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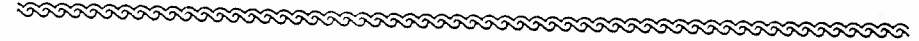
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Pronouns of Address in Swedish: Social Class Semantics and a Changing System

One who has lived soon an entire century must learn to change all her habits, and habits of address surely are not the easiest. What comes simply and naturally in one place is wrong and ill-mannered in another. (Former servant-girl, informant KU 2849.)

Even an ordinary simple worker has today become aware of the fact that he also is a human being, and that the great machinery would not function if he did not play his part. An old conservative postmaster's wife said once to my mother, who was the simple wife of a worker: "I think things now are not the way they should be; the workers' conditions are so good that they dress so well that nowadays one cannot tell the difference between workers and fine folk." This utterance from a woman who believed she belonged to the fine folk my mother never forgot, and I myself have also remembered it. (Retired railroad worker, informant KU 2768.)¹

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this paper is to describe the forms of address in Swedish and the patterning of their usage. When I stated this purpose of my fieldwork in Sweden, a very common reaction was *Det kan du aldrig göra*, 'you'll never do it, it can't be done'. The Swedish address system is in rapid change, and, although Swedes have found difficulties in their address system for the last hundred years, they are sensitive now more than ever to seeming lack of generally accepted rules of usage. Indeed, for some type of encounters the rules are so vague that people may report (I noticed it in my own usage as well) that choice of a particular form of address simply depended on one's mood that day, whether one is feeling cheerful or cranky. Nevertheless, there exists considerably more order than Swedes at present give

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¹ These quotations and others with a KU number are from the archives of the Nordiska Museet, 'the Nordic (Scandinavian) Museum' which undertook an ethnological investigation on words of address in 1969. The informants are not randomly selected and are not representative of the Swedish population at large as they are especially selected for their ability to express themselves in writing. In reading through the responses from the 290 informants, one is forcibly impressed by their intelligence and power of observation and recall. As a source, say, for investigation of working-class lexicon they would not be valid; for my purposes these informants proved an invaluable source, and I have no doubt as to the validity of the quotations.

themselves and their language credit for. This paper is an attempt to delineate that order.

In Sweden, the Social Democratic party has been continuously in power since 1932 and through its programs for social, economic, and educational reforms has consistently stressed egalitarian relations among all members of society.² In spite of this dominant ideology, there remain "strong elements of ascription, elitism, particularism and diffuseness in the Swedish value system" (Lipset, quoted in R.G. Paulston 1968:5). The society is still divided into *Social grupp 1, 2, and 3*, a division into social classes first used in 1911 in connection with bicameral elections. In 1970, social group 1 (the upper class) counted 7.8 per cent of the population, social group 2 (middle class) 34.7 per cent, and social group 3 (working class) 57.5 per cent (*Svenska Dagbladet* 1970:1). Politically induced social structural change does not necessarily result in a change in the cultural value system. Söderberg (1972), a social historian, posits the change in address forms as an indicator of social change with concomitant cultural change. Sweden still remains a country highly stratified in terms of social class but her cultural values are changing and some of the friction between speakers and confusion about usage which stem from the address system can best be understood in terms of the lag between slow cultural change in the wake of rapid social change. The viewpoint from which this paper is written is that linguistic description of the Swedish address system is not possible unless one takes into account the social and historical factors of the society.

METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION

My present data were obtained during a five-month stay in Stockholm, Sweden, in 1973. I was born and grew up in Stockholm and speak a regional dialect of Swedish (*Östermalms-stockholmska*) which has become stereotyped as Swedish upper-class speech. Methods of data collection included participant-observation and the taking of copious field notes, during and after situations which ranged from a royal dinner in white tie to a coffee clatch in the cafeteria of low-salaried factory workers; structured and unstructured interviews; survey questionnaires; and archive work. I observed the behavior of those I met in my daily life teaching at a branch of the university: students, friends, family members and librarians, bus conductors, salesclerks, the police, hospital personnel, public school personnel, etc.; that is, the public at large such as any working professional Stockholmer would run across. I interviewed many of these people as they crossed my path, from cab drivers to the archbishop. I also systematically interviewed a number of informants in order to get a sampling representative of the various social classes and of the public vs. the private sector. To that purpose I interviewed the rector and teaching staff at the police academy as well as members of the police corps; the personnel manager and management of AB Storstockholms Lokaltrafik (public transportation: buses, streetcars and subway) and observed and talked to innumerable bus drivers; University of Stockholm personnel: students, faculty, staff and administration; Svenska Arbetsgivare Föreningen (Swedish Employers Association, major organ of Swedish private enterprise); management and workers in two factories; and members of the personnel and training sections of three department stores: Nordiska Kompaniet (expensive), Domus (middle), and OBS (inexpensive). ← cp. labo in

² The Social Democrats lost the 1978 elections to the center parties.

Special care was taken to corroborate the accuracy of self-report data by firsthand observation. Frequently my own observations were augmented by those of others (friends, family, colleagues, students, informants) after they had been especially instructed in what to observe. In my study of the police, for example, a number of people were simply asked to talk to police officers and to note down how the officers addressed them. I talked to the police myself. I then used my own observations and those of my "assistants" in checking the data obtained in an interview with the instructors at the police academy in order to estimate the reliability of their reported usage. The police instructors' reported data were highly accurate as were most reported data obtained from informants interviewed in depth about the address system of specific groups, organizations, or institutions of which they were members.

Such self-report data, however, are in sharp contradistinction to self-report data on institutional usage from informants who either are not members or who do not have access to all members of an institution. Another way to state this is that internally observed and later reported data tend to be very accurate while externally observed data necessitate more careful double-checking. For example, department store personnel are succinct and accurate on the rules of address usage toward customers; customers are nowhere near as reliable in their self-report on department store sales clerks' address system. Another example is university address usage. Students and the general public will typically generalize that only *du* is now used at the universities, as indeed is officially decreed. This is only partially true, as I shall discuss later, and I found that a few 'trick' questions about usage of which I already knew the actual language behavior were helpful in evaluating observational power and reliability of informants. Incorrect information of the type "everyone says *du* at the university" I then considered as data on the discrepancy between perception and actual address behavior, a discrepancy which at present is widespread.

I came to prefer to interview informants in pairs as they would often correct or expound on each other's responses.

When I studied various department stores, I would interview the staff supervisors in a series of two interviews, the first of which partially served to alert them to certain questions and situations. After some weeks I would follow up with a second interview. In the period between the two interviews, the supervisors had watched for and recorded specific speech behaviors (e.g., did customer or clerk initiate form of address?). It became quite clear that their observations (which I collected at the second interview) were as accurate as my own, and deserved to be classified as participant observation data rather than interview reported data.

I mention this technique of "training" (the observation of address forms is a fairly simple operation which does not necessitate any sophisticated linguistic knowledge) some actual members of the group under study for participant observation themselves as it does away with an otherwise insolvable problem. If I am interested in comparing the external system of address behavior of department store staff (i.e., how they speak in the presence of customers) with their internal system (i.e., how they speak among themselves), there is no way for my presence not to cause them to switch to the external system. Study of the internal system necessitates either self-report data or direct observations made by informants with membership in the group under study.

THE FORMS OF ADDRESS

Background

Swedish possesses two second person singular pronouns of address, with the typical distinction in European languages between the familiar, *du*, and the formal *ni*. Because of a reluctance in the past by many Swedes to use *ni*, Swedish also has several other forms of address. In an earlier paper (C.B. Paulston 1975:7), I listed different ways of expressing *What do you want?* and I relist them here with some minor changes:

- | | | |
|--------------|---|---|
| <i>Du</i> 2y | 1. Vad vill <u>du</u> ha? | 'What do you want?' (familiar form) |
| <i>Ni</i> 2x | 2. Vad vill <u>ni</u> ha? | 'What do you want?' (formal form) |
| 3sg | 3. Vad vill <u>hon</u> ha? | 'What do you want?' (third person singular feminine) |
| FN | 4. Vad vill Christina ha? | 'What does Christina want?' (in direct address) |
| TLN | 5. Vad vill { fru Paulston
Professor
Paulston } ha? | 'What does { Mrs. Paulston
Professor
Paulston } want?' |
| TØ | 6. Vad vill <u>fröken</u> ha? | 'What does the Miss want?' (to unknown female, married or unmarried, a status one can only guess at from the presence or absence of a wedding band) |
| TØ | 7. Vad vill <u>frun</u> ha? | 'What does the Mrs. want?' (used only by a female seller in the market place, to unknown female, married or unmarried) |
| TØ | 8. Vad vill <u>professorn</u> ha? | 'What does the professor want?' |
| | 9. Vad vill <u>man</u> ha? | 'What does <u>one</u> want?' |
| | 10. Vad vill <u>vi</u> ha? | 'What do <u>we</u> want?' |
| | 11. Vad får <u>det</u> vara? | 'What <u>may</u> it be?' |
| | 12. Vad behagas (det)? | 'What is pleased?' |
| | 13. Vad skulle det vara för någonting? | 'What would it be?' |

To this list should be added one more form: *Vad vill du ha, fröken Lundgren?* This curious usage of informal *du* plus formal title + last name (TLN) is the mode of address between clerks (otherwise on first name terms) in better shops in the presence of a customer. The existence of this usage is frequently denied by Swedes but it occurs in my data both as self-report and in my own observations.³

There are strict co-occurrence rules (Ervin-Tripp 1973) of the pronouns with the type of fillers which can occupy the frames in which the pronouns occur. *Du* typically co-occurs with name, usually first name (FN), nickname (NN) or kinship title (KT) but occasionally with last name (LN). *Du* may also occur with no name (Ø). It normally never occurs with T(LN), and hence the discredence of *du* + fröken Lundgren. TØ or TLN co-occurs with *ni* or is used in third person address. The reverse is not true; *ni* may in regional usage co-occur with kinship title (KT), actual or honorary. *Hon* can co-occur with either (T)LN or FN; its use is rural

³ I am grateful to Ulf Hannerz who first pointed it out to me. I am grateful as well for all his other helpful comments.

and disappearing. Although I can remember being so addressed in my youth and there are frequent references to this usage in the archive data (Nordiska Museet 1969), there is not one incidence of it in my 1973 Stockholm data.

All forms in 3 through 13 in the list above represent a relationship between speakers where *du* is not appropriate, i.e. where an expression of "condescension or intimacy," in Brown and Gilman's terms (1960), is not called for. These forms also represent a way of avoiding the use of *ni*, an avoidance of which Swedes are very conscious. In the earlier paper, I speculated that the extreme avoidance of the V-form in address is avoidance of the "linguistic compulsion" of power-coding (as expressed by the *dulni* choice) in a country which has both social class stratification and social-democratic ideology. This is only partially true, and Haugen was absolutely right when he in a discussion of that paper⁴ pointed out the importance of the historical development of *ni*.

The major argument of this paper is that one can describe the Swedish address system adequately only if one recognizes that the social classes have different rules of use due to different "semantics" for the pronouns *du* and *ni*. This difference, I believe, can primarily be accounted for by the historical development of the language and by political ideology. The corollary to that argument is that such different rule systems within a single speech community cannot be discovered, understood, or described by analyzing only the single pronominal forms. Beyond (non)-reciprocity (Brown & Gilman 1960) and dispensation rights (Ervin-Tripp 1973), one needs to consider *inter alia* co-variance of address forms, change of options and the direction of such change, initiation procedures, external versus internal systems of address, but most specifically the particular frames or formulae within which the pronouns occur (Hymes 1974), i.e. with the non-pronominal forms of address with which they do or, just as importantly, do not co-occur. When Swedes discuss their address system, they typically talk about *du*, in and of itself, without looking at the other factors, and this practice is a contributing factor to the confusion and feeling that no rules exist.

Historical Background

Old Swedish had only one singular pronoun of address *du*, used to friend and stranger alike. In the 1600s, under influence of usage at the Byzantine court, says Wellander (1952:1; cf. Brown & Gilman 1960), the plural pronoun *I* came to be used in address to a single person. This pronoun *I* developed into *ni* from the plural suffix *n* of the preceding verb as in *haven I* 'do you have'. During the 1700s the Swedish elite was under strong French influence, and the *dulni* dichotomy seems to have developed in the upper classes then under influence of French *tu* and *vous*.

The lower classes, especially the peasant class (Sweden remained a primarily rural society much longer than continental Europe) did not adopt this usage but maintained *du* as the mutual form of address to both known and unknown of their equals. To their superiors they used titles which proliferated *ad absurdum*. Americans are familiar with the euphemism of maintenance engineer for janitor but in Sweden such titles were used seriously in direct address; *Herr Matmedläggaren*

⁴ Professor Einar Haugen in the discussion following my presentation of the paper at the forty-sixth annual meeting of the Linguistic Society of America, December 30, 1971.

⁵ "Semantic" is the term used by Brown and Gilman (1960: 253) to refer to the "covariation between the pronoun used and the objective relationship existing between speaker and addressee."

'Mr. Rug-installer' and *Herr Tågbefälhavaren* 'Mr. Train-commander' occur from the 1930s in my archive data.

It would give a wrong impression to imply that there was no social stratification within the peasant class. At the turn of the century on the large estates, the womenfolk carefully observed social niceties. Informant KU 2525 writes: "At the coffee clutches (by and for the wives of the peasants who worked the estate) the wife of the head gardener was to serve herself first, next the wife of the smith, followed by the coachman's wife." They did not use *du* to each other but *hon*.

The guilds too were careful to maintain the social distance created by skill and age, and apprentice learners were specifically forbidden the use of *du* to their superior fellow workers.

But among full-fledged workers and ordinary peasants *du* was the common form of address, and this peasant *du* survived within the labor class and became a hallmark of membership in the Social Democratic party (many informants say they would address the Prime Minister as *du* because he is a fellow Social Democrat) and the unions. Its semantic now is that of solidarity.

Because of the idiocy and cumbersomeness of the titles, there have been repeated attempts at address reforms during the last hundred years. The first attempts were in the latter part of the 1800s and well in advance of any political ideological change; indeed, members of the royalty were among the co-signers of the public declarations. This movement was referred to as *ni-reformen* and advocated the use of *ni* instead of titles in third person. It failed.

There were further attempts throughout the first half of the twentieth century. Schools and hospitals carried signs which said 'Here we say *ni*'. Many informants comment on a doctor or dentist below such a sign who addressed the nurse as *syster* 'sister, nurse' in third person. I have no evidence which establishes a causal relationship between these reforms and today's practice where the younger generations do not hesitate to use *ni*. But when a people which has over a hundred years been intermittently exposed to editorials and articles in the press on the virtue of *ni* with no result finally changes its address behavior, it makes more sense to look for other causes than the repeatedly ineffectual *ni*-reforms. Whatever other purpose the *ni*-reforms served, they certainly helped to make Swedes conscious of their address system and aware that it often was awkward.

The change toward increased *ni*-usage is becoming obscured by what most accurately can only be described as the *du*-landslide. *Alla säger du nu för tiden* 'all and everyone says *du* nowadays' was the common rejoinder when people heard I was studying the address forms. Although this is far from true, it is a very frequently stated belief, especially among older members of the upper class with whose own usage the increased use of *du* contrasts most sharply.

"*Du* was and is the form of address among the workers," writes a retired railroad worker (KU 2768) who clearly sees the relationship between *du* and the social democratic movement. But in addition to the leftist political parties, organizations such as the Red Cross and the Home Guard with its auxiliaries institutionalized the use of *du* among their members. It is easy to imagine the sense of emergency such organizations must have experienced during the two World Wars. Sweden managed to remain neutral, and the correlation between state of emergency and the T-form is well documented (Brown & Gilman, 1960; Friedrich, 1972; Jonz, 1975). Many informants comment on the formative effect of such experiences.

There certainly was opposition to the use of *du*. Informant KU 2604 writes of the angry speech the rector of his school addressed to the students in 1915 on the "demoralizing tendencies in an evil time." The students, age 16-30, had suggested they be allowed to address each other with *du*.

The earliest attempt at a *du*-reform in the private sector I have come across took place in the early fifties in a department of the Swedish Employers Association. That the director and the janitor were on *du*-terms (+LN) was considered sufficiently newsworthy to be written up in the public press. In those days, however, the janitor delicately changed to Director X in third person in the presence of others outside the department. Not so today. The 1960s saw wide-spread institutionalized *du*-reform, at first in the public institutions like hospitals and universities. Stockholms Spårvägar (public transportation, later Storstockholms Lokaltrafik) 1965-72 carried through a *du*-reform, and my informants directly related this change to membership by management in the Social Democratic party. Around 1968, the public schools began to follow suit, with the vocational schools beginning the trend.

The private sector is also changing, and all factories with which I am familiar have instituted a general use of reciprocal *du* from management to lowest worker. Management's motivation, however, is not the same as that underlying the Social Democratic party. Big business finds it more effective to be on *du* terms with its workers. A case will illustrate. One of the companies whose factory I visited had been in the red five years previously due to faulty management. One of the problems had been poor relations with the union, which had been forced into *underdånig ställning*, 'subserving obeisant posture'. The then president of the company did not believe in a strong union. On his daily round he reportedly addressed the workers with first name in third person and received a polite *TÖ*, an illustration of the classical non-reciprocal power-relationship, in Brown and Gilman's terms.

The present management had faced the task of having 'to create a climate in which one could exist'. One of their recommendations was general, reciprocal use of *du* throughout the company, and against considerable doubt 'a president is after all a president, not proper (from the workers' side)' the *du*-reform was institutionalized and successful. While I was in Stockholm, a leading journal ran an article on the recovered economic success of the company, and it would be naïve to believe that either success stemmed from egalitarian motives. Swedish management certainly are not ogres, but it makes good capitalistic sense to be on good terms with the labor force, and management clearly conceives the use of *du* as promoting such feelings. It can, however, be argued that the workers' previous unhappiness and subsequent acceptance of the *du*-reform was partially grounded in egalitarian ideology; I am merely arguing that management clearly acted from profit-making motives, and that these coincided with the workers' wishes.

The comments on the *du*-reform by the 60-year-old company physician cannot be laid at any political door: "Listen, it's great; one can reach them so much better." Swedes for whom personal interrelationships tend to be difficult (Garbo's "I want to be alone" remark is never cited in Sweden, presumably because it is typical of all) feel closer and warmer with the use of *du*. Whatever the reasons—egalitarian, manipulative, or just humanitarian—all agree on the positive aspects of the spreading *du*-usage. Even some 70-year-old upper-class ladies find it agreeable to be addressed as *du* in the street; they say it makes them feel younger.

The change is also observable on an individual level. Many informants comment that their children did not address them as *du* but that their grandchildren do. One informant had sons with an age difference of twenty years; the elder had addressed him with *KT* in third person; the younger said *du*. There are repeated anecdotes of people who had known each other as youths and not exchanged *du*; on meeting twenty or thirty or forty years later, they either spontaneously used *du* or promptly initiated *du*-usage. The difficulty lies not in demonstrating increased usage of *du* but rather in delineating the new rules which accompany the shift toward *du*, the change in options as context for the specific linguistic expressions.

USES OF *DU*

There are two distinct uses of *du* with two different semantics: intimacy-familiarity and solidarity. The two uses overlap and may well eventually become merged, but at this time the two are distinguishable.

Du + FN

The pattern for intimacy-familiarity use of *du* is distinct in this way: (1) 'it always co-occurs with FN or KT, and (2) its use among adults is always preceded by the speech act of *lägga bort titlarna* 'putting the titles away' which follows ritualized dispensation rules (Ervin-Tripp 1963).⁶ This is an elaborate set of rules as to whose right it is to initiate the use of *du* (primarily from *ni* and/or title-last name (TLN) usage but there are also occurrences from (KT)FN in third person), and worries and misunderstandings about this initiation right occur frequently in the data. The rules, which are found in the Swedish etiquette books, involve the variables of sex, age, and rank in that order of importance. It is always the prerogative of a woman to initiate *du*, with age and rank deciding if the speakers are of the same sex. Age is not necessarily chronological but may involve other factors, such as year of high school matriculation or number of years spent with a company or institution. But note that these are the rules of the educated elite. From the responses to the questionnaire of an ethnological investigation which the Nordic Museum undertook in 1969 on terms of address, it is overwhelmingly clear that for members of social group 2 and especially 3, rank is the all over-ruling factor:

If an *överordnad* (superior in rank) says *ni* or Fru Angquist, then I address him with the title which is owed him. That person will himself have to suggest if there is to be any change (KU 2411).

Next to rank comes age: 'because he was of middle age, and in that case it was not the lady who should suggest'. The informant was 20 (KU 2854).

More often than not, social group 3 lacks a rule which involves sex as a variable. In my interviews with 18 low-salaried female factory-workers, ten claimed that there was no rule, and eight said that it was a man's prerogative to initiate *du*.

⁶ Children may use *du* + *KT* without any initial ritual. They also learn the communicative competence rules much later than the linguistic forms, i.e. the appropriateness of their usage. I am grateful to Aare Mörner for the example of a child's *du* + *vinnan* (from *grevinnan*, 'countess') totally inappropriate in adult speech.

The highly formalized ritual of *dricka du-skål* 'drinking a *du* toast' has now become much simplified although it still can occur. A member of the high nobility writes as follows:

Now it is much easier to become *du*. I usually propose it as soon as it is practical. I usually say something like: "*Skall vi inte lägga bort titlarna*" 'shan't we put titles away'; it is much easier so (KU 2418).⁷

The act of becoming on *du* terms is called *lägga bort titlarna* ('put the titles away') and so reflects its origin in the higher classes, which had titles. There are other linguistic correlates which help define this speech act: *stå fadder* 'stand godfather' (if such hesitation exists that neither partner can bring themselves to initiate as in the case of a young woman and an old man of high rank, a third party may be brought in to break the ice), *du-broder* 'du-brother.' etc.

Finally, the attitudes of the speakers themselves are clear indications that there are semantics of *du* which vary according to the speaker. They say so. Typical remarks are 'I want to keep *du* only for those I am very close to' versus 'It feels like a relief when that happens' (being addressed by *du*). 'One feels equal' (KU 2920). There are of course exceptions, but in general, intimacy use of *du* is associated with social group 1 usage, and solidarity use of *du* with social group 3. In the Nordic Museum investigation, the last question inquires about the informants' attitudes towards the various reforms of address suggested during the last hundred years in Sweden. Of the 26 responses from members of social group 1, all with only one exception want to keep *ni* and/or titles. Of the 55 responses from social group 3, all with four exceptions wanted general usage of *du* to all people. (Of the four exceptions, three are upwardly socially mobile as measured by occupation or children's occupation.) Social group 2, on the other hand, showed no clear trend: of 50 responses, 29 favored the maintained use of *ni* while 14 were in favor of a *du*-reform, i.e. general use of *du* to everyone. The maintained use of *ni* of course implies an intimacy semantic for *du*.

The fact that two distinct usages of *du* exist, with a tendency to separate along class lines, is not recognized, and there are constant complaints from encounters where the speakers apply different sets of rules with no recognition of the difference. An anecdote will serve to illustrate. Herr and fru (Mr. and Mrs.) Nilsson, members of social group 2 with origin in 3, are caretakers of a farm owned by Lennart B., a member of the Stockholm upper class. The men are approximately of the same age, and because of his social rank, Mr. B. initiated the use of *du* with Mr. Nilsson and the two now freely exchange *du* and FN. But with Fru Nilsson, Mr. B. was stuck. His rules say that a woman initiates *du* no matter what, while

⁷ The rules for initiating a toast involve the variables of sex and age only. Only a man can initiate a toast with a woman of whatever age, with the older initiating between members of the same sex. A toast is the man's response to a woman's suggested *titelbortläggning* or may be simultaneous with his own *titelbortläggning* to a younger man.

The toast consists of raising the glass to the height equal to the placement of the third button from the top of an officer's dress uniform, eye contact and gracious nod, drinking, raising the glass again, eye contact and second gracious nod with smile. Upper class children learn this ritual early, and my own youngsters have practiced *skåling* (with Coca-Cola) with great delight since they were five.

Indeed, the *du*-dispensation ritual has become much simplified. One of my favorite pieces of data concerns another member of the nobility who initiated *du* with my informant while sharing a urinal with him in the men's room.

Mrs. Nilsson has no such rule. Her rule gives rank precedence and if she does have a rule regarding precedence of sex, it will be that the male initiates. Nor does she use *ni* (see the discussion below), with the result that she addresses Mr. B. as *Direktör B.* in the third person, a practice Mr. B. dislikes intensely.

Mrs. B., on the other hand, who knows perfectly well that Mr. and Mrs. Nilsson would prefer to use *du* with her and that it is up to her to initiate as woman and older, refuses to do so. She does not realize that to Mrs. Nilsson *du* means solidarity, not intimacy, and that it is her rank, not her age which keeps Mrs. Nilsson from initiating. To Mrs. B., the semantic of *du* is strongly one of intimacy, and when pressed by her social-democratic children for reasons of egalitarianism to become *du* with the Nilssons, she will say 'But I don't know them that well.' Mrs. Nilsson is likely to perceive that distance as one of social class rather than as of personal friendship. And certainly neither of them realizes that they don't share the same set of rules.⁸

Upper-class speakers of course think that their rules are the only appropriate ones. But they fully expect the rest of the world not to know these rules since it is only by being one of them (upper class) that one gains access to social niceties. Swedish upper-class children are socialized by stigmatizing their unwanted behavior as lower class: 'Don't drink from a cup without a saucer; that's lower class.' Upper-class speakers expect lower-class speakers not to know their rules, only they don't realize that lower-class behavior also is rule-governed, but rather see it as an absence of rules. Lower-class speakers on the other hand have not spent as much time learning arbitrary rules at a conscious level (see footnote 6 for an example) and are not as likely to realize that their behaviour also is rule-governed. The typical reaction to upper-class speech patterns is that it is 'stuck-up', but lower-class speakers are not likely to question the 'correctness' of upper-class speakers.

Even though the rules for dispensation rights differ between the social classes, it is generally recognized that such rights exist. Consequently people develop strategies for forcing dispensation, for manipulating the other into suggesting *du*. I recognized this dispensation-forcing as a speech act proper much too late in my data collection for careful study but it merits such and in other languages as it is likely to be a universal phenomenon. One informant commented that he would pretend to misspeak and say *du*, and then apologize. He said it never failed that the addressee would ask him to please continue with *du*. Another strategy is constant and repeated use of T+LN (once or twice in each sentence) which marks the address system for attention. This is the strategy Mrs. Nilsson used. A common strategy is some teasing remark like 'Well, you are oldest, I wouldn't dare suggest *du*.' There are bound to be many more such strategies.

Intimacy is not signalled by the use of *du* or by the use of first name but exactly by the combination of *du* + FN. First name by itself does not imply intimacy, and its usage in third person, i.e. repetition of the name instead of the pronoun in direct address, denotes familiarity and often social distance. This usage is disappearing and I have no instances of it in my data from 1973 although I well remember being so addressed, especially in the country from the servants and the local population who had seen me grow up from childhood. Totally gone is the

⁸ At a visit two years later in 1975, I found that Mrs. B. had indeed initiated *du* with Mrs. Nilsson and thought nothing remarkable of it. If anything is an indicator of socio-cultural change, Mrs. B.'s change of attitude and use of *du* + FN with the caretaker wife is. It would have been not only unthinkable but unimaginable in my childhood.

usage of my grandfather's generation to third person first name among relatives although that may primarily have been between the sexes.

Nor does the use of *du* by itself signal intimacy.

Du + Ø—or Solidarity, yes, Intimacy, no

When the form *I* and titles came into usage, *du* remained within the peasant population as the mutual form of address of equals to both known and unknown, and this manner of address has survived until the present day within the labor class. The semantic of this usage of *du* is one of solidarity, an expression of membership in the same group. It is this usage of *du* which has spread so rapidly and so widely. In 1965, for instance, police officers in patrol cars addressed each other by TLN in third person; today they all use *du*. This increased usage of *du* resulted in a change of available options of address as well as in a change of the frames in which *du* occurs, the latter presumably as a result of the former.

In this use, *du* may co-occur with FN but more frequently with no name (Ø), even when the name is known. The use of first name is often avoided since it is felt to express intimacy. Solidarity use of *du* is now extended to strangers and people with whom one cannot presume an intimate relationship. This development of *du* + Ø reflects the upper-class reciprocal use of *du* which is one of intimacy and which always co-occurs with first name. *Du* by itself, then, expresses solidarity but not intimacy, maintaining a personal but not social distance. By institutional decree, university students now address their professors with *du* as an expression of group membership. Said my Swedish colleague: 'Well, I have gotten used to *du* but when they come and say *Hör du Bengt* (i.e. *du* + FN)—that's going too far.'

My students freely addressed me as *du*, even at guest lectures, but even my regular students *never* referred to me by name. It was of course difficult for them since it meant that they had to have eye contact with me before they could be recognized to speak, lacking a linguistic means by which they could call my attention, since *du* co-occurs with FN but not with T. In the primary and secondary schools such a situation has led to the use of *du* and *fröken*, a combination of the informal pronoun and the formal traditional address of women teachers (originally the title for unmarried daughters of the nobility) which is totally counterintuitive, and I am relieved I can trust my informants by virtue of the fact that I have heard it with my own ears. Other informants, from social groups 2 and 3, have commented on the difficulty of first naming with solidarity *du*. They frequently resort to some kind of made up name or nickname (NN). Swedish last names commonly end in *-son*, 'son of', and there are several occurrences in the data where someone with the name, say, of Valter Danielsson, is addressed as *du* and Daniel in the attempt to avoid the use of *du* + FN.

The development of *du* + Ø is very recent, in all probability only within the last ten, fifteen years. I pointed it out first in my 1971 paper, and Professor Bengt Loman of the University of Lund agreed with me then; he had not been aware of it, which certainly points to recent development. This development of *du* + extreme first name avoidance has resulted, I believe, from the increased use of *du* in relationships which cannot be characterized as intimate. This increased usage is a result of a national policy of social egalitarianism, which in turn has brought about a definite change in the value system. In addition, the alternative options to solidarity *du* have been so cumbersome or considered not acceptable with the result that the

linguistic system has supported the pressures of the social system. One is reminded of Labov's "theme that internal, structural pressures and sociolinguistic pressures act in systematic alternation in the mechanism of linguistic change" (Labov 1972: 537).

Solidarity Use of *du*—Individual Usage

The working class has always been very clear on the solidarity function of *du* and clearly sees its relationships to social class; these informants to the ethnological investigation make their points cogently:

When I began my own company, it happened sometimes that some of my former co-workers would come and take a job; I considered them still as old friends and called them *du*, but it happened sometimes that they did not like this but in a marked manner addressed me as *Herr Andersson*. This was in the twenties when in certain groups it was considered treason against one's class to be on friendly terms with one's "workbuyer" as some used to say. (Retired painter, informant KU 2913.)

There is a clear line between what we call social group 1 and 3. I heard on one occasion an old woman who claimed that it was not suitable for workers to buy *wienerbröd* 'a type of elegant coffee bread'. It is that kind of mentality one finds when people are classified as "fine folk" and "ordinary folk." The respect for fine folk is still great for many among social group 3. One "degrades" oneself before others who have done well and one really cannot blame them for this. Heard at the hospital how a physician asked a patient of his own age who had been his childhood chum to address him as *du*. The patient who was "only" a worker answered: "It is not proper!" and continued to say "Doctor." A hopeless case. (Retired typesetter, informant KU 2341.)

But attitudes are changing with the younger generations. Within social group 3, such change is often difficult and accompanied by a feeling of conflict. The secretary, born 1936 into a rural family of carpenters and smiths, who wrote the following is typical of the informants:

And myself, I have also changed my attitude to using *du*—I react with pleased gratitude if I am addressed with *du* by strangers and sex makes no difference. I know that others in my age group can easily feel depressed about this, feel that it is below their dignity to be *duad* by the landlord. I think they seem so small and afraid in their attitude, I am so proud to have changed. I try also myself to say *du* to everyone but meet certain difficulties and feel at times uncertainty. (She comments that she uses *du* to everyone everywhere of her own age but not to older people.) The uncertainty comes when I am struck dumb by respect before a high imposing title and I forsake my good resolutions. I also avoid using *ni*; at a visit to the doctor's office recently, e.g., I said *du* to the nurse but then said *Professorn, Professorn* (T-third person). I want so very much to say *du* to everyone and make no distinction and I get into a conflict when I all the same make a difference between folk and folk on the basis of their social position. (Informant KU 2854.)

The use of solidarity *du* has now spread to members of all social classes, in social group 1 primarily among the younger members who frequently comment that they use it as an expression of their egalitarian ideology. This is very similar to the situation Bates and Benigni (1975) found in Italy. The solidarity *du* is always intended by the addressor to be reciprocal, but there are numerous instances in...

observed data that *du* is not returned. Several taxi cab drivers, for instance, who claimed that they virtually always addressed their clients with *du*, carefully avoided any pronoun reference to me, even when I addressed them as *du*. (The use of *ni* by the cab driver would have been insulting in such a situation as it would blatantly have denied my claims to solidarity.) Throughout my conversations with the cab drivers runs a clear awareness on their part of social class, which speech and appearance are used to determine. Generally the informants claimed that they waited to see how they were addressed, meaning they would reciprocate the same address form which in fact they didn't. 'It also depends on how they talk,' said one, 'if they are *bildade*.' *Bildade* roughly corresponds to 'educated' and is a frequent euphemism for membership in social group 1. This sentiment was echoed by many informants. In other words, although members of social group 1 are increasingly adopting the use of solidarity *du*, this usage is many times met with distrust by members of social group 3 who do not return it, and the result is a condescending *du*, i.e. the non-reciprocal *du* in Brown and Gilman's terms, the very opposite of what was intended.

Although solidarity occurs primarily with social class, there are instances of *du* as an expression of other types of solidarity. When a police chief in a "speech by the coffin" addressed the deceased as *ni*, the editorial commented the following day that he should have used *du* because 'in the face of death we are all alike,' i.e. *du* as an expression of common human frailty and mortality (informant KU 2448).

One informant links these two themes of solidarity in the following folk poem from a church yard:

<i>Att döden han ser inte te personen</i>	Death does not look to the individual
<i>For döden han är demokrat</i>	For Death is a democrat
<i>Så direktören och fabrikören</i>	So the director and the factory owner
<i>A rätt om di forsmädlitt mot mig le</i>	Even if they scoff at me with a sneer
<i>Sa kanske de få legga breve me.</i>	May end up lying next to me.

(KU 2768)

The archbishop, a man of charisma, told me that, although he in general does not encourage the use of *du*, there exists a group of high school and theology students with whom he works closely, who do address him as *du*. They are profoundly religious and see their work as that of a 'guerilla group' (the archbishop's term) in a profoundly irreligious country. The use of the T-form is common as an expression of religious solidarity (cf. the Quakers) but its usage is almost always institutionalized rather than as here in an individual case.

Solidarity Use of *du*—Institutional Usage

The most widespread use of solidarity *du* occurs in institutionalized usage, *du* as a function of membership in a formal group, such as social institutions of occupation, recreation, organizations, and the like. The decreed use of *du* now occurs in hospitals, factories, universities, offices, clubs, etc. (but not in the military or in the police force). The *du* usage in an institution like the Swedish Employers Association on the immediate surface looks like institutional solidarity *du*, and indeed the receptionist addressed me as *du*, as is their custom, over the telephone. But among its professional members, lawyers by training, reciprocal *du* is always

preceded by *titelbortläggning* according to upper-class dispensation rules or disapprovingly commented on as deviant usage when those rules are not adhered to. Nor is there any FN avoidance among the upper-class members, and in fact their usage among themselves retains its intimacy–familiarity function albeit more widely extended than fifteen years ago. But between lawyer and janitor there is a clear change: solidarity *du* with no first name and no initiation rights.

One of the young lawyers commented that in her work at court among her own political group there is automatic use of *du* as distinct from her usage at the Swedish Employers Association, where she begins with *ni* + TLN and proceeds to *titelbortläggning* and *du*. In their individual usage, people will tend toward a perception of *du* either as a function of intimacy–familiarity or of solidarity. In institutionalized usage of *du* this is not so, and upper-class speakers will, as the young lawyer, switch between functions. She exemplifies a system in change as she was brought up with the upper-class intimacy–familiarity semantic of *du*, functions with its rules when they are imposed on her, but has come to prefer solidarity usage of *du*.

One more example to illustrate the switch between the two semantics of *du*. At a visit to the *Kungliga Biblioteket* (Royal Library) to fill out application forms. I was addressed as *du* by the librarian, a woman older than myself. She knew from the forms my occupation as professor and this did not impress her (professors rank very high in the social order in Sweden) sufficiently to avoid *du* + ØN. Her use was clearly that of solidarity *du* to strangers. In the course of the interview of filling out the cards she discovered my Stockholm identity, as it were; she had known my father and for some years lived in the same apartment house as my family. At this point she changed to *ni*. (It is considered the height of rudeness to switch back to *ni* after an initiation ritual to intimacy *du*.) *Du*, at this stage, when I had ceased to be an anonymous stranger, would to her imply an intimacy *du*, and she changed to the mode of address we would mutually employ, had we been introduced in the street.

The University of Stockholm changed to institutional *du* around 1963 and many informants complained that it was difficult, especially for the older secretaries. Within a department, there is now general use of *du* + ØN by all, chairman, students, and secretary. The chairman of linguistics addressed me as *du* with no further ado even though I had addressed him as *ni*. The students all say *du* + ØN to everyone. However, across departments there is considerable uncertainty. The secretaries do not say *du* to professors in other departments without a great deal of caution. Most of inter-departmental contact is by telephone, which makes age difficult to judge, and in institutions with decreed *du*-usage, age especially but not necessarily when paired with rank, is the most important variable in choosing options. The secretaries never initiate address form, and their basic strategy is one of wait and see. They observe the greeting: from an older janitor *goddag* will to them indicate *ni* while *hej* will signal go ahead and use *du*. If the caller introduces himself as Professor X, they respond formally with *ni* or TLN, which is exactly what happened the first time I called the linguistics department. But when I appeared in person and the secretary saw that she was older than I, she changed to *du* + ØN without any hesitation.

Most uncertainty appears in the communication between the academic departments and the bureaucratic non-academic administration with its civil servants. One senses a strain on the feeling of solidarity and there is considerable hesitation and address avoidance from professors and secretaries alike.

Neither do professors automatically address their colleagues in other departments with *du*. Swedish professors can look very old and imposing and to these 'greying men' my informant-professors said they would most certainly not use *du*. Their general policy then is one of address avoidance.

What the students then observe and disseminate to the larger society is the mutual *du* + ØN between student/student and student/professor as well as frequently between professor/professor. They are not likely to notice the address avoidance between professors (avoidance is very difficult to observe) or be party to the administrative communications between departments and even less between departments and the administration. It is easy to understand then that the general perception is that everyone says *du* at the university when in fact they don't.

The solidarity usage of *du* is only extended to members of a group when their social intercourse is a function of group membership. At the Nobel Awards Banquet, a formal dinner at which the king presides and to which only scholars and their spouses (besides the Nobel Foundation officials) are invited, there was a general use of *ni* and titles among the academicians.

Swedish business firms are likely to have international contacts, and many informants commented on the confusion institutional use of *du* resulted in across languages. Swedish secretaries would be *du* with the president of the Danish branch office while he was not on *du* terms with his own secretary of thirty years. Visiting Danes or Germans, who, while colleagues, were on formal terms with each other, would be forced into T-terms with each other. The communicative competence rule for the T-form is so strong for the Swedes that they impose it on the speakers of other languages. It then becomes too awkward to exchange V with a well-known colleague in the same conversation where one exchanges T with a comparative stranger. The rule conflict led to many extraordinary measures, such as granting temporary dispensation to a colleague with the clear understanding that upon return home one resumed formal address. The Swedes, who have long been ridiculed by the Danes (the languages have virtually the same linguistic forms of address) for the awkwardness of their old address system, took great delight in telling these anecdotes.

Deviant Use of *du*

In one sense, the truest expression of solidarity occurs in a state of emergency where class and rank become unimportant in the face of danger and death. There are many types of emergencies but they all share a deviant usage of *du*, i.e. in a given situation, the protagonists would not have exchanged *du* had the state of emergency not been present.

Police and public transportation personnel have long exchanged *du* in situations where their intercourse was the normal result of accidents. My sister reports on unaccustomedly being addressed as *du* by the police as she walked by a bank where a robbery was taking place.

Informant KU 2768 sums it all up:

During a hospital stay, I had as roommates several people whom I perceived as members of social group 1. Here we said *du* to each other without any *titelbortläggning*, we just simply and naturally said *du* to each other and this with people who I don't think I otherwise would ever have *duad*. It is strange, but in a hospital, on a

ward, one is so to speak in the same boat. The uncertainty perhaps makes one want to feel *gemenskap* 'communion, solidarity' and come closer to the person in the next bed. One is confronted with disease and death and in the face of this, titles have no meaning.

Du is also used to scold. The one of two times I was addressed as *du* by a bus driver was when I unwittingly was using an expired bus pass. Several informants told me they had been similarly scolded for expired passes. *Du* is also used for swearing: *Din djävul* 'you devil' is the only possible form.

Du is typically used deviantly under the influence of alcohol. Occurrence of such usage is frequent in the data. One of my favorite examples concerns the daughter of a pastor whose very life had been threatened by two drunken apprentices who had broken into the manse:

It had however not gone any further than that the man addressed her as *du*. In spite of the threatening situation, what had most upset fröken Söderblom was the use by the 'murderer' of such a familiar term of address (KU 2341).

Finally, there is dialectal regional usage of *du* where it tends to be the only form used in some provinces, such as Dalarna. All Swedish children know about the Dalmas who addressed the queen: "*Lyft på stjärten, du Landsens Moder...*" ('Lift thy bottom, thou mother of our land, thou art sitting on my mittens'). This usage is deviant only in the sense that it differs from standard Swedish.

USES OF *ni*

While the two semantics of *du* are not recognized at all, the different semantics of *ni* are described in the literature and accounted for by the historical development of the linguistic form. There is, however, considerable confusion in the century-long public debate in the press over the use of the pronoun and, as late as 1963, Rosengren could write: 'The Swedish language still lacks a generally accepted word of address' (1963: 109). He was referring to *ni*. The general uncertainty regarding the semantics of *ni* no doubt has contributed to the recent rapid spread of *du*.

Ni derives from *I*, which was originally the second person plural form. This *I* developed along three different lines.

Ni + (KT) (FN); Peasant *ni*

Among the peasant population, *ni* (with regional variations of *I* and *ji*) became an address of respect reserved for parents, older relatives, and worthy elders within the community. It occurred typically with KT and/or FN and tended to be non-reciprocal with the speaker receiving *du*. This *ni* took the place of *du* as evidenced by the gradual replacement of *ni* by *du* as the children grew up and reached adult status, and also by the fact that *ni* was occasionally refused with 'I'm not so old you'll have to say *ni*' (Ahlgren 1973: 78). This use of *ni* is today rural and rapidly disappearing. I myself have never heard it, but several of my students said they had called their parents by *ni*.

Ni + Ø; Polite and Impolite ni

Given this development, it is unclear and curious how *ni* came to be received with such very negative connotations that its usage would be conceived as an insult by parts of the population. A multitude of folk sayings arose as a rejoinder to *ni*: 'Do you think I am lousy?' (meaning that with fleas the addressee would have been plural), 'Ni the farmer called his mare when he didn't know her name', etc. (Ahlgren 1973: 75, 76). Wellander and Ahlgren account for this development by the fact that *ni* came to be used by the upper classes downward to their inferiors while they expected to be addressed by their titles, and that this non-reciprocity was the cause of the bad reputation of *ni*.

When the new time came in (1800s) and the *du* of the old *ståndsamhället* 'estate society' by politeness was substituted with the modern *ni*, the mark of social class was transferred from *du* to *ni* which naturally follows with non-reciprocal address forms: he addressed by *ni* got an inferiority complex visavis the titled person (Wellander 1952:7).

But by this argument the earlier non-reciprocal condescending *du* might have been expected to share the same fate. Ahlgren reasons that a downward *ni* would be felt more distancing, more haughty, more arrogant than downward *du* because the inferiors knew that the speaker used *ni* to strangers and *du* to friends: "A downward directed form of address also used between friends has larger possibilities to survive than a downward directed form also used between strangers" (1973: 121). I am not convinced.⁹

It is beyond a doubt that *ni* came to be considered as a rude form of address by parts of the population and in all social classes although by very few in social group 1. In the Nordic Museum questionnaire, only two members (both ministers of the church) from social group 1 objected to the use of *ni* while only two (of 55 responses) from social group 3 were for *ni*. For whatever reasons, people who acquiesced at an endless use of titles, which certainly marked the status relationship, balked at *ni* on the grounds that it was impolite. One of the informants to the Nordic Museum survey from social group 3 writes:

Already in primary school, our teacher warned us against the use of *ni* as term of address because it was considered as a cussword. He said that in coarse language there was an expression "*Ni kan kyssa mig där bak*" ('*Ni* can kiss me behind'). For this reason he advised us to use *ni* only when we spoke to *bildat folk* 'educated people' so that no misunderstandings would occur (KU 2930).

He had an unusually sensitive teacher. Especially the folkschool teachers show wide variance in their acceptance of *ni*, and many children were categorically taught never to use *ni* while others were taught that it was perfectly acceptable (apparently by teachers of strong egalitarian convictions), and according to many informants such teachings remained with them throughout life.

⁹ Ahlgren's argument is contradicted by the case in English where the T form disappeared and the V form survived. There is one comment from a Medelpad farmer: "*Ni* from someone of my own age I take as intended: as an insult" (KU 2600) which leads me to speculate. Peasant *ni* was never used to an equal so that its usage in such a case would have been sarcastic just as I might address my husband as Professor Paulston when I think he deals with me as an ignorant student. As upper class usage of *ni* to equals spread, it would not be surprising if such usage was misunderstood by the peasants who themselves would never use *ni* downwards or to equals (see also Haugen 1975).

This considered rudeness of *ni* is no doubt the major reason for the extreme address avoidance and circumlocutions that one finds in Swedish. From my notes on address to customers in department stores I have:

Skall det betalas kontant	'Shall it be paid in cash?'
Vad skall vi ha?	'What shall we have?'
Om damen går...	'If the lady goes'... etc.

with only two occurrences of *ni* (during five months' observation), one by a much older woman and the second, interestingly enough, after I had completed my purchase—no need to be polite any more, I suppose.

By necessity, I visited one of the same department stores on December 27, the first day stores were open after the Christmas holidays. The store was crowded, with the majority of customers trying to exchange or return gifts. The clerks gave an impression, say my notes, of cranky sullenness and I heard so many *ni*'s that I lost count. Clearly *ni* is an integral part of Swedish clerks' linguistic competence but in some situations carefully avoided.

In my study of the department stores, I had expected to find a difference in the address systems of the clerks between the expensive and inexpensive store. I found no difference between the three but a lot of difference between the various departments within the store. The clerks in sporting goods, toys, and teenage clothes tended toward solidarity use of *du* + ØN, but virtually no clerks used *ni*. Their attitude is that *ni* is not polite. The personnel manager of the expensive store (who did address me as *ni*) told me several anecdotes about women customers whose name and title (husband's title in feminine form) were known to the clerk and who had protested at being addressed as *ni* ('I am not *ni* with you'). I suppose after such an episode one is careful to avoid the use of *ni*. From the titles and names cited, like *kunsulinnan Petersson*, I suspect such customers would belong to a class my grandmother would have labelled as *nouveau riche*, i.e. recently upwardly mobile speakers with pretensions to upper class behavior which they knew imperfectly.

Peasant use of *ni* is clearly distinguishable from impolite use of *ni* in that the former always co-occurs with KT and/or FN while the latter never does, but there is no linguistic distinction between polite and impolite use of *ni* + Ø. I have looked very diligently for social settings, scenes, even channels (Hymes 1972) which might mark the meaning of the interaction between linguistic form and social setting. The only vector I have been able to identify is the use of anonymous *ni* to a stranger in public when dressed in street clothes, a usage which is now generally accepted as polite by the younger generation.

The police, for example, freely use *ni* to strangers, but only to those they take to be members of social groups 1 and 2; to members of 3 and to the young they use solidarity *du*. However, the lower ranks do not use *ni* to their own superiors, whom they address with TLN in third person. *Ni* in that situation is considered disrespectful and impolite.

But I can't tell when someone first addresses me as *ni* whether that person considers such usage to be polite or not. The rector of the Police Academy addressed me as Professor Paulston in third person over the telephone, switched to *ni* when he saw me (I was some fifteen years younger than he), and sighed with relief when I initiated *du*. Clearly he does not consider *ni* as impolite but still as less polite than TLN in third person as is reflected in the general usage of it.

There is, however, no social setting which can inform me that he considers *ni* as less polite than TLN if he had addressed me with *ni* from the beginning; the only clue lies in the direction of his change of address within the formal range.

When a bus driver addresses me with *ni*, I cannot tell whether he considers such usage to be polite or not, without knowing his habitual mode of address. If he usually practices address avoidance or third person address like *damen* and then uses *ni* in a key of irritation (Hymes 1972), his intention is likely to be impolite. But one does not know the habitual modes of strangers and so I cannot distinguish between polite and impolite use of *ni* + Ø and neither can anyone else; it is simply a matter of attitude transmitted through upbringing.

Peculiarly enough, the nominative form is much more avoided than the genitive *ers*, *eders* and the oblique *er*, *eder*. From my notes on bus drivers, whose general tendency was pronoun avoidance, I have the delightful: *Har damen biljett, gå och sätt er bara* 'If the lady has a ticket, just go and sit down' with its mixture of third person + oblique pronoun. Also... *kan gå och sätta er* '...can go and sit down' which must syntactically have been *ni kan gå* but the *ni* was totally inaudible.

To sum up, whether *ni* + Ø is polite or impolite depends entirely on the attitudes of addressor as well as addressee. The no doubt impolite intention of the clerks in the after-Christmas rush will have been decoded (more probably not noticed) as polite usage by habitual upper class *ni*-speakers. Speakers who themselves consider *ni* rude will have been more likely to notice and to decode *ni* as impolite. Often mode of address is not consciously noted and only contributes subliminally to one's impressions. As a glaring example, to my extreme annoyance I never could recall how I addressed the archbishop.

Ni + TLN; Polite *ni*

The third development of *ni* took place in the elite where *du* and *ni* became patterned after French *tu* and *vous* (cf. Russian, Friedrich 1972). Ahlgren writes: "Apparently *ni* during the earlier half of the 1800s has had its strongest support within the aristocracy—where it was perceived as corresponding to French *vous*—and within the peasant class, whereas the growing middle class more often used titles" (1973: 135). Certainly, the spokesmen for the *ni*-reforms advocated during the 1800s and 1900s were all members of the aristocracy and/or the intelligentsia.

In my earlier paper I pointed out that "the free use of *ni* might be said to be a hallmark of address behavior between members of social group 1, who are not on familiar terms with each other" (Paulston 1975: 7). My later work has found no evidence which contradicts this observation, and convincing evidence to support it. The statement needs to be modified to "the free use of *ni* + TLN," since *ni* + Ø to strangers has become fairly common, especially in the intercourse between the public and the many federal institutions like the post office, transportation, communications, etc. Although more formal and definitely class-linked, the use of *ni* + TLN marks the same meaning in personal interrelationship as solidarity *du* + Ø: a maintenance of personal but not social distance. My own address system underwent a drastic change as a result of my findings, and I virtually never use *ni* + TLN any more. When I did, it was invariably with upper-class speakers whom I either disliked or felt to be cool and distant.

Because of the widespread institutional use of *du*, I have fairly few direct observations of reciprocal *ni* + TLN but without exception they all involve members

of social group 1. A typical example is the Nobel Awards banquet where the guests addressed each other by *ni* + TLN. Some may, like my own group, have switched to familiarity *du* after proper toasting ceremonies, but those I know of did not. At the banquet I promptly initiated *du* with the professor on my right but the one on my left was much older than I, grey-haired and so distinguished that I hesitated. When I pointed out my dilemma to him, adding teasingly that he could not very well initiate, he delightedly said: *Det är vad du tror* 'That's what you think' and raised his glass in the ritual toast. A younger gentleman across the table then raised his glass and said, 'May I join you?' The three men then prompted the woman across from me to follow my example and initiate *du* with them, which she did. Clearly the men were more than willing to use *du* but the women were reluctant to initiate and so in most groups *ni* + TLN prevailed. But note that the use of *ni* + TLN and the ritual initiation ceremony for switching to *du* were partially a function of the occasion. According to both my partners at table, had I met them at the university they would have addressed me as *du* without further ado.

CHOOSING OPTIONS

Present at the musical soiree which followed the dinner and mingling with the guests were technicians from radio/TV, by official order also dressed in white tie. In my conversation with them, there was mutual use of solidarity *du* + ØN. This episode can be taken to illustrate the ruling principle of all encounters in Swedish in normal situations: the speaker attempts to speak in a fashion he believes will please the addressee (not necessarily consciously so). The sequence followed by the dinner guests of (1) introduction of self which consisted of saying one's first and last name aloud followed by a handshake, (2) use of *ni* + TLN (in order to know which title to use one must either study the place lists carefully before dinner or else find out surreptitiously), (3) initiation ceremony, and (4) use of *du* + FN, I felt would be considered putting on airs by the working-class technicians so I omitted all of that sequence and simply used *du* and no name to them. Certainly I made no such conscious analysis at the time. And certainly one can never be sure that one guesses correctly how the other would like to be addressed; hence all the agony Swedes experience in addressing their fellow man. The following lament from a worker is typical:

But you can't tell, and you don't want to use titles if they are workers and one doesn't dare use *du* in case they aren't (KU 2932).

He is an older man, and the younger working-class generation is more likely to use *ni* to strangers, which they consider perfectly polite, or practice address avoidance, but note that the criteria for choice of option have not changed. The following comments on why they would choose *du* rather than *ni* are culled from my interviews with young factory workers: 'if he looks kind; age; to "simple" folk; I look at the general style; which social class; those who don't seem arrogant and superior; people I like; not large.' *Ni* is offered to 'older people; in order to be polite; not to irritate someone; to those with snotty manners; and to Östermalms-women.' In other words, social class and age still remain the basic criteria. Rather, what has changed is the situation and the range of options.

Upper-class life is much less formal than twenty years ago when every upper-class family was expected to have at least one servant. That life has disappeared along with the servants. The standard of living has risen enormously and in a country with general good taste it is difficult to tell social class at a glance, as indeed the police complain: 'Now one has to talk to them for a while' (in order to determine social class). With socialized medicine and cultural values which regard corpulence as moral decrepitude and looking youthful as a virtue, age is also difficult to tell. Swedes never lie about their age; they take pride in looking younger than they are, not in *passing* for younger. Social class and age still remain basic criteria but what will count as markers for social class and age has changed, and the range within which they are determined. And with a prevailing egalitarian worldview, there is much less fear of making mistakes.

People do misjudge. The winter 1973, half of the girls and women in Stockholm were wearing loden coats and traditional peasant babushkas (scarves) as was I: no social clue in dress. During the break at the end station, the bus driver approached me and addressed me as *du*. As I answered, he of course noticed I had addressed him as *du*. In the five minutes of following chat during which I addressed him as *du*, he scrupulously avoided any pronoun reference. Clearly he must have had (my social rules did not allow me to ask him) the same rule as one of the factory workers quoted above, and did not feel comfortable with using *du* to me any longer after he had revised his judgment of my social class.

Indeed, choice of option can be so delicate a matter that one of the personnel managers of an international business firm, whom I interviewed, uses address choice as a test in hiring salesmen. At the job interview, one was disqualified for greeting the personnel manager with *hej* (marked for *du*) instead of *goddag* (unmarked). Another was disqualified for addressing him as Herr Johansson. The third passed the test; he carefully avoided until he was addressed as *du*, which he unostentatiously reciprocated. On the whole, that is the general rule: Let the other initiate and then reciprocate. Indeed, there is a court ruling on the matter. Engineer T. had been arrested by the police for disturbing the peace (he was drunk). He complained to the court about his treatment and pointed out he had been addressed as *du*. The court cleared the police and acknowledged the recent change in address system, but added that the police had been remiss; they should have waited until they were addressed with *du* or *ni* and then reciprocated—'restrictivity' in the matter of address was essential. (The exception to the reciprocity rule is, as I have discussed, the tendency of some members of social group 3 to avoid the use of *du* in speaking to members of group 1, especially by men to women.)

Obviously, such general strategies strain the rules for dispensation rights to the utmost, as someone must initiate. As a matter of fact, the court's ruling violates the rules of the etiquette books (variables of sex, age, and rank, in that order of importance) as some policemen will be older than their male clients but still cannot initiate. It seems there are two distinct initiation acts.

One is the clearly recognized initiation to *du* by *titelbortläggning*. This is the speech act which follows the dispensation rights discussed above and which vary according to social class. But there is also an initiation act which does not involve dispensation, simply an initiation of choice of option, primarily *ni* + Ø or *du* + Ø, but any form of address is possible. Everyone is aware of the existence of this initiation act, but it is not recognized that its rule occasionally conflicts with those for dispensation rights, another cause of the Swedes' confusion. This initiation act

rule says simply that the customer or client initiates. At the hairdresser and the post office, in the bus and the department store, to the police and the bank clerk, the customer is granted choice of option. The exception will be upper class 'patrons', like bank officers and librarians, who will not hesitate to initiate and who tend to use the dispensation rule-variables in choice of option, as will strangers who are not in a client-patron relationship.

At a visit to the Immigration and Naturalization Department of the Federal Police to arrange for my visa, I was puzzled by my irritation at being addressed as *du* by the immigration officer, a woman younger than myself. Puzzled because I had come to prefer to use solidarity *du* and so it made little sense to be irritated at it. But the young woman was breaking every possible rule: no institutional use of *du* existed, I had been addressed as *ni* by others; dispensation rules granted me the initiation (but she also addressed my husband with *du*, which would have been sanctioned by those rules, and I took umbrage at that usage as well). Above all, I was the customer-client and it was my right to initiate choice of option. At the time, I was not able to understand my irritation (especially as I would have initiated *du* + Ø) but the social meaning certainly was clear to me: condescension and reduction to dependent/childhood status, and mine was much the same as the reaction of Engineer T.

The initiation act as distinct from the dispensation act is a recent development, and I was not aware at the time I collected the data that the two did not conform to the same rules. Consequently I did not investigate specifically the parameters of the client-patron relationship, which definitely merits further exploration. I think what is happening is as follows. When the address system was stable, prior to the present change, form of address was fairly predictable: speakers from social group 1 used *ni* or third person to such patrons as police, bank clerks, and sales personnel while members from social group 3 used *du* to patrons from their own social class and *ni*, third person, or avoidance to patrons from social groups 1 and 2. Patrons knew what to expect, and could perfectly well predict and therefore *initiate* address form. Whatever hesitation existed lay only in accurately ascertaining the dispensation rule variables.

There is today no way of predicting form of address between strangers. As a result, patrons from social groups 2 and 3 are developing an "avoid—let the other initiate—then reciprocate" strategy, and the change in choice of options with the present uncertainty in predicting choice is accompanied by new rules, i.e. not a change in rules but additional rules, for who chooses option. Application of the dispensation rules requires some familiarity with the addressee in order to determine sex, age, and rank, in whatever order they are applied. With the rapidly increased use of *du* + Ø between strangers, and clients' fluctuation between this *du* and anonymous *ni*, it makes sense in service relationships to grant the customer the opportunity to miscalculate rather than to offend by one's own faulty estimation of the situation.¹⁰

It is especially this alternation between anonymous *ni* and solidarity *du* between strangers which lead Swedes to believe that their address system is totally irregular. Anonymous *ni* is being replaced so rapidly by *du* + Ø that an individual's

¹⁰ This approach is reflected in the following excerpt from *Trafikhandboken*, Storstockholms Lokaltrafik 1974, the manual for employees of the local transportation company: 'Between employees, we usually say *Du* to each other. Avoid, however, saying *du* to customers. Word of address is a personal matter which one ought to agree on. Older persons usually don't like to be addressed as *du*.'

usage will vary day from day depending on his mood that day. When I was cheerful and happy with the world, I would address many more strangers as *du* than when I felt tired and irritated in which case I would use *ni*. I was not aware of this variation in my own usage until several informants commented on the influence of mood on their own usage.

There are, however, certain factors which do influence an individual's alternation so there is not totally free variation. I would never use *du* to somebody much older than I or *ni* to somebody younger. The librarian I overheard at the Royal Library constitutes a perfect example. He was filling out cards for two customers. As upper-class patron, he did not hesitate to initiate, which he did. To the man of his own age, about 30, he said *Vad heter du?* 'What is your name?' while to the reader who was fifteen—twenty years older than he was—he said *Vad är Ert namn?*

The setting of similar transactions may influence choice of pronoun. Many informants commented that they would address the sales clerk in a boutique with *du* but that they would never do so at NK, the expensive department store. Gas station attendants are repeatedly singled out by upper-class informants for their uninhibited address form; although working-class patrons, they frequently initiate *du* + Ø, but they too are sensitive to social class. One amused informant reports that when he drove up in a small car he was addressed with *du* only to be addressed as *ni* later in the day when he returned in a big expensive car. The same informant also reports that the Lutheran minister, who was known to the attendant, in mufti was addressed as *du* but in clerical garb received a polite *Pastorn*, i.e. T-third person.

But individual usage will vary between individuals in the same identical setting, and one cannot predict such usage. My friend, around 40, writes me that the other day two plumbers around 25 came to fix something in her apartment. One of them addressed her as *du*, the other as *ni*. At a cash register in a sports clothes store where I was paying for my purchase, there were two clerks; one addressed me as *du*, the other as *damen*. The *du*-speaker in this case was the younger, and the *du*-usage clearly is spread by the younger generation. But the impossibility of delineating rules of address which will accurately predict choice of address is limited to the interaction of strangers, of *opresenterade* (Andersson et al. 1970) 'people who are not introduced to each other', and all other interactions are clearly rule-governed.

CONCLUSION

The Swedish address system is in a stage of rapid change with an increased use of solidarity *du* + ØN, brought about by the dominant political ideology, and no doubt facilitated by the awkwardness of the previous usage which most Swedes are relieved to escape. Swedes are given to generalizations that (1) today everyone uses *du* and (2) there are no stateable rules for address usage. Neither proposition is true, and I have attempted in this paper to account for those rules. The major argument has been that an adequate description of the Swedish address system is possible only through the recognition that the social classes have different rules due to different semantics of the pronouns *du* and *ni*.

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