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Language Management and Marketing

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Abstract

This article deals with language issues from both a management and a marketing perspective. If management focuses on human resource management and linguistic auditing, marketing puts stress on the strategic efforts to attract and persuade bottom-top agents to be concerned about bringing language policy implementation to satisfaction. This can only happen if top-bottom authorities invest in their human resources, that is, language users of language, to overcome their deficiency needs and engage in growth needs, as defined by Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs (1943). Human resource management and linguistic auditing activities stem from the fact that language status is threatened by an uncertainty problem, which is a function of social, economic, and political and international variables that influence the scaling of languages, while marketing arises from the need to sustain the language promotion activities. First, the term management is introduced to move then to language management and what domains of practice need to be given priority in terms of management activities, and finally marketing as a term and a concept used for language policy purposes.

Mots clés :

Langue, management, marketing, ressources humaines, audit linguistique

Résumé

Cet article est une réflexion sur la question des langues du point de vue management et marketing. Alors que le management met l'accent sur la gestion des ressources humaines et l'audit linguistique, le marketing met l'accent sur les stratégies, d'attraction, de participation et de persuasion des agents clés devant contribuer à la bonne mise en œuvre de la politique linguistique. Cela ne peut être réalisé que si et seulement si les utilisateurs de la langue en question (les agents clés) sont amenés à satisfaire les besoins de déficience pour s'engager dans la réalisation des besoins de développement tels que définis par le model de motivation humaine d'Abraham Maslow (1943). Ainsi le management des ressources humaines a pour objective l'accompagnement du capital humain pour contribuer à la réalisation des projets sociaux. Les activités de gestion des ressources humaines et d'audit linguistique découlent du fait que le statut linguistique des langues est menacé par un problème d'incertitude, qui est fonction de variables humaine, sociales, économiques et politiques qui influencent le développement ou le déclin d'une langue. Le marketing découle de la nécessité de soutenir la promotion de la langue. Il représente un moyen d'accompagnement de la langue. D'abord, le terme management est introduit pour passer ensuite au management linguistique et aux domaines de pratique à privilégier en termes d'activités, et enfin le marketing en tant que terme et concept utilisé à des fins de politique linguistique.

1. Introduction

As the title suggests, this article attempts to handle language challenges from both a management and a marketing perspective. While management focuses on human resource management and auditing, marketing puts stress on the strategic efforts to attract, and persuade bottom-top agents to be concerned about bringing language policy implementation to satisfaction. This can only happen if language users are helped to overcome their deficiency needs and engage in growth needs, as defined by Abraham Maslow's human motivation model (1943). Human resource management and auditing activities stem from the fact that language status is threatened by an uncertainty problem, which is a function of social, economic, and political variables that influence the scaling of languages, while marketing arises from the need to sustain the language promotion activities. First, the term management is introduced to move then to language management and what domains of practice need to be given priority in terms of management activities, and finally marketing as a term and a concept used for language policy purposes.

2. Management: some definitions

According to J S Chandan (1997:6), Van Fleet and Peterson (1994) define management "as a set of activities directed at the efficient and effective utilization of resources in the pursuit of one or more goals." For Kreitner (1980) cited in J S Chandan (op cit) 'Management is a problem-solving process of effectively achieving organizational objectives through the efficient use of scarce resources in a changing environment.' While F.W. Taylor, quoted in Arun Kumar, Rachana Sharma (2000 :39) considers " Management is an art of knowing what to do when to do and see that it is done in the best and cheapest way".

These definitions imply pursuing goals for problem solving effectively by utilizing human and material resources in a constantly changing environment through an organizational approach. To be effective and efficient, management takes the form of a process, which, according to John R. Schermerhorn, Jr. (2009:9), consists of four functions: "planning, organizing, leading, and controlling" (see fig below). However, it should be noted that these steps must be adapted to the context in which management is practiced. Certainly, the practice of management in industry differs from its practice for social or educational purposes, to cite only these two cases, and needless to mention its use for language issues, a case in which management is a very recent approach in the field of language policy and planning.



The four functions that made up the management process
Source: John R. Schermerhorn, Jr (2009:10)

3. Language Management

The term "language management" is used to refer to the activities, ways and steps, taken to address the issues of language development and promotion. A language management agenda includes sets of activities concerning the status of the language candidate, its corresponding corpus planning and its spread. As regards language status management, it focuses on language legislation and language attitudes, while corpus planning targets everything which relates to the language under focus namely the description of the language and its standardization. This has been termed "language cultivation". The spread of the language encompasses both status and corpus issues and seeks to influence and regulate the linguistic landscape as well as the language used on the radio, on television, in the press, and in the various domains and workplaces.

As an approach to language issues, "Language management" implies assigning values to the various aspects of language varieties used in a community to agree on which to apply to each of the languages that make up the community's repertoire. One of the most recent developments in language planning relates to an increasing awareness of the potential role that management can play in the overall understanding of language planning processes (V. Webb, 2002). The concept of management which is rather used in the economic and industrial sector is borrowed in an effort to adapt it to the fragmentation of research activities in the field of language planning, policy, and implementation with respect to the distribution of language functions across all language structures and agencies in the matter of language use and promotion. In fact, language agencies and agencies must constantly look for ways and means to improve the process of language development and use in view of the uninterrupted aspect of language change.

The broadest decisions for language planning are initiated and elaborated by politicians, but these need to be sustained by the services of experts in the field to decline the policies into activities that provide the language with the means of development. As regard Djernudd and Das Gupta (1971:196) "the broadest authorization of planning is obtained from politicians. A body of experts is then specifically delegated the task of preparing a plan. In preparing this, the experts ideally estimate existing resources and forecast the potential utilization of such resources in terms of developmental targets. Once the targets are agreed upon, a strategy of action is elaborated. These are authorized by legislators and are implemented by organizational set-up, authorized in its turn by the planning members. The planners may evaluate the implementation of the task periodically. (In Antia B.E, 2000:2-3)"

Language management may be covert or overt depending on those in power and have the monopoly to decide on language issues. For example, Victor Webb's (2002) approach to language planning in South Africa constitutes an overt orientation to language management theory. V.Webb (2002: 282) develops an agenda for language management in the form of a framework which consists of a chart of management tasks, a broad presentation of the activities that cover each of the main management tasks, and a language management example dealing with

language standardization. The major management tasks included in the framework are: planning, organizing, leading, and controlling. The covert case is generally the case of language issues hidden agendas.

As regards planning task, it constitutes the starting point in the management process. Success requires that the staff involved in any organization conducting a project be provided with future goals and the corresponding plans to achieve them. This leads to developing a framework or an organizational structure to indicate how and where human and other resources should be deployed to achieve the goals. This entails a dynamic strategy, which consists of directing the human resources through motivation in such a way to align their activities with the predetermined goals and plans. Since objectives cannot be attained without a follow-through activity, the use of mechanisms to ensure that objectives are satisfied is necessary. Then, a controlling structure which sees to the development of standards, norms and performance indicators to measure the progress towards the achievement of an objective, and make sure the organization is on the right course is fundamental.

According to V. Webb's framework (op cit), each of these management activities consists of a number of sub-tasks. The management task of planning incorporates three sub-tasks namely strategic planning, functional planning, and tactical planning. The management task of organizing integrates the sub-tasks of responsibility and authority; delegation; co-ordination; assignment of tasks; and the allocation of resources. The management task of leading and controlling include, respectively, the sub-tasks of leadership, motivation, disciplining, and communication, and the sub-tasks of setting standards, measuring performance, evaluating deviations, and rectifying deviations. John R. Schermerhorn, Jr (op cit:10) summarizes the functions as follows: "planning sets the direction as performance objectives; organizing arranges people and tasks to do the work; leading inspires others to work hard; and controlling measures performance to make sure that plans and objectives are accomplished."

In language planning terms, language management "refers to the actions and strategies devised to achieve language policy objectives", V Webb (op cit: 281). But he distinguishes between two situations. In a matured situation, which is a case of language management "[referring] simply to the management of the implementation plan [and] a still in progress case where,

> language management has to refer to the entire process involved, that is, from the strategic analysis stage (the identification and definition of the major language problems which need to be resolved, the decision about the language planning framework to be used, the analysis of the relevant external and internal environments, the description of the language planning vision and mission, and the formulation of general and specific language policy goals…), through the strategic planning stage , that is the description of the specific plan of implementation, to the actual management of the implementation of the language policy plan.

In an attempt to define language management, B. Spolsky (2004:8) notes cases of direct efforts to manipulate the language situation. This is the case "when a person or group directs such intervention" and reveals that "Language management may apply to an individual linguistic micro-unit (a sound, a spelling or the form of a letter), or to a collection of units (pronunciation or a lexicon or a script) or to a specified, named macro-variety (a language or a dialect). … Language management refers to the formulation and proclamation of an explicit plan or policy, not necessarily written in a formal document, about language use."

However, He (op cit:10-11) further argues that the existence of such an explicit policy does not guarantee that it will be implemented, nor does its implementation guarantee success, (B. Spolsky, 2004: 8, 10, 11). For Modest Munene Mwaniki (2004:179) "Language management is seen as a discipline, i.e. language management is, and should be an organized body of a particular kind of knowledge and scholarship that engages with particular epistemological and pragmatic concerns of resolving language related problems in society, and harnessing language resources in society with a view of enlarging people's choices." According to *Antia B.E (2000:8),* Jernudd (1991) defines language management as "A process through which particular people are given authority to find and suggest systematic and rigorous solutions to problems of language potentially or actually encountered by members of their community."

However, advocators of language management believe that it is not enough to simply implement a series of best practices, but that human resource management needs to be tailored so that it serves such practices.

3.1. Language Management and Human Resource Development

The human resource approach treats people as a key resource, placing emphasis on the ways and means needed to obtain added value from them that ensures a competitive advantage for an organization, which may, in this case, stand for an economic organization, a community, or a nation. People are then elevated to being the most valued assets that individually and collectively contribute to the achievement of the nation's planned objectives. Effective human resource management requires its alignment with the strategy of the organization creating a culture that allows the individuals to identify their own interests and successes with that of the organization.

Aware of the complexities involved in the relationship between language management and human resource development, and because language directly and precisely affects human beings' behavior, attitudes, emotions, and relationships and communication with one another, it is obvious that a policy based on human resource management contributes to language planning and policy implementation if dedicated to the objective

Al-Hajj (in Chejne 1968:145) draws a parallelism between the user's status and language status. According to him "if a people rises, the language rises … when a poet is found, a language of poetry is found; when a philosopher is found, a

language of philosophy is found; when a scientist is found, a language of science is found." Chejne (op cit) has noted,

> Whatever virtues or defects of a language may be, they are directly related to the general philosophy of a people, to their psychology, inquisitiveness, and creativeness. Proof of this can be seen in the development of Arabic from humble beginnings to become a supreme medium of intellectual expression as the Arab people matured intellectually and emotionally and acquired an inquisitive spirit and love of knowledge.

Whatever model of language policies and implementation procedures are used, man remains the most important factor that has a negative or good impact on these processes. The only way to acquire a man's loyalty is to invest in him. A policy in the absence of motivation, motivation in the absence of ability, and ability in the absence of motivation, as well as ability in the absence of motivation, is insufficient to yield performance. Human resource development is critical to the achievement of goals by governments, organizations, and institutions.

One of the most significant strategies to implement any project policy is to invest in human resource development. It also denotes the degree to which an individual is responsive to both internal and external stimuli, and it gives value and support to policies. HRM intends to prepare and identify the human capital needed to meet any policy development and implementation needs as a policy. Smith (1982) argued, "Human resource policies should be tailored to reflect the needs of the Future…" (In Cinthia A. L and Mark L. L, 1999: 35).

Human capital, on the other hand, necessitates taking into account the aims and aspirations of individuals, as this drives them to respond satisfactorily through involvement and support. To put it another way, human capital must be aligned with goals in order to achieve success. Government programs that better address the needs and ambitions of the younger generation have the potential to mobilize them in support of state policies. As a result, the most crucial asset is investing in people. Focusing on language planning policy and implementation, Webb (2002: 250) has noted, "Language planning, as such, cannot constitute much to the process of language promotion, in and of itself. The pre-requisite for valorization of a language is that the stature of its first speakers must increase. Communities need to become successful and acquire self-esteem as well as esteem in the eyes of the out-group."

The option of human resource development to sustain the language policy originates from the fact that man is the manipulator of language, and his loyalty to the language project is strongly dependent on the services provided by the language and how well they align with his social and economic aims. Given that any policy planning, whether economic, social, or linguistic, is fundamentally geared toward bringing about change, the agent of change and those for whom change is intended must take precedence. However, human resource development should never be viewed as a one-way profit-making effort. Citizens must be given the tools they need

to grow their human capital, which will allow them to be active agents in the social engine.

3.2. Education: Ideal Place of Human Resource Development and Language Management

Investing in human resource development implies investing in man, and because man is the only one who can manipulate language, it also involves investing in language acquisition and learning. According to R. L. Cooper (1989:182), "Language planning is akin to societal planning. As a result, an acceptable theory of language planning must wait for a satisfactory theory of social change." This is relevant to the task of education, which is a decisive factor in human resource development.

The educational institution that is responsible for raising the intellectual level of the entire society must be available to all people, regardless of their gender, age, socioeconomic status, geographic location, or social conditions. These objectives stress the necessity of education to use the national and official language as that of thinking, science, and technology. Furthermore, education must be oriented and geared to the individual's search for knowledge, job opening perspectives, and social mobility; otherwise, the obsolescence of certain learning and levels of disciplines together with job market demands and law would feed not only people's inertia but also resistance to participating in developmental projects. For A. Efurosibina (1994: 96)

> The educational system is the power house of developing every nation. When it is sick, it sickness will most likely be contagious and affect the entire nation. On the other hand, when it is healthy, the entire nation in all probability will enjoy fairly good overall health. Language is crucial in ensuring the health of an educational system and attitudes towards language use in education can make or mar an entire educational edifice.

4. Language Marketing: An Economic Adaptation

The notion of language marketing has been adopted from the business world to suggest that government and state acts are designed to get the same results for the 'customer' as an advertiser and marketing professional. There is an attempt to link the procedures used in commercial product marketing with those used by language policymakers to persuade 'clients,' or users, to accept a language along with its product. The marketing four P's, which include "product type," "pricing or cost," "packaging or presentation," and "point of sale," are adapted to language planning tasks. (D.E Ager ,1999:166). R. L. Cooper (1989:73) reveals that Kotler and Levy (1969) were the first to suggest that "effective marketing principles can be applied to non-business organization."

4.1. Marketing: A definition

Marketing is a social and managerial process by which individuals and groups obtain what they need and want through creating and exchanging products and values with others. The classic western definition, as summarized by Philip Kotler, is "a human activity oriented to satisfying needs and wants through an exchanged process" (in Kuma r. S. Anil 2008:160). In terms of what R.P Maheswari (1997:264) notes, "Marketing identifies human wants, gives maximum satisfaction to the consumer, and continues to create and maintain consumer demands. Marketing is a creative, dynamic, and challenging socially useful activity, which every planning has to undertake". When it comes to language, marketing aims at focusing on the economic considerations in language planning to cause users' attitudes to change through persuasion.

4.2. Marketing and language

If native speakers represent the fulcrum that develops a language, then marketing for a language is essentially based on taking care of its users socially and economically. Marketing for a language is also a function of the kinds of educational and professional prospects offered to its users, mainly those that imply prestige and a high degree of competition locally and worldwide. These services, if guaranteed, make their holders a rare resource, which represents an added value to their society. For the language policy to achieve its primary goals concerning the status and promotion of the national and official language selected for the whole community, the whole enterprise of language policy and planning should be viewed as a marketing plan. Among the long-term measures for language policy development and planning, V. Webb (2003:78) suggests "An extensive marketing strategy aimed at convincing the labor force as well as public and private employers that the policy concerned will be economically beneficial, also in money-terms, to individuals, communities, and the country as a whole."

Language marketing, in this case, is a strategy for addressing social issues and is accomplished through social marketing campaigns that adapt marketing principles and techniques to influence a target audience to freely agree to, reject, adjust, or abandon a behavior for the benefit of the individual, the group, or society as a whole. Thus, marketing research needs to be conducted to understand the language market segments and each segment's needs, wants, beliefs, problems, concerns, and behavior because, in terms of language services, these differ from one audience segment to another. This will serve to increase the involvement of the different audience segments according to the identification of their interests.

5. Auditing and language management

Auditing is a management tool used to verify that systems, processes, or any activities are compliant and effective, or if there is a need for improvement to achieve satisfactory results. That is, an audit determines if process requirements are being met. In general, auditing serves assessment purposes and can be considered as a kind of regular health check. Auditing is a performance-checking tool used for any

project. Formerly, audits examined mostly public sector expenses based on some liability standards that were results-oriented. However, in the context of language management and, in particular, language planning policy, which itself is a project destined for society, auditing seeks to inquire about the ways the planning programs have been aligned to achieve the commitments of the policy.

Still, there is no liability standard as long as language policies differ greatly, depending largely on the decision-makers and the sociolinguistic situations they are designed for. Language auditing is a newly introduced notion, which is concerned with the procedures of a language program from the beginning of recognizing a need to implementing a language program (Reeves and Wright, 1996). It consists of a set of analyses and diagnostic phases of language planning necessary for a comprehensive data collection concerning the sociolinguistic situation, the way it has evolved, and what actions are needed to gain social support. Its application to language can assist in supplying strategies grounded on the results of language auditing, as it would help language agencies to better formulate their language strategies as a result of identifying the root causes of the problem, the actual and expected consequences, and the measures to resolve the problem. As Reeves and Wright (1996:5) argue,

> The primary objective of language or linguistic auditing is to help identify the strengths and weaknesses (…) It will also indicate what it will cost in time, human resources, training and finance to improve the process, so that the resource implications can be fed back into strategic and financial planning.

When it comes to auditing practice, it can be approached on two fronts. It can place emphasis on the purely linguistic aspects of the language, i.e., to identify the language resources in such a way to prompt the development of the linguistic registers which are not yet elaborated, and see to the efforts the concerned language agencies have made so far and whether they fit the objectives of the corpus planning policy. The other emphasis can be directed towards the social factor, i.e., what investments are made to bring about a societal commitment to the language issue. This will necessarily focus on the role of the human factor as regards the status of planning policy together with the image planning, which is tightly dependent on the human resources management. Another essential aspect of language planning is the data gathering process which helps to understand the language situation that prevails, including the needs of students, the language they speak, and the attitudes towards these languages. Language planning takes place at various levels, from government and government agencies to the individual.

6. Conclusion

There is no domain of economic activity in which language does not have a function or a place. All domains are language-based in one way or the other. Indeed, language proficiency plays an important role in determining an individual's earnings

and occupational attainment. Language skills can either limit or increase the chances of labor market prospects. There is a direct relationship between language and the job market. Language can contribute to job creation or scarceness. This is because language knowledge and linguistic skills are commodities that can be sold and obey market demands. V. Webb establishes a direct relationship between the individual's socio-economic situation and his standard of living and language abilities. For him, "if the speakers of a language become more wealthy, with a higher per capita income and a higher quality of life, their languages will concomitantly acquire status and prestige, and automatically lead to their use in higher functions." (V. Webb, 2003:77)

Language can also affect entry into lucrative careers in increasingly competitive job markets. A language policy that is not sustained by a job market policy is necessarily doomed to failure. A market job which is indifferent to people's wants and needs and does not allow continual adjustment by introducing better jobs affects people's trust in their language power and may lead to social disinvestment and social unrest. Language problems are deep-seated. They can even interfere, causing a slump in economic activity and affecting social cohesion. No doubt that employment policies play an important role in language learning, use, and shift, which are associated with economic change. This is not surprising since language has a strong instrumental value.

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