

LANGUAGE POLICY AND LANGUAGE OF CULTURAL PLURALISM

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The aim of this article is to challenge the problem of the formation of national identity through the prism of cultural pluralism and language policy. On the example of the principle of liberal neutrality as a part of the hybrid theory of language policy, (which means the right of a national minority to develop and use its national language within reasonable limits which will be understandable for them), it is shown how to realize cultural pluralism policy. Two basic models have been established for language policy: a common public language model (which views language policy as a primary tool for national education and views that a common language is to be shared by all citizens) and language maintenance model (public institutions recognize the right of separate groups to be able to use their own minority languages as a tool for a state-level dialogue). Language policy dilemmas facing the European Union (EU) and the most important documents of the EU on problems of the rights of national minorities and its language policy are analysed in the article.

Keywords: cultural pluralism, national identity, language, language policy, national minorities, assimilation.

The challenge for identity

All modern nations are more pluralistic in cultural, religious and political attitude than traditional communities which keep their integrity by means of a fundamentalistic ethnic culture and religion. Cultural and religious pluralism which developed in the Western world, particularly among Anglo-Saxons, demands tolerance and pluralism as the foundation of a community. Tolerance is the natural product of pluralism and the condition of its further development. The Western tolerance is rooted in religious tolerance. In the past religious tolerance became the source of all the other freedoms which were achieved later. This subject is studied in an interdisciplinary way: philosophical, linguistic, religious, legal, psychological, political. In social sciences pluralism is the framework of interaction in which social groups show sufficient respect and tolerance towards one another, that they fruitfully coexist and interact without conflict or assimilation.

Helen Fedor, a senior research analyst at the Library of Congress' Federal Research Division wrote in 1995 that to those who have never undergone forced cultural assimilation, the issue might seem trivial. What difference does it make what language is spoken or what it is called? To those who have had their use of language restricted, however, the matter goes beyond mere defiance. Language is the medium of culture on which their daily lives and identities are based. To define what language can be spoken is to define the identity not only of the individual but also of the country.

The problem of cultural pluralism is directly related to the issue of identity. Identity represents a person's publicly expressed feeling of solidarity; identification and unity with a national, ethnic and religious group, a member of which he or she is. At the same time cultural and religious pluralism is the sum of collective and individual

identities which were traditionally carried out by means of three basic receptions:

1. Identity is formed and supported through “internal” identification of myself with my own ethnic or religious group;
2. Identity is formed and supported through “external” identification, distinguishing ourselves from Others. The Other is represented as something ontologically external and hostile. Therefore, he has to be assimilated or banished. Concern about the Other allows forgetting personal problems and communal conflicts;
3. Other doesn’t exist outside me. He is the only unique way of my self-identification. Search for identity is started by a person from search for Other within himself/herself.

For instance, after “regaining their independence, the Baltic States have been constructing their political identity in terms of the East/West opposition. They have been creating narratives of belonging to the West, with the East as their threatening “other” (Miniotaite 2003: 214). Some researchers (B. Anderson, 1983; E. Gellner 1983 and E. Hobsbawm) consider that identity is something ‘constructive,’ ‘imaginary,’ ‘made up’. B. Anderson claims that the *ethnos* is an artefact which has been generated by cultural and political leaders, but the case of Eastern and Central Europe strongly confirms the reality of ethnic communities (Anderson 1983). According to Zygmunt Bauman, postmodern people are *choosers* faced by identity problems in need of counselors (Bauman 1999: 72, Marty and Appleby 1991: 814–842). Zygmunt Bauman maintains that modernity constructed the concept of identity and post-modernity was occupied with its semantic destruction. From his point of view, identity still is ‘a problem,’ but it is not the same problem that was urgent during the entire modern period. The problem of identity in the modern epoch was that of how to construct identity and keep its integrity and stability. The problem of identity in the postmodern epoch is how to avoid inflexibility and to preserve the freedom of choice. Paraphrasing Jean-Francois Lyotard,

Z. Bauman considers identity as something easy digestible by “system”. A person, ‘emancipated’ from identity, starts to search for the Other within himself and finds the Other, if not in himself personally, then in the events around him.

The formation of national identity is an important part of the process of nation creation. It also includes the formation of national states, connection of citizenship with ethno-cultural community, changes in economic system, the formation and distribution of mass education in a national language, the process of cultural homogenization. National identity is formed as a symbiosis of national statehood and the ethno-cultural ground. The dominating differences of national identities are linguistic and religious specificity, belonging to their concrete group. They render the deepest influence on maintenance of consciousness of the personal national identity, on the development and strengthening of its originality, visible difference from other national and ethnic persons and groups. As Samuel Huntington emphasizes, “two central elements of culture are language and religion, and they create the most obvious distinctions between societies”.

The national minority

The concept of national minority denotes a certain group of people constituting a minor part of a country’s population in view of their nationality. The criteria defining this concept are the following: possession of a separate language, cultural tradition and religious affiliation. The self-consciousness of a national minority is formed under the influence of the following factors: ethnic and cultural-religious differentiation, the presence of a different linguistic group and a state in which the stated national group constitutes the majority. The level of its development depends on the historically formed stage of assimilation and tendencies of tolerance in a concrete society.

Assimilation as the process of evening out “otherness”, adjusting oneself to a dominant cultural-linguistic environment is usually accompanied by the weakening of national identity. A policy of assimilation is one that uses measures to accelerate the downsizing of one or more linguistic minority group(s). The ultimate goal of such policies is to foster national unity inside a state. The conventional typology of assimilation of a national minority is the following:

1. The strong type – dissolution of its mentality in a dominant national environment (identification with the culture, language, history, civic and public-legal status of the national majority).
2. The medium type, which is equivalent to the above type with the exception that the knowledge of the mother tongue is retained, whereas the sphere of its usage is reduced to the level of family relations.
3. The weak type, which can be characterized by episodic relations with a dominant cultural-linguistic environment, self-identification by means of a minority’s own historical, linguistic and public-legal tradition.

The process of prevalence of one or another type of assimilation depends both on the specific character of a national minority (weakness or absence of religious and linguistic tradition, the history of its appearance in this territory) and on the specific character of the society a part of which it constitutes (homogeneity of the national-religious structure, history of the formation of statehood, manifestation of cultural-linguistic peculiarities).

Yet, apart from the strictly objective features of a national minority and society in which it lives, a subjective factor exerts profound influence. It is manifested in a concentrated form

in the concept of tolerance which denotes the psychological state of forbearance to a different mode of living, thinking and feeling. The limits of tolerance are wide and mobile, ranging from indifferent neglect of “otherness” to the urge to support and protect it. In a historical sense tolerance means to concede to a lesser evil in order to avoid a bigger one, i.e. it always means the priority of one’s own values and simultaneously tolerance towards those who are different and often treated as inferior.

The society in which a national minority displays a tendency towards assimilation (i.e. partial adoption of the majority’s central values) proves as a rule most tolerant. The life of a national and religious minority according to the principle of the medieval “ghetto” usually creates in society the atmosphere of intolerance and social psychology of national superiority.

The phenomenon of languages

Many countries have a language policy designed to favour or discourage the use of a particular language or set of languages. Although nations historically have used language policies most often to promote one official language at the expense of others, many countries now have policies designed to protect and promote regional and ethnic languages the viability of which is threatened. The preservation of cultural and linguistic diversity in today’s world is a major concern to many scientists and national political leaders. National language policies can either mitigate the effects of some of geopolitical factors.

The phenomenon of languages is rather a discussable subject in contemporary social sciences.¹

¹ Joshua A. Fishman. *Reversing Language Shift. Theoretical and Empirical Foundations of Assistance to Threatened Languages*. Clevedon, Multilingual Matters, 1991, UK.; Joshua A. Fishman. “Maintaining languages. What works and what doesn’t”, in: Gina Cantoni-Harvey, ed., *Stabilizing Indigenous Languages*, 1997: 186–198, Flagstaff, Ariz.: Northern Arizona University; Will Kymlicka. *Politics in the Vernacular: Nationalism, Multiculturalism and Citizenship*. 2001. Oxford: Oxford University Press; *Language Rights and Political Theory*. Edited by Will Kymlicka and Alan Patten. 2003, Oxford University Press; Alan Patten. “Liberal Neutrality and Language Policy”, *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, 2003, 31:4, 356–386; *Linguistic Human Rights in Education*. Presented to the XVI Session of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations of the United Nations Centre for Human Rights, Geneva, July 27–31, 1998; Robert Phillipson. *Linguistic Imperialism*. 1992, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

“Each language reflects a unique world-view and culture complex, mirroring the manner in which a speech community has resolved its problems in dealing with the world, and has formulated its thinking, its system of philosophy and understanding of the world around it” (*Atlas of the World’s Languages* 2001: 13).

In the view of a prominent Danish researcher Tove Skutnabb-Kangas, “languages are today being murdered faster than ever before in human history, and many more are threatened. A language is threatened if it has few users and a weak political status, and, especially, if children are no longer learning it, i.e. when the language is no longer transmitted to the next generation” (Skutnabb-Kangas 2002). Even the most ‘optimistic realistic’ linguists now estimate that half of today’s oral languages may have disappeared or at least not be learned by children in 100 year time (*Atlas of the World’s Languages* 2001), whereas the ‘pessimistic but realistic’ researchers estimate that we may only have some 10 % of today’s oral languages (Krauss 1992) (or even 5 %, some 300 languages, Krauss 1995) left as vital, non-threatened languages in the year 2100 (Krauss 1995: A15).

Tove Skutnabb-Kangas adds that the problem of support linguistic diversity is a very important in an intellectual perspective. For her multilingualism enhances creativity. High-level multilinguals as a group do better than corresponding monolinguals on tests measuring several aspects of “intelligence”, creativity, divergent thinking and cognitive flexibility. This has been formulated by Stephen Wurm as follows: “Bi- and multilingual tend to be superior to monolinguals in having more flexible, more alert minds and a greater and quicker thinking capacity on the basis of a much greater volume of memory which they have for mastering two (or in the case of multilingual more than two) different language systems with different vocabularies, grammars, sound structures and idiomatic expressions. Bi- and multilingualism from very early childhood onwards, to be maintained past the age of six years, is the most advantageous quality any per-

son can possess” (*Atlas of the World’s Languages* 2001: 15).

In industrial societies, the main items produced were commodities and, in a later phase, services. In industrial societies the ones who did well were those who controlled access to raw materials and owned the other prerequisites and means of production. When we move ahead to an information society proper, we will see that the main ‘commodities’ produced are knowledge and ideas. These are mainly transmitted through languages and visual images. In this kind of information society, those with access to diverse knowledge, diverse information and ideas, will do well, the creativity argument claims.

Every country of the global world, and multiethnic one specially, is confronted with the necessity to solve language problems, since they have to provide for linguistic uniformity of the country, satisfy cultural and language needs of various ethnic groups in their native languages. Mostly these tasks can be solved through different types of language policy.

There are some objective factors of the language situation such as demographic (number of native speakers, their territorial distribution, history of sociopolitical formation); cultural and historical (similarities or differences in spiritual culture, specific history of literary traditions); sociolinguistic (the number of languages which are media of communication, distribution of social functions among them, the character of differences between languages and dialects). Vida Mikhalchenko from Research Center on Ethnic and Language Relations (Russia) adds that usually language policy is pursued with the account of both subjective and objective factors. From her view, that is why in analysing the language policy in a certain region one is to take into account: 1) objective and subjective factors of the language situation and correlations between them, 2) the character of the language situation as a result of a long-term impact of determining factors, 3) measures aimed at changing the ethnic and language situation in the region as

a concrete manifestation of the language policy principles (Mikhalchenko 2002).

sented by Jacques Leclerc (Index par politiques linguistiques 2003).

He created a scheme of different kinds of language policies which include the following:

The language policy

Language policy laws can be categorized in many ways. The most prominent ones were pre-

Kind of policy	Examples
1. A policy of non-intervention consists in choosing to allow a normal rapport between the main linguistic group and the minorities evolving on their own. This almost invariably favors the dominant group. Sometimes, such policies are accompanied by administrative measures protecting certain minorities.	Australia, Austria, Czech Republic, Germany, United Kingdom
2. A policy that recognizes a different legal statute for a given language usually aims at allowing the coexistence of multiple linguistic groups inside a state. Typically, the majority has all its linguistic rights secured and sometimes promoted, while the minority or minorities are given special protection for their language.	Croatia, Estonia, Macedonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Netherlands, Slovakia, Sweden
3. A policy favoring the official language is a policy of unilingualism. Sometimes it favors the national language; sometimes it favors a colonial language with a strong influence internationally. In some cases such policies are accompanied by measures recognizing and protecting minority languages.	Estonia, France, Greece, Italy, Lithuania, Macedonia, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Spain
4. A policy of bilingualism based on non-territorialized individual rights recognizes the same rights to all the members of a community whatever their location on a national territory.	Belarus, Canada, Norway
5. A language policy based on territorialized individual rights recognizes the same rights to all the members of a community within a specific region.	Basque Country, Brandenburg, Brittany, Catalonia, Corsica, Finland, Northern Ireland, Nicaragua, Sardinia, Scotland, Sicily, Valencia, Wales
6. A policy of multilingualism based on non-territorialized individual rights recognizes the same rights to all the members of a community whatever their location on a national territory.	Singapore
7. Linguistic separatism refers to the attempts of linguists or politicians to create an independent language from a dialect by splitting off the written language. In a broader sense, this can also occur as a result of natural processes. Demarcation from other languages is mostly for political reasons.	Serbian, Croatian, Bosnian and Moldovan languages

For Vida Mikhachenko, a very significant role belongs to the type of state organization. She described two types of a state: “a commonwealth of ethnoses” and “a commonwealth of citizens”. In the first case, emphasis is laid upon cultural and linguistic rights of individual ethnic communities – indigenous ethnoses and ethnic groups. This produces conditions for imposing a language of a dominant ethnic community upon other ethnic communities. In most cases it can be done by ascribing the status of national or official to the language of one of the ethnic communities. In the second case, emphasis is laid upon individual rights. In such a society an official or national language is supported by the state, while cultural and linguistic needs of separate ethnic communities can be freely satisfied, however without state support.

Destruction of the language *status quo*, change of a language inhabitancy of a person is one of the most difficult psychological processes. This process is less inconvenient and easier realized in the case when a person moves in geographical space, changes the country of residence. The process is the most difficult psychologically and socially when change of a language occurs in the environment of the same spatial area. For the national majority, it is natural to speak in domestic language, and for national minorities or, more precisely speaking, for their most radical representatives, it is substitute for the problem of approaching assimilation. J. V. Arutiunian remarks that the degree of a minority’s integration and enculturation depends on some factors of concurrence or affinity of religious, civilizational and psychological identities. In the work “Russians in Near Abroad” (on materials of comparative ethnosociological research in Estonia and Uzbekistan) J. V. Arutiunian demonstrates that 2/3 of interrogated Russians were natives in Tashkent, and only 1/3 of them in Tallinn. At the same time the Russians’ level of knowledge of the title nation language was, accordingly, 8 % and 35 %. The author draws a conclusion that the efforts of Russia should be directed

“not on preservation of ethnocultural inquiries, separation of Russian population..., but for all-round adaptation...to the local environment” (Арутюнян 2003: 35–36, 38).

Today the majority of democratic states aspire to keep to a national policy based on the principle of *liberal neutrality* as a part of which is *the hybrid theory of a language policy*. The latter means “a distinctive and appealing way of making the case for minority language rights and also to an understanding of the reasonable limits that can be placed on such rights” (Patten 2003: 357).

If we step back from the variety of linguistic policies in different countries, it is possible to allocate two basic models: *a common public language model* (a common language shared by all citizens) and *a language maintenance model* (public institutes recognize the right of separate cultural groups to use their own minority languages as a tool for a state-level dialogue and possibility to survive as distinct cultural entities). The second model, which focused on their purposes, is typical of USA (Spanish language), Canada (French), Finland (Swedish) (Patten 2003: 365).

The principle of *liberal neutrality* in language policy is shared far from all the researchers of this problem. One of the most known researchers of cultural pluralism Will Kymlicka adds that the idea of similarity policy, based on analogy of a language and religious policy, is a mistake. W. Kymlicka writes: “This analogy does not work. It is quite possible for a state not to have an established church. But the state cannot help but give at least partial establishment to a culture when it decides which language is to be used in public schooling or in provision of state services” (Kymlicka 2001: 111). However, actually this distinction is not so great, or it exists in another sense. In fact, interdiction on religion in this or that confessional form is possible. History knows such examples. But interdiction on language usage practically never worked.

The basic problems with which the principle of a *liberal neutrality* faces consists in the way in which a common public language is socially used. Suzanne Romaine adds that “newer than four percent of the world’s languages have any kind of official status in the countries where they are spoken” (Romaine 2002: 194). The only institutions with authority to regulate language policies exist within the political bodies of individual states, and the European Union has generally avoided taking any action that would interfere with national laws or policies, concerning linguistic minorities, or with laws concerning national languages. Moreover, the charter does not grant rights to speakers or minority language groups, but to languages. Despite the fact that Greece is a signatory of many international conventions and treaties on human rights as well as a member of the European Union, it voted against the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages in 1992. Most European nation-states still apply one set of rules to the national language and another one – to minority languages within their boundaries, and often in addition apply differing standards to indigenous and non-indigenous minorities (Romaine 1998). In the view Joshua A. Fishman, globalization is by far “not the only process transpiring on the language front” (Fishman 1999: 272). It is precisely because “globalization” and “localization” are so commonly co-present that the designation “globalization” has been coined. Indeed, the ongoing tensions between independence and interdependence, between withdrawal and interaction, are at the very heart of all language planning per se (Fishman 2000).

The question is interrelation of language and social mobility, a common language and a common identity, connecting all citizens and display of common civil values, the role of language as an intermediary during democratization. In this case pragmatic arguments do not work: people are ready to pay for all organizational difficulties connected with translation in the name of tolerance to otherness. This process is similar to

the field of religion: homogeneous society promotes religious formation of common identity but nobody will offer religious variety for this purpose.

We can find another view in the book of Samuel P. Huntington “Who Are We? The Challenges to America’s National Identity”, published in 2004. The author addresses American self-identity at the beginning of the 21st century and argues for a re-affirmation of the country’s Anglo-Protestant heritage. For him, a persistent inflow of Hispanic immigrants threatens “to divide the United States into two peoples, two cultures, and two languages” (Huntington 2004: 3). He adds that for most Americans the creed is the crucial element of their national identity. Key elements of the American culture are the following: the English language; Christianity; religious commitment; the English concepts of the rule of law, including the responsibility of rulers and the rights of individuals; and Protestant values of individualism, the work ethic. Historically, millions of immigrants were attracted to the United States because of its culture and economic opportunities as well as political liberties it made possible. For S. P. Huntington, a very important argument are the words of the former US President Theodore Roosevelt: “We must have but one flag. We must also have but one language. That must be the language of the Declaration of Independence, of Washington’s Farewell address, of Lincoln’s Gettysburg speech and second inaugural.”

In S. P. Huntington’s view, the domination of the Spanish language in a part of the USA territory is a mark of losing American identity. In his article “The Hispanic Challenge” we can find information that in 2000 more than 28 million people in the United States spoke Spanish at home (10,5 % of people over the age of five), and almost 13,8 million of these spoke English worse than “very well,” 66 % increase since 1990. According to the US Census Bureau report, in 1990 about 95 % of Mexican-born immigrants spoke Spanish at home; 73,6 % of these did not speak English very well, and 43 % of foreign-

born Mexicans were “linguistically isolated.” Just 11,6 % spoke only Spanish or more Spanish than English, 25,6 % spoke both languages equally, 32,7 % – more English than Spanish, and 30,1 % –only English (Huntington 2004: 30–45). In his view, the USA today is on the way of its identity “deconstruction”, what will give a new and dangerous “clash of civilizations”.

Integration of the European cultural heritage into a common spiritual value is promoted first of all by the policy of the European Union in the field of culture. The constitution of the European Union ascertains that “The Union is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, liberty, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights. These values are common to the Member States in a society of pluralism, tolerance, justice, solidarity and non-discrimination”. On the basis of the EU cultural policy there exist the principles of cultural pluralism and multiculturalism which imply that

- one of Europe’s distinctive cultural features is its unity in diversity, that is to say, the ongoing coexistence and interaction, which has evolved through centuries, of a rich variety of languages, traditions, lifestyles, trends, movements and artistic and cultural expressions;
- culture, in a broad sense, is the bedrock on which peoples build their identity;
- a European cultural policy, which in no way seeks uniformity but can offer an identity resulting from encounter among differences, is of crucial importance for the development of a collective European consciousness;
- the cultural policies of the Member States reveal both differences and similarities, with both aspects being important for enhanced cooperation in this field;
- a European cultural policy, that does not aspire to standardize, but rather to establish a cultural identity resulting from meeting of diversities, is paramount as far as the development of a European collective awareness is concerned;

- recognition of the national and ethnic minority’s self-value.

In the UN Declaration of 1992 the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities the following regulations can be found:

- 1.1. States shall protect the existence and the national or ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic identity of minorities within their respective territories, and shall encourage conditions for the promotion of that identity;
- 1.2. States shall adopt appropriate legislative and other measures to achieve those ends;
- 1.3. States should take appropriate measures so that, wherever possible, persons belonging to minorities have adequate opportunities to learn their mother-tongue or to have instruction in their mother-tongue.

For our subject, the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (Strasbourg 1995) is a more important document of the European Union. It explains the European Union’s policy on national minorities and language policy concerning them. In many articles the rights of national minorities are added for “recognition that every person belonging to a national minority has the right to use freely and without interference his or her minority language, in private and in public, orally and in writing” (Article 10). The Framework grants possibility and right “in areas inhabited by persons belonging to national minorities traditionally or in substantial numbers possibility to use the minority language in relations between those persons and the administrative authorities”, “to display traditional local names, street names and other topographical indications intended for the public also in the minority language when there is a sufficient demand for such indications” and “for being taught the minority language or for receiving instruction in this language”. The general right of a national minority is the right “to recognize that every person belonging to a national minority has the right to learn his or her minority language”. Paragraph 2 of 14 articles

is also implemented to learning of the official language or teaching in this language.

The English language in a global context

One of the more discussable problems in this subject is the role of the English language in the global world. A perspective of the role of English as an international language is one of the more important questions in the subject of language policy. Many researchers formulated this question in this way: Does English for social development require an acceptance of the Judaic-Christian religious, capitalist economy, democratic and social values?

Critical frameworks employed to examine the English language in a global context often portray its spread as natural, neutral and beneficial and somehow free of economic, political and ideological constraints. As many critics have argued, language is never a neutral vehicle for communication and contextual factors are inextricably tied to it. Some critics see English as playing a fundamental role in the promotion of global inequalities and losing national identity.

Since the early 1990s the theory of linguistic imperialism has attracted attention among scholars in the field of English applied linguistics, particularly since the publication of Robert Phillipson's influential book *Linguistic Imperialism*, which led to considerable disputes about the merits and shortcomings of the theory. Linguistic imperialism is often seen in the context of cultural imperialism. He defines English linguistic imperialism as "the dominance asserted and maintained by the establishment and continuous reconstitution of structural and cultural inequalities between English and other languages" and "an essential constituent of imperialism as a global phenomenon involving structural relations between rich and poor countries in a world characterized by inequality and injustice" (Phillipson 1988: 339).

According to R. Phillipson, education serves the imperial center by having three functions:

ideological, economic and repressive (Phillipson 1992: 47). The ideological function serves as a channel for transmitting social and cultural values. In this role English is regarded as a "gateway" for a better communication and education as well as higher standards of living. The second (economic) function legitimizes English as a means of qualifying people to contribute to their nation and operate technology that the language provides access to. The third (repressive) function serves to dominate indigenous languages. The theory of linguistic imperialism calls attention to the potential consequences of English teaching worldwide causing "reconstituting cultural inequalities between English and other languages" (Phillipson 1992: 47).

According to him, linguistic imperialism is based on the following arguments:

- English is best taught as a monolingual language;
- an ideal teacher is a native speaker;
- the earlier English is taught, the better the results;
- the more English is thought, the better the results;
- if other languages are used much, the standards of English will drop.

William K. Penny in the article "The Role of English as an International Language" adds that "where individual countries are represented by their own unique political, economic and religious systems it is unrealistic to expect one imposed language to meet the needs of all cultures and their varying social agendas" (Penny 2002: 8). The Lithuanian case is a good example of this idea.

Through 15 years of the Lithuanian state restoration we can see a changing attitude towards English. Education ministries in each of the East European countries have identified English skills as a major factor in the process of economic reconstruction and reformation, and transition to democracy. Today the situation changed radically. Most researchers see in English a danger for the nation to lose its identity, stop developing its own language and feel growing apathy to

its own historic heritage. Advance in English is a direct start to immigration and possibility to find jobs in the EU countries. The project on the European evaluation of changing national identity (the coordinator Prof A. Andrijauskas) raises a hypothesis that the mass youth emigration in the last years will result in a fast loss of the Lithuanian language, mostly through the children of “new-wave” emigrants.

The phenomenon of language is present in each type of assimilation as an essential element of its structure. The language of a national minority, the sphere of its application and opportunity of its transfer to new generations become the major element of the equal civil rights image.

In Lithuania, where the national majority makes 83,5 %, the Lithuanian language has a state status. The Lithuanian citizenship legislation was one of the most democratic and liberal laws in Eastern Europe, and the knowledge of the Lithuanian language quite soon became the norm of daily life. A Lithuanian sociologist Natalya Kasatkina remarks on admiration in the early 90s, when a non-Lithuanian person spoke Lithuanian, that was soon replaced by a critical attitude and “object of sneers in mass media, there was a hero speaking with obvious Slavic accent”. In N. Kasatkina’s opinion, “hypertrophied linguistic sensitivity serves not only as a parameter of daily ethnic consciousness, but it is also a mark of distinctions through ethnic groups”.

The problem of the rights of national minorities to use their native language is precisely described. But the question of the EU language remains open. Today in Europe as well as all over the world such a language is English. However, emotional aversion of “americanization” and “westernization” of cultures, anti-global moods make this question debatable and problematic.

A famous researcher of linguistic ecology Albert Bastardas has confirmed at the World Congress of Language Policies (Barcelona, 2002) that although we can conceptualize the phenomenon of language contact as a unit, the situations and stages of development of various cases can be very different and thus require very differ-

ent types of action, and one of the most urgent aspects that needs to be studied and solved is knowing exactly which policies are to be applied in diverse situations all over the planet.

Conclusion

1. The problem of cultural pluralism is directly related to the problem of identity. The post-modern problem of identity is how to avoid ossification and preserve the freedom of choice.
2. Assimilation as a process of evening out “otherness”, adjusting oneself to a dominant cultural-linguistic environment is usually accompanied by the weakening of national identity.
3. The dominating differences of national identities are linguistic and religious specificity, belonging to their concrete group.
4. The preservation of cultural and linguistic diversity in today’s world is a major concern to many scientists and national political leaders.
5. The question is interrelation of language and social mobility, a common language and common identity, connecting all citizens, and display of common civil values, the role of language as an intermediary during democratization.
6. Perspectives of the role of English as an international language is one of the most important questions in the subject of language policy.
7. The language of a national minority, the sphere of its application and opportunity of its transfer to new generations become the major element of the equal civil rights image.

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KALBOS POLITIKA IR KULTŪRINIO PLIURALIZMO KALBA

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Straipsnio tikslas – panagrinėti tautinio tapatumo problemą per kultūrinio pliuralizmo ir kalbos politikos prizmę. Liberalaus neutralumo kaip kalbos politikos dalies pavyzdžiu parodoma, kaip įgyvendinamas kultūrinis pliuralizmas. Kalbos politika turi paisyti tautinės mažumos teises plėtoti ir vartoti savo kalbą. Pristatomi du pagrindiniai kalbos politikos modeliai: viešosios kalbos modelis (kalbos politika kaip pirminė tautos švietimo priemonė) ir kalbos palaikymo modelis (viešosios institucijos pripažįsta grupių teisę vartoti savo kalbą kaip valstybinio lygio dialogo priemonę). Straipsnyje nagrinėjamos kalbos politikos dilemos, išskylančios Europos Sąjungai, bei kalbos politika tautinių mažumų atžvilgiu.

Reikšminiai žodžiai: kultūrinis pliuralizmas, tautinis tapatumas, kalba, kalbos politika, tautinės mažumos, asimiliacija.

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