# A note on Language Management Theory

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In the context of Language Management Theory (LMT), management is generally understood as the attention and activities devoted to language and its use, in other words, behavior toward language. Language behavior is necessarily accompanied by behavior toward language. Management can be observed when an individual notes a feature of language, say, a choice of word, in her own speech or in something written or signed, evaluates the word as unsuitable for whatever reason, comes up with a replacement and ends up using that other word. This can be demonstrated by a repair sequence from a meeting at one branch of Siemens in Prague: a speaker used a German term within a turn in Czech, and then immediately replaced it with a Czech one. Another example is when a foreigner visiting Prague notes that a local person whom he had asked for some information does not understand him particularly well, or vice versa for that matter, and begins to speak slower and perhaps even louder, possibly even in "simplified" grammar in order to enable comprehension (so-called foreigner talk, in the sense of Charles Ferguson). Or the local person may turn to someone nearby and younger with a request for help with answering the visitor's question in, say, English.

It is not at all unexpected and certainly not a chance occurrence that a younger person in Prague is expected to know English. An education ministry mandates the teaching of English, hardly a surprise nowadays. A multitude of agents and agencies, of organizations ranging in complexity, attend to language and its use. A government may decide to protect a certain language or set of languages by promulgating a law on the support of domestic minority languages, or by adopting a Charter of Regional or Minority Languages. The creation of agencies to promote vocabulary, texts, teaching and particular situational uses of these languages typically accompany such policies. States are by no means the only decision makers on behalf of their citizens. Multinational corporations adopt "in house" lan-

guage policies and terminologies, international unions of branches of science and technology coordinate terms globally, conference organizers make available interpreters and edit proceedings.

National awakening in Europe in past centuries was accompanied by complex actions of language management, as were, and are, the development of post-colonial states. Linguapax, after all, is an example of an organization that dedicates itself to the support of languages in communities whose members cannot exercise the full potential of their own languages or worse, even face the loss of their languages -- and with that loss their sense of individual value and identity.

Thus, Language Management Theory observes, describes and attempts to explain not only simple management in discourse but also organized management of language. LMT presumes that simple and organized management are related, and deems uncovering the character of these relations as fundamental for empirical research. Linguistic phenomena under management are interconnected with communicative and socio-cultural phenomena (including socio-economic ones) to such a degree that the management in one dimension is related to the management in others. Post-colonial state development involves language policy formulation. European nation state formation motivated national language development. Contemporarily, and more specifically, the arrival of Korean multi-nationals in       the Czech Republic (the socio-economic dimension) created an advantageous situation for Korean speakers of Czech and Czech speakers of Korean (communicative dimension) and communication in the work dimension stimulated the standardization of Czech and Korean terminological equivalents in the area of manufacturing (linguistic dimension). Catalunya's post Franco successful economic development, therefore attracting immigrants who were on the whole Castilian speakers, and while national governance remained Madrid-centered, motivated Catalunya's language "normalization" and education policies in support of re-vitalising Catalan, in turn underpinning a policy of autonomy for Catalunya.

Finally, the sensitivity of individuals and institutions to linguistic, communicative and socio-cultural phenomena is fundamentally dependent on (language) ideologies. For example, in the Czech Republic the ideology of the absolute instrumentality of English – in the sense

of "you can get by anywhere with English" – leads to the reduction in the teaching of German at state schools, even in regions on the border with Germany and Austria, despite the fact that German-based multinationals are looking for new employees there and evaluate German knowledge as an added bonus. In Catalunya, bilingual speakers of Catalan and Castilian can be expected to use words from the one language in the other, without causing disapproval; however, advocates of a separate Catalunya may well project their political ideology onto language use, and practice an ideology of separation of languages. A case in point is the Catalan pop star Rosalìa's use of Castilian words, "Spanishisms", in her first single record some three years ago, which caused protests on the part of Catalan hard liners and linguistic purists. An ideology of political separation goes hand in hand with an ideology of language separation. Ideologies influence what individuals or institutions note, what and how they evaluate, and what adjustments are designed or even implemented, in short, what will be managed (or not).

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Essential information on Language Management Theory including relevant papers to be downloaded can be found here at the Language Management website:
http://languagemanagement.ff.cuni.cz

The Language Management website <http://languagemanagement.ff.cuni.cz> has been run by the Language Management Research Group at the Faculty of Arts, Charles University, Prague, since 2013. It is a basic resource for studies using Language Management Theory, an approach initiated by J. V. Neustupný and B. H. Jernudd in 1980s.

**Further reading:**

Nekvapil, J. & Sherman, T. (eds.) (2009). *Language Management in Contact Situations: Perspectives from Three Continents*. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang.

Fairbrother, L., Nekvapil, J. & Sloboda, M. (eds.) (2018). *The Language Management Approach: A Focus on Research Methodology*. Berlin: Peter Lang.

Kimura, G. C. & Fairbrother, L. (eds.) (2020). *A Language Management Approach to Language Problems*: *Integrating Macro and Micro Dimensions*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.