

LANGUAGE PLANNING IN THE POST- COMMUNIST ERA

The Struggles for
Language Control in the
New Order in Eastern
Europe, Eurasia and China

Edited by Ernest Andrews



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Editor

Ernest Andrews
Department of Linguistics
Indiana University Bloomington
Bloomington, IN, USA

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Lithuanian Language Planning: A Battle for Language and Power

Loreta Vaicekauskienė and Nerijus Šepetys

This present chapter deals with issues concerning language standardization in Lithuania, one of the three neighboring Baltic States along with Latvia and Estonia. The countries are situated alongside the eastern coast of the Baltic Sea and share the recent history of liberation from the Soviet empire. Common linguistic origin, however, is only shared by Lithuanian and Latvian, the two remaining living languages of the Baltic branch of the Indo-European language family. Lithuanian is spoken by more than 3.5 million Lithuanians, including speakers in communities outside Lithuania proper, of which the largest are in the US and Great Britain. While at present Lithuanian enjoys its status as the country's official language, during the course of its history other languages have been used for the administration of the state.

L. Vaicekauskienė (✉)

Institute for the Languages and Cultures of the Baltic, Vilnius University,
Vilnius, Lithuania

N. Šepetys

Department for Theory of History and Culture History, Faculty of History,
Vilnius University, Vilnius, Lithuania

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After the foundation of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania in the thirteenth century, Lithuania expanded into Slavic territories and became a multi-ethnic and multilingual state. At that time Latin and the Old Slavonic (Ruthenian) languages were chosen for the state chancellery, and later on, when the Polish-Lithuanian Republic was formed in the late sixteenth century, Polish was added. Being the language of the noblemen, Polish gradually established itself as an official language of Lithuania until the Republic was partitioned among the Russian Empire, Kingdom of Prussia, and Austria in 1795. Lithuania then passed into Russian rule which brought severe political, cultural and economic repression, as well as plans to introduce Russian for state administration. More than one hundred years had to pass until changing political landscapes permitted the establishment of the Lithuanian Republic in 1918 with its national language Lithuanian.

These historical facts are important for understanding the approach to the national language at the times when the final stages of dialect selection and codification of standard Lithuanian were completed. The chapter introduces the socio-cultural circumstances and the identity of the community in the era of nation building, and gives a brief description of language planning (LP) ideas and practices during the years of Soviet occupation. The main focus is on the formation of a legal framework and an institutional system of state language surveillance just before and after the breakup of the Soviet Union in 1990. We explore the abundant discourse on the threat to language and linguistic expertise, upon which professional language planners built the basis for language nationalization in the restored Lithuanian state. The study demonstrates how the shifting self-perception of linguists intertwined with the inherited bureaucratic practices from the Soviet period to form a power-based relation between language planners and the community.

Historical Background

Although the first printed books in Lithuanian appeared in the middle of the sixteenth century (manuscripts somewhat earlier), systematic development of written Lithuanian was induced externally. The first scholarly

grammars of Lithuanian were written by German scholars of Indo-Germanic linguistics. Lithuanian was considered the highest valuable source for the study of Proto-Indo-European.¹ The comparative linguistics of that time discovered similarity between Lithuanian and Sanskrit. Due to well-preserved archaic features, the Lithuanian language received much academic attention. Developing Lithuanian nationalism at the end of the nineteenth century could thus proudly supplement the romantic views towards language typical to the region with scholarly proof of the (presumed) uniqueness of Lithuanian.

Due to the discovery of the historical value of Lithuanian, Lithuanian language engineering acquired a specific feature. Not only was standard Lithuanian purified from Polish and German loanwords, but also the idea developed that constructed “archaic” Lithuanian had to form the basis for the standard language. Interestingly, Ferdinand de Saussure himself noted the attempts of Lithuanian language planners to present Lithuanian data as more archaic and systematic than they were in reality. For his general linguistics theory Saussure needed evidence from Lithuanian phonology and was disappointed when he saw that Lithuanian descriptions of dialects were idealized. It was hard to make out how dialect speakers really used the linguistic forms (see Joseph 2009: 194).

The first normative grammar of Lithuanian (1901) was written by Jonas Jablonskis (1860–1930), the father of standard Lithuanian, as people started calling him. It is based on the southern sub-dialect of West Highland. The choice was not only determined by the fact that the dialect had been used for writing and was described in the German grammars of Lithuanian, but for socio-political reasons as well. At that time this dialectal region was better placed. For several hundred years part of it had been German territory (Kingdom of Prussia and East Prussia of German Empire²). The other part, after the partition of the Polish-Lithuanian Republic, was assigned to Prussia and later to Poland. Here serfdom was abolished earlier than in other regions; people had a higher standard of living, farmers could allow their children education and teaching of Lithuanian was not forbidden. Most Lithuanian nation-builders came from the region. Thus their native dialect formed the basis for the written standard of Lithuanian.

In the meantime the largest part of the territory of the Lithuanian-speaking population had become a directly controlled province of the Russian Empire. As a punishment for continuous resistance, after the uprising in 1863 teaching in Lithuanian in schools and publishing books and press in Latin script were banned for 40 years (1864–1904). It was required to use Cyrillic script instead. Secret schools were founded and books as well as periodicals were brought illegally from East Prussia, that is, from the West Highland-speaking region. The biggest cities, including the capital Vilnius played no role in the development of the standard language, since Lithuanian was mainly spoken in the rural regions. Due to these historical circumstances the fight for the survival of the Lithuanian language, its revitalization and development formed the basis for the political nationalism of Lithuanians. Interestingly, during codification of the written standard the fathers of the national movement rejected Polish and German letters traditionally used for Lithuanian writing and, for instance, left *v* alone to stand for previous *w* and *v*, as well as replaced Polish *sz* and *cz* with, respectively, *š* and *č*, which they borrowed from Czech.

Language Planning in the Pre-communist Era

When the nation state of Lithuanian was founded in 1918, linguistic nationalism became legal. It meant granting official status to the Lithuanian language and host status for ethnic Lithuanians. In the beginning, endeavors to create a standard language community were not directed against other languages or speakers of them or against Lithuanian dialects, although there arose some language purification initiatives and reactions typical to the time and the region. Books were edited, linguists and the cultural elite initiated standardization of pronunciation of theater actors and radio readers, and sporadic waves of purism occurred. In accordance with the growing autocracy, requests for state intervention in language policy matters became more prominent. However, more radical interference was fought back by modern intellectuals and artists. Good standing speakers refused to be corrected and dictated how they should use their language.

The magazine *Gimtoji kalba* (*Mother tongue*) was founded imitating the practices of the Prague linguistic circle. Although it featured language purity and correctness, among practical criteria for standard norm-setting the editors (the Lithuanian language society) included appropriateness of language variants for a concrete communicative situation. The autonomy of writers to choose their own style was emphasized as was the principal of stability of language usage (“established language forms should not be corrected”) (DOC 1938).

One can say that normalization of language at that time was exercised primarily as a cultural power, an idea of an ideal norm. Although it was supported by the cultural myth of the antiquity of the Lithuanian language and the authority of a linguist as a qualified standard language engineer, the ways people expressed themselves in public were numerous and diverse. (For a more detailed overview see Rinholm 1990.)

Political tasks of Lithuanian language policy were mainly directed to the Polish-speaking Vilnius region (almost eighty per cent of population of the region). From 1920 it was controlled by Poland. When Nazis and Soviets destroyed Poland, the capital Vilnius and the surrounding areas were passed to Lithuania by the Soviet Union in 1939. Memories of battles with Poles a couple of decades before did still hurt, so bureaucratic and policing language actions were introduced. Efforts were made to restrict civil rights and the right to work in the public sector to those who did not speak Lithuanian (Mackiewicz 2002 [1943]).

It is difficult to say how the clash between political historical wounds, purist ideology and the modernist approach of intellectuals would have developed in the field of practical language standardization if the independent life of the state had not been interrupted for a half a century by Soviet occupation in 1940 (with a break in 1941–1944 by invader Nazi administration). Very likely, Lithuanian linguistics, language planning and ethno-linguistic nationalism would have followed a similar path leading to language description, liberalization, and tolerance to linguistic diversity which with time was taken by other Western European societies.

Language Policy in the Communist Era

One should stress that regardless of the efforts by Soviets, their Russification policy in Lithuania was not so intense as in Latvia and Estonia, which were occupied simultaneously with Lithuania. Colonization of the neighboring countries was more determined; it manifested through immigration of a Russian speaking population, primarily due to the development of a military industry.

In Lithuania, armed resistance was stronger and lasted longer; it impeded an already weaker industrialization. Composition of the population was dominated by ethnic Lithuanians (during the entire period about 80%). Despite introduction of the Russian language to the official administrative field, which caused occasional word-for-word translation into Russian, despite Russian media and intensive teaching of Russian in schools, in all language domains Lithuanian was used as well.

For the Soviet authorities Lithuanian language was important as a tool for Sovietization and control of the public space and public life. The Dictionary of Lithuanian is a good illustration of how Soviet language ideology manifested in language matters. The distribution of the first two volumes of the dictionary, which were published until 1940, was stopped when the censors discovered “ideological errors” in illustrations of word usage. As in the whole field of culture, in language, from press to poetry, “socialist content in national form” had to be ensured. Language editors had to perform this obligation, part of their immediate task was to check ideological matters. Of course, not only was the written language controlled. It was a common practice to read “from paper” when speaking in public. In radio and television “the paper” had to be pre-edited and made entirely “correct”—from grammar, pronunciation, accentuation pattern to ideology. Also in dictionaries language variation was avoided. Erasing sociocultural variation was a deliberate language policy in the totalitarian Soviet state, by means of which the government tried to conceal the social stratification of the society (Liebich 2005: 138).

From the middle of the 1950s the entire USSR underwent intensive language standardization. Ideas of the Prague linguistic circle were adjusted to socialist needs. The circle itself experienced ideological

transformations after the Sovietization of Czechoslovakia. The once practiced encouragement of social awareness in language matters turned into an overall language supervision by authorities (see Stich 1993; Basovskaya 2011; Gorham 2014). Accommodation to the new LP practices was not very smooth in Lithuania since professional linguists, like most of the occupied population, tried to avoid collaboration with the government. Nevertheless, a Commission of Lithuanian language was founded in 1961, a number of periodicals on language standardization were published, and programs on language correction on TV and radio as well as columns in press were founded. The Soviet regime took political advantage of the popular fear of Russification and nationalist attitude on language preservation. From the beginning of the 1970s a specific discipline, the so-called language culture, was introduced to implement an overall practice of language correction and cleaning it of “linguistic rubbish” (see e.g. Subačius G. 2016: 129).

During the Soviet period, the idea that everybody had to use Lithuanian in the same way and to follow instructions from the norm-setters had been settled. In analytic terms, the late Soviet period reveals an already fixed opposition between speakers of Lithuanian and language norm-setters, who forbid certain language forms and command use of the other forms (cf. Raila and Subačius 2012). This opposition is especially prominent in the LP discourse, where language users in all possible domains (from a seller in a market or service provider in a resort to a TV journalist) are attacked in a derogatory tone for not being able to produce the correct version of Lithuanian constructed by language planners. Notably, the official “wooden newspeak” (for more see Thom 1989) was not discussed by the fighters for culture, at least not before Gorbachev’s Glasnost and Perestroika. As the open struggle for the rights of the Lithuanian language flared up in the Glasnost-Perestroika period along came also the already established language planners’ need for power and institutional authority. The symptomatic Soviet inheritance became evident in the fact that the Lithuanian language was approached not as a means of communication of information and ideas, but rather as a medium of dissemination of the constructed forms by the norm-setters.

Language Planning in the Post-totalitarian Era

The Lithuanian language had been officially recognized even before the collapse of Soviet rule. Most likely, the governments in the Baltics could not withstand the pressure from the uprising intellectual elites. At the end of 1988 the Lithuanian Supreme Soviet granted the Lithuanian language the status of the state language. The practical ideas of Gorbachev's social reform were taken over by the language planners. They started criticizing the liberating public speech and required introduction of institutional language control. Soon after, large scale language surveillance by the state became an integral part of post-Soviet LP. In this section we follow the process and review a number of legal means and language institutions founded in the very beginning of the reestablished independence. Additionally, from a critical discourse perspective, we examine considerations and ideas of the language planners of the period.

Establishment of Legal Framework

The very first LP steps just before and after 1990 can be approached in the light of the so-called weak state syndrome, a by-product of the post-Communist transition (cf. Järve 2002: 99). Just like in the first Lithuanian Republic, the restoration of the state was marked by endeavors for securing official status for the national language. Seen from a language maintenance perspective, however, there was no serious reason for concern. On the eve of the collapse of Soviet power almost eighty per cent of the people of Lithuania were Lithuanians who spoke their mother tongue. With time, the proportion relative to other ethnicities grew even larger; the size of the Russian population decreased due to emigration, whereas the Polish minority became the largest one. The ethnic composition of the population makes Lithuania the most homogeneous state of the three Baltic communities. According to Latvian and Estonian censuses from 2000, the relative percentage of titular population and Russian minority in Latvia was, respectively, 60/30 percent, in Estonia 68/26 percent. In Lithuania, on the other hand, as the last population and housing census data of 2011 show, the ethnicity composition is as follows: 84.2 percent Lithuanian, 6.6 per cent Polish and 5.8 per cent Russian.

Yet, despite the favorable socio-political conditions for maintenance of the Lithuanian language, the language planners announced a state of emergency. Since the recognition of Lithuanian as the official language in 1988, legal initiatives were continued in a number of interim documents until the right and the duty to use the language for public purposes was firmly established in the Constitution of the Lithuanian Republic in 1992. Contrary to the pre-communist period, the ideas and practices concerning both status and corpus planning in the restored Republic became the subject of gradually expanding legal enforcement.

A provision on the status of the Lithuanian language had been developed and explicated in the principal legal document *Valstybinės kalbos įstatymas* (The Law of State language), issued in 1995 (Language Law 2002 [1995]). Since then, the Language Law has framed the legal and ideological basis for any LP related activity in Lithuania. For instance, it specifies public matters and spheres in which the state language is required. Alongside various official affairs and spaces (such as state and municipal paperwork, courts, legal documents, etc.), internal documents and correspondence of enterprises and businesses, as well as public information, public signs and advertisements are included.

Since the early 1990s, official requirements to acquire proficiency and take an exam in state language were imposed on all state officials and public servants who had graduated from school in which the language of instruction had not been Lithuanian. In terms of titular language status, the neighboring Baltic States, Latvia and Estonia, underwent very similar development. In all three states a political requirement regarding the acquisition and use of titular languages for public affairs within the given transition period was introduced (for more see Grenoble 2003; Hogan-Brun et al. 2008). Due to the demographic situation in Latvia and Estonia this issue has remained the primary concern of language planners. Lithuanian LP, however, has developed in the direction of securing both language status and corpus planning.

One must note that introduction of Lithuanian language instruction for speakers of other mother tongues than Lithuanian was far from unproblematic. Tens of thousands of people were forced to go through language courses followed up by offensive and discriminatory public discourse and controlled by a wide network of “language police” (see a review of an external observer from that time: Sabaliūnas 1997). Alongside

the language teaching project, an idea of regulation of the ways of speaking and writing in Lithuanian took a very concrete shape. The obligation to use ‘correct’ language forms directed at any citizen that would use Lithuanian in public was developed.

Actually, the idea that state institutions had to prescribe ‘correctness’ of the state language was officially recorded as early as 1989 by a decree from the Lithuanian Supreme Soviet (Subačius P. 2016). Since then, the opposition between correct state language developed by LP institutions and the language of speakers of Lithuanian has been gradually established.

The Language Law contains a chapter on ‘Correctness of State Language’ which points out the actors and the subjects to whom the correctness issue is applied. Among them there are the State (the principal actor that sets and controls the implementation of the requirement) and the mass media (the principal executor of the set rules), cf.:

The State shall enhance the prestige of the correct Lithuanian language and provide conditions for protecting linguistic norms (Article 19);

The mass media of Lithuania (the press, television, radio, etc.), all publishers of books and other publications must observe the norms of the correct Lithuanian language (Article 22).

As one can see, no exception is made for private media institutions and publishers. Besides mass media, the requirement of correctness covers company names, advertising, and other public information. Cf.:

Names of all enterprises, establishments and organizations functioning in the Republic of Lithuania shall be formed adhering to the norms of the Lithuanian language [...] (Article 16);

All public signs must be correct (Article 23).

During the Soviet period the domains and objects that were inspected for language correctness were regulated by the state. When the foundations of current LP were laid, the public sphere as we know it today had not yet been formed, it was rather limited in scope. During the first years of the regained independence it was governmental or semi-governmental.

The post-Soviet Lithuanian LP is thus rooted in the Soviet perception of the public space, that is, it is not approached as the common property of people, but as belonging to the authorities and therefore obliged to function according to rules set by the authorities.

Following this logic, any public language usage falls under the category “state” language. Lithuanian language is perceived as an authorized entirety of approved language forms to be used in public, which has to be acquired and reproduced by every public speaker. The latter are not entitled to display spontaneous linguistic behavior and thus are obliged to use the language without changing any given form or meaning, i.e. according to the given rules of ‘correctness’. Everything that is not a private communication automatically has to be included into the field of regulation by the authorities. Hence, we have a problem, since the people are not a property of the government (even though they *de facto* were during Soviet governance). The ways of linguistic expression of the society, such as publishing of books, broadcast and print media, advertising, information on product labels and other, i.e. the whole broad, diverse and dynamic public space with its multiple players, factors and processes, in democratic conditions should not and cannot be covered by the automatic regulations of the government. Meanwhile, according to the Language Law in force, a private taxi driver, a hairdresser, an owner of a business (a wedding planner or a director of a retail chain) have to act as the government, i.e. they are required to ensure the production of the set language forms.

Even such controversial objects as personal names are regulated by the norm-setters (Article 15). According to the current implementation of the Language Law the names of citizens in official documents are spelled only in the 32 Latin characters that comprise the authorized Lithuanian alphabet. Characters used in the Polish alphabet, but not necessarily specific to Polish alone, such as, for instance, *w*, are not allowed. Essentially this issue dates back to the end of the 19th c. and the beginning of the 20th c., when endeavors were made to escape the Polish influence and orthography reform was undertaken. As was mentioned already, several new characters from the Czech script were introduced (such as *š*, *ž*) and some existing, such as *w*, were removed. Besides political struggle, language planners of the time also had pragmatic and even modernistic considerations (among other things,

simplification of Lithuanian orthography was discussed). Today's fear of "foreign" characters has converted into a battle targeting the right of citizens to original forms of their names. The rules apply for any name that would exceed the Lithuanian version of the Latin alphabet (for instance, in case of marriage with foreigners) thus neglecting the diversity of the public—the community's—needs that exist alongside the private and the official sphere.

The analysis of the dynamics of the enactment and subsequent amendments of Language Law, including working drafts of documents, confirmed that a gradual transformation has been taking place during the first decades of the post-soviet state. The approach to the state language by its planners gravitated from the initial motivation to set a duty for citizens of other ethnic backgrounds to speak Lithuanian in terms of their employment, towards the pressure to any Lithuanian citizen to reproduce a *correct* version of Lithuanian (Subačius P. 2016). With time the focus of language planners was completely shifted to intensive engineering of the Lithuanian language corpus. We shall see that the only connection to the issue of language status remained a discursive construction of endangerment of the Lithuanian language and the nation. Thereby Lithuania developed a unique LP approach not only in the Baltics but in a general western context as well.

The 'correctness' requirements set in the Language Law have been adopted in a number of legal documents, such as the Law of the Provision of Information to the Public (2006 [1996]), Code of Ethics of Journalists and Publishers (2005) as well as job descriptions by some of the radio and TV broadcasting companies. This augmentation of the regulative legal framework reveals how much effort has been put into maintaining the established system of language surveillance. During the post-1990 period the Lithuanian LP turned into a self-reproductive and completely bureaucratic phenomenon.

Institutions for Language Planning and Surveillance

The Language Law provided an ideal matrix, according to which all supervision of *official* and *public* language affairs (without making a difference between the administrative matters of the government and the societal, economic, cultural matters) had to be implemented. The requirement for

correctness presupposed complementary law-making, a series of regulations that would establish language rules. Consequently, institutions were needed to be responsible for issuing of rules of correctness and for inspection of compliance to the rules as well as for the procedures of how speakers have to learn the rules (such as exams for state officials and national curricula). Such institutions were immediately established and have not been dissolved since.

To represent the government and to apply the matrix *de facto* two state institutions were founded in 1990: *Valstybinė lietuvių kalbos komisija* (the State Commission of Lithuanian Language, henceforth, the Commission) and *Valstybinė kalbos inspekcija* (The State Language Inspectorate, henceforth, the Inspectorate). Consisting mainly of language professionals (either linguists or Lithuanian philologists) these institutions and their subdivisions carry the responsibility for all principal work concerning language ideology, legislation and supervision of implementation of language laws. The Inspectorate's main task is to determine how the orders passed by the Commission are followed by the community rather than to make independent decisions.

The Commission has been fully authorized to approve compulsory norms of 'correct language' and to lay down language regulations. Its mandate is defined in the Language Law:

The State Commission of the Lithuanian Language shall establish the trends and tasks of the state language protection and approve linguistic norms (Article 20).

One of the most known corpus planning means passed by the Commission is *Didžiųjų kalbos klaidų sąrašas* (the List of Major Language Errors) (1998 [compiled during 1992–1996]). It includes hundreds of grammar and lexical 'errors' and a chapter on pronunciation *Būtinausi bendrinės lietuvių tarties reikalavimai* (Indispensable Requirements for Standard Lithuanian Pronunciation) (1998 [1994]).

Even more voluminous are the so-called language recommendations—a series of periodically updated publications correcting all kinds of language variants; they are based on a volume from the Soviet period that follows the prewar tradition. Alongside language variants induced by language

contacts, variants of dialectal origin are proscribed. The Commission also exercises control over creation of professional terms: all publishers have to deliver the compiled term dictionaries for the Commission's approval (DOC 1997). Hence the Lithuanian language engineering rests on all possible language "codices": extensive regulation of pronunciation, grammar and lexicon is carried out. For instance, dictionaries of the Lithuanian language still contain prescriptive marking "should not be used" to designate words that are considered incorrect or the editors simply exclude the 'incorrect' items.

The language codices are the principal tool for the Inspectorate—a unique language institution whose principal function is to carry out outright public language control, i.e. to inspect how speakers comply with the prescribed norms. The state inspectors and, locally, the municipal language administrators (a position established in each local government in Lithuania) implement the program of Control of Use and Correctness of the State language, which was issued by the Government and incorporated into the Law of Municipal Autonomy (2004 [1994]). From Strategic plans developed by the Inspectorate one can see how the institution defines the goals of language correction work. Hence, it pursues "protection, nourishing and propaganda of Lithuanian language", encourages "to follow language traditions", and ensures "systematic strengthening of the Lithuanian language" (DOC 2007–2016). The document highlights a recurring feature of LP discourse: it justifies intervention in well-established, unproblematic language usage by claiming that the Lithuanian language is weakening and in need of defense.³

Hence, following legal documents and the Statute of Language Inspectorate, dozens of language inspectors "control how state and municipal institutions and all other companies, organizations and institutions of Lithuanian Republic follow Language Law, the regulations of the Language Commission and other legislation which set up the requirements for language use and correctness" (DOC 2006 [2002]). Institutions and enterprises, press, TV, radio and publishing houses are monitored for "language violation", including the use of non-authorized, 'incorrect' language variants. Among other things, journalists' pronunciation is monitored. Non-compliance with any of the regulations of the Commission and to the directions of language inspectors results in warnings and fines.

Reports are regularly brought with lists of detected errors out in the media and on the website of the Inspection and the names of the ‘transgressors’ are made public.

It is noteworthy that most broadcasting companies and periodicals, as well as publishing houses and state institutions have a position for a language editor for language consultation and correction in order to ensure compliance with the set language norms, which is apparently still insufficient to meet the requirement for language correctness.

Also a public association of professional linguists *Lietuvių kalbos draugija* (the Lithuanian Language Society) may undertake monitoring of whether the appointed language norms are observed in usage. The society claims to be a successor to an equivalent prewar organization.⁴ Although it has no official authority, it can issue public reports. For instance, it has been undertaking monitoring of TV, after which reports have been issued and requirements to take action (i.e. to introduce pre-employment language tests in order to ‘stop the downturn of the contemporary language usage and protect language from degrading and decline’) have been brought to the leaders of the broadcasting companies (DOC 2005–2007).

In LP literature language editors in publishing houses are included among practitioners in the field (Ayres-Bennett and van Ostade 2017: 113–115). In Lithuania the editor position is firmly established. Not only publishers, press and broadcast media, but also governmental and private businesses hold an editor position. Typically, a graduate from Lithuanian philology is employed and her primary task is to check whether the institution’s written or spoken Lithuanian is in accordance with the required correctness of language.

Thus in post-1990 Lithuania a complex and extensive institutional system of language surveillance has been developed. The decision on what is legitimate as a public language norm is mainly consolidated in the hands of linguists, acting either as authors of ideological guidelines and legal documents, members or employees of state and public language institutions or permanent language correction practitioners.

Despite quite a few critical opinions that were expressed during the initial post-Soviet years and a growing number of metalinguistic discussions of discontent on the Internet, there is a general consensus that Lithuanian language supervision is necessary:

Lithuanian language, the mother tongue we all have had as our own, now is nationalized and turned into property of the state. Its grammar has been bonded with the legal codex: you may get punished for a language error. [...] Yet the society supports and even encourages the authorities to maintain the state of affairs, it does not question and does not discuss the competence of the authorities. (Sverdiolas 2006: 122)

It is not unlikely that public support might be a byproduct (and a goal) of determined ideological work by language planners. An overwhelming professional discourse developed simultaneously with the national rebirth around the 90s as the outright construction of language endangerment, decline and authority. The pressure for unquestioned reproduction of Lithuanian language ideology is still echoed in mother-tongue teaching programs and co-curricular activities in schools (Vaicekauskienė 2016).

Discursive Construction of the Need for Language Regulation

The prevailing LP discourse rests on the presumption that the ethnic nation of Lithuanians and their language are endangered. Since the very beginning of the restoration of independence concerns have been directed to the spread of the English language. It was depicted as not a lesser threat than Russification by the Soviets. Looking from a broader European perspective the anti-global and anti-English attitude was not unique for the time, but in Lithuania the issue was raised to the institutional level by professional linguists and became mainstream. Although there was no empirical evidence for panic (even twenty years after, the command of English in the community is low), emotional appeals were made public. The speakers have been accused of disloyalty to their mother tongue, and the cultural contacts mediated by the English language have been presented as a natural catastrophe causing serious threat to the status of the Lithuanian language and contaminating its corpus, thus threatening the Lithuanian nation (see, among many others, Rosinas 1993; Kniūkšta 1994; Pupkis 1994; Vidžiūnas 1998). For instance, the then chairman of the Lithuanian Language Society called for action against the unwanted development. Cf.:

The Society of the Lithuanian Language and the Society's Commission of the Press cannot accept such linguistic practice. We have to take immediate action against all deliberate attempts by journalists to legitimate a mish-mash of languages. (Rosinas 1990: 6)

As we already mentioned, before long official means were developed. For instance, a *List of unacceptable new borrowings* was prepared and included into the *List of Major language errors*. Additionally, rules for control of the use of English for public information, as well as rules for naming businesses were issued.

Partly due to the borrowing from English, but mainly because of the gradually evolving autonomous public sphere, a simultaneous discourse of language downturn in the media developed. When it became apparent that monitoring of all growing and free printed as well as broadcast media is impossible and speakers can hardly adjust to the regulative norm requirements of the gate-keepers (including prosody and phonetics), the discourse took on a nostalgic tone. Cf.:

In present times, when they have started broadcasting improvisations, when one is allowed to speak without an in advance pre-edited and correctly accentuated written text, the radio and particularly the TV can also teach us things that are only suitable for a prison environment. (Pupkis 2005: 335)

So far we have been unable to develop an effective way to introduce the language norms on the radio and TV and in the press; private publishing houses are being established and they take freedom to disregard standard language norms, they base such attitude on primitive demagoguery, the so-called democracy. (Language Society's address to Lithuanian people 1992: 30)

It's remarkable that the post-Soviet nostalgia for 'ideal language' essentially differs from the universal cultural longing of the lost time when language supposedly existed in an unblemished state which is said to characterize standard language communities. The Lithuanian LP discourse longs for a very recent period of language existence, the one when, as it is put, "the whole army of paid stylists [...] was correcting the language of semi-illiterate persons and translating it into normalized, more or less correct texts" (Vanagas 1990: 23). In other words, censorship,

control and discipline is what define the language ideal of the Lithuanian gate-keeper—a pre-checked, corrected and approved text before it appears on air or in print.

Systematic analysis of both nationalistic discourse against otherness embodied by the threatening English language and language downturn discourse reveals that problematizing of language variation is an integral component of the official Lithuanian language ideology. A number of related claims can be distinguished in the problem-identification discourse by language professionals of the time. The linguists note that the Lithuanian language started deteriorating; it (and the ethnic nation as well) become endangered due to global language contacts, yet the speakers freely engage in usage instead of protecting it.

Among the presumed causes of such development, overall decline of command of the mother tongue and the lack of public language control is emphasized. The latter is especially indicative that the Lithuanian language planners are concerned not just with language. It is quite possible that construction of threats has been necessary for the maintenance of institutional power of language planners, as an excuse for supposedly indispensable measures of “defense”, which otherwise, under regular circumstances, would not have been taken.

Abundant publications on language authority show how language users are judged in moral terms and how their behavior is related to a crisis of values which in turn is claimed to be due the crisis of institutional authority. Cf.:

Only nostalgic memories are left from that then Soviet time when the language specialists regularly broadcast on language on TV and radio, [they] had a deep and true authority in the society and made a clear educational impact. (Miliūnaitė 2010: 7; also see Paulauskienė 2012)

It has been noted elsewhere that the post-Soviet nostalgia of linguists may point to the breakdown of the unwritten contract between the Soviet authorities and the intellectual establishment during the Soviet period (Daugirdas 2016). It can explain common manifestations of power in the texts of the norm-setters, where construction of authority is based on the opposition between the speakers' *right* to make an independent choice and the linguists' *permission* to use a chosen language variant:

None of the teachers have the right to break the set language norms!
(Pupkis 1988: 4)

Political parties and public organizations have been formed by people of whom many do not master the language well enough. And yet they still were allowed to speak and write what they wanted and how they wanted.
(Rosinas 1992: 24)

Who gave the right to destroy language norms? [...] [will the day come when they will start advising on TV] that one can use other word-stress pattern than the one appointed by linguists [...]? (Būda 1998: 21)

Addressing a variety of professional groups these claims about linguists' right to regulate speakers' behavior is rooted in the idea that all public speech has to be normalized according to the conception of language planners. The argument divides language users into two groups: the righteous and the wrong-doers, a construction taken over from Soviet practices of power which manipulated scholarship in order obtain a monopoly on knowledge (Keršytė 2016, Vaicekauskienė 2017).

By claiming that speakers of Lithuanian lack competence in language the gate-keepers reinforce their own expertise. Although linguistically false (mother-tongue speakers *know* their grammar and their needs for linguistic expression), this claim seems to be necessary for discursive construction of a need for an expert. It is intertwined with the requirement for obedience and punishment by a collective judge—an institution of linguists. Cf.:

However, standard Lithuanian speech is not invincible for all. Those who respect the language of their fathers, who study hard and carefully listen to advice and recommendations of linguists, they can learn it. [...] Every language mistake on air is made by a concrete person. We have to start from him—let us correct him, teach him, shame him, demand from him, but if it won't help, we will have to renounce him. (Masaitis 1991: 9–10)

The idea of punishment for language, including proposals regarding employment and job dismissal, is consistently developed in the early publications of the period. Later on the established mechanisms of discipline are supported and justified, emphasizing that punishments (fines) promote improvement (Smalinskas 1997: 13). The List of Major

Language Errors is claimed to be a handy instrument for school teachers as well as for language inspectors, when language violators appeal against penalties to courts (Miliūnaitė and Smalinskas in [Urnėžiūtė 2014]).

The discourse of authority and expertise is thus a strong argument to conceive the institutional power as both the goal and the measure of the Lithuanian LP. Metalinguistic rhetoric reveals how important institutional language regulation was for the self-perception of linguists of the time. Assertions on behalf of an institution dominate the LP discourse as well as peremptory tone when discussing the plans for language policy: “one must”, “it’s indispensable”, “immediately”, “react”, “preclude” etc. Exercise of power and requirement to expand language monitoring is evident and the lack of reflection of the political shift that is taking place is striking. The Lithuanian state is being restored and the Lithuanian language regains official status. However, language planners propose to introduce “a common nationwide language regime” (Vanagas 1990: 24) and to develop “a system of language defense, normalization and implementation of norms” (Pupkis et al. 1989: 23), as if the national language began to be threatened with extinction.

Indeed, the idea of language nationalization rapidly developed and numerous proposals to establish a network of existing and newly founded institutions were brought before the public. Cf.:

An effective system of [public language] control has to be established. A financially autonomous center for guardianship of implementation of norms and language consultation has to be founded [...] a Lithuanian language society has to be founded to perform a broad range of activities within the field of language protection and supervision [...] the rights of the Lithuanian Language Commission under the Science Academy of LSSR have to be expanded [...] in universities and the Science Academy research groups for current language usage and norm-setting have to be established [...] Ph.D. education which graduates could perform norm-setting work has to be started. (Linguists’ address to the society and leaders of Lithuania 1989: 25–26)

One must say that the top-down, power based position of language planners in relation to the objects of planning (society and the language) was noticed and criticized from the very beginning of the 1990s and onward.

Both local intellectuals and Lithuanian expats, as well as external observers of democratization processes in the post-communist bloc noted the risky tendency for cultural elite to move away from the real political and social decision-taking and to engage into a radical patriotic nationalism seeking support from authorities (among many others see Lieven 1994; Adomėnas 1995; Sabaliūnas 1997; Blommaert and Verschueren 1998).

Cf. also:

The ongoing processes of social stratification which enable inner diversification of the society and reduce its repressiveness are followed by unrestrained growth of language purism, uniformity and repression. (Donskis 1997: 124)

Nevertheless, during the first years of the restored independence the symbolic power of linguists turned into a tangible disciplining of the community. Backed by purely ideological construction of threats to language and discourse of language authority, an institutional network of language surveillance was developed. Obviously rooted in the soviet regulative practices, current Lithuanian LP is distinguished in the European context by the scope of bureaucratic institutional regimentation and the role of linguist as language ideologist who approves and safeguards the rules of the Lithuanian language.

Conclusion

Normally subjects and means of LP are identified according to what has been recognized as a problem or a need of a community. In the beginning of the twentieth century, the main concern of Lithuanian language planners was construction of a functional standard language as a tool for intra-national communication and ethnic identification. At that time and later on, taking a defensive position was a natural consequence of historical conditions, such as annexation by and incorporation into the authoritarian Russian Empire and the totalitarian state of the Soviets. During the Soviet period, expansion of Russian indeed threatened the status of national languages. That might explain the endeavors in the

Baltics of the late 1980s to enact defensive titular language laws. Legislative action was seen as a solution. But implementation of overall language control does not have any reasonable justification in the independent Lithuania that has been restored since the 1990s.

Although current social and political conditions are most favorable for the maintenance and development of the Lithuanian language, the language planners do not consider the shift nor respond to it. The stated LP goals do not necessarily correspond to the chosen LP means whereas reported problems may appear very different from those discovered when analyzing the communicative practices of the speech community. It is striking how poorly the Lithuanian language planners have been informed of the actual sociolinguistic situation and how much of the argument is grounded in belief rather than in empirical evidence. Presented as if it was based on linguistic expertise, the professional discourse of the linguists who style themselves as language planners is purely ideological. The language and the community is seen as threatened due to globalization, ethnic minorities, supposedly decreasing command of native speakers, “incorrect” public communication and loss of the authority of linguists. Romantic nationalist notions of language, including the local mythology of constant threat to one of the most archaic Indo-European languages are intertwined with an isolating and defensive attitude—the focus on pure language forms rather than factual usage and functionality for the speakers. LP discourse seems to reject language awareness of the community itself and speakers’ socio-linguistic competence—their ability to independently decide which languages, language forms and meanings are best suitable for variable and changing communicative contexts.

It is very likely that artificial conservation of cultural ideology, including mythologized ethno-linguistic identity, was nourished by the Soviets. Isolation from sociopolitical developments elsewhere served the needs of the Soviet authorities and the social sciences were manipulated. During the Soviet period the discipline of the so-called language culture was developed. Among other means of language correction, it continued with language purification rather than acceptance of borrowings as a source for the enrichment of the stylistic repertoires of standard Lithuanian (cf. Rinholm 1990: 282–283). Although the normative principle of replacement of borrowings was adopted from the pre-communist period, before the Soviet intervention, public speakers and writers could negotiate their own choices of lin-

guistic resources. Later on, the Soviet order did not leave much space for discussion. Correction of language forms became an officially sanctioned and common practice in the whole USSR. Thus, since the very beginning of national rebirth we can trace a firmly established belief that the styles and forms of public language are not created by the speaker community itself, but instead governed centrally by linguists—as experts, teachers and controllers. In addition to the regulative and powerful Soviet order, a particularly bureaucratic and institutionalized approach to LP has now been added.

In conclusion, it can be said that the current institutionalized LP system in Lithuania is likely to remain intact for the foreseeable future. Qualitative change in it can be expected only when radical change has occurred in the ingrained mental attitudes described in this chapter. The recent criticism by intellectuals and popular opinion leaders is becoming increasingly consolidated and this promises the beginning of the end.

Notes

1. Among the most prominent scholars in the field was August Schleicher, author of Darwinian Germanic language tree (“Die ersten Spaltungen des indogermanischen Urvolkes”, In *Allgemeine Zeitung für Wissenschaft und Literatur*, 1853). His works include first scholarly handbook in Lithuanian: *Handbuch der litauischen Sprache*, vol. 1–2, 1856.
2. The largest part of the territory now is part of the Russian Federation, the Kaliningrad region.
3. In Lithuanian language standardization, “language traditions” equal the norms fixed in codification manuals (see Vaicekauskienė 2017).
4. One should stress, however, that the Lithuanian language Society in the pre-WWII Republic of Lithuania was filling the gap of practical work on standardization of the then young Lithuanian standard language.

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