

**NORM(AL)IZATION OF LEXICAL RE-STANDARDIZATION
(CASE STUDY: THE CROATIAN EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM)**

Anita Peti-Stantić, University of
Zagreb, Croatia

Keith Langston, University of
Georgia, USA

CROATIAN LANGUAGE POLICY

- article 12 of the Croatian constitution - “the Croatian Language is in official use in the Republic of Croatia“
- although this term presumably refers to the Croatian standard language, there is no official body that has been given real authority to regulate the standard language

CONSEQUENCES

- debate about the type and extent of changes that should be made to the standard language
- in some areas of government administration and the educational system traditional Croatian terms have been reintroduced
- elsewhere – much more fluid situation, the degree of acceptance among the broader population is questionable
- also, there is some natural degree of resistance to any changes in the standard language among the general public, and disapproval of the coining of new words, revival of archaic forms

LANGUAGE POLICY IN EDUCATION

- The educational system has become the primary arena for the implementation of official language policies and language management in Croatia.
- Despite the great symbolic importance attached to the Croatian standard language and linguistic purism, the government has not made serious efforts to implement or enforce explicit language policies in other spheres.

THE ROLE OF EDUCATION

- In the process which leads to the construction, legitimation and imposition of an official language, the educational system plays a decisive role.

Pierre Bourdieu “Language and Symbolic Power” 1999:48.

- If language and politics were a country, education would be its capital, the great centralised and centralising metropolis that everyone passes through, from which the country is run and where its future course is determined. On one level this has always been true – for insofar as the politics of language, especially of ‘correct’ or ‘standard’ language, are bound up with writing, they depend on a technology that demands intense and sustained teaching before it is mastered.

John E. Joseph “Language and Politics” 2006:46.

EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM IN CROATIA

- The educational system is a primary arena for the
 - creation
 - performance
 - reproductionof language in its role as a symbol of national identity
- in 1990s - highly symbolic value of language identification (us – them, ours – theirs, to differentiate ourselves from neighbours)
 - symbolic (mostly lexical) normization
- today – less symbolic value, more concentration on the curriculum
 - open pathway to a (mostly lexical) normalization

INSTITUTIONS IN CHARGE OF LANGUAGE IN EDUCATION

- 1. Committee for Education, Science, and Culture (Croatian Parliament)
- 2. Ministry of Science, Education, and Sports (earlier Ministry of Education and Sports)
- 3. Education and Teacher Training Agency
- 4. Universities (Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Faculty of Teacher Education...)

EXPLICIT PROCEDURES AND PRACTICES

- 1. Curricular standards for Croatian as a school subject
- 2. Textbooks
- 3. Teacher training/continuing education
- 4. Journals

1. CURRICULAR STANDARDS FOR CROATIAN AS A SCHOOL SUBJECT

- changes over recent decades
 - the explicit connection between the Croatian language and Croatian identity
 - specific, more “Croatian” language features used in the texts of plans (especially in the plan of 1995)
 - notably new orthographic and lexical choices

2. TEXTBOOKS

- The Textbook Standard – Ministry (2006)
 - explicitly - unnecessary foreign words and internationalisms should be avoided
- new textbooks
 - Differences in language in textbooks for the subject 'Croatian language' and in subjects other than Croatian
 - changes in orthography (zadatci, podatci, podcrtavanje, vrjednovanje, ne ću)
 - changes in terminology (slovnica/gramatika, slovopis/grafija, naglasak/akcent, otvornici, zatvornici, samoznačne i suznačne riječi (samoznačnice, suznačnice), sklonidba, rečenični znakovi/razgodci)
 - almost no other changes

3. TEACHER TRAINING/CONTINUING EDUCATION

- Education and Teacher Training Agency oversees certification and continuing education of teachers
 - meetings on the local level
 - yearly symposiums at the national level for teachers of Croatian language

4. JOURNALS

- The Croatian Philological Society has been publishing a journal *Jezik* (for the culture of the Croatian language) for decades
 - striking –issues from the last three years and the first year of publication (1952) are available on the journal website; the first published text is “On language culture” by Petar Skok, followed by “The teaching of the Croatian language in high schools” by Ljudevit Jonke
- Recently – the Croatian Philological Society and the Department for the Croatian language have started a journal *Lahor*, dedicated to the teaching of Croatian as a first and second language
 - of note is the extremely consistent use of the “purest” or “best” Croatian in all of the articles

INFLUENCE - SURVEY 2010.

- 100 students at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Zagreb
 - 20 pairs of words (in sentences and alone)
 - they were asked to determine which term they use and which one they regard standard
 - they were also asked to give opinions on questions such as: Only words, expressions and grammatical forms that belong to a pure Croatian language should be used in education. I think that teachers and professors are relevant language models for their students.

SURVEY 2010 – SOME RESULTS

	use	standard
• osobne zam.	85	61
• lične z.	9	2
• both	6	37
• glagolska osoba	0	5
• glagolsko lice	100	74
• both	0	21
• naglasak	30	37
• akcent	49	9
• both	21	54

SURVEY 2010 – SOME RESULTS

• zadatci	3	11
• zadaci	93	48
• both	4	41
• slovnica	1	9
• gramatika	99	57
• both	0	34
• športaši	1	14
• sportaši	99	62
• both	0	24
• ne ću	5	7
• neću	88	40
• both	7	53

SURVEYS CONDUCTED BEFORE

- 1998 – 208 individuals
- 2000 – 10% of primary school teachers in Croatia (1/3 teachers of Croatian language)
- 2004 - 10% of primary school teachers in Croatia (1/3 teachers of Croatian language)

CONCLUSION

IF WE ACCEPT THAT:

- **Language policy** is a set of actions which refer to all the language practices, beliefs and management decisions of a community or polity.
- **Language management** refers to the formulation and proclamation of an explicit plan or policy, usually but not necessarily written in a formal document, about language use. The existence of such an explicit policy does not guarantee that it will be implemented, nor does implementation guarantee success.

WE CAN SAY THAT:

- There is no consistent language policy in Croatia, not even in the educational system.
- There are several competing agendas.
- For that reason, nobody should be surprised by an insufficient level of linguistic culture.

CONCLUSION

- WHY IS THAT SO?
- 1. There is no agreement between institutions in charge.
- 2. Restandardization and language purism have been considered more important than modernization.
 - We understand restandardization as the process of recreating an idealized language variety that is seen as being historically authentic and can serve as an unambiguous marker of national identity.
- 3. There is almost no correspondence between the literary language community, built on a literary tradition that is at the same time imagined and historically justified, and the attempts to “purify” language.
- BUT... literary language community is regulating the language itself

THANK YOU



HVALA