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The standard Albanian language and the institutionalization of its usage in the educational institutions of Kosovo

Language planning is an important factor when addressing the language issues and the usage of the language standards. This planning may well regulate the sorting out for addressing, consideration and protection of a language variant, of a written language declared as a standard official language. Albanian language has successfully gone through from the institutional addressing period to its unification, up to the Orthography Congress (1972); meetings in Tirana and Prishtina were, throughout decades, held on addressing the language issues and principles toward unification and standardization of the Albanian language. The institutional usage of the standard Albanian language throughout institutions was continual during the Orthography Congress post-period.

There is no occasion that an accord for a language norm in an orthography format to have taken place prior to being used by particular professional and other forums. Moreover, its extensive usage did not happen rapidly. The accord on orthography and codification does not resolve the whole issues of the language standards usage. By citing Hjelmslev, Dykro & Todorov say that “the normative aspect is a set of imposed constraints in a given society for its effective implementation” (*Osfald Dykro & Cvetan Todorov, Fjalor enciklopedik i shkencave të ligjërimet, Rilindja, Prishtinë, 1984, f. 181*). The accord on the uniform orthography will commence the process of the common official usage of a unified language, whereas the standard usage is enabled by the state, educational, cultural, informative, administrative institutional system and etc. The standard usage, via this system, will as such become institutional, and subsequently will the institutional usage of the standard language.

Institutionalization means the conscious usage of language standard by those who are expected to use it for the official communication, in this case within the educational institution. In addition to the advantages of institutionalization of the standard Albanian language usage within the educational institutions in Kosovo, by preventing the language standard usage, specific aspects of the usage may well be addressed and few questions could be raised: What is the language culture of the language standard user? What is the sociolinguistic ‘momentum’

that makes no change to the concept and the user does not vary from 'its' language to articulate the opinion? Reading, thus book usage, does (not) change the attitude of the speaker up to the standard usage? Is the educational system sufficient to create and develop the attitude of a speaker, of a teacher, to insist on permanent usage of the standard language?

Language culture of the teacher. – The language communication is a day to day necessity and practice. All forms of this communication are subject to a specific language culture. (Z. Munishi, *Gjuha shqipe dhe kultura e të shprehurit, Prishtinë, 1984.*). Language culture must be understood as knowledge and school training on forms of the language usage. Institutional usage of the standard language by the user has, in itself, an important element: linguistic culture of the user, preparing the user with linguistic culture for institutional use of the standard language. Language culture and standard language are connected to each other by the specific form of the linguistic communication. A teacher using the standard language might have the linguistic culture matching the level of such a usage. There is no usage of the standard language if lacking conscious, educational and intellectual linguistic culture. This intercommunication means using the standard in both the written and spoken discourse. Thus, "correct writing helps to avoid violations of morphological spoken norm and correct pronunciation of these forms." (Rami Memushaj, *Eagle Standard, Tirana, 2011, p. 46.*). The language culture of a standard language user is a must element of institutionalization of the standard language usage.

Institutionalization of the standard language usage and the schooling system

Pre-schooling institution, educator and child. – a kindergarten child, following cartoons with the best use of the standard language, will definitely make use of the same language, whether to interpret or to further tell than a custom answer that may come out from an ordinary question. When the 3-4-5 years old children want to be told the story of Little Red Riding Hood, Snow White, Cinderella or Aurora, by listening to it with attention, as a white paper, they will, in addition to the interesting content to them, acquire the language used for telling the story. TV and the books are two most "institutionalized" means; children love them and attend them, and with the consideration of the education system in kindergartens, those means take an important role in the pre-schooling education. This "institutionalization" of using these means, not as an

obligation but as an greater opportunity to understand a story and as a further opportunity for expression and interpretation by each child of a same story, leads to an implementation call for: the possibility on institutionalization of the standard language usage. To make it complete, this need is co-guided by the necessary official level of the standard language usage by the educator towards complete institutionalization of this usage. I will not stop on the outcome of this usage, as it is already known; the survey made by Hudson is there, talking about the prejudices of the students through the experiment with two paper boxes with similar gifts with tape recorders in them, one speaking in the standard language and the other one in non-standard language, and the majority of the students make their choice according to the gift explanation via standard language usage as from this box envisaged a better gift instead of the other. (*Richard A. Hudson, Sociolinguistika, Tiranë, 2002, f. 241.*)

It is important the context in which the communication takes place (*R. Ismajli, Standards and Identities, Pejë, 2003, pg. 155.*) and, the opportunity that “children should in parallel learn more varieties enabling thus better learning of the essential standard, as well as most advantageous ability to communication with lesser frustrations in the entire communication surroundings.” (*Same, pg.156*) appears not to be that easy. “Many varieties” cannot be learned easily, their learning should be free and compared against standard; educators come from different regions bringing thus dialects of their respective regions (one says: *ka shku*; other: *ka shkue*; other one: *ka shkuenën*). Children, able to learn and accept whatever the teacher says, not forgetting the emotions while being faced with the educator, catch even words of a dialectical language usage. The issue is that children will get use to the varieties by being exposed to the society, street, family, etc, whereas the learning and usage of language standards is institutional and equal to everyone. (*F. Shala, Learning and usage of standard Albanian language in primary and high schools in Kosovo, 5th International Seminar of Albanology, Tetovë- Shkup, October 2011.*)

Educational institution and teacher. – School is a typical representative of development opportunities for institutionalization of standard language usage. Teachers’ academic level and the usage of language standard by them, as main educational players, could directly influence on students’ level of language standard usage. By principle, a teacher of a course in a High School institution in Prishtina, attempts lecturing by using the standard language on the basis of lecturer knowledge and skills. In a Prishtina high school, as a typical illustration, despite

occasional efforts of Albanian language and other courses teachers, that during class lectures, debates and official meetings, to make use of a proper language standard, a persistency of institutional usage is not achieved. There is no consistency of permanent usage during the entire 'institutional' standing period vis-à-vis audience: students, teachers and their presence in the educational institution. Utilization of the standard language in schools has not been applied by teachers of other curriculum courses, neither during lectures or official meetings, arranged according to official schooling plans and programs. Thus, a question could be asked: What is the sociolinguistic and systemic momentum 'feeding' the concept and the user does not differ from 'his/her' language while expressing his/her opinion?

First, psychological attitude of teachers on standard is developed based on psychological contrast among standard and dialects. (*Eduard Sapir in Language – Introduction to studying of lecturing*, pg. 223). *Second*, lacking of a required level of linguistic culture and permanent use of standard language, makes no difference to such an "attitude" on standard and dialects and no controversy decrease (psychological contrast) between these language varieties. *Third*, the education system is yet to engage mechanisms that will monitor the use of the standard Albanian language under the supervision of the implementation of teaching and learning standards. *Fourth*, in absence of law provisions for the official usage of standard Albanian language, there is ground for less interest to learn and use the unified language norm by everyone, teachers and other education officials (*F. Shala, same*).

Teacher and the student. – Nowadays, both the teacher and the student have prejudices on use of standard language. Much more by the teacher. This is not often said, and therefore is not accepted as "linguistic prejudice", but the attitude of teachers to using the standard has already triumphed over the prejudice and inferiority to such use. Teachers stand between the wish to evaluate students on the degree of standard language usage, which the student provides the asked message and their real inferior state on usage of language standard. A significant number of teachers highly appreciate a student's attitude on standard; although some of them do not use it themselves in order to avoid their opinion and their inferior position on the standard language. Standard usage habits, either in writing or spoken, are created by the students at an early age, coinciding with the elementary and low high education level. (*Rami Memushaj, Standard Albania, Tirana, 2011, pg.46.*), and these habits are weakened due to the inferior attitude of the

teacher against the standard. This relationship between teachers and students on Albanian language standard usage, presents the usage level in the respective educational institution, as well as the standard of "institutionalization" of such usage, even now, over forty years after the Congress already. This is not a good situation. It is an unattended situation within the schooling institution and in larger institutional scale. It must be stated that such a situation prevents and prohibits the institutional development of children, their intellectual growth, knowledge gaining and skills development. We have to reiterate what Richard Hudson said "linguistic prejudices, whether from teachers and students are a potential source for serious problems in learning process" and that "it is difficult to imagine achieving something if teachers themselves do not clearly acknowledge the nature of linguistic prejudice." (*Richard Hudson, Sociolinguistika, Tirana, 2002, pg. 244*).

Standard usage by the teacher is a psychological "burden" to him/her, because, as a speaker in a given sociolinguistic environment, with an own *psychological attitude* based on his/her *psychological contrast* and with insufficient language culture in one side and being aware of intellectual and "legal" responsibility on the other side, all his efforts to establish the relationship with the auditor will remain efforts only, unable to reach the required productivity through the "professorial" clarity and authority (*Roland Barthes, Aventura semiologjike, Dukagjini, Pejë, 2002, f. 55.*) on the subject lecturing, initially on "the argument he speaks" first, and second on standard usage, thus on "in what he says" (*Roland Barthes, same, f. 56.*

Addressing the issues on using standard language, R. Ismaili says: "Problems are legal ones, Albanian language status, of the nature of language culture, of a cultural schooling of an official, nature of relationships and roles of communication participants, the sociolinguistic nature and elements assumed to protect the (co) speakers identity; respecting the communication norms of the official and the client" (*same*).

Educational system and the teacher. - Educational curriculum requirements are linked with learning competencies which should be available to students; all these competencies such as communication, thinking, learning, personal and civic know-how (*Korniza e Kurrikulës e Arsimit Parauniversitar të Republikës së Kosovës, Prishtinë, 2010, f. 16.*), are linked to one another. The communication competence represents an important factor of language usage, in our case of standard Albanian language. It is implicit that acquisition through learning is done

via the development of communication capability, developed by a competent, professional teacher and a good speaker of the standard language, a teacher dedicated to implement the requirement: to be part of the institutionalization usage of standard Albanian in relevant schooling and university institution. Teacher professional development is part of the education system. A functional educational system enables and develops the communication competence based on the standard language usage institutionalization demand. A functional educational system enables and develops teacher's communicative ability, which potentially is the most important subject at all stages of pre-university and university education system. (*Xhovalin Shkurtaç, Sociolinguistikë e shqipëse, Tiranë, 2009, p. 269*). Let me refer to what Shkurtaç says that "the co-presence of meanings, alongside linguistic reference, (which is related to certain external and imaginative reality, with expression of opinion) the social, emotional, stylistic meaning and others linked to communicative idea are also present". (*Shkurtaç, ibid, p. 271*). A teacher having average linguistic background is equipped with communicative grammar and sociolinguistic proficiency. Within the schooling institution, in respect to the student, teacher is one with official language communicative know-how. The education system in Kosovo is yet to develop such mechanisms for monitoring the development of communication competence for the use of standard language. The problem of this development is shortage of upgrading language education for teachers.

Professional and language development of a teacher. - Teaching is more complex than an accomplishment of learning competence. The development of students' communication competence in itself hides the teachers' professional and lecturing ability, teaching methods for learning effects. We can refer to what R. Barthes says for the method, that it "meets the highest degree of awareness for a speech that by itself is not forgotten ", (*Roland Barthes, ibid, p.62*). The spoken speech is different from the written one of a same topic. Usage of a standard in the first (spoken one) remains within the teachers physiologic approach frame. Teachers, consciously, facing "professional nightmare", are "not aware" of the language standard and its usage. They remain within the dissimilarity boundaries (physiologic disparity) between the standard and other language varieties. The teachers' professional development mechanism in Kosovo does not match the demand of institutionalization of standard Albanian language usage.

Book. – Book usage upgrades the imagination and the habit of using the language as per linguistic norms. By itself, book reading imposes the reader to establish its attitude and to dissolve the disparities between the standard variety and the spoken language variety. Apart of others, the student who has read more books, has created prerequisites for a more stable usage of the standard Albanian language, with standard usage habits. This usage is expressed in the spoken speech, in students' answers to teachers' questions. Thus, usage of the language standard becomes official via answers on specific topics. In a communication external to this "officiality" use of standard language is weakened, in one case, not as a consequence of lack of reading, not as a consequence of the standard acquisition, but as a consequence of sociolinguistic surroundings. Book using, although individual, as it comes from the institution (publication), becomes institutionalized giving its results, in addition to knowledge gaining, to standard language usage within the educational, school and university institution too. Institutional book usage is enabled by means of a developed and functional educational system. Such a system impacts directly on institutionalization of standard Albanian language usage in educational system in Kosovo.

Conclusion

Utilization of standard Albanian in Kosovo following the Albanian language Orthography Congress is connected to the importance given to the institutionalization of its usage. Of a same importance is almost the history of Albanian language standardization up to the Congress with the history of standard usage after the Congress. Problems of the first, in addition to differences between dialects that the spoken Albanian language had and differences in the custom of writing Albanian language, are also on the nature of language planning policy deriving from language, subsequently by state policies. Furthermore, the post-Congress problems come out due to the same reasons, the standard Albanian language realistically cannot be entirely used as the agreement provides, due to a variety of dialects of those who write and speak, and the insufficient institutionalization of its usage. The usage of standard Albanian after the Congress was widely enabled by its institutionalization in public administration, universities, schools, media, theater, radio and television. A question having an answer is **what is the degree achieved in usage of institutionalization of standard Albanian language in educational institutions?** The point here is more about an institutional regulation of using the standard by teachers in educational institutions, whether in spoken speech or in written one as well as in learning and its usage by students and pupils. The book, as the most widespread method of connecting users, children, pupils and students to the standard, is an appropriate instrument for learning the standard language. The fact of the use of the standard in universities, schools and kindergartens, derives from the method and amount of use the book as a curriculum obligation of a given subject and the professional interpreting and language education of teachers. Gradually, we reach the education system at all its levels, at its functioning. The education system functioning by itself includes state, educational, intellectual and professional responsibility of the direct participants, teachers, their professional and language development, coming from top to the book, its user; standard Albanian language; in addition to grammar method, is learned by reading literary pieces, and textbooks on particular subjects. So, by using the book is meant the dissemination and utilization of standard Albanian language after the Orthography Congress of the Albanian Language.

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