

REPORT ON VISIT TO SWEDEN under the auspices of exchange between Royal Academy of Letters, History and Antiquities and the Australian Academy of Humanities  
Michael Clyne

My fellowship lasted from April 28 to May 12, 2004 and I visited the Departments of Linguistics, German, and Swedish at the University of Gothenburg, the Department of Linguistics and the Multiethnic Research Centre at the University of Uppsala, the Centre for Bilingualism Research at the University of Stockholm, and the Linguistic Research Centre in Rinkeby. I was in Göteborg from April 28 until May 4 and in Stockholm and Uppsala from May 4 to 10.

As was outlined in my application, the main purposes of my visit to Sweden were to visit several institutions with strong research interests in multilingualism and language policy, to experience Swedish language policy first-hand, and to acquaint myself with the current procedures of address in Swedish. These aims were more than fulfilled.

(i) During the visit, I gave talks on the following topics:

Language Demography and Language Policy in Australia: The changing fate of community languages (Gothenburg, Uppsala – in the latter it doubled as part of a course), How the abuse of language is excluding asylum seekers from Australia (Stockholm), Contrastive work on immigrant language change in Australia (Uppsala).

(ii) During my visit to Gothenburg, Profs. Sally Boyd and Lars-Gunnar Andersson organized a workshop on second language learning and acquisition and bilingualism, at which two staff members and seven graduate students presented their research and I was asked to give a critical summary, which was also intended to initiate contact between more people in Sweden and Australia with similar interests.

(iii) I also had the opportunity to meet individually and in smaller groups with more than thirty colleagues and graduate students working in my fields to exchange ideas and experiences and to network. I gained many insights from these meetings and I have been told that they were also useful to the Swedish colleagues and students. Apart from the three universities I visited the Language Research Centre at Rinkeby, a multicultural outer suburb of Stockholm at which community-imminent research is being carried out. This also enabled me to see the context in which immigrants live, work and use languages in Sweden. I was a little surprised that the immigrant languages were publicly more invisible than in Australia.

(iv) I was interviewed for two broadcasts on Swedish Radio.

(vi) During my visit to Gothenburg, I met with Jenny Nilsson, the part-time research assistant on an ARC-funded project on changes in the address systems of some Western European languages, which I am involved in together with some colleagues in Melbourne, to discuss her progress. I was also able to gain first-hand experience in the rather egalitarian Swedish address system which I will be able to utilize in our contrastive project.

The visit to Sweden enabled me to renew contacts with colleagues who had visited us in Melbourne (e.g. Sally Boyd, Lars-Gunnar Andersson, Kerstin Nordenstam, Sigrid

Dentler, Eva Csato) or whom I had met at conferences (e.g. Kenneth Hyltenstam, Åke Viberg, Leena Huss) and to make many more contacts.

In Gothenburg, I exchanged ideas with Lars-Gunnar Andersson (sociolinguistics), Sally Boyd (bilingualism), Inge Lindgren (ethnolects), Kerstin Nordenstam (social discourse), Sigrid Dentler and Monika Haglund (German immersion programs), and learned about African languages, even about Dinka in Melbourne (!) from Karsten Legere and Fattima Idris. In Stockholm, I exchanged ideas on bilingualism with Kenneth Hyltenstam and his colleagues and established contact between his Centre for Bilingualism Research and the Research Unit for Multilingualism and Cross Cultural Communication at the University of Melbourne and I spent most of a day at the Rinkeby Centre brainstorming with Eija Kuyumcu, Margaret Obondo, Ellen Bijvoet and Mari Diemain. In Uppsala I had a day each discussing linguistic aspects of bilingualism with Åke Viberg, Eva Csato, and other colleagues in the Linguistics Department and sociolinguistic aspects with Leena Huss and her colleagues at the Multiethnic Research Centre, which brought me in contact with staff and students across different departments and disciplines.

I was moved by the warmth and hospitality of the colleagues who invited me to their homes to meet with others, who showed me around their cities, and who arranged for me to partake of Swedish culture. For instance, on Valpurgis Day in Gothenburg, I was taken to a departmental celebration, the official opening of the University festivities and a procession of floats by students of the Technical University and on May Day I was taken to the traditional demonstration, which was addressed by the Prime Minister. In Gothenburg I was accommodated in a stately villa on the university campus. Among my cherished moments was inspecting in the Uppsala University Library the Codex Argentinus, Wulfilas's Gothic Bible, the only remaining manuscript in the Gothic language. One of the PhD students from Stockholm and her husband showed me around the Old City of Stockholm while discussing her research on Hungarian-Swedish bilingualism.

I am most grateful to the Kungl. Vitterhets Historie och Antikvitets Akademien and the Australian Academy of Humanities for facilitating this visit and to Sally Boyd (Gothenburg), Kenneth Hyltenstam (Stockholm), and Leena Huss (Uppsala) for hosting me. I am very impressed by the exciting and dynamic academic atmosphere and the friendliness and generosity of the people, and enjoyed being immersed in Swedish culture and language. I am confident that as a result of the visit, ongoing contact in my field between Sweden and Australia will be intensified.

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