

LANGUAGE PLANNING

NEWSLETTER

The Linguistic Rights of Language Learners

Francisco Gomes de Matos*

A key concept underlying first or second language acquisition is that of the individual user's linguistic rights. Although the growing literature of sociolinguistics and language planning sometimes mentions such rights, very little explicit attention has been given to a full-length treatment of the problem.

Fenando Peñalosa in his *Introduction to the Sociology of Language* (Rowley, Mass.: Newbury House, 1981) states that among the human rights to be exercised by all individuals are "linguistic rights" (p. 183). Rosaura Sanchez, in her revealing *Chicano Discourse* (Rowley, Mass.: Newbury House, 1983) mentions the protection of cultural and linguistic rights of nations (p. 2). In the Proceedings of the 5th World Congress of Applied Linguistics (Montreal, August 1978), published by Les Presses de l'Université Laval in 1981, the first paper deals with "Pour une politique linguistique mondiale." Its author, the politico-linguist Sélim Abou, makes the cogent point that an ethnolinguistic group has the right to defend and develop its language because language is the symbol of the group's survival and the essential tool for the individuals making up the group (p. 4). Abou also draws attention to the political hypocrisy of enhancing respect for language rights as an integral part of human rights while at the same time exploiting ethnolinguistic differences for purposes of political and economic domination (p. 7). In the encyclopaedic volume *La Norme Linguistique*, edited by Edith Bédard and Jacques Maurais (Gouvernement du Québec, Conseil de la langue française; Paris, Collection l'ordre des mots, Le Robert, 1983), we have not come across explicit references to the individual's linguistic rights, although inferences concerning the latter can be made, as for example, on the basis of Joshua Fishman's statement that "planifier le langage c'est planifier la vie du peuple; cultiver

le langage, le préserver, l'améliorer, c'est également cultiver, protéger et améliorer le peuple" (*Aménagement et norme linguistiques*, p. 386). Conceivably one could speak of the individual's rights to cultivate, maintain, and improve upon his or her uses of the native language (or another language, for that matter).

The literature on language planning is equally frugal in its explicit treatment of individual linguistic rights. As a typical example, Carol Eastman's *Language Planning: An Introduction* (San Francisco: Chandler and Sharp Publishers, 1983) comments on a society's being characterized by primordial ethnicity (in which case) "the people have a right to be and that right is unchallenged" (p. 45). Eastman mentions that "language rights" is one of the entries in the *International Bibliography of Bilingualism*, edited by William F. Mackey (Québec: Les Presses de l'Université Laval, 1972). Another language planner (and political scientist), Brian Weinstein, in his *The Civic Tongue: Political Consequences of Language Choices* (New York: and London: Longmans, 1983), emphasizes the duties that all individuals have toward their nation, since without the latter the expression or manifestation of individual rights would be impossible.

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Language Planning Newsletter and the East-West Center

For the past eleven years, since its inception, the East-West Center has published the *Language Planning Newsletter*, which has grown to a readership of more than 1,400 and is distributed to more than 100 countries. However, the East-West Center will discontinue sponsorship as of this issue. The editor wishes to thank the East-West Center for its support.

The editor is most anxious to identify organizations that might be willing to sponsor the newsletter, which serves an important and unique academic community and helps form a global network. Readers are encouraged to write me (Joan Rubin, P.O. Box 143, Pinole, California 94564, USA) if they have any suggestions for sources of support to continue the *Language Planning Newsletter*.

Joan Rubin
Editor

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In the United States, as far as an observer from abroad knows, attention to or concern about “linguistic rights” has been more overtly expressed—in the first instance, rather provocatively—through three documents, namely: (1) the 1974 statement on Students’ Rights to Their Own Language (special issue of *College Composition and Communication*, Urbana, Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English); (2) the Cristobel Resolution, signed by the NCTE, ACTFL, MLA, and TESOL, among other organizations, a document that basically recognizes the “rights of all people” to include “the right to maintain their own patterns and varieties of culture, language and dialect and the right to expect public education institutions to recognize the validity of linguistic and cultural diversity” (cf. Robert B. Kaplan’s article, “Bilingual-Bicultural Students and Competency Testing” in *The Starter Sheet SLATE* (Support for the learning and teaching of English), February 1984, pp. 1–3); and (3) the Sanibel Statement of Principles for a National Multiple Language Policy, drafted at the 3rd Annual Lee County Leadership Seminar held at Sanibel Island, Florida, September 10–12, 1981, approved and signed by the writers of that document on February 22, 1982. The first resolution in the Sanibel document is that “The United States of America, as a multilingual multicultural society, strive to nurture and advance the human and legal rights of individuals of all languages and cultural backgrounds.”

Although ours has been said to be “the age of rights” (cf. James Botkin et al., *No Limits to Learning: Bridging the Human Gap*. A report to the Club of Rome. Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1979, p. 13), there has not yet been a thorough, well-documented, carefully thought-out discussion of the crucial problem of the human being’s linguistic rights.

Accordingly, we have made a plea through the UNESCO-FIPLV ALSIED Newsletter of Paris (April 1984) that international organizations pool their efforts and cosponsor a meeting devoted to the drafting of what would become a universal declaration of individual linguistic rights. We have already spelled out some of the features of such a declaration as we conceive of it: firstly, in the Brazilian journal *Revista de Cultura Vozes* (Petrópolis, Rio de Janeiro, March 1984) through an essay entitled, “Por uma declaração dos direitos lingüísticos individuais” (in Portuguese) and secondly through the article, “A importância dos direitos lingüísticos do aprendiz” in issue number 4 of the journal *Interação*, (São Paulo: Centro de Lingüística Aplicada do Instituto de Idiomas Yázigi), July 1984.

The age of “linguistic rights” is an important, top-priority goal all of us should help come true. Through this newsletter a plea is made for discussion, fact-finding, solution-probing of a humanistically and ecologically valid macroproblem. Let’s do something about it, shall we?

On an international scale, mention should be made of growing concern about the multifaceted issue of “linguistic rights” in congresses and symposia. Two examples are the 2nd Colloquium on Languages and European Cooperation held in Urbino, Italy, in 1981 (with its proceedings published by CIREEL, Centre d’Information et de Recherche pour l’Enseignement et l’Emploi des Langues, Paris, 1982) and the VII World Congress of Applied Linguistics (AILA) at the University of Brussels, August 5–10, 1984. Significantly, the very first section—among the 36—focuses on the problem of the linguistic consequences of colonialism.

Rights of Language Minorities in the United States

Rights of Language Minorities in the United States: An Introductory Bibliography

Judith N. Levi*

The following is an introductory set of readings on the subject of the legal rights of language minorities in the United States. The term “language minorities” is intended to include limited- and non-English-speaking individuals, bilingual and bidialectal people, and the hearing-impaired and deaf. Although a number of articles from legal journals appear here, the list is in no way intended to be representative of the legal literature on this subject. Rather, it is offered primarily as a survey of current academic writing by linguists and other social scientists, as well as by some nonacademics, all of whom share an interest in the ways in which the law and the legal process in the United States affect the lives of people who are not fluent native speakers of standard English.

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The entries were gleaned from academic publications, personal correspondence, related bibliographies, and two computer searches of relevant literature, the first using the data base of Language and Language Behavior Abstracts (LLBA) and the second using the data base of the Educational Resources Information Clearinghouse (ERIC). The ERIC computer search turned up many more items than could be included here, including many unpublished documents that may be difficult to obtain.

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This list is an updated version of a section that originally appeared in a much more comprehensive bibliography entitled, *Linguistics, Language, and Law: A Topical Bibliography* by Judith N. Levi (1982). (This bibliography is still available from the Indiana University Linguistics Club, 310 Lindley Hall, Bloomington, Indiana 47405; as of May 1985, the price was still \$4.20. Postage and handling charges for a single copy were \$1.50.)

Readers who know of additional bibliographic material relevant to the rights of language minorities in the United States are encouraged to send these references to the author.

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Conferences, Seminars, Workshops

CONFERENCE—Vernacular Languages for Modern Societies

A conference was held June 11 to 15 at the Reimers-Foundation in Bad Homburg, FRG, on problems of adapting vernacular languages to the communicative needs of modern societies. The focal question discussed by the participants was that of how languages react when they come under pressure through socioeconomic and cultural developments of their speech communities. Language adaptation is the process of making a language suitable for all communicative needs of modern life, especially for science, technology, and government. The essential characteristics of this process can be observed for a variety of languages in different historical eras when language and society had developed at different paces. The objective of the conference was to compare language adaptation processes across cultures and historical eras. The main

topics discussed were: lexical innovation and terminology formation; grammatical standardization and change; and stylistic differentiation, especially as regards spoken and written language.

The discussion centered on the following papers:

- Chaim Rabin—The Revival of Hebrew
- Chander J. Daswani—Language Adaptation in India
- Muhammad Ibrahim—Communicating in Modern Arabic
- David P. B. Massamba—The Adaptation of Swahili
- Makoto Takada—Language Change in Meiji Japan
- Seiju Sugito—Adapting the Japanese Language to Modern Life
- Fritz Pasierbsky—Permanent Adaptation without Loans: The Chinese Case
- Uwe Pörksen—German as a Language of Science: How it Replaced Latin

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Konrad Ehlich—Greek and Latin as a Permanent Resource of Language Adaptation in Europe

Wolfgang Nedobity—Standardization of International Terminology

Florian Coulmas—Why Linguists Should Deal with “Good Language” and “Bad Language”

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WORKING MEETING—The Politics of Language Purism: A Rhetoric of Authentication

The Humanities: Literature program in the Institute of Culture and Communication studies the consequences and concomitants of societal change on, among other relationships, the language of literatures. The language-in-literature activity in the program studies how literary languages develop and how writers and readers evaluate and shape them.

In Asian communities with a Great Tradition, the language of literary expression became bifurcated with the advent of modernization. The literary language, restricted to classical subjects, was treasured by all the educated groups, while the uneducated, the general public, and those with educations oriented toward the rest of the world moved practically and mostly but not necessarily so unsystematically toward the development of linguistic forms more suited to their current needs. Reconciliation of these two divergent trends, both linguistically and philosophically, lies at the heart of modern Asian language and literature studies and constitutes a problem central to writers. Many other communities, especially in the Pacific region, face the additional problem of wholesale development of written languages for indigenous literatures.

In many literary communities, a period of uniform language in literature seems to occur in between a later, again differentiating, period of accommodation of marginal groups of people in society (minorities, rural “deviant” dialect speakers, immigrant laborers, refugees) and an earlier period of transition from erosion of a clearly defined dominance by a High Language of the Great Tradition. This erosion was heralded by a mobilization of colloquial language and borrowing of foreign usages into the language of literature. It is in this transition period that puristic responses are likely to arise, as the articulation of a battle between writers, critics, and other arbitrators of literary culture. Some feel empowered by knowledge bestowed by a Past and others seek privilege in their construction of a different Future. Purism could perhaps also be an authenticating response to attempts at

domination from an outside center of power, especially in the first period of development of written language in the absence of a Great Tradition.

The language-in-literature activity will seek knowledge specifically about what is “good” and “bad” literary language and about the role of literature in forming norms of language. Research will explore how writers and critical readers evaluate literary languages and what they do to enhance, use, and shape these languages. For example, what views are represented among writers about the authenticity of literary language? What is the role of the writer as language cultivator?

Work in this fiscal year included a small meeting. This intensive working meeting with discussion of papers and development of working documents to stimulate research on the development and change of language in literatures in Asia, the Pacific, and the United States took place at the Institute of Culture and Communication in the East-West Center from September 8 to 14, 1985. Participation was by invitation only. The topic of the meeting was “The Politics of Language Purism: a Rhetoric of Authentication.” The meeting was co-chaired by Björn H. Jernudd, research associate at the East-West Center, and Michael J. Shapiro, professor of political science at the University of Hawaii.

The problem that the meeting discussed is: Under what conditions do authenticity-seeking, puristic movements with effects on literary languages arise? Who are the players? What are the outcomes? What is the rhetoric?

This problem is embedded in a larger one, namely: What conditions give rise to use of a relatively uniform language of literature, a literary “standard” language?

Specifically, within the general problem, the meeting focused on (a) how the social formation within a nation state is understood or defined in relation to the language of literature problem; (b) how language is approached in its presumed functions of simply facilitating and mirroring communication, on the one hand, and of empowering and expressing power, on the other; and (c) what domains of language use (such as fictional literature and other literary art forms, newspapers, school texts, films, and other popular media) are affected and brought into public scrutiny for purposes of policy formation.

The organizers intend to edit and publish a volume of papers from the meeting. The working title of this volume is the same as the topic of the meeting.

For further information, contact:

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Institute of Culture and Communication
East-West Center

Michael J. Shapiro

Co-chair
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University of Hawaii at Manoa

Meg White

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East-West Center

Conferences, Seminars, Workshops — continued

CONFERENCE—Fourth Annual Linguistics Conference

Yarmouk University held its fourth annual linguistics conference April 2-4. This effectively was the first pan-Arab linguistics conference, bringing together scholars from 15 Arab countries and 18 universities. Papers were presented on various topics in applied and general linguistics, though the greatest focus was on English language teaching methodology and policy and on Arabic linguistics.

For further information, contact:

Jonathan Owens
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WORKSHOP—National Language Question

A one-day workshop on the National Language Question took place July 17 during the LSA Institute held at Georgetown University. The questions addressed by the workshop were: (1) how many national languages are there in the world today? (2) How do national languages differ from other languages politically and linguistically? (3) What are the conditions that national languages in the making have to meet in order to become national languages proper, and what are the major difficulties in the process? (4) Does the establishment of a national language (necessarily) impinge on the rights of speakers of other languages spoken within the range of the former's stipulated use? (5) What is the national language good for? A publication of the papers presented is being compiled.

For further information, contact:

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Tokyo 171, Japan

Language Planning/Language Treatment News

A NEW JOURNAL—*The Jewish Language Review*

The Jewish Language Review is a new journal, published yearly by the Association for the Study of Jewish Languages and devoted to all aspects of the inner and outer linguistic history of the Jewish people and related groups. The four volumes published so far contain several articles of interest to students of language planning (for example, "Planning Glottonyms for Jewish Languages, With Emphasis on Judezmo and Yahudic" and "Contribution à l'étude de l'apport du yidiche à l'espéranto"), numerous reviews concerning corpus and status planning in Hebrew and Yiddish, and, among the more than 2,700 queries from readers appearing in the "Queries and Replies" section, many relating to corpus planning (for instance, "What is the correct term for . . .?" and "How does one say . . .?").

A list of the *JLR*'s contents is available to anyone sending an addressed envelope to:

Association for the Study of Jewish Languages
1610 Eshkol Tower
University of Haifa
Mount Carmel
Haifa 31 999
Israel

FIRST INFOTERM SUMMER SCHOOL FOR TEACHERS OF TERMINOLOGY

Infoterm held its first summer school for teachers of terminology in Vienna, September 10-14, 1984. This newly established course was attended by a number of teachers from the Rijkshogeschool voor Vertalers en Tolken in Brussels, Belgium.

The following topics were treated in the form of lectures and roundtable discussions:

- terminology work of the translator and interpreter
- fundamentals of the General Theory of Terminology
- terminological principles and standards
- methods of terminology
- terminology documentation

Also discussed was the adaptation of available material for specific training purposes in terminology. The theoretical part of the course was supplemented by practical in-house training and extensive use of Infoterm documentation and the Wüster Research Library. The newly prepared "Terminology Manual" proved to be a very useful teaching and training aid for this course.

It is planned to hold the next Infoterm Summer School at the beginning of September, 1985. Applications should be addressed to Infoterm.

REISSUE OF NYT FRA SPROGNAEVNET

Nyt Fra Sprognaevnet, the quarterly newsletter of the Danish Language Committee, will appear again. The last issue printed, no. 20, was dated 1978. At that time, the newsletter was distributed free of charge to interested subscribers. Cuts in Danish public expenditures forced its suspension. Now readers are invited to subscribe at a cost of 40 Danish crowns per year. Write to Dansk Sprognaevn, Vester Voldgade 115, 1552 Copenhagen, Denmark.

(Continued on page 8)

Conferences, Seminars, Workshops — continued

LANGUAGE PLANNING POT-LUCK

A group known as the Language Planning Pot-Luck has been meeting monthly in the Washington, D.C., area to exchange a wide range of expertise and interests in issues of language planning, as well as the delights of "home grown" international cuisine.

The LPPL provides an opportunity to keep in touch with people from various fields and agencies, including the Center for Applied Linguistics, the World Bank, the Foreign Service Institute, and the National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education, among others. The group serves as a forum where, each month, someone speaks informally on current or past work (and travels) in areas of interest to language planning scholars.

Topics presented to date include: Language Movements in Quebec and Tamil-Nadu by Brian

Weinstein; World Bank Literacy Project in Paraguay by Nadine Dutcher; Survey on the Status of Bilingual/ESL Programs in Public Education by Anna Chamot; Language Planning Issues and the Hmong in the United States by Barbara Robson; Language Planning Processes: Issues of Power and Resource Allocation by Hailu Fulass Hailu; and Issues of Language Planning in China by Mae Chu Chang.

The group meets on the third or fourth Thursday of the month and welcomes the participation of anyone visiting or residing in the Washington area.

For further information, contact:

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1400 Key Blvd.
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BOOKS AND ARTICLES

NOW AVAILABLE—*Language Planning and Language Use in Taiwan: A Study of Language Choice Behavior in Public Settings* by Marinus Elisa van den Berg. "Proefschrift" for the degree of Doctor (of the Social Sciences) at the University of Leiden, successfully defended on 25 June 1985. Dordrecht: ICG Printing. 251 pp.

Will also be commercially available through a Taiwanese publishing company, Crane, Taipei, in its series *Studies in Linguistics*.

NOW AVAILABLE—*Sprachnorm, Sprachplanung, und Sprachpflege*. Bibliographie theoretischer Arbeiten aus Linguistik und Nachbarwissenschaften [A bibliography of theoretical works from the discipline of linguistics and neighboring sciences] by Bernhard Gröschel. Münster: Institute für Allgemeine Sprachwissenschaft der Westfälischen Wilhelms-Universität. Studium Sprachwissenschaft #6, 1982. 232 pp.

NOW AVAILABLE—"Linguistic Consequences of Ethnicity and Nationalism in Multilingual Settings," by C.B. Paulston. Presented to a conference on The Educational Policies and the Minority Social Groups Experts' Meeting organized by CERI/OECD at OECD Headquarters in Paris, January 16-18, 1985. 52 pp.

The paper presents an analytical framework for explaining and predicting the language behavior of social groups as such behavior relates to educational policies for minority groups. The paper considers: (1) under what circumstances language planning for these groups is to be successful, (2) the importance of understanding the forces which contribute to language maintenance or language shift, and (3) the problem with reaching an understanding in (2) is the need to identify the factors (forces?) which contribute to language maintenance and language shift. Of interest is Paulston's comment, "The most elegant educational policies for minority groups are doomed to failure if they go counter to prevailing social forces, especially the economic situation" (p. 38).

NOW AVAILABLE—AVIS du Conseil de la langue française au Ministre responsable de l'application de la Charte de la langue française Monsieur Gerald Godin sur *La situation linguistique actuelle*. 1985.

A recommendation by Gerald Godin, Conseil de la langue française, that the enforcement of existing linguistic legislation be strengthened. In particular, the document recommends that the Quebec National Assembly reaffirm the fundamental language rights of the Charte de la langue française by making it a constitutional document. This recommendation was adopted by the Conseil on January 25, 1985.

Back Issues of Language Planning Newsletter

Readers interested in completing their holdings of the *Language Planning Newsletter* may write for back issues to Publication Orders, East-West Center, 1777 East-West Road, Honolulu, Hawaii 96848, USA. If interested, readers should do so in the near future.

THE EAST-WEST CENTER is a public, nonprofit educational institution with an international board of governors. Some 2,000 research fellows, graduate students, and professionals in business and government each year work with the Center's international staff in cooperative study, training, and research. They examine major issues related to population, resources and development, the environment, culture, and communication in Asia, the Pacific, and the United States. The Center was established in 1960 by the United States Congress, which provides principal funding. Support also comes from more than 20 Asian and Pacific governments, as well as private agencies and corporations.

Situated on 21 acres adjacent to the University of Hawaii's Manoa Campus, the Center's facilities include a 300-room office building housing research and administrative offices for an international staff of 250, three residence halls for participants, and a conference center with meeting rooms equipped to provide simultaneous translation and a complete range of audiovisual services.

1777 East-West Road
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