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DOI <https://doi.org/10.18485/fid.2019.9.ch5>
UDC 376.7-054.57:811.163.41

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SERBIAN AS A NON-MOTHER TONGUE¹ IN PRIMARY EDUCATION OF ALBANIAN NATIONAL MINORITY IN SOUTHERN SERBIA

Summary

In 2014, the Government of Serbia's Coordination Body for the Municipalities of Preševo, Bujanovac and Medveđa carried out a Serbian language assessment in 16 primary Albanian-language schools located in southern Serbia. The research results suggest that a very small number of pupils have a functional knowledge of the Serbian language. The consequences of poor knowledge include significantly decreased possibilities for

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1 Based on the Council of Europe's *Guide for the Development of Language Education Policies in Europe* (Beacco and Byram 2007), the term "non-mother tongue" is used in this paper in the closest meaning to the term "second language", i.e. language adopted in the immediate surroundings. The authors opted for the prevalent use of the term "non-mother tongue" due to its usage in the legislation of the Republic of Serbia. The terms „native language”, “first language” and “mother tongue” are used interchangeably with the same meaning, i.e. the first language acquired in early childhood. The term “minority language” refers to languages used by members of national minorities, primarily in education, but also in communication with state institutions, courts, and the media. The “official language”, or “state language”, refers to the language prevalent in all public domains in a given country – i.e. Serbian language in the Republic of Serbia.

further education in the Serbian language, serious limitations regarding employment and work, as well as participation in society as a whole. With the aim of overcoming these problems, a set of recommendations for the improvement of teaching and learning of Serbian as a non-mother tongue have been formulated and their implementation has been initiated in late 2014.

This paper briefly presents the research findings and results of the implementation of recommendations. The recommendations entail a multidisciplinary approach that in addition to glottodidactics include measures applied in a wider social context: inter-institutional cooperation, different levels of peer interaction with Serbian language native speakers, and exchange of experience and good practices among teachers.

Key words: Serbian as a non-mother tongue, linguistically homogenous environment, improvement of language teaching and learning, southern Serbia

Introduction

Knowledge of the Serbian language is relevant for members of all national minorities living in the Republic of Serbia. It enables full access to education in Serbia's official language, work and employment opportunities (especially in public administration), participation in decision-making processes, dialogue, communication, and interaction with members of other national minorities and majority population alike. Furthermore, it allows national minorities to take part in formal and informal professional development as well as in other training programmes and similar activities.

The need for assessing the level of Serbian language knowledge among members of the Albanian national minority living in the municipalities of Preševo, Bujanovac and Medveđa located in southern Serbia was identified through a number of reports and experiences of institutions, civil society, and international organisations during the past years. The reports indicated an insufficient knowledge of the Serbian language, particularly among youth, and the problems they were facing as a result.

In 2014, the Government of the Republic of Serbia Office of the Co-ordination Body for the Municipalities of Preševo, Bujanovac and Medveđa (hereinafter: OCB), with support of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development (hereinafter: MESTD), drafted a Study on the Possibilities of Improving the Teaching and Learning of Serbian as a Non-

Mother Tongue in Preševo, Bujanovac and Medveđa¹ (Bošković et al. 2014; hereinafter: the Study), with expert assistance and financial support of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities (hereinafter: HCNM), and with the financial support of the British Embassy in Belgrade. In cooperation with the key stakeholders at local and central level, and financial support of the international partners, the implementation of the Study recommendations has been initiated during the same year and is still ongoing.

This paper briefly presents relevant international standards and the legal framework of the Republic of Serbia regulating education of members of national minorities in their native language and learning of Serbian as a non-mother tongue, i.e. as second language. It provides a short overview of the main research questions, findings and recommendations of the Study, and of the main implementation phases of measures and activities for the improvement of teaching and learning of Serbian as a non-mother tongue in the municipalities of Preševo, Bujanovac and Medveđa. It also outlines the most salient results achieved as well as the challenges the actors face in their work. This paper also offers a context and background information for the following article of the volume – *Improving the Teaching of Serbian as a Non-Mother Tongue in Primary Education of Albanian National Minority in Southern Serbia*.

International standards and legal framework regulating learning of Serbian as a non-mother tongue in the Republic of Serbia

The Republic of Serbia is signatory of a range of international treaties, declarations and other documents relevant for the rights of national minorities in the field of education.² The right to education is guaranteed to

1 English version available at: <http://bit.ly/2o66OAp>.

2 The most important obligations and standards in relation to education of members of national minorities can be found in documents of the following international organizations: United Nations (Universal Declaration on Human Rights, 1948; UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education, 1960; International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, 1966; International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, 1966; Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities, 1992; Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989),

all citizens, without discrimination. The education of members of national minorities in their native language is generally acknowledged as a means of preserving identity, while the learning of the official state language is recognised in the function of societal integration, that is, participation in the country's social, economic, and political affairs. The right of minorities to maintain their collective identity through the medium of their mother tongue is recognized in relevant international documents (OSCE 1996; UNESCO 1960, Art. 5; United Nations 1992, Art. 4; Council of Europe 1995, Art. 14) and it is commonly accepted that primary and secondary education of members of national minorities should be delivered in minority language (see Council of Europe 1992a, Art. 8; Council of Europe 1995, Art 14, para 2; OSCE 1996, 6–7, recommendations 11, 12 and 13 pertaining to Minority education at primary and secondary level). The place that the minority language is given in education represents a crucial factor for its preservation (Council of Europe 1992b, 10). Similarly, the education process is of utmost importance for learning the state language in schools where the teaching takes place in the minority language, particularly during compulsory primary education (OSCE 1996, 6–7, recommendations 11, 12 and 13; Council of Europe 1992a, Art. 8; Council of Europe 1992b, 13).

In accordance with the international legal protection of human and minority rights, the Constitution of the Republic of Serbia (2006) guarantees individual and collective rights of national minorities. For the purpose of realisation of the right to self-government in culture, education, information and official use of language and script, the Law on National Councils of National Minorities envisages that the members of national minorities may elect their national councils and take part in decision-making or decide on certain issues pertaining to the four abovementioned areas.³

Council of Europe (European Charter on Regional or Minority Languages, 1992; Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, 1995), and Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) (Copenhagen Document, 1990; Hague Recommendations on the Rights of National Minorities to Education, 1996; Ljubljana Guidelines on Integration of Diverse Societies, 2012).

3 The following domestic laws are significant for the education of members of national minorities: Law on Foundations of Education System; Law on Pre-School Education and Upbringing; Law on Primary Education; Law on Secondary Education; Law on the Official Use of Languages and Scripts; and Law on the Protection of the Rights and Freedoms of National Minorities.

In the Republic of Serbia, compulsory education is free of charge and lasts nine years. It consists of a pre-school programme (compulsory in the year prior to enrolment in primary school) and primary education lasting eight years. Secondary education is free of charge and is not mandatory, while tertiary education is available to all citizens under the same conditions, with educational work carried out in Serbian.⁴ The Law on Foundations of Education System prescribes that education for members of national minorities shall be delivered in their native language (Art. 5, para. 2), bilingually in the language of the national minority and in Serbian (Art. 5, para. 3), and bilingually in foreign language and language of national minority (Art. 5, para. 4). When education is delivered in the language of national minority, foreign language or bilingually, learning of the Serbian as a second language is obligatory (Art. 5, para. 6 of the Law on Foundations of Education System; Art. 12, para. 9 of the Law on Primary Education, and Art. 5, para. 9 of the Law on Secondary Education). Serbian as a Non-Mother Tongue is a mandatory school subject in the primary and secondary education curriculum. Pupils and students coming from national minorities and attending school in Serbian have the right to study their native language including elements of ethnic minority culture (Art. 12, para. 5 of the Law on Primary Education, and Art. 5, para. 5 of the Law on Secondary Education).

Education activities in institutions are performed by teachers, educators, and associates, who obtained appropriate higher education as envisaged by the Law on Foundations of the Education System (Art. 14 and 140). The conditions required for teaching Serbian as a non-mother tongue are further regulated by the Rules on the Level and Type of Education of Teachers and Teaching Associates in Primary Schools (MESTD 2012).

A Brief Overview of the Study on the Possibilities of Improvement of Teaching and Learning of Serbian as a Non-Mother Tongue in Preševo, Bujanovac and Medveđa

During the implementation of projects aimed at learning the Serbian language⁵ in the three municipalities in southern Serbia, a significant in-

4 The exception is the Hungarian-language tertiary education at certain faculties of the University of Novi Sad.

5 Such as: “School of the Serbian Language” implemented in three consecutive cycles in the period 2012-2014 in Preševo and Bujanovac by OCB with support of

terest for learning the language has been noted, particularly among young people, who had been applying and attending courses in numbers often triple than those originally envisaged.⁶ According to the assessments carried out at the end of each course, the achieved progress was evaluated as being very satisfactory. However, given that such courses were conceived as short-term interventions, primarily donor driven and intended for the youth aged 15–30, it has been decided to approach the issue of insufficient knowledge of the Serbian language systematically, i.e. by intervening in the education system, at the level where children attending Albanian-language schools often come into contact with Serbian for the first time, i.e. in primary school.

The Study undertook to verify a variety of fragmented data *vis-à-vis* the challenges that members of the Albanian national minority in southern Serbia face due to an insufficient knowledge of Serbian. Based on these data, concrete measures were designed with the aim of improving the situation found on the ground. In this manner, the decision-makers were provided with the necessary material for creating effective, fact-based public policies. The Study represents an assessment model methodologically applicable in other situations with similar issues.

The Study represents the first attempt to comprehensively analyse problems, challenges, and explore possibilities for the improvement of teaching and learning of Serbian as a non-mother tongue in primary schools with tuition in the minority language. Bearing in mind that the OCB competences entail only the three municipalities in southern Serbia, the research has been primarily focused on the analysis of the situation in

British Embassy in Belgrade; pilot project aiming at improvement of language skills implemented in the secondary school “Sezai Surroi” in Bujanovac implemented by OSCE Mission to Serbia in the school year 2013/2014.

6 The number of learners who took part in “School of Serbian Language” implemented by OCB in 2012 was envisaged to be maximum 160, while 310 persons of the age 15–30 applied. It was initially planned that one course would be implemented. However, due to the high interest expressed by young people from the community, two additional courses were organized. In 2013, 250 secondary school and university students attended the course (some of them had previously attended the 2012 course and wished to further improve their knowledge of Serbian), while in 2014 a course for 80 primary school pupils was also implemented.

the Albanian-language primary schools. However, the problem of insufficient knowledge of Serbian is not only confined to the Albanian national minority. Members of other national minorities who live in linguistically homogeneous settings and whose mother tongue is significantly different from Serbian face similar problems. This has been confirmed during the field research phase during the creation of the Study and in later consultations with competent institutions of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina (hereinafter: AP Vojvodina).

Main research questions and findings of the Study

The research was conducted in the period January–April 2014.⁷ It entailed the following elements: testing of Serbian as a non-mother tongue knowledge among pupils of fourth and eighth grades in 16 schools (total of 433 pupils); analysis of the Curriculum for the school subject Serbian as a Non-Mother Tongue for all grades of primary school; analysis of all existing textbooks and manuals for teachers; analysis of data about teachers (educational background, preferred teaching methods, etc. collected for 41 teachers from 16 Albanian-language schools); analysis of classes of Serbian as a non-mother tongue through classroom observation without participation (carried out in all 16 schools); analysis of the socio-cultural and teaching framework surrounding the Serbian language classes, including consultations with parents from 16 schools, interviews with the Albanian national minority representatives from local and central authorities, National Council of Albanian National Minority, local civil society organisations and media, relevant education institutions and representatives of the business sector; analysis of experiences and results stemming from the previously implemented projects and initiatives aiming at the improvement of Serbian language knowledge; consultations with representatives of relevant institutions from AP Vojvodina.⁸

7 A multidisciplinary approach has been selected and the research team comprised of experts in the field of linguistics, law, political science, with participation of a number of associates on the local level.

8 For more details on each element of the research please see the Study, section III.1 Methodological Framework and Research Description (p. 45 of the English version).

The main finding of the Study is that around 5% of pupils can communicate in Serbian.⁹ The majority of pupils do not have a functional knowledge of Serbian, neither in writing nor orally. The linguistic competence of a few pupils who achieved above-average results was generally not acquired in school but either at home or in different interactions with native speakers outside of school. The main reasons of the poor results pertain to the following factors: a lack of qualified teachers, an inadequate methodological approach to teaching Serbian as a non-mother tongue, and a lack of interaction with Serbian native speakers.

Teachers of Serbian as a non-mother tongue, in most cases, did not have the appropriate educational background, i.e. only 6 out of 41 teachers who had been teaching Serbian as a non-mother tongue in 16 schools in the three municipalities at the time of drafting the Study had necessary qualifications to teach Serbian language, while none of them were trained for teaching Serbian as a non-mother tongue. The vast majority never had a chance to attend any training related to teaching Serbian as a non-mother tongue. Based on the data obtained through interviews with teachers and observation of classes, the prevailing approach in teaching did not yield satisfactory results in the pupils' learning of the language. Several problems related to the application of the existing Curriculum and textbooks were also noted.¹⁰

Training for teachers has been recognized as a key precondition for the improvement of teaching and progress in the pupils' achievements. In addition, it has been concluded that teachers needed the support of teaching assistants, whose mother tongue is Serbian and who are qualified for teaching the Serbian language. The majority of teachers also require language support for a consistent use of the standard Serbian language, in many cases overshadowed by the local dialect.

According to the data gathered during the field research, contact between pupils attending Albanian-language schools in southern Serbia

9 The finding is based on the analysis of the test results of pupils attending fourth and eighth grades in 16 primary schools (433 pupils in total), carried out in February 2014. For detailed analysis of this element of the research please see Krajišnik, Strižak and Zvekić Dušanović in this volume and the Study.

10 For more information on Curriculum and textbooks analysis, please see Krajišnik, Strižak and Zvekić Dušanović in this volume and the Study.

with their peers from Serbian-language schools is either absent or at best sporadic, and virtually inexistent in ethnically homogeneous towns and villages. There is no established cooperation among schools with tuition in these two languages or extracurricular activities gathering pupils from different ethnic communities.

In addition to the ones listed above, other factors hindering the achievement of satisfactory results were also taken into consideration: absence of educational standards and learning outcomes for the school subject Serbian as a non-mother tongue, reported discrepancies between the curricula for Serbian as a non-mother tongue and Albanian as a native language, significant linguistic distance between the Serbian and the Albanian language, long-term neglect when it comes to the teaching of Serbian as a non-mother tongue in the three municipalities in southern Serbia.

Recommendations

Based on a comprehensive analysis of teaching and learning of Serbian as a non-mother tongue in primary schools in the three municipalities, 26 short-, medium- and long-term recommendations were formulated. They were designed as concrete activities, in close consultation with all relevant stakeholders.

Short-term recommendations include: the establishment of the Working Group by MESTD to monitor progress of recommendations' implementation; the provision of textbooks and teaching aids; designing and implementation of training for teachers; meetings between teachers of Serbian as a non-mother tongue from south and north of Serbia; hiring teaching assistants; regular testing of pupils' achievements; re-establishing competitions in Serbian as a non-mother tongue at local school- and regional-level.

Mid-term recommendations, *inter alia*, entail: the drafting of manuals for teachers; creating of Serbian-Albanian Albanian-Serbian dictionary suitable for use in primary schools; continuous training for teachers and result-oriented monitoring; drafting of educational standards and learning outcomes for the school subject Serbian as a Non-Mother Tongue; identifying needs for harmonisation of the curricula for the school subjects Albanian Language (as mother tongue) and Serbian as a Non-Mother Tongue.

Long-term recommendations are aimed at: ensuring conditions and incentives for education of new teaching staff, primarily from the local community; identifying needs and creating enabling factors for the learning of the Albanian language among native speakers of Serbian in the three municipalities; adapting the curricula upon the adoption of educational standards and learning outcomes.

Implementation of the Study recommendations

Realisation of the project “Implementation of recommendations for the improvement of teaching and learning of Serbian as a non-mother tongue in Preševo, Bujanovac and Medveđa”, by the main implementing party MESTD in partnership with OCB, started in 2014. With the aim of supporting and monitoring of the realisation of recommendations, MESTD established the Working Group gathering also representatives of relevant local- and central-level institutions: Municipalities of Preševo, Bujanovac and Medveđa, National Council of Albanian National Minority, Institute for Education Quality and Evaluation (IEQE), Institute for the Improvement of Education (IIE), and National Education Council. Representatives of international organisations which support the project also participate in the Working Group as observers: Office of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM), British Embassy in Belgrade, OSCE Mission to Serbia, and European PROGRES Programme.

School year 2014/2015

In 2014, 16 Albanian-language primary schools were provided with textbooks, manuals for teachers, and additional teaching materials. Meetings of teachers and school principals of primary schools in Preševo, Bujanovac and Medveđa with representatives of MESTD, IEQE and IIE were organised twice and served as a platform for discussions on the modalities of curriculum application in the given circumstances, and for initial consultations for the drafting of educational standards and learning outcomes for the school subject Serbian as a non-mother tongue. Drafting of the *Little Serbian-Albanian Albanian-Serbian Illustrated Dictionary - Mali rečnik/Fjalor i vogël* (OSCE, High Commissioner on National Minorities

2017) (hereinafter: the Little Dictionary) suitable for the use in primary school with over 12,000 entries, 21,000 examples, and 23,000 audio files, has been initiated by HCNM in cooperation with a team of experts from the Faculty of Philosophy at the University of Novi Sad, Institute of Linguistics and Literature in Tirana, and associates from Bujanovac, Belgrade and Priština, with the support of OCB.

In cooperation with a team of experts from the Faculty of Philology, University of Belgrade, and Faculty of Philosophy, University of Novi Sad, an eight-day Basic training for 19 teachers was designed, accredited, and implemented. In addition to acquiring knowledge and skills pertaining to teaching methods, teachers greatly benefited from getting to know each other, analysing common problems, and identifying practical solutions related to language teaching. Besides teachers' cooperation at the local level, a visit to AP Vojvodina was organised, entailing meetings and an exchange of experiences among teachers from north and south of Serbia. It has been confirmed that teachers from schools with tuition in minority languages linguistically distant from Serbian (Albanian and Hungarian) and located in ethnically homogenous environments in the south and north of Serbia encounter the same problems in the teaching process, and that these factors negatively condition the pupils' performance. Thus, the need to include the teachers from the AP Vojvodina in the activities was also identified.

School year 2015/2016

In 2015, representatives of the Provincial Secretariat for Education, Regulations, Administration and National Minorities-National Communities, and Pedagogical Institute of Vojvodina were included in the MES-TD-established Working Group. The second cycle of the eight-day Basic training for 25 teachers from southern Serbia and from AP Vojvodina, including six teaching assistants, was implemented. Based on the experience and feedback from the Basic training, a four-day Advanced training for 27 teachers from the three municipalities in southern Serbia and from AP Vojvodina, including six teaching assistants, has been designed, accredited and implemented.

Six teaching assistants were hired in fourth and seventh grades in 4 selected primary schools (two rural and two urban) in Bujanovac and

Preševo. The teaching assistants are highly motivated, qualified Serbian language professors who assist teachers of Serbian as a non-mother tongue in all segments of planning and realisation of the teaching process.

School- and regional-level competition in Serbian as a non-mother tongue has been re-established in Preševo and Bujanovac. Pupils expressed a great interest to participate. Although none of them qualified for the state-level competition, the significant progress they achieved in less than two semesters and motivation to continue learning in the year to follow were acknowledged and supported accordingly. In May 2016, a visit to AP Vojvodina for 31 pupils from southern Serbia who participated in the regional-level competition was organised on the occasion of the state-level competition held in Novi Sad. The contacts established between pupils and teachers from southern Serbia and their peers and colleagues from AP Vojvodina, who also learn and teach Serbian as a non-mother tongue was very successful.

Three cycles of testing pupils' achievements¹¹ were implemented in four primary schools in classes supported by teaching assistants. The analysis of the testing results, introduced as a modality for monitoring the pupils' achievements and teachers' work, show a progressive and unequivocal improvement of the pupils' progress in classes that had teaching assistants and where teachers attended trainings.

IEQE established an expert team that, based on analysis and empirical verification, started drafting educational standards for the inclusion of Serbian as a non-mother tongue subject for the first three education cycles, i.e. first cycle primary school grades 1-4, second cycle primary school grades 5-8, and third cycle secondary school), including adult functional education.

School year 2016/2017

Teaching assistants were hired for the second consecutive year in 4 selected primary schools in Bujanovac and Preševo. They continued to assist teachers in the same classes where they worked during the previous year, i.e. with pupils attending fifth and eighth grade. Teachers and

11 October 2015, February 2016, and May 2016. For more information on testing please see Krajišnik, Strižak and Zvekić Dušanović in this volume.

assistants continued monitoring the pupils' achievements with the aim of establishing effectiveness of the implemented measures, including applying knowledge and skills acquired through professional training that focus on contemporary teaching methods, exposure to the language and contact with native speakers of the Serbian language, as well as proper use of textbooks and other teaching aids.

In October 2016, the return visit of pupils and teachers from two primary schools in AP Vojvodina to their peers and colleagues in Bujanovac and Preševo was successfully implemented. The meetings confirmed the importance of contact through joint activities.

In November 2016, the National Education Council adopted Educational Standards for Serbian as a Non- Mother Tongue at the End of the First, Second and Third Education Cycle and Adult Primary Education (MESTD 2017). The drafting of the manual and training programme curriculum for the application of standards was initiated. In addition, the IEE-led task force started working on the learning outcomes and planning of the new curricula.

Implementation of extracurricular activities at the local level has been initiated for pupils from different ethnic communities who attend schools with tuition in Serbian and Albanian language, with emphasis on the development of intercultural competences and linguistic skills.

The digital (desktop and smart phone) and printed versions of the Little Dictionary were presented in schools in Bujanovac, Preševo and Medveđa and all schools received printed copies for use in the teaching process.

Most important results and challenges

Since 2014, when the Study was drafted and the implementation of the recommendations was initiated, relevant actors at the local and central level increasingly recognised the importance of improving learning and teaching of Serbian. Representatives of local institutions and relevant authorities actively participated in the implementation of the recommendations, as well as teachers and school principles of primary schools in the three municipalities. This resulted in coordinated and timely actions, mon-

itoring, and ensuring conditions for the realisation of activities. Bearing in mind positive results achieved in primary schools, it has been proposed to expand activities to secondary schools, where the support to learning and teaching of Serbian as a non-mother tongue could result in a greater availability of a number of university-level study programmes for members of national minorities.

Different aspects of improving the learning and teaching of Serbian as a non-mother tongue have been included in two important strategic documents relevant not only for southern Serbia but countrywide. The 2016 Action Plan for Chapter 23 for the accession process of Serbia to the European Union (Government of the Republic of Serbia 2016a) envisages a continuous implementation of measures for improving the learning of Serbian as second language. This is according to the methodology of learning foreign languages (activity 3.8.1.12), including the drafting of new curricula for primary and secondary schools following the adoption of education standards. The 2016 Action Plan for the Realisation of the Rights of National Minorities (Government of the Republic of Serbia 2016b) foresees measures for improving the education of teachers as regards to Serbian as a non-mother tongue, including the analysis of needs, the current situation, and enrolment of teachers in higher education institutions according to identified needs (activity 6.7); the development of educational standards for Serbian as a non-mother tongue and implementation of the new curriculum for primary and secondary school, including the functional adult education (activity 6.8); implementation of programmes within curricular and extracurricular activities that encourage the learning of Serbian as a second language (activity 6.9); and enhancing the educational role of schools by promoting tolerance and preventing segregation, through the development of extracurricular programmes that encourage tolerance and multiculturalism (activity 6.15), and thus indirectly the development of linguistic skills.

The most important results of the implemented recommendations are the improved pupils' achievements in primary schools in southern Serbia, confirmed by the results of the continuous testing during the school year 2015/2016. The teachers' competences were strengthened through training, resulting in an improved teaching methodology and a more proactive

participation in the creation of more innovative contents. Pupils demonstrated to be more motivated in consolidating their knowledge on the basis of already acquired skills. The progress with pupils is best illustrated by the words of one of the teaching assistants: “We started with ‘good day’ and now we are writing stories”.

All relevant actors agree that the improvement of teaching and learning of Serbian in southern Serbia represents a long-term process and that it is not possible to significantly improve the situation by devising short-term interventions. However, taking into consideration that the activities have been mostly implemented with the financial assistance of international partners and donors, it is necessary to ensure the sustainability of the accomplished results. The progress achieved needs to be integrated in a way that guarantees maintaining an improved quality of teaching and of pupils’ achievements as well as their further development. The sustainability of the achieved results requires further strengthening of the teaching staff, i.e. ensuring conditions for continuous professional development for the existing teachers as well as creating opportunities for quality education of the new ones, particularly those coming from the local community. It is also necessary to ensure integration of curricular and extracurricular activities aimed at improving teaching and learning of Serbian as a non-mother tongue into school development plans and school annual work plans.

Conclusion

Since 2014, when the Study was produced and the implementation of its recommendations has started, the issue of improving teaching and learning of Serbian as a non-mother tongue has progressively been receiving more attention at both local and central level. On the basis of the experience of working in this field it can be concluded that this is an issue that requires systematic, multidisciplinary, and long-term efforts. The results achieved so far through actions based on these principles show progress in terms of improved knowledge of pupils. Interventions in the area of didactic and methodical aspects in schools are necessary for achieving the desired results. This said, it is also necessary to work in the area of creating conditions for interaction with native speakers of Serbian, particularly

through extracurricular activities and investing further efforts by all actors relevant to the process. It is, therefore, equally important to ensure presence of qualified teachers and necessary conditions in the classroom, interaction and activities with native Serbian language speakers, and conditions for continuous professional development, peer learning, and regular consultations with competent institutions and experts.

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SRPSKI KAO NEMATERNJI JEZIK U OSNOVNOM OBRAZOVANJU ALBANSKE NACIONALNE MANJINE NA JUGU SRBIJE

Sažetak

Prema rezultatima istraživanja koje su 2014. godine sproveli Služba Koordinacionog tela Vlade Republike Srbije za opštine Preševo, Bujanovac i Medveđa i Ministarstvo prosvete, nauke i tehnološkog razvoja Republike Srbije u 16 osnovnih škola u opštinama Preševo, Bujanovac i Medveđa, utvrđeno je da vrlo mali broj đaka osnovnoškolskog uzrasta, koji nastavu prate na albanskom jeziku, vlada funkcionalnim znanjem srpskog jezika. Posledica toga su znatno smanjene mogućnosti za njihovo dalje školovanje na srpskom jeziku i ozbiljna ograničenja u zapošljavanju i učešću u svakodnevnim društvenim aktivnostima. U cilju prevazilaženja problema, formulisane su odgovarajuće preporuke za unapređivanje nastave i učenja srpskog kao nematernjeg jezika, a njihova realizacija započeta je krajem 2014. godine.

U radu će biti prikazana dosadašnja iskustva i rezultati primene preporuka. Preporuke podrazumevaju multidisciplinarni pristup problemu, što pored glotodidaktičkog aspekta uključuje i širi socijalni kontekst – međuinstitucionalnu saradnju, različite nivoe vršnjačke interakcije sa izvornim govornicima srpskog jezika, uključujući razmenu iskustava i dobrih praksi među nastavnicima.

Ključne reči: srpski kao nematernji jezik, homogena jezička sredina, unapređivanje nastave i učenja, jug Srbije.