**Abstract**

**TITLE:** “Language policy in Europe in the 21st century: Comparison of language curricula in Secondary Education in European countries. The example of Germany, Sweden, Italy and Greece”.

The purpose of the proposed doctoral dissertation is to study the language policy of European countries based on the Curricula of secondary education for the language course. The APs act as guides of the didactic act. The wider political, social and cultural context influences the decisions taken for their design by the competent bodies. Today, the new world order with the creation of multicultural societies, the recognition of linguistic human rights and the modern needs of students contribute to the shaping of the content of the APs for the mother tongue lesson. However, the idea that language programming tactics that present the official language as superior may be followed by the school and further by the state necessitates a more in-depth investigation. Thus, at a time when developments in Europe are being judged rapidly by forming heterogeneous classrooms and where the disciplines of Linguistics are constantly advancing by emphasizing the equal value of social linguistic varieties and geographical dialects, which may be the students' home language, the linguistic policy in European schools requires constant review.

The concern for equal opportunities in education dates back to the French Revolution which was the beginning of social change and especially J.J. Rousseau, who dealt extensively with educational policy issues. The branch of Educational Policy in the 20th century is systematically studied and recognized as a separate science. The object of the branch of educational policy is the study of how the structure of the economy, the struggle of different social interests, the correlation of social and political forces that arise each time from it and the way the state is organized affect education (Gouvias, D. / Therianos K .: 2014). A basic idea of ​​this science is that the educational system seems to make social inequalities natural, as it turns them into inequalities of culture and intelligence, that is, it transforms social privileges into meritocratic criteria and finally school performance is linked to social characteristics.

Bourdieu (1999) states that the sociology of language, like the sociology of culture, is logically inseparable from a sociology of education. Bernstein (1971), linking social origin to linguistic competence, concluded that children from disadvantaged social classes have poorer and more standardized vocabulary, use fewer abstract words, and have a poorer and simpler speech. However, the correctness of the view was questioned. Thus, Labov (1972) proved that "deviations" from the official language perceived as "errors" are organized in linguistic rules as stable and complex as the rules of the official language.

Linguistic diversity, ie linguistic heterogeneity, can be divided based on the user (geographical and social) and based on the use (functional). According to Labov (1972) studies, language use reflects social stratification and is a form of social behavior creating social dialects. Social groups are defined based on fixed variables such as age, gender, education, social status, ideology, profession or occupation. The functional linguistic variety concerns the variants depending on the situational environment, ie the different ways to express what one wants in a particular communication occasion and to bring about a communication result. The dimensions that characterize the variety according to the use, taking into account Halliday (1978), are the subject, that is, the subject of communication and the purpose, the way, which concerns the means and the way of communication e.g. written - oral speech and direction, ie who the interlocutor is. The relationship especially of the speakers is a very important parameter and is determined by its position on the axis of power - intimacy.

On the other hand, the official language is a strong symbol of national unity and has prestige, as it is the language of the educated, of the written language, of the upper class, while at the same time most societies are characterized by a range of linguistic varieties, adopted in everyday life. According to Bourdieu (1999) the official language is the one that within the territorial limits of a political unit is imposed on all citizens as the only legal one, and this is all the more imperative the more formal the circumstance. Social space, as Tokatlidou (2003) observes, favors linguistic diversity, while state-controlled institutions such as education intervene regulatively by limiting it. As a result, education, which implements state policy and follows language programming tactics, is aware of the limited quantitative and qualitative changes that occur in society.

Language programming refers to the intentional actions to influence the behavior of others in relation to the acquisition, structure or functional distribution of their language codes (Cooper: 1989). This deliberate effort is planned by organizations tasked with achieving such goals. Language programming as a subject of study has been practically started since 1959, when Haugen used this term based on his analysis of the continuous effort to modernize and promote the "national" language of Norway, that is, in the preparation of a normative spelling, grammar and dictionary to guide writers and speakers in a heterogeneous language community (Haugen: 1968). The question is does the modern school promote language bias which is understood as the use of social cues to evaluate the language of an individual or a group? It is reasonable that language prejudice has as a direct consequence the linguistic and social inequality, which the school as a social institution will maintain by imposing the official or established language that has prestige.

From a pedagogical point of view, the branch of Language Teaching is constantly evolving. The revolution against conventional methods of teaching the language took place with the development of the communicative method. According to Hymes (1971) the concept of language proficiency was broadened to include the notion of the ability to use speech appropriately depending on the communication situation. Thus, Fterniati (2001) observes that due to this approach there have been significant changes in the curricula for the language course of developed countries in Europe and the USA. Today, the goal of language teaching is not only to develop communication skills, but also to cultivate literacy practices and especially critical literacy. Thus, we teach language through the processing of authentic texts with an emphasis on how texts work in relation to social reality. According to Kern's (2000) model, literacy in relation to language teaching has a linguistic, cognitive and sociocultural dimension.

Research on language teaching in school is internationally extensive, with the first relevant efforts being traced in part to the late 19th and early 20th decades. After the Second World War, mainly UNESCO, strengthened with its various initiatives such as research on the analysis of textbooks and in this context in many countries (eg Austria, Sweden, Norway, Germany) Research Centers and Institutes were established.

The network set up by UNESCO states that relevant research is currently being carried out by various research units or individual scientists. In Greece, the teaching of language varieties in school has attracted the interest of many researchers in recent years. Particularly remarkable recent studies have been conducted that have promoted research (Garavelas K., 2019, Tzakosta, 2015).

A key question, then, arises as to whether modern European schools do not only promote the standard form of the language which is also the official language. More specifically, an attempt will be made to study whether the content of the AP is related to the linguistic diversity of the classroom. Taking into account the structural elements of CA, as defined by Tyler (1949), we will examine: what purposes are pursued by schools in language teaching, what experiences are promoted and how these experiences are effectively organized at the stage of drafting CA. Another key question is how to evaluate the success of the goals. One way of evaluating the implementation of the objectives is the attitude of the teachers towards the CA and especially in matters of language policy.

Thus, specific questions arise about the stage of implementation of the CA, such as whether teachers as orchestrators of the teaching process know what the aims of the curriculum are, whether they feel more autonomous in teaching practice, whether they are given the opportunity of alternative teaching, if they believe that at the same time with the formal program a sub-program is developed, if the activities proposed by the CA provide for the use of various supervisory means.

At the same time, with regard to language policy issues, questions arise for teachers such as whether scholars believe that the official language of the state is superior, whether they understand that the natural mother tongue consists of dialects, whether they take into account students' language needs, whether they attend training conferences. and linguistics seminars, if they try to cultivate students' communication skills and in general their critical and creative thinking, if they consider all textual genres equal or if they consider one more important, if they believe that the written word is superior to the oral one, if they include in the didactic multimodal texts, if they teach the language lesson differently in classes where multilingualism is observed.

The present study will attempt to examine the language policy of European countries. Initially, some of the European countries of the "North" were selected, which are among the so-called "developed" countries of Europe, with perhaps more possibilities of providing financial resources for the reform of the CA by specialists or for training teachers in scientific subjects. Such countries are Germany and Sweden. In fact, they are among the countries with the best performance of fifteen-year-old students in terms of their ability to understand texts in their mother tongue according to the international comparative research conducted by the OECD (2018).

At the same time, European countries of the "South" were selected, such as Greece and Italy. These countries have been confronted more intensely in recent years with developments such as the refugee and economic crisis, factors that may have affected the domestic education system in various ways. First of all, it should be emphasized that this is an external evaluation which means that we have not taken part in the work of preparing the official Curriculum. This evaluation is divided into two parts. The first part of the research concerns the pre-course stage of drafting the AP and the second part of the in-course-implementation stage, as defined by Kelly (1989).

Regarding the evaluation of the first stage as a research method was chosen on the one hand the content analysis and in particular the exploratory-descriptive approach of the subject that emphasizes the identification of relationships and trends with variables and on the other hand the comparison of different groups, which aims to study differentiation between of two groups differing in one variable according to Korre (2011). Socio-political and scientific circumstances are the main reason for the activation of language planning according to Cooper (1989) and in the present research the place of extraction of variables. Thus, the modern linguistic principles of Textual Linguistics and Sociolinguistics, but also the modern didactic trends of Critical Literacy and more broadly of Language Teaching will be the scientific basis for the definition of the variables – criteria. At the same time, however, socio-political developments in Europe will be taken into account, as the relationship between language teaching defined by the CA and the wider environment is inextricable, utilizing in our research the historical-structural approach that emphasizes the role of social, political, economic and cultural forces in the language policy of the state (Tollefson: 2006).

The evaluation in the current phase of the research will be, therefore, qualitative - interpretive and will be based on a productive reasoning of drawing conclusions, where the transition is made from the general (theory) to the specific (research) by checking hypotheses to confirm or not the theory. (Darvir: 2009). This is a descriptive evaluation model, where experts describe the CA and try to give an overview of it with the aim of understanding the problems of the CA. Of course, the purpose of the evaluator, what he wants to evaluate, what is his point of view, play a decisive role in the evaluation.

In the second stage of the research, the implementation of the CA will be evaluated. One way of evaluation is, as mentioned above, the attitude of teachers. The descriptive-exploratory research approach will be followed again, but as a technique now the questionnaire is chosen which as a research tool will help in the collection of primary data, in order to give answers to the research questions (Karageorgos: 2002). The sample will be representative, as it will be randomly selected from regions of the countries under consideration and will concern Secondary Education teachers who teach the mother tongue to students aged 12-15. The sample will include 50 teachers per country. Simple random sampling ensures the reliability of the research (Cohen: 2008). The embassies of the Greek state in these countries and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs could act as mediators for the easier conduct of the investigation.

The questionnaire as a research tool will be structured in such a way and will include such questions, in order to achieve the research objectives. Eventually, the corresponding assumptions made at the outset will be confirmed or rejected and solutions will be proposed. From the study of Greek and foreign literature it was found that no corresponding research tool has been developed regarding language policy. Selecting the questions in closed form will help in the ease of filling in, in the faster analysis of the data and in the best possible coding.

In the present study, IBM - Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) is considered as the most appropriate data processing software. This software will be used to extract both descriptive and inductive statistical results from data processing to finally draw statistical results and conclusions (Frangos: 2004). Variables for teachers will be defined as their gender, their studies, their area (city or countryside), the type of school (public or private). This evaluation will make suggestions for improving European language policy.