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## Language planning from a management perspective: An interpretation of findings\*

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### 1. Definitions of language planning

In summing up the International Colloquium on Language Planning in 1986, Joshua Fishman reflected on the state of language planning. He first traced a continuity from the 1966 Airlie House Conference on language problems of developing nations (Fishman – Ferguson – Das Gupta 1968), work at the East-West Center, the International Research Project on Language Planning Processes (Rubin et al. 1977) and conferences to the Ottawa colloquium (Laforge 1987: 409–409). Fishman then asked "What is language planning?"

There are different answers to the question, as was apparent at the colloquium. Fishman wrote (1987: 409): "For me, language planning remains the authoritative allocation of resources to the attainment of language status and corpus goals, whether in connection with new functions that are aspired to, or in connection with old functions that need to be discharged more adequately." Among the other definitions, Fishman focused on "the management-planning distinction previously espoused by Neustupný and Jernudd" (and restated in the Ottawa conference, Jernudd and Neustupný 1987) and called for exploration of substantive and theoretical differences between the two approaches.<sup>1</sup>

In this paper, I shall discuss the consequences of one difference between the two approaches. The difference is that the language-management model seeks to explain how language problems arise in the course of people's use of language, that is, in discourse, in contrast with approaches under Fishman's definition of language planning which takes decision-makers', for example governments', specification of language problems as their axiomatic point of departure.

## 2. Planning in language management

The language management model seeks to explain how a language problem in fact arises out of discourse, in whose discourse, how it projects into discourse if it arises out of non-linguistic interest, or out of systematic linguistic principle (Jernudd and Neustupný 1987). Language planning can be accommodated as an aspect of language management, a process through which particular people are given the authority to find and suggest systematic and rigorous solutions to problems of language potentially or actually encountered by members of their community. Note that this formulation does not presuppose a democratic or any other particular political-institutional process of authorization; but it does require identification of the language problem in discourse. Such identification should be conscious and extensive, although in historical language planning it often remains underdeveloped.

The existing models of language planning met demands placed on academic discourse during the optimistic approach to development in the 1960s and to the particular political and economic conditions of modernization. The language management approach to language planning represents a shift of focus from the concern of language planning concerned with finding optimal strategies for government-initiated action, to an interest in explaining how individuals manage language in communication, and uses this as the starting point for community-wide management. The shift of focus is an academic response to people power in reaction against central imposition, and it recognizes the multitudes of competing group interests.

A critical empirical property of the language management model, and therefore of planning in its fashion, is the supposition that people will not change use of a feature of language unless individuals pay attention to the particular feature of language, at least in short-term memory (that is, noting the feature, cf. Neustupný 1985, 1988) in the process of discourse. How the noting takes place is a matter of utmost importance. Noting here subsumes the situation when a person knows s/he cannot understand another language, and also to the process of acquiring new languages later in life.

## 3. An interpretation of some of Saulson's conclusions

Saulson (1979) studied the spread and the development of Hebrew in Israel, and the role of the Hebrew Academy in Israel in that growth. In his analysis, Saulson based himself on the model of language planning presented by Jernudd and Das Gupta (1971) and extended it further. This model takes as point of departure the authoritative allocation of resources on which Fishman's definition hinges. Here, I shall use the language management planning model instead to explain some of Saulson's conclusions.

Some of Saulson's important conclusions are (1979: 171) that "(A) the general language community is more purist than the Academy (known to be purist), and demands Hebrew words to replace foreign ones, even commonly used ones; (B) the older generation is more ideological about Hebrew though speaking it less exclusively, while the younger generation is far less ideological although almost exclusively Hebrew speaking." These are also the key findings in the International Research Project on Language Planning Processes (Fishman 1977: 212):

there is reason to conclude that in the three countries ... the attitudinal/informational goals of language planning tend to be best approximated by an older generation of users (who were themselves young adults when language planning activity may have been less routinized and more ideologically embedded), whereas its approved usage goals often tend to be best approximated by a younger generation of users (who acquire the new terminologies as part of normal and institutionalized educational experiences with much more minor attitudinal/informational overtones).

Saulson found that the older generation reiterates and endorses the language managers' propaganda and prescription about speaking Hebrew but does not in fact speak it much. However, enough individuals revived Hebrew by speaking it in their new community in the nineteenth century, acting according to religious and Zionist interest to adjust their repertoire of speaking by their own acquisition of spoken Hebrew and by their support of use of Hebrew in community institutions. They supported the implementation of Hebrew in educational institutions, the army, the media, and other institutions controlled by themselves and the state, which then acquire young people for Hebrew who use it as a matter of course because the people who work in these institutions use Hebrew. New arrivals to Israel will have to decide whether to learn to speak Hebrew with their decision to settle, and to what extent. This decision clearly has to confront the fact that the Jewish individual has decided to

move into a Jewish community in which Hebrew is already in dominant use and for which Hebrew is a symbol of the religiously founded State that governs the promised land. The decision is made easier by the ready supply of Ulpan Hebrew classes that serve to help new settlers implement their language adjustment decision.

The Language Academy may well have had a role in a period of rhetorical enthusiasm and national-ideological fervour. However, as the state consolidates and as the society enters the post-modern period, the Academy will, possibly inevitably, fossilize or fade out unless it can reorientate itself to deal with peoples' problems in peoples' actual use of the language. This is what happened to the Academy in Israel (Saulson 1979: 171; Jernudd 1977: 221).

Ideological-attitudinal agreement may protect the state-controlled use of language and language planners may be effective to the extent that they set the rhetorical scene for an evolving language situation. They may persuade people in the abstract but not in their concrete language use, yet, people's support in the abstract has consequences on the language acquisition by captive audiences and serves to remind and pressure individuals into adopting adjustment strategies of acquisition and increase in their use of the language.

Saulson's explanation (1979: 171) for the finding of generational difference in attitude versus behavior towards acquiring and using Hebrew is that "wherever the State provides other symbols that satisfy the need to express authentic particularism, the attachment to language orthodoxy is weakened ... Then, realistically speaking, in order to preserve the imprimatur of authority reserved to it, the demands of language planning on the general community must be minimized." But why should language planners make demands on the community to preserve authority? What is the relationship between planners' authority and perception of such authority by the general community? Effective authority hinges on popular awareness of what language managers have to offer, writes Saulson. He suggests (1979: 188) that language managers have a responsibility of "demonstrating agency awareness of the linguistic *needs* of the general language community, and raising that community's awareness of the various language products being offered [by the managers]." To prove his point, he found that terminology is in fact a pressing need, and terminology expansion is the most successful activity of the language managers.

The language management model predicts that language planning works when language managers offer solutions of language inadequacies

that language users in the general community have noted and evaluated in discourse as inadequate and in want of adjustment. Language managers may successfully provide adjustment items for speakers to adopt and use because speakers refer the problem to them and, having noted their suggestions, accept them. Hebrew language managers were found to be successful in terminology expansion to the extent that they in fact responded to professions' noting of terminological inadequacies.

The language-management model suggests that the terminology managers were successful because a group of language users shared with them in noting the particular terms that were problematical in their particular discourse. If planners and people do not share in noting and evaluating particular features of language, it is very difficult for the planners to suggest that people change ways of speaking. If at least noting of some language item is shared, it is somewhat less difficult. If specialists share with the public and its sub-groups both noting of language items and an evaluation of these items as inadequate, then the planners have a chance of being heard because they are providing an alternative language item that people can use to overcome the inadequacy<sup>2</sup>

The language-management model holds that if supply (language suggested by the Academy) and demand (people's search for solutions to inadequacies) do not match, people will not take the Academy's suggestions. Indeed, Saulson found that if planners compete with accepted usage, they will encounter great resistance (Saulson 1979: 172). Language planners must first establish common ground with the language user by identifying the language feature that is felt to be inadequate in discourse before they offer their advice so that both specialists and public note the same language feature. Otherwise their advice will be largely ignored. If the language planners and language users do not manage to jointly identify the potentially troublesome language features, or if they differ and the language planners nevertheless communicate their one-sided evaluations, they may well engage some members of the public in a spirited debate about language system in the abstract or even about language behavior but that debate need not translate into changes in anyone's language use.

In Saulson's model, the "need" for a language planning "product" in the "target population" is specifically represented only by the language managers' determination and interpretation of goals. Similarly, Cooper (1989: 98, 183) elaborates a "top-down" model which descriptively accounts for a spread process within a scientific metaphor that views users as targeted recipients of innovations that originate in language-planning

actors' "deliberate efforts to influence the behavior of others with respect to the acquisition, structure, or functional allocation of their language codes". Users are not represented directly and at best only indirectly as anonymous participants in a political process. On the other hand, the language management model's focus on discourse processes bridges the gap between language planner and language user and predicts that language planning works when language planners offer solutions to language inadequacies that language users in the general community have noted and evaluated as inadequate and in want of adjustment.

#### 4. A mini-case: Québec

Another example may perhaps help present the view of language planning that the language management model makes possible. I shall attempt to present the situation in Québec as a mini-case in point, even though this limited presentation may distort the picture in some ways.

When language planning solves language problems, these may be motivated by inadequacies of communication that people have noted in their actual discourse or may be inadequacies only projected for future discourse. When one segment of the population in a polity decrees the exclusive use of its language over another's, to enhance its social, economic and political status, normally at the same time denying access to social services, political participation and jobs to the other, they cause a massive language problem for those who are obliged to note and evaluate as inadequate their own ability to communicate in the favored language (here: French). Planning authority in this case will likely require enforcement of language laws and regulations, because stable, expected and relatively unproblematic communication processes are upset, and the people who have thus been given the problem are unlikely to agree with this imposed evaluation of communicative inadequacy and even more unlikely to implement adjustment by acquiring sufficient French to function equivalently well in it as in the English they already have. Authority will have to resort to propaganda, incentive and perhaps force to overcome protest. Québec is a case in point. The goal of the Québec French community of interest is to overturn the dominance in the economy by people who speak English, and thus to achieve an advantage for people who do not speak English well enough but who speak French. Cooper (1989: 118–119) refers to Québec as the best-known example of language *status planning* and concludes that Québec laws "provide clear recognition

that status planning refers ultimately to the status of those who use the language." It is not that the French in Québec do not have French – it is economic power and jobs that they do not have. Since eviction of people who speak other languages than French from the territory is impractical in a democracy such as Québec, people are free to leave by their own decisions, or they have to accept the language imposition by complying with the dictum that French be acquired and used in mandated domains.

However, the albeit democratic economy grab in Québec by means of enforcement of French does entail linguistically motivated language problems, too, because it has consequences on discourse, among many other consequences. One effect was an acceptance to a degree (although easily shaken by events in Canada's language policy process) of individual and federal institutional bilingualism in Canada. This acceptance engendered language planning to provide opportunities for broad segments of the population to learn and use English and French. Another effect was the systematic evaluation of variation in French, and awareness of degree of fit between French metropolitan norms of usage and local practices in Québec in particular. People came to note differences in vernacular usage from normatively prescribed usage, and questioned the difference; just as they questioned the supremacy of the Anglophone managers in the economy. People became uncertain about what is correct language. The search for evaluative principle and overt norms required language management. Some of these language problems were in fact forecast and agencies were created fairly early to define adjustments and implement solutions by making them available to individuals. For example, agencies created and disseminated terms for document translations, terms for commercial processes and products, etc. It was also understood that for the imposition of French in Québec to succeed, one would smooth the way by making language available, for example, vocabulary, terms and so on, to avoid delays which would be caused by such language problems as being uncertain about a French word in the expanding domains of use of French.

#### 5. Conclusion

What is missing in models of language planning that are axiomatically centered on the decision-making agency is an explicit way to relate discourse to language problems as the engine of authority in language



planning. The link is accomplished by the management model which allows relationships at any of the points of noting features of language in the discourse process, evaluating those features, adjusting inadequate features and implementing these adjustments. One immediate advantage is the requirement and ability of the model to separate linguistic from non-linguistic interest in language planning. Language management's focus on discourse, and thus on processes of language use in relation to people's behavior towards language, provides a basis on which to relate language planning to other language management systems such as language cultivation, terminology, language teaching, among others. This opportunity for integration obliges us to explain variation in language management systems over time and across societies and promises a unified perspective on behaviors towards language.

Some students of language planning *either* take authority in language planning for granted by aligning their interests of study in empirical work with the interests of the authority under study *or* rely on declarations of their own values such as planning by democratic principle or planning in the defense of minorities and threatened groups in theoretical work. While such alignments net much valuable data, and while such declarations are good, a theory that requires students of language planning to describe and explain who are the people with the language problems and how these problems arise in actual discourse is consonant with a climate of the times that favors discourse-based discoursing. In consequence, language planning is also no longer silent on potential violation of people's interests and rights. Language planning in the perspective of language management obliges us to find out what the language problem is, whose problem it is, and how language problems arise out of discourse and how they affect discourse.

## Notes

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1. Specifically, Fishman asked four questions about the management approach to language planning:

- a) Is it more linguistically oriented?
- b) Does it materially broaden the field of investigation?
- c) Does it relevantly broaden the field of investigation?
- d) Does it more successfully relate the language planning efforts in *developed* countries to those planned, ongoing and completed in *third world countries*?

2. Other factors of course influence success also. For example, Saulson's observation that "syntax and style do not explicitly appear among mandated [Academy] endeavours" (1979: 194) while terminology expansion is successful also has a partial explanation in discourse processing. Syntax and style are difficult to note by any person who is not highly trained in making linguistic observations, especially in discourse, whereas vocabulary items, pronunciations, spelling, and perhaps idioms, are readily available for noting in language use.

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## Conflicts of metaphor in the discussion of language and race

Robert B. Le Page

In 1953 Alf Sommerfelt gave a series of lectures to the Summer Institute of the Linguistic Society of America at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, which I was attending as a visiting Fulbright Fellow from the West Indies. His subject matter forms the chapter (pp. 87–136) on “Language, society and culture” in his selected articles published in 1962 as *Diachronic and synchronic aspects of language*.

Another short paper in the same book commemorates Hugo Schuchardt, whose work has been a source of illumination for many creolists like myself. I was honoured to be asked to give a memorial lecture at the University of Graz on the fiftieth anniversary of Schuchardt’s death in 1977. Sommerfelt commented that Schuchardt “liked subjective-individualistic views which did not lack objectivity”. Perhaps what I am going to say now will fall into this category.

I want to explore the nature of stereotypes concerning dialects and languages and cultures on the one hand, and races and ethnic groups on the other; to look at how these stereotypes become established; and at the interactive processes and conflicts which take place all the time between stereotypes on the one hand and more scientifically-derived percepts on the other.

This sounds like a tall order for one lecture, and indeed it is. I can do little more than sketch out the grounds of my exploration in the hope of providing a starting-point for those who might wish to pursue what I believe may prove to be an interesting and rewarding voyage of discovery for which perhaps a new Darwin is needed, a role for which I am much too old and ill-prepared myself. In what follows I use the term “focusing” in the sense of “becoming more uniform and homogeneous”; and for “unfocused” I use the term “diffuse”.

Let me give two illustrations. Before the war ideas similar to Hitler’s about the isomorphism between race, language and the nation-state quite rightly caused geneticists such as Julian Huxley to re-examine the whole concept of “race” and try to disentangle the confusions evident in popular