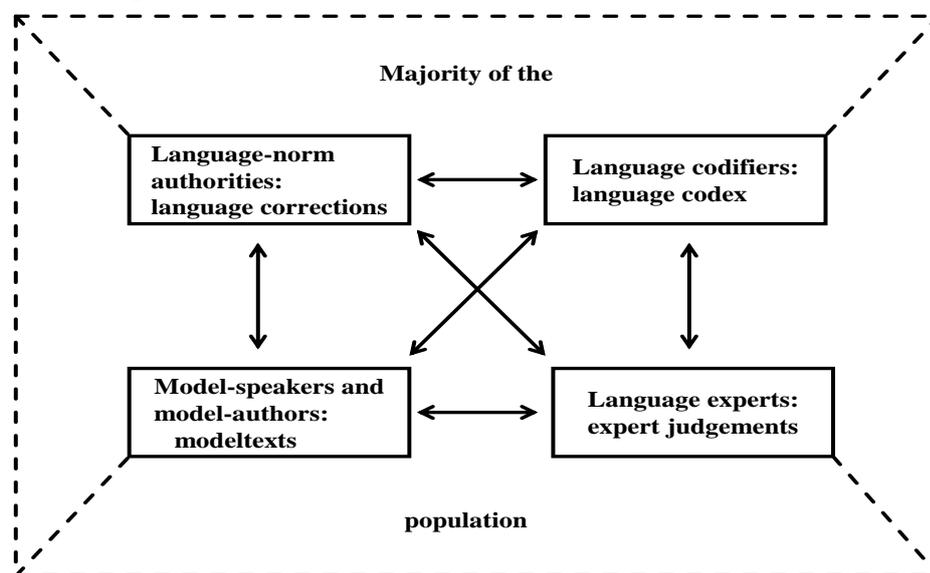


Norms of standard varieties and non-standard language varieties: a comparison

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I will at first deal with the concept of *authority*, but not try a comprehensive explication. Then I will say something about the social forces, comprising specific authorities, who or which decide what is standard in a language and their roles in these decisions. Thereafter, I will show that the kind of authorities for standard varieties and for non-standard varieties are deeply different, which – among other differences - justifies to conceive the former as *prescriptions* and the latter as *customs*. I will also relate the respective differences between standard and non-standard varieties to their different regional and national distribution as national varieties of standard languages and, respectively, dialects. My analysis will be based to a considerable extent on Georg Henrik von Wright's book *Norm and Action* (1963: especially 70-92).

The following model identifies and names the major social forces which typically, though not always, are involved in setting the norms of standard varieties, and indicates their relationships.



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