

Linguistics Research Seminar Series 2008

Monday, August 11 at 11.00 am
Linguistics seminar Room - W5C221

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Language Management in Contact Situations

The aim of the paper is to demonstrate the central features of Language Management Theory (LMT), originated in work of J.V. Neustupný and B.H. Jernudd, which represents an alternative to language planning theories. Language management may be defined as metalinguistic activities (“behaviour-toward-language”). These activities take place in actual everyday discourse (that is, Simple Management, e.g. a self-correction of a word-form) or in social organizations varying in scope, aiming at influencing actual everyday discourse (that is, Organized Management, e.g. a language reform elaborated by a governmental agency). Thus the theory can cover very different but interrelated metalinguistic activities such as those produced by both the ordinary language user (“layman”) and the linguistic expert (“professional”). One of the main goals of the paper is to demonstrate that LMT is well suited both to the analysis of language “macro-planning” and language “micro-planning”. The focus is on the dialectic relationship between these two levels as captured in the concepts of simple management, organized management, pre- and post-interaction management, and language management cycle. Moreover, the paper deals with methods of analysing language management. These methods include some procedures and concepts of conversation analysis, follow-up interviews, and language biographies.

Bibliography

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Jiří Nekvapil teaches sociolinguistics, discourse analysis and pragmatics at the Department of General Linguistics at Charles University, Prague. His research interests lie in the issues of language interaction. His current research focuses on the language biographies of Czech Germans, Language Management Theory and an ethnomethodologically-based analysis of media discourse. He is also member of an international team studying to what extent, how and why Czech, German and English are used in multinational companies operating in central Europe.