Prospects for an Endangered Language: The Effects of Stigmatization, Group Sentiment and Standardization Movements on the Future of the Kashubian Language

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A Senior Essay in Linguistics
Presented on

May 6, 2004

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1.0 Introduction

A member of the West Slavic group of languages, Kashubian is spoken within the boundaries of what is now modern-day Poland. Its similarity to Polish has provoked a lingering debate over whether it is merely a dialect of Polish or a language in its own right. Certainly it is the most widely spoken minority language or dialect in Poland. The perceived distinctiveness of the Kashubian language, as well as the culture which it symbolizes, persuades many scholars to maintain that it is indeed a separate language. The damaging stigma of Kashubian as a rural simplistic culture has led many speakers to abandon the language in favor of Polish, which holds a prestigious position in this bilingual society. A recent cultural revival movement endeavors to reverse this stigmatized image. Efforts to maintain and revive Kashubian focus on heralding the glory and uniqueness of the language and culture, within the framework of the Polish speech community. The extent to which the two cultures are intertwined is highlighted by the famous quote from the Kashubian poet H.J. Derdowski: *Nie ma Kaszëb bez Polonii a bez Kaszëb Polsczi* "There are no Kashubs without Poland and no Poland without Kashubs."

Nevertheless, Polish is replacing Kashubian in increasing facets of Kashubian life, and the trend shows few signs of slowing down. Perceptions of group identity and the lack of efficient standardization both affect the regular use of the language as well as its transmission to younger generations. The lack of a written or oral standard form discourages literary use of the language, meanwhile, a nonexistent Kashubian national sentiment furthers the attitude that Polish, the national language, is superior to the ethnic Kashubian language.

The goal of this paper is to analyze the current linguistic situation of Kashubian in light of the failures of standardization movements, widespread stigmatization of the language, and lack of nationalistic sentiment among the Kashubs, and to posit a direction for the future of the language. Section 1 provides a brief synopsis of the linguistic situation in Kashubia. Section 2 outlines the relationship between Polish and Kashubian and includes a discussion on structural differences, disparate patterns of usage, and the effects of language contact in a diglossic society. Sections 3 deals with group identity, in particular national and ethnic sentiment, and analyzes the character of its manifestation among the Kashubs with respect to recent political and social changes. Section 4 examines the process of standardization and the issues surrounding the creation and adoption of a standard Kashubian language. Section 5 considers efforts to combat language shift and identifies possible reasons that shift is taking place. This paper concludes with the determination that Kashubian is in need of a revival, and makes some suggestions for possible paths which such movements could follow.

1.1 Overview of the Kashubian Language

Covering only about 6,000 km^2, Kashubia encompasses the major port city of Gdansk as well as the tourist resorts of the Hel Peninsula. Also known as Kashubian Pomerania, the region stretches diagonally from the Baltic Ocean bordering the north and northeast to the edge of the Great Poland (Wielkopolska) region further southwest. Major cities and towns include Wejherowo, Puck, Kartuzy, Koscierzyna, and Chojnice.

Estimates of the number of speakers vary, but most scholars agree that actual numbers range from 330,000 speakers to about 500,000, if half-Kashubs are included. The vast majority, approximately 300,000, live in the Kashubian linguistic area described above. The rest have emigrated out of the region, most to Germany, North America, or other areas of Poland. In this paper I will limit the discussion to Kashubian spoken by those living in Pomerania.

The great majority of speakers of Kashubian live in rural areas and use the language to varying degrees depending the individual and the situation. It is spoken mostly in informal situations and it is becoming increasingly rare in major cities. It is not used in official matters. All Kashubians speak Polish, using either a northwest dialect or the standard form of the language. Some older Kashubians also speak German, the result of German occupation before World War I. Only about 60% of Kashubs actually speak Kashubian; this figure also includes people with basic knowledge of the language, i.e. those who can say a few words or phrases, but who cannot use the language to functionally communicate in most situations.

1.2 Influence of Political Climate on the Study of Kashubian

Little formal linguistic study of Kashubian was carried out before the mid-nineteenth century, when dictionaries, grammars, and other dialectal studies first began to appear. The initial works were descriptive in nature, and reflected the specific dialects of the authors. During the Cold War era, the ruling Communist party enforced an official policy of monoethnicity and banned any expression of ethnic distinctiveness, including

recognition of Kashubian culture and language. There were no reference books on Kashubian, nor did the language appear on any census questionnaires. As a result, comparatively little study of Kashubian was conducted during this time. The gradual move toward democratization beginning in the 1980s led to increased interest in Kashubian, particularly regarding ethnicity and nationalism. For this reason, most studies related to Kashubian group sentiment have been conducted after 1980.

1.3 Linguistic History of Kashubia

After the extinction of Polabian and Slovincian around 1750 and 1900, respectively, Kashubian and Polish remain the only existing Lechitic languages. During the Middle Ages, Polish and Kashubian were essentially the same language; differences did not begin appearing until the twelfth century. The main period of phonemic divergence occurred between the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. According to Topolińska (1974: 22), "It is back to this time that we can trace all the definitional (i.e. serving to define [the language] from the linguistic point of view) properties of Kashubian which are still phonemically in force."

To this day, Kashubian has never attained the status of an official national language. Latin was the lingua franca across Europe during the Middle Ages, but German replaced it as the language of government in Pomerania in the 14th century. In the latter half of the 15th century, Latin was added again as an official language, but there is little evidence that it had any major effect on Kashubian at any time. Although Latin ceased to be an official language in 1772, it had essentially been in disuse for many centuries.

Polish was the language of informal use; however, German remained the language of administration until 1920, when the Polish language became official in the region. (Lorentz 1935)

1.4 Literature

Kashubian literature is rather basic in relation to Polish, but a literary tradition does exist. Unfortunately, a low level of interest in the literature and little knowledge of the language result in a narrow audience. In fact, the Kashubian scholar Alfred Majewicz (1996) refers to Kashubian literary tradition as a "literature without readers." However, as I will discuss later in more detail, a recent revival effort has increased the amount of Kashubian literature as well as broadening its audience. Efforts are unfortunately slowed by the fact that the language does not yet have a standardized literary language; I will explore the standardization issue more thoroughly in Section 4.

Older literature from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries is essentially Polish with a few "kashubianisms," or dialectal variations. This reflects the still relatively nascent divergence between Polish and Kashubian as well as failed attempts to make Polish the literary language of Kashubian during this period. The first book actually translated into Kashubian was a Protestant hymnal in 1586. Most scholars, however, agree that the literary tradition first began with the works of Florian Ceynowa in the mid nineteenth century. Ceynowa, dubbed the "father of Kashubian literature," initiated the first Kashubian literary revival movement. A second resurgence, labeled the "Young Kashubian" movement, began with the establishment of the "Young Kashubian Society"

in 1912. The goal of the movement was to "advocate... a union of Kashubia with Poland without sacrificing the local linguistic and cultural traditions."(Topolińska 1980: 190) The epic poet Hieronim Jarosz Derdowski and the novelist Aleksander Majkowski are the best known authors during this period. Majkowski's novel *Zëcé I Przigodë Remusa* (*The Life and Adventures of Remus*), written in 1938, is probably the best-known example of Young Kashubian work. The novel was translated into German in 1988, a noteworthy event because it allowed speakers of an unrelated language to encounter Kashubian literature.

Most Kashubian works of literature are printed as articles in journals. The most well-known of these is the bilingual monthly *Pomerania*. This ethnic journal publishes several genres of writing, including poetry, prose, and scholarly works. As a regional socio-cultural journal, it is distinguished throughout Poland. Other publications exist as well, including *Tatczëna*, which has been published in Gdansk since May 1990 by the Kashub Student Association of Pomerania.

1.5 Press and Media

In the three decades before World War II, several local Kashubian press publications flourished. The Communist regime and its ideals of homogeneity and monoethnicity, however, brought an end to most of these publications. After the fall of Communism, several of them resumed publication – among them was *Zrzesz Kaszëbskô*, an important newspaper which started publication again in 1992 after 44 years. However, as of now, no form of press exists that is published exclusively in Kashubian.

Kashubian is minimally present in other forms of media as well. *Rodnô Zemia* is a half-hour biweekly television show which presents entertainment, news and language classes. An hour-long radio show, *Na bôtach ë w borach*, broadcasts from Gdansk weekly, in addition to other less frequent radio transmissions. Stories and songs are recorded on tapes and CDs. Contests of poetry and prose occur throughout Kashubia, with the goal being to maintain interest and improve ability to communicate in the language.

1.6 Religion

The overwhelming majority of Kashubs practice Roman Catholicism. The Church, therefore, is an important influence on daily life. Most Masses are conducted in Polish, but there is a gradual trend to offer more religious services in Kashubian; several churches in the region offer such services sporadically throughout the year. Officially, the Church has no position on the use of the language in Mass, but bishops accept its use and some even use in it sermons. Although there is no Kashubian catechism, a translated version of the four gospels of the Bible appeared in 1992, followed in 1993 by a complete translation of the entire New Testament.

1.7 Education

Prevalence of a minority language in educational spheres is an important factor in its continued vitality. In the post-Communist era, Kashubian was introduced as a main

language of instruction in primary schools in several towns. Many more Polish-medium schools in Pomerania offer classes in Kashubian language, history and culture, and in 1991, an independent Kashubian high school was established in Brusy. However, there are no classes in the social or natural sciences taught in the language, and classes where Kashubian is the medium of instruction are limited to subjects related to culture and language. University-level study of Kashubian language and culture has been possible since 1993 at the University of Gdansk, which offers these courses as part of a specialization in Kashubian studies.[1]

[1] For more information on education, see 5.1.

2.0 Use of the Kashubian Language

2.1 Language versus Dialect

Since one of the purposes of this paper is to examine the issue of preservation of Kashubian as a distinct language, it is important to touch upon the debate over the linguistic definition of Kashubian. The genetic proximity of Kashubian to Polish lead some to question its status as a separate language, and further to define it as merely a dialect of Polish. While some scholars refer to Kashubian as a "variation," Synak (1993) avoids the problem by terming Kashubian an "ethnolect," thus emphasizing its ethnic nature without specifically dealing with the language-versus-dialect issue. The majority of Kashubian linguists, however, use the term "language" in their treatment of the subject; thus I will also use that label in this paper.

The debate has cultural ramifications as well, considering that language is the center of ethnic consciousness of the Kashubs. Stefan Ramułt's dictionary of Kashubian, published in 1893, set the Kashubian language apart from Polish, thus bringing the issue of language versus dialect to the forefront. In 1980, the Kashubian poet Jan Trepczyk argued that Kashubian was a separate language, and its decreased use was the result of an unwarranted campaign to lower its status. Majewicz argues that the need to translate Kashubian texts into Polish – he gives the example of the aforementioned novel *The Life and Adventures of Remus* by Majkowski – "constitutes a strong argument for upgrading [the language's] status." Furthermore, he notes that "it is impossible to translate dialectal texts into a standard literary language without the complete loss of their essence – the

accumulation of dialectal features." (Majewicz 1996: 42) The need for translation, he suggests, is proof that Kashubian is a language in its own right.

The case for the separateness of Kashubian is strengthened by the distinctiveness of the culture. As I will discuss in detail later in the paper, the language is a symbol of Kashubian culture, which is considered by Kashubs to be different from that of Polish society.[2] Swedish and Norwegian speakers, for example, have little difficulty understanding each other, but their languages are accorded separate status due to political and cultural divisions. Conversely, the Chinese dialects, despite mutual unintelligibility, are grouped as one language because of cultural similarities, among other factors. Self-identification as a member of an ethnic group has implications for the definition of a language. Speakers of the Chinese dialects consider themselves ethnically Chinese, so they refer to their language as Chinese, while Kashubs who speak the language regard themselves and their language as Kashubian. Cultural disparities therefore warrant the designation of Kashubian as a separate language.

2.2 Dialectal Variation within Kashubia

Kashubian exists within a linguistic continuum, whereby dialects shift gradually within a given geographic area. Thus neighboring dialects exhibit very similar features, while those farther apart have greater differentiation. In fact, many speakers of southern dialects of Kashubian have a difficult time understanding speakers from the north. The greatest dialectal differences in Kashubian occur in vowel phonology[3]. Loss of vowel

[2] Refer to 2.4 for a discussion of cultural differences between Polish and Kashubian societies.
[3] There is very little consonantal variation among the Kashubian dialects.

quantity and subsequent differentiation of short and long reflexes resulted in a varied phonological landscape in Kashubia. The language becomes increasingly "polonized" in the southern areas of the continuum because historical contact with Polish has moved chronologically from southwest to northeast. This pattern of dialectal variation provides fodder for both sides of the language versus dialect debate – southern Kashubian varies little from Polish, thus supporting the "dialect" argument, while the numerous differences between northern Kashubian and Polish suggest its status as a separate language.

2.3 Differences between Kashubian and Polish

2.3.1 Phonological Differences

The main distinguishing features of Kashubian are phonetic and phonological in nature. In fact, many speakers of Polish have difficulty understanding Kashubian because of the many phonemic variations in comparison to Polish. As a result of several mergers during its development, the Kashubian phonemic inventory is essentially a subset of that of the Polish language, with a few minor exceptions. The key phonological differences between Kashubian and Polish are enumerated below[4]:

[4] In the following list, Kashubian forms are in Italics; Polish forms are in print.

- The alveolo-palatal consonants [ć, dź, ś, ź], which are common in Polish, do not exist in Kashubian; they merge with the non-palatal variants [c, dz, s, z]: K *jezoro,* P jezioro 'lake;' K *sostra,* P siostra 'sister;' K *sedzec,* P siedzieć 'to sit.[5]'

- Polish *y* [+high, –back, –front] occurs in many Kashubian dialects as *i* [+front]: K *dobri,* P dobry 'good;' K *tim,* P tym 'that-INSTR;' K *sin*, P syn 'son.'

- Polish *i, y,* and *u* sometimes appear as the short central vowel ə: K *rəba*, P ryba 'fish;' K *zəma*, P zima 'winter;' K *čəc*, P czuć 'to feel.'

- Both languages have two nasal vowels which are both pronounced differently in each language. Polish *ą* (nasalized open *o*) occurs as Kashubian as *õ* (a nasalized closed *o* similar to a nasalized *u*). Polish *ę* (nasalized *e*) appears as Kashubian *ą* (nasalized *a*). The difference between the Polish *ę* and the Kashubian *ą* is more pronounced than the disparity between the Polish *ą* and the Kashubian *õ*: K *rąka*, P ręka 'hand;' K *ksõdz*, P księdz 'priest.'[6]

- Polish *-le-* corresponds to Kashubian *-ło-* interconsonantally: K *młoko*, P mleko 'milk;' K *młoc*, P mleć 'to grind.'

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[5] In Polish, the orthographic combinations {*ci, dzi, si, zi*} are pronounced as { *ć, dź, ś, ź* }. Also, {*cz, sz*}are pronounced as {*č, š*}.

[6] Common Slavic õ > Lechitic õ:, õ > Polish Ṽ:, Ṽ ; CS ę > L õ before hard dentals > P Ṽ: ; otherwise CS ę > L ę:, ę > P Ṽ. In the 12th century, each group of long and short vowels had two positional variants in complementary distribution: P Ṽ:, Ṽ > K ę:, ę after [+ sharp] consonants word-internally and not before a hard dental ; P Ṽ:, Ṽ > K õ:, õ after hard consonants and/ or before hard dentals and word finally. In the 13th – 15th centuries, former K ę:, ę > ĩ:, ĩ, then subsequently lost nasality and merged with i and i:. Hence former õ:, õ > ą:, ą remained the only nasal vowels. After the loss of quantity that occurred in both Polish and Kashubian beginning in the 16th century, K ą: > ą (orthographically õ); and K ą > ę.

- Polish *-il-*, *-eł-*, and *-łu-* correspond to Kashubian *-oł-* interconsonantally: K *vołk*, P wilk 'wolf.'

- The Polish sound group *-ro-* in particular has some interesting properties. It corresponds to Kashubian *-ar-* between consonants: K *varna*, P wrona 'crow.' These changes may be the result of overgeneralization of the P *-ro-* / K *-ar-* correspondence by Kashubian speakers trying to speak more "proper" Polish (Lorentz 1935): K *gronk* P garnek 'pot;' K *grosc*, P garść 'handful.' Kashubian *-ar-* also causes palatalization of the preceding consonant: K *cv'arti*, P czwarty 'fourth.'

2.3.2 Lexical Differences

Keeping in mind the close genetic relationship between Kashubian and Polish, it is not surprising that most differences are phonological and that lexical disparities are relatively few compared to other pairings of related languages. Aleksander Labuda's Kashubian-Polish Dictionary, published in 1982, endeavored to eliminate all identical words, yet still managed to compile a list of 10,000 words. (Majewicz 1996) However, the majority of vocabulary in these languages is strikingly similar; a study by Tadeusz Lehr-Spławinski (1935) comparing categories familiar to a rural people, specifically domestic animals and housekeeping activities, found that with only one exception, elicited words differed only in phonological rather than etymological features.

Furthermore, he notes that "all instruments of word-formation (prefixes and suffixes) used in Polish are also used with the same meaning in the [Kashubian] dialects." (Lehr-Spławinski 1935: 352) Kashubian does however have a subset of lexical items that differ from the Polish forms. Many of these are archaic forms that do not occur anymore in Polish: *jesore* 'fish bones;' *kôlp* 'sea swan;' *nogawica* 'stocking.' Kashubian does also exhibit some novel forms which are distinct from Polish: K *żêletka* > K *gòlëtka*, P żyletka 'razor blade.'

2.3.3 Register Differences

Kashubian has effectively disappeared from urban communities, but it continues to be used in rural towns and villages in Kashubia. Most Kashubs only use it in informal settings within the local village community, e.g. when speaking with older relatives, at the village market, etc. Increasingly the language is being introduced into schools, but Polish is still the primary language of instruction of most educational institutions in the region. All scholarly work, with the exception of a very few pieces published in *Pomerania* and other Kashubian journals, is written in Polish. Kashubian is the language of government and administration, and speakers will always use Polish whenever they are in an official setting. Furthermore, when meeting someone of unknown linguistic background, Kashubs will undoubtedly speak Polish in initial contact.

2.3.4 Prestige Differences

The stigmatization of Kashubian is a constant plague to the proponents of Kashubian language revitalization. The language is seen as a rural dialect spoken by a simple peasant people; thus many speakers shy away from using it for fear that they will be shunned or disregarded. Polish, on the other hand, is the language of advancement and prestige in the community. Widespread government and workplace usage of Polish has enforced the perception that it is a useful and necessary language to learn. The low status of Kashubian in comparison to Polish has numerous implications for the future of the language, which I will discuss later.

2.4 Cultural Differences

While Polish and Kashubian culture share many similarities, Kashubs consider their culture to be distinct from Polish. As a consequence of the rural nature of Kashubian culture, its customs have not undergone as much modification as Polish traditions in the face of urbanization and modernization. Many Kashubs see their culture as preserving the old world traditions which Polish society has been unable to retain, particularly those relating to farming, fishing, or domestic life. Kashubian folk music and dances are distinct from those of Polish, and many legends and stories contain a supernatural element that is not present as often in Polish. The culture also reflects the historical differences between Kashubs and Poles. Kashubian folk poetry, for example, is not heroic or emotional because, as Lorentz (1935: 172) notes, "those classes among which

heroic legends generally arise were lost... at an early period." Polish literature, on the other hand, is filled with examples of epic poetry because the higher social classes to which Lorentz refers have historically played an conspicuous role in Polish society.

2.5 Diglossia

Cultural contrasts are all the more different when one considers the fact that the languages exist side-by-side within a relatively small region. A situation in which two languages coexist in a linguistic community but are used in separate settings is by no means exclusive to Kashubia. Diglossia is the term first coined by Charles Ferguson (1959) in an attempt to describe the linguistic circumstances of Haitian Creole, Swiss German, modern Greek, and Arabic. Ferguson's diglossia is a situation of complementary distribution between two languages or varieties, where each is used in a specific group of settings. He distinguishes between the high (H) and low (L) varieties used within the diglossic community. H enjoys a high level of prestige, while L is considered to be the "common" language. In diglossia, H is the standard language for a separate group of speakers who are outside of the diglossic community; for example, in Haiti, French has H status in comparison to Haitian Creole, but in France the language is simply the standard variety. Ferguson notes that H is learned formally in educational settings, but L is acquired natively at home. Unlike L, H is usually the language of literature, media and religion, and is often standardized in dictionaries and orthographies.

Ferguson makes the distinction between diglossia and "standard-with-dialects," where the standard language is used as H by some speakers within the community and as

the only language of communication by other non-diglossic speakers. Fishman (1967) takes Ferguson's definition further to include situations combining diglossia with bilingualism. He distinguishes between four situations within multilingual societies: diglossia with bilingualism, neither diglossia nor bilingualism, bilingualism without diglossia, and diglossia without bilingualism. Bilingualism, Fishman notes, occurs on the level of the individual, while diglossia is a socio-cultural phenomenon. Diglossia without bilingualism tends to occur in a stratified social situation, where groups in a single society are divided along very distinct, often socio-economic lines. Each group uses a different language (or variety of a language), and the lack of interaction between the groups hinders the development of bilingualism in the individuals. Bilingualism without diglossia, on the other hand, is often symptomatic of rapid social change where speakers of one linguistic group adopt the language of another more dominant group. This generally occurs in industrializing societies where workers who speak a weaker language adopt the more dominant language, and gradually the entire group shifts to sole usage of the stronger language. Such changes are indicative of a transitional society encountering a period of brisk modernization and/or democratization.

So can the linguistic situation in Kashubia be defined as diglossia? According to Ferguson, the answer is no, because within the linguistic community there are speakers who have no knowledge of Kashubian (L) and who use Polish (H) as their only means of communication. However, the relationship between Kashubian and Polish is an excellent example of Fishman's partial diglossia. Kashubian seems to occupy a place between Fishman's two hybrid cases of bilingualism without diglossia and diglossia without bilingualism. Individual speakers of Kashubian are all bilingual, but a situation of

diglossia certainly exists within the community of Kashubian speakers. This group, however, is fully integrated into another larger community of monolingual Polish speakers; thus the diglossia phenomenon does not extend across the entire linguistic area in Kashubia. The intertwining of the larger, predominantly monolingual and smaller bilingual linguistic communities results in language conflict, particularly among younger speakers who, by attending school and participating in urban society, are more exposed than older Kashubs to the Polish language. The higher status of Polish in this conflict situation ensures that it remains the predominant language in the larger community, and that its influence expands within the smaller Kashubian community.

3.0 Group Sentiment Among the Kashubs

The perceived prestige of a language such as Polish is linked not only to pragmatic elements of its usage, but also to emotional factors as well. Ethnic and nationalistic attitudes are therefore important determinants of group identity. This observation rings true in Kashubia, where perceptions of identity are linked to cultural attitudes and language usage. The Kashubian distinction between ethnic and national identity is a very significant one; in order to discuss their impact on the use of the Kashubian language, it is important to understand how these two sentiments relate.

3.1. Ethnicity

Popular belief leads the average layperson to equate ethnicity with minority groups. The obvious mistake here is failure to acknowledge that every individual is a member of an ethnic group; a minority group is simply an ethnic group who has fewer members than other ethnic groups in the same region. The delineation of such a group depends upon a variety of factors. Synak (1993) and Edwards (1985) refer to a combination of subjective and objective factors that define an individual's membership in a particular group. The subjective aspect encompasses ideas of self-identification as well as beliefs about the group held by non-members. Awareness of group distinctiveness engenders a consciousness of the characteristic traits shared solely by its members, and an individual's self-identification as part of a group generates a sense of connection to

other members. These sentiments of shared uniqueness result in a cohesive bond within the community.

In fact, the line between subjective and objective factors can often be murky. In an analysis of the relationship between language and ethnic identity of the Kashubs, Synak (1993) segregates the two aspects of identity by describing the objective dimensions as "behavioral." He includes specific sociocultural markers in his objective definition of identity: "use of ethnic language, membership of the Kashubian association, reading Kashubian newspapers and literature, knowledge of Kashubian culture..." (Synak 1993: 77)

The notion of group boundaries illustrates the importance of both aspects of identity in defining the group. Boundaries are objective in that they create a concrete partition between members of different groups and between the groups themselves; they are subjective because they serve to unify members of the group within the boundaries. Edwards notes that boundaries remain relatively static as the cultures within them change. This group continuity lasts over generations and centuries, and creates the foundation for a shared past within the group, a historical connection which definitively ties together all group members. Scholars commonly cite the existence of a common past as an important and concrete unifying factor; since ancestral heritage is an inherited factor, it introduces a strong kinship element to the identity equation. Edwards (1985: 8), referring to Isajiw (1980), remarks that "the subjectivity here is not completely arbitrary but is, like the more material or objective perspective, based upon ancestry."

In examining the relationship between ethnic identity and the use of the Frisian language in Friesland, a Frisian-speaking province of the Netherlands, Pieter van der

Plank (1987) makes a distinction between geographic, genealogical, and ethnolinguistic definitions of ethnicity among Frisian and Dutch speakers. To non-Frisian speakers residing outside of Friesland, living within the boundaries of the province automatically marks a person with Frisian identity, regardless of the speaker's native language. Within Friesland, however, native Dutch speakers only consider those with Frisian ancestry to be ethnic Frisian; native language plays no role in this distinction. For native Frisian speakers in the province, ethnicity hinges on the use of the language that is historically attributed to members of the ethnic group.

Ethnicity is thus a multifaceted sentiment combining aspects of personal opinions and tangible elements. According to Edwards:

> Ethnic identity is allegiance to a group – large or small, socially dominant or subordinate – with which one has ancestral links. There is no necessity for a continuation, over generations, of the same socialization or cultural patterns, but some sense of a group boundary must persist. This can be sustained by shared objective characteristics (language, religion, etc.), or by more subjective contributions to a sense of "groupness," or by some combination of both. Symbolic or subjective attachment must relate, at however distant a remove, to an observably real past. (Edwards 1985: 9)

3.1.1 Language as a Symbol of Ethnicity

Given the connective nature of groupness, it is not surprising that maintaining and strengthening ethnic bonds requires some sort of common link that all members of the group can sense; the existence of a real shared past was offered earlier as an example. Language becomes a part of ethnic culture; its use signifies membership in the group. The uniqueness of the group culture means that the language, too, is a distinctive entity. The presence of certain ethnic features in a language is often a measure of identifying

group members. The commonly told story of the Gileads illustrates this point. In order to distinguish enemies from their own people at a checkpoint, soldiers were ordered to pronounce the word "shibboleth." If the first consonant was pronounced as "s," then the soldier was considered an enemy and immediately killed. However, if he pronounced the sound "sh," he was identified as a friend and allowed to pass through. (Tabouret-Keller 1997)

3.1.2 Kashubian Ethnic Identity

The Frisian example cited earlier illustrates that the conscious choice to speak a given language often symbolizes the ethnic identification of the speaker, particularly when the language is regional or spoken by a minority. Van der Plank refers to a "tendency that typifies modern regionalism, and in that regard, regional languages also: the acceptance of an ethnic identity as a conscious choice and no longer solely as a hereditary determination, a choice expressed in the use of the regional language." (Van der Plank 1987: 17) Among the objective factors of ethnicity offered by Synak (1993), the most important and tangible was the use of the Kashubian language, a symbol of the shared past that ties all Kashubs together. Majewicz (1996) and Synak (1993) both stress the importance of the language in determining ethnic identity of the Kashubs. According to Majewicz, although only about three-fifths of Kashubs have any knowledge of the language at all, its use is recognized by Kashubs as a core marker of "Kashubianness." Synak found a direct correlation between frequency of use of Kashubian and level of self-identification as a Kashub:

Table 1:

Degree of Ethnic Identity and Usage of the Kashubian Language (in %)

Degrees of Identity	Speaking Exclusively Kashubian	Speaking Mostly Kashubian	Speaking Mostly Polish	Speaking Exclusively Polish	Other Answers
High	59	44	19	5	21
Middle	28	34	23	5	57
Low	13	22	58	90	22

$p < 0.05$ Synak (1993)

As is shown in Table 1 above, 90% of Kashubs who use Polish on a regular basis have a low degree of Kashubian identity, and only 5% of speakers each have low or middle levels of identity. As speakers use Kashubian more often in their daily life, they exhibit a higher level of ethnic identity; 59% of those who speak Kashubian exclusively have a high degree of identity, while 13% characterized their identity as low. The contrast between the identities of those who speak exclusively Polish and those who only speak Kashubian is interesting; while those who only speak Polish responded overwhelmingly that they have low identities, Kashubs who speak exclusively Kashubian do not exhibit such a decisive compartmentalization of self-described identity. This is probably the result of immersion in Polish culture; even those who say that they speak exclusively Kashubian must use the Polish language in at least a few domains.

3.2 Nationalism

Ethnic sentiment is often confused with nationalism, in part because the line between the two is not always clearly drawn. To the average layperson, the notion of a strong personal attachment to and identification with a group is the central theme in

defining group sentiment. Although ethnicity and nationalism both incorporate the idea of a group with strong internal bonds, it is the distinction between the two concepts that is so important for the future of Kashubian, and is therefore the focus of this discussion. Nationalism is essentially ethnicity coupled with the desire for some level of self-government. This political autonomy need not be in the form of a nation-state to be nationalistic; the Autonomous Region of Catalonia in Spain is an example of a strongly nationalistic community which enjoys regional political autonomy but not federal. All other factors of ethnic group sentiment are present in nationalism, including self-identification, the existence of a real shared past, and stable group boundaries. In this sense, nationalism is the expansion and politicization of ethnic sentiment, a type of "organized ethnicity."

Nationalism is a relatively new political phenomenon, dating only from the 18th century. The origins of the linguistic nationalism with which this paper is concerned can be traced back to German romanticism and the European Enlightenment. During this time, growing belief in Germany that intellectual dominance was connected to use of the German language led to a strong sense of pride among the intelligentsia. Language was seen as the gateway to reality; superiority of the national language facilitated the continuity of national culture and the nation-state. These ideals influenced similar sentiments in other European nations. From these roots, the notion of a nation tied to its own pure language developed.

3.2.1 Language and Nationalism

As a focal point of nationalism, language can be a powerful force. History is filled with examples of language being used by one group as a tool to apply pressure on another; for example, as a social and political weapon, it has been used to subjugate conquered peoples (the situations in Brittany and Ireland come to mind, among many others) while at other times it has been used as an instrument to exert economic and administrative influence on less developed cultures, as in the Francophone African colonies. The underlying sentiment shared by all these attempts at linguistic control is the nationalistic belief in the higher value of the dominant language. It is important to mention here that nationalism does not necessarily entail the forceful imposition of the language on another group, but given the strong link between nationalistic sentiment and language, it is not surprising that this does occur occasionally when nationalist groups gain political control.

Catalan provides an excellent example of a language which is at the center of the national identity of its people. The people are highly aware of the distinctiveness of both their culture and their national language. Throughout history the Catalan people have alternated from being a conquered people to controlling their own independent state. During the reign of the Fascist dictator Francisco Franco, all expression of Catalan minority culture was forbidden, including use of the language. However, muted nationalistic stirrings persisted, and the language continued to be used by the Catalan people amongst themselves. With the death of Franco and the new Spanish Constitution of 1978, the Spanish state was divided into 19 autonomous communities, one of which being the Autonomous Community of Catalonia. Catalan was once again recognized as a

minority nationality, and national minority languages were officially recognized within each individual autonomous community. Catalan is by far the minority language with the most nationalistic support in Spain. Today, the language is used in all facets of society, including in educational and governmental affairs, and the language shares a similar level of prestige as Castilian, the official language of the entire country of Spain.

3.2.2 Kashubian National Identity and the Post-Communist Transformation

The strong nationalistic sentiments in Catalonia do not have a counterpart in Kashubia. Although a strong ethnic identity is well-attested among the Kashubs, most declare their nationality to be Polish. Only a tiny minority of Kashubs advocates any sort of regional or national independence. There are no nationalistic organizations or movements that have garnered a considerable following.[7] Even if any significant movements towards Kashubian nationalism did exist, they would be for symbolic rather than pragmatic purposes because the bilingualism of Kashubian speakers and the clear dominance of Polish in many facets of life demonstrate that all Kashubs can function in official and administrative contexts within the greater society.

Considering the recent history of Communism in Poland, it is not surprising that no substantive nationalist movements currently exist in Kashubia. The policy of monoethnicity which characterized the regime prohibited the expression of any culture other than Polish. Language, the most recognizable marker of the Kashubian minority, was tightly controlled by the government, and minority languages were forbidden in public areas. According to Cordell (2000:29), during Communist times "the whole thrust

[7] However, an ethno-regional organization does exist; see section 5 for a discussion of this movement.

of Polish policy was to turn those who did not consider themselves to be Poles into Poles." This strategy of "forcible assimilation" created an overtly homogenous society where minority ethnicities were kept hidden and national loyalty was openly proclaimed to the state. Census figures clearly illustrate the deficient Kashubian national identity that resulted from such a policy. Communist-era census questionnaires made no mention of ethnicity or nationality because the government did not recognize the existence of ethnic minorities. However, the most recent census in 2002 included a question intended to elicit ethnic affiliation, but only 5,100 people listed their ethnicity as Kashubian, a figure much lower than any other scholarly estimate. A close examination of the census forms may explain this discrepancy. Question 33 asks for respondents to identify their "narodowość" ("nationality") which the census directions specifically differentiate from "obywatelstwem" ("citizenship") which is the topic of another question. The government's definitions of ethnicity as "nationality" and of nationality as "citizenship" may confuse many minorities such as the Kashubs who have "embedded" ethnic identities, i.e. strong ethnic identities entrenched in a separate and sometimes conflicting sense of nationality. Thus the low census statistics for Kashubian ethnicity are the result of imprecise language in the survey and a hesitance to declare Kashubian as a national identity.

The recognition of minorities in the recent census questionnaires indicates just how far the Polish nation has progressed since the end of Communism. During the 1980s, Marxism began to wane under the pressure of pro-democratic groups, the largest and most influential of which was Solidarity, a worker's party which aimed, among its other liberal and civic-minded goals, to erase the pejorative attitude towards ethnic minorities

in Poland. Sweeping political and social changes after the fall of the Polish Communist Party in 1989 resulted in democratic government, liberal social consciousness and increased involvement in the world community.[8] Open borders permit more international contact and exchange of ideas, and membership in multilateral organizations encourages more awareness of liberal ideals, including those regarding minority rights. Poland has now signed every principal international agreement on human and minority rights, and has incorporated many of these conventions into its 1997 Constitution. Chapter 2 guarantees the dignity, freedoms and rights of all Polish citizens and protects them from discrimination, and Article 35 deals specifically with rights of minority groups to express their culture:

1. The Republic of Poland shall ensure Polish citizens belonging to national or ethnic minorities the freedom to maintain and develop their own language, to maintain customs and traditions, and to develop their own culture.

2. National and ethnic minorities shall have the right to establish educational and cultural institutions, institutions designed to protect religious identity, as well as the participate in the resolution of matters connected with their cultural identity. [9]

Article 27 declares Polish to be the official language of Poland, but specifies that "this provision shall not infringe upon national minority rights resulting from ratified international agreements." In effect, these constitutional clauses eliminate a previous impediment to the development of Kashubian culture and language, namely the laws prohibiting its expression.

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[8] In May 2004, Poland became a member of the European Union.
[9] Polish Constitution: http://www.sejm.gov.pl/english/konstytucja/kon1.htm

With the implementation of the Polish Constitution, the Kashubian language now enjoys a protected status which it has never experienced before. Unfortunately, little else has been done to elevate the status of minority languages in Poland. As Cordell (2000: 31) notes, "there is still no national minorities law in Poland, and one will not be presented to parliament until a separate piece of legislation guaranteeing Polish as the national language is passed." He claims that ensuring the passage of such a measure is improbable because "the issue of (official) bilingualism harks back to previous attempts to eradicate the state and nation." Thus regardless of the outward signs of linguistic tolerance afforded by the Constitution to minority languages such as Kashubian, not much actual effort on the part of the government is to be expected. This trend of inaction is likely to continue given the indifference of many Poles towards minority rights issues; the subject is not a common topic in national or regional media.

4.0 Language Standardization

It is clear that the overall attitude of society toward minority rights plays an important role in the desire of speakers to use the ethnic language. Yet the future of any language relies not only its regular use, but also on its transfer from generation to generation. As the previous section illustrates, ethnic and nationalistic attitudes can influence the desire of the speakers to pass their language on to their children. The most common way to do this is of course orally, but in today's modern society merely speaking a language is often not enough to ensure its existence over a longer period of time. The language must have a concrete form of existence in order for it to realize its full potential as a communicative function; the vast majority of people in the world today speak a language that has been standardized into both oral and written forms. In this era of globalization, the most dominant languages are those which have a clearly defined standard that can be used by both native and non-native speakers from all parts of the world.

I am not suggesting that standardization will result in Kashubian becoming a major world language, but I do believe that identifying a standard form is key to its long-term survival. Macaulay (1997) distinguishes between two types of standard languages – one being a particular variety of a language in contrast to other varieties, the other being one language in a multilingual environment. In the first sense, nearly all speakers in a given environment speak the same language, but the variety differs from one group to another. One variety is adopted as the standard, and although the other varieties may still be used, the standard is the language used in formal situations or taught as a second

language. Thus situation occurs in Scotland, where RP (Received Pronunciation) English is the standard, but Scots is the variety used by most speakers in the region. Although the distinction between the use of the standard and its variation can be attributed to a number of sociolinguistic factors, the use of Scots is dependent mostly upon social class. Lower social classes in Glasgow, for example, exhibit significantly more Scots features in their speech patterns than upper classes. A second type of standard language occurs when multiple languages are spoken in a single environment. The necessity to communicate requires that one language be adopted as the standard for intergroup contact, while speakers within each individual linguistic group continue to speak their own non-standard language amongst themselves. In the Philippines, for example, Tagalog is the standard and is spoken by all speakers. However, within their individual communities, many people also speak other languages such as Waray and Bikol, which are not accepted as standard. (Macaulay 1997)

The close genetic relationship between Kashubian and Polish means that the latter exhibits characteristics of both of Macaulay's standard language definitions. The multilingual situation in Kashubia has been resolved by the Kashubs adopting Polish as their means of communication with their society at large. Poles, however, remain monolingual with respect to Kashubian because there is no need for them to learn it. On the other hand, without venturing too far into the language-versus-dialect debate, we could consider Kashubian and the local Polish dialect to be two varieties of the same language, given the genetic similarities they share. In this sense, the northern Polish dialect spoken in Kashubian territory would be considered the standard for the region. Whether this is a good idea or not will be discussed later in the paper.

4.1 Adopting a Standard Language

So what exactly determines which language will be standard in a multilingual area? In order to discuss this, we must first examine the two main purposes of language – communicative and symbolic. The communicative role centers around pragmatism; for this reason, the lingua franca is generally the language which the majority of speakers use. In Kashubian territory, for example, Polish is the functional language of the overall speech community, as well as the official language of the Polish nation. The symbolic element of language, which was explained at length earlier, is reflected in the view of Kashubian as a marker of ethnicity. Garvin and Mathiot (1975) propose four functions of a standard language:

1) unifying
2) separatist
3) prestige
4) frame-of-reference

The unifying function connects speakers of different dialects to one unified speech community. The modern phenomenon of urbanization, for example, speeds uniformity by language contact. This function emphasizes similarities between members of a particular group. The separatist function, in contrast, differentiates the community itself from all others by highlighting the uniqueness of the group language. In this sense, urbanization encourages diversity; for example, in cities where recent immigrants speak many different languages, there can be a strong group incentive to retain the use of the ethnic language. The distinctive nature of the language encourages awareness of group membership and of community culture. According to Garvin and Mathiot, it is this

function which allows a language to "serve as a powerful symbol of separate national identity." The prestige function suggests a level of pride inherent in possessing the standard language. This sense of dignity extends not only to the individual speakers, but to the group itself, which is held in higher regard by members of the larger society. As a frame-of-reference, the standard language provides "a codified norm that constitutes a yardstick for effectiveness." The notion of the standard variety as a social norm implies a conscious acceptance of it as such by speakers within the community.

At first glance, it seems that Polish satisfies all four of Garvin and Mathiot's criteria, as well as Macaulay's definitions of a standard language. Conversely, Kashubian does not fulfill the prestige and frame-of-reference functions; the language remains highly stigmatized and in no way can its use be considered a social norm. So given that the language does not seem to exhibit all of the prerequisites needed to become a standard language, can Kashubian ever be effectively standardized? As we will see in the next section, historically the answer has been no. This leads us to another question – should we therefore formally propose Polish as the standard language for Kashubia? If the goal is to maintain and revive the Kashubian language, then certainly not, because doing so suggests that the language should be treated as a mere dialect rather than a language in its own right. This would encourage the downgraded status of the language, which could perhaps lead to the complete abandonment of Kashubian by its speakers. For the most part, Kashubian and Polish are treated formally as separate languages; by imposing Polish as the standard, Kashubian would essentially lose its claim as distinct from Polish. In fact, Polish cannot be considered the standardized form of Kashubian because its use in formal situations is not the result of its status as the standard version of

Kashubian, but rather because of its perceived prestige and usefulness in a diglossic situation involving two separate languages. Maintaining the individuality of Kashubian therefore requires a separate literary language which would be recorded in writing as proof of its distinctiveness.

4.2 Kashubian Efforts at Standardization

The lack of a written standard for Kashubian is a great hindrance to the future of the language. Past attempts to create an orthography have ended in varying degrees of failure. The first major work in Kashubian was a collection of spiritual songs in 1576 written by Simon Krofey, the parson of Bytowo. Whereas earlier works were written in literary Polish, his was one of the first attempts to reproduce the Kashubian dialect of his village. As Lorentz notes, his alphabet was not advanced enough to cover the full range of sounds of the language. Krofey's successor and the parson of Smołdzino, Michael Potanus, translated a version of Luther's Catechism in 1643. Potanus' language reflects natural phonological developments within Kashubian since Krofey's work. The spelling, although more regular, is still inconsistent; Lorentz notes that "the sounds *ž* and *ł* [which Krofey did not orthographically distinguish from *z* and *l*] are represented by symbols of their own, but these symbols are not always used." (Lorentz 1935: 15)

Perhaps the most influential impact made on the creation of a standardized Kashubian literary language came from Florian Ceynowa in the mid 19th century. His many works included primers and grammars, and he created an alphabet which paired each sound in the language with a particular symbol. The language of his writings

reflected an attempt to purify his Kashubian Sławoszyno dialect. Ceynowa fabricated words when he could not find an appropriate word in Kashubian, only using Polish vocabulary as a last resort. Although now he is considered one of the great contributors to the Kashubian literary tradition, he was not influential in his time.[10] His alphabet, though innovative, was never used; his system proved to be impractical because he combined symbols from many different Slavic alphabets. Ramułt's Polish-Kashubian dictionary of 1893 had similar flaws; the orthographic system was simply too difficult to be put into widespread use.

The next generation of Kashubian authors, that of the Young Kashubian movement in the early 20th century, concerned themselves less with elevating one particular dialect in favor of creating a sort of interdialect. The preeminent leaders of this movement, Derdowski and Majkowski, used contemporary Polish orthography without showing any regard for dialectal differences within Kashubian. This system created many problems because in some cases, several Kashubian sounds were represented by one single symbol, which led to difficulty in differentiating the phonemes. Majkowski invented a new system for the periodical *Gryf*, which created some controversy until a more standardized alphabet was created for the fourth issue. However, even this new alphabet was not sufficient and underwent subsequent revisions.

Even today each Kashubian author uses a different system to transcribe his work. The only generally accepted orthographic norms are the additions of the two letters *ô* and *ë*. Although the differences between orthographies is much narrower now than in the past, the issue of written standardization has still not been resolved. Of course, this problem

[10] His lack of contemporary influence is not due to the fact that he wrote in the Kashubian language, but rather because of the content of his writings. His latter works are political but abstract in nature, and were not widely read during his time.

requires a solution, because it is difficult to read a language in which the reader must guess as to the phonetic representation of each symbol. Confusion may lead to many readers abandoning the literary tradition altogether and only using the language orally. Therefore the question is not whether standardization is necessary for the future, but instead if it can be accomplished at all.

4.3 Problems Associated with Standardization

The central issue in the creation of a standard language revolves around the determination of the form which the standard should take – either one particular dialect should be designated as standard, or it should be a compromise between several varieties. The latter option is probably less feasible for Kashubian because the language is decentralized. Multiple dialects, which vary greatly in similarity to Polish, make it difficult to agree on what the standard form of the language should be. Speakers of a northern dialect may refuse to speak a more southern variety which is more similar to Polish; they may even refuse to use such a dialect as a written standard. The language is not rooted in any specific cultural, historical or political center like French or English; thus there is no particular dialect with traditional significance. Kashubian writers use their own dialects, and it is improbable that they would adapt both their written dialects to reflect a new standard that is not their own variety. Most Kashubian authors also publish a substantial amount of their work in Polish, and the dialect they do use is often specifically intended to represent the particular Kashubian dialect of a certain area, especially in prose. (Topolińska 1980)

It has also proven difficult to counter an apathetic attitude toward the language held by its speakers. The declining number of people who use the language is a symptom of the deficient linguistic unity among Kashubs. Because all speakers use Polish to varying but substantial degrees in everyday life, the Kashubian-speaking community is fractured. Many do not see the need to continue passing along the language to the next generations. Given the limited applicability of Kashubian in an increasingly modern and urbanized society, speakers no longer feel that it is useful, especially in a literary context. The general lack of concern for its survival means that there is little popular incentive to support any standardization efforts.

5.0 The Future of Kashubian

5.1 Efforts to Sustain Language Awareness

Although the majority of Kashubs seem to share an indifference towards preserving Kashubian, since the end of Communism a small minority has been advocating to change the high level of apathy. Concern over the deteriorating condition of the language has been the impetus for increased efforts to strengthen ethnic and cultural awareness. Ethno-regional movements and educational reforms are the principal vehicles for such attempts in Kashubia. The Kashubian-Pomeranian Association (Zrzeszenie Kaszubsko-Pomorskie, or ZKP) is the only Kashubian ethnic organization in existence, and it is instrumental in leading the movement to increase the political and cultural consciousness of the Kashubian people, thus rendering it the closest faction to a nationalistic movement in Kashubia. In order to enhance regionalization within Poland, the ZKP works with other similar associations as a member of the League of Regions. It has also joined the Federal Union of European Minorities, which held its 1994 Congress in Gdansk. Members of the ZKP advocate greater local self-government, and many are active in regional and municipal councils.

The greatest concern of the ZKP, however, is the maintenance of the language. To this end, the organization is involved in numerous literary and educational activities. Along with the University of Gdansk, it is one of the largest publishers of Kashubian books and periodicals. The ZKP is likewise influential in establishing many of the educational reforms that have occurred since 1989, which are aimed at increasing

knowledge and understanding of the language, particularly among students. Courses in Kashubian language, history and culture have been added to the curriculum at many rural primary schools. The language is also enjoying more exposure in post-elementary education, particularly at university undergraduate and graduate levels. The University of Gdansk offers courses in culture and language as well as a specialization in Kashubian within the Institute of Polish Philology. The graduate curricula are specifically intended for graduates of history, philology and pedagogy.

5.2 Language Shift

Despite the efforts of the ZKP, there have not been any major changes in the frequency of use of Kashubian. In fact, as Synak admits, "the process of giving up the Kashubian language by its users still continues." (Synak 1997: 726) The pattern of language use in Kashubia testifies to the process of language shift that is occurring in the region. Shift occurs when one language forcibly overtakes the other – i.e. language murder, as in Irish – or when speakers willingly give up use of their own language in favor of another. Generally the latter occurs when the weaker language has lower prestige or is not useful in a modernizing society. For example, as technology develops in Asia, many languages have adopted English words for lack of a better term in their own language. In the Philippines, science courses are taught in English, presumably out of necessity, and Tagalog is used for classes in other subjects. (Kaplan 1993) This kind of shift will not necessarily result in a complete replacement of the weaker language, but it reinforces the roles of both the inferior and the dominant languages within the society. As

the dominant language is adopted in a certain sphere of use, the weaker language loses its applicability, and eventually is no longer used in that particular realm. Public attitudes toward a language involved in shift may also influence the desire to retain use of the language. Speakers who feel that their language is inferior in comparison with another language may consciously abandon it in favor of the other. The higher prestige of the dominant language may lead to an unconscious adoption of words and phrases by speakers of the other language – the pervasiveness of American popular culture in Japan is a good example. Such shifts do not necessarily affect all of society; as Kaplan (1993: 15) notes, many shifts occur "'underground;' that is, the social sectors involved... may be marginal or proscribed sectors – adolescents, drug dealers, criminals, etc."

In Kashubia, however, shift affects every segment of society, regardless of age or occupation:

Table 2:
Age of Kashubian Speakers (in %)

Age Categories	Speaking Exclusively Kashubian	Speaking Mostly Kashubian	Speaking Mostly Polish	Speaking Exclusively Polish	Other Answers
16 – 30	4	43	37	14	2
31 – 45	15	50	22	10	3
46 – 60	28	51	11	6	4
Over 60	57	31	8	3	1

$p < 0.05$ Synak (1993)

The table above illustrates that younger Kashubs are increasingly giving up the use of their ethnic language in favor of Polish. Only 4% of 16 to 30-year-olds and 15% of 31 to 45-year-olds use Kashubian exclusively, and 51% of the youngest group responded that

they speak Polish always or most of the time. These statistics are significantly lower for older populations – 57% of Kashubs over 60 only speak Kashubian, and 88% of the total sample of the oldest group use Kashubian on a regular basis. Clearly, there is a strong trend of shift towards Polish that occurs among younger speakers. I have no doubt that if statistics were taken for the under 16 age group, the children would exhibit an even greater frequency of use of Polish. Of course, the low rate of exclusively Kashubian speakers among the younger age categories is partially the result of the diglossic situation in Kashubia; however, this societal diglossia is in fact a symptom of the shift towards Polish since Kashubs, particularly younger speakers, are socially, economically and politically required to integrate with mainstream Polish society.

Occupation and social class are also important determinants of the amount of Kashubian spoken. The Kashubs are traditionally a rural people, so it is not surprising that the language is used more often by those with the least amount of contact with urban Polish society:

Table 3:
Social Structure and Use of Kashubian (in %)

Social Categories	Speaking Exclusively Kashubian	Speaking Mostly Kashubian	Speaking Mostly Polish	Speaking Exclusively Polish	Other Answers
Farmers	39	46	10	4	1
Workers	12	54	23	7	4
Intelligentsia	7	7	41	37	8
Housewives	45	33	14	3	5
Students	0	9	48	43	0

$p < 0.05$ Synak (1993)

Students and intelligentsia both choose to use Polish overwhelmingly over Kashubian; only 14% of the latter group use Kashubian most or all of the time, and no students responded that they speak exclusively Kashubian. Conversely, a large majority of farmers and housewives, 85% and 78% respectively, use Kashubian as their usual means of communication. These discrepancies are due to the level of interaction with Polish society and language. Technical and academic pursuits, for example, require a language in which students and the intelligentsia can express themselves in a wide variety of domains, and Kashubian is simply too inadequate. Farmers and housewives are generally not very well educated, and since the majority of their time is spent in rural settings with other Kashubian speakers, they do not need to speak Polish as often. However, with the rapid modernization that has been occurring in the post-Communist era, technological improvements and urbanization will spur the integration of these sectors of Kashubian society by necessitating the use of Polish in an increasing number of realms in which Kashubian vocabulary is insufficient. The statistics in Tables 2 and 3 illustrate that shift is centered around those segments of society who most need to use the Polish language in daily life, namely the young and educated population, but it is spreading to other social classes and age groups as society modernizes and the Kashubian-speaking population ages.

The roles of the two languages involved in shift are clear: Polish is the dominant language and Kashubian is weaker. It is possible to argue that, while Kashubs have not been physically coerced into adopting the dominant language, as has been the case with Irish in Ireland and several minority languages in France, they have been forced to assimilate through social and economic pressures. Although such a condition may have

existed in the past, the current situation of shift is primarily voluntary; Polish is generally not considered by Kashubian speakers to be a conquering language in any sense. Even the ethno-regional movement mentioned in the previous section is not based on the premise that "Polish is bad," but rather that "Kashubian is good." The higher prestige and greater usefulness of Polish mean that, rather than being perceived as a undesirable influence encroaching on the pure ethnic language, its presence is welcomed in the Kashubian-speaking community.

5.3 Why Are Speakers Abandoning the Kashubian Language?

Since speakers are increasingly giving up their language of their own accord, it is worthwhile to examine the factors that have facilitated such a shift. I have already discussed the restricted usage of Kashubian by many sectors of the population, which testifies to the limited usefulness of the language. Although Kashubian is clearly in danger as a spoken language, it is even more so as a written means of communication. Despite efforts to increase the amount of published works of Kashubian literature, there are nevertheless only about 500 readers, and the literature is still relatively nascent when compared to Polish. (Topolińska 1980: 191) Standardization efforts, which would ease the process of reading in Kashubian, have not succeeded in normalizing a script. Furthermore, the literature is not very famous outside of Polish intellectual circles. The inability to use Kashubian widely as a literary vehicle leads to a further downgrading of its status.

The stigmatization of both the Kashubian language and its culture has had detrimental effects on the continued existence of the language. Kashubian culture is rural, and use of the language is often perceived as a sign of the backwardness of the speakers. Many speakers feel ashamed to speak the language because it is a symbol of a stigmatized rustic culture. Even schools emphasize modernized Polish over rural Kashubian, as is evidenced by the fact that Kashubian-medium schools are still not widespread across the region. Those schools that do offer Kashubian classes are part of a poor educational system that suffers from a lack of funding. Parents often choose to teach their young children Polish rather than Kashubian in order to prepare them for school and to offer them a chance at a better life. Many do not want their children to speak in a manner that is "low class" or "country," and in any case they do not find the language useful for social or economic advancement. As a result, children do not internalize the language, which, as any linguist knows, is one of the first steps toward language shift and possibly death. The disruption in language transmission to Kashubian children is reflected in the generational gap between older and younger speakers.

The fate of Kashubian is still bleaker considering the fact that, with the exception of a few scattered settlements in Germany and North America, the language is only spoken in a very small territory. Courses in Kashubian as a second language are restricted to the Gdansk region; it is highly doubtful, for example, that any major university outside of Poland offers a course in the Kashubian language. Teaching a language that does not have a standard form creates difficulties for both the students and instructors, so it is unlikely that such programs will be initiated anytime soon. Moreover, global awareness of the very existence of Kashubian is scarce in comparison to other endangered languages

such as Irish or Welsh, which have far fewer speakers. At least part of this is due to the lack of nationalist movements in Kashubia, which tend to attract more international attention than ethnic resurgences because of the inherent political nature of their motives.

In order to gain further insight into the meaning of the ethnic and nationalistic factors influencing the future of Kashubian, it is helpful to study the case of the Scots variety of English spoken in Scotland. Scots has persisted despite its status as a non-standard language, and it is a thriving dialect far from danger of extinction. Within the speech community there is a great disparity among social classes which leads to a systematic variation among its speakers. In general, the lower social classes tend to exhibit a greater frequency of typically Scots features. A study by Macaulay (1997) found that the incidence of certain allophones attributed to the Scots dialect occurred significantly more often among the lower social classes.[11] Many members of the lower class speakers stated that although they were proud to use their own dialect and would not use any other, they felt that outsiders attached a certain stigma to their variety. Yet despite its low external prestige, speakers remain loyal to their dialect because of a strong sense of nationalism. Ask any Scotsman what nationality he belongs to, and he will answer "Scottish" rather than "British." People of Scots descent feel a deep connection with other Scotsmen and with the ethnic group itself, and use of the dialect is one of the most important markers of membership in the group.

Unlike Scots, the strong ethnic bonds that characterize Kashubian group identity do not have a nationalistic component. Nearly all Kashubs will claim that they are of

[11] The specific Scots features in question in this study included: glottal stop [ʔ], the central lax vowel [a], the open diphthong [au], high-front lax unrounded vowel [I], and a fairly low-back lax unrounded vowel [ʌ]. The features were respectively contrasted with the following variants: [t], [ɑ] or [ɒ], the high back rounded vowel [u], and a slightly fronted high-back rounded vowel [u], and [I]. Social class affiliation was determined by occupation.

Polish nationality rather than Kashubian, while, as shown earlier in Table 1, questioning them about their ethnic identity elicits responses that vary according to the frequency of use of the language. The association of the language as a symbol of a stigmatized ethnic group leads many of the Kashubs who can speak the language to avoid use of it altogether. In Scots, external stigmas do not have nearly the same effect as they do in Kashubia. Scots speakers simply do not believe enough in validity of the stigma to discontinue use of the language because to them Scots is a legitimate form of communication within their community. The majority of Scots speakers do not feel that other Scotsmen criticize them for their use of the language. In Kashubian, however, such internal stigmatization is becoming more common; for instance, when parents avoid use of Kashubian with their children, they are effectively passing along the stigma to the next generation of Kashubs.

Another factor that differentiates Scots from Kashubian is recognition of the group as a nationality by those outside of the group. Self-government by a nationality, even on a regional level, implies a political legitimacy that is not afforded to an ethnic group. For example, the political structure of the United Kingdom allows for the relative independence of Scotland and of the Scottish people, and the nationalistic pride generated by self-government extends to the language or variety that symbolizes the national group, in this case Scots. External recognition thus fosters a certain sense of internal validity which is shared by the group members. Without any substantive nationalist movements agitating for its legitimacy in public or official domains, Kashubian remains an ethnic language without any global or internal political status. Therefore, any hopes by the ethnic minority for political advancement, and by corollary for economic and social

progress, require that the Kashubs functionally adopt Polish as a means of communication. The greater applicability of Polish to modern life encourages its use in a wider range of situations as society develops, all at the expense of the Kashubian language.

6.0 Conclusion

As a result of the close diglossic relationship between Kashubian and Polish, the latter language has become the language of prestige and advancement, and speakers are gradually employing the use of Polish in an increasing number of domains. The modernization of Polish society is slowly rendering Kashubian less useful as a means of communication. As I showed in Section 5, the declining usefulness of the language is slowly leading many speakers, particularly the young and educated population, to discontinue its use voluntarily in favor of Polish. The abandonment of Kashubian by its speakers has damaging implications for the future of the language. Brenzinger summarizes the cyclical process of such a large-scale shift:

> Limited use of the minority language leads to limited exposure to that language, which results in decreasing competence, lack of confidence in using the language, and increasing reliance on the dominant language. The circle then repeats itself on a lower level, by more limited use of the minority language. (Brenzinger 1997: 283-4)

The increasing adoption of Polish by the group as a whole reduces the communicative function of Kashubian, while prolonged stigmatization, cultivated in part by a lack of nationalism, leads to a decline in its status as a symbol of ethnicity. The two major functions of a language, communicative and symbolic, are thus losing applicability to Kashubian in a continuous downward spiral. Meanwhile, Polish, which is gradually becoming the sole native language of many Kashub children, is also posing a threat to the passage of Kashubian to future generations. All of this points to a grim outlook for the Kashubian language.

Given the complexity of the factors involved in the decline of Kashubian, the difficulties encountered in reversing this trend are manifold. So how can the language be maintained and revived? James and Lesley Milroy have identified a distinction between what they have termed "institutional" and "noninstitutional" maintenance. (Milroy and Milroy: 1997) "Noninstitutional," or vernacular, maintenance occurs when a speech community sustains a language informally, while "institutional" maintenance involves a formal organization, such as a government or a language board, that is dedicated to language planning. By establishing a norm to which every speaker can relate, vernacular maintenance suggests identity formation within the community. Kashubian has largely been functioning on the basis of "noninstitutional" maintenance, but apparently the lack of formal intervention has not succeeded in resuscitating the language. "Institutional" maintenance entails such an active interference of a formalized organization in planning the future of the language. Language boards and academies such as the Welsh Language Board in Wales and the Académie Française in France take a prescriptive approach to language standardization, maintenance and revival. While no institution currently exists in Kashubia, there has been some mention of initiating such a program in the past; in 1984, Breza and Treder (1984: cited in Majewicz 1996) recommended the establishment of a Kashubian language association.

One of the most crucial steps that should be taken when attempting to reverse the shift in Kashubian is an effort to invalidate the stigma attached to the language and the culture. The ethno-regional movement has endeavored to do just that, but unfortunately has met with limited results. Although it has succeeded in raising awareness of the language, at least within Poland, the results are not enough to counter the pejorative

stereotypes. Adjusting personal attitudes that have existed for centuries is a daunting task, so such a pervasive change will probably not happen anytime soon.

Throughout this section the assumption has been that Kashubian should be maintained and revived, but there has not yet been an attempt to explain why or to what extent such a movement should occur. Trudgill argues that "preservation of languages is important for the preservation of cultures" (Trudgill 1991: 67) and that "each [language] helps us to shed a somewhat different light on the puzzle of the nature of the human language faculty." (Trudgill 1991: 66) He further declares that it is the linguists' responsibility to ensure the preservation of endangered languages by encouraging bilingualism and asserting the value of every language, regardless of any stigmas attached to it. Indeed, the loss of a language can easily lead to the demise of the culture it symbolizes, and the resulting cultural homogeneity is an undesirable consequence. This is a vastly different view from that expressed by Ladefoged (1992), who proposes that linguists should not interfere in situations where speakers willingly give up their language because it is clearly no longer suitable to modernization. While acknowledging strong linguistic and humanitarian reasons to study endangered languages, he emphasizes that differing languages are only one aspect of culture. If language is the biggest difference between two societies, he suggests, then maybe the cultures are not all that dissimilar.

What Ladefoged does not take into account, however, is the symbolic link between language and culture. The notion that we must not intervene in the natural processes of language death is extreme. Loss of a language implies the decline of an entire culture – this simple reason alone is enough to warrant attempts to maintain the Kashubian language. However, any efforts to save Kashubian must take into

consideration the fact that modernization renders the language less applicable to present-day life. An appropriate strategy, therefore, would be to preserve the language selectively, by a relative stabilization of the diglossic situation. Use of Kashubian should be encouraged in domestic situations, where it is suitable, while Polish should remain the language of formal and administrative affairs. The only way to achieve such a goal is to reverse the stigma associated with the language. Success in this domain will make it possible to promote the continued use of Kashubian in those realms in which it is applicable. Only then will parents raise children who are able to maintain diglossia and pass the language to the next generation of bilingual speakers, and only then will the Kashubian language be protected from extinction.

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