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**Language Management
in Contact Situations**
Perspectives from Three Continents



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PROLOGUE

The integrative potential of Language Management Theory

Jiří Nekvapil

The concept of “language management”

The term “language management” appears relatively frequently at present, but it usually does not have much in common with Language Management Theory (hereafter LMT), which underlies the contributions to this volume. In the sphere of practical language planning, “language management” is frequently used to mean the provision of translation services or the development of different linguistic skills via language courses. “Language management” is also used as the English equivalent of the French term “l’aménagement linguistique”, above all in relation to language planning in Canada (see for example <http://www.salic-slmc.ca/>), but essentially, it is used to mean nothing more than what is labeled as “language policy and planning” in the Anglo-Saxon tradition. Finally, there are sociolinguists who have only relatively recently begun working with the term “language management” as a specific term, or rather, a semi-term to express their more or less specific theoretical approach to language policy and planning issues (see esp. Spolsky 2004; see also my comments on this recent development in Nekvapil 2006).

In contrast to this, LMT, the basis for which was formulated by J. V. Neustupný and B. H. Jernudd, has already been developing for several decades (the classic paper being Jernudd & Neustupný 1987). The birth and formation of LMT were connected to the development of language planning theory in the 1960s and 1970s, and both of these theories were connected through the person of B. H. Jernudd. J. V. Neustupný, raised on the intellectual heritage of the Prague Linguistic School, was further removed from language planning theory and brought particular features into it, which culminated in LMT.

LMT is based on the idea that it is necessary to differentiate between two processes (and thus two sets of rules) in language use: (a) the process which enables the generation of utterances or communicative acts and (b) the process whose object is the utterances or communicative acts themselves, whether they have already been generated, are currently being generated, or are anticipated. This differentiation – as well as other features of the theory – has been mentioned as early as in Neustupný (1978). Various labels have been used for both processes, the most common being

the pair “generative” – “corrective”. The expression “corrective”, however, suggested only some aspects of process (b), which is why Jernudd & Neustupný (1987) programmatically introduced the term “management” for this process (far less attention was devoted to process (a)). “Management” in LMT is thus meta-linguistic activity or “behavior towards language” in J. Fishman’s wording. The mutual relationship between the generative and management processes is aptly characterized by Jernudd (2000b: 195): “Language behavior as generation of utterances is accompanied by behavior towards language as management. The former is shaped by and allows overt expression of the latter.”

The derivation of the concept “management” from language use (parole, performance) provided LMT with an essential feature that differentiated it from language planning theory – concrete utterances and the analysis of what happens in concrete interactions moved into the center of attention; which is why it was only logical that Conversation Analysis began to be utilized, particularly in conjunction with the concept of repair/correction, which was in the central sphere of interest in both Conversation Analysis and in LMT (see e.g. Ho & Jernudd 2000, Miyazaki 2001).

At first glance, it may not be clear how the analysis of concrete interactions is related to language planning, which is usually understood as the decision-making of state organs or their agencies regarding language, for example, the determination and development of official languages, orthography reforms or the standardization of terms, which is why there arises the question of whether language planning needs the analysis of conversations, or, more generally, of interactive events.

First of all, it is necessary to respond to this question by pointing to the fact that LMT works with the basic distinction between “*simple* management” and “*organized* management”. The process, the objects of which are the features of an ongoing interaction, is “simple management”. An example of simple management is when a moderator in a television interview uses a colloquial expression, and after uttering it, immediately adds the equivalent standard expression (in Conversation Analysis terminology, this is called self-initiated self-repair). In addition to simple management, LMT considers the existence of more complex management processes, which are trans-situational and sometimes demonstrate a lesser degree of organization and sometimes a greater one. LMT uses the term “organized management” for this type of management. We are now thus able to claim that the language planning theory from the 1960s and 1970s dealt precisely (and only) with organized management.

LMT emphasizes the *connections* between organized management and simple management. These connections are key not only for LM *theory*, but also for the *functioning* of organized management itself – Neustupný (1994) even calls directly for basing organized management on the analysis of simple management to the greatest extent possible. I will discuss these connections in the section on the Language Management Cycle.

The language management process

I have already mentioned that simple management does not merely mean correction of what has been said. The definition of the difference between generating utterances or communicative acts on the one hand and their management on the other implicates that management is already taking place when a speaker *notes* some feature of utterance generation. This is the first and basic phase of management. Discovering what a speaker in a concrete interaction did or did not note is an empirical matter, though it is generally assumed in LMT that the speaker notes a *deviation* from what is expected, in brief, a deviation from a norm. A further phase can (but need not) follow noting – *evaluation* of the noted deviation. This phase is essential for LMT, for it provides a clear opportunity to define a language problem – as a negatively evaluated deviation from a norm. However, a deviation from a norm can also be evaluated positively – in such cases, it is not a “problem”, but rather, a “gratification” (Neustupný 2003: 127). Following evaluation, a further phase of management – *adjustment design*, which is, in the end, either *implemented* or not, can (but need not) occur.

The management process can be summarized using the following diagram. It clearly shows that not all phases of this process must occur, which is intuitively evident to every speaker.

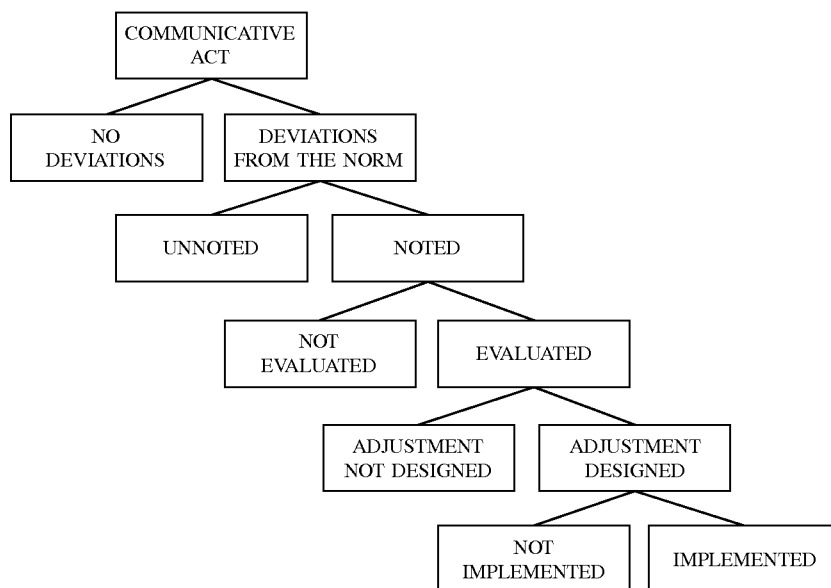


Figure 1: The simple management process scheme

A series of phases of the management process can be demonstrated using the following example (M is a Czech manager in a large multinational German-Czech company, S is a Czech researcher interested in the situation in this company)¹:

Example 1 ((translated from Czech))

1. M: ...when holding workshops, (...) so for example in the sphere of personnel matters
2. the workshops are held without the Germans in ninety nine percent of cases,
3. (...) or without the experts.
4. S: [hm]
5. M: [I] don't like the wording without the Germans, so, eh (...) ...

In this fragment it can be seen that M has used the ethnic category “Germans” (line 2), but after a short pause he replaced it with a professional category, i.e. “experts” (line 3). On the basis of empirical research, it was found that the “norm” in the given company was to not use ethnic categories, because they evoke ethnic stereotypes and the problematic common history of Czechs and Germans (it can be said that this norm is an example of a sort of local political correctness). The management process thus likely occurred in the following manner: M *noted* that he had deviated from the norm, he evidently *evaluated* this deviation *negatively* (which is made explicit by his turn in line 5), sought and found an *adjustment design* (i.e. a non-ethnic category with the same referent) and *implemented* it, i.e. by using the expression “experts”.

The individual phases of simple management become available to the analyst in various ways. The most accessible of these is, of course, the result of the implementation, because it is manifested directly in interaction. From a methodological standpoint, it is simple to identify the *noting* of the deviation which was “corrected” because in such cases it is possible to rely on the common-sense reasoning that “if something was corrected then it had to be noted”. However, it is much more complicated to uncover the presence, and, primarily, the succession (or the course) of the processes located “in between” noting and implementation; in other words, it is complicated to analyze everything that concerns evaluation of the noted item and the creation of the adjustment design, and of course even the noting itself, if it is not followed by other phases of simple management. The most common method is the so-called follow-up interview, a stimulated recall interview. During such interviews the researcher lets the interlocutors themselves reconstruct the individual stages of language management which occurred in the recorded and examined interaction. For example, listening to a particular segment of the recording, the researcher asks the speaker whether and how he evaluated a certain word-form used during the

¹ This example and its analysis have been taken from Nekvapil & Sherman (2009). In the presentation of spoken data I draw on conventions of Conversation Analysis.

recorded interaction by his interlocutor (Neustupný 1999). The advantage and, at the same time, the limitation of the follow-up interview is the fact that the researcher has to rely upon the categories of everyday language, that is, on the way in which ordinary actors speak about linguistic processes and about their “mental states”. Because, essentially, even the model of the management process itself is based on these categories, it is evident that LMT is closer to discursive psychology than to cognitive psychology (in detail see Nekvapil 2008).

Up to now, the point of departure has been that the management processes model is essentially universal. However, it can be assumed that management processes take various forms in various genres, styles, and communicative situations. A difference can be expected between speaking and writing, between generating spontaneous utterances and prepared utterances, between automated or routine behavior on the one hand and behavior in training (e.g. at school) on the other, etc. It can be assumed that the management process, in the form in which it is presented in Figure 1 above, will be utilized more intensively in the second member of these pairs. Yet only further empirical research can confirm or dispute this, or rather, reveal other connections.

Language management cycle

One of the merits of LMT is its continuous interest in the interplay of simple and organized management. This research perspective in particular distinguishes LMT from various theories of language planning. To simplify considerably, the existence of organized management is due to the fact that, in their interactions, everyday speakers encounter problems, be they linguistic, communicative or socio-cultural, and as they are not able to solve them themselves, they turn to linguistic or other professionals in social institutions (see e.g. Jernudd 1994). Though this consideration leaves some important circumstances aside, it is evident that there essentially exist several types of language problems. Among these, it is necessary to include, minimally, the following:

- (a) Problems or inadequacies which are solvable directly in the concrete communication situation or interaction (this type is in Example 1, line 2, 3),
- (b) Problems which were not solved in the concrete interaction, but the speaker came up with an adjustment design later by him/herself (e.g. by looking into a dictionary, consulting friends or other people interested in similar issues) and
- (c) Finally, problems which interlocutors do not solve by themselves, either within the concrete interactions or outside of them, but which they refer to professionals.

Problems of type (a) and (b) can be labeled “smaller problems”, and problems of type (c) “larger problems”. But some “smaller problems” can indicate “larger problems”, above all when they occur with high frequency. Undoubtedly, professionals who provide language services to the public in language consulting centers or who do research on the language behavior of speakers in everyday communication situations are also aware of this fact.

Organized management can be defined by the following features:

- a. Management acts are trans-situational
- b. A social network or even an institution is involved
- c. Communication about management takes place
- d. Theorizing and ideology intervene
- e. In addition to language as discourse, the object of management is language as a system

Let us now pay attention to how one can conceive of the relationship between simple and organized management. Ideally, their relationship can assume the form of the “language management cycle”. This concept, first used in 2006 (see Sherman 2007), was created based on Canagarajah’s concept of “language policy cycle” (Canagarajah 2006) and was inspired by the following statement by J. V. Neustupný:

I shall claim that any act of language planning should start with the consideration of language problems as they appear in discourse, and the planning process should not be considered complete until the removal of the problems is implemented in discourse. (Neustupný 1994: 50)

If what happens in concrete interactions is considered to be the social “micro” and all other social structures (above all education, research, economic and government institutions) are considered to be the social “macro”, the language management cycle can be depicted in a simple manner, as

Micro → *Macro* → *Micro*

This scheme captures the following typified situation: problems experienced by ordinary language users or “laymen” are brought to the attention of linguistic or other professionals; the problems are solvable and the designed adjustments are accepted by the laymen.

Such a situation, however, is the ideal case. It is symptomatic that Neustupný’s statement above does not apply to the way in which language planning is being realized but takes the form of a requirement (a “should-form”). Logically, and in reality as well, there exist other cases which can be labeled “partial language management cycle” and “fragment of language management cycle”. Using the conventions introduced above, it is possible to encounter the following cases:

Partial Language Management Cycle: Type 1

Micro → *Macro* (problems experienced by ordinary language users are brought to the attention of linguistic or other professionals, but the problems are not solvable or the designed adjustments are not accepted by laymen)²

Partial Language Management Cycle: Type 2

Macro → *Micro* (in institutions, professionals design adjustments without considering the actual language problems of laymen; nevertheless the designs are implemented)³

Fragment of Language Management Cycle: Type 1

Micro only (problems experienced by ordinary language users are solved only in ongoing interactions or as simple pre- or post-interaction management)⁴

Fragment of Language Management Cycle: Type 2

Macro only (in institutions, there is only weak attention paid to problems experienced by ordinary language users; professionals design adjustments without considering their implementations, linguistic experts pursue science for the sake of science)

Even though specific language situations or their partial aspects are, of course, more varied and dynamic, they tend to conform to one of these types of relationships. It is even possible to make predictions as concerns what type of management activities will be characteristic for the schemas listed here – e.g. it can be expected that the type *Micro* → *Macro* → *Micro* is more likely to be realized in the case of “corpus planning” than in the case of the “status planning” that tends toward the type *Macro* → *Micro*, even though the cases of referenda show that a (complete) language management cycle is not ruled out here either. This will, of course, also depend on which historical time period we have in mind (cf. Jernudd 1996, Neustupný 2006).

It is also noteworthy that in some cases a language situation which includes micro-macro linkages can differ from the way it is presented in public discourse. Giger & Sloboda (2008) offer a case from contemporary Belarus, from which it can

² On unsolvable problems, see Muraoka (this volume).

³ Such a situation is evidently what B. H. Jernudd had in mind when he wrote about the functioning of the “interest” factor: “The theory [= LMT] requires an analyst to discover whether directed [= organized] language management acts have their source in deviations and evaluations of discourse or in interests concerned with regulating discourse. In this latter case, interests project ideological or modeled positions onto discourse to shape discourse practices in their own image or according to some a priori model” (Jernudd 2000a). Needless to say, such an approach often causes (further) problems for ordinary language users.

⁴ “Pre-interaction management” has been defined as the management process done in anticipation of potential problems in a future interaction while “post-interaction management” as the process which takes place after the given interaction (in detail see Nekvapil & Sherman 2009).

be seen how in an authoritatively governed society, the type *Macro* → *Micro* is presented in the media as *Micro* → *Macro* → *Micro*, i.e. as the solution of problems from below, “from the will of the people”. Importantly, as Giger & Sloboda (2008) claim, such a discursive presentation is proof of the emic character of the concept of language management cycle; in other words, this concept is not merely an expert construct, but rather, social actors themselves orient to it.

In concluding this section, it is necessary to point out that both simple and organized management have their own complexities which the schemas presented above cannot tell us much about. For example, what an individual perceives as a problem can change, in other words, deviations from norms which the individual has consistently evaluated negatively can be evaluated neutrally, or even positively, with the passing of time – Muraoka (2000) and Fairbrother (1999) in these cases speak of various forms of the management reprocessing, such as “familiarization”, “cumulative evaluation” and “de-evaluation”. The conception of the problem in institutions is undoubtedly changing in conjunction with new theories and ideologies. In the case of simple management, it is necessary to also consider the fact that the speaker him/herself, on the basis of past experiences with problems from previous interactions, can develop strategies to use in interactions which have not yet occurred (pre-interaction management; see above and Note 4). The language management of an individual thus cannot be observed only in relation to the relevant institutions, but it is necessary to also devote attention to the way in which that same individual manages communicative acts in various everyday interactions and how his/her management acts in various interactions are interrelated. In the case of organized management, it is necessary to devote attention to the way in which various institutions (e.g. the Ministry of Education, Academy of Sciences, or various judicial authorities) manage language, communication and socio-cultural problems and how their actions are interrelated.

On the integrative potential of Language Management Theory

As we have seen in the previous sections, the scope of LMT is very broad. This is due to the fact that this theory is oriented above all to the following three elements of management:

- (1) both simple and organized management, and the relationships between them
- (2) language management in relation to communication and socio-cultural management
- (3) a processual view of management

Neustupný (2004a: 1) implies that LMT should communicate with “contemporary ethnomethodological theories of repair, Gumperz’s interactional sociolinguistics,

theories of language acquisition, critical discourse analysis, theories of language rights, language imperialism theory, multicultural policy theories etc”, and in a further step, it could perhaps integrate some aspects of these theories or knowledge acquired on the basis of them. LMT is also prepared for research on the history of language management. Here it is possible to emulate Neustupný (2006), which is a description of the general features of language management in “Early Modern”, “Modern” and “Postmodern” periods.

The integrative potential of LMT, however, can be conceptualized from at least one more perspective. As I have already stated above, the point of departure of LMT is the differentiation between generation and management in language use. It is thus the case that LMT is complementary to theories concerned with the generation/production of situationally appropriate sentences or communicative acts. In this context, the question arises as to what optimal form this generative component should have. As is already evident from Neustupný (1978: 35f.), the point of departure of the generative component in LMT is D. Hymes’ model of language use, well-known from his “ethnography of speaking/communication”. Neustupný elaborated this model and utilized it in many of his texts (as early as in Neustupný 1987). This model also underlies an extensive description of management processes taking place on the territory of one specific country, namely Neustupný & Nekvapil (2003). In this monograph it is demonstrated in detail how the generation of individual components of communicative events as conceived by Hymes is accompanied by language, communicative and socio-cultural management.

A significant component of communicative competence, however, is also grammatical competence. For that reason alone, an interesting question is that of what optimal form the *grammatical* component of this broadly conceived generative component should take. As far as I know, neither Neustupný nor Jernudd ever posed this question (but see Jernudd’s Epilogue in this volume on facing this challenge). Some concepts and terms that Neustupný uses suggest that this component was represented by – in the spirit of the time period when he was writing – Chomskyan transformational/generative grammar (cf. Neustupný 1978: 21, 213f.). I presume that this was not the final phase of his grammatical considerations, but in one of his latest articles, he comments on this topic merely by stating: “Models of grammatical competence abound. It is unnecessary to give details here.” (2004b: 7). It is evident that the answer to the question posed above would merit special attention. Here I would like to at least mention that in addition to formal grammatical theories, we now have elaborated theories of functional grammar at our disposal, from which we should not overlook the systemic linguistics of M. A. K. Halliday and his colleagues. In it, the relationships between grammar and extra-grammatical aspects of communication are developed (Butt *et al.* 2001, Martin & Williams 2004) and it was also not entirely removed from the generative approach (see Fawcett 1981).

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