

# Language management and language problems

## Part 1

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This paper is an introduction to language management and to the papers in this and the next volume of the Journal. It refers to contributors' papers as the text evolves. It discusses first management of problems in discourse, then directed management with the help of a mini-case study and some examples, then surveys sources of language problems and their solutions according to a selection of functions of language. In the first volume, it brings up the communicative, symbolic, social and entertainment functions as sources of language problems. In the second volume, it continues with a discussion of the development function as a source of language problems. The paper then brings together discourse and behavior towards language in their socio-economic context in a unified restatement of the theory.

The division of volumes is necessarily arbitrary, yet, each volume can be read independently of each other. This and all the papers together celebrate J. V. Neustupný's contribution to language management.

### 1. Discourse language management is a necessary component of language use

Language problems are a normal part of daily life. People have always had cause to manage language. Whenever people talk, people manage their language. Here is an example from a weekly staff meeting in a company in Hong Kong:

Director: How d'they cue the print?

Specialist: Er...

- Director: Acid dye?  
 Specialist: Yes they have keep + a... a machine to cue the fabric + + How to say?  
 Director: What's the print process? They steam it?  
 Specialist: Yes they steam it yes just like baking right? This is circle right? The fabric is fit inside and then a pressure steam  
 ||... something like that  
 Director: ||Oh  
 Oh I know

(from Jenny Chow's MA thesis 1996: 84, *A Study of Communication in a Textile Quality Management Services Company*)

All utterances in this extract from a discussion of a factory that the Specialist had inspected illustrate language management of discourse. The Specialist signals lack of understanding of the Director's question who provides a cue with 'Acid dye?'. The Specialist can now answer but has difficulties finding the correct term, clearly signalled by pauses, repetition of 'a' and the direct question 'How to say?'. The management process generates the message entire.

The transcribed record is a very primitive rendition of what actually occurs in the process of communication between two people, but at least some of the evidence of the details of the communicating parties' mutual dependencies of generating and managing their respective talk have been captured. The management is entirely positive in that all management acts contribute to enabling continued communication.

When people write, people of course also manage their language. We need hardly offer an example because readers will realize how they pause and think and erase and rewrite themselves.

Management helps construct discourse and evolve text. This is altogether positive in the sense that participants have not made capital out of interpreting each others' relative social merits as reflected in language use. As we well know, in all speech communities, people also manage what is good and what is bad, what is appropriate and what is inappropriate language.

*(Although repair of appropriate and inappropriate language is the focus of the paper on Hong Kong Cantonese conversation by Jernudd and Ho, the very idea that participants cooperate to construct discourse and thereby make continued communication possible by management of speaking underlies their interpretation of those particular repair behaviors.)*

The celebrated example from Gail Jefferson (1973) is well worth repeating here because the speaker makes use of an act of correction of the socially less

appropriate word, cop, into the socially more appropriate, officer, to express contempt of the police if not of the court in which he is speaking:

...When thu ku-[self-interruption] officer...

The speaker uses a management routine as an interaction resource in generating his utterance, which consists of deliberately beginning to pronounce the inappropriate 'cop' and deliberately interrupting it before completion so as to issue the appropriate word 'officer' making it seem a correction of a mistake — which it was not.

If you make it a point to think about your own speaking and writing (and this is easier for some people to do than for others) you will realize the extent to which you manage your own language. You deliberate on the right choice of word and expression, the correct spelling, the flow of expression to get the right meaning. And if you make it a point to think about your own listening and reading, you will realize the extent to which you manage your interpretation of the other's language. In discourse, you relate constantly and inevitably to the other, who integrates his/her reaction to yours constantly and inevitably into his/her speaking. This relationship opens opportunity to overtly react to each others' language. A simplest example is a request for reissue of an utterance: "What did you say?" 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 latter behavior is language management. The interaction of management with language generation results in language use in a circular process of causation which is sustained by and embedded in the interaction of participants in the communicative situation.

## 2. Directed language management is determined by the conditions of the society

At remove from discourse, evidence of directed and systematic language management surrounds us. For example, in almost every issue of almost any newspaper, there is an imprint of language management.

The Hong Kong English language newspaper the *South China Morning Post* on 16 September 1997 printed a picture of a man sitting backwards on a donkey carrying placards that read

"ENGLISH IS MY FATHER TONGUE".

The caption explained that his 'Donkeywork' protests the domination of English in India over Indian languages. The protest wants English removed, somewhere and somehow and for some reasons. This illustrates an act of language management.

*(The flooding of Czech with English that František Daneš discusses in his paper offers ample opportunities for puristic protest or passive acceptance of these potentially destabilizing foreign borrowings, in the context of complex psycho-social beliefs about and behaviors towards the foreign. Can and do people manage the language norm, and how?)*

On the same day, the International Herald Tribune carried a feature on inventing palindromes which substituted for Mr. William Safire's regular column on cultivating English language use.

Or consider this news headline in *The Japan Times* on 15 August 1997:

"CHECHNYA LAWMAKERS ADOPT CHECHEN AS OFFICIAL LANGUAGE".

The newspaper text said that "Chechnya's Parliament voted to make Chechen the official language of the southern republic and declared Russian a foreign language". The Parliament made policy by declaring how Chechen and Russian should be used in their republic. This decision was "the latest move to assert the territory's self-proclaimed independence." Chechnya has declared independence from Russia, and therefore its Parliament feels that it has to overturn the use of Russian which was the official language when Chechnya was a part of Russia. Instead, the indigenous language should be declared the official language in order to authenticate Chechnya's claim to independence.

The overt problem was apparently that Russian was still the declared official language or also that Russian remained in use in government offices. The former language problem is a symbolic one. The latter may to an extent be a communicative one, if the use of Russian got in the way of work and prevented some people from participating in relevant communications because some people didn't know Russian or didn't know it well. It is unlikely (although not entirely impossible) that members of Parliament in Chechnya would have waited to speak in their native Chechen until the use of Chechen was declared official. We can at the very least assume that if speakers had had any particular difficulties with the use of Russian, they would have switched to Chechen without regrets also before the policy was declared, at least in face-to-face communications. But in records-keeping and other contexts of writing it would not be that easy to avoid Russian if it had been customarily used before.

The declaration demoted Russian to a status of foreign language, something

which strongly reinforces the boundary between the native Chechen speakers and the foreign Russian speakers. For someone to know to speak only Russian and not also Chechen has now become available as a criterion to tell who is a national and who is not. This again is symbolic with very concrete consequences on a person's standing in the polity.

A symbolic problem with symbolic consequence has found symbolic solution. The solution was implemented by a Parliamentary vote in favor of the particular policy. The solution removed an anomaly which was symbolically important, namely, to remove Russian in favor of one's own language as the language of the republic. The policy declared Chechen the authenticating language of the Chechnya nation, just as a flag flies symbolically for one's country.

The policy, however, had some additional content and further mandates "all government agencies [to] draft measures to switch business correspondence to Chechen [from Russian]". Parliament need not have sought to implement the use of Chechen in particular domains. The state machinery and many individuals in Chechnya may still continue to use Russian for actual communicative purposes, because they may not feel ready to use Chechen in many contexts of writing. For one thing, individuals may simply not be proficient in written Chechen and especially not in bureaucratic language. This is plausible because we read in the text of the news that "only two hours a week have been devoted to the Chechen language in village schools and it has not been studied in city schools at all". We learn from the article that a Chechen-speaking population has not had an opportunity to be educated in their own spoken language except in a minimal way. The absence of education in and about Chechen is now going to be rectified. However, it takes time to gear the teachers up to function comparably well throughout the school system in their use of Chechen and to design language teaching materials and texts and tests and what have you.

The policy implicates a whole new set of language problems. Among others, it leads to language problems for the individuals who have to function in an educational system that is now governed by a legally required use of Chechen. The equivalent situation will be true for the state administration and for the legal system. How will individuals cope in their particular speech situations that constitute their working day? Do judges and lawyers share authoritative and interpretable legal texts in Chechen and if they do not, what do they do? Do teachers throughout the school system manage to speak about, demonstrate on the blackboard, mark essays and grade examinations in Chechen in each their particular subject?

Presumably, the Chechen state will now engage language professionals in a

concerted attempt to plan the transition from Russian to Chechen, and if not, it will have to deal with a constant flow of language problems at any and all levels of administration, education and law that arise in consequence of the way in which Parliament want the policy to be implemented. These problems that will inevitably come to the attention of state offices have their origin in the individual speech acts of all of the people who are embraced by the new policy.

The removal of one kind of problem, the symbolic one, would lead to noting a wide range of individual difficulties with the use of Chechen that would have to be overcome to ensure the smooth and continued use in actual communication of Chechen. The individual and the institutional, the symbolic and the communicative, are inextricably linked and managed.

Thus, implementing a decision that mandates the future use of an official language and a new medium of instruction in all schools leads to a whole host of language problems as a consequence of the first decision. People must take responsibility for new formulations and new vocabulary to produce new texts in the language, texts for which Russian and not Chechen was used before. There is of course also the matter of enabling individuals to use Chechen by supporting individual acquisition of proficiency and by helping them with reference materials, e.g., with availability of texts to model their own language use, and much else.

To the extent that a Russian-speaking minority of ethnic Russians would remain in Chechnya, the republic now also faces the potential need for a policy towards this minority. Should special provisions be made for children from this minority in the educational system?

*(Australia is very different indeed from Chechnya: there is no policy to curtail the use of Japanese, and it hardly needs telling that the sociopolitical circumstances are radically different. But children's right to acquire, use and find support for the use of minority family languages in communities in which some other language is all-dominant, in and out of school, is very much a concern in both situations. Kuniko Yoshimitsu's paper offers a case study of management of language maintenance for children of Japanese-speaking sojourners and settlers in Melbourne.)*

The break-away province's language planning act of policy formulation made news perhaps because Chechnya is already in the news; but it also made the news because state interests are involved. The context is one of conflict between the might of the Russian State and a former province, therefore it concerns other states; and from a different perspective, if the decision is implemented, the consequences concern a lot of people and their daily discourse.

### 3. The key questions of language management

A theory of language problems can be developed to predict what language problems are likely to appear under what societal conditions, and how these problems will be managed. The key questions of a theory of language management are:

- What are language problems  
(= where do they come from?);
- How are language problems managed?  
(= who attends to what problems when where and how?).

#### 3.1 Where do language problems come from?

The central function of language is communication. By logic of implication, language management serves the same function (and many others). Linguists deal first of all with the role of language in its communicative function to accomplish and maintain interaction. However, people claim that there are language problems also when there is no immediate motivation in discourse. People even implement solutions to language problems although there is no discourse problem for them to solve when they go about their daily communicative business. In particular, at remove from discourse, people evaluate language and seek solutions to problems that arise out of these non-communicatively motivated problems. All these language problems could be regarded as inventions if discourse were to be postulated as the only permissible source of problems. Of course, nobody can legislate permissibility in this manner and the facts are that people manage language for a variety of reasons, beginning the process sometimes at the point of applying principles of evaluation to language systems, sometimes at the point of implementation. Regardless of how a management process got started, there is nevertheless the possibility that the process will run on and have an impact on discourse. Therefore, we need to preview the many reasons there are for initiating language management and at what stage in the management process. A selection of functions of language in relation to language management serve to organize this preview.

##### 3.1.1 The communicative function and language problems

A simplest case of a language problem that clearly aims at removing an obstacle to the communicative interactive function of language is a person's realization that s/he does not share a language with a potential interlocutor, perhaps as



concretely as at a particular moment of potential communication. Noting may occur before, during or after attempted communication.

For example, a medical emergency onboard an airplane may require the assistance of the next-seated person when it turns out that the passenger and the crew do not share language. Finding an interpreter is the solution to the problem of not having a language in common so as to be able to communicate and to handle emergencies. Not surprisingly, many airliners have multilingual crews. In the case of longer-term involvement with people in another speech community, learning the others' language is a solution, and persevering in actually accomplishing a level of proficiency is the implementation of the solution.

### 3.1.2 *The symbolic function and language problems*

The symbolic interest is usually a collectively corporate one and emerges through a political-administrative process, as in the Chechnya case above. It is typically related to partisan interests in a state, or to deliberate nation-building. Language management that demarcates a variety of language from another, to create greater linguistic distance than before ("abstand"), as for example between Norwegian and Danish, exemplifies the symbolic interest. The symbolic function does not arise out of discourse. It impacts on discourse if adjustments to constraints (rules) of language selection and use are actually implemented. For example, people may not be served by civil servants unless they select to speak a particular desired language; or schools may be ordered to teach a particular variety of the official language and to examine proficiency according to prescribed grammatical criteria.

The major motivation for the many recent changes of names of international cities and even countries is symbolic, to erase a perceived imposition or to signal a new order. Changes are away from names based on foreigners' mishearings when the names were once given in the past to an authentically indigenous pronunciation:

Beijing for Peking  
Mumbai for Bombay  
Yangoon for Rangoon

The adjustments could also be regarded as communicatively motivated because it is probably more efficient (however measured) to have a name that fits the phonetic system of the language that most people in the country speak. Whether that is so or not, the prescription of new authenticating spellings and pronunciations have an impact on discourse to the extent that individuals

comply. Interestingly, there is an international registration process for changes of place names which costs but which therefore also ensures implementation in names lists with normative force.

*("A name is not merely a personal identifier" is the opening phrase for John Maher's paper on 'Marriage, Naming and the State'. Names are given and taken, allowed and disallowed, in a complex interaction of individual, family, community, and state interests. In his paper, Maher discusses adjustment of married names by the marrying individuals as a deeply symbolic, ideological speech act, subject to control by community and state.)*

### 3.1.3 *The social function and language problems*

Language problems often concern socially appropriate language use, indeed, those are the problems that reflect the role structure of society (i.e., social, professional, geographical, or otherwise). The role structure in society is maintained by differential interests and reflected in language structure and use, and in access to language proficiency.

The restructuring of the use of pronouns in European speech communities is a striking example. The problem arises when language use is out of synchronization with social change. Sweden solved a contemporary problem of the use of a pronoun of address, Ni, during the 1960's. The use of a universally applicable Du [dʉ:] was implemented in large measure through institutional decisions at work places, in education and in the media. This reform was strongly supported by leaders in the Social Democratic Party. The problem was that people hitherto avoided a no longer polite Ni when they addressed a person whose name was not known. Unhappily, Ni was the only choice, because Du was too intimate, and the use of Ni had become associated with condescension and inequality of social relationships. As stopgap measures, people used passives and paraphrases in discourse to avoid using a pronoun, and felt very awkward. The solution was to use Du to everybody.

Could it be said that the problem was not social but communicative since it was generally shared and avoiding Ni in actual discourse consistently caused difficulties of formulation for the vast majority of Swedish speakers? I say not, because the Du-reform as it became known abolished the need for a polite address form. Du would suffice. As a consequence of sanctioning a socially equal address term, the problem of how to formulate oneself politely to avoid Ni simply disappeared. The solution satisfied most people but led in turn to a new awkwardness in actual interaction among some few other people who wished to continue signaling differentials of social status through differential

selection of address terms. While the use of Du has won out as a socially acceptable usage, people still have means to express social distance.

Sociolinguistic research and theory building focus on social processes of language change, and implicitly recognize a language management process as an essential component of the processes and the theory. The fundamental concept of monitoring (per Labov) signifies the theoretical concept that allows individuals' noting, evaluating, adjusting and implementing of variants of linguistic variables. This is the management process. Socially motivated adjustment does not arise out of troubled communication, in the sense that there is difficulty of mutual understanding. It arises out of deliberate individual distancing of self from members of other social groups by use of features of language. Actuation may occur in different ways. This distancing of self may be initiated at comparing others' speech with one's own and evaluating the result of comparison. Or, other-initiated evaluation of an individual's spoken values on socially meaningful linguistic variables is systematically embedded in differentiated school systems with speech training to socialize pupils to the school's standards of speech. The speech (and other) teachers note the pupil's deviations from the socially appropriate norm and in the ensuing teaching process systematically replace the pupil's speech with the new standard.

### 3.1.4 *The entertainment function and language problems*

Solutions to language problems related to the entertainment function can hardly be expected to interfere with communicative interaction. This is because language problems relating to the entertainment function derive from individuals seeking more, not less, exposure to language and language use. The kinds of problems that belong here relate to the construction of jokes and crossword puzzles, or the appreciation of stylistic finesse in belles lettres. These are communicative problems of course but serving aesthetic or intellectually scintillating ends, not interactive ends.

If an individual can afford the cost including the time, evening study of a foreign language could be a socially and intellectually quite rewarding activity. The individual removes the problem of what to do with his/her time by enrolling in the socially rewarding interaction associated with learning a language in a group setting. The individual participates in what could be regarded as an act of implementation in the language management process for reasons not related to the solution of a language problem, but nevertheless ends up with some measure of communicative competence that could be applied in interaction.

[to be continued in JAPC 11:1]

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# Language Management and Language Problems

## Part 2

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[cont.]

### 3.1.5 *The development function and language problems*

The development function arises out of a wish to expand the use of a language into new domains of use and to replace the use of another language in some domains.

*(Zhou Youguang succinctly surveys the major dimensions of attention by language planning work in China to language systems; this work aims at promoting a national common language in a linguistically diverse state, and to develop stable usage norms and efficient writing systems for majority and minority languages alike.)*

*(A useful reality test for Chinese language reform is the snapshot of the language situation in Shanghai, China, that Chu Xiao-quan takes. He relates language behavior and changes in language behavior in Shanghai to behavior towards language at increasingly comprehensive levels of social communication, from individual to state.)*

This wish may take expression in a language policy that generally or in particular domains favors the use of one language over another. To enable its use, certain supportive and coordinating measures may have to be undertaken to build up the language ("ausbau"), e.g., by providing lists of recommended vocabulary, by subsidizing the production of textbooks, by providing guidelines for correspondence, etc. The policy presumably also broadens participation in communication because more people already are somewhat proficient in the language that is being developed than in the language that is being replaced. The use of one language is negatively evaluated, and the adjustment consists in its replacement; implementation of the adjustment — the policy — in turn requires solving a large number of language problems that arise because people are unsure of norms and do not want to take individual initiatives in generating new usage. In principle, people could use their own resources and allow social communication to coordinate usage. This latter strong version of implementing a language policy of replacement has its advocates, but experience shows that start-up is complex and involves overt directed language management. This could very well be motivated by the fact that directed language management agencies have to also be developed, in any case, to support the continued routine use of the language. If that is not so, institutions of language development predictably evolve into institutions of language cultivation. The extent to which early agency actions have specific impact on discourse is not known, but the fact that their presence is important for implementation of policy is clear. Discourse may take its own course, yet, agency work provides an essential backdrop of support for the evolving use of the developing language.

Typical examples are the national languages developments both by pre-modern and post-colonial states. The pre-modern state managed the lexicon by starting work on a national language word book, the post-colonial state by creating committees to fill perceived gaps of administrative, technical and "scientific" vocabulary. Both began work on a standard grammar. Other acts of language management require the acquisition and use of the language in schools and civil service.

The Swedish language attracted developmentally motivated management attention in the pre-modern period when the state founded a Swedish Academy

in 1786 on the model of the French Academy. So reads this Academy's rules of 1786, paragraphs XXII and XXIII:

Academiens yppersta och angelägnaste göromål är, at arbeta uppå Svenska Språkets renhet, styrka och höghet, så uti Vettenskaper, som serdeles i anseende til Skaldekonsten och Vältaligheten uti alla thes tillhörande delar, jemväl uti then, som tjenar at tolka the Himmelska Sanningar.

[The ultimate and most urgent task for the Academy is to work on the purity, strength and nobility of the Swedish Language, in Sciences, as in regard to Poetry and Rhetoric in all their component parts, and also in that which serves to interpret the Heavenly Truths.]

Ty åligger äfven Academien at utarbete en Svensk Ordabok och Gramatica, jemte sådana Afhandlingar som bidraga kunna til stadga och befordran af god smak.

[And the Academy shall also produce a Swedish Wordbook and Grammar, and such dissertations that can help stabilize and enhance good taste.]

A paradigmatic post-colonial example is the work by the Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka on behalf of Bahasa Malaysia. (The interested reader may look up and link to the Dewan on the web site <http://arts.hkbu.edu.hk/~bhjernudd>.)

### 3.2 Who attends to language problems when where and how

Teenagers mimic barbarian tongues in ritual rebellion. Adults note the teenagers' language use and complain, "why do they talk like (listen to ...) that?" Teenagers protest, "you cannot tell me..." and at the very same time pay very close attention to peer fashion of expression. The adults' noting and evaluating, as the teenagers' noting with approval peers' usage and adjusting to it, are acts of language management. But the two concerns will not connect. Negotiated management is impossible, for the same reason that teenagers behave in the way they do in the first place. The differential evaluations remain, and teenagers remain teenagers. There is no basis for organized management to emerge, unless adult society's action to place youth in school is seen as at least in part a related measure of implementing adjustments to youth language in a desired direction.

Foreign language acquisition presents a very different range of opportunities for organized language management. Fortunately, people do not want a new Tower of Babel so they respect the use of foreign languages and many learn some. Individuals realize their helplessness in potential communication with people who speak other languages and therefore acquire proficiency in foreign languages.

One person may hire a teacher, another person may take the matter into his/her own tongue and settle into the foreign speech community for a period of time, yet a third person may access one of the many other opportunities to learn foreign languages that are available in just about any contemporary society. These opportunities include opting for a language subject in school, enrolling in an adult-education language class, and purchasing a language course for self-study.

*(How learners manage self in acquiring a language is modeled in detail in Joan Rubin's paper; and the particular aspect of communicative adjustment and especially the roles that adjustment markers play in this process are given a meticulous theoretical treatment in Satoshi Miyazaki's paper.)*

Directed management by the state of foreign language teaching in schools coexists with a private supply of market-driven foreign language learning opportunities. There is an entire foreign language teaching industry that depends on school, corporate or individual customers for its continued prosperity; and that responds to customer sentiments of communicative need.

This need will have been variously defined. It may have been defined by systematic inquiry at the state level, to decide what languages to offer in an educational system. Graduates' planned proficiency patterns will obviously affect future communication patterns which in turn perpetuate the language teaching pattern.

The need may have been defined at an intermediate level of social organization by a company for training or recruitment of employees in relation to projected export sales. The degree of control over market information and agents will obviously be affected by communicative access.

Individuals have different roles in the management process, so that some may note the problem, others may evaluate it, yet others may define alternative solutions, and others yet may be involved in implementing the preferred solutions. In the case of the company, it may have undertaken a market survey in-house and included the language factor, or it may have turned to consultants; and for implementing the language plan that particular employees have to know particular foreign languages, it may contract a language teaching institute to teach or a head-hunting firm to screen for suitable employees which would include screening for language competence.

The need may have been defined at an individual level by any single person, in relation to interest and career plans, yet the individual may have sought information towards a decision on language from specialized sources and will very likely turn to organizations for help with his/her language acquisition. The

potential language learner will next have to evaluate the language provider, in the unfolding language management process.

Directed management of language can occur at most any level of organizational complexity. Directed language management has a degree of organization that assigns roles to participants, and routines and idioms to its transactions, and are based on some principle or theory which may be more or less rigorous of thought.

#### 4. The concept of language management

##### 4.1 The language management model in social, economic and political context

The model of language management relates all language problems to discourse. "Language" is an intermediate stage in the relationship between individuals who generate and manage discourse towards partially shared ends. Discourse is necessary for the construct of any particular language which is reified by meta-linguistic awareness and analysis. The theory focuses on individuals' management of a language in aid of discourse towards interactive ends. It would be adequate to refer to the interactive discourse process as a process of language use if "language" is understood in the most general terms of communicative competence that is manifested by all human beings' capacity to use some verbal or signed system of more or less arbitrary symbols for interactive purposes. Discourse is consummated through the use of language that is inevitably managed as a language.

*(What could be a more elegant demonstration of discourse management of language than a study of individuals' narrative discourse of their language management? Such is Jiří Nekvapil's paper on biographical narratives by Czech Germans and their acquisition and use of German and Czech over the latter course of this century.)*

Whether language management has a lasting impact is highly problematic. A solution which is momentarily implemented in discourse to meet any communicative contingency may be as fleeting as the flow of talk. This is so because language management is inevitably constrained by the socioeconomic and political state of affairs in a speech community. It is important to be very clear about this constraint. Language management does not remove problems related to differential social, economic and political interests, although it responds to problems that arise out of differential interests.



Neustupný has forcefully argued this point with reference to the Romani (in his paper 'Language Management for Romani in Central and Eastern Europe', May 1, 1993). The Roms did not place themselves in urban slums or separate settlements, deprived themselves of political participation, and what not. The Rom agree wholeheartedly with the Czech government that their situation is a grave social problem; they may disagree as to why. On the basis of a contemporary value of respect for ethnic-cultural differences, history is clear: the majority polity corralled them. Absence of positive action set up a process on which the social ills followed. One consequence is that the Rom's socioeconomic condition circumscribes the sociolinguistic condition of use of Romani; and as a consequence of that, Romani remains linguistically (lexically and stylistically) underdeveloped. Logic alone prescribes that users of the Romani language will not readily respond to efforts at linguistic and even socio-linguistic development unless their socioeconomic conditions change.

Relative socioeconomic underdevelopment implies circumscribed sociolinguistic opportunities of use which imply stylistic and lexical gaps for which discourse management or directed management at a grammatical or sociolinguistic level would hardly have lasting effect other than to possibly communicate a problem more saliently. Conversely, socioeconomic development that concurrently rewards the use of Romani will contribute to the development of Romani, through the cumulative effect of individual discourse management acts. Individuals' language use may be yet further enhanced by guidance from directed language management which responds to discourse problems in their socioeconomic and sociolinguistic context.

The socio-economic constraints on discourse management opportunities are obvious and forbiddingly strong at the individual level. The individual cannot move socio-economic realities by mere acts of discourse management; and individual solutions to language problems in discourse remain within the constraints of what is meaningful to the participants in that speech situation and the situation is necessarily predicated on social and economic realities.

The direction of potential effect from the socioeconomic through the linguistic to discourse predicts also a problem of language selection: should people go to the trouble of using Romani at all since it implies a cost of effort of management to do so? This was and still is the dilemma in many post-colonial states which had a choice to develop their own language(s) or continue the status quo of use of the formerly highly developed colonial language already known by the elite and entrenched in the state administration and educational system. The measure lies in the prediction of 'amount of trouble' to acquire and use a given

language, for the group of people who dominate sociolinguistic decision-making. If democratic participation in decision-making in the polity is an agreed goal, there seem to exist only two possible solutions to the problem of language selection: to mobilize the entire population to shift languages (as has Singapore, to English for a multilingual and multiethnic population) or to add a lingua franca to the languages they already speak, or for all to use their languages with multilingual mediation. It is a fortunate society indeed that today can assume that an overwhelming majority of its valued members 'speak the same language'!

#### 4.2 A criterion for successful language management

Language management cries out for a criterion that does not confine its application within the constraints of existing socio-economic and vested interests. Theory should under all circumstances require application of at least an interactive criterion, say, openness of participation, to safeguard the rights of those least benefited by management acts. It follows that language management should try to predict what are good and bad solutions to actual and potential language problems by requiring at least the status quo of interactive potential among all groups affected by a suggested solution.

This is how the criterion would work in principle in the case of large-scale implementation of an official language. In just about any contemporary state reside other-language-speaking minorities, whether with indigenous birthright, refugee status or labor permits. These peoples' opportunities for participation in social affairs should at least not be made appreciably worse through language decisions that erect barriers of communication, at least not as a result of negligence of attending to their communicative situation.

For example, when the Baltic states recently implemented symbolically important official language laws which were doubtlessly also communicatively sound for the future development of the state, they explicitly retained provisions for the use of Russian by ethnic Russian speakers. (The provisions have to be made to work, too.) These provisions retain a degree of *status quo* of interactive potential. It is dynamic because individuals may change ethnicities, move or for whatever reason acquire and accept in use another language.

Analysts have in our view an obligation to point to adversary consequences and to make available theories that do that. Placing a constraining condition of at least unchanged interactive opportunity for all on solutions to language problems of whatever source affords decision-makers and critics alike an

opportunity to weigh perceptions of the benefit of the degree of good against perceptions of cost of the bad.

Conventionally the academic assumes the role of critic. The academic does not have to identify with "the powerless" in society by taking their side in any sense of one's individual vote but s/he has an obligation to present their case. This rule of academic-analytical conduct eliminates what would otherwise have been a moral dilemma. The academic is held responsible for exhaustively accounting for changes in opportunities of communicative interaction among all groups affected by a solution to any language problem. S/he cannot hide behind the limits of a particular interest.

Communication is a means to an end and aims at accomplishing and maintaining interaction. Interaction may well in turn aim at achieving specific actions, but it is reasonable to set aside the continuing chain of potential outcomes from interaction. Instead, language management theory rests on the assumption that a sufficient criterion of successful communication is the potential for continued interaction. Continued interaction presupposes access to people and institutions. In the case of acquiring another language, the criterion of successful communication is that at least one of the participants is prepared to interact on a range of topics in a range of situations — and continued use makes perfect. If interaction continues or can continue, in a given situation, then communication at least has the chance to be successful or, *happy*.

The criterion of happy communication is very powerful in revealing interests, whether these are social, political or economic, that are connected with language. Consequently, an ultimate criterion of a successful theory of language management of language problems is the power of the theory to predict what are good and what are bad solutions to actual and potential language problems in view of achieving and maintaining equal opportunity of interaction.

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