

## Intense-Forms and Sound System.

According to one of the chief tenets of the Neogrammarian school none of the original forces at work during the time of the birth of human language have completely disappeared. There is no reason, therefore, to speak of a special pre-historic period of development during which the human genius for linguistic creation functioned in ways different from those during a later, historical period. In his *Prinzipien der Sprachgeschichte*, p. 176, PAUL declares that all the presuppositions necessary for the creation of language can still be discerned in man's physical and psychical make-up as we know it to-day. We no longer create merely because there is no more need for creating. Nevertheless, all creativity has not ceased, for in each language we are faced with many cases of unknown or unsatisfactory etymologies. Words which we can assume to have arisen more recently belong first and foremost to the group which we are wont to call descriptive and onomatopoeic which contains words with meanings referring to noise and motion. Paul considers genuine *Urschöpfung* at work in the case of *bammeln*, *bummeln*, *klatschen*, *knarschen*, *plumpen*, *zischen*, etc., which cannot be accounted for before Late Middle High German.

It is obvious that onomatopoeic words have already attracted the attention of those who endeavoured to throw light on the riddle of the birth of language. To the Greeks *onomatopoesis* meant the formation of words by means of the imitation of acoustic phenomena. Later thinkers, such as LEIBNITZ and HERDER, considered the imitation of natural sounds a clue toward the solution of the problem of the birth of language. In spite of the severe criticism which has been levelled at this approach to the problem, it has nevertheless

continued to persist, for it is true that in onomatopoetic words we seem to perceive an understandable relation between sound-matter and that which it signifies, while the complete arbitrariness of the linguistic sign still remains a riddle to us. However, as soon as we examine the matter more closely, the relation between the phonic make-up and the meaning of onomatopoetic words reveals itself as a more complicated problem. First of all, we must not limit the class of onomatopoetic words to those which represent sheer imitations of acoustic phenomena; already STEINTHAL extended this class to include words with meanings beyond the pale of events perceived by the ear. The same applies to WUNDT; cf. DELBRÜCK, *Grundfragen der Sprachforschung*, p. 78. In his *Ursprung der Sprache*, p. 311, Steinthal says: »Der onomatopoetische Laut wird erzeugt durch das Gefühl, welches die Wahrnehmung des Objektes begleitet; dieses Gefühl nämlich reflektiert auf die Sprachorgane. Wenn nun dieser Reflexlaut wieder wahrgenommen wird, so kann die Wahrnehmung desselben nur dasselbe Gefühl hervorrufen, durch welches es entstanden ist.» According to Steinthal, onomatopoetic articulation is a kind of reflex and as such, therefore, in genetic relation with the object which such articulation denotes; in a mediate way, one might say, it is the product of this object. Wundt's position is similar to that of Steinthal, with one significant difference in favour of Wundt. According to Wundt, onomatopoetic words did not arise from the *imitation* of the heard sound, but from the fact that an exterior event causes an imitative motion to be produced by the speech organs which, in turn, brings about articulation. Indeed, Wundt speaks of sound-gestures, *Lautgebärden*, and these form a central part of his theory. Onomatopoetic words can be compared to facial expressions and manual gestures. In attempting to throw light on the difference between Steinthal's and Wundt's position, Delbrück made use of the German verb *bammeln* 'to pendulate, as a suspended object'. According to Steinthal, the perception of a pendulating object creates a feeling within the perceiving subject which feeling, in turn, releases a reflex which, in turn, creates a

sound. According to Wundt, on the other hand, the perception of a pendulating object produces a certain kind of pendulation within the body itself and the pendulating lips (just as the hand may move back and forth) produce *bammeln*.

The well-known theoretician MARTY has criticized this approach severely, according to which silence is a much greater riddle than the birth of language; cf. G. RÉVÉSZ, *Ursprung und Vorgeschichte der Sprache*, p. 55. According to Marty, all articulation which imitates sounds is the result of habitual and conscious expression and is in no way instinctive or original. It is questionable whether perception can instinctively give rise to onomatopoeic articulation within us.

It is not my purpose here to treat the riddle of the birth of language and the rôle of onomatopoeic words within this problem; suffice it to say that many, e. g. DE SAUSSURE, have warned against exaggerating the share of onomatopoeic words within the life of language. Others, on the other hand, among them COLLINDER, have emphasized the fact that during the extremely long history of language many originally onomatopoeic words have lost their imitative nature as, e. g., Swedish *le* 'to smile' which to-day fails to reflect the fact that it originally imitated an acoustic phenomenon, cf. German *lachen*, Gothic *hlahjan* 'to laugh'; cf. FUF 29, p. 15. It seems that the percentage of onomatopoeic words within the lexicon of various languages differs. SAPIR mentions that the Mackenzie River Indians whose language belongs to the Athabaskan group hardly has any onomatopoeic words at all while English and German abound in them: »Such an instance shows how little the essential nature of speech is concerned with the mere imitation of things.» (*Language*, p. 6.)

If we approach our question from the usual diachronic point of view we must agree that onomatopoeic words must be taken into consideration; still, we know what vexation these words have caused especially to those who follow the strict methodology of the Neogrammarians, for a prudent attitude is in agreement with the teachings of Paul, since onomatopoeic words, being most often relatively young, represent phonetic phenomena which cannot be explained by the aid

of sound laws or analogy. Thus, the very application of the label »onomatopoetic» or »descriptive» implies a different kind of explanation within the frame of historical research; it implies the statement that on the basis of such a word we cannot draw any certain conclusions. Onomatopoetic words have thus come to enjoy the rights of second class citizens. But all, no matter how religiously they followed the dictates of the Neogrammarian school, have not proceeded in this way. In cases of significant resemblance genetic relationship has been nevertheless assumed if an explanation on grounds of coincidence seemed too fanciful. In many Baltic Finnic languages an affricate appears at the beginning of many onomatopoetic-descriptive words. Rather than ascribe this conformity to chance, it has been assumed that the initial affricate is a common heritage from a common original language. Such is the case of Estonian *tsirk* 'little bird' (= Fi. *sirkka* 'cricket'), Veps *tširkkuine*, Carelian *tširkkune*, Olonetsian *tširkku*. (Cf. E. A. TUNKELO, *Vepsän äännehistoria*, p. 297 ff.) Onomatopoetic and descriptive words have sometimes played decisive rôles in various theories, as, e. g., in the hypothesis according to which Primitive Finno-Ugric had initial voiced stops, and even initial aspirated stops (cf. WICHMANN, FUF 11, p. 173 ff.). However, such theories have usually not found general approval and are to-day, for the most part, abandoned. Nevertheless, we still lack a satisfactory theoretical clarification of how to evaluate the phonetic peculiarity of onomatopoetic words and why these must be considered as falling into a group of their own.

If we assume that onomatopoetic words continually display a certain kind of *Urschöpfung* and that they are being continuously created anew, our assumption must be taken *cum grano salis*. Paul emphasizes that onomatopoetic words obviously adapt themselves to the formal categories existing in a given language, that they can be grouped according to existing morphological criteria and that, in their flexion, they are no different from other words. Furthermore, they are not privileged: they can only consist of phonic material already existing in the language: »Die noch vorliegenden (onomatopoe-

tischen Bildungen) sind also auch insofern keine reinen Urschöpfungen, als sie sich aus dem Lautmateriale einer schon ausgebildeten Sprache zusammensetzen» (*op. cit.*, p. 186). KARL BÜHLER refers to the same thing when, in his *Sprachtheorie*, p. 205, he speaks of *Phonem-Riegel*. Bühler asserts that human beings, having learned to describe and deal with their environment by means of articulation can only attest the extent to which language, with its own set of laws, is capable of conveying the abundance of immediate perceptions, this conveyance being characterized by a certain degree of imperfection. The use of sounds for descriptive purposes, *Lautmalerei*, then leads toward a better and a more thorough interpretation of the surrounding world. It is clear that we can use this device as much as we wish if we do not take language into consideration; the question is: can we do this within the framework of a given language? According to Bühler, phonemes must be realised with sufficient exactness and in correct succession. Each phoneme leaves us some amount of leeway. Completely free *Lautmalerei* can occur only in those dimensions which are phonologically irrelevant in a given language. This means, in practice, that if quantity in a given language is phonologically irrelevant, it can be used for such purposes.

It is obvious that this point of view, regardless of all the sound notions it contains, does not present the whole truth. We can, beyond doubt, detect irregularities and features which are foreign to a given language's stock of conventional words in the affective words of the same language. E. g., I have often noted that in the expression *Fi. herra jes!* 'good Lord!' the first vowel of *herra* acquires shades ranging from *ä* to *ö* and to *e*, especially in the speech of women, when the expression is used to convey great astonishment. Many enlightening examples of the same kind can be found in SOMMER, »Stimmung und Laut«, *Germ.-Rom. Monatschrift* VIII as well as in SAARESTE, *Eesti Keel*, 1927, p. 161 (in the latter, especially examples from Estonian). Irregular geminates can also occur in affective words in languages where the geminate is phonologically relevant, a fact on which HAKULI-

NEN (*Über die semasiologische Entwicklung einiger meteorologisch-affektivischen Wortfamilien in den Ostseefinnischen Sprachen*) has based many of his Baltic Finnic etymologies.

No one will be astonished to learn that some words have, on grounds of their phonic make-up, special values as compared to those words which are more or less mere neutral signs. Such words as *Fi. lirisee* 'it drizzles', *lorisee* 'it dripples, purls', *sihisee* 'it hisses', *sohisee* 'it murmurs', *kohisee* 'it rushes (as water)', *ratisee* 'it rattles, clatters' are in one way or another different from, e. g., *lintu* 'bird', *joki* 'river', *kulkee* 'he walks'. Neither is it correct to assert that that particular relation which we seem to feel between sound and meaning is always of secondary origin. We might, as SAPIR does, speak of referential — as distinct from expressive — symbolism, cf. *Selected Writings*, p. 61. *Joki* would represent a purely referential symbolism, while *kohisee* would come closer to the expressive type. The border between these, however, is by no means a rigid one. Sapir assigns interjections and onomatopoeic words to the expressive level of language (*op. cit.*, p. 14) but most words, of course, contain features belonging to both kinds of symbolism. Indeed, to a native speaker of a given language most words are, by nature of their very phonic make-up, descriptive to some extent.

But let us not be forgetful of the fact that the same objective phenomenon is perceived differently in diverse linguistic communities. The barking of the same dog will strike a Frenchman and a Finn in completely different ways. By the side of parallelism and conformity, therefore, there is also great diversity in the interpretation of natural sounds. Indeed, what we believe to hear depends to a great extent on the traditions prevalent in our own linguistic community and, within that, not only on the phonic structure of our own language but also on the way in which we have been taught to interpret certain sounds of nature. In any case, it must be agreed that at least in some cases, men know that their own articulation either actually imitates or in some other way describes natural phenomena, i. e., the speaker's consciousness maintains a certain natural connection between the word's phonic make-up and the object denoted by it.

In his posthumous article »Nochmals: . . .»<sup>1</sup>, the late FR. SPECHT firmly defends the thesis that the phonic make-up of a word can express a psychic attitude not only as a secondary phenomenon but also otherwise. The well-known Indo-Europeanist purposely polemicizes against the Neogrammarians who, in his opinion, completely failed to grasp the significance of such matters in the life of language. The chief merit of the article is that it boldly and without prejudice draws attention to phenomena which, in spite of their great importance had earlier remained without sufficient, pertinent discussion. By this I do not mean that I share Specht's ideas as they are; on the contrary I feel impelled to contest some of his statements. In any case, however, I share Specht's opinion that affective words have a position of their own in the sound-system of a language, no matter how individual cases are explained.

Among other things, Specht draws attention to the high rarity of Sanskrit voiceless aspirated stops. Usually, the Skt. aspirated voiceless stop corresponds to a mere voiceless stop in other languages, viz., Skt. *rátha*, Av. *raða* (< *th*), Lat. *rota*, Lith. *rátas*, Germ. *Rad*. If we bear in mind the important rôle of the war-chariot in the life of ancient India it is easy to perceive the sound of pride and joy in the Skt. *th*. According to Specht, the word in question is highly affective and this fact is invoked to account for its exceptional phonic make-up.

I am not equipped to contribute anything to the controversy over the Indo-Iranian aspirates. In principle, however, it should be possible to explain this phenomenon in the light of Specht's theory. I merely wish to point out that aspirated voiceless stops have found their way into Lapp, along with Scandinavian loanwords, e. g., *kar'tá* 'map', *kom'pas* 'compass', etc. From loans, this feature has spread into native words in some of which it seems to be immediately associated with the meaning of the word, as, e. g., in *giew'rá* 'strong, powerful' which in some dialects has acquired an initial aspirated stop: *kiew'rá*. Prof. ERKKI ITKONEN has attracted

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<sup>1</sup> »Nochmals: die äussere Sprachform als Ausdruck der seelischen Einstellung.» *Zeitschrift für vergleichende Sprachforschung*, 1951.

my attention to the form *bap<sup>1</sup>pá* 'clergyman' which is a loan from Finnish and has an initial *b-*, as is to be expected; nevertheless, in some dialects of Lapp, a *p-* appears in place of the *b-*. This feature serves to distinguish the word from other, more commonplace words. Lapp provides more examples of this kind.

In his above-mentioned article Sommer presents an amusing and illustrative example. He had noted that Mrs. Vockerat in Gerhart Hauptmann's play *Einsame Menschen* once utters '*tumme Darwin*', although she otherwise employs a normal initial *d-*. In Sommer's opinion the substitution of *t-* for *d-* was due to affect, an opinion which was confirmed by Hauptmann himself who explained that '*tumme Darwin*' is »das Produkt aufgebrachtcr Stimmung».

Some of Specht's examples from German and from Baltic languages are of special interest since they contain clear parallelisms from diverse languages. Specht points out that the affricate *tsch* is quite unusual in German, but nevertheless occurs in such forms as *rutschen*, *putschen*, *knutschen*, *pitschen*, etc. in areas where German and Slavic territories meet. Native Germans at once perceive a nuance, an emotional factor, an affekt in these forms. Low German lacks *tz* except in a few affective words like *kitzeln*, *kotzen*, etc. In the German of Berlin the originally foreign *ž* (as in *genieren*) has spread to other words all of which — according to Specht — it endows with particular qualities: *kuželn*, *wuželig*, *muželn*. Specht has noted phenomena of a similar kind in Lithuanian where *c* is unusual and generally does not appear in native words. Nevertheless, it occurs in words which can be considered descriptive, viz., *cackà* 'Püppchen', *cibnóti* 'meckern', *cinkterėti* 'klirren'. Voiced *z* is also foreign to Lithuanian but occurs in such affective words as *kibyza* 'a thin person' and *kabarzuoti* 'ungeschiekt fahren'. The diphthong *ui* is not of native origin and occurs only in loanwords and in such native words where it adds a new shade of meaning: e. g., by the side of *raišas* 'lahm' there is now *ruišas*. Specht states that in all these cases a rare and partly unknown sound appears to denote a phenomenon which diverges from the ordinary. I shall



return to cases of this type within the realm of Finno-Ugric languages.

The following example presented by Specht is a somewhat different phenomenon. The Indo-European word for flea contains *p* or *b*, *l*, *u* and *s* (or *k* for *š*), but the order of these phonemes is nowhere the same within the various IE. languages, viz., Lat. *pulex* < *pus-l-ex*, Skt. *pluṣ-i*, Greek *\*psul-ja*, Lith. *blūsa*, Old Bulg. *bl̄cha*, Germ *floh* < *\*plau-k*. What is the meaning of this irregularity? In Specht's opinion it has no other function than that of modern hygiene or insect-powder and he interprets it as a kind of linguistic magic: an arbitrary change in the order of sounds aims at a certain desired effect. Specht maintains that all cases of this kind combat the doctrines of the Neogrammarians and are subject to their own special set of rules originating in the original affectivity residing in the word. Rare sounds were chosen to describe rare phenomena or the order of sounds was changed in order to endow the word with magic powers. Specht is completely justified in assuming that the irregularity so patent in the words for flea, louse, ant, etc., is connected with the meanings of these words. However, I should not venture to agree with him when he goes so far as to see traces of superstition in them, although I do not wish to exclude this possibility. These words which refer to nuisances are obviously closely connected with the language of children. Child language, on the other hand, displays similar features everywhere, as do onomatopoeic and descriptive words. The irregularity displayed by words belonging to child language is often due to faulty pronunciation and sometimes perhaps to a certain kind of play. Adults purposely distort their words when speaking to children and I have observed the fact that such a distortion implies a change in the order of sounds. Besides, in the language of the nursery, there are certainly as many words which have originated with grown-ups as there are words which are the creation of children.

Sounds originally foreign to a given language present interesting and theoretically important problems which, in their turn, are reminiscent of cases in which the distribution

of a certain sound undergoes a change within a given language as the result of a foreign sound-system's influence. Finno-Ugric languages offer numerous examples of this kind and research in Baltic Finnic languages has been dealing with them for some time. While, in general, the theoretical side of the phenomenon has usually been insufficiently treated (as a rule, the mere facts are stated), their genuine nature has been in most cases realised. Usually this phenomenon is ascribed to analogical formations of a tendentious-pretentious sort.

Initial voiced stops and sibilants are foreign sounds in Mordvinian and were certainly foreign to Proto-Mdv., as they are to certain dialects of Mokša-Mdv. to-day. The original voiceless stops and sibilants have become voiced in medial position, in voiced surroundings, e. g., *jalgo* 'on foot' (= Fi. *jalka* 'foot'), *pižę* 'nest' (= Fi. *pesä* 'id.'). etc. In initial position, of course, no such change took place, viz., Mdv. *kandoms* 'carry' (= Fi. *kantaa* 'id.'). Mdv. *kargo* 'crane (bird)' (= Fi. *kurki* 'id.'). etc. As Russian loans entered Mdv., voiced stops and sibilants were beginning to be tolerated in initial position which produced a state of affairs completely at variance with the language's own system, according to which such voiced sounds were tolerated only medially, in voiced surroundings. Hypercorrect forms can be partly explained by the popularity of the new sound and partly by the uncertainty which continually disturbs the tranquility of the system, e. g., Mdv. *bauk* 'spider' < Russ. *pauk* 'id.' Nowadays, many dialects have such voiced stops and sibilants in initial position in native words as well. It can by no means be maintained that all of these words are »*Neuschöpfungen*«, e. g., *šulot guńnit* 'bowels are growling' (= Fi. *suolet kurnivat*), *guj* 'snake' (Fi. *kyy*). The etymological affinity between the Mdv. and the Fi. verb in the first of these two examples may perhaps cause some difficulty inasmuch as both may be said to have developed independently, being by nature onomatopoeic; I believe, however, that no one will deny the possibility that these words do belong together in spite of the exceptional correspondence *g:k*. As to the etymology in the second

example, it is beyond question, although it shows as great a deviation from the norm as that in the first example.

The word *gu'niems* is no more the product of *Urschöpfung* than *guj* and shows only one deviation: *g* instead of *k*. Paul calls phenomena of this kind which can no more be explained by the aid of sound-laws than by the aid of analogy »*partielle Neubildung*» (*op. cit.*, p. 179). It is obvious that the initial *g*- in the above Mdv. words has its own, particular function which carries more meaning than the common, conventional sign and which has an undeniably descriptive power which enables the word to express the particular acoustic phenomenon to which it refers.

In my opinion many onomatopoetic words which contain sound-matter or other sound features foreign to the original sound-system of the language and which can therefore not be discussed in terms of linguistic-historical methods still conceal an old germ which is a heritage from previous stages of the language. Such words cannot, of course, be dealt with in terms of the methods with which we usually operate in diachronic linguistics. However, I do not think it impossible to reveal this concealed germ if in the future we carry out prudent comparisons within the realm of onomatopoetic words itself.

As we have seen above, an innovated distribution is, in principle, the same kind of phenomenon as the acquisition of a foreign sound. The above examples throw light on this question inasfar as voiced stops and sibilants occur freely in medial position. But Mdv. also provides examples of another kind: the acquisition of foreign sounds. By the side of *rakams* 'to laugh' occurs *razams* whose *ʒ* is completely foreign to Mdv. and which occurs only in obviously late loans from Russian. As a newly learned sound it fulfills its function acoustically better, somehow, than the more conventional *k*.

Baltic Finnic languages display an abundance of examples of the same kind. Carelian, Veps, Votic, Estonian and Livian all have initial voiced stops (in general as well as in hypercorrect forms) which can be accounted for by foreign influence. It is interesting to note that in some cases the same word in different languages has developed the same feature indepen-

dently, viz., Olonetsian *dovariššu* and Votic *dovarišša* < Russian *tovarištš* 'comrade'. In all of these languages words of this type belong to the class which BLOOMFIELD (*Language*, p. 156 ff.) has called *intense-forms*, a group which includes onomatopoeic and descriptive words (symbolic forms), interjections, nursery-words, words of endearment, hypochoristic forms, as well as nonsense forms. In all of these affect plays a more or less manifest rôle. Initial consonant clusters and affricates (as well as *n̄*- in Carelian) all of which were originally unknown, behave in the same way as voiced stops. Consonant clusters of two members are also a known phenomenon in the Western dialects of Finnish which lie within the reach of Swedish influence. It is worthy of mention that Hungarian, too, displays initial clusters only in loan-words and native onomatopoeic words.

Without burdening the reader with the wealth of examples (which in itself suffices to throw light on the above) contained in the literature on this question I wish only to remark that these intense-forms display the same features in diverse languages to an astonishing extent. This shows concretely that these words are not the product of some individual fancy's arbitrariness but are subject to a unique set of rules of their own which, nevertheless, is different from that governing the behaviour of other words.

It should perhaps be mentioned in this connection that not only other languages but neighbouring dialects as well leave their imprint on a given linguistic community's stock of affective words. LAUROSELA and RAPOLA have noted that the clusters *kl*, *kr*, *pl*, *pr* and *tr* appear medially in onomatopoeic words in the dialects South of the Vaasa region, just as they do around the Pori region; of course they do not represent any old clusters. They are borrowed from the neighbouring dialects of Savo, and are, as VIRTARANTA (*LYSMÄH* I, p. 204) says, adapted for their descriptive task, e. g., *käp-ristü*, *mükristellä*.

The particular affect inherent in a word, therefore, tends to come to the fore but must always contend against the inhibiting barriers which language — not tolerating arbitrariness —

sets in its way. The phonematic rigidity of a language, however, is not so tight as not to permit some room for movement, a fact which is comprehensible since language, though a conventional system is at the same time a dynamic one. Affect reveals itself beyond the realm of sound-laws and phenomena of common analogy when sounds are exceptionally weakened, strengthened, when they undergo changes which cannot be considered traditional, or when they undergo contamination. I say common analogy for, after all, in many cases which we are concerned with the question is one of analogy. Sounds which enter a language first through the vehicle of foreign words tend to penetrate into the places occupied by those which most completely resemble them: *g* tends toward *k* but never toward *p*, *z* and *š* tend to push out *s*; palatal *ń* aspires toward *n* but never in the direction of stops and *ž* toward the *k* which resembles it. The clusters *kl* and *kr* tend to be realized as *r* and *l* and only seldom as *k*, as, e. g., in Fi. *krivetä* = *kivetä* 'to climb'.

In my opinion it is remarkable that the phenomena which have been touched upon above and in which, therefore, affect has in one way or another made itself felt nevertheless do not introduce anything absolutely novel into the sound-system of a language. It is difficult to point to a single case where words of the type discussed have brought new phonic material into a language. On the contrary, as we have seen, new sounds are usually learned by aid of loans. I am not oblivious to the fact that certain interjections and certain highly common words (cf. the *herra jes* example above, p. 137) which are pronounced with a high degree of psychic participation contain new sounds, but no one will assert that these sounds belong to the genuine sound-system of a given language. Thus, if a word like *fein!* (as Sommer presents it, *op. cit.*, *Germ.-Rom. Monatschrift* VIII, p. 201) is characterized by an inspiratory articulation, it is nevertheless improbable that this feature will spread, as did, e. g., the initial voiced stops dealt with earlier.

Since a larger group of phenomena than mere occasional deviations can be found in language we can assume that

language is not as strict a system as it has sometimes been said to be. A certain phenomenon can occur in one word alone but the word which bears such a feature will hardly be one chosen at random. JALO KALIMA has shown (*Virittäjä*, 1909, p. 45) that in the dialects of Ylöjärvi and Askola the vowel in Fi. *hullu* 'insane' is clearly the same as that of the Swedish dialect of Finland, *u*, this, however, being the only word in which this particular vowel appears. Others have noted the same phenomenon elsewhere and I have observed it in the surroundings of Turku. We are therefore not dealing with an accidental phenomenon or with a mere allophone but with a phoneme. Indeed, the same person who says *hullu* is equally capable of saying *hullu*, with the important difference that *hullu* means '(clinically) insane' while *hullu* appears only in such contexts as *sä olet ihan hullu* 'you're completely crazy!' where the word's semantic content is altogether different. This sound which serves a known purpose in the example given above and occurs in contexts similar to that above is, in my opinion, to be traced to speakers of Swedish. What is strange about this case is that speakers of Finnish who are perfectly capable of pronouncing *u* in *hullu* are incapable of pronouncing it when attempting to speak Swedish. The same phenomenon occurs among those speakers of Russian who can pronounce *h* (or *ɣ*) only in the word *hospodi* 'Lord'.

Prof. Erkki Itkonen has attracted my attention to the fact that unvoiced *l* and *r* occur in the Kola Dialect of Lapp only in a few words (e. g., *škūLLĕð* 'rattle' and *jīRĕs* 'making a fuss') most of which are, by nature, onomatopoeic or descriptive. I have noted the same in the Lapp dialect of Maattivuono in, e. g., *bilaidi'k* 'to twinkle', and the same applies to the Lapp spoken in Norwegian Finnmark. These sounds which are foreign to Lapp to begin with have arisen in loanwords containing a consonant cluster corresponding (etymologically) to Fi. *-hl-* and *-hr-*, e. g., in *gili* = Fi. *kihla* 'suitor's engagement present'. While this explanation does not apply to Kola-Lapp, I would consider an explanation of the Kola-Lapp forms solely on grounds of onomatopoeia somewhat too daring.

It can therefore be generally stated that if phonic entities foreign to the sound-system of a given language appear in words with affective content they can be ascribed to the influence of surrounding languages. But how can it be explained that phonic features foreign to a given language are so sought after just for such purposes, why are they endowed with a higher degree of expressivity than native sounds which are equally bearers of information?

Specht asserts that rare sounds are used to represent rare phenomena. I find it difficult to subscribe to this explanation, firstly, because it is difficult to say what is a rare sound in the mind of a speaker; let us think of hypercorrect forms which show that newly learned sounds are highly fashionable. The frequent occurrence of such a form as Car. *dabakka* 'tobacco' (with a hypercorrect initial *d*-) is enough to assure a frequently occurring initial *d*-, even if no other initial *d*-s existed in the language.

I believe that the only explanation of this phenomenon lies in the fact that foreign words, by virtue of the very fact that they represent a foreign sound-system tend to lend themselves to more or less descriptive use. In many cases, expressive or onomatopoeic words are simply borrowed. Often words which are neither onomatopoeic nor expressive are borrowed and only later endowed with such meanings. JESPERSEN has observed that foreign words are adopted not only because of a cultural need but also because of their inherent unusual, suggestive nature (*Language*, p. 409). Saareste (*op. cit.*, *Eesti Keel*, 1927, p. 167) has shown that if a speaker is able to speak not only his native language he will tend to use foreign words for emotional, affective purposes.

It is worthy of mention that various Finno-Ugric languages have to a large extent borrowed the same Turkic lexical material, though we can assume with certainty that these borrowings took place independently of each other in the various languages. Many of these words are descriptive or of such a nature as makes their borrowing inexplicable, save for the fact that — as Jespersen says — they are inherently suggestive.

Onomatopoetic words have attracted the attention of a great many naïve etymologizers and have thus brought about highly arbitrary assumptions, etymologies, and even assertions concerning the origin of language. It is understandable, therefore, why prudent scholars have avoided them. In this presentation I have tried to show that such words need not, however, be frowned upon, for they display important features of the dynamics and development of language and help us to gain new insights into its true nature. Affective words follow rules of their own; for this reason it is possible to deal with them scientifically.

PAAVO RAVILA.