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## **LANGUAGE POLICY AND LANGUAGE PLANNING IN KOSOVA**

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### **Abstract:**

This paper will present the role of globalization in small country and the role of language policy and language planning in the developing and strengthen the foreign language values in the kosovan society. Social changes and the mobility, migration and remigration due to the historical processes have made changes in language policy and bilingual society from Albanian/Serbian into Albanian/English and Serbian/ English bilingual society. English is used as Lingua Franca in Kosova and due to globalization and using new technology has been changed the regional and global aspect of thinking and transfer of social values from old generations to the young generations. The new bilingual communities are developed in different social, political and economic contexts.

### **Keywords:**

language policy, language planning, linguistic, multilingualism, foreign language learning

**JEL Classification:** I28, I29

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## 1. Language Policy in Kosova

The purpose of this research is to analyse and document the foreign language policy in the education system in Kosova towards multilingualism, as well as investigating the use of linguistic diversity and the language skills of primary and secondary school children in everyday life. Within the framework of the research, the education system in primary and secondary levels in Kosovan schools are presented together with foreign language learning, curriculum reforms in the education system, and historical aspects of language policy. Although language policy and foreign language learning are important topics and the major challenge in the education system in Kosova, there is no analysis of language teaching trends in Kosovan schools. Therefore, this study examines the language status, language use, and language education from the perspective of language policy.

In addition, the central question of this study is: Which languages, including the languages of minorities, are spoken in Kosova and which foreign languages are taught in Kosovan primary and secondary schools?

Due to these complex issues, this research requires an interdisciplinary approach and empiric interviewing of actors involved in language policy making and foreign language learning. In addressing these challenges, the research uses discussions analyzing different aspects of language policy and foreign language learning with a focus on German as a second foreign language and the links between language policy and migration research.

In pursuing this approach, the theoretical aspect focuses on language policy, foreign language policy, multilingualism, and foreign language learning in primary and secondary education. Legal and strategic documents with regards to the education system such as current legislation, strategies, and administrative instructions are used in this research as well as examples from secondary schools, which are analyzed with a brief presentation of the results derived from questionnaires about the motivation of learning German as a second foreign language in secondary school.

The results of this study revealed that in 2014/2015, French was the most frequently selected second language in Kosovan schools, and in 2015/2016 German was chosen by 51% of pupils. In Kosova 44,3% speak at least one foreign language, 11,5% speak two foreign languages and only 4,5% speak more than three languages.

It is important to mention that due to historical legacy and political changes in Kosova, the education system has changed and, while the new generation is not learning the same languages as their parents. Young Kosovans today are creating new English/Albanian or English/Serbian bilingual communities.

## **2. Language Planning in Kosova**

Language planning encompasses all the processes, formal and informal, overt and covert, which shape the direction and nature of change in language using, language learning and foreign language learning.

Kosova is a small country with 1.8 million inhabitants and 50% are under age of 35 years.

The state languages are Albanian and Serbian, Turkish has a state status in Prizren, English is Lingua Franca in the country. The ethnic or cultural background of the kosovan population is presented in the fig.1. The red points represent the Serbian community and green points the Turk community.

Kapitulli II / Chapter II

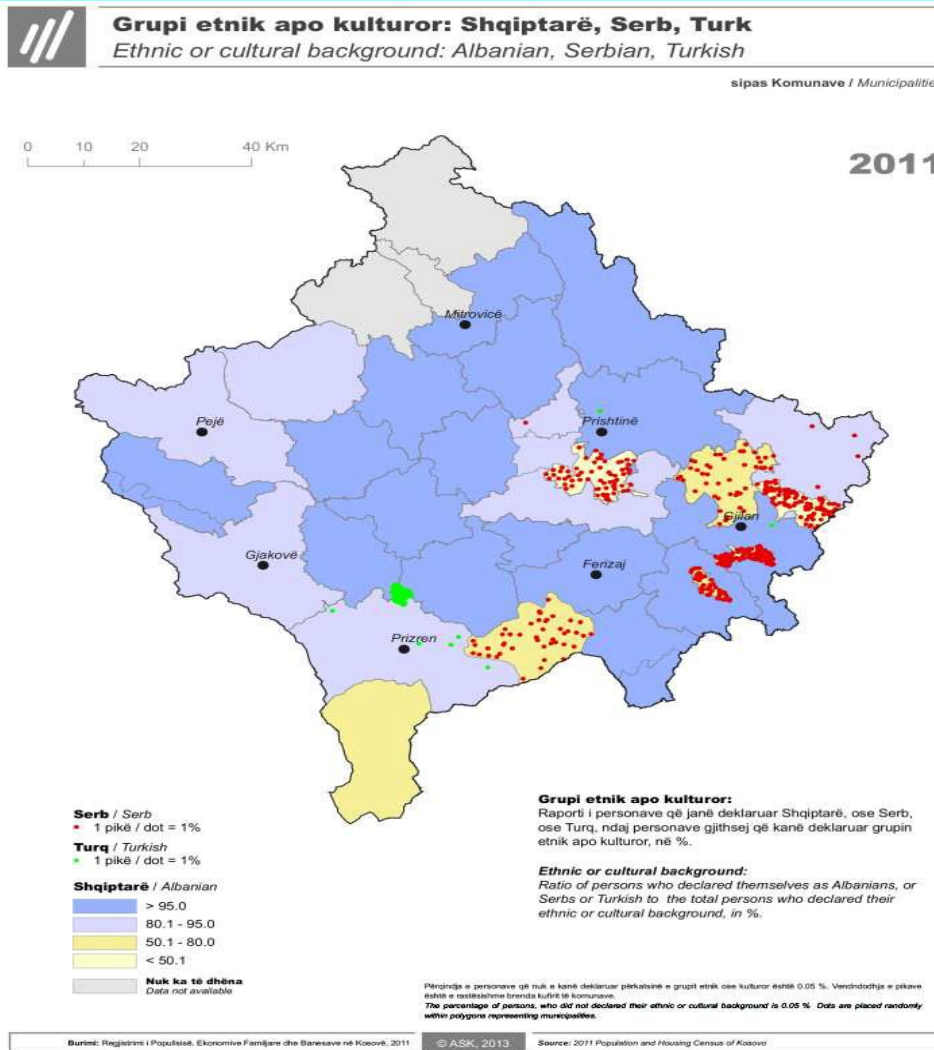


Fig 1. Ethnic and cultural background of kosovan population.

The results presented, highlight language policies, language planning, foreign language competences, minority languages spoken in Kosovan community, and foreign languages learned at primary and secondary schools in Kosova. For the interpretation of the results of this research importance is given to the evaluation of education reforms after 1992. Since then, most of schools have taught English in place of Serbo-Croatian as the first foreign language and French or German as a second foreign language. In 2010/2011 school year, English as a foreign language was made compulsory nationwide starting in the first grade of primary school. As a result, new models which integrate more than two foreign languages

were developed, taking into consideration the historical, political, and social development of the education system and migration/re-migration processes in Kosovan society.

The language policy involves decisions usually taken by authorities to influence the function the structure, or acquisition of a language or language variety in a particular speech community, an institution or in a geo-political space such as a nation. Albanian language is standardized from two big dialects Gheg and Tosk.

Historically the language planning of Albanian language is based on two dialects - North and South, actually are two major dialects of Albanian spoken in Albania known as Gheg and Tosk. In Kosova is used just standard Albanian and the Gheg dialect. Mutually intelligible, but still strikingly different in many ways and enjoying different histories, the dividing line is the Shkumbin River, neatly slicing the country into North and South. Gheg is spoken in the north and Tosk in the South. For centuries, Gheg was the dominant dialect in Albania, a literary language used by the educated and the elite since the 15<sup>th</sup> century.

Since 1972 the Tosk dialect was taken as basis for the Albanian standard language, it was politically decision from communist party in Albania and it was taken from Kosova too<sup>1</sup>.

The Kosova tries to ensure a democratic and pluralistic multi-ethnic society based on legal framework provides crucial safeguards for extensive language rights of different communities, and obliges all public institutions and service providers to respect the equal use and status of the official languages. But further developing and strengthen the values of multiethnic society without respecting the values of all state languages is very difficult to be realised in the Kosovan reality and in the Kosovan conditions after the war of 1999 till 2019. Without reconciliation, and without full reciprocal respect for minority languages in both countries in Kosova and in Serbia, and the legal status of both languages Albanian and Serbian as state languages in Kosova can be implemented if the Albanian minorities in Serbia can have the same legal language rights as the Serbian minorities in Kosova.

This can be approved by the implementation of the Law on the Use of Languages (2006) which remains till know 2019, 13 years after promulgation, only partially implemented due to

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.osce.org/kosovo/120010?download=true>

insufficient human and financial resources, often accompanied by lack of sufficient understanding of obligations and/ or lack of political will.

### **3. Legal and policy framework on the use of languages in Kosova**

Through the adoption of the Law on the Use of Languages<sup>2</sup> in 2006, the Assembly of Kosova committed Kosovan institutions to ensure the equal use of Albanian and Serbian as the official languages in Kosova. The Law on the Use of Languages complements the Anti-discrimination Law and international instruments for the protection of national or minorities and regional or minority languages directly applicable in Kosova, including the Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities. Based on the legal framework, Albanian and Serbian and their alphabets are recognized as the official languages of Kosova. Other languages can also gain recognition as official languages at the municipal level – with the same status as Albanian and Serbian – if the linguistic community represents at least five per cent of the total municipal population. Exceptionally on the use of languages gives Turkish the status of an official language in the municipality of Prizren.

### **4. Language planning – Albanian as state language in Kosova**

Language policy involves explicit decisions usually taken by authorities to influence the function the structure, or acquisition of a language or language variety in a particular speech community, an institution or in a geo-political space such as a nation. Some scholars envisage language policy as the superordinate category and see language planning as referring to the diverse concrete steps of its implementation. The standard Albanian language is standardized based on two dialects Gheg and Tosk.

For centuries, Gheg was the dominant dialect in Albania, a literary language used by the educated and the elite since the 15th century. This changed in the 20th century when the Communists took power in Albania (after Second World War 1954), and put their support behind the Tosk dialect in the south, which was seen as less elitist and more of the working class. For decades the sponsorship of Albanian government placed Tosk at a superior position to Gheg.

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<sup>2</sup> Law No. 02/L-37 on the Use of Languages as promulgated by UNMIK Regulation 2006/51, 20 October 2006

Language policy refers to the influence of the internal system of a language or the standardisation of the language eg. the standardisation of the Albanian language from two dialects Gheg and Tosk or in Ex-Yugoslavia the standardisation of the serbo-croatian language from 1945 to 1990 which however failed and since 1992 serbo-croatian is developed in two languages: Croatian and Serbian.

The first initiatives on language policy of standardisation of Albanian language were undertaken at “Language Consultation” (Consulta Gjuhësore) on 22 and 23 april 1968, under the motto “One Nation – one standardised-written Language” (see. Cvetkovic –Sander 2013:267).

Since 1972 the standard Albanian has been used in media, in schools and other educational institutions, and in the government, but the Gheg-dialect is still to be heard everywhere (eg. gheg. zá, (tosk. zë) "voice"; gheg. nánë, (tosk. nënë) “mother”, gheg. punue (tosk për të punuar) "to work,", gheg. lexue (tosk. për të lexuar), "to read", me shkruie (tosk. për të shkruar); “to write”.

Gheg survived perfectly well, and today both dialects flourish. The main differences between the two dialects are found in pronunciation and sentence structure, which are easy to understand each other. In pronunciation, the major difference is in the rhotacism of each dialect - Tosk is much more rhotic than Gheg: (tosk. druri - gheg. druni “wood”; tosk. syri - gheg. syni” eye”; tosk. liri – gheg. lini “line”).

There are also some spelling differences, and regionally within each dialect you will find odd stress differences, with some Gheg speakers trailing off at the end of sentences where Tosk speakers hit a definitive stress point on the final syllable.

Map showing the various dialects of Albanian in Albania, Kosova, North Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Italy and Greece (The map does not imply that the Albanian language is the majority or the only spoken language in these areas.). All Albanians in other Countries in Serbia, Montenegro, North Republic of Macedonia, Greece and Italy are bilingual.



Fig. 2. Various dialects of Albanian in Albania, Kosova Google map. (22.01.2017)

The standardisation of Albanian language is part of language planning in Kosova since 1972, which is a process and has taken in consideration some gheg elements. It's important to mention that generally in Kosova are taken different measures by official agencies to influence the use of one or more languages in a particular speech community.

According to the researches from different linguists Fishman (1987, 1991), de Cillia (2002, 2003, 2004, 2010, 2013), the language planning is a process and takes in consideration language variety to one legally standardised language. Fishman defined language planning as “the authoritative allocation of resources to the attainment of language status and corpus goals, whether in connection with new functions that are aspired to, or in connection with old function that need to be discharged more adequately”

Language planning in Kosova is about the status planning as “the authoritative allocation of resources to the attainment of language status”, for example in connection with new functions that are aspired to for the modern languages: English, German or French, or in connection with old functions that need to be discharged more adequately such as Serbian and Russian.



The social standing of the foreign language and the language in education planning, foreign language learning and the prestige of the language or the image of the language, the language on the level of state and the language on the level of community.

This perspective places not languages but those who speak different languages at the center of language policies. The emphasis is upon valuing and developing the ability of all individuals to learn and use several languages such Albanian, Serbian, English, German or French to broaden this competence through appropriate teaching and through plurilingual education, the purpose of which is the creation of linguistic sensitivity in Kosova.

### **5. Language Policy and Foreign Language Learning in Kosova**

The area of languages, the following questions were asked: Which linguistic laws exist? Are language rights guaranteed by law (school legislation, media legislation, official and court rules, military law, topographic inscriptions, etc.)? This raises the questions of whether there is a coordinated, national language policy body that provides for the development, implementation and control of linguistic provisions based on scientific standards.

As regards minority languages, the Commissioner's office is responsible for languages. The Office is exclusively responsible for minority language rights and is not entrusted with any other language policy measures, such as the foreign languages of returnees or of sign language.

The language policy measures in the history of Kosovar language policy, education policy and minority languages are described. The author would like to distinguish and analyze the language policy measures of language legislation, the legal protection of the status of languages and the social function of the languages in national law in Kosova:

- Language standardization processes and measures (language planning),
- language policy of minority languages,
- Educational language policy or promotion policy for one or more languages as foreign languages.

The most important aspects for the understanding of language policy in Kosova are described through:

- different dimensions of a national / international language policy,

- the history of Kosovar language policy / education policy and the role of the international community in Kosovar language policy,
- the modern forms of administration (the language policy in the economy, in the legal and judiciary),
- modern foreign languages as means of communication and their use in the media, business and administration,
- Foreign language learning in the compulsory education system.

The author considers the influence of these factors to be important for the further development of Kosova and integration into the European Union because Kosova is a bilingual national state based on her constitution. The Kosovar education system follows European Union recommendations on education. The economy is organized in a market economy. Kosova seeks to establish legal norms and to meet the demands of the state as well as modern bilingual administrative structures, to use modern structures means to use modern communication and to promote multilingualism in the media. These language policy measures in Kosovar institutions are implemented by speed-specific experts and not by targeted research and analysis of the language policy of specific experts. Language policy can occur in different forms. "As a deliberately planned policy on linguistic phenomena that enacts laws and sets policy measures" (de Cillia 2003, p. 15), e.g. the Language Usage Law (No. 02 / L-037) in Kosova, or Administrative Instructions for Language Uses of Minority Languages (No. 07/2012). Language policy exists everywhere in society, in legal regulations of language policy: in school laws, curricula, in court, etc. Thus it plays an important role in overall policy. In this context, minority language policy and minority language law are protected and regulated by law and regulation. On 4 April 2012, Regulation No. 07/2012 establishing the Office of the Commissioner for Languages was signed by the Kosovar Government. On May 29, 2012, the Executive Board for Language Policy was established, which was established as a political forum for minority language policy and minority rights. This established a network of various Kosovar institutions. Its tasks are the control of the Kosovar institutions in the implementation of the language law in practice as well as the monitoring of the language rights of all ethnic groups throughout the territory of Kosova. The role of Kommissioner is presented in the fig. Nr. 2

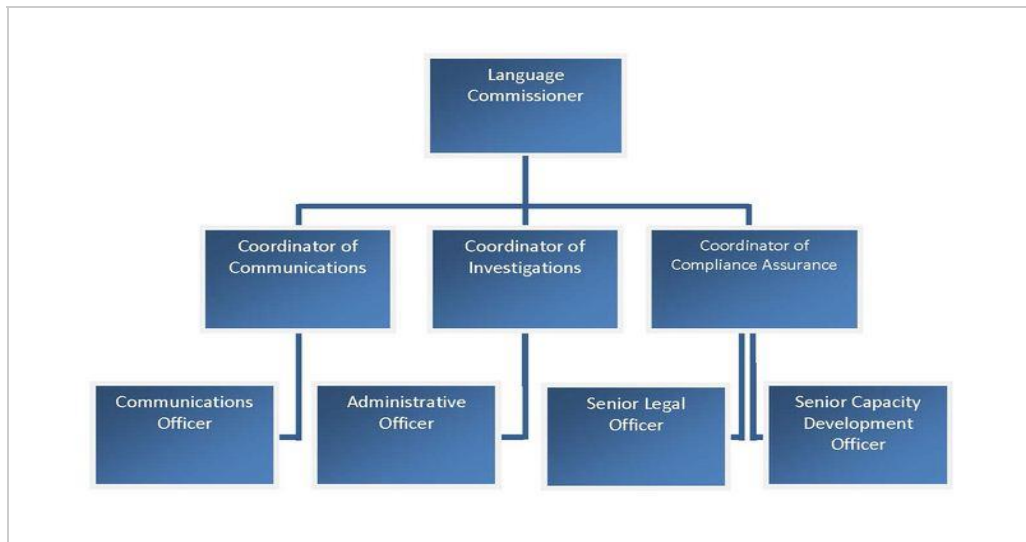


Fig 3. The Organigram of the Language Commissioner

This organigram shows that the office should deal with the language use, with the language policy, language planning, foreign language learning and with the language rights of minorities. In fact, the office is concerned only with the linguistic rights of minorities and the language usage of minority languages. However, in the opinion of the author, the Office should use further opportunities to promote other language policy measures (promoting the learning of modern foreign languages in the same way as the promotion of neighbor languages and the language promotion of the returnees). The third level of analysis is the language (s) planning, that is, corpus planning and status planning. Which language is defined for use? Are there scientific institutions such as academies as norm-setting authorities, dictionaries, terminology dictionaries, grammars etc. for the respective languages, etc. In order to outline the status planning of a language, one should ask the following question: What measures are taken to increase the value of a language on the national and international language market? The aim of the Kosovar language policy is linguistic planning, which means the control of the educational institutions in the sense of a desired language competence development within a legislative area.

The question which is still open, is that in 1999 the UNMIK –System was postcolonial system with primarily political and security goals, first just peace and security without strong education and economic development, the second keeping the status quo, without any solution. From 2008 keeping the young kosovan population in isolation, without any future perspective and using English as lingua franca. The research evidence on mother tongue-

based multilingual education is unambiguous. English- medium education in postcolonial contexts that neglects mother tongues and local values is clearly inappropriate and ineffective.

## 6. The presentation of the education system and language policy in Kosova

The language policy situation and the socio- political aspects of second language acquisition in Kosova are very complex. This complex and wide ranging area of the socio-political view of the second language acquisition and foreign language acquisition, which influences the process of multilingualism as well as the intercultural possibilities of communication – including the educational system, school policy and foreign language policy, and which influences the individuals with all their language components and cultural differences and have high impact in the overall society. In this paper is elaborated the language policy related to international mobility, minorities and language domination, as well as the political and economic situation in Kosova on the other hand, this paper concern the Kosovar integration process in the EU and the international position of English as a first foreign language and German as a second foreign language in business and science.

Table 1<sup>3</sup> presents the levels of the education system. The learning objective of the curriculum for communication shows that mother tongue, first foreign and second foreign language is explained in the respective chapter of the curriculum:

In the Kosovar educational system, various international and national actors are playing crucial role to reform the core curricula and the general curriculum, which promotes modern foreign languages English, German and French.

**Table 1: The levels of education system 2001**

Key stages of the curriculum			
Age	Formal education stage	Grade	Key stages of the curriculum
<b>Upper Secondary Education</b>			
17	Upper Secondary Education	XII	Orientation and Specialisation
16		XI	
15		X	

<sup>3</sup> The new Kosovo Curriculum Framework – preschool, primary and secondary education – White Paper September 2001, Prishtine, S. 33 <http://www.masht.gov.net/advCms/documents/New%20Kosova%20Curriculum%20Framework.pdf> pg. 33 [18.06.2015].

	(Gymnasia-Theoretical and Vocational/Technological and Vocational Schools)		
<b>Lower Secondary Education</b>			
14	Lower Secondary Education – Middle School	IX	Reinforcement and Orientation
13		VIII	
12		VII	
11		VI	
<b>Primary Education</b>			
10	Primary Education	V	Development and Reinforcement
9		IV	
8		III	
<b>Preschool Education</b>			
7		II	Basic Acquisitions/ Fundamentals of Basic Education
6		I	
5	Preschool education	Pre- primary	

#### **„Development and Reinforcement (grades 3, 4, 5)**

- This stage aims at helping students acquire basic education knowledge and skills, as tools for further learning and development. Students are exposed to challenges such as:

Correct use of mother tongue and of a foreign language in oral and written

The main outcomes of this stage of education for student's achievements are as follows:

- Students will be able to communicate effectively in their mother tongue, in English and in another language, while demonstrating fluency, correctness and clarity in relation to oral and written messages of different kinds.
- They will be able to demonstrate creativity in using language in personal writing and to manifest a critical approach towards literature, mass - media messages, and other kinds of discourses and texts, i.e. public discourses.

#### **Reinforcement and Orientation (grades 6, 7, 8, 9)**

This stage aims at deepening the knowledge in different subjects, ensuring a base for academic and career orientation. Students are exposed to challenges such as:

- Discovering their interests and aspirations:
- Developing skills for self-evaluation
- Developing effective communicative skills while including the scientific specialized codes,
- Expanding the possibilities for verbal and written communication in mother tongue, English and another language ... S. 35

**Upper Secondary education (grades 10, 11, 12)** – comprises theoretical and vocational high schools and vocational schools

- Upper secondary education should ensure the basis for a wider, deeper and more specialized process of learning, taking into consideration the future orientation of students toward academic studies and or professional qualifications and the need to equip them with lifelong learning skills ... (Kosovo Curriculum Framework S. 30)

With regard to the specificity of upper secondary education as a preparatory phase for education and for careers in theoretical and vocational high schools, the main education goals are as follows:

- Students should be challenged to master correctly, fluently and expressively their mother tongue, English and another (classical or modern) language when dealing with oral and written messages of medium to a high level of complexity.
- They should have a good orientation in literature and be able to use a language creatively in different kinds of personal writing ...” (Kosovo Curriculum Framework 2001, S. 31)<sup>4</sup>

Language policy refers to the influence of the internal system of a language or the standardisation of the language. The author refers to the LEPP „Language Education Policy Profile“ in the content of this work as well as the determination of objectives and research questions. Here, the author has sighted in particular the publications on foreign language learning and language policy (de Cillia 2003, 2010, 2013, 2014, Christ 1991, 1995, 2005, 2007) and this work contributes to the Kosovar foreign language policy. The objectives of this work are:

- To present existing initiatives and actions and thus to achieve more support for foreign language learners,
- To create the basis for the development of a global language concept for Kosova, and to develop the qualitative aspects such as the use of existing multilingualism and the development of individual multilingualism.

The question posed by this paper calls for an overreaching theoretical as well as empirical approach to the topic of “language policy and foreign language policy”,

- to provide foreign language policy issues with a stronger public and thus to contribute to the revaluation of the topic "foreign language (s)",

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<sup>4</sup> The new Kosovo Curriculum Framework – preschool, primary and secondary education – White Paper September 2001, Prishtine, S. 30-S. 35 <http://www.masht.gov.net/advCms/documents/New%20Kosova%20Curriculum%20Framework.pdf> [18.06.2015]

- to create the basis for the development of a global language concept for Kosova, and to develop the qualitative aspects such as the use of existing multilingualism and the development of individual multilingualism.

### **7. Excursion to the Kosovar language policy**

Kosova is a multinational state, although Kosova is very homogeneous as a small state with 91% Albanian population, 4% Serbian population and 5% other minorities. In this respect, the "Kosovar national language policy" is very complex. In the following, the author deals with questions of language theory and linguistic planning as well as questions of the concrete implementation of more or less conscious language policy measures in the kosovar context (for example with foreign language teaching measures by school regulations in the area of school language policy or minority-friendly measures in Kosova). The national language policy in the best form explains de Cillia (2003:18) in an essay: "National language policy includes language-policy and language-planning measures and linguistic rules concerning the role, the importance, the status of the languages spoken by the inhabitants of a particular state, as first, second or foreign languages. That is to say, all measures concerning the standardisation, the dissemination and the enforcement of the languages concerned, both within and outside the respective territory. Of course, language policy can also be said, if no conscious measures are taken or no legal regulations are in place. There is always a language policy, even if it is ignored or neglected." (De Cillia 2003:18).

The national language awareness of the Albanian population was developed in comparison with other nations very late in the 19th century. The language policy with regard to the Albanian has existed and will always exist, even if it has been ignored. In order to present the Kosovar language policy, the author distinguishes three levels: the sociolinguistic level, language law and language planning. In the sociolinguistic analysis, the following questions are asked: What living languages are used in Kosova? What is the legal status of the respective languages in the Kosovar society? How is the demographic situation, the multilingual situation presented in Kosova? How is an accurate sociolinguistic assessment of the minority languages and the languages of the returnees in Kosova? What are the role of minority languages or returnees as primary languages, as second languages or as foreign languages? What is the meaning and function of the languages in Kosova? In the area of languages, the following questions were asked: Which linguistic laws exist? Are language rights guaranteed by law (school legislation, media legislation, official and court rules,

military law, topographic inscriptions, etc.)? This raises the question of whether there is a coordinated, national language policy body that provides for the development, implementation, and control of linguistic provisions based on scientific standards. As regards minority languages, the Commissioner's office is responsible for languages. The Office is exclusively responsible for minority language rights and is not entrusted with any other language policy measures, such as the right for sign language or modern languages (English, German, French...) learned at schools.

## 8. Summary

This summary of the language policy and the history of the Kosovar language policy shows, on the one hand, that many measures and activities in the education system were deliberately and systematically enumerated in order to implement the language policy and language planning according to the Kosovar rules. Albanian and Serbian / Bosnian / Croatian (SBK) are legally recognized as state languages in all Kosovar institutions, and the two languages should be used by all officials in the administration. A central point of language policy and language dissemination at national level is the school, which plays a decisive role in the dissemination of state languages (Albanian / Serbian-Bosnian-Croatian) and the spread of certain foreign languages (English / German / French) compared to others. In this paper is analyzed the language standardization processes and measures, language minority policy, education language policy and the social function of the languages in national law in Kosova.

The author sees that the most important aspects for the understanding of language policy: the history of Kosovar language policy / education language policy, modern administrative forms, modern foreign languages as a means of communication and their use in the media, business and administration, and foreign language learning in the compulsory education system. Comparing the historical depiction of the Kosovar language policy, one notes that progress has been made in minority language policy, but that no linguistic measures have been taken in some linguistic areas. Especially when it comes to the language skills of the returnees, there are no regulations on the promotion of their language skills. There are also clear shortcomings in the area of language skills in adult education and vocational training. In addition, there is no recognition of the sign language as a minority language. Another important feature of Kosovar's language policy is that, in many cases, language professors are not consulted, as in



the case of word Kosova / Kosovo, and there is no uniform standardized list for the use of state names.

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