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Description

vs.

Prescription:

The Prescriptive Role of Culture

in

Johann Christoph Adelung's

Geschichte der Deutschen Sprache

A Thesis

Presented for the

Master of Arts

Degree

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Leah Kathryn Huneycutt

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated in
memory of my mother,
Marolyn White Huneycutt,
who has always been
a part of my life.

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ABSTRACT

This analysis of Johann Christoph Adelung's eighteenth century grammar entitled Geschichte der Deutschen Sprache clearly reveals Adelung's main theory of the interconnection of language and culture and how he approached his discussion. Adelung's grammar consists of four sections which emphasize the effect of the level of culture on the development of language. Section three of this grammar (*Deutsche Mundarten*) is of main importance to my research because it best illustrates Adelung's view on the relationship of language and culture. In this section of Adelung's grammar, Adelung's specific use of the three words *Sprache*, *Mundart* and *Dialect* and his views regarding the formation of the *Oberdeutsche*, *Niederdeutsche* and *Hochdeutsche Mundarten* are analyzed. The result is clear: Adelung arranged his notions of *Sprache*, *Mundart* and *Dialect* and the three German *Mundarten* on a hierarchy according to his perception of their level of culture. In addition, Adelung was highly judgmental in his descriptions of *Oberdeutsch*, *Niederdeutsch* and *Hochdeutsch*.

The analysis concludes that Adelung's initial intention for writing this grammar was to describe the language rather than prescribe in order to enlighten the masses of the irregular usage in their language. Adelung hoped his indirect intervention would be a successful method aimed at

refining the German language, but a closer analysis of his text reveals that he did intervene by expressing a preference for the dialect he proposed to describe. Through this choice of dialect, he in effect acted prescriptively because he thus chose to describe forms he preferred and could ignore forms he found distasteful.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Johann Christoph Adelung was one of the foremost scholars of the German language during the eighteenth century who contributed immensely to the codification of the German standard language before his death in 1806. Adelung is recognized today primarily for his four-volume comprehensive dictionary Versuch eines vollständigen grammatisch-kritischen Wörterbuches der hochdeutschen Mundart, mit beständiger Vergleichung der übrigen Mundarten published between the years 1774 and 1786. Adelung's meticulous explanations of the meaning of each word illustrate the influence of the Enlightenment period in which he wrote. This period was characterized by the concept of reason, or rather, the educability of all human beings, and led to a rapid expansion of knowledge in all areas. Since Adelung's field of study was language, he also concentrated on conveying to the educated bourgeoisie his theories on how language developed. The impetus for his theories stemmed from Johann Gottfried Herder's essay "Ursprung der Sprache," in which Herder contributed his views on the origin of language. Adelung presented his work in such a way that readers could readily understand and apply his theories and hypotheses. In doing so, he followed the work of Herder.

Adelung made several valuable contributions as a grammarian during his time. Two works in particular are his Deutsche Sprachlehre für Schulen published in 1781 and his Umständliches Lehrgebäude der deutschen Sprache published in 1782. He described language development from a historical standpoint and laid down some diachronic groundwork for Germanic linguistics. Although Adelung viewed language as developing historically, he has not been credited for this view of language by his successors. As a result, his contributions regarding language development have not been recognized by other linguists since his death in the earlier part of the nineteenth century.

The era in which Adelung was active was one of great change in regard to the views and theories concerning the origin of language. The traditional views on language origin and development were advanced in the mid-eighteenth century by such scholars as J.P. Süssmilch, Jean Jacques Rousseau, Etienne Bonnot de Condillac, and the English and French "naturalists." In his 1907 paper "Herder's Ursprung der Sprache," Edward Sapir reviewed the principal theories of this era, which I summarize in brief in the following paragraphs.

The first theory involved Johann Peter Süssmilch (1707-1767), who is known first and foremost for his work as a German statistician and political economist. His orthodox theory was the most commonly accepted theory at this time.

His 1766 work, entitled Versuch eines Beweises, daß die erste Sprache ihren Ursprung nicht vom Menschen, sondern allein vom Schöpfer erhalten habe, presents his view of the origin of language as a gift from God.

The second theory involved the Swiss Jean Jacques Rousseau and the German Rationalists. Rousseau, who is often labeled "The Father of Romanticism," lived from 1712 to 1778. He wrote novels as well as critical works regarding the society in which he lived, writings which often disturbed the Calvinist Genevan council. As a passionate writer, Rousseau was also concerned with the evolution of language and he expressed his views on this topic in his 1749 essay entitled "L'Essai sur l'origine des langues." He saw "language as a *sine qua non*, as the natural lifeblood of human culture and social demeanor in all its forms" (Moran and Gode v). Rousseau, along with the German Rationalists, looked upon language as suddenly manifesting itself in the minds of humans who could no longer bear the frustration of not having speech. Therefore, according to this theory, the most astute individuals came together and devised a way for humans to successfully communicate their ideas. This means of communication was, of course, language itself.

The last theory was held by the "naturalists," who viewed language as a reaction of the senses and of the mind to stimuli in the environment. This reaction, or reflex,

was expressed in the form of cries, which therefore formed a language. One of the more well-known scholars who supported this theory was Etienne Bonnot de Condillac (1715-80). "Als Vertreter des Lockeschen Sensualismus [sah] er aus der Sensation die Reflexion durch bloße Umformung folgen und ebenso, kann man hinzufügen, aus der Reflexion die Expression, die Sprache also" (Arens 107).

This overview of the variety of theories during Adelung's time reveals the complexities of an age when no one view of the way human language developed was universally accepted. Süßmilch's theory was the most accepted theory during that period, which was presumably based on the text in Genesis. The text in Genesis states that Adam gave names to the animals and birds that were led before him by God, but it does not clearly state how Adam developed these names. In other words, it allows for other interpretations than that of Süßmilch. Therefore, there was a growing skepticism toward this orthodox view of the Bible, which permitted more than one clear interpretation of the origin of language. This skepticism led to the establishment of the Berlin Academy prize essay contest of 1769, which called for different scholars to contribute their views on the origin of language. The contest posed the following question: "En supposant les hommes abandonnés à leurs facultés naturelles, sont ils en état d'inventer le langage?

et par quels moyens parviendront-ils d'eux-memes à cette invention?" [Supposing that men are left to their own natural faculties, are they capable of inventing language? And by what means do they arrive at this invention by themselves?]

This prize question motivated more scholars to formulate ideas regarding the origin of language. Johann Gottfried Herder's views on this subject profoundly influenced Adelung. Herder developed his own theory of language, which departed from the most widely accepted views during his time. Herder, who was several years younger than Adelung, revolutionized the prevailing outlook on the origin of language through his views. Instead of perceiving language as a pre-formed gift from God, he saw it as developing historically out of capacities widely recognized as innately human.

Herder incorporated elements from many of the widely accepted views of his time, but found elements in each theory to be disputable. One especially important objection was to Condillac's theory, which Herder believed did not sufficiently differentiate "between the instincts of the animals and the higher mental powers of man" (Sapir 7). Herder wanted to prove that the ability of a human to speak was a "necessary correlative of certain distinctly human psychic conditions" (Sapir 7). He formulated his own term, "Besonnenheit," literally meaning "reflection," to refer to

the human ability to refine and develop concepts which were then expressed in language. "Der Mensch in den Zustand von Besonnenheit gesetzt, der ihm eigen ist, und diese Besonnenheit (Reflexion) zum erstenmal frei würkend, hat Sprache erfunden" (Herder 572-73). Thus, Herder's view served as an impetus for more historically and psychologically based views, and people started believing that language evolved over time on the basis of innate, God-given human capacities instead of coming directly from God. Herder's view led to progress towards the evaluation of the role of history in language which has guided our understanding of language since his time.

Following in the footsteps of Herder, Johann Christoph Adelung expanded on the knowledge gained by Herder's work during the eighteenth century and he applied the new outlook to the history of the German language. Adelung, as previously discussed, published his renowned four-volume dictionary during the years 1774 to 1786. This great work brought Adelung much deserved attention and earned him a position among the most respected scholars of his time. After receiving the highest recognition as a lexicographer, Adelung also became known as a grammarian through his published work entitled Deutsche Sprachlehre für Schulen in 1781. Following the publication of this grammar, Adelung also issued a periodical and released a study of the Asiatic languages. Through his work, Adelung is said to have

greatly contributed "towards rectifying the orthography, refining the idiom, and fixing the standard of his native tongue" ("Adelung").

Although Adelung received a tremendous amount of attention during his time and is said to have made a great mark in the world of linguistics, he is recognized in the twentieth century mainly for his eighteenth century dictionary. Adelung, along with Herder, also expressed his views and knowledge regarding the origin and history of language. Herder's proof that language rested upon the innate human capacity to perceive and refine characteristics of objects of our senses (*Besonnenheit*) implied that language developed over time and in society to an even more highly refined instrument. In other words, language was a product of history and of culture in Herder's view. This notion was adopted and refined by Adelung, who explicitly refers to Herder's work in the separately published section of his grammar Umständliches Lehrgebäude der deutschen Sprache entitled Geschichte der Deutschen Sprache. In this grammar, Adelung focuses on the interconnection of language and culture, i.e., the continuous effect that culture has on language and vice versa. This interconnection was of central importance to Adelung, who developed and established his views on the history of the German language accordingly.

Although Adelung's grammar during the eighteenth

century became a crucial element in the development of the German standard language and a descriptive approach to German grammar in the following century, Adelung is underrecognized for this contribution by his successors. Perhaps because his grammar was intended for schoolchildren in the elementary and secondary schools in Germany, his views were largely ignored by serious linguists after his time, and recent scholars of the German language rarely make note of this work.

Another reason for the disregard of Adelung's text is the work of his successors during the early part of the nineteenth century. One scholar who is well known for his linguistic contributions and who has certainly overshadowed the work of Adelung is Jacob Grimm. Grimm, who lived from 1785 to 1863, is known for his work as a German philologist and mythologist. Like Adelung, Grimm also began a comprehensive dictionary of the German language, which was finally completed in 1961.

During the earlier years of Grimm's life, approximately between 1819 and 1837, he, again like Adelung, wrote and published his own grammar. For this comprehensive work (3854 pages and four volumes), Grimm was recognized as the one who became the "Schöpfer der historisch-vergleichenden Grammatik" and "Begründer der Germanistik in ihrem ganzen Umfange" (Arens 194). It should be mentioned here that when Grimm wrote his epoch-making Deutsche Grammatik, it was

against Adelung that he directed his criticism of earlier grammars. Thus, Grimm's grammar superseded the work of Adelung and, as a result, redirected the study of linguistics as a whole. Although Adelung had laid down some diachronic groundwork for Germanic linguistics, we think of historical studies as beginning with Grimm.

Another linguistic scholar whose work also overshadowed the accomplishments of Adelung is Wilhelm von Humboldt. Humboldt lived during the years 1767 and 1835 in Germany and became known for his work as a philologist. Humboldt did not write an entire grammar, as did Adelung and Grimm, but rather expressed several ideas and views, in fragments, on the history of language.

Humboldt is often noted for his "sprachbedingte Weltanschauung," i.e., his "relativity principle," which states that the language we speak largely influences our view of our surroundings and of life; "our minds are cast in a certain linguistic mold which predetermines our interpretation of the world about us" (Waterman 194). This principle is expressed in his 1836 work entitled Über die Verschiedenheit des menschlichen Sprachbaues und ihren Einfluß auf die geistige Entwicklung des Menschengeschlechts. In this work, Humboldt also asserted a "unitary" perception of language, a perception that was also shared by Grimm. This perception viewed language as a single unit or "organism" which functioned as a whole, so

that there was no need to distinguish between dialects and the more prestigious standard language. As quoted from Humboldt's view on language: "Nicht bloß, daß die Sprache selbst ein organisches Ganzes ist, so hängt sie auch mit der Individualität derer, die sie sprechen, so genau zusammen, daß dieser Zusammenhang schlechterdings nicht vernachlässigt werden darf" (Arens 171). Although not written in the form of a grammar, Humboldt's work was popular during the nineteenth century and in it he minimized the scholastic contributions of Adelung. Humboldt's name is still well known among linguists in the twentieth century.

In summary, Johann Christoph Adelung was a key figure among a large group of scholars in the eighteenth century who contributed to the formation of the German written standard and the application of Herderian views regarding the origin of language to the understanding of the development of German. Adelung was primarily influenced by Herder, who redirected the study of linguistics by viewing language development as a historical process. Adelung's contributions in this regard and his emphasis on the interconnection of language and culture have been overshadowed by nineteenth-century scholars, such as Jacob Grimm and Wilhelm von Humboldt. Thus, linguists from Adelung's time to the present rarely make note of the theories he presented on the origin of language.

In this thesis I will examine more closely the views which Adelung presented on language development. The basis for my research will be the section of Adelung's grammar entitled Geschichte der Deutschen Sprache. The objective of this analysis is to reveal how Adelung perceived the development of language, how he emphasized the interconnection of language and culture, and how he approached his linguistic work. In the conclusion of this thesis I will examine Adelung's attempt as an eighteenth century scholar at applying a descriptive method to his theories on language development and how he deviated from this method.

Chapter 2

Adelung's Notions of *Sprache*, *Mundart*, and *Dialect* and Their Relationship With Culture

In this chapter I will discuss Adelung's theories on the relationship of language and culture. For this purpose, I will analyze Adelung's Geschichte der Deutschen Sprache, published in 1781, which is representative of his views regarding the origin of language in this historical grammar.

The four sections of Adelung's grammar deal with the history of the German language, a survey of the development of the language, German dialects, and the grammatical rules of the language. When each section is analyzed in detail, the cultural and historical references that govern Adelung's work are quite evident. For example, in the second section, Adelung provides a culturally based periodization which roughly corresponds with the modern periodization of Germanic, Old High German, Middle High German, and Early New High German. In a more specific example, his periodization from the fourteenth century "bis zur Reformation" (15) corresponds with one commonly accepted periodization of the Late Middle High German. Relying as it does on a non-linguistic event to define a linguistic period, this is just one example among many which reveals his socio-cultural view of the German language.

The third section of this grammar (*Deutsche Mundarten)*

focuses most clearly and best illustrates Adelung's view of the interconnection of language and culture. Even so, the views in this section regarding language and culture are representative of the entire work.

To clarify Adelung's views on the status of the "dialects" of each historical period, I will first examine his specific use of the three words *Sprache*, *Mundart*, and *Dialect*. His use of these three closely related words distinguishes three separate meanings and clearly defines his views on language and its formation.

The word *Sprache* for Adelung is a general term which he applies to a "Nation" or to an established and consistently used language among a group of peoples. For example, in the third section of this grammar he describes the German language during its earlier years as embodying two related *Sprachen* instead of two principal *Mundarten*. "Die Deutsche Sprache theilet sich von Alters her in zwei Hauptmundarten, oder vielmehr eigene verwandte Sprachen, die südliche oder Oberdeutsche, und die nördliche oder Niederdeutsche" (72). In the first section of this grammar, Adelung defines *Sprache* as an audible expression of ideas (4) and asserts that a *Sprache* is the most distinguishing characteristic of a people. "Die Sprache ist das wichtigste Unterscheidungsmerkmal eines Volkes. . . . Es (das Volk) kann seine Sitten, seine Gebräuche, selbst seine Religion ändern, und es bleibt noch immer eben dasselbe Volk; aber

man gebe ihm eine andere Sprache, so verhält sich ganz anders" (5).

According to Adelung, *Sprache* seems to represent a completed product after a series of changes which occured starting with a *Mundart*. The final form of a *Sprache*, whether coarse or refined, is determined by the level of culture from which it evolved.

> Mehr oder weniger Gemeinschaft unter den Stämmen, verschiedene Grade der Cultur, Clima und Boden, und andere zufällige Umstände mehr, unterhalten diese Verschiedenheit, vermehren oder vermindern sie, und können endlich aus dem, was anfänglich nur Mundart war, eine eigene sehr verschiedene Sprache machen, wenn nämlich die Trennung frühe genug und vor der völligen Ausbildung der Sprache geschiehet; und auf diese Art sind die meisten Sprachen in der Welt entstanden. (10)

In referring to differing forms of speech, or "dialects," that make up a *Sprache*, Adelung sometimes uses the words *Mundart* and *Dialect* without clearly distinguishing between the two. Adelung states that the language of a people (*Volk*) is very different at different historical times and that "diese Verschiedenheiten machen das aus, was man Dialecte oder Mundarten einer Sprache nennt" (9). At other times, however, he does make a distinction between these two words. A closer look at the section on *Deutsche*

Mundarten will provide clarity on this point.

When Adelung uses the word *Mundart*, he connects it with the following words signifying groups of people: *Volk*, *Stamm*, *Völkerschaft,* and *Völkerbund*. This expresses his contention that these people only spoke *Mundarten* because their means of language were constantly changing within and between their groups and never became established and accepted languages. "Von den Mundarten der Germanischen Völkerschaften vor und in der großen Völkerwanderung läßt sich wenig mehr sagen, als daß allem Ansehen nach jedes Volk oder jeder Stamm seine eigene [Mundart] hatte" (72). Although Adelung sometimes seems to use the words *Sprache* and *Mundart* interchangeably, a closer analysis reveals that he uses *Sprache* to refer to an established language and *Mundart* to refer to a more unstable language. Even if a *Mundart* later becomes a "Sprache," he still uses the term *Mundart* to refer to it.

In this third section on *Deutsche Mundarten*, Adelung rarely uses the term *Dialect*. This suggests that a *Dialect* is more restricted geographically and less developed culturally than a *Mundart*. In any case, a *Dialect* is certainly far below a true *Sprache* from a cultural standpoint. Perhaps a *Dialect* never reaches the status of a *Sprache* because Adelung limits it to small and isolated groups of people, such as *Volksstämme*, or to provinces. "Jede dieser Mundarten ist wieder in eine Menge kleinerer

untergeordneter Dialecte abgetheilet, so wie jede dieser fünf großen Völkerschaften aus der Verbindung oder Unterjochung mehrerer kleinerer Volksstämme erwachsen ist" (73). Here it is apparent that Adelung sees a parallelism between a *Mundart*, the larger more comprehensive grouping of speech types, and a *Völkerschaft*, the larger more comprehensive grouping of tribes. Therefore, according to Adelung, a *Dialect*, the speech of a *kleinerer Volksstamm*, is the less established form of speech among the *Mundarten*, the speech of a *große Völkerschaft*.

A closer look at Adelung's views regarding the formation of the *Oberdeutsche*, *Niederdeutsche*, and *Hochdeutsche Mundarten* in the section on *Deutsche Mundarten* reveals his primary attitude towards the interconnection of language and culture. Adelung places a great amount of emphasis on the level of a culture and its effect on the formation of a language. Put simply, Adelung's main theory is that culture forms language, i.e., the level of culture determines the status of a language. For example, once a *Mundart* reaches a certain level of culture, it then becomes a *Sprache*. Although he reinforces this theory throughout his text, some minor inconsistencies do arise where Adelung appears to imply that language influences culture. Adelung's views on the interrelationship of the terms *Sprache*, *Mundart*, and *Dialect* come into especially clear focus when he compares the German *Mundarten* with the three

Greek *Dialecte*. The contention of his argument is obvious: he intends to set the superior Attic form of Classical Greek equal to the *Obersächsische Mundart*, which he strives to set above the South German (Bavarian and Alemannic) and North German (Lower Saxon) dialects.

In Adelung's description of *Oberdeutsch*, a *Mundart* he limits to the most southern provinces "zwischen Franken und Italien," he describes the language as harsh, as having a tendency for glottal fricatives (/h/) and dorsovelar fortis fricatives (/x/), or in his terms "hauchende Mitlaute". He further describes its tendency for labiodental lenis and fortis fricatives (/v/ and /f/), the "blasenden Mitlaute," and dorsoprepalatal fortis fricatives (/ʃ/), the "zischenden Mitlaute." He also describes this language as having deep and high vowels, such as "sundern für sondern," and coarse diphthongs, such as in the words "fleussen, geussen, fleuhen, u.s.f. für fließen, gießen, fliehen" (77). According to Adelung, this *Mundart* distinguishes itself "durch ihre Härten, durch ein weitläufiges Wort- und Silbengepränge, durch weitschweifige Ausdrücke, Überfüllungen und hohe Figuren" (74).

Following this general description of *Oberdeutsch*, Adelung proceeds to give eight specific examples regarding the vocabulary and its usage which mark it as unbecoming or unsuitable for being a standard language. They are as follows: "1) Fülle des Mundes; daher die vorzügliche Liebe

zu hauchenden und blasenden Mitlauten . . . 2) Hang zu breiten und vollen Doppellauten statt der verwandten wohlklingenden, oder auch statt der einfachen Selbstlaute . . . 3) Härten, besonders Weglassung des e an den Fämininis, im Nominativ des Plurals, und an den Adjectiven . . . 4) Harte Zusammenziehungen . . . 5) Unnöthige Verdoppelung und Verhärtung der Mitlaute . . . 6) Verwechselung der harten Mitlaute mit den weichen und vorzügliche Neigung zu den ersten . . . 6) [sic] Überfüllungen der Wörter . . ." and lastly, "7) [sic] Der schwerfällige Gebrauch der Participien . . ." (74-75).

Because the Bavarian and Alemannic dialects had played such an important role in the Middle High German and Early New High German period, Adelung faces a curious predicament. These dialects have produced an extensive literature and undergone the kind of semantic enrichment typical of literary languages. Under normal circumstances, this would seem to be a mark of culture and refinement, which Adelung would view as a hallmark of a *Sprache*. Instead, he argues that this enrichment in the *Oberdeutsch* "ist Reichthum ohne Geschmack, Verschwendung ohne Klugheit, und Aufwand ohne Feinheit" (76).

In regard to the relationship between culture and language, Adelung saw this *Oberdeutsche Mundart* hindered by the lack of cultural progress. What was refined in the fifteenth century could not in his view be considered

refined by more modern standards. Thus, Adelung finesses the clear literary preeminence of South German dialects as measured against those of Central Germany. Since *Oberdeutschland* remained culturally behind, the language was unable to advance and to refine itself. "Oberdeutschland blieb in der Cultur zurück, als selbige in andern Provinzen sehr schnell fortschritt, daher behielt auch dessen Sprache alle die Härten und rauhen Eigenheiten, welche noch so sehr das Gepräge des funfzehnten [sic] Jahrhunderts an sich tragen" (76).

Following the description of *Oberdeutsch*, Adelung then describes the *Niederdeutsche* or "plattdeutsche" *Mundart* which dominated "von den Niederländischen Gränzen an bis an die Litthauischen" (77). He does not give specific examples of this *Mundart* as he did for *Oberdeutsch*, but defines it as pleasing to the ear. Although it was a melodic *Mundart*, it remained dominated by the *Oberdeutsche Mundart,* which was the customary written language. *Niederdeutsch* was dominated later by *Hochdeutsch*, which became the more preferred *Mundart* among cultured peoples.

> In der Cultur blieb das heutige Niedersachsen in den mittlern Zeiten am meisten zurück, zumahl da noch ein großer Theil von Wenden bewohnt ward, und obgleich unter den Schwäbischen Dichtern einige Niederdeutsche Sänger mit auftraten, so dichteten sie doch in der herrschenden Oberdeutschen

> Mundart. Zur Zeit der Reformation und der Wiederherstellung der Wissenschaften, erhielt Niederdeutschland seine Geistlichen und Gelehrten aus Obersachsen, und diese führten nach und nach die Hochdeutsche Mundart auf die Kanzeln, in die Hörsale und Gerichtsstuben ein, und alles, was **Geschmack** und **Sitten** haben wollte, fing an, sich dieser Mundart zu befleissigen, und die einheimische Landessprache blieb dem gemeinen Volke überlassen. (78-79, emphasis mine)

It should be pointed out, as stated above by Adelung, that everything that aspired to **taste** and **culture** began to devote itself to the *Hochdeutsche Mundart*, which was the more culturally refined language. Those languages that were looked down upon were left to the common *Volk*.

Since the *Niederdeutsche Mundart* gradually became a less respected language, it also lagged behind culturally. Here it is apparent that Adelung was sometimes inconsistent in his theory that culture forms language, though of course their interconnection remained strong. The less respected language, *Niederdeutsch*, is determining the level of culture in this example: "Da man nun die Niederdeutsche Mundart bloß als eine verachtete Volkssprache ansahe, so blieb sie in der Cultur zurück...(79). But Adelung heavily emphasizes that since the *Niederdeutsche Mundart* was "unter allen Deutschen Mundarten in der Wahl und Aussprache der Töne die

wohlklingendste, gefälligste, und angenehmste" and was "reich an einer kernhaften Kürze, an treffenden Ausdrücken und naiven Bildern," it could have been the most prosperous *Sprache*. However, *Niederdeutsch* was lacking one essential quality to advance further and that was "eine sorgfältige und verständige Cultur" (77). Adelung continues to praise this rich and pleasing *Mundart* and believed that one

> könnte daher leicht in Versuchung gerathen, die Niederdeutsche Mundart für die Sprache eines blühenden und durch Wohlstand und Wissenschaften sehr frühe ausgebildeten Volkes zu halten, und vielleicht ist sie wirklich ein Überbleibsel einer Cultur, welche über die Gränzen unserer bekannten Geschichte hinaus gehet" (79,80).

From the discussion of the *Oberdeutsche* and the *Niederdeutsche Mundarten*, the influence of a culture on a language, as perceived by Adelung, determined the success of the language and its acceptance among a certain group of peoples. According to Adelung, culture played the dominant role in the formation of all means of speech. Though Adelung normally sees culture as a causative factor, he appears to concede that the prestige of the language may cause cultural developments to lag in certain cases.

The *Hochdeutsche Mundart* is of central importance among the German *Mundarten* and is directly related to the level of culture from which it evolved. Adelung defines this

language as nothing more than "die durch das Obersächsische gemilderte, und durch Geschmack und Wissenschaften ausgebildete Oberdeutsche Mundart" (81). Here Adelung refers to the earlier preeminence of *Oberdeutsch*, although, according to Adelung, it has remained culturally behind in recent centuries. This third *Mundart, Hochdeutsch*, was highly influenced by the mixing of the "Slavische Sprache," known for its melodic pronunciation, with the "Fränkische Mundart," which was changed and refined through this mixing (82). Since "Handlung [=Handel], Wohlstand, Geschmack und Sitten" were becoming more and more popular in Meissen after the tenth century, any progressing culture strived for these qualities. Therefore, during the restoration of the arts and sciences in the sixteenth century, economic qualities, such as *Handlung* (=*Handel*) and *Wohlstand*, and cultivated qualities, such as *Geschmack* and *Sitten*, were used in the refinement "der rauhen und vernachlässigten Oberdeutschen Mundart" (82).

Meissen and *Obersachsen* remained the most prestigious "Sitz des Geschmackes und der Gelehrsamkeit in ganz Deutschland," and as a result, the language spoken in these two areas included all people of "Geschmack und Erziehung" (82). Since this language was the dominant or exclusive form spoken from the pulpits, in the classrooms, and in the court rooms of *Niederdeutschland*, it was gradually adopted by all cultured people there and certainly affected the

development of the *Hochdeutsche Mundart* during its earlier stages (78).

Adelung also describes in a metaphor the envious relationship of the *Oberdeutsche Mundart* towards this new and "young" *Hochdeutsche Mundart*. "Die verblühete ältere Schwester sahe vom Anfange an scheel dazu, beneidete die jüngere wegen ihrer Reize, und suchte sie aus Verzweiflung durch den Vorwurf der Ketzeren verhaßt zu machen" (82). This "envy" led to disputes concerning the name of the new *Mundart*, which as we know today, received the more prestigious title of *Hochdeutsch*. It represented the more culturally advanced area in central Germany and became the more dominating *Mundart*.

> Daß die alte Oberdeutsche Mundart bisher in dem südlichen Deutschlande noch immer die gewöhnliche Sprache der Schriftsteller und des gesellschaftlichen Umganges der obern Classen ist, ist ein Beweis, daß diese Hälfte des Reichs in der Cultur hinter der nördlichern zurück geblieben ist. So wie Aufklärung und Geschmack auch in diesen Gegenden mehr Platz greifen, so verfeinert sich die Sprache von selbst, und wird an der Donau und an der Iser [=Isar], - man denke! - **Hochdeutsch** (86).

Adelung also supplies a concise comparison in the section on *Deutsche Mundarten* of *Oberdeutsch*, *Niederdeutsch*,

and *Hochdeutsch* with three Greek *Dialecte*: *Dorisch*, *Ionisch*, and *Attisch*. He pairs *Dorisch* with *Oberdeutsch*, *Ionisch* with *Niederdeutsch*, and *Attisch* with *Hochdeutsch*. Adelung depicts each Greek dialect with characteristics of the three corresponding German *Mundarten*. For example, he describes *Dorisch* as having "den vollen und breiten Mund, die Zisch- und Hauchlaute, und die rauhen aus der Gurgel gesprochenen Doppellaute" of *Oberdeutsch* and *Ionisch* as "sanft und weich," which resembles the melodic sounds of Niederdeutsch (81). Just like *Hochdeutsch*, *Attisch* was located between the other two *Dialecten*, it was younger than they were and was enriched by them. This "Attische Dialect" was "durch Wohlstand, Geschmack, und Gelehrsamkeit am meisten ausgebildet, daher er als der blühendste, wohllautendste und zierliche nach und nach seine ältern Brüder verdrängte, und endlich in Schriften nur allein gebraucht wurde" (81). Thus, culture, as Adelung understood the term, again prevailed.

Chapter 3

Adelung's Subjectivity in his Descriptions of the Development of the Three German *Mundarten*

> Meissen und Obersachsen blieben noch lange nach der Reformation der vornehmste Sitz des Geschmackes und der Gelehrsamkeit in ganz Deutschland, und daher geschahe es, daß die hier verfeinerte und ausgebildete Sprache, nicht allein die Schriftsprache des ganzen aufgeklärten Theils der Nation, sondern auch die gesellschaftliche Sprache fast aller Personen von Geschmack und Erziehung, besonders in dem mittlern und nördlichen Deutschlande, ward und noch ist. (Adelung, Geschichte der Deutschen Sprache, 82)

In this chapter I will analyze direct quotations from section three of Adelung's Geschichte der Deutschen Sprache to reveal the subjectivity in his descriptions of the development of the three German *Mundarten*. For example, in his discussion of the development of *Hochdeutsch*, Adelung praises the language of central and northern Germany as refined and educated. In the previous chapter, I discussed Adelung's interest in the relationship between language and culture by examining his hierarchy of the notions of *Sprache*, *Mundart*, and *Dialect*. It illustrated how Adelung classified the languages simply by means of the degree to

which they were established and associated certain groups of people, such as a *Nation*, *Völkerschaft*, or *Volksstamm*, with each notion of language. This type of hierarchy is objective, in that it establishes a correspondence between well-defined social or territorial groups and the varieties of speech peculiar to them.

This chapter will explore yet another of Adelung's hierarchical classifications, but one which is highly subjective: his understanding of the relationship between *Oberdeutsch*, *Niederdeutsch*, and *Hochdeutsch*. This hierarchy reveals how Adelung classifies the three *Mundarten* based upon an assumed level of culture. To further emphasize this point, Adelung's discussion of a comparison of the three German *Mundarten* with three Greek *Dialecte*, *Dorisch*, *Ionisch*, and *Attisch*, will also be examined.

The judgmental terms Adelung used in his descriptions of the three German *Mundarten* will be analyzed to illustrate that his discussions of *Oberdeutsch*, *Niederdeutsch*, and *Hochdeutsch* were in fact less objective than his classifications of *Sprache*, *Mundart*, and *Dialect*. Several definitions of these words from Adelung's dictionary Versuch eines vollständigen grammatisch-kritischen Wörterbuches der hochdeutschen Mundart, mit beständiger Vergleichung der übrigen Mundarten (hereafter Versuch...) will also be examined to illustrate what he associated with culture.

Culture, according to Adelung, is connected with high

notions such as "Geschmack," "Verfeinerung," and "Wohlstand," many of which contain implicit value judgments. *Geschmack*, as defined by Adelung, refers to "die Eigenschaft einer Sache, nach welcher sie angenehme oder unangenehme Empfindungen in uns erwecket" (Versuch... 613). Adelung classified languages that were pleasing to him, such as *Hochdeutsch*, as cultured, whereas he considered languages that lacked *Geschmack* as uncultured. Adelung did not directly define *Verfeinerung* in his dictionary, but used it as a verb in connection with customs, attitudes, and language as follows: "Die Sitten und Gesinnungen verfeinern. Die Sprache wird sich bald durch den Umgang verfeinern. Daher die Verfeinerung" (Versuch... 1033). It is interesting that he includes *Sitten* in his definition because he saw these connected with culture and language. In his definition of *Wohlstand*, he provided an example of the use of this word: "Die Beobachtung des Wohlstandes macht die gute Lebensart aus" (Versuch... 1599). Adelung emphasized a "gute Lebensart" here and in his grammar, where it is clearly associated with a cultured language.

Adelung applied words like "Nachläßigkeit," "rauh," and "zischend" to refer to uncultured qualities in a language. He defined neglect, "Nachläßigkeit", as "der Zustand, der Fehler, und in engerer Bedeutung die Fertigkeit, da man nachläßig ist" (379) and suggested that a *Mundart* could be neglected. If neglected, the *Mundart* was

unable to become more cultured. "Gereicht ihr [die Mundart] dieser Reichthum, nebst ihrer Volltönigkeit und Pracht, wenn beide in den gehörigen Gränzen bleiben, zum Ruhme, so kann sie doch den *Fehler der Nachläßigkeit* in ihrem Putze nicht entschuldigen" (76). Adelung described the sound of an uncultured language as "rauh," stating that it was not pleasing to the ear. Adelung defined "zischen" as a "unmittelbare Onomatopöie" (1727), but elaborated to refer to an unpleasing and uncultured sound: "eine Feindin aller hauchenden und *zischenden*, und der meisten blasenden Laute" (79).

The remainder of this chapter will reveal how Adelung's evaluative statements regarding the three German *Mundarten* seem to fall into four main categories: phonological characteristics, lexical, morphological, and syntactic characteristics, general descriptive characteristics, and characteristics Adelung assumed of the people and/or society. Taken together, these characteristics reveal Adelung's biassed attitude towards each *Mundart* and Greek *Dialect* and how he arranged them in a hierarchy.

The following chart serves as a reference to expose how many judgmental terms Adelung used in connection with his descriptions. The words only come from the third section entitled *Deutsche Mundarten* and are divided into the previously discussed categories. Within each category, the terms are displayed under the headings of "uncultured" or

Page numbers in ( )	UNCULTURED	CULTURED
Phonological Characteristics:	voller/breiter Mund (81) breite/tiefe Selbstlaute (74) Hauch-,Blase-, Zischlaute (79,81) rauh (82) rasselnde Buchstaben (81) Härten (74,76) hauchende/blasende Mitlaute (74) breite/volle Doppellaute (74,81) harte Zusammenziehungen (74) Verdoppelung und Verhärtung der Mitlaute (75) Verwechselung der harten Mitlaute mit den weichen (75)	wohlklingend (79) wohllautend (81) angenehm (79) gefällig (79,83) verfeinert (82) sanft (81) weich (81) fein (82)
Lexical, Morphological, and Syntactic Characteristics:	weitläufiges Wort und Silbengepränge (74) weitschweifige Ausdrücke (74) hohe Figuren (74) Überfüllungen der Wörter (75) Aufwand ohne Feinheit (76) Verschwendung ohne Klugheit (76) schwerfälliger Gebrauch der Participien (75)	kernhafte Kürze (79) naive Bilder (79) treffende Ausdrücke (79)

General Descriptive Characteristics:	niedrig (73) vernachlässigte (82) rauhe Eigenheiten (76) verblühete ältere Schwester (82)	hoch (73) verfeinert (84,86) ausgebildet (82,86) blühend (79,81) herrschend (87) zierlich (81) rein (85) reich (79) Verfeinerung (82) Ausbildung (82,83) sanfte Reize (83) Güte (83)
Characteristics of the People and/or Society:	ohne Geschmack (76) schwerfällig (79) Nachläßigkeit (76)	Geschmack (81,82,85) Wohlstand (80,81,82) gute Lebensart (85) Sitten (82) Handlung (82) Wissenschaft (80) Gelehrsamkeit (81) Erziehung (82,85) Aufklärung (86) aufgeklärt (82) ausgebildet (80) gesittet (87) sorgfältig (79) verständig (79) blühend (80)

"cultured." This overview of these terms will clearly reveal Adelung's subjectivity towards each German *Mundart*.

I. Phonological Characteristics

In Chapter two it was revealed that Adelung considered the *Oberdeutsche Mundart* to be culturally deficient. In his description of the characteristics of this *Mundart* he used words such as harsh and coarse that are associated with uncultured qualities . The terms Adelung used to discuss the phonological characteristics of *Oberdeutsch* are negative and judgmental. Adelung found this *Mundart* to be ill-sounding and described it as such. "Die Oberdeutsche unterscheidet sich durch ihre hohe Sprache, durch ihren vollen Mund, durch ihren Hang zu hauchenden, blasenden und zischenden Mitlauten, zu den breiten und tiefen Selbstlauten und zu rauhen Doppellauten; durch ihre Härten" (74).

According to Adelung, the tendency to use fricatives such as /h/, /x/, /v/, /f/, and /ʃ/ and deep and high vowels is representative of an uncultured phonation. This is apparent in his description of diphthongs which are "rauh," "breit," and "voll" , such as "fleussen, geussen, fleuhen, u.s.f. für fließen, gießen, fliehen" (74). He describes the contractions of the Oberdeutsch as "hart," which seems to refer to the clumsy rhythms in the words. He provides

examples such as "Eidgnoßschaft" and "allgedeylichen Vorschub thun" (74). He also describes the consonants, which he claims have an unnecessary "Verdoppelung und Verhärtung." To support this description, he cites words like "Tretten, Botte, nemmen, darumb, umb," and "Umbstand" (75). The first three examples may refer to short vowels in open syllables which were not lengthened.

In Adelung's description of the phonological characteristics of *Niederdeutsch*, his preference of this *Mundart* over *Oberdeutsch* is obvious. Adelung used words such as "wohlklingend," "gefällig," and "angenehm" to describe this cultured *Mundart* and placed it in opposition to the harshness of the "rauhes" *Oberdeutsch*. "Denn sie [Niederdeutsch] ist gerade das Gegentheil der Oberdeutschen Sprache, und unter allen Deutschen Mundarten in der Wahl und Aussprache der Töne die wohlklingendste, gefälligste und angenehmste, eine Feindin aller hauchenden und zischenden, und der meisten blasenden Laute" (79).

Adelung does not describe the phonation of *Niederdeutsch* in detail, but he stresses his preference for it as he continues by describing the ease with which one can learn this *Mundart*.

> Der Ausländer, dem die vielen Hauch- Blase- und Zischlaute des Oberdeutschen ein Ärgernis sind, lernt die Niederdeutsche am ersten und leichtesten, so wie der Niedersachse wegen seines

> feinen Gehörs und wegen der Feinheit und Biegsamkeit seiner Sprachwerkzeuge jede fremde Sprache weit eher und vollkommener sprechen lernet, als sein schwerfälliger südlicher Bruder. (79)

As in the case of the *Niederdeutsche Mundart*, Adelung does not describe in detail the phonation of the *Hochdeutsche Mundart,* but he does include a summary of its earlier northern influences. In this summary of the history of *Hochdeutsch*, Adelung speaks of the fine and "wohlklingend" qualities of the Slavic pronunciation which were incorporated into the Franconian *Mundart* (82). This mixing of the two eventually refined the pronunciation of the latter *Mundart*, and they of course influenced the pronunciation of *Hochdeutsch*, which Adelung considered to be the most cultured *Mundart*.

II. Lexical, Morphological, and Syntactic Characteristics

Adelung describes the lexical and morphological characteristics of *Oberdeutsch* in the same negative tone he used with its phonological characteristics. According to Adelung, it distinguishes itself as being too rambling and having long-winded expressions; "durch ein weitläufiges Wort- und Silbengepränge, durch weitschweifige

Ausdrücke,..." (74). He also discusses its tendency for multiple affixes within one word. For example, "allfolglichen, einfolglichen für folglich," and "gnädiglichen" (75). Another characteristic of *Oberdeutsch* that Adelung rejects is its clumsy use of the participles. For example, "die vorgeschützt werden dürfende Wichtigkeit" and "die von dero Gemahlin hergeleitet werden mögende Ansprüche" (75). Adelung's distaste for the *Oberdeutsche Mundart* is also apparent in his description of its overabundance of vocabulary. Adelung considers this excessive richness to be "Reichthum ohne Geschmack, Verschwendung ohne Klugheit, und Aufwand ohne Feinheit" (76). Taken together, these characteristics, obviously unfavored by Adelung, describe an uncultured *Mundart*.

Cultured characteristics which Adelung found in the *Niederdeutsch* include a robust brevity, apt expressions, and uncomplicated images. "[Die Niederdeutsche Mundart war] reich an einer kernhaften Kürze, an treffenden Ausdrücken und naiven Bildern" (79). Here Adelung praises *Niederdeutsch*, which further accentuates his preference for this *Mundart* over *Oberdeutsch*. Unfortunately, according to Adelung, *Niederdeutsch* lacked the appropriate culture to help the language advance and prosper, even though it had cultured characteristics.

III. General Descriptive Characteristics

General descriptive characteristics regarding *Oberdeutsch* and *Hochdeutsch* emerge in a metaphor which Adelung used to describe the two *Mundarten*. *Oberdeutsch* is characterized as being the old and faded spinster sister while *Hochdeutsch* is characterized as being the young and appealing sister. "Die verblühete ältere Schwester sahe vom Anfange an scheel dazu, beneidete die jüngere wegen ihrer Reize, und suchte sie aus Verzweiflung durch den Vorwurf der Ketzeren verhaßt zu machen" (82). *Oberdeutsch*, the older sister, also complained about despotism and tyranny in the younger *Mundart* called *Hochdeutsch*. Adelung's personification of *Oberdeutsch* referred to statements by language critics from the South German dialect areas. But Adelung disputes this complaint and claims that the *Hochdeutsche Mundart* is nothing less than despotic and that it has gained its power through its inner goodness instead of through violence. "Die Hochdeutsche Mundart ist nichts weniger als despotisch, sie beneidet den übrigen ihre archaischen Schönheiten nicht, und dringt sich niemanden auf. Sie hat ihre Herrschaft keinen gewaltsamen Eroberungen, sondern dauerhaften Ursachen, ihrer innern Güte und Ausbildung zu danken" (83). Thus, the faded older sister can be seen as representing an uncultured language, while the younger sister, with her qualities like "Güte" and

"Ausbildung" represents the more cultured *Mundart*.

Other words, such as the adjectives "verfeinert" and "ausgebildet," which are usually applied to culture or a group of peoples, are used by Adelung to describe a cultured language. For example, in a description regarding the development of *Hochdeutsch*: "Erst war sie mittelländisch oder Fränkisch, dann Oberdeutsch oder das höchste Deutsch, und jetzt ist sie wieder mittelländisch, aber ein sehr ausgebildetes und verfeinertes Mittelländisch" (86).

IV. Characteristics Assumed of the People and/or Society

When Adelung describes a cultured people and/or society, he applies words such as "Wohlstand," "Wissenschaft," "Gelehrsamkeit," "Erziehung," and "Geschmack". These characteristics are part of a cultured language which is the more preferred language by the elite classes.

Adelung considered *Niederdeutsch* to have the characteristics of a cultured language, but he implied that it lacked the appropriate level of culture. Adelung made the judgment that culture should be "sorgfältig" and "verständig" and that the society should have commercial and scholarly characteristics such as "Wohlstand" and "Wissenschaften." Since *Niederdeutsch* lacked these aspects

of culture, Adelung suggested that one

> könnte daher leicht in Versuchung gerathen, die Niederdeutsche Mundart für die Sprache eines blühenden und durch Wohlstand und Wissenschaften sehr frühe ausgebildeten Volkes zu halten, und vielleicht ist sie wirklich ein Überbleibsel einer Cultur, welche über die Gränzen unserer bekannten Geschichte hinaus gehet" (79-80).

In contrast, according to Adelung, *Hochdeutsch* had the appropriate characteristics of a cultured people and society in and near central Germany at the time of its formation during the sixteenth century. Therefore, Adelung applied sophisticated terms when describing these cultured qualities. The following description of two regions which highly influenced *Hochdeutsch* during its formation contains several words representing culture (emphasis mine):

> Meissen und Obersachsen blieben noch lange nach der Reformation der vornehmste Sitz des *Geschmackes* und der *Gelehrsamkeit* in ganz Deutschland, und daher geschahe es, daß die hier *verfeinerte* und *ausgebildete* Sprache, nicht allein die Schriftsprache des ganzen *aufgeklärten* Theils der Nation, sondern auch die gesellschaftliche Sprache fast aller Personen von Geschmack und *Erziehung*, besonders in dem mittlern und nördlichen Deutschlande, ward und noch ist. (82)

Once again, adjectives, such as "verfeinert" and "ausgebildet," are applied to a language to refer to its level of culture. Other terms, such as "Geschmack," "Gelehrsamkeit," and "Erziehung," refer to the characteristics of a cultured people or society.

For the most part, Adelung did not apply any of these cultured characteristics of *Hochdeutsch* or *Niederdeutsch* to the people or society of *Oberdeutschland*, which further emphasizes his disregard of the *Oberdeutsche Mundart*. Apparently, *Oberdeutsch* received cultured characteristics such as "Geschmack" and "Wissenschaften" from northern Germany during the sixteenth century, but it remained at a lower level of culture. Thus, Adelung does not highlight the few cultured societal qualities which he in fact found in this *Mundart*.

To further emphasize cultured and uncultured qualities, Adelung discusses a comparison among the three German *Mundarten* and three Greek *Dialecten* that Herr Prorector Friedrich Gedike made in his *Einladungsschrift* concerning purism and the enrichment of language in 1779. The terms with which Adelung depicts each *Dialect* correspond to the terms that he chose in his descriptions of the German *Mundarten*, revealing again how he classifies each one.

The Greek dialect *Dorisch* is paired with *Oberdeutsch* because it had similar qualitites. It was the least prestigious language of the mountainous areas of Greece and

"wie der Deutsche Oberländer" tended to have "den vollen und breiten Mund, die Zisch- und Hauchlaute, und die rauhen aus der Gurgel gesprochenen Doppellaute" (81). Again, Adelung characterizes this language as sounding harsh and unrefined. It is then, according to Adelung, an uncultured dialect.

Ionisch is paired with *Niederdeutsch* because it was considered as also sounding melodic and pleasing to the ear. This language dominated the flat areas near the sea in Greece and is described as being "sanft" and "weich" (81). Just like *Niederdeutsch*, *Ionisch* attempted to retain its melodic qualities and avoided, "so viel möglich, alle rauhen Gurgeltöne, alle breiten Doppellaute und zischenden und rasselnden Buchstaben (81)," which from Adelung's perspective characterized an uncultured language.

The most cultured Greek *Dialect*, *Attisch*, reflected the cultured qualities of *Hochdeutsch* and is described with the same terms. *Attisch* was the youngest of the three Greek *Dialecte* and was, according to Adelung, the most pleasing phonetically. Further, the people who spoke it had the cultured qualities which a language needed to prosper. It was "durch Wohlstand, Geschmack und Gelehrsamkeit am meisten ausgebildet" and became the "blühendste, wohllautendste und zierlichste" of the three Greek *Dialecte* (81). Adelung's preference of this *Dialect* over the other two enabled it to be labeled as the most cultured Greek *Dialect*.

In summary, this chapter reveals Adelung's subjective stance toward the three German *Mundarten*. The terms Adelung utilized in these descriptions illustrate his subjective view of what was "uncultured" and "cultured". Adelung's value judgements clearly intervene and detract from his noble attempt to provide an objective scholarly theory of the development of language. Although he was highly subjective, he of course provided a thorough investigation of the formation of the German *Mundarten* according to the viewpoint of an eighteenth-century scholar.

Conclusion

> Eine gründliche Sprachlehre ist gewisser Maßen eine pragmatische Geschichte der Sprache; soll sie eine wahre Geschichte und kein Roman sein, so muß sie die Sachen nicht so vortragen, wie sie sein könnten oder sein sollten, sondern wie sie wirklich sind. (Adelung, Geschichte der Deutschen Sprache, v-vi)

Adelung's initial intention for writing Geschichte der Deutschen Sprache was to provide Germans with a basic overview of the grammatical forms and syntactic constructions which had evolved over time in the German language. Adelung wanted to describe the language rather than intervene and prescribe specific grammar rules or reveal his preferences. As a man of the Enlightenment, Adelung felt compelled to better inform the masses of their language and its usage by writing a grammar. He did not intend to adjust the language or incorporate his ideas in his grammar, but as the preceding chapters have revealed, he did in fact intervene and voice his opinions on the dialect forms he felt worthy of description. In this chapter I will examine Adelung's attempt to remain objective and descriptive and will review his principal theory of language development and its relationship with culture.

In the *Vorrede* of Adelung's Geschichte der Deutschen

Sprache, Adelung explicitly states that his goal is to clarify certain concepts of the German language in order to provide "Klarheit" and "Deutlichkeit" with respect to certain grammatical irregularities that occur in the language. Adelung viewed this irregular usage in the German language as a result of obscure analogies, or as he termed it, "dunkel empfundene Ähnlichkeiten," which, according to Adelung, had progressively developed in the language during successive periods in history. Since Adelung was a part of an era that was characterized by the concept of reason and "Aufklärung," he felt it necessary to make the common classes aware of these obscure "Ähnlichkeiten," but without the direct application of grammar rules. He hoped that their awareness of their illogical usage would indirectly motivate them in their enlightened state to use more regular and logical forms. Thus, their change in speech would result in a more refined language.

> Allein ich bin zugleich überzeugt, daß diese Mühe, bei einer Deutschen Sprachlehre für Deutsche zu der gegenwärtigen Absicht sehr unnütz gewesen sein würde. Ein jeder lernet seine Muttersprache ihrem ganzen Umfange nach mechanisch, d.i. nach dunkeler Vorstellung der Ähnlichkeiten. Eine ihm zum Beßten geschriebene Sprachlehre erfüllet ihre Absicht, wenn sie ihm diese dunkele Vorstellung zur Klarheit, und, wo es möglich ist, zur

Deutlichkeit bringt. (xiv)

Adelung wanted to codify and regularize the German language, but not through direct intervention. In his grammar, he wanted to avoid prescribing grammar rules, although he does discuss some of the prevailing grammar rules in the fourth section entitled *Deutsche Sprachlehre*. Although he includes them in his grammar, he is not necessarily supporting their effectiveness as part of the German language, but rather uses them to highlight the irregular forms in the language. He also criticizes most of his predecessors who wrote grammars of the German language, stating that they provided only an imitation of the classical Latin grammar and therefore detracted from the clarity of concepts in the German language.

> Ich habe bereits mehrmahls geklaget, daß fast alle unsere bisherige Deutsche Sprachlehren Copien der Lateinischen sind, wo man die dort üblichen Begriffe und Rubriken beibehalten hat. Ich habe mich daher so oft von ihnen entfernen müssen, als die Natur der Deutschen Sprache, und die Deutlichkeit der Begriffe, meine erste und wichtigste Absicht, ... Neuerungen, als bloße Neuerungen habe ich nie geliebt. (xi)

Evidently, Adelung did not seek to change the German language and should be recognized for his attempt as an eighteenth century scholar to remain objective and distanced

in his descriptions of the German language. Although he felt his non-intervention would be the best method in enlightening the common peoples and providing clarity, he, perhaps unaware, did intervene by revealing his preference for the *Hochdeutsche Mundart* as the dialect of choice. In choosing the *Hochdeutsche Mundart* over the *Niederdeutsche* and *Oberdeutsche Mundarten*, Adelung used his concepts of the level of culture, refinement, taste and economic development as his criteria. They were non-linguistic criteria that must have appealed strongly to his eighteenth century audience in Germany, which suggests why they were such effective forces in moulding the modern conception of the German standard language on a central German basis.

Statements Adelung makes in the *Vorrede* of his grammar reveal his initial desire not to intervene, but further examinations of his text indicate where he did intervene. Adelung failed to remain purely descriptive when he classified the *Hochdeutsche*, *Niederdeutsche*, and *Oberdeutsche Mundarten* according to their level of culture. His subjective stance of what he considered "cultured" and "uncultured" and his theory that culture forms language illustrate his active approach towards regularizing the German language. His preference for the *Hochdeutsche Mundart*, which he felt was the most cultured, refined and pleasing to the ear, best illustrates the form of his intervention, since he established it as the model German

language.

In summary, Adelung's initial intention in writing his grammar Geschichte der Deutschen Sprache was to refrain from adjusting the German language or voicing his preferences in order to indirectly enlighten the masses about the present state of their language and its unrefined irregularities. However, because Adelung made value judgements and applied "uncultured" and "cultured" characteristics to each *Mundart,* his work was not as objective as he had originally intended. Adelung did present some objective material, such as his discussion regarding the formation of *Sprache*, *Mundart*, and *Dialect*. Yet Adelung's emphasis on the level of culture in the development of his notions of *Sprache*, *Mundart*, and *Dialect* was a prescriptive approach, not descriptive.

Nevertheless, Adelung contributed greatly to the study of the German language in the eighteenth century. Unfortunately, Adelung's pursuance of Johann Gottfried Herder's revolutionary diachronic innovations concerning language development has always been overlooked. Also, the work of nineteenth century scholars, such as Jacob Grimm and Wilhelm von Humboldt, has continually overshadowed Adelung's theory on the origin of language. His contributions to the field of Germanistik should not be underestimated. His efforts to remain objective, although flawed, and his theory on the origin of language should be recognized in the accepted canon of German studies today.

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