Burmese grammar. One looks naturally to the long-distinguished Department of Burmese in the School of Oriental and African Studies for such a grammar. For this reason, the present attempt is a double disappointment.

REFERENCES


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Glossolalia, according to Goodman, is a certain kind of behavior (97): a person goes ‘into’ glossolalia (10) and emits vocal sounds while ‘in’ it (52). In contexts like these, the word is practically synonymous with altered mental state (or dissociation, or trance). But the same word is used of the vocalization (ix) or utterance (121) emitted in this state. Superficially innocent, the terminological ambiguity is symptomatic of this book’s damaging shortcomings. G has apparently never accepted the fact that people speak in tongues, and obviously do so for accessible and simple reasons. In fact, verbs of locution play a minor role in the rhetoric of her description, in spite of the book’s title.

As utterance, glossolalia is said to be characterized across different ‘cultural settings’ and language competence (121) by certain ‘earmarks’ (4). They are the following, originally set out in only eight points: (a) Every pulse or pulse configuration—an unexplained synonym of syllable (95, 103)—begins with a consonant. (b) Syllables never begin with consonant clusters. (c) Groups of syllables, or ‘bars’ (103) are usually of equal duration. (d) Every bar has a primary stress on the first syllable, i.e. after pause. There is always a secondary stress, but its distribution is not explained. (e) Series of bars make up phrases (comparable to what I call breath groups) that are (i) ‘of approximately equal length’ (4, fn.) in a single ‘episode’—or, perhaps, to use my own terms, glossolalic discourse? for the same glossolalist all the time? for all glossolalists?; (ii) set off by pause ‘approximately as long as that between two successive English sentences in running speech’ (103); and (iii) characterized by an intonation contour that ‘regularly shows’ an onset in the medium range, a peak, and a sloping gradient. (f) For any individual over time, utterances (quickly, one gathers) become ‘internalized’ and ‘stereotyped’. The latter is defined in terms of a fixed inventory of syllables, which means that ‘the subject keeps saying the same thing’ (97). (g) Stereotyped utterances of the members of a single group resemble those of the person who guided them into the behavior. (h) An individual’s ‘glossolalia utterance’, a series of several phrases (103), changes over time, resulting in a ‘loss of intensity (loudness, pitch), increase in pattern variation [presumably meaning that the intonational contours become more varied], lengthening of utterance time, and shortening of the episode’ (123). (i) The
vocalizations are 'lexically non-communicative' (123). (j) ‘Grammar and coherence of thought are often neglected’ (4, fn.)

If the reader is at this point puzzled or incredulous, he will be stupefied to learn that the vocal phenomenon characterized by this set of features is illustrated by choking, spasmodic movements, and whispering (156); stuttering (129); repetitions of syllables like /rai/ and /sa/ (143, 144); a tense hiss consisting of a sound ‘produced with the teeth almost touching and the tongue curled tightly behind the lower teeth’ (139, 103); and inarticulate vocalization (iii) as well as intelligible speech (110)! Yet G claims that the ‘configuration of patterns’ is her strongest argument for the unity of these and other kinds of vocalizations, all of which have their source in dissociation (99). Her thesis therefore stands or falls on linguistic analysis.

We will look at this thesis and the nature of the data that supposedly support it. But let us first note that G is caught in the inconsistency of her own logic. Because she has failed to specify the necessary features of a glossolalic utterance, she can believe that this hodge-podge uniformly has these patterns. (Elsewhere she wrote of ‘the perfect regularity of the organization’ of glossolalia with respect to these features, 1969:238). Elsewhere in the book the criterial feature is identified, and it is purely prosodic in nature. For an utterance—or if there is auditory interference, just ‘identifiable units within the utterance’ (in other words, any number of syllables)—to be considered glossolalic, it is only necessary that it show ‘a threshold of onset, a brief rising gradient of intensity, a peak and a final, often precipitous decay’, and that this pattern cannot be accounted for by chance when it occurs in different cultures (7). In other words, the universality of a rising-falling and ‘decaying’ intonation is neither natural nor learned, but is the product of an altered state of consciousness.

I will make the contrary assertion that the rising-falling intonation is the most common and the least marked one in all human speech. But this is so easily tested that it is a trivial observation. Therefore, if there is a neuro-physiological basis for this pattern, it must be found in the brain’s normal state.

While it is true that I have not made much of intonation in my own description of glossolalia (Samarin 1968 etc.), this is not because, as G claims, I consider intonation ‘not a linguistic factor’, and it is not true that I ‘failed to record it’ (102). It is typical of G’s misreading of her sources that she failed to note that, in the sentence quoted (from Samarim 1968:74), I was talking about the sample text. What I said was that extra (in addition to primary and secondary stress was probably ‘to be explained by intonational and emotional factors, not linguistic ones in the strictest sense’ (emphasis added). Moreover, there is no justification for assuming that I did not record intonation simply because, in the printed sample text, I did not provide a notation. In fact, on p. 60 I do give a notation for one of the ‘sentences’, and compare the intonation of several others with those of English sentences! Since then, I have also subjected some glossolalic texts to spectrographic analysis. The only observation that can be made of these prayers is that they resemble in prosodics the English praying style of the groups from which the people come, except that they are even more repetitious.

G’s thesis, to be explicit, is that there is a kind of vocalization that is an ‘artifact of a hyper-aroused mental state’ (8). It is not simply produced while a person is in dissociation (96, 123), but is the result of rhythmical discharges of the brain’s sub-cortical structures when a person has switched off cortical control; this kind of speech is automatic (124). As a ‘trained linguist’ (ix), therefore, G interprets this phenomenon ‘in Chomskyan terms as the surface structure of a non-linguistic deep structure’, which is a hyper-aroused mental state (8, 151–2). Having discovered this causal relationship between dissociation and vocalization, she claims that this kind of vocalization is itself diagnostic of dissociation
(84, 126)—you will know that a person is in trance. And another ‘important point’ to her research, G suggests, is that she has contributed to understanding the structure of the unconscious by outlining its regularities (152).

The regular speech automatism which G writes about was observed in speakers of four different languages in seven different ‘cultural settings’ (121). These are never explicitly identified, nor does G, ‘armed with years of anthropological training’ (19), tell us what is significantly different about these ‘settings’. Indeed, they are all religious, and all but one are of the Pentecostal variety. Of the seven, G clearly had field contact with only three: one church congregation each in Hammond, Indiana, in Mexico City, and in Yucatan. But field work was concentrated only in the last two (26). The Evangelical Temple in Hammond is not identified as Pentecostal, but it clearly is Pentecostal in religious ‘culture’ if not in denominational affiliation. The other two churches are definitely Pentecostal, of the Apostolic Faith variety (see Nichol 1966, Synan 1971). The Yucatan church was in a Mayan village; but, like the Mexican congregation, this one was Spanish-speaking. (No sociolinguistic information is given by G; we are not told to what extent and for what purposes the subjects of this study are bilingual.) Two of the remaining ‘cultural settings’ are from the United States: one a tent revival in Columbus, Ohio, known only from a student’s report; the other an unidentified main-line Protestant church meeting, known only from a television broadcast. Both are definitely Pentecostal, the latter an example of the contemporary or ‘neo’-Pentecostal movement. Of the final two, the St. Vincent Island group is definitely Pentecostal, as I know from personal field work in Holland where the Streams of Power movement originated; the Umbanda group, however, studied in São Paulo, Brazil, does not appear to be Pentecostal. In any case, G knows these only from the work of others. Besides, she uses Umbanda data only to illustrate three specimens of behavior in trance: breathing, singing (vocalization not provided), and an ‘inarticulate trance phrase’ (111–12).

Whatever it is that G has observed, then, we can agree with her that it was probably not caused by chance (7). But we do not need to derive it from dissociation, which, as we shall see, was not itself an empirical certainty. Pentecostals pray, preach, give their testimonies, read Scripture, and use pseudo-language in a characteristic way. This should be no more surprising, even if some Pentecostals do find a religious function for dissociation, than finding that, in ‘high-church’ Anglican liturgy, Scripture is read and prayers are intoned in similar ways. If a researcher like G does not know this, she owes it to her subject (as an author does to her readers) to become familiar with at least the use of language in religious practice.

Let us say it clearly: G’s treatment is erroneous, speculative, contradictory, and incredible, because of her relentless hold on an idée fixe. Yet her empirical base was simple enough: the vocalizations of Pentecostals who appeared to be in a state of dissociation. It was because she believed her hypothesis (on the causal relation between vocalization and dissociation) that she has gone to such extremes to prove it. A more careful person, working within the best scientific tradition, would have taken pains to DISPROVE it. If she had failed at that, she would have had more reason to believe the hypothesis.

Although G passes over in silence contradictory evidence available to her, some of it cited in her bibliography, she comments on one case of anomalous speech produced during dissociation as induced by LSD (124–5). This is not glossolalia, she says, because it has a richness of sound inventory, and because it has no regularly spaced bars or phrases, and no onset-rise-decay intonation such as occurs in ‘naturally’ induced glossolalia. Moreover, in supporting her belief, G does not refer to the tremendous number of people in the contemporary ‘neo’-Pentecostal movement

1 Although it is clear from some of the statements made that G has in mind a causal relationship, she does not use the word. Elsewhere, in fact, she says of her vocalizations that they are ‘produced on the substratum of hyper-arousal dissociation, reflecting directly, in its segmental and supra-segmental structure, neuro-physiologic processes’ of this state (124), and that it is a ‘secondary behavior, superimposed upon and evolving on’ this sub-stratum (156, 157, 160). None of this is spelled out, nor is it even suggested how one could go about demonstrating all this.
(found among, e.g., Presbyterians, Lutherans, and Catholics) that espouses a certain quality and style of religious experience. Dissociation is rare in this movement, and it certainly is not culturally structured—integrated into the belief system—as it is among some traditional Pentecostals. Furthermore, she has ignored the large variety of verbal phenomena outside religion that very closely resemble or are identical with what Pentecostals call 'speaking in tongues.' For many of these (like play language among children), there is absolutely no justification for assuming an altered mental state.

While ignoring the vast amount of evidence that refutes her belief, G imputes to me ignorance of 'the diagnostic signals of the altered state' (96). This is, of course, pure conjecture on her part. If I did not record my qualifications as an observer, it was because I felt that there was no need. With St. Paul's diffidence, I am now forced to recite them. Born into a distinguished family in the pre-Pentecostal, tongue-speaking Russian sect of Molokan Spiritual Jumpers, I participated from childhood through adolescence in all types of major functions. Dissociation has always been a common feature of Molokan religious events, especially in the ever-rising 'revivalistic' (in the ethnographer's sense) groups in the community. As an adolescent, I participated as a critical observer in a young people's movement where inspiration by the Spirit led to frequent, prolonged, and intense dissociation. I have elsewhere witnessed what fundamentalist Protestants call demon possession on several occasions. I have seen people 'filled with the Spirit' in a pocomania meeting in Jamaica, in a snake-handling church service in West Virginia, in Negro Pentecostal churches in Connecticut, in a Puerto Rican and Cuban Assemblies of God church in the Bronx, in Pentecostal churches and tent meetings in Holland and Canada, etc. I have also witnessed dissociation outside Christianity, once in an exorcising ritual in the Central African Republic, and once when (for the sake of research) I had a consultation in the Bronx with a santera priestess. And I know dissociation personally from two experiences, both of the 'nature' variety, once unexpectedly and once self-induced for my research on glossolalia.

It is clear, in any case, that I have seriously considered the possibility of there being a causal relationship between dissociation and a certain kind of anomalous speech; and in my paper cited by G, I reached a negative conclusion. I said that emotion and psychological state should be omitted from the definition of glossolalia (Samarin 1968:52). G grossly misinterprets me as contending that 'no dissociation ... is present at all' (96). In fact, I accepted the concomitant occurrence of both these variables in two published cases (50, 57). What I did say, giving a critical reading to a third account, was that if a person utters something like dododododo ... while in dissociation, that is not necessarily glossolalia—i.e. a particular kind of speech (1968:51).

It should be obvious by now that one of the crucial problems in studying 'glossolalia' is determining the kinds of vocalizations that are to be considered as data. I have said repeatedly that it serves no linguistic purpose to accept as glossolalia everything that Pentecostals consider Spirit-given tongues. What they are willing to accept depends on the function that anomalous speech has among them. If it is no more than evidence of the baptism in the Spirit, and if that experience is of paramount importance, then the believers will be extremely indulgent in their judgments—going to the limit, in fact, of imputing tongues to a person when he denies or doubts having achieved this speech (as cited, e.g., by G p. 68). On the other hand, when anomalous speech is to be used for personal or public prayer, or when it is to be used for declaring a message (that, of course, needs inspired interpretation), it is reasonable—but not necessary—that it sound more like language. These too are 'perfectly pedestrian' observations (99) about language that should have figured in G's study.

With this perspective, I have elsewhere hypothesized (Samarin 1973) that the segmental form of pseudo-language has a certain regressive characteristic. I would now hypothesize that it is inevitable that extemporaneously produced and prolonged speech will have open syllables, a very high incidence of a small number of phonological units, and gradient variation (e.g. kontola, huntala, kuntala from G,
p. 106, etc.) But it was an entirely different hypothesis that first directed me to the study of glossolalia. In 1965, before I had had an opportunity to analyse a glossolalic text, I assumed that I would find similar phonological patterns in both African ideophones (for which see Samarin 1971) and glossolalia, because of their affective function. My expectations were confirmed. An adequate sample of glossolalia always turns up something like G's handa landa (108), which is comparable to the Gbeya ideophonic adverb yongo lingo. However, I would now want to restate the basic hypothesis about affect.

If one takes a sociolinguistic stance, most of the vocalizations can be accounted for as follows. There are two kinds: one consists of utterances produced while the speaker believes or is under the impression that he is actually talking; the other consists of vocalizations under less linguistic control. Some of them can be ejaculatory (and, like ejaculations and exclamations in natural language, may have a certain pattern); others may be non-linguistic in the strict sense. The latter would include utterances that are accidental, because the speaker—while groaning, crying, laughing etc.—allowed sound out of his mouth with little or no intent to control its acoustic form. In certain Pentecostal groups and on specific religious occasions, speech is less important than making sounds. That is, one's involvement in getting the Spirit is manifested vocally. Some vocalizations are stereotyped as exclamations. From here, there is closer and closer approximation to natural language, to the degree that the speaker takes himself to be saying something. Not every person advances to eloquent pseudo-language in groups like those observed by G, though even there leadership is clearly associated with competence in producing pseudo-language. In other groups, these initial utterances are taken to be the first steps in learning the spiritual language. My own views are treated in works cited below.

Because G has slighted sociolinguistic factors, she is forced to an implausible explanation of some of her data. Put very simply, she notes that people did not vocalize in the way she expected, and when she expected them to. Her explanation for this is attenuation: 'with the inescapability of physiological processes', glossolalia fades (132). The process she alludes to is energy discharge, a Freudian notion accepted uncritically and credited to Laffal (e.g. 1967). Speech, even in the conscious state, is a mechanism for discharging energy; but in dissociation, energy is obstructed to a point where 'it is as if a tremendous wall were being rent apart, some weighty obstacle literally blown up' (94). The first stage of glossolalia, then, is physiologically-produced, high-energy vocalization. This is when glossolalia is a 'compressed shout', 'chattering teeth', or a string like [PUʔPUʔPU] (94). The next stage is stereotype, which is model-oriented and has fixed content. G obviously means that, at the next point in time, a speaker will say exactly what he has said before. But this is contradicted by diachronic attenuation.

2 It is strange that G quotes from personal correspondence with Laffal without realizing that his glossolalist, who had 'rather remarkable control over his glossolalia speech', could not have been in dissociation (84). Moreover, she has grossly misinterpreted Laffal's report of his study with this speaker. She cites it as an illustration of the use of 'trigger words' that induce dissociation and glossolalia; but this is not the case at all. The speaker was my 'Rev. d'Esprit'. At my invitation Dr. Laffal and I collaborated in an interview with this neo-Pentecostalist. What I was primarily interested in was the possible correlation between glossolalic output and affect (since this pseudo-language has no systematic semantic reference). We asked him to think of, e.g., 'strength', while praying in tongues, and then do the same with 'weakness'. When I analyzed these texts, I found no interesting correlations (see Samarin 1972a:96). Incidentally, far from being an artifact of dissociation, Rev. d'Esprit's closing [so*ntó*] in a glossolalic prayer (Samarin 1972a:78), very similar in form—and probably in function—to G's [hónto], obviously has the function of terminating a text, as if he were saying Amen.
Attenuated glossolalia shows less energy content, and this is perceived in a number of ways: decrease in loudness, disappearance of the majority of the high-effort vowels [i u] which are replaced by low-effort ones [a a], and increase in the variety of syllable types etc. (96). (One is surprised to learn, 103, that for all G's data, [i] and [u] have the qualities of the vowels of English thick and foot.) This fails to convince, not merely because no statistical information is provided, but also because the statements are contradictory. Note that attenuation is said to have both a fixed vocal content and also an increase in syllable types. And if it is true that energy decline is manifested by vowel decay in a single utterance (135), this is not revealed in most of her samples. The vowel [a] is common in all our samples, for good linguistic reasons. In fact, the phrase G describes as having an 'energy level ... so depleted that the decay is truly precipitous' (106) ends with [handi:]!

G claims to have discovered that glossolalia changes over time, that this was one of the most surprising findings of her study (27), and that it had never been noted before (96). She apparently had not adequately prepared herself for the research, because glossolalic development (as I would call it) is frequently discussed by Pentecostalist writers. Besides, in a paper that was familiar to her, I dealt explicitly with this matter (Samarin 1969:62).

If G had paid attention to the etiology or the nature of glossolalia, she would have produced a much more interesting and perhaps even valuable book. However, she disavows this intent (xxii); she wants only to offer a description of glossolalia (xxii). It is typical of this book that the ostensible goal is inconsistent with its numerous assertions. The descriptive aim, however, is revealed in the book's organization. Since dissociation is really G's primary topic (i.e. glossolalia behavior), she first deals with her research methodology, then with conversion stories, altered states of consciousness, the glossolalia utterance, kinetic behavior that accompanies dissociation, wakening from this state, and cultural elaborations of hyperarousal dissociation.

G received a master's degree in linguistics and a doctorate in anthropology at Ohio State University, where she participated as a student team member in a project devoted to the 'Cross-cultural study of dissociational states', under the direction of Erika Bourguignon of that university. We have become accustomed to sophisticated linguistic studies by anthropologists in North America. This incompetent book will remind us all that excellence is not a state, but only a goal for which we strive.

REFERENCES