

Abstract

Census is considered to be an objective and exhaustive reflection of certain population indicators. For this reason, the results of the census serve as a basis for the formulation of state policies, including ethnic and language policies. As such, however, the census becomes an interest of certain groups seeking results that can help them to attain their own objectives. In my thesis I show that an objective view of censuses is naive. The "objective" census itself is preceded by a pre-census situation, during which both the wording of the question and possible answers are defined, and the population is persuaded to fill in certain types of answers. Drawing on language management theory, conversation analysis, discourse analysis, and existing research on language policy, I will attempt to decipher the pre-census persuasion activity of ethnic and linguistic groups in the Czech Republic (especially German and Polish minority) prior to the 2021 Czech National Census.