Abstract

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The first Swedish Code of Law, common to the whole country, was not established until 1734. Until then different codices, rules and regulations were used for towns and the countryside, respectively. The Law Committee, appointed in 1686, maintained thorough records of its work, and these were published between 1900 and 1909. The members of the Committee frequently discussed linguistic matters, and they also suggested several lexical improvements. Thus, the linguistic material in the protocols can be considered to be direct evidence of 17th-century language planning regarding one of the most important models for Swedish written language – the Code of Law of 1734.

In this article, 514 lexical units are analyzed using text linguistic and lexicological methods. The theoretical framework is taken from Ulf Teleman’s work on language planning that targeted the 17th century. The investigation focuses on three factors which have relevance for contemporary language planning: Swedish as a language for all purposes; an expanded lexicon, improved and enlarged in order to compete with Latin; and finally Swedish as orthographically and morphologically normalized.

Keywords: Code of Law of 1734, language planning, lexical units, Swedish.