The bilingual advertising decision

GRIN, François

DEVELOPING MINORITY LANGUAGES

The Proceedings of the Fifth International Conference on Minority Languages

July 1993,
Cardiff, Wales

Editors
Peter Wynn Thomas
Jayne Mathias

Department of Welsh, Cardiff University
Gomer Press
CONTENTS

PREFACE

INAGURAL ADDRESSES
Sir Wyn Roberts
Helen Ó Murcha

SUMMING UP
Dark Gorter

MOBILITY AND MINORITY LANGUAGES
Colin H. Williams: Development, dependency and the democratic deficit
John Edwards: Parochialism and intercourse: Metaphors for mobility
Jari Väänänen: Mobility and minorities in Estonia
Lammert Gussa Jansma: Migration and language maintenance: Frisian cultural organizations outside Friesland
Kenneth MacKinnon: Occupational class, age and gender in the Gaelic-speech community from census data
Deborah Morris & Olyn Williams: Mobility and minority languages: Theory without designation
Juan Pujolar i Cux: The effect of migration on the patterns of language use in Catalonia

LANGUAGE PLANNING
Joshua A. Fishman: Critiques of language planning: a minority languages perspective
Ulrich Oesling: Upwardly mobile languages: the politics of language in the Baltic states
Clinton E W Robinson: Is sauce for the goose, sauce for the gander? Minority language planning in North and South
Allan Wynn Jones & Linus Dafic: Why should the devil have all the good tunes? Marketing: a valuable discipline in language planning
### MULTILINGUALISM
- **Michael Prosser**: Minority languages of China: an overview
- **Marianne Bodt**: The changing role of minority languages in Australia: the European and Asia-Pacific nexus
- **Sharon L. Goeke**: Attitudes in Arahapaskan and Keresan speakers

### LANGUAGE MAINTENANCE AND LANGUAGE LOSS
- **Barbara J. Bowker**: The disappearance of American Indian languages
- **Pádraig Ó Ruagáin**: Language maintenance and language shift as strategies of social reproduction
- **Kas Deprez**: Who wants to save Òiléan Thorigh?
- **Tom Priemyl**: Effects of educational and social mobility on language maintenance, language attitudes and language structure: Selc in Cariñthia
- **Lucia Wines**: Ethnonlinguistic vitality of Portuguese-speaking communities in Lusitano
- **Mahendra K. Verma, Karen P. Corrigan & Sally Firth**: Minority children's heritage language: planning for non-preservation?

### LANGUAGE DEATH
- **William W. Botnack**: Language grief: its nature and function at community level
- **Tomasz Wierzbicka**: The impact of politics and social factors on the death of a minority language (the case of Wilamowicen in Poland)
- **Alfred F. Majewska**: Records of Wilamowicen, the smallest literature in a minority language in Poland

### LANGUAGE ATTITUDES
- **Sara Reid**: Language planning and the domains of language use
- **Anthony Packer & Cefin Campbell**: Parental choice in the selection of Welsh-medium education
- **Jordi Ballart**: Language use in a bilingual setting: a Catalan immersion school
Preface

A selection of the papers in this volume appeared soon after the conference in a special issue of Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development (Vol. 15: 2 & 3, 1994); published here are all the papers which were read at the conference and submitted for publication. Although we have attempted to make rough places plain, the volume does in some measure reflect not only the diversity and flavour of the various sessions and the conference as a whole but also the state of the art of the discipline of language planning as represented by participants at the conference.

The contents of this volume convey the many changes which had occurred in relation to minority languages since the previous International Conference on Minority Languages. Most notably, there was the adoption of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages by the Council of Europe, and discussion in the European Parliament on the Killila report on linguistic minorities. Nearer home, the Welsh Language Bill, whatever its merits and shortcomings, was under discussion in Westminster not long before the conference.

The focus of the International Conference on Minority Languages is growing ever wider and the need for research becoming ever more important, particularly for those involved in decision making. The conference well highlighted areas in which research might be done: bilingual education, parental attitudes, language transmission in the home, the economy, the breaking down of barriers for learners in order that they may become part of a wider community, and the new discipline of marketing. We also heard of language death and language grief, but the main thrust of the conference was a celebration of diversity rather than what Barbara Bosker so poignantly called the ‘trail of tears’.

One of the functions of the International Conference on Minority Languages is to remind participants of the particular linguistic problems which characterize various parts of the world. Wales, as host nation, has naturally featured prominently in the Fifth International Conference on Minority Languages and it is purely for that reason that we hope that it will be many years before this conference returns to Wales. But when it does, and it will, participants will be assured of the same events.

The editors wish to thank Dr Dryed Ellis-Gruffydd for reading the proofs of this volume and for his invaluable editorial assistance, and also thank him and Dr E. Wyn Jones for steering the volume through the final stages of production.

Peter Wynn Thomas
Jayne Mathias

The organizers gratefully acknowledge the financial support of the Welsh Office and the Commission of the European Communities.

Task Force on Human Resources, Education, Training and Youth.
The bilingual advertising decision

François Grin

Abstract
This paper examines the relationship between linguistic plurality and the rationality of advertising decisions. The presence of two or more languages on one market modifies the traditional advertising problem, and in the absence of literature on the subject, a logical first step is to develop a basic model. This paper presents a simple model of sales to different language groups as a function of the level of advertising in each language, language attitudes, incomes, and an advertising response function. It generates a set of hypotheses about the necessary and sufficient conditions for bilingual advertising to become more profitable than advertising in the majority language alone. A few of the results of the model are presented in the paper, showing total indifference to language in the public domain will produce a well served commercial environment, or by how much consumers' resistance to dominant language hegemony can increase the range over which bilingual advertising is profitable. This generates policy recommendations about the level of respective group incomes, the efficiency conditions of boycott or goodwill campaigns, and the role of product differentiation and market structure. This model is intended as a benchmark, and several extensions are suggested, in order to adapt the model to specific cases or allow for the inclusion of more complex causal links. In its present form, it shows how integrating information on the existing commercial environment can provide instruments for language planners.

Introduction
In spite of an abundance of literature on marketing strategies, there appears to be little in the way of formal, theory-based guidelines instructing businesses on how to adapt advertising to the cultural and linguistic characteristics of the market. In the basic economic model of advertising, optimum advertising is seen as a function of a few of the determinants of supply and demand in the market where a firm operates. These factors, in addition to price and production cost, are the responsiveness of sales to advertising, and the extent to which the firm’s competitors may step up their own advertising in order not to fall behind. The magnitude of these responses, in turn, is influenced by complex variables such as the number or size distribution of competing firms or the degree of product differentiation. However, although the investigation of "non-price" decisions, and their link with standard price problems, has given rise to a considerable amount of literature (see Neelham 1978, or Scherer and Ross 1990, for an overview), the role of the cultural and linguistic characteristics of the market has received little attention (Grin 1993a).

The increase in the volume of international trade, as well as the rise of trans-national ethnic, cultural and linguistic pluralism fed both by ethnic revival and migration flows, have made it commonplace for business firms, even those of a modest size, to sell their products to customers of widely diverging backgrounds and cultures. Yet marketing textbooks usually fail to mention language and culture at all (e.g. Weleber 1979; Böisvert 1988), while those that do are apparently content with a few rather general comments to the effect that culture-based attitudes vary greatly, and that language is the "key" to a culture and hence to effective communication with the people who live in it (e.g. Terpstra and Sarathy 1991). This is confirmed in a survey by Holden (1987), who reviews 463 articles in general marketing, industrial marketing, international marketing, international business operations and advertising. Only 18% of these articles mention the importance of language; of those articles dealing with advertising proper, only 9% make any mention of language. It appears that for the most part, theorists and practitioners of advertising either forget about linguistic differences, and assume that uniformity is the norm (particularly within any given national market), or rely on their business skills and acumen to develop ad hoc responses to the variety of linguistic and cultural conditions they encounter.

The existence of supposedly well-established practices or rules of thumb does not, however, fill the need for a more thorough investigation of the nature and causes of multilingual advertising. Knowing what reasons business firms could have to engage in multilingual advertising can be helpful in two rather different perspectives.

The first is fuelled by business-oriented, rather than strictly scientific, preoccupations. As pointed out above, the business community is grappling with the emergence of multicultural and multilingual markets with remarkably few guidelines to go on. The result is that marketing practices are not immune to serious blunders. But the newer aspect is that multilingualism increasingly occurs within national boundaries. Major companies selling on the US market have by now realized that Spanish speakers living in the US are approximately 20 million strong, and that their purchasing power was estimated, in 1987, at $120 billion. This fact alone justifies some investigation into the type of advertising decisions that will have the most profitable impact on sales.

There is a second, and less mercantile, reason for investigating the problem. Cultural and linguistic plurality is not just an increasingly prevalent trait of modern societies; it can also be seen as a societal characteristic about which citizens have preferences, just as they may choose a certain level of environmental standards or income redistribution. Even if the case for considering linguistic and cultural variety as a valuable or costly societal characteristic is intuitively appealing, it has not, to my knowledge, been formally investigated (Grin 1993b). In any event, the prevailing degree of