The Immigrant Language Transition, Then and Now

By Walter D. Kamphoefner

One of the axioms of immigration history—it could almost form a corollary to Ravenstein’s Laws of Migration—is that the good immigrants are always the old immigrants, while the bad immigrants are always the new ones, even if over the course of time the same groups and some of the same individuals move from one category to the other. The reason for this is fairly obvious: immigrants fresh off the boat (or plane, or raft, or boxcar) are compared with others who have experienced several decades if not several generations of acculturation. The “old” immigrants did not look nearly as promising when they first arrived in the United States. What I will attempt here is an overview of immigrant and ethnic language acquisition and loss, with a comparison of historical and contemporary patterns.

The 1940 census was the first to pose the question of mother tongue to the whole population rather than just to immigrants. While an earlier date would be desirable, 1940 at least gives a benchmark reading from a time when the bulk of immigration was still of European origin. This census gives evidence of considerable carryover of ancestral languages into the second generation, and to a limited degree beyond. At that time, less than 79 percent of the population claimed English as its mother tongue, a lower share than the 82 percent in the 2000 census claiming to speak only English—admittedly a somewhat different concept. In 1940, the immigrant proportion of those claiming foreign mother tongue was only 38 percent—again considerably lower than the 54 percent foreign-born among those who spoke languages other than English at home in 2000. While social scientists have postulated a three-generation model of language assimilation among European ethnics, there were nearly three million individuals with foreign mother tongues in 1940 who were of the third generation or beyond, over 13 percent of the total, or 27 percent of the number in the second generation. Unfortunately, the census ceased to enumerate the second generation after 1970, so no direct comparisons on this aspect are possible. While it did record mother tongue for the entire population in 1970, changes in wording from the 1940 question make it practically useless for determining long term trends.

One thing that has remained the same in the course of immigration history is that all immigrant languages may be equal, but some are more equal than others. The leading foreign language in a community has a much better chance of obtaining public recognition and support—a position which German frequently held before World War I and Spanish has increasingly taken on since World War II. In fact, Spanish speakers constituted an absolute majority of 60 percent of all speakers of languages other than English in the 2000 U.S. Census.

The 1970 census showed a foreign born proportion below 5 percent, the lowest figure in more than a century. But two years earlier, new immigration laws had taken effect which would greatly change the complexion of the nation, literally and figuratively. The foreign born population has more than doubled since 1980, and nearly tripled since 1970. With the large influx of the prosperous 1990s, the immigrant population of the U.S. once again surpassed the 10 percent mark for the first time since 1930, though still well short of the level of the 1860-1920 era, when it remained above 13 percent and on occasion approached 15. The recent changes in composition were perhaps more dramatic than the change in volume. As late as 1970, more than 70 percent of the foreign-born population was still of European or Canadian origin, but by the turn of the 21st century, over half was from Latin America and more than a quarter from Asia.

As Table 1 shows, the impact of this huge influx on the linguistic makeup of the country has been less than dramatic. Granted, there has been a seven point decline since 1980 in the

(continued on p. 8)

U.S. Census Data on Language Use and Ability to Speak English, Population Age 5+

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1980</th>
<th>1990</th>
<th>2000</th>
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<tr>
<td>Percentage speaking English exclusively</td>
<td>89.0</td>
<td>86.2</td>
<td>82.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage speaking English exclusively or &quot;very well&quot;</td>
<td>95.2</td>
<td>93.9</td>
<td>91.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage speaking English &quot;not at all&quot;</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Of persons speaking any other language at home, % speaking English &quot;very well&quot;</td>
<td>55.8</td>
<td>56.1</td>
<td>54.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Of persons speaking Spanish at home, % speaking English &quot;very well&quot;</td>
<td>49.8</td>
<td>52.1</td>
<td>51.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Of persons speaking any other language at home, % speaking English &quot;not at all&quot;</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>7.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Of persons speaking Spanish at home, % speaking English &quot;not at all&quot;</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigration in previous decade (millions)</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>9.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign-born percentage of total population</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>10.4</td>
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</table>
News from Libraries, Museums and Research Institutes...

Notre Dame University, Lebanon anticipates the founding of its Lebanese Emigration Research Center at the university in Kesrawan, Lebanon. Formal announcement of the creation of the center will be made at a one-day conference to be held in November 2003 at the university. The conference will deal with sources for research on emigration. As its first project, the center is compiling a roster of university professors (in any discipline) of Lebanese lineage. Contact for information and to be included in the roster: Gisra G. Hourani, e-mail ghourani@ndu.edu.lb

Plans are moving forward for the construction of the Immigration Museum of New Americans in San Diego. The museum will concentrate on post-World War II immigration. A capital campaign is now being conducted, and a site for the museum is being sought, probably on the waterfront in downtown San Diego. Possible date for opening the museum is in 2006. The chief executive officer of the museum is Mike Madigan, a land use expert and planning consultant. Information about the museum and its plans is on the web at http://www.immigrationmuseumofnewamericans.org/

During the academic year 2004/05, the Shelby Cullom Davis Center for Historical Studies at Princeton University will continue its focus on the study of the city in history. The Center will offer a limited number of research fellowships for one or two semesters, running from September to January and from February to June, designed for highly recommended younger scholars who have finished their dissertations as well as for senior scholars with established reputations. Inquiries and requests for Fellowship Application forms should be addressed to the Manager, Shelby Cullom Davis Center for Historical Studies, Department of History, 129 Dickinson Hall, Princeton University, Princeton, NJ 08544-1017, U.S.A. The deadline for 2004/2005 is December 1, 2003. Scholars who would like to offer a paper to one of the weekly Seminars are asked to send a brief description of their proposal and a current curriculum vitae to the Director. Detailed information and application forms are also available on the web site: http://www.princeton.edu/~davisctr/

The library reading room of the New-York Historical Society closed April 26, and will not reopen until the end of August 2003. Extensive renovations of the library will take place during the summer. The closing affects only the library and the department of prints, photographs and architectural collections. For updates on the situation, consult the web at http://www.nyhistory.org/library.html

A new exhibit at the Smithsonian National Museum of American History in Washington is “Communities in a Changing Nation: The Promise of 19th Century America.” Three specific sections of the exhibit focus on industrial workers in Bridgeport, Connecticut; Jewish immigrants in Cincinnati, Ohio; and slave and free blacks in the South Carolina low country. Nearby on the museum’s second floor is “Field to Farm,” portraying the Great Migration of African Americans to the North, 1915-1940.

The University of California, Irvine, has received a grant of $207,849 from the National Endowment for the Humanities to process archival material about the post-Vietnam War diaspora from Southeast Asia.


The University of Nevada, Reno has received a grant of $248,653 from the National Endowment for the Humanities to develop an online database of materials that document Basque history and culture.

The board of the Estonian Archives in the U.S., Inc., located in Lakewood, NJ, recently voted to transfer its archival holdings to the Immigration History Research Center at the University of Minnesota. In addition, the organization has contributed $150,000 to establish the "Hildegard and Gustav Must" Graduate Fellowship in Estonian American Studies. Further information about the transfer of archives and the fellowship will become available on the IHRC web site: http://www1.umn.edu/ihrc/

The Immigration History Research Center at the University of Minnesota has an online exhibit, “Finnish Communities in Minnesota.” The exhibit presents materials from an exhibit mounted in the university library during the summer of 2002, on the occasion of "Finnfest," an annual cultural festival held at that time in the Twin Cities. The online exhibit can be viewed at http://www1.umn.edu/ihrc/exhibits.htm

The Museum of the City of New York, Fifth Ave. at 103rd St., New York City, has just opened a new exhibit, “Harlem Lost and Found,” which traces the architectural history of a vibrant neighborhood as it evolved from farmland and suburb into thriving metropolis, involving many ethnic groups over the centuries of its existence. The exhibit runs until Nov. 4, 2003. Information: http://www.mcny.org/

The Ohio State University Library has a website with information and illustrations about Thomas Nast, the 19th Century German-American cartoonist. It includes a portfolio of his cartoons. The web address for the exhibit is http://www.lib.ohio-state.edu/egaweb.nast

The Centre for Studies in Religion and Society at the University of Victoria, British Columbia, has prepared a thorough bibliography on the subject of ethnicity and religion in Canada. It can be found on the web at: http://www.canada.metropolis.net/research-policy/Religion/index.html

The Lower East Side Tenement Museum in New York City has a $40,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities to restore a room as once occupied by a 19th century Irish-American family.
MINUTES OF THE EDITORIAL BOARD AND BUSINESS MEETING
THE IMMIGRATION AND ETHNIC HISTORY SOCIETY
APRIL 5, 2003, MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE

Ron Bayor, the Journal of American Ethnic History Editor, opened the meeting of the Editorial Board at 5:00 p.m. He announced that he would relinquish his position as editor of the journal, effective in the summer of 2004, his last issue. The process for finding a new editor has begun. He called on members to suggest names and identified the several considerations for the position. The candidate should 1) be able to make an initial commitment of five years; 2) know the level of institutional support for the journal from the home institution; 3) discuss his/her vision for the journal over the next five years, indicating plans, innovations, strategies for keeping the journal at the cutting edge of research; and 4) describe editorial experience, and/or service on editorial boards. Any persons interested in the position or those interested in nominating individuals should contact him (ronald.bayor@hhs.gatech.edu).

Ron also noted that the JAEH has had a “dry spell” in receiving article submissions in the last year—the first time the numbers have been so low. He appealed to scholars to submit works. In the past year (since April 2002) three articles and one research note have been accepted for review; two were conditionally accepted; six are currently under review; and 17 have been rejected. Ron reported that Suzanne Sinke, the new book review editor, has received 165 books, 57 of which are out for review. Currently, the active subscribers to the journal total 785, including 77 from overseas; individual subscribers number 324, and institutional subscribers, 446. This compares with a total of 783 subscriptions last year. Some discussion followed about how to increase familiarity with the journal through advertisements and special mailings.

Alan Kraut opened the annual meeting that concluded his service as president. He said it was an honor to serve and he thanked the IEHS officers and newsletter editor. He then reported on the state of IEHS, affirming that there was good news and bad news. The good news was that the organization is offering more to its members and students: gatherings both at AHA and OAH, the IEHS website offerings of news, updates, links to relevant sites, and a list of “experts”; the luncheons at AHA in the last three years; and the scholarly conferences. The first one occurred at the University of Minnesota in 2000 and the forthcoming one in 2003 at New York University (October 31-November 2). The bad news for the organization, Kraut noted, is money. The discount for new members: $30 to $23 has depleted resources, Kraut stated, and if we are to continue this need we appeal for donations or raise the cost of the journal to $40.

Betty Bergland reported the results of the election—Ron Bayor was elected as Vice-President/President Elect. The new members elected to the Executive Board for the term 2003-2006 are Nancy Foner at the City University of New York (and SUNY Purchase), Ewa Morawska at the University of Pennsylvania, and Dominic Pacyga at Columbia College/Chicago. Member participation in the election was about 36% (125), consistent with the ratio in past elections. Bergland also reported the results of the survey request of members in November, 2002 on the use of an electronic newsletter. Only eleven members responded, but most did not favor the idea. Jim Bergquist commented that each mailing of the (continued on p. 5)
Conferences and Meetings...

**Fall IEHS Conference Set to Open October 31 in New York City**

Plans are taking shape for the conference of the Immigration and Ethnic History Society to be held Oct. 31-Nov. 2, 2003 at New York University in New York City. Co-sponsors of the conference are New York University and Columbia University and its Center for Ethnicity and Race. Theme of the conference is "Transcending Borders: Migration, Ethnicity and Incorporation in an Age of Globalism." Coordinating the conference are Alan Kraut, IEHS past president, Elliott Barkan, IEHS president, and Hasta Diner of NYU. Keynote speakers are Nancy Foner of the State University of New York at Purchase and Roger Walder of the University of California at Los Angeles. A full schedule of sessions and participants can be seen on the IEHS web page at http://www.iehs.org.Conferences.htm.

Registration information will be available on the web page later.

The Nordic Association for American Studies will hold its biennial conference at the Norwegian University for Science and Technology in Trondheim, Norway, Aug. 6-9, 2003. Theme: "America in the World: Transnational Dimensions of Life and Culture in the United States." Proposals closed in March. Information: David Mauk, Dept. of Modern Foreign Languages, Dragvoll campus, Norwegian University of Science and Technology, N-7491 Trondheim, Norway. E-mail: david.mauk@bf.ntnu.no

Carleton University in Ottawa, Ontario, and its Centre for the History of Migration, will sponsor a conference Aug. 7-9, 2003 in Ottawa. Theme of the conference: "Reading the Enigrant Letter: Innovative Approaches and Interpretations." Program and registration information on the web at www.carleton.ca/cchm

The Eighth International Metropolis Conference will be held Sept. 15-19, 2003 in Vienna, Austria. Theme: "Gaining from Migration: A Global Perspective on Opportunities for Economic and Social Prosperity." Say the organizers, "The Vienna conference will focus attention on the opportunities created by a responsible and broadly welcoming approach to immigration...." Further information is on the web at http://www.metropolis2003.at/en/about.htm.


The New England Conference for Irish Studies will meet at Bridgewater State College in Bridgewater, Mass., October 18, 2003. Theme of the conference is "Green Cards and Green Dreams: Irish America in the Twentieth Century." Proposals are invited; deadline is Aug. 15, 2003. Contact: Patricia Fanning, Dept. of Sociology, Bridgewater State College, Bridgewater MA 02325. E-mail: pfanning@bridgew.edu Telephone: (508) 531-2648.


The Italian American Historical Association will hold its 36th annual conference Nov. 6-8, 2003 in Boca Raton, Florida. Theme: "Italian Americans and the Arts and Culture." "Any and all interpretive approaches to the 'arts' are welcome." Proposals with 250-word abstracts are due by Aug. 1, 2003. Contact: Anthony J. Tamburri, Dept. of Languages and Linguistics, Florida Atlantic Univ., 777 Glades Rd., Boca Raton FL 33431. Telephone: (561) 297-3860. E-mail: atamburri@fau.edu

The Polish American Historical Association will hold its annual conference in conjunction with the American Historical Association in Washington, D.C., Jan. 8-10, 2004. Submissions closed May 12, 2003. Contact: Mary Erdmans, Dept. of Sociology, Central Connecticut State University, New Britain CT 06050. Phone: 800-832-3144. E-mail: ErdmansM@ccsu.edu


Minutes of the Annual Meeting...
(continued from p. 3)

Newsletter is about $800.00, making an electronic version an attractive alternative. Elliott Barkan noted the response was insufficient for making any conclusive decision on the issue.

Diane Vecchio reported that the current IEHS balance is $1,483.21, but the forthcoming deposit from Transaction Publications for $3,600 will bring the balance near $5,000, which approximates balances in the past. She noted that major expenses this year were one-time occurrences: transferring books to the new book review editor, Suzanne Sinke, and the research travel gift for the former IEHS secretary, June Alexander.

Jim Bergquist reported the cost of mailing the Newsletter this year was $777.42 in November and $866 in May, noting that the Historical Society of Pennsylvania does the mailing. Jim pointed out that half of the Newsletters are sent to libraries. The membership discussed text alternatives to mailing the Newsletter, such as putting the newsletter on a website, using an email list, and putting announcements on E-mail. It was also noted that libraries do download electronic journals. No decision on the manner of future distribution of the Newsletter was reached.

Elliott Barkan spoke for the Program Committee and reported that the IEHS sponsored three sessions at OAH and that five sessions had been proposed for OAH in Boston in 2004. Decisions on these have not yet been received. In the absence of David Gerber, Chair of the Nominations Committee, Alan Kraut thanked the committee and its chair for their work.

The president then led the discussion of new business. The first topic focused on membership—dues and recruitment. The general membership can vote to increase the dues, noted Alan. David Reimers made a motion to raise the dues to $40; the motion was seconded by Shelby Shapiro. June Alexander stated that members need to be clear about where the money goes. It was suggested that two or three rates might be proposed. Nora Faires added that a "gift subscription" for students be offered. The vote to increase the dues to $40 was passed unanimously. Mechanisms for increasing memberships were also discussed. Elliott Barkan suggested that the IEHS has become a "victim of its own discipline" and success, since we are competing with a number of other journals focused on migration. No consensus or resolution was reached on how best to increase membership.

The next item of new business was a revision of the brochure and logo. Elliott commented that he and John Higham drew the logo 20 years ago and that perhaps it was time for revision. It was suggested that today the logo looks imperialistic to some—since North America covers the globe. Jim Bergquist noted that the image reflects the idea that the IEHS is concerned with immigration to North America, not the globe. Shelby Shapiro suggested that the issue be resolved if the globe were enlarged on the logo. Nora Faires proposed that the Society have a contest to generate a new logo.

The third item of new business was the Pozzeta Prize: the need to clarify its wording and re-examine its remuneration. The issue on the wording arose this year because a Pozzeta Prize applicant was a Russian in Canada, who asked if he were eligible. Rudy Vecoli, whose letter regarding the prize was circulated at the meeting, understood that the prize was intended for scholarship on immigration of people to the United States—that this was the "language of the agreement" and the "intent of the award." The Pozzeta Prize Committee, however, felt that the "Americas" included Canada. The original Pozzeta Agreement was dated May 11, 1995, and Alan said Rudy was certain that the intent was for research on migration to the U.S. Mark Stolarik noted that George Pozzeta would have wanted an inclusive interpretation of the award. No vote was taken, but the consensus was that clarity needed to be established on the intent of the prize. The members also discussed a proposal that Rudy Vecoli submitted in his letter to Alan Kraut, noting that the Pozzeta funds dipped below $10,000 this year. The original agreement was that the IEHS would pay into the fund until it reached $10,000. This year, Alan Kraut said, IEHS would contribute half of the Pozzeta Award ($375) because the amount dipped below $10,000 (the level to which IEHS was to contribute funds). Vecoli recommended that the amount of the award be temporarily reduced until the Pozzeta Fund could be sufficiently replenished to pay out $750, while remaining over $10,000. The fourth item on the agenda addressed the Saloutos Prize Funds. Rudy Vecoli proposed in his March 19, 2003 letter (circulated at the meeting) that the income from the Saloutos Fund #6376 beyond the amount of the $1,000 prize money "be contributed to the Greek American Studies Fund to help establish a Greek American Fellowship at the IHRC." Phil Gleason asked for clarification and Alan stated that IEHS cannot use the Saloutos funds, but it must vote on the dispensation of the funds. Alan Kraut called for a vote on the motion to accept Rudy's proposal. The motion failed to pass.

The final item of new business was the conference to be held at New York University. Because of the costs of hotels, food and travel in New York City for the conference participants, the organizing committee raised the issue before the IEHS. An appeal was made for contributions to support a session. While NYU contributed the principal sum of $20,000 (along with several other smaller amounts, such as those from the Migration Policy Institute, Columbia University’s Center for Ethnicity and Race, and California State University San Bernadino), a major funding grant sought from the Russell Sage Foundation did not materialize. Alan said that no money would be requested now from IEHS, but asked members to "authorize us to ask the Executive Board for support in the fall in case funds are needed. David Reimers so moved and Shelby Shapiro seconded the motion to authorize the conference committee to approach the Executive Board. The motion passed.

The business meeting ended at 7:00 p.m. (While members came and left during the meeting, a total of 15 to 17 members were present at any time, and for the votes.)

Respectfully submitted,

Betty Ann Bergland
IEHS Secretary

President’s message...
(continued from p. 3)

and also sent to all members providing the email addresses, which we must collect.

Second, the reexamination of our Society’s logo is likewise discussed elsewhere in this Newsletter. Please get your creative juices flowing and send your suggestions and graphic alternatives to me by July 1, 2003 (no double entendre intended!).

I wish you all a continued year of good health, good teaching, good research, good fortune. If you have any comments or suggestions regarding the Society, please do let me hear from you: ebarkan@csusb.edu. Thanks so much.

Elliott Robert Barkan, President, IEHS
THEODORE SALOUTOS
BOOK AWARD, 2002
The annual Theodore Saloutos Book Award for the outstanding book of the year in American immigration and ethnic history was made to Susan Greenbaum, University of South Florida, for her book More than Black: Afro-Cubans in Tampa (Gainesville: Univ. Press of Florida, 2002). The committee consisted of Matthew Frye Jacobson (Yale University), chair, Alison Games (Georgetown Univ.), and Judy Yung (Univ. of California, Santa Cruz). The award was made at the annual dinner of the Immigration and Ethnic History Society in Memphis, April 5, 2002. The citation follows:

It is our great pleasure to award this year’s Theodore Saloutos memorial book prize to Professor Susan Greenbaum for her deeply researched and beautifully written study, More than Black: Afro-Cubans in Tampa. The field was very strong this year, and by solid consensus the committee identified several books which are worthy of this honor. But in the final stages of deliberation, working from a short list of five or six, it took almost no discussion at all to name Professor Greenbaum’s book the winner. The decision was unanimous and almost immediate.

The virtues of this work begin with its remarkable scope. Professor Greenbaum has traced the genesis and development of the Afro-Cuban community in Tampa from the late nineteenth century all the way through the Civil Rights era and beyond. But she has done so in such a way as to sacrifice nothing in the way of subtlety or nuance, when it comes to the complex story of Afro-Cubans’ sense of identity or social location; the community’s internal tensions or rifts; and the social dynamics of race when Cuban modes of racialized understanding met the unforgiving imperatives of Jim Crow Florida. Drawing on a wide range of archival, journalistic, and ethnographic sources, Greenbaum manages to render a compelling socio-economic portrait of this community over time, and yet a portrait that is wonderfully evocative of the street-level feel of group life, rich in the voices of the Afro-Cubans themselves.

This will be an important book for researchers and teachers in a number of areas: as a shining exemplar of the classic, community-based approach, More than Black is an important contribution to immigration studies generally. Though painstakingly rooted in a single community, More than Black also engages some of the most far-ranging theoretical questions currently under discussion in the field—questions having to do with race, racialization, and re-racialization; with the diversity of American “blackness”; with transnational identity formation; and with the importance of gender and sexuality in parsing such notions as immigrant aspiration and “respectability.”

This is an exceptionally good book in conception, design, and execution. We heartily congratulate Professor Greenbaum on her accomplishment.

Other New Publications Noted...


Fahrmeir, Andreas, et al., eds. Migration Control in the North Atlantic World: The Evolution of State Practices in Europe and


Journal of American Folklore, v. 115 no. 456 (Spring 2002), is an issue devoted to folklore in Canada, with emphasis on ethnic traditions.

Journal of International Migration and Integration 3:2 (December 2002) is a special issue on "Immigrant Diversity and Political Participation in Select North American and European Cities."


Literature Interpretation Theory, v. 13, no. 3 (July/Sept. 2002) is a special issue on Italian American literature.


O'Reilly, William. "Bridging the Atlantic: Opportunity, Information and Choice in Long-Range German Migration in the Eighteenth Century," in Menschen zwischen zwei (continued on p. 9)
Language Transitions...
(continued from p. 1)

share of the U.S. population speaking English exclusively, but such monolinguals still make up over 82 percent of the population. Nor has English competence declined by the same proportion as the use of other languages has increased: more than 91 percent of the population still speaks English exclusively or "very well," down only 4 points since 1980. Although the number of those who speak no English has more than doubled in the last twenty years, they still constitute a negligible 1.3 percent of the population. In fact, the majority of persons speaking other languages at home also speaks English "very well," and that figure has fluctuated very minimally in recent decades. Among Spanish speakers, the percentage speaking English "very well" is slightly lower than for other languages, but it still constitutes a majority and has actually improved slightly, if unevenly, since 1980. Only 7 percent of all speakers of other languages claimed to speak no English, up a mere two points during the last twenty years. For Spanish speakers, the proportion that speaks no English is slightly higher, but did remain stable from 1980 to 1990 (with the latest figures still unavailable). Considering the fact that two fifths of the foreign born have arrived within the last decade, and more than one fifth have been here for less than five years, the degree of English acquisition is impressive.

There is very little evidence of English being supplanted by other languages among second generation ethnics. Overall, Table 2 shows that foreign-born individuals could account for all Americans who speak English at a level below "very well," at least at first glance. The patterns become more complicated when broken down by different language groups. Speakers of Asian languages are the least competent in English, the only group where a majority does not speak English "very well," but they are concentrated most heavily, to nearly 80 percent, in the immigrant generation. Spanish speakers are the only group where the immigrant population was outnumbered by individuals who rated their English ability below "very well." So Spanish shows more viability across generations than other languages, though the question remains how much.

As it has always been, immigration to the U.S. is regionally concentrated. There are 35 states with an immigrant population of less than 10 percent, and 30 states where over 90 percent of the population is monolingual in English. In both instances, West Virginia constitutes the extreme case, followed closely by Mississippi—not exactly candidates for emulation. The states of California, New Mexico, and Texas are the only ones where more than 30 percent of the population uses a language other than English. At first glance, California might set off alarms: more than one quarter of its population was born abroad, and close to 40 percent of Californians use a language other than English at home. More reassuring is the fact that of those foreign language speakers, 37 percent are immigrants, the second highest of any state in the union. Of the state's population, 80 percent speaks English exclusively or very well; of those who do not, more than 80 percent are immigrants. Less than 4 percent of Californians speak no English. If more of the nation looked like New Mexico, it might be cause for greater concern. There immigrants made up less that 9 percent of the population, and only 21 percent of the population speaking foreign languages, and 42 percent of those speaking English at lower levels of competence, were foreign born. This is the closest thing to a Quebec the United States has to offer—not an immigrant situation but a conquered province. Notwithstanding a few similar enclaves along the Rio Grande, Texas (not to mention the rest of the country) resembles California more than it does New Mexico in its language patterns.

| Persons Age 5+ Speaking Languages Other than English at Home, 2000 Census Data |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| % speaking "very well"          | % of all foreign-born speakers |
| English                         | English                          |
| "very well"                     | English                          |
| All Languages                   | 45.4                             | 54.3                             |
| Spanish                         | 48.9                             | 47.5                             |
| Other Indo-European Language    | 33.8                             | 55.8                             |
| Asian-Pacific Languages         | 51.6                             | 79.2                             |
| Other Languages                 | 31.4                             | 56.5                             |

For many Americans, Miami presents a worst-case scenario of Hispanic reconquista, where there were actually billboards asking the last American who left to turn out the lights, and with shops displaying signs advertising "English spoken": that Spanish was spoken was taken for granted. Fortunately, one of the broadest and most careful studies of language change was conducted in the greater Miami area (Alejandro Portes and Richard Schaeffer, "Language Acquisition and Loss Among Children of Immigrants," in Sylvia Pedraza and Ruben G. Rumbaut, eds., Origins and Destinies: Immigration, Race, and Ethnicity in America [Wadsworth: Belmont, CA, 1996], 432-443; for a broader perspective see Guillermo J. Grenier and Lisandro Perez, "Miami Spice: The Ethnic Cauldron Simmers," in Pedraza/Rumbaut, 360-372). Portes and Schaeffer surveyed 2,600 eighth and ninth graders in Miami and Ft. Lauderdale metro area schools whose parents were born abroad. Less than one percent of such youth born in the U.S. reported they did not speak English well or at all; by contrast, more than one third reported similarly poor competence in the parental language. Moreover, immigrant children who had been in the country for ten years or more claimed almost the same levels of competence as those born here. The authors conclude that "English is alive and well in Miami," going on to point out that "contrary to nativist fears, what is at risk is the preservation of some competence in the languages spoken by immigrant parents (p. 442).

Another recent study finds that "even in southern California . . . language shift . . . among Latinos is proceeding along the same lines as in the past. The intergenerational pattern is slower . . . than that of Asian languages, but it is incontrovertible." Among second generation youth, 92 percent or more of Asian-Americans, and 78 percent of Latinos expressed a preference for English. By the third generation, over 90 percent of Asian and more than half of all Hispanics speak English exclusively (David E. Lopen, "Social and Linguistic Aspects of Assimilation Today," in Handbook of International Migration [New York, 1991], 217-18).

Concern has been voiced in some quarters about new media such as cable TV and the internet, which can bring the language and culture of origin into immigrant homes in a way that was not possible a century ago. This
New Publications...

(continued from p. 7)


Revue Européenne des Migrations Internationales 18.3 (2002) is a special issue on immigrants in the city, especially about Robt. E. Park and the "Chicago School."


Walter D. Kamphoefner is Professor of History at Texas A&M University. He edited (with Wolfgang Helbich and others) News from the Land of Freedom: German Immigrants Write Home (Cornell Univ., 1991).
PERSONALS


At the annual meeting of the Association of American Geographers in March, Daniel Arreola (Arizona State University) received the John Brinkerhoff Jackson Prize for his book Tejano South Texas (Univ. of Texas, 2002).

Mieczyslaw B. Biskupski (St. John Fisher College) has been appointed to the Stanislaus A. Blejwas Endowed Chair in Polish and Polish American Studies at Central Connecticut State University. The chair is named in honor of the Polish-American scholar at CCSU who died last year.

Nancy Carnevale has been awarded a National Endowment for the Humanities fellowship for 2003-2004. She will revise her dissertation, “Living in Translation: Language and Italian Immigrants in the United States, 1890-1945.”

Carlos E. Cortés (University of California, Riverside) received an Outstanding Contribution to Higher Education Award from the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators.

David G. Gutiérrez (University of California at San Diego) has been elected to a three-year term on the Executive Board of the Organization of American Historians.

The American Philosophical Society has awarded a Sabbatical Fellowship for the academic year 2003-2004 to Walter D. Kamphoefner (Texas A&M University). His project is to study the chain migration from Hannover to the United States.

Joseph P. McKerns (Ohio State Univ.) received a grant from the Ohio Humanities Council to support an exhibition and symposium in the fall of 2002 on Thomas Nast, the 19th century German-American political cartoonist.

William Pencak (Pennsylvania State University) was named a Mellon Postdoctoral Research Fellow for his project “Jewish Communities and Anti-Semitism in Early America, 1654-1800.”

George Sanchez (Univ. of Southern California) received a National Endowment for the Humanities fellowship for “Remaking Community: A Multiracial History of the Boyle Heights Neighborhood of Los Angeles, California."

FROM THE PROGRAM COMMITTEE

The new chair of the IEHS Program Committee is Ronald BAYOR (Georgia Institute of Technology), recently elected vice-president and president-elect of the Society. He now chairs the committee which coordinates proposals for sessions at major academic conferences, such as the American Historical Association, the Organization of American Historians, and the American Studies Association, among others.

Members who have ideas for panels or papers for these conferences during 2004-2005 can contact the program committee chair: Ronald H. BAYOR, Georgia Institute of Technology, Dept. of History, Technology and Society, Atlanta GA 30332. E-mail: Ronald.Baylor@hts.gatech.edu

NECROLOGY

Harry H. L. Kitano, professor of Japanese American Studies at the University of California at Los Angeles, died Oct. 19, 2002 in Los Angeles at the age of 76. American-born, Kitano was interned in the Topaz camp in Utah during the Second World War. He enrolled at the University of California at Berkeley, from which he received his B.A., and a master’s and doctorate in social work. He turned to ethnic studies, and published Japanese Americans: The Evolution of a Subculture in 1969. He was a constant advocate for the redress of the formerly interned Japanese Americans, and published Achieving the Impossible Dream: How Japanese Americans Obtained Redress (with Mitchell Maki and Megan Berthold, 1999).

Helena Znaniecki Lopata, sociologist of the Polish-American community and former professor at Loyola University in Chicago, died Feb. 12, 2003 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin at the age of 77. Among her many works was Polish Americans (1944), with Mary Riedman. She was the daughter of the famous sociologist Florian Znaniecki, co-author of the pioneering work The Polish Peasant in Europe and America (1918).

Shown above is the logo of the Immigration and Ethnic History Society as it has appeared on the cover of the Journal of American Ethnic History since it began publication in 1982. The emblem has also been used on the IEHS web page and on the stationery of the Society. At the annual meeting in Memphis, discussion was raised about whether to keep the present logo, modify it, or adopt an entirely new one. (see p. 5). It was decided to hold a contest as to the future design of the logo. You can submit a new design or a modified one; or, if you prefer the logo as is, you can send that suggestion too.

Designs and comments will be reviewed by the board. If a new design is adopted, a suitable award will be given to the creative member responsible. Let your artistic talents flow, and send your submission by July 31, 2003 to the president: Elliott Barkan, Department of History, California State University, San Bernardino, CA 92407-2397.
IHS News Notes...

THEODORE SALOUTOS BOOK AWARD

Closing date for submissions for the annual Theodore Saloutos Book Award is December 31, 2003. To be eligible, a book must be copyrighted 2003. A book may be nominated by the author, the publisher, a member of the prize committee, or a member of the Immigration and Ethnic History Society. Inquiries and nominations should be submitted to the chair of the Saloutos Prize Committee, Prof. Matthew Jacobson, Dept. of American Studies, Yale University, HGS 233, 320 York St., New Haven CT 06520. E-mail: matthew.jacobson@yale.edu

Copies of the book must be received by all three members of the committee by Dec. 31, 2003. Send books to Prof. Jacobson at the address above; and also to: Prof. Madeline Hsu, Asian American Studies, San Francisco State Univ., 1600 Holloway Avenue, San Francisco CA 94132; and to Prof. April Schultz, Dept. of History, Illinois Wesleyan Univ., Bloomington IL 61702-2900.

NEW IEHS OFFICERS

In the annual IEHS election, Ronald Bayor of the Georgia Institute of Technology, longtime editor of the Journal of American Ethnic History, was elected Vice-President and President-Elect of the Society. He replaces Elliott Barkan (California State Univ.-San Bernardino), who succeeded to the presidency. The following persons were elected to the Executive Board of the Immigration and Ethnic History Society for the term 2003-2006: Nancy Foner (SUNY-Purchase), Ewa Moraw ska (Univ. of Pennsylvania), and Dominic Pacyga (Columbia College, Chicago).

GEORGE POZZETTA DISSERTATION AWARD

At the annual dinner of the IEHS on April 5 in Memphis, the Immigration and Ethnic History Society named Vadim Koukouchkine, a doctoral candidate at Carleton University in Ottawa, Ontario, as the recipient of the eighth annual George E. Pozzetta Dissertation Award. Mr. Koukouchkine's dissertation project is "Peasants on the Move: Slavic Labour Migration from the Russian Empire to Canada."

The Immigration and Ethnic History Society announces competition for the 2004 George E. Pozzetta Award. It invites applications from any Ph.D. candidate who will have completed qualifying examinations by Dec. 1, 2003, and whose thesis focuses on American immigration, emigration, or ethnic history. The award provides $375 for expenses to be incurred in researching the dissertation. Applicants must submit a 3-5 page descriptive proposal in English, discussing the significance of the work, the methodology, sources, and collections to be consulted. Also included must be a proposed budget, a brief curriculum vitae, and a supporting letter from the major advisor. All materials must be received by each committee member by Dec. 15, 2003, which is the submission deadline. Send materials in hard copy (no FAXes accepted) to: Barbara M. Posadas, Dept. of History, Northern Illinois Univ., DeKalb IL 60115, chair of the committee; Cindy Hahamovitch, Dept. of History, College of William & Mary, P.O. Box 8795, Williamsburg VA 23187-8795; and Deirdre Maloney, Dept. of History, St. Francis Univ., Loretto PA 15940. Inquiries to Prof. Posadas at: bposadas@niu.edu

Activities Report for the Immigration and Ethnic History Newsletter

Mail your information for the next Newsletter to:

James M. Bergquist, Department of History, Villanova University, Villanova PA 19085-1699
or FAX a copy to (610) 519-4450 or send information via E-Mail to: James.Bergquist@villanova.edu

Your name and affiliation:

THE IMMIGRATION AND ETHNIC HISTORY SOCIETY

...was founded in 1965 as the Immigration History Group. It was chartered in 1972 as the Immigration History Society. In 1998 the Society, which had traditionally dealt with ethnicity as well as immigration, changed its name to the Immigration and Ethnic History Society.

The purpose of the Society is to promote the study of the history of immigration to the United States and Canada from all parts of the world, including studies of the background of emigration in the countries of origin; to promote the study of ethnic groups in the United States, including regional groups, native Americans and forced immigrants, to promote understanding of the processes of acculturation and of conflict; to furnish through the Immigration and Ethnic History Newsletter information as to research, organizations, meetings and publications in the field of immigrant history; to help organize sessions on immigration and ethnicity at meetings of learned societies; and generally to serve the field of immigration-ethnic history with special reference to professional scholarship.

MEMBERSHIP

...in the Society includes subscriptions to the quarterly Journal of American Ethnic History and the biannual Immigration and Ethnic History Newsletter. Dues for individuals: one year, $40; 2 years, $75; 3 years, $105. Dues for institutions: one year, $100; 2 years, $194; 3 years, $280. Students: 1 year, $15. For domestic first-class mail, add $5 per year. For all subscriptions outside U.S.A. and Canada, add $30. Membership dues should be sent to Journal of American Ethnic History, Transaction Periodicals Consortium, Rutgers University, 35 Bernue Circle, Piscataway NJ 08854-8042.

OFFICERS OF THE IEHS

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Inquiries about the Society should be directed to the appropriate officer. This newsletter was edited with additional assistance and support from the staff of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. Newsletter submissions and questions about editorial matters should be sent to the newsletter editor at the address above. Requests for back issues should be sent to the editor, to purchase back issues, send $2.00 per copy (by check made out to Villanova University).

Subscriptions to the Immigration and Ethnic History Newsletter are part of membership in the Society. Members’ changes of address should be sent to Journal of American Ethnic History, Transaction Periodicals Consortium, Rutgers University, 35 Bernue Circle, Piscataway NJ 08854-8042.

Visit the IEHS website at: http://www.iehs.org/

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