact that the Canadian residents of Point Roberts are retaining their linguistic identity and are not accommodating their speech patterns to any great extent to those of the Puget Sound area.

3. THEORETICAL PRINCIPLES AND CONSTRUCTS

In the early '70s, although his recent focus has been on the variational aspects of social dialectology, Labov made a start towards describing the parameters of dialect transition areas when he defined three stages in the progress of change that all dialectol-

ogists must be cognizant of (Labov 1972:3): first, the origin of linguistic variation; second, the spread and propagation of linguistic change; and third, the regularity of linguistic change. His chief concern was the change involved in one particular dialect feature, i.e. diphthong raising in the speech community of Martha's Vineyard, but he failed to emphasize the point that his three stages of language change could and should be extended to include the widest possible range of features involved in dialect contact and dialect change.

More recently, Trudgill (1986) attempted to rectify the paucity of past research by formulating an extensive definition of transition areas. He noted that dialect contact, like language contact, can be either short- or long-term, and that dialect accommodation (as he calls it) can be both regional and social. The crucial requirement in long-term dialect contact situations, such as that in Point Roberts, is face-to-face interaction between the speakers of the competing dialects on a regular basis. Trudgill found that dialect transition occurs first at the individual level, and only later at the level of the speech community, the transition being an effort on the part of numbers of speakers of the competing dialects to understand each other and to be understood (1986:39). His primary claim was that the long-term transition process from one dialect to another follows a fixed route, with lexical items being the first to change, followed by morphological features,[4]. and, finally, by phonological differences (1986:25).

Differences in the lexicon are the most evident to speakers and hearers because they are non-systematic and can cause obvious problems in comprehension; also, lexical items are easy to learn one at a time. Hence, they are the first to change. Phonological differences, Trudgill's primary focus, are more difficult both because they are systematic and because they may be very subtle. Here, variable rule analysis has been invaluable in analyzing the patterns of change; according to Wang (1969), the transition process tends to be piecemeal and non-systematic, with speakers changing their pronunciation of individual words first and of entire classes of words only when the transition process is nearing its end. Or to put it more simply, speakers learn the pronunciation of individual words first and assimilate the phonological rule later (Trudgill 1986:58).

Apart from these studies, transition areas have been neglected both in the field and in the theoretical realm, and such theoretical devices and principles as there are, are scattered, originating in other areas of study such as areal dialectology and bilingualism, but there is to date no coherent theory for transition areas *per se*. Such a theory can, however, be developed by adapting these scattered theoretical devices and principles to refer specifically to transition areas. As well, a theoretical base for transition areas (hereinafter referred to as **transition theory**) can be considerably expanded by applying principles derived from the patterns of dialect shift observed in the Point Roberts study. At this point, therefore, we must turn to the theoretical constructs previously developed and their application to a coherent transition theory.

3.1 Isoglosses and Heteroglosses.

Iso/heteroglosses have been used for decades to define the boundaries or show the divisions between dialect areas, and, in fact, a dialect boundary is usually defined as a bundle of iso/heteroglosses. Their use as a theoretical device has, however, not been without problems, the major one being that the isogloss is, by and large, an arbitrary line, and its appearance on a map implies that dialect variation is geographically abrupt. The use of the heterogloss avoids this particular problem but creates a problem of its own in that it can indicate nothing about the linguistic variation that exists between the two lines of which it is composed. Both these problems result in a degree of imprecision, or as Chambers and Trudgill (1980:125) put it:

Bundles cohere only approximately, there are apparently no general principles for grading a set of isoglosses, and they correlate with other cultural features only roughly.

In the past, the major theoretical efforts have been in the direction of categorizing different types of iso/heteroglosses (lexical, morpho-syntactic, phonetic, semantic), and attempting to weigh their respective prominence in order to arrive at a degree of differentiation between two dialects. Dialectologists have not yet reached a consensus on these attempts as more than one system exists, and these studies have still not come to grips with the problem of defining isoglosses and heteroglosses accurately or of confirming their theoretical validity.

The following discussion is based on Chambers and Trudgill's (1980) treatment of the use of iso- and heteroglosses in transition areas, with data from the Point Roberts study used to support or refute their delineation of the problems involved. These are four:

1. Many previous dialect studies have used only one category of informant, thus restricting the number of independent variables (i.e. social factors affecting speech patterns were often ignored), and it was from the results of these investigations that the dialect boundaries were drawn. For example, the Survey of English Dialects (SED) used only non-mobile elderly rural males (or NORMs). However, the Point Roberts study and other studies in social dialectology have shown that linguistic variation occurs across a wide range of independent variables in the informant population, including sex, nationality, and socio-economic status as well as age; this makes the drawing of whatever kind of "-gloss" so complex as to be practically impossible because it must include all the independent variables in its representation in order to represent the dialect boundaries accurately.
2. The second problem is a phonological one and applies especially to transition areas. Traditionally, only one word such as **some** or **out** is tested as representative of an entire class. This implies that the use of a particular vowel is uniform across the entire class of words in which it can appear. However, the theory of lexical diffusion shows that a vowel that is in competition with a second vowel (e.g. [ʌ] and [u] in the SED materials or [aw] and [ʌw] in the Point Roberts data) does **not** occur uniformly across the class of potential words in the speech of any one particular informant; in the Point Roberts study, this principle is illustrated by some American informants who use [aw] in **clout** but [ʌw] in **out**.
3. A similar phonological problem arises in the case, particularly common in transition areas, where a single informant may use competing sounds interchangeably in the same word (what is traditionally called "free variation"). In the transition area of Central England, this is seen in the use of both [ʌ] and [u] in separate occurrences of the word **duck** in the speech of the same informant. In the Point Roberts data, **out** was frequently pronounced first as [awt] and then as [ʌwt] by American informants (this word was purposely tested twice in the course of the tape-recorded interviews).
4. The last problem is peculiar to transition areas. Some researchers have tried to adapt the principle of the isogloss or heterogloss to the variation found in transition areas by determining the frequency of occurrence of a particular feature and then drawing an isogloss such that the the low frequencies are on one side and the high frequencies on the other. Unfortunately, this often results in discontinuous lines or none at all.

As a result of these problems, Chambers and Trudgill (1980:132) came to the conclusion that the existence of transitional dialects seems to render the notion of "isogloss" obsolete. This abandonment seems premature, however, because isoglosses do seem to have a certain value as a first step in any dialect survey covering a large geographic area, in that they can serve to define the boundaries of a transition area (see Mann, 1988). In the case of the heterogloss, its very presence would indicate the existence of a transition area, and its two lines would define the outer boundaries of that area. With the more complex heteroglosses that are joined together in order to arrive at an isogloss (see Kurath 1972), the two outermost lines of the heterogloss bundle would define the transition area. The same basic principle holds true for the isogloss bundle; its presence indicates the presence of a transition area, and its outer limits are defined by the outermost isoglossic lines (see Mann 1988:284). Everything between the lines can thus be defined as the transition area, and the lines themselves make no prediction as to the variation found between them.

3.2. Principles of lexical transition.

In 1963, Weinreich published his seminal work on language contact, in which he noted that the basic theoretical constructs and patterns he was outlining for lexical interference between languages were equally applicable to dialect contact. However, because of his immediate concern with bilingualism, he noted only briefly the applicability of his theories to bidialectalism and did not explore the notion further.

A decade later, Allen (1973) applied Weinreich's theoretical constructs to the dialect contact situation he had discovered in the Upper Midwest of the United States, where the Midland and South Midland dialects had come in contact with the Northern dialect. The crux of Allen's article was his outline of the five possible speaker reactions to competing lexical items in a dialect contact area. These lexical principles as set forth by Weinreich dealt essentially with lexical interference, a term which seems imprecise in reference to a dialect contact situation, as all informants already have a command of the language whereas in bilingualism they initially do not. However, the five principles themselves are of great value in explaining the lexical variation present in a dialect transition area. They are as follows (see Allen 1973:56-66):

1. One of two competing terms gains a new meaning from the other term. For example, the Midland term **bellybuster** only means throwing oneself on a sled in order to get a running start downhill, while the competing Northern term **bellyflop** has the additional meaning of diving flat into a pool; as a result of the contact situation, this second meaning has been added to **bellybuster**, making the two completely synonymous. Allen represents this schematically as $X_{a,b} + Y_a = Y(a)b.[5]$
2. A term with two meanings comes in contact with a competing term having only one of these meanings (a partial synonym), and drops the meaning which the two do not have in common, again resulting in complete synonymy ($X_{a,b} + X_a, Y_b = X_a$). In the Point Roberts study, The word **holiday** had, for the Canadian informants, the two meanings 'a single day' (as in "the July 1st holiday") and 'a longer period of time' (as in "my summer holiday[s]"). As a result of contact with the American **vacation**, **holiday** lost the second meaning, thus becoming synonymous with the American usage.
3. A semantic differentiation occurs between two competing terms which were synonymous; both terms are retained with the differentiated meanings ($X_a + Y_a = X_b, Y_a$). Thus in Point Roberts, **depot**, **station**, and **terminus** are now differentiated, each referring to a different type of transportation.

4. Competing compounds become hybridized ($X_1, X_2 + Y_1, Y_2 = Y_1, X_2$). Allen noted the hybrid **slop pail** resulting from a combination of Northern **swill pail** and Midland **slop bucket**. The single example of this in the Point Roberts study is the use of **chesterbed** resulting from hybridization of **sofa bed** and **chesterfield**.
5. The most severe reaction, from a sociolinguistic point of view, is that which occurs when two competing forms are labelled as "correct" and "incorrect." Of the competing forms **bundle** and **sheaf** [of wheat], Allen's informants insisted that the latter was the "correct" term because it is the one used in the Bible. Again, there was only one example of this found in Point Roberts; a single Canadian informant labelled **holiday** "incorrect" and **vacation** "correct" in the context of a long period of time.

3.3 Principles of phonological transition.

Trudgill (1986) introduced three types of what he referred to as "phonological accommodation", but the term *accomodation* is misleading when applied to transition studies; it was introduced in the work of social psychologists (Giles 1973) to account for linguistic convergence and divergence in short-term contacts along the social dimension. Trudgill, however, uses *accomodation* with reference to long-term dialect contact along the geographic dimension without presenting any arguments for the term's validity in this context; although valid when referring to a speaker-hearer relationship and short-term contact, *accomodation* seems imprecise in the context of long-term dialect contact and permanent changes in speakers' idiolects. Again, *transition* reflects the situation more accurately, thus enabling us to speak of three principles of dialect transition.

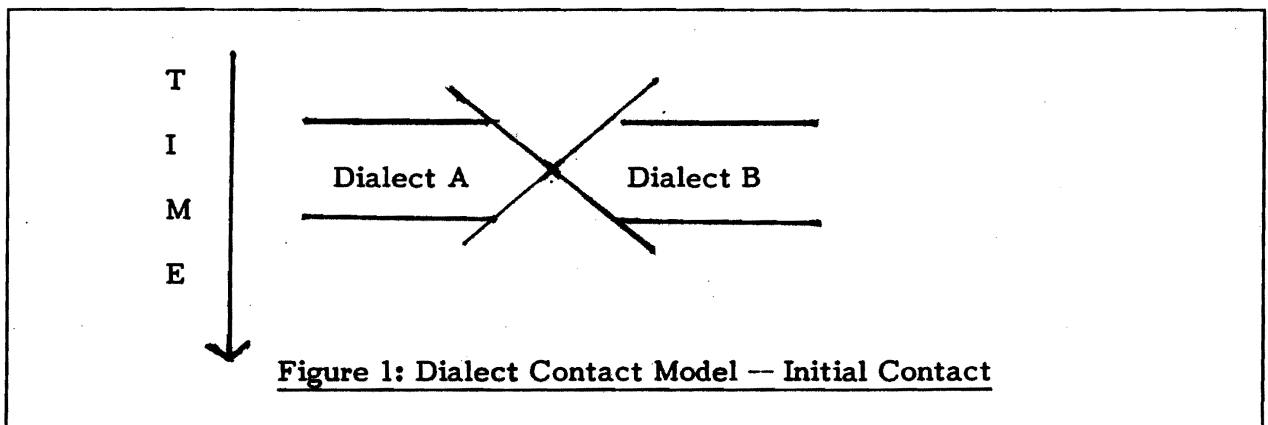
Using Trudgill's (1986) schema, long-term phonological transition for individual speakers can be shown to follow three main paths:

1. Alternation of the frequency of occurrence of a particular feature over which the speaker already has control; if the original dialect has a low-frequency usage of a particular feature, and the contact dialect has a high-frequency usage of the same feature, speakers of the original dialect will gradually increase their usage of this feature to the point where they may match the frequency of the contact dialect. It may even be the case that speakers having no control over a particular feature may adopt it as a result of contact, using it at first with a low frequency which will increase as the speakers gain control over its use. In the Point Roberts study, this was seen most markedly among the American informants in the decrease of frequency of [a] and its ultimate merger with [ɔ]. Trudgill fails to point out, however, that the opposite process is equally possible, i.e. that high frequency features may decrease in usage and even ultimately disappear as a result of contact with a dialect having no or low frequency occurrences of those features.
2. Change in a particular feature in a word-by-word manner, i.e., lexical diffusion. For instance, if a particular dialect 'X' having only [ɔ] as a low back vowel comes into contact with another dialect 'Y' having only [a], speakers of 'X' may say [hɔg] [frɔg] [an] [pɑ] [mɑ] for **hog, frog, on, pa, ma**. If the transition process continues, these speakers may ultimately use [a] in all the contexts in which it is used by speakers of 'Y'. In Point Roberts, this was seen among the American informants in the acquisition of the raised diphthongs [ʌy] and [ʌw], first in words such as **like** and **out**, and later in **wife** and **lout**.

3. The third pattern, the "development of an interdialect" (Trudgill 1986:62), is the use of pronunciations intermediate between two competing forms. He gives the example of the Oslo Norwegian diphthong [øy] that resulted from the contact between the upper-class use for the monophthong [ø:] and the lower-class use of the diphthong [æu]. As a general rule, this form of transition occurs when the phonological distance between the competing forms is not very great, and the resulting compromise vowel already exists in other contexts in the language; this situation was not evident in the Point Roberts data.

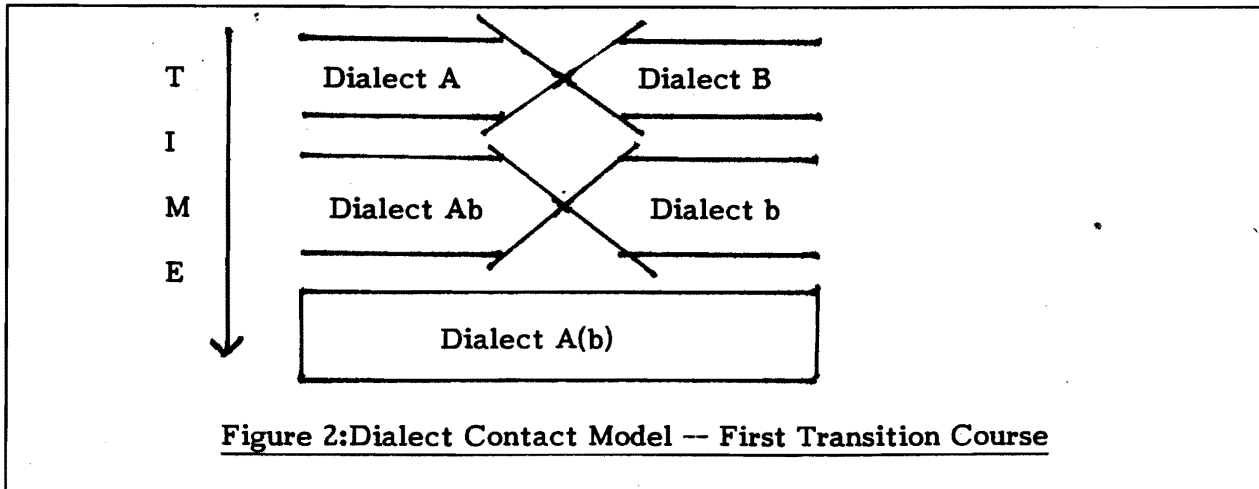
3.4 Transition Courses

These principles regarding dialect accommodation in individuals can, of course, be equally well applied to whole speech communities. Surprisingly, no scholar has, to date, developed a model of diachronic dialect contact, but such a model could be very simply represented thus:



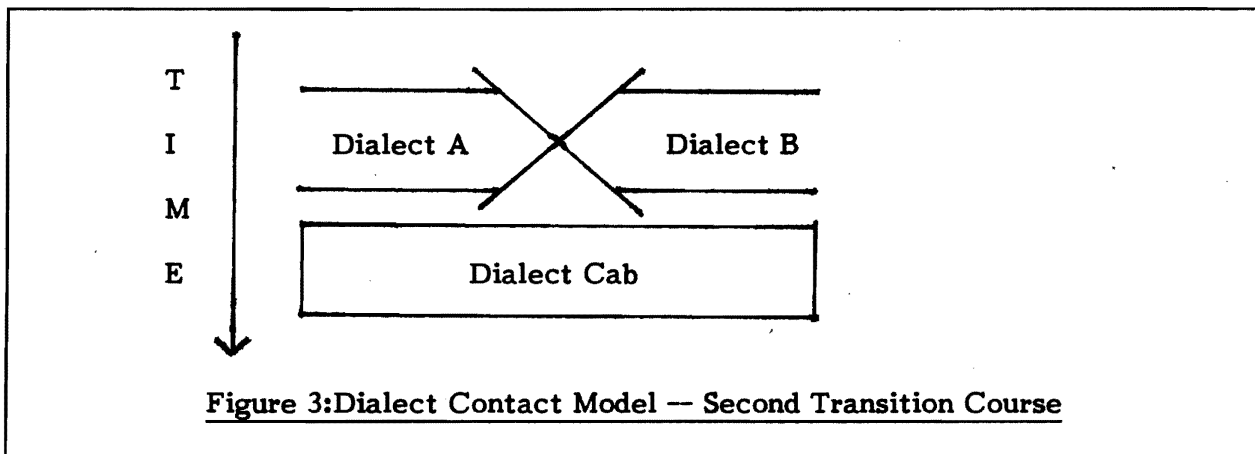
At this point, the question is raised of what occurs between the two dialects if they remain in contact with each other over a long period of time, that is, which course of transition will occur.

1. By far the most common process is illustrated in Fig. 2, where two dialects, A and B, of equal strength initially, are in contact over a long period of time with the result that A first becomes dominant and finally engulfs B, although it may retain some of its features (in this and all succeeding figures, uppercase labels indicate greater prominence and lowercase labels indicate lesser prominence).



Examples of this transition course can be found in Northwestern Ohio, where the northern dialect came into contact with the North Midland dialect and ultimately overtook it, and in South Dakota, where these same two dialects have again come into contact with apparently similar results. The primary characteristic of this transition course is that the speakers from the dominant dialect (A) retain their original speech patterns.

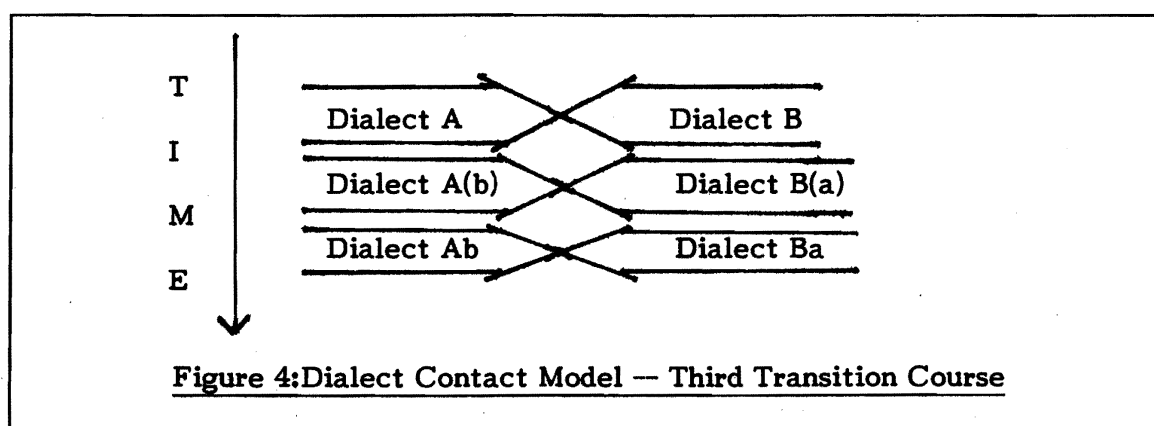
2. The second, less common but equally possible, transition course results in the emergence of a third, and different, dialect using features of both the parent dialects, but also having developed some unique features of its own (see Fig. 3).



In the context of Canadian English, this second transition course can be seen in the complex speech patterns of the Ottawa Valley, where various dialects of English, notably

Scots-Irish, and other languages such as French and Gaelic were in contact from the time of the original settlement of the area. The result has been the emergence of the distinctive Ottawa Valley dialect of Canadian English, now in danger of itself being taken over by the more standard dialect of the metropolitan capital region.

3. The third transition course is followed when two dialects in contact retain their essential identity but may borrow features from each other, thus remaining, in a sense, co-dominant (see Fig. 4). This situation commonly occurs along national borders where the dialects in contact are intimately bound up with the national identity of the speakers. The most obvious example of this case, for English, is the Canada-United States border area, where Canadian English has been in contact with American dialects for nearly 150 years[6], and they have retained their individuality while borrowing freely from each other (especially in the realm of the lexicon). This is the situation in the Point Roberts area, and, of course, the focus of the present study.



3.5 Principles of dialect transition

In the Point Roberts study, certain patterns of a change in dialect were observed to have occurred more than once, and these observations led to the formulation of five principles of dialect transition.

1. If a dialect with two competing lexical items (A,B) comes into contact with a second dialect that also has two competing terms for the same referent (B,C), and one of these terms (B) is the same in both dialects, then this shared term will become the preferred term in the transition area (B,a,c). This was observed in the Point Roberts study in the case where the terms **curtains** and **blinds** in competition in AE came into contacts with CE **blinds** and **shades**, and **blinds** has become the preferred term for all informants in the area.
2. If a particular lexical item or phonological feature is receding in one of the two contact dialects (b), it is highly unlikely to diffuse into the other contact dialect, and will continue to recede in the usage of its original dialect. In Point Roberts, this was noted with regard to the term **braces** 'suspenders', and the variant [ɛ] in **zebra**, features that are recessive in CE and have thus failed to diffuse into the speech of the American informants.

3. If a particular feature (b) that is less prominent or is recessive is in competition with a second feature (A), and the same situation exists in the second contact dialect (A,b; A,b), then this feature will continue to recede in both dialects; in fact, its recession may be accelerated to the point where the feature rapidly disappears from both dialects (A:A). In the Point Roberts data, this is found in the neutralization of the contrast of the non-high vowels [æ:e:ɛ] and [o:ɔ] before [r] that had been gradually occurring on both sides of the border in British Columbia and Washington, but was nearly complete in the speech of all informants in Point Roberts. This pattern was also observed in the decrease of occurrence of the preposition **in** in the phrase **sick (to/at/in) [one's] stomach**.
4. If a particular feature (b) co-occurs but is less prominent than another feature in each of the contact dialects (A,b:C,b), its usage may increase in prominence in the transition area while the competing features decrease (a,B:c,B). There was only one example of this in the Point Roberts data, where the term **[fruit] pits**, in competition with **stones** and **pips** in both contact dialects, gained in prominence in the Point Roberts transition area.
5. This is the most complex of the five contact patterns. If the same two terms are in competition in each of the contact dialects so that one term is present in the majority of contexts in one dialect but only in specific contexts in the second dialect, and the reverse is true of the other term (A,b:a,B), then over time the two terms will become interchangeable in all contexts for one of the dialects but retain their respective degrees of prominence in the second contact dialect (a,b:a,B). After a further period of time, the relatively less prominent term will be confined to specific contexts in both dialects (a,B:a:B). There were two main examples of this pattern in the Point Roberts data in the speech of the American informants. **Tap** went from being present only in specific contexts to being interchangeable with **faucet** to being used in the majority of contexts (as in CE); similarly, **icing** has gone from being used only in specific contexts to being interchangeable with **frosting**. In a sense, this last principle is the lexical equivalent of phonological change seen in the theory of lexical diffusion (Labov 1981). In both cases, a variant form is first used in a specific context or a specific word, then is used interchangeably with its competing variant, and finally becomes the preferred usage.

3.6 Years of Residence as an Independent Variable.

Linguistic studies in general are divided into two major categories, synchronic and diachronic. Dialectologists are often involved in synchronic studies contemporaneous with the researcher, but try to incorporate the factor of linguistic change by including age of the informant as an independent variable. Thus, a difference in usage between older and younger informants is regarded as an indication of change in apparent time. Two other methods of looking at change are both known as "revisiting", i.e. repeating the study at five or ten year intervals with the same population, and repeating it at similar intervals with the same type of population consisting of different individual informants.

A fourth technique, particularly useful for the study of transition areas, is to include the length of time an informant has been resident in the area as an independent variable; like age, length of residence can give some indication of dialect change in apparent time. In the Point Roberts study, the inclusion of this variable proved its worth many times for the American informants, as the following examples indicate:

1. **Seesaw** becomes **teeter-totter** between five and ten years of residence.

2. **Faucet** becomes **tap** between five and twenty-five years of residence.
3. In the word **blouse**, [s] changes to [z] between seven and twenty-four years of residence.
4. In the words **either**, **neither**, [i] starts to become [ay] at fourteen years of residence.
5. In **fertile**, syllabic [l] in the unstressed syllable starts to change to [ayl] after seven years of residence.

Thus, the addition of "years of residence" as an independent variable gives an additional indication of dialect change and accommodation occurring in apparent time.

4. CONCLUSION

In the past, studies in CE have addressed the issue of linguistic diffusion from the various dialects of AE into CE (e.g., Avis 1955a, 1955b, 1957), but no similar studies have specifically addressed the complementary issue of diffusion in the other direction. The Point Roberts study indicates that such diffusion does indeed exist, at least in this transition area, especially in such features as Canadian Raising and the merger of the low back vowels. There are hints that diffusion from Canadian English exists elsewhere along the Canada-U.S.A. border. Vance (1987) reports that Canadian Raising is present in such northern American cities as Rochester, N.Y. and Chicago, but he gives no information as to its distribution. Both these cities are well within what may be considered the border transition area, and the presence of Canadian Raising in these cities as well as in the Point Roberts area represents an important diffusion from CE into AE. Evidently, there is a great need for further studies concerned with diffusion in both directions along the border, modeled on a theoretical base such as we have suggested here, specifically designed for the investigation of transition areas. Ideally, such studies would test for a variety of linguistic variables along the full reaches of the border, but this is a totally unrealistic goal for obvious geographic and demographic reasons. Two possibilities present themselves: the examination of a limited set of variables across the entire border area; and the examination of several variables over a limited area such as the "double cities" (Windsor-Detroit, Niagara Falls-Buffalo, Sault Ste. Marie, Ont.-Sault St. Marie, Mich.). In any case, it is suggested that future research into transition dialects be conducted in the light of the more coherent transition theory that the Point Roberts study has given rise to.

NOTES

- [1] Areal dialectologists have defended their preoccupation with relic areas on the grounds that it is more important at the present time to record a dialect before it disappears than to record a developing one; later social dialectologists (such as Labov) have concentrated on focal areas in order to document social variation and continuing linguistic innovation.
- [2] An **exclave** is a geographic territory that is politically, linguistically, or culturally cut off from its mother territory, and is completely surrounded by another political, linguistic, or cultural entity to which its relationship is that of **enclave**. Thus, Point Roberts is an American exclave, but a Canadian enclave.
- [3] This situation is analagous in some respects to the one described by Labov (1963) for Martha's Vineyard.
- [4] This change applies mainly to languages other than English, since there are few if any morphological differences among the various dialects of English
- [5] The upper-case X and Y refer to the lexical items in each of the two dialects, and the lower-case a and b refer to the meanings attached to the items; the plus (+) symbol refers to the dialect contact situation and can be expressed as "is in contact with"; the equal (=) symbol refers to the result of the dialect contact.
- [6] This assumes that Canadian English had become a distinctive form of English by approximately 1850; since the first writings on CE per se date from 1857, this seems a reasonable date to assign as an arbitrary starting-point.

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