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ABSTRACT
                This paper discusses the problem of language
standardization in education. The areas to which standardization may
refer - phonology, spelling, punctuation, grammar and lexicon - are
discussed, and problems associated with efforts to standardize them
in schools are pointed out. The position taken is that a decision to
promote language standards should weigh the advantages against the
disadvantages, i.e., clarity in communication against time and effort
needed to implement and teach standard usage. The complex nature of
the process of language standardization is described by analyzing six
interrelated components: isolation of a norm, assignment of value,
establishing a purpose for the norm, acceptance, comparison and time
span. Finally, the following criteria are suggested for standardizing
or maintaining a standard within the educational domain: the number
of styles it is useful to isolate, and whether schools want language
standardization. (AM)

Language Standardization and Education

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There seems to be an uneasy feeling among teachers in primary and secondary
education that their job is somehow to present or promote the "Standard Language."
This feeling would appear to arise in part from the fact that education often
has as one of its goals the preparation of citizens for entry into the business
and professional world and in part seems to derive from the more mundane choices
which the establishment of curricula, the choice of textbooks and the training
of teachers seem to promote. Simplicity often seems to be a motive behind
standard language decisions in educational circles when such choices are
consciously made.

As a matter of fact, every country must take seriously the teaching of the
major language(s) of its schools. It must do so because of the several important
functions which language is known to fulfill. Language serves as a means of
communication between peoples--their thoughts must be clearly expressed so that
understanding rather than confusion and distrust may result. Language is an
important tool in the creative process, more particularly in the process of thinking
scientific thoughts. If the command of a language is not adequately and fully
developed, the results of thinking may be deficient and disappointing.[1] Language
serves as a means of socialization and unification; it is through language that
we learn to be good members of our society. For all of these reasons, the
language arts are critical and proper attention must be given to their teaching.

Given that we admit that these and many other reasons make the teaching of
language arts an important aspect of the educational process, the teacher is
still faced with the problem of "what to teach." ~~Whtxthxrexrxexrxr~~ A natural
response might for example be "good Spanish" or "correct Spanish." But there are

many possible interpretations of this answer. Is good Spanish the language spoken by educated people--all educated people all the time? But recent work in sociolinguistics has fully demolished the assumption that a given individual has a single style so we are left with deciding _which_ of the styles of _which_ individuals. As well, the assumption that a given class of people all share the same set of styles has been demonstrated to be largely false. Or is good Spanish the language spoken by well-known people, such as actors or politicians or radio announcers or government leaders? One might further ask whether they speak this language on all circumstances or only on ceremonial occasions? Or is good Spanish the language of the people offa given region, city or social class? Another interpretation might focus on written materials. "Good Spanish" might be considered that which is written by outstanding literary writers.[2] Or one might consider "Good Spanish" that which is found in grammars or dictionaries. Still another consideration in the isolation of "Good Spanish" might be the question of whether all educators _all over_ a country agree that there is a single "Good Spanish."

Similar questions could be raised with regard to the standards to be used for any language in an educational context. Indeed, the further we look at the concept of standard, the more complex the matter becomes. Not only do we need to establish the basis or source for the standard to be used but we must decide which aspect of language we want to ~~standardize~~ refer to and decide whether there is a standard in this area of language. Does "standard" refer to pronunciation? If so, is it the case that people in most regions of any one country agree that a particular way of ~~pronouncing~~ pronouncing the language is appropriate for specified circumstances? Or do we mean by standard, the grammar or the lexicon?

At the same time we decide whether there is a standard pronunciation, we might also want to decide whether it is important for an educational institution to promote a standard. Thus, although a standard pronunciation may be generally accepted, it is worth considering whether standard pronunciation is really essential for effective communication. What factors should be taken into consideration in deciding whether a standard is useful or not? One of the functions of a standard pronunciation is to prevent misunderstanding. Another is to identify a person as being more educated or as belonging to a particular social class. It is up to the educational system to decide xhkthex which of the several functions which a standard pronunciation may serve is important in their particular situation.

In addition to pronunciation, standardization may refer to spelling, punctuation or syllabification. In this area, standardization appears to be quite useful. Lack of attention can lead to misunderstanding or at least delay communication. Some variation in spelling can always be expected but schools should try to use that system which best promotes communication and best reflects the modern language.

This point should not be left without noting that although the value of a standard spelling and . nctuation for communication seems great, it may not always be simple to achieve. Spelling reforms often arouse sentiments of group identification or may serve as a sounding board for expressing political views. In lsuch cases, effecting a change xhxu or reform may prove quite difficult and the decision to promote such a change should be based on a consideration of the dgree of misunderstanding extant against the costs of effecting such a change.

The question of a standard grammar is a more complicated one and must be considered both from the point of view of the kind of content to be communicated whether poetic, prose, scientific ~~and~~ or other from the view of the social values associated with different varieties of these styles. ~~The~~ A standard grammar increases its value when it rests not only on the details of the language itself but also on its social and communicative functions.

In the standardization of vocabulary, it is useful to consider/for what area of vocabulary a norm ~~is~~ is needed. It is probably that schools would not find it worth the cost to try to control the daily language of its students. Additionally, one might wonder what the benefits to be gained from such an effort might be. On the other hand, it would seem worthwhile the effort to standardize technical terminology since exactness in this area of communication is essential and regionalisms may impede the spread of information.

Decisions on standards for language must be carefully made. It should be clear that the existing diversity in language is really adverse--that the diversity of language does lead to misunderstanding (something which needs to be demonstrated), that it does lead to uncertainty which might be especially bad for the beginner, or that it is indeed time-consuming. This advertisity must be weighed against the cost of promoting the standard form.

Although the need for improving language arts through education is very important and some decisions about standard language useful, we must still recognize that decisions about standards are very complex. In order to demonstrate this, I would like to elaborate the processes involved.

Because standardization refers to a process which is so complex, different aspects of the process have come to be labeled by this term. In understanding the complexities of this process, it is useful to see it as consisting of six separable but interrelated parts. Each of these can in turn be analyzed into several different features. The first three, while analytically separate, always co-occur in actual fact:

1) A reference point or system is set up or comes into being, i.e. a norm is isolated.

2) Value is assigned to the reference point or system, i.e. some judgment is made by some significant group of people that the reference point or system is "good" or "correct" or "preferred" or "appropriate."

3) Specification is made or comes into being as to when and for what purposes the norm is to be used.

4) Some agreement occurs, i.e., there is such a reference jpoint as is specified by 1,2,3. That is to say, some acceptance of 1, 2, 3 occurs.

5) 1,2,3 serve as a basis for comparison.

6) There is some span of time during which 1,2,3,4,5 are in effect.

To demonstrate how these six illustrate the standardization process, let us take an example from the publishing industry--say the establishment of stylistic norms. Thus, a group of editors might agree that in order for a textbook to meet their standards, bibliographic references must be done in a particular way (1--reference point; 2--value for the "right" way). They might specify that such norms will only be followed in textbooks and not in other commercial books (3--when and for what purposes the norm is to be used). This norm would then probably be referred back to the publishing houses for acceptance (4--acceptance). If accepted, authors would be expected to use this norm in submitting manuscripts (5--norm is used as a basis of comparison). As well, editors might correct manuscripts which did not conform to this norm (5--norm is used as a basis of comparison). The duration of the norm would depend upon when the next meeting of editors took place an or whether there was some other means of establishing norms through written agreement (6--span of time).

Although I will not go into all the detailed features which this process
comprises here,[4] I would like to consider some features of interest to/the educational
sphere.

ISOLATION OF A NORM

The isolation of a norm refers to many things. The scope of the reference
point/system can be very different. The norm may refer to in a general way to
the entire language or it might refer only to the spelling system or to the
lexicon or the pronunciation. It could even be as narrow as the pronunciation
of a single word.

The norm may be quite precise or quite vague. In the area of grammar, a
norm may specifically allow only one form as the standard form or the standard
may refer to more general rules such as "No double negative" and still allow
for the expression of this rule in many different ways. The norm may be a
point or a range (or pronunciation) or an entire system. It may refer to the
interrelation of parts--such as the idea that spelling should be based on
pronunciation. Judgments may vary widely as to how closely an individual example
is an adequate reproduction of the norm.

The norm may be defined positively or negatively. Wolfram, 1971, points out
that a popularly held view of what Standard American English is, is a negative
one. Hence, he says that a group of dialects have become standardized by
default, that is, Standard American English is: "a dialect(s) NOT spoken by
socially stigmatized groups." Another negative definition and one quite difficult
to be specific about is one which defines standardized speech as somehow "leveled."
Sweet, 1908, observed that "The best speakers of standard English are those
whose pronunciations and language generally least betray their locatlity."
A more positive definition of a standard language would be one that specifies
that the standard is the speech of a particular social or geographically located
group.

The sources of (bases for) the norm can vary widely. Jespersen, 1925, lists several common sources for standard language: (1) the standard of authority, (2) the geographical standard, (3) the literary standard, (4) the aristocratic standard, (5) the democratic standard (6) the logical standard, and (7) the aesthetic standard. Many other sources have been used. Choice depends on the community in which the decision occurs.

ASSIGNMENT OF VALUE

The principles for assigning a value to a reference point/system are indeed a complex matter. Of interest here is the suggestion by Danes, 1970, who discusses what sorts of theory we ought to look at in considering standardization efforts. He suggests that we see that norms are selected on the basis of a consideration of: "The essence, nature and function of the valuated object." By the essence of a language, Danes refers to the structure and history of a language. By the nature of a language, Danes refers to the social values attached to a particular form within that language. By the function of a language, Danes refers to the purposes for which it will be used.

An example of what Danes means by these three facets might be a spelling reform. If an appeal is made to the system of the language and to the general development of that language, such a judgment would be based on the essence of the evaluated object, namely its form and substance. If a judgment is made on social preferences for approximating an adajacent language, such as the decision to make French creole spelling as similar as possible to that of French, this decision appeals to the social value of a language. If a judgment is based on economy in learning or in use, such a judgment is based on the function of the evaluated object.

PURPOSE OF NORM

It is common to speak about a standard language as the only norm for all situations; to speak about it as uniform. In its less sophisticated form, "uniformation" assumes that the speakers of a standard language don't even have stylistic variants. A more sophisticated version of "uniformation" allows for some variation in terminology or in grammatical details while still assuming a limited range for the norm. The Czech view of a standard language seem more appealing. It allows for functional differentiation of norms by consideration of the different domains for which a language is to be used. Standardization efforts then are seen as a reiterative process affecting different domains of a language in different ways. A standard language seems to be one which has a complete range of expression for all domains. It lis worth noting that in many diglossic situations, the language undergoing standardization may be restricted in the functions it is expected to or can fulfill because the language of the th home is different from that of business, administration or other public sectors.

I have tried to indicate a few of the complexities of the standardization process and the development of a standard language. Finally, I would like to suggest some criteria which could be used in deciding on or in maintaining a standard within the educational domain.

First, consideration should be given to the question of how many styles it is useful to isolate. If mobilization is a primary function, then mass appeal and understanding should be a prime consideration. If, on the other hand, technical specialization is important, then creation of more standardized specialized ata forms might be appropriate.

Secondly, educators should consider whether schools want and need a standard pronunciation, spelling, grammar or terminology. A decision should be made as to which of these is most urgent; which of these most worth spending time and energy on.

Two precautions seem relevant here. First of all, since language is always changing, having once achieved a standard or having set a standard does not mean that this is fixed once and for all. Standardization and norms of good usage will probably change through time and what is taught should be adjusted to these changes. In many standard language communities, it is common and useful to have administrative routines which keep up with the changing standard. A second precaution which needs a great deal of attention is the following: although we have discussed those domains in which a standard might be useful, the question remains whether the schools should stick to the standard as the only kind of language permissible or correct. If full development of creative potential is to be encouraged, students should be made aware of the many stylistic possibidiyies and their appropriate application. Too great emphasis on any one style may hamper creativity.

The costs of establishing and maintaining a standard vary immensely from locale to locale and depend on what degree of standardization currently exists, on the available resources (both human and material) to promote standardization, on existiang values toward different varieties, and on the desires of the population toward establishing a standard.

In the Western Hemisphere, several interesting and complex examples of standardization problems have been brought to light. Eduardo Hernandez[5] argues that some variety of Chicano Spanish and not Standard Spanish should be taught in the U.S. bilingual schools on the grounds that students have little use for Standard Spanish, that language maintenance is best achieved in Chicano Spanish, and that students normally acquire inferiority feelings when standard

Spanish is taught. Gary Parker, 1973, has called our attention to the complex problems of deciding on the proper standard for teaching Quechua literary in Peru. The principle problem seems to revolve around the fact that Quechua is not a single language as popularly believed; indeed the differences among the several lects of Quechua would lead to serious learning difficulties for most beginning learners, no matter which variety was chosen. Similarly complex problems for Black English in the United States have been reported.

In conclusion, what I have been trying to do here is: (1) suggest what the multiplicity of factors involved in the standardization process are and (2) discuss the sorts of values and functions the educational domain should consider when making decisions about the standard language. Naturally the complexities of the problem will vary from country to country. However, no country which wants to promote creativity, improved communication and advanced thinking can afford to neglect the language arts and, as a consequence, problems of standardization.

Notes

1. Although linguistic science has long taught that every child can learn his own
language, it also seems true that not all children have equal command of their
mother tongue. Householder, 1969, p.838, points out that there is a "dubious
claim formerly made by some taxonomists, that all speakers of a (j)given language
'master' it equally, that there are no differences in linguistic skill." It seems
clear that one important role which the schools can perform is to help develop
linguistic skills so that ideas can be expressed more succinctly, more fully
and more clearly.

2. The term "good" needs further clarification. When a person says that a jgiven
individual writes "good" Spanish does he mean that his use of grammar is acceptable
or appropriate or does he mean that his style is effective?

3. My research on standardization was made possible through my participation in the
International Language Planning Processes Project (1969-72), funded by
the Ford Foundation and administered by Stanford University.

4. I go into the details in a paper entitled "Standardization" which is in the
draft report of the International Language Planning Processes Project but which
will appear in book form in the future.

5. Personal communication.

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