Sociolinguistics
Soziolinguistik

HSK 3.1
2nd edition
2. Auflage

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Handbücher zur Sprach- und Kommunikations- wissenschaft

Handbooks of Linguistics
and Communication Science

Manuels de linguistique et
des sciences de communication

Sociolinguistics
Soziolinguistik

An International Handbook of the Science
of Language and Society
Ein internationales Handbuch zur Wissenschaft
von Sprache und Gesellschaft

2nd completely revised and extended edition
2., vollständig neu bearbeitete und erweiterte Auflage

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Volume 1 / 1. Teilband

Walter de Gruyter · Berlin · New York

Preface

A. Preliminaries

Since the first edition of the handbook "Sociolinguistics/Soziolinguistik", the discipline has changed considerably and undergone important developments. It has moved beyond the discussion of linguistic barriers and has started to investigate language from many new points of view as a phenomenon that is determined by society and affects society in its turn. In the course of this development, sociolinguistics has left behind its earlier status of interdisciplinarity (a "hyphenated" discipline) and has become independent. It is now established on a world-wide basis. It is true that within institutions it is still often situated within linguistics and also partly within sociology, but there are now numerous independent institutes for sociolinguistics quite separate from other disciplines. They represent important sources of information that can be consulted in both scientific and practical investigations.

The growth of the field of sociolinguistics is also reflected in the sheer number of publications among which there are several, firmly established journals as well as other, sometimes competing, handbooks. Whereas *The Handbook of Sociolinguistics*, ed. by Florian Coulmas (Oxford, UK/Malden, Mass. 1997) is considerably shorter than our handbook, the *Concise Encyclopedia of Sociolinguistics*, ed. by Raj Mesthrie (Amsterdam etc. 2001) has a more similar format. However, the fact that their contents differ significantly illustrates the multifaceted perceptions of the discipline's structure. The editors of the present handbook hope that it will provide meaningful additions to already existent reference books.

This new edition of the handbook emphasizes the specific nature and autonomy of the discipline more strongly than the first edition of 1987/1988. Moreover it is much broader in scope, extending to all parts of the globe. It is intended to give a worldwide overview of the many and varied endeavours in sociolinguistics. To this end at least all the larger countries of the world are included in the section that gives a regional overview (the present **Section IX**). Concern for global representativeness was also one of the motives for adding Peter Trudgill to the team of editors. His collaboration guarantees both a larger regional spread and greater representativeness within the discipline. For the same reason, this second edition sees the replacement of some authors and the addition of new ones.

Of course, some elements had to be taken over from the earlier edition. However, because the discipline has developed, no single article could remain unchanged. Even where titles have remained the same, a thorough reworking of the articles themselves proved necessary. Generally, this was not just a question of leaving out dated ideas and adding more recent research, but required a more fundamental reformulation. Each article had to be made to fit in with the changed concept of the handbook, in which many new areas have been separated out and areas that were originally seen as distinct have been brought together.

This new conception can clearly be seen in the increased number of sections in a different sequence, and in changes to their titles. A new first section is dedicated to the discipline's specific object of study: the relationship between language and society. This reflects the fact that in many areas this object of study has now developed relatively clearly and quite separately from other disciplines. On the other hand, it no longer seemed necessary to discuss the theoretical foundations of this now well-established discipline in a separate chapter; in many respects they are much the same as those of the other social sciences. Today sociology and social psychology no longer serve as the foundation for sociolinguistics since this has become autonomous and indeed is nowadays frequently seen as itself the foundation for the other two sciences. The historical circumstances surrounding the genesis of sociolinguistics have therefore become less important; and the discipline itself has become increasingly able to solve its own problems of systematic description and explanation. This means that the specific methodology of the discipline can now be presented in a more coherent way in a single section (there were formerly three sub-headings). Just as regional coverage has been expanded by the addition of regions from all over the world, so too all the other sections have been expanded by the addition of new themes which did not appear to be relevant, or at least not obviously so, at the time the first edition was being prepared.

Besides regional and disciplinary representativeness, we have tried to achieve encyclopaedic usefulness for all potential readers. To this end we offer theoretical depth and stringency for those interested in theory, as well as methodological richness and detail for the empirical researchers. The methodological presentations are intended to be informative and precise so that they can serve directly as a preparatory stage in the conception of projects. Likewise, the presentation in the articles concerned with practical application is, as a rule, concrete enough for practitioners to be able to assess precisely what they can expect sociolinguistics to contribute to the solution of their problems.

Finally, it seems to be appropriate to remark upon the bilingual nature of this handbook which, considering the present predominance of the English language in science, may appear almost outdated. However, by choosing two languages, the editors wanted to point out that sophisticated studies in sociolinguistics produced in other language communities have often gone unnoticed due to the narrow focus on the English-speaking world. For practical reasons, German was chosen to highlight the value of multilingualism. Nevertheless, the growing importance of English as the global language of science was taken into account by including more English contributions than in the first edition.

B. The Sections in Detail

I.   The Subject Matter of Sociolinguistics

This section presents an initial look at the whole discipline, focusing on the present areas of interest of sociolinguistics and largely excluding the history of the discipline and its theoretical conception. It is also not our intention to present detailed results: more crucial is what sociolinguists actually do nowadays and why they do it. A series of themes come to the fore which were not considered in the first edition of the handbook and are a consequence of the changed structure of the subject.

One of the overriding questions of the first section is how to present the varied research premises and aims of the different representatives of the discipline. Many who work within the discipline use an approach which differs little from that common in general linguistics. They are mainly interested in a deeper understanding of human language, its structures and speakers' behaviour, and the nature of language change. These include representatives of generally recognized sociolinguistic disciplines; or those that overlap with sociolinguistics, such as psycholinguistics, social dialectology, geolinguistics, and certain strands of language contact research such as the linguistic investigation of pidgins and creoles.

At the other extreme there are quite a number of researchers who often consider themselves sociolinguists or who are so categorized by others. They are mainly interested in sociological, anthropological or socio-psychological problems. The linguistic data they examine serve to provide them with a deeper understanding of human societies or their structures and conditions of change. They are thus not interested in a deeper understanding of the structures and structural properties of language. In their case, it is particularly obvious that they do not work within sociolinguistics proper; that is why they appear in **Section VI** "Neighbouring Disciplines".

Other researchers have tried from the beginning to combine linguistic and sociological perspectives, developing independent approaches and knowledge. These approaches can be seen in terms like "The Sociology of Language", "Interactional Sociolinguistics", "Discourse Analysis", "Conversation Analysis", "Social Psychology of Language", "Anthropological Linguistics" and "Ethnography of Speaking". Most of the research areas designated by these terms do not simply form sub-areas of sociolinguistics, but also deal with non-sociolinguistic questions; nevertheless, they all contain essential sociolinguistic elements. In **Section 1** an attempt has thus been made to reveal, amongst this plethora of terms, the nature of sociolinguistics as a coherent area of study

II. Basic Sociolinguistic Concepts

In contrast to the first section, which is orientated towards the subject matter, **the second section** is more theoretical in its approach. Those elements of developing sociolinguistic theory that have become established concepts with their own terminology are dealt with individually. An important subset of basic sociolinguistic concepts relates to types of linguistic systems conceived of in broadly sociological terms. This was the case in the first edition too; however, the concepts handled here are more varied and new ones have been added.

A second group of concepts consists of types of societies or sections of society seen from the perspective of communication theory. This group includes varieties of language as well as linguistically governed processes of socialization.

This last area in particular has been extended by the addition of concepts which do not appear in the first edition: "Concentration and Diffusion", "Domain" and "Code-Switching". The types of society as defined in terms of linguistics or communication theory, and the concepts associated with them, have not been expanded since the first edition; but it is important to note that recent developments, many of which are permanent, have been properly taken into account by the authors. The types of linguistic system determined from a broadly sociological point of view have been considerably expanded and further differentiated in comparison with the first edition. So, for

example, "Dialect" is distinguished from "Language" and connected with "Accent". "Vernacular" is related to "Nonstandard" and distinguished from "Slang". "Antilanguage" has been added to the latter term. "Style" and "Register" too have been re-evaluated on the basis of more recent, more extensive research in individual articles. The series "First Language – Second Language – Native Language – Foreign Language" has been divided into two articles on the basis of clearer conceptual distinctions.

This section does not deal with detailed presentation of all the research into these basic sociolinguistic concepts but mainly with their clarification. "Basic concept" is not meant here in the sense in which it is used in calculus, that is as a non-definable concept, but with the meaning 'fundamental concept'. In individual instances it may well be the case that, given the present state of research, the concept cannot be defined in a strict sense. More than other sections, **Section II** also serves as a reference list for unknown terms. For this reason a concise presentation was aimed at throughout and unnecessary elaborations were avoided.

III. Sociological Concepts

As in **Section II**, this section was not intended as a detailed discussion of theoretical connections or empirical findings. The aim was rather to discuss the most important sociological and socio-psychological concepts and to include sociological questions posed by them, insofar as they are relevant to sociolinguistics. Dividing up two large areas of knowledge – sociology and social psychology – into individual research concepts which are often connected with certain sociological or socio-psychological research projects is of necessity problematical and cannot lead to a consistent picture of "society" as the object of study. The criterion for deciding to include a concept in this series of topics was not its significance for sociology or social psychology, but exclusively its relevance to sociolinguistics.

This last aim was used to structure the articles in general. The concepts presented are integrated into the study of sociolinguistics at the beginning and at the end of each article. First their relevance to sociolinguistic research is briefly sketched in each case. Then they are presented from a sociological or socio-psychological perspective in relation to the most recent state of research, in such a way that different conceptual traditions are highlighted. Finally, the concepts discussed are once more placed firmly in the context of sociolinguistic questions and problems.

It is sometimes difficult to separate specifically sociolinguistic terms from those of neighbouring disciplines. One example is the article "Domains", which has been taken out of this section in the second edition and included amongst the sociolinguistic concepts **(Section II)**. The concept "Community", on the other hand, has enough theoretical independence to warrant separate treatment alongside the article "Speech Community" dealt with in **Section II**. At first glance it appears that concepts such as "Age" and "Sex", which are clearly basic sociological concepts, are missing. However, they have acquired such a close connection with sociolinguistic problems that it seems appropriate to present them in **Section VIII** under the results of sociolinguistic research.

To associate concepts unambiguously with sociology or with social psychology is often dubious from a sociolinguistic perspective. Certainly "Religion", "Orders and Castes" and "Minority" are essentially sociological concepts, whereas "Attitude",

"Identity" and "Prestige and Stigma" are mainly socio-psychological concepts. Articles dealing with themes such as "Role", "Norm" and "Network" show, however, that the consistent separation of sociological and socio-psychological concepts on the one hand and specifically sociolinguistic ones on the other is often not possible.

It seems at first view possible to organize the themes according to the dominant sociolinguistic approach distinguishing the macrosociolinguistic and microsociolinguistic levels of analysis. Whilst "Region", "Nation" and the new article "City" belong unambiguously in the first area, "Norm", "Attitude" and "Prestige and Stigma" belong to the second. But here too there are articles on themes such as "Ethnicity", "Situation" or "Network" which made such attempts at differentiation seem questionable.

The articles "City", "Minority" and "Community" are additions. In particular the concept *City* has proved to be an important analytical entity in sociolinguistics in recent years and this is becoming clearer all the time. In it, complex structures of communicative competence develop, especially where there are multilingual conurbations. The terms "Minority" and "Community" exhibit a sociological profile independent of the representation of linguistic minorities and linguistic communities, which can be important as a framework for sociolinguistic work.

IV. The Social Implications of Levels of Linguistic Analysis

Taking semiotics as a starting point, the influence of extralinguistic factors on verbal and non-verbal systems of signs is organized into themes. The central question is: "Which extralinguistic factors influence linguistic characteristics on the different levels of analysis of the linguistic code and to what extent?" The articles refer to the following questions:

– What is the state of theoretical discussion about the level of linguistic analysis in question and its various characteristics?
– What empirical and sociolinguistically relevant descriptions are available?
– What prototypical social functions are taken on by those linguistic principles which organize a particular level of description?
– Which social functions are central, which peripheral? How can social knowledge be categorized, bearing in mind that it is mediated quite specifically by the features of the linguistic level under investigation?
– Can isolated functions of the particular level of description or its units be connected with linguistic items in syntax, semantics or pragmatics?

The separation of "Phonetics" and "Phonology" was made in order to achieve a clearer coverage of the rigorous description of variety in phonological systems. On the other hand, in the area of phonetics, consideration should be given to prosodic and suprasegmental features of utterances more than has been the case hitherto. "Morphology" is particularly well documented in anglophone linguistics, and its interaction with syntax is significant. In this regard, consideration was given to the issue of whether specific encoding procedures (diminutives, aspect and the like) are linked to language-specific social functions. In the area of "Syntax", the range stretches from traditional investigations of sentence and attribute complexity, through word position and the role of negation, to syntactic focusing and topicalization. In this section the question is also posited as to how far syntactic variation is to be explained sociolinguistically or pragmatically.

"Lexicon", "Semantics" and "Pragmatics" also exhibit certain features in common. In the lexical area, a central question is that of lexical differences, in particular the existence of lexical fields in domains of linguistic usage, according to theme, interlocutor and situation. On the other hand, in the article on semantics it is more a question of thematizing the levels of sentence, utterance and speech act. In the case of pragmatics, consideration is given to situationally determined differences and those arising from the linguistic perspective of utterances. This level of description is crucially characterized by the numerous investigations of institution-specific behaviour in language and communication.

"Code-Switching" is connected more or less directly with the previously mentioned areas: the more recent investigations refer to all areas of the grammar in an increasingly comparative way; pragmatic aspects have also been studied, but apparently in a less detailed and thorough way. "Discourse" and "Text" are once again closely linked. In the case of text the results of text linguistics are highlighted in connection with text types and their social functions. On the other hand, the article on discourse is more concerned with spoken language and thereby emphasizes the ways in which conversations are constructed as organizational principles of social behaviour. A clear separation from pragmatics was not always easy. In the article on discourse, however, the focus is less on the linguistic behaviour specific to particular institutions than on the principles of social organization that are laid down as rules, sequences and contextualizing factors in conversation. The article on "Politeness Forms" makes reference both to pragmatics and to the grammatical levels of linguistic usage. The main focus of the presentations on individual languages is on the way differences in social function are reflected in the organization of linguistic structures.

The remaining five articles contrast spoken and written language and also contrast these with repertoires of both vocal and gestural as well as other non-verbal symbols which accompany speech.

V. The History of Sociolinguistics

The starting point for this group of themes was that questions of sociolinguistic research in the past have been formulated and analysed not just within an established sociolinguistic paradigm. Long before the institutional establishment of sociolinguistics as an area of research, academics were concerned with the problems posed by the relationship between language and society, between language and nation, between language and population shifts, and between language and social evaluation. Thus sociolinguistics existed before it was known as such. Furthermore, in the past, sociolinguistic questions were raised and answered not only within sociolinguistics but also in other areas of research such as in dialectology and cultural anthropology. In addition, areas of research which are today partly integrated into sociolinguistics or overlap with it, such as research into pidgins and creoles and language contact, often have long traditions of their own which are sociolinguistically interesting.

Finally there are special theoretical approaches, such as Marxist approaches and symbolic interactionism, which have independent historical developments.

All these aspects are brought together in **Section V**. This seems to be important in particular because discussion of the historical dimension of sociolinguistics is still to some extent in its infancy. Individual observations on the origins of sociolinguistic research have remained sporadic up until now. It is precisely this extreme fragmentation

of questions about the relationship between language and society – for example, in dialectology or pidgin and creole research – that has made comprehensive tendencies difficult to see. They definitely do exist, however, partly in the work of particular researchers such as Hugo Schuchardt.

The whole field of sociolinguistics in its more restricted sense is expounded historically in the first two articles. Whilst the first article deals with sociolinguistics before its institutional recognition as a subject, and therefore unavoidably focuses on a European context, the second article deals with the actual history of sociolinguistics as a subject. Language contact and pidgin and creole research have been separated from sociolinguistics proper; they have their own traditions, partly stretching back into the 19th century, whose sociolinguistically relevant aspects are presented.

A separate treatment is also given to those sociolinguistic questions which have developed in the areas of dialectology and cultural anthropology. If one considers that questions of the social value of varieties were discussed thoroughly in the German-speaking area as early as the 18th century, one could expect this to be a rich area of study. Three special historical areas of research in which the relationship between language and society has been the subject of debate many times are (i) sociology, (ii) symbolic interactionism and (iii) Marxist approaches, which developed in particular in the period between the two world wars.

However, the historical presentation is not limited to the development of theoretical problems. It is also a question of presenting where and when in the past concepts of sociolinguistic research were applied in a practical way, including their effects and results. For example, the language policy of the Habsburg Empire in the 19th century is largely obscure, as well as the sociolinguistic effects of plans for colonization in past centuries. For this reason an article on applied sociolinguistics has been added to the existing ones.

VI. Neighbouring Disciplines

Those disciplines that are of immediate importance for sociolinguistic theory and methodology come under this heading. Both traditional and modern sociology and linguistics feed in to almost all areas of sociolinguistics. That is why no separate sections have been devoted to them. Cultural sociology, especially of the kind proposed by Bourdieu, has contributed in particular to more rigorous explanations of observed phenomena in sociolinguistics. It has connections with categories such as "social stratum", "taste", "cultural change", etc. The enmeshing of cultural and sociological arguments opens up fruitful perspectives for explaining sociolinguistic findings. The article "Social Psychology" deals in particular with the enmeshing of group communication and communicative processes in interactions embedded in particular situations. Under this heading also belong psychological aspects which conceive of the individual as a social being and the group as the basic social unit. Consideration was also given to the conditions governing the existence of social and communicative networks, since network theory plays an important role in present day sociolinguistics.

Interaction, intercultural behaviour and forms of social organization in various cultures are investigated successfully from a comparative point of view in "Ethnology and Anthropology". This is where the differences of cultural categories and sociological categorization are worked out. The principles of investigation, especially those from ethnography that are often used in sociolinguistics, are understood as differentiated,

qualitative, interpretative and structuralist principles. A considerable part of sociolinguistics is also fed by anthropology and its comparison of cultures. With the integration of cognitive concepts, anthropology has recently gained a basis for comparison which is particularly relevant to sociolinguistics.

At first sight "Dialectology" may be seen as less directly related to sociolinguistics than the other disciplines. However, an understanding of the sociolinguistics of urban speech, for example, involves investigating both the areal spread of linguistic varieties and their social differentiation. To this end dialectology developed the first methodological instruments and valid techniques of data collection, and for this reason its contribution to more recent sociolinguistics is highly significant. It was also important to ask what more recent research into measuring various dimensions of dialects can contribute to the development of sociolinguistics.

An early trigger for the investigation of linguistic variation and of linguistic differences with social consequences was the theory of linguistic relativity formulated by Wilhelm von Humboldt and, much later, Benjamin Whorf, amongst others. It made many linguists more receptive to the study of psychological and sociological issues. In this context a central question of "Psycholinguistics" becomes relevant to sociolinguistics. Psycholinguistics is presented not only in its modern form but also in its historical development, insofar as this is significant for sociolinguistics. Finally, "Human Geography" has recently linked regional facts with vertical social divisions. The methods developed in this field and their theoretical background offer enough material to stimulate sociolinguistic descriptions and explanations.

VII. Sociolinguistic methodology

In this section the problems of sociolinguistic methodology are collected in 32 articles. **Articles 95–103** are devoted essentially to research planning, **104–110** to data collection and **111–126** to the methodology of describing verbal, and to some extent also non-verbal, behaviour. The authors have built in informative cross-references in the articles. Because of the numerous overlaps, no explicit differentiation of the various blocks in the list of contents was undertaken, unlike in the first edition.

"Research Policy" and "Research Ethics" are to some extent two sides of the same coin: the orientation of the researcher towards political principles or ethical maxims in deciding for or against particular research programmes. Which types of research are at all feasible also depends of course on the "Possibilities and Limits of a Sociolinguistic Theory". Only on that basis can one assess which questions can be addressed and answered by structural knowledge.

The series of **articles 98–105** address almost in the form of a flow diagram those questions which must be answered in the course of planning a sociolinguistic investigation. First of all, the "Research Aims" have to be established and linked to decisions about "Methods". The methodology should help to achieve the aims: "Quantitative" or "Qualitative" methods are available according to the particular state of research and the explanatory intention. Once these decisions have been made, then the "Stages of Research" have to be determined. In collecting data there is always the issue of "Problems of Representativeness". Also, the kind of interaction and the process of "Elicitation" are of significance for the validity of findings. Finally, a decision has to be made with reference to the explanation of data as to whether a "Cross-Sectional" or a "Longitudinal" study is more appropriate. Concluding the first group of themes, dif-

ferences in investigation between "Micro- and Macrostudies" are discussed. **Articles 106–110,** which concentrate on the actual techniques of data collection beginning with "Observation". In sociolinguistics, under certain circumstances, this even presupposes participation in the life of those being studied. The "Interview" is not only one of the most widely used methods of data collection in sociolinguistics, but it has even developed in a specific way; hence the explicit adjectival specification "Sociolinguistic Interview". In contrast to this oral method, "Investigation" is taken to refer to written forms of data collection (for example, questionnaires) which have considerable importance in macrosociolinguistic research in particular. Large parts of the two articles from the first edition "Experiments" and "Tests" are still current today, though the most recent state of research had to be worked into them. Of particular importance are the semi-natural experiments that have been developed in detail in recent years.

Articles 111–116, which are aimed at sociolinguistic descriptions, are introduced with a consideration of the "Possibilities and Limits of Corpus Linguistics". The article "Language Censuses" shows how very large corpora of written data can be as representative and valid as possible. The article "Contrastive Sociolinguistics" is new – an approach which has been inspired by contrastive linguistics and has been developed only recently. "Transcription" has for a long time been judged as a rather trivial activity in linguistics, but has been developed in many different ways in sociolinguistics.

"Statistical Descriptions of Language" shows how descriptive statistics can be applied to linguistic structures, especially in the description of linguistic variation, and also explains briefly how it differs from explanatory statistics. In the article "Linguistic Measurements" the sociolinguistic relevance of the mathematical and linguistic bases of measurement is presented. **Articles 117–119** deal with different possibilities of presentation and explanation of linguistic variation. The **article 120** "Computer Analysis" gives an overview of procedures, software and computer programmes for evaluating data. **Articles 121–123** relate to pragmatic aspects of linguistic and communicative behaviour. The last three articles **(124–126)** of this section are divided between a number of different questions. As a correlate of objective linguistic data, subjective dimensions of linguistic behaviour – "Attitudes" to language – must be included in sociolinguistic investigations. In order to obtain this type of data there are many techniques of direct and indirect observation. As a rule, very little attention is paid to receptive linguistic behaviour. The article "Analyses of Intelligibility" gives an overview of the possible ways of measuring the comprehension of utterances as precisely as possible. In the last article, on "Non-Verbal Behaviour", descriptive possibilities are scrutinized, including its interplay with verbal behaviour.

VIII. Findings of Sociolinguistic Research

Since the first edition a vast amount of sociolinguistic research has been carried out, and it is important to give an overview which is as representative and well organized as possible. In order to give a detailed presentation, a process of selection was unavoidable for each article; but at least in the form of references an acceptable degree of completeness was nevertheless aimed at. This applies in particular to the bibliographical information which is not restricted, if possible, to particular languages. The findings are arranged in a way which makes sense from a theoretical point of view and are evaluated according to both their scientific and their social relevance. There is geographical concentration, but not at the expense of related research in other regions.

One particular difficulty has been that the empirical results can hardly be presented meaningfully without at the same time making pronouncements about theoretical approaches and methodology. Sometimes, it has been possible to truncate the presentation to some extent by means of references to other articles, especially those from the methodology section. The presentation of research findings is arranged either on a chronological basis or more systematically, but usually encorporates both aspects.

A number of themes from the first edition have been retained. In almost all cases there were, however, extensive new pieces of research which had to be included, as for instance in the investigation of "Urban Varieties". Other new themes have been added, such as for example "Research on Sociolinguistic Style", "Code-Switching" and "Pluricentric and Divided Languages". On the other hand, the topic "Linguistic Minorities", which was in two parts in the first edition, has been combined into one article. Some articles have been taken over from other sections of the earlier edition, in particular from the former **Section XII** "Historical Sociolinguistics", namely "Sound Change in Progress", "Sound Change" (completed sound change, including general laws), "Grammatical Change" and "Semantic and Lexical Change". This group of articles is introduced by a general article on "Historical Sociolinguistics".

It is noteworthy that in this large section devoted to the results of sociolinguistic research, terms from nearly all the preceding sections reappear. This is unavoidable because the concepts, theoretical approaches and methodologies, which were presented concisely or only from certain points of view in the previous sections, are handled here in greater detail and with a wider spread of empirical evidence: there are topics here which are also discussed under the "Subject Matter of Sociolinguistics", the basic "Sociolinguistic" and "Sociological" concepts, and under "Levels of Linguistic Analysis", "Neighbouring Disciplines" and "Sociolinguistic Methodology". The present section discusses factors which were omitted from the articles in these earlier sections, and because of the complementarity of these particular articles, precise cross-references are given.

It is clear that in articles with such global titles as "Research on Language Contact" or "Research on Language for Special Purposes" there can never be a complete presentation of such huge areas of research, for which separate handbooks with a similar format to this one are available. These articles are restricted to the sociolinguistically relevant findings of the respective research areas. The fact that they are thus restricted is not reflected explicitly in their titles because this is obvious in the context of a sociolinguistics handbook and it is also important to avoid too much repetition.

IX. Regional Overview

This section has been completely re-planned in two aspects. Firstly, those articles in the first edition dealing with specific countries or areas needed to be thoroughly reworked and brought up to date. Secondly, and this is more fundamental, this time we aimed to represent all areas of the world. The articles of the first edition were inconsistent in relative size (for example China compared to Berlin) and this has now been remedied by aiming for individual articles which are more consistent. It was not, however, the geographical size but the linguistic complexity of the area that was the determining factor.

The representative coverage of the whole world is an ambitious aim but it proved not unrealistic. Every country or every linguistically-based political entity was investigated

with regard to its sociolinguistic characteristics, specifically the languages or at least the types of language used, the sociolinguistic relationships between them, and the basic social, cultural and political situation. The reader is thus given information about the languages and their genetic relationships, the demography of the languages, linguistic minorities, official and national languages, lingua francas and other functional types of language, such as the languages used in the school system, linguistic varieties and attitudes towards them, dialect variation, questions of autonomy and heteronomy of varieties, and political tensions between language communities. The consideration of as representative a sample as possible of all pertinent sociolinguistic publications was particularly important.

Each article was to follow the same basic pattern, which was given in advance by the editors. The material in all articles is intended to be comparable wherever possible. The way the different countries and political entities are grouped is obvious in many cases. In others it has proved difficult and was only possible with a certain amount of arbitrariness. In a few cases the only grouping possible was one which arose from the work of the individual authors concerned, although objective reasons took precedence wherever possible. Even the principle of dealing with subject matter of roughly the same degree of sociolinguistic complexity in the individual articles could not be rigidly applied.

Groupings, therefore, could not always be made according to homogeneous criteria. Africa, for example, was divided up according to geographical, colonial and various other sociolinguistic criteria. In other cases clear geographical classification was hardly possible, for instance in the case of Gypsy languages which cannot readily be associated with one particular region. Sometimes languages or groups of speakers are included even though they lie outside the region under discussion; an example is the article on Israel, in which the Jewish languages used outside the country are included. Often a shared official language has served to bring together various countries, while not ruling out the possibility of striking differences below the level of the official language.

The task of the authors was extremely difficult. The reader must bear in mind that each article is intended to serve as a representative and comprehensive source of sociolinguistic information of various kinds relating to the group of countries under consideration. The authors often had to be very succinct because there were restrictions on space. Extensive and pertinent bibliographical references fill some of the gaps. In some cases, maps are included for presenting additional information.

X. Linguistic Change, Sociolinguistic Aspects

The structure of this section has changed considerably in comparison with Section VIII of the first edition. To start with, all the articles that deal with sociolinguistic aspects of language-internal change at various linguistic levels, from sounds to text, have been removed. They have now been assigned to the new **Section VIII** "Findings of Sociolinguistic Research". Only those articles have been retained that deal with the linguistic effects of the processes of social change which permeate communities in their historical development.

Developments which are decisive in that they radically change the communicative structure of societies are, for example, the development of written languages and the transition from oral to scribal societies and, in connection with this, the spread of com-