

Vančo, Ildikó / Vancho Ildiko: Relationship between types of bilingual education and identity

vancoildiko@gmail.com

Docent, Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra, Slovakia, Faculty of Central European Studies

Language, with regard to preserving identity of minorities, plays a varying role in different parts of the world. Nevertheless, there is a link between the language and identity existing for all nations and minorities. In many cases, the minority, which uses the language and also culture are disappearing along with the minority itself. From the point of view of language and culture preservation, there are, in all cases, political efforts and aspirations of the language policy of the powerful majority create a social situation where value and prestige of the language fall within the definition of linguistic market and are being valued or are losing their value.

The identity of linguistic and ethnic minorities is based on delimitation and in comparison with the majority is defined by its dissimilarity. At the same time, the coexistence with the majority is inevitable and a vital necessity.

In the case of state formation and its preservation, language has essential value with regard to both ethnic majorities and minorities. Thus, a linguistic issue is not only a political issue but also a duty of education. The main dilemma of minority education policy that exists within the framework of majority, is its division and integration, while taking their attributes and extent thereof into account. In other words, how and to what extent is it necessary for minority to separate itself from the majority and how is it necessary to determine values that connect the minority with the majority. Individual interest requires learning a language that has the greater value in terms of social prestige. At the same time, from society's point of view, the main goal is to preserve the native language. When due to uneven distribution of power, in terms of language, there is unequal division of written texts (i.e. there are more books and documents in official language than in minority language), the individual can decide in favor of his own interests, instead of following the interests of the society.

In situation where minority and majority coexist, the inevitable issue is bilingualism, in other words teaching of the language of the majority (in most cases, it is a national language) and of the minority language for the sake of its preservation.

In this presentation, I will introduce model of bilingual education executed in the institutional framework, analyzing influence of certain models on preservation of language and identity.