LANGUAGE PLANNING

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Multi-Disciplined Language Planning

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1. Multi-Disciplinary Approaches to Language Planning[1]

To his study of language, Joshua Fishman has indefatigably applied an array
of disciplinarily separate humanistic and social scientific theories and re-
search methods; he has allied historical with synchronous system perspec-
tives; and he has harmonized as well as innovated such novel approaches. His
work exemplifies two requirements in conducting research that we regard as
fundamental in today's study of language management and language plan-
ning.

First, work should be anchored in data that have been gathered with the
use of replicable method. Second, interpretation should take advantage of co-
operation between researchers in as many disciplines as is relevant. Reading
across disciplines will not find unity in inter-disciplinary diversity, but will
help discover richer methods and richer sources of theory. Research in his-
tory, political science, ethnography, literacy, geography, literature, linguistics,
social psychology, and so on provides crucial insights into language manage-
ment and language planning and offers new methods.

Work on the political, social, and economic circumstances of language
planning in particular and language management in general will benefit from
being informed by variety in methods and theories in the respective disci-
plines, and can take advantage of variation and conflict of approach within

the disciplines. If political science accommodates institutional and rhetorical approaches, then the study of the politics of language should accordingly be informed by these institutional and rhetorical approaches (compare, e.g. articles in Jernudd and Shapiro 1989) – to the benefit both of our understanding of language planning and of theory in political science. When theories of development replace each other, so should their projections on language behavior be reevaluated on the basis of appropriately enriched and enlarged data bases that correspond to the analytical requirements of the adopted theoretical perspective.[2] We also suggest that language as behavior and behavior towards language are domains of study that offer new and rich data for development theory, as for other disciplines in each its uniquely focussed search for answers.

In commenting at a recent conference on the status of "status planning" within language planning, Joshua Fishman said that

> [those interested in language planning] have been making up social science theory far too long and, as a result, have benefitted far too little from the theory that has been elaborated by specialists working in other areas of social change and social planning. [He also noted that (426)] far too few empirical studies were presented ... in any but a historical vein. The study of history is, of course, empirical in terms of documentation of the past record. But sociolinguistics is also concerned with the exhaustive, multidimensional depiction of the present, with attitude studies, with usage studies, with criterion evaluation studies, in short, with quantitative studies of various kinds. We ultimately want to know more about what kinds of populations are more likely, and what kinds are less likely, to adopt the status planning and corpus planning products of language planning authorities and why these differentials exist. (1987a: 410)

For an example of this kind of work, Fishman refers to the International Research Project on Language Planning Processes which he regards as a "serious beginning" of empirical, exhaustive, multidimensional, quantitative work (1987a: 426).[3] The research questions for this project were formulated during the research team's year at the East-West Center in 1968-1969. The questions then, as Fishman's questions also now, focus on the authorization, inner workings and products of language planning agencies and associations, and on responses among people to their work.[4]

Significantly, the project did not connect with individual management of language in discourse because impact of agency work on discourse was the

main issue. It gathered language data only as deemed relevant to evaluating agency influence on language use. Because of this particular interest, the project did not consider, for example, the processes of term evaluation in various situations of discourse (i.e. in editing, lecturing, writing of manuals, industrial training, laboratory report writing, advertising, etc.). Research in language planning today can undertake these latter kinds of work also. Language planning researchers now have opportunity to relate individuals' management of language in discourse to institutional, ideological, attitudinal and survey-of-language-use findings. A discipline of language management which includes language planning as one type of language management activity arises out of that relationship.

2. A Disciplinary Focus in the Study of Language Planning

Multiplicity of research questions that derive from researchers' interaction in schools of political science, anthropology, sociology and other disciplines informs the study of any human activity. Some activities allow greater scope of cooperation in research, and language planning is one of them. In the 1990s, language planning is motivated in one context by migrations and ethnic relations, in another by new nationalisms, or by the maintenance of state power by a particular interest group (even self-identified by "race"), in yet another by consequences of economic globalization of the economy. Naturally, therefore, researchers engage in language planning from multiple perspectives of study.

However, there is one perspective that can be regarded as language planning's own perspective. This perspective arises out of a theory of language problems (Neustupný 1968, 1978: 243-257; Jernudd and Das Gupta 1971: 205-206). A theory of language problems is explicit about relationships between discourse and peoples' behavior towards discourse (or "behaviour toward language", cf. Fishman 1971a: 221), and can therefore serve as the basis for theory of language management and language planning. We claim that a theory of language problems must reveal how language problems occur in communicative acts. Participants in processes of language management claim that certain features of language, or a language system, are inadequate. How do these claims arise? Do they arise out of *linguistic interest* or out of *non-linguistic interest*? With what differential consequences? The former are

a direct part of the communication process, while the latter have to be introduced into discourse in order to become problems of language (Jernudd and Neustupný 1987: 77) .

The model for language management in discourse (Jernudd and Neustupný 1987: 75-76) holds that a person

1. produces messages;
2. monitors the language that constitutes these messages, and notes (or not) a difference from norm;
3. evaluates (or not) the kind and degree of deviation from norm in the segment under consideration;
4. selects (or not) an adjustment strategy or at least ad hoc means of adjustment for the inadequacy; such adjustment can be pre-, in- or post-correction of self or of other participants' language;
5. acts (or not) to implement the selected adjustment.

It is not always easy to recover notings, evaluations, and adjustment strategies from recordings, even when it is obvious that a participant took action to implement adjustment. However, ethnomethodologists' and conversation analysts' work has shown that there are signals to be recovered from the discourse that allow interpretation according to "models of repair". A video-recording of communication may allow guessing from close study of body movements that a writer pre-corrected an inadequacy or that a hearer noted some aspect of the speaker's communication. The analyst may have prior knowledge, established independently of the discourse under study, that certain evaluations are likely to be made. Such evaluations may leave traces in discourse between persons characterized by different degrees of linguistic insecurity (Labov 1987: 133-134); however, evaluations may be lost with the moment of speaking – and they may not be recoverable in any case from a record of the interaction. Conversation analysis assumes that participants' communicative actions are both context shaped and context renewing.[5] It shares with language management an interest in trouble and repair in conversation, and trouble and repair are as central to ethnomethodologists' reconstruction of language process as they are to the language managers' search for solutions.[6] Conversation analysts' untiring attention to details constitute their (ethno)methodology; language managers make accessible evaluation, adjustment, and implementation processes in discourse and situate these processes in institutional contexts.

One possible way to recover processes of discourse management is to play back a record of interaction to the participants in it, soonest after the event of discourse, and to request the participants to recollect their thoughts (feelings, (re)actions). This method, frequently used by Neustupný and his colleagues, has been called "the follow-up interview" (Neustupný 1981). There still exists a confounding possibility that the participants may give either ideologically informed, pre-packaged, person-based or situation-based explanations which only incidentally reproduce meanings that may have informed their earlier behavior. However, psychologists' interests during the last ten years have led to a reevaluation of the usefulness of tapping participants' reports on own behaviours (Ericsson and Simon 1984).[7]

It is easier to recover notings, evaluations and adjustments for some language use than others. For example, classificatory terms are likely to be noted and evaluated in the process of reading scientific texts, because principles of taxonomic systematicity and morphological term-formation explicitly govern their selection and use. All discourse is not equally laden with potential trouble. Much, perhaps most, language use reflects the idiomatically frozen, probabilistically expected construction or sequence of utterances, the effective reproduction of which is less costly in effort with regard to monitoring and evaluation than composing anew its constituent parts. If language behavior reduces risk of trouble in language use, then this lends further support to models that explore all aspects of individual management of potential trouble. By pointing in a lexical[ist?] direction, this reasoning also allows common sense to support this approach to language management, because common sense has it that people want help with the "right word" and the "right expression". It is much easier for us to conceive of correction processes that deal mostly but not only with "items" than with "underlying rules". Further, lexical phenomena as a matter of fact take center stage in language management practices anywhere in the world.[8]

For written language in general, principles guide editing and evaluation of congruent parameters of a style, of document formulation and so on. Yet, in other language behavior than reading for the very purpose of evaluation, i.e. in speaking, and in real-time written interaction through, e.g. electronic means, such principles are but one source of evaluation and a source that it is difficult to apply as an evaluation metric at the moment of discourse. Yet, there is a way of capturing some parts of the creative process, e.g. by registering all input a writer makes at a computer keyboard when word-processing

(Severinson-Eklundh 1988). There is such a project underway at the Royal Institute of Technology at Stockholm (Sweden) and at locations in the United States. The detailed record of rewrite can be analyzed, and then, with questions guided by the analysis, presented to the writer for comments in a follow-up interview.

While it presents a serious methodological problem how to access the discourse management process as the assumed base for the systematic management of language, there are language inadequacies that can be studied directly in the management process. We refer to situations of language learning – if acquisition is one's problem area – and to characteristic situations of language cultivation. In the former case, the researcher may experience overt, consultative management as a participant either in the role of teacher or learner.[9] In the latter case, the researcher may take note of queries directed over the telephone or by mail to language cultivation agencies to help solve language problems, or collect problems in any situation of seeking help with adjustment of inadequacies. There are several recently published studies that account for queries from the public directed at language cultivation agencies, e.g. for the major languages in the Nordic countries (Nordisk Språksekretariat 1988), for Czech (Svobodová 1988), for German (Kolde 1976).

3. The Multiply Disciplined Study of Language Planning

At the center of language management is discourse. An interest in discourse processes is of course not unique to language management. An interest in discourse is very much a feature of our times. An indicator of the climate of our times in this respect is, among many others, that Clifford Geertz (1988) struggles with *discursivity* as a means to understanding what anthropologists do (and what anthropologists could and should do). The discursive interest in anthropology, practical philosophy,[10] literary criticism,[11] political science,[12] and history,[13] now percolating in all the human and social sciences, and interest in discourse in branches of language study, are not accidental and not unrelated.

The diverse concerns in other disciplines that come to involve language as a discoursal and discursive resource is matched in linguistics and in the study of language management by a concern with how discourse itself gets formed, and with the bases for discourse about discourse (e.g. overt norms).

One motivating factor for the shared foregrounding of the discursive in the human and social sciences is an interest in the individual, and perhaps also, therefore, interest in the ordinary, in contemporary endeavors of any kind.[14]

The study of language management focuses on trouble in discourse because processes of overcoming trouble validate practices of language cultivation and language planning. We wish to add our voices to Fishman's in support of cooperative study of these practices, from multiply disciplinary perspectives, with cross-readings, and with historical awareness.

Notes

1. An early version of this paper was presented to a conference on Malay studies, 21-23 August 1989, in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

2. We are very impressed by results obtained through the use of cultural indicators, a specific technique of content analysis to produce quantitative measures of (aspects of) the *Zeitgeist*, see Rosengren 1983.

3. Rubin et al. (1977) report on this project; for its comparative methodology, note especially Fishman (1977b) in the report.

4. The questions are published in an appendix to the book *Can Language Be Planned?* (Rubin and Jernudd 1971: 293-305) and are still relevant. We relied mainly on questionnaires, and the questionnaires were formulated on the basis of social science methodology. We also worked from archival and published sources about agencies and projects, and to an extent obtained information by intensive interviewing of people in agencies and associated with agency work. We directly observed aspects of agency work, but even more importantly, study of policy-processes called for "more detailed discussion and contingency-questioning than questionnaires are likely to permit" with a small number of very knowledgeable informants (Rubin and Jernudd 1971: 295).

5. For a detailed overview, see Heritage 1985, including copious reference to Goffman, Jefferson, Sacks, Schegloff, and many others.

6. See Schegloff 1979. Ethnomethodology is process thinking. The quote from *Language* demands process thinking. For example, explanation of findings in Speech Accommodation Theory requires a process whereby interactants are enabled to exchange their attributed beliefs, schemata and perceptions (see Giles et al. 1987) to produce discourse that in turn allows the researchers' production of measurements of quantities of convergent and divergent speech.

7. Since individual discourse stands at the center of the language management discipline, application of methods that rely on participant reports is extremely important. Language management is not alone in sharing this methodological interest. Students of language teaching are returning to self-report and even stream-of-consciousness methods

to explore the language acquisition process (see Faerch and Kasper 1987, Cohen 1987a, b). Neustupný (1986a, b) discusses the application and interpretation of interaction and follow-up interviews in language management. His colleagues and students are currently applying such techniques also to the study of language contact. Michael Clyne's work, also at Monash University, with playback of a video-taped record is equally noteworthy (1975).

8.   Lexical phenomena have already been foregrounded in other areas of language study. For example, in support of a lexical[ist] approach to first language acquisition, Schmidt and Frota (forthcoming: 90) quote Lakoff who

> has argued that a continued focus on core grammar, that portion of the grammar which happens to work by fully productive general principles of compositionality, is unfortunate, since by his estimate the continuum between fully productive constructions and completely frozen expressions includes 95% to 98% of the constructions in English. (1982: 157)

9.   Richard Schmidt, an expert language teacher and researcher, monitored very closely his learning of Portuguese and subsequently analyzed his experiences (Schmidt and Frota forthcoming).

10. "Heidegger displaces the ego subject, the subject of consciousness from the centre of knowledge and puts in its place an historical, changing subject constituted as a set of skills and/or practices, including (and especially) linguistic practices which 'house' human existence" (M.J. Shapiro 1984: 216).

11. In the same article, Shapiro lets Beckett speak for the literarily discursive (1984: 239): "Beckett places the 'I' in a place where it *receives* the action. It is in a head, but the kind where it gets pissed on".

12. For applications, see Shapiro and Henningsen on language purism in Jernudd and Shapiro (1989). For an overview, see Shapiro (1987) with an annotated bibliography or his edited collection (1984). Philosophers and political theorists who work in this mode grapple with the problem of our free will in context of peoples' production of relationships of power and authority.

13. Muecke (1983: 71): "Events in history exist only insofar as they exist in discourse".

14. See, for example, Basso (1989: 393).