STATE UNIVERSITY OF MOLDOVA

SOLTAN ANGELA

POLICY AND DIMENSIONS OF ALTERITY IN SPEECH COMMUNITIES OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA AFTER 1991

Specialty: 621.03. Phonetics and phonology; dialectology; language history; sociolinguistics; ethnolinguistics

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PhD supervisor:
ZBANȚ Ludmila, PhD Hab. in philology, university professor, State University of Moldova

Reviewers:
ARDELEANU Sanda-Maria, dr. professor, "Ștefan cel Mare" University, Suceava, Romania
SAVIN-ZGARDAN Angela, PhD Hab. in philology, associate professor, Free International University of Moldova
Members of the Specialized Scientific Council:
CONDREA Iraida, PhD Hab. in philology, university professor, State University of Moldova – President of the Council
GRĂDINARU Angela, Phd in philology, associate professor, State University of Moldova – Council Secretary
MOLEA Viorica, PhD Hab. in philology, associate professor, State University of Moldova – Council Member
MANOLI Ion, PhD Hab. in philology, university professor, Free International University of Moldova – Council Member
TREBEȘ-ROȘCA Tatiana, Phd in philology, lecturer, Nicolae Testemițanu State University of Medicine and Pharmacy – Council Member

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Specialized Scientific Council Secretary:
GRĂDINARU Angela   _____
Phd in philology, associate professor

PhD Hab. in philology:
ZBANȚ Ludmila   _____
doctor habilitat, profesor universitar

Author: _____
SOLTAN Angela

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ABBREVIATIONS

LA – Language Acquisition
SC – Speech Community
LP – Language Planning
LPO – Language Policy
PPL – Language Policy and Planning
RM – Republic of Moldova
USSR – Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

CONCEPTUAL LANDMARKS OF THE RESEARCH

The relevance and importance of the research. During the period addressed in this paper, the standardization of the Romanian language and the expansion of its social functions have been the main priorities of language policy in the Republic of Moldova. This trend has been reflected in language acquisition policy as well. The policies were designed and implemented under the conditions of an unfair competition with the Russian language, in both the public, as well as the private space. As a result of the Republic of Moldova's accession to international and European conventions, opening borders and increasing migration, the acquisition of minority languages and foreign languages has also entered the list of language policy priorities.

In the present doctoral study, we investigate language acquisition [9, p. 111] as a set of language policy and planning activities aimed at mastering the standardized variety of the official language and other languages considered necessary for internal and external communication within a state (e.g., minority languages, regional languages, foreign languages, etc.). As a component of LPP alongside status and corpus planning, LA is assigned two basic functions: planning language acquisition activities and developing language education policies. Upon reviewing diverse research perspectives, it becomes apparent that the conventional understanding of LA is that it involves the acquisition of linguistic, cultural, and social interaction skills on a subconscious level. Additionally, language education is perceived as the conscious and structured acquisition of linguistic norms within a given system.

In public secondary education, the practice of LA typically occurs in a framework determined by the contacts between languages and speech communities. The intricate nature of these contacts is reflected especially in sociolinguistic representations, which encompass linguistic, cultural, and social differences and can influence the general dynamics of relationships in society. Such complexities often give rise to linguistic scenarios that necessitate the attention of both language policies and state institutions in general.

The process of language learning is not solely confined to formal educational institutions, as it is impacted by both the physical and digital linguistic environment (macro-context, language market), such as the prevalence and appeal of languages in various forms of media and public spaces.

In the process of LA, contacts with a different language, as well as contacts with a linguistic variety, can lead either to the creation of *ad hoc* learning solutions or to highlighting the inefficiency of existing solutions and identifying new possibilities.

Drawing from the premise that LA entails widespread cognitive processes that involve individuals from varying socio-economic backgrounds, cultures, and geographical regions, we investigate how linguistic alterity could be utilized as a critical concept for examining language standard acquisition policies. Drawing on the

theoretical framework of linguistic anthropology, we examine the role of linguistic alterity in shaping language policies aimed at promoting standard language acquisition in diverse educational settings, where social factors play a significant role in shaping the linguistic landscape.

In order to ground language acquisition policies within their cultural and social context, it is essential to develop a clear definition of linguistic alterity. Within this work, linguistic alterity is framed as a form of sociolinguistic representation that influences individual attitudes, behaviours, and feelings towards linguistic diversity. Such representation is comprised of a complex system of values, ideas, and practices that enable effective communication and social interaction among members of a given community.

The significance of this research lies in the instrumental function of LA in facilitating access to other fields of state activity, by means of the linguistic resources and models of social interaction that are made available. Thus, it is imperative to conduct research that focuses on exploring the interplay between the macro-contextual level of language acquisition and the micro-contextual level of linguistic practices within education, specifically through examining (1) particular activities that take place within the classroom, and (2) the daily experiences of those involved in the learning process (teachers, students, parents, etc.).

Description of the research context. Throughout the development of the epistemology of LPP, the debate on the strategies, tools, methods, and linguistic variants agreed upon or recommended in language acquisition is fuelled by both linguistic change in line with social change, as well as the linguists' need to protect linguistic norms. Traditionally perceived only as the common dilemma of a language teacher, LA has become, in the last two decades of the 20th century, pivotal for LPP. The list of factors influencing LA extends from visible tools (curricula, textbooks, dictionaries, etc.) to psychological and social dimensions, often implicit (alterity and stereotypes triggered by it, political events, language contact, etc.).

Considering that LA is both a linguistic and an extralinguistic process, attitudes and sociolinguistic representations constitute one of the research topics of interest. In this sense, it is important to emphasize the position of E. Coșeriu [3, p. 40], who values the speaker's conception of language "given that language does not function for and through linguists, but actually for and through speakers." Renowned researchers in the fields of linguistics, sociolinguistics, sociology, anthropology, and social psychology have conducted influential studies highlighting the linguistic, cultural, and social dimensions of LPP within the vast range of research themes and directions. The theories of American and European researchers from both the early generations of experts studying the social aspects of language (W. Labov, D. Hymes, E. Haugen, J. J. Gumperz, U. Weinreich, J. A. Fishman, E. Coșeriu, P. Bourdieu, L. V. Aracil, R. Ninyoles, etc.), as well as from the period covered in this work

(R. L. Cooper, B. Spolsky, L. J. Calvet, Ph. Blanchet, Ch. Baylon, J. W. Tollefson, N. Hornberger, J. Jaspers, F. V. Tochon, L. Verhoeven, etc.) have been analysed and applied.

This work also considers contributions of researchers from Romania (L. Ionescu-Ruxăndoiu, D. Chitoran, T. Herseni, M. Ciolac, F.-T. Olariu, I. Oprea, T. Slama-Cazacu, etc.), from the Republic of Moldova (A. Ciobanu, I. Condrea, E. Bojoga, L. Colesnic-Codreanca, V. Molea, G. Moldovanu, etc.), and from the Russian Federation (И. А. Аполлонов, В. М. Алпатов, А. Барыбина, Н. Манухина, Е. Ю. Кислякова, Е. А. Кострова, Л. С. Выготский, etc.).

Sociolinguists have identified and confirmed over time the potential effects of the heterogeneous public education environment on language acquisition, starting from empirical-inductive identification of themes and research methods. In the scientific literature, there is a focus on the challenge of ensuring fair access to learning the standardized linguistic code, which involves not only the teaching of standardized language norms, but also addressing potential difficulties in assimilation that may arise depending on the primary linguistic variety that an individual is exposed to during their initial socialization. The significance of exploring the educational context to recognize the challenges and necessities of learners is stressed. Furthermore, the pertinence of distinguishing and isolating the standardized code from other variations (regional languages, dialects) and codes considered rivals (foreign languages) in public education is discussed as well.

Thus, we can summarize four major global research directions that derive from concerns related to the diversity of the educational environment: (1) attitudes towards linguistic variation in a community or in a context of linguistic practices; (2) trends in politicizing LA in the process of implementing language policies; (3) investigating LA as a student-centered process; (4) integrating studies of the attitudes and experiences of language education beneficiaries with critical social analyses. These four directions, in turn, are corollary to two other related research themes in language education policy: (1) the role of linguistic practices in reproducing or changing power relations in society, and (2) the role of social context in understanding linguistic practices.

The purpose of this research is to identify the dimensions of linguistic alterity in speech communities in the linguistic, cultural, and social context of language acquisition policies. We aim to achieve this goal by analyzing the representations of LA processes in secondary-level public education in the Republic of Moldova, applying the Model for outlining the macro- and micro-context of alterity investigation in language acquisition. The achievement of the established goal has determined the formulation of the following **objectives**:

1. To present and analyse the key concepts of the epistemology of language policy and planning in general, and language acquisition in particular, and to analyse the views and interpretations on LPP, as well as on LA in the Republic of Moldova after 1991.

2. To trace the linguistic and sociological genesis of the concept of *alterity* and to examine existing approaches and definitions for the concept of *speech community* from the perspective of language acquisition and alterity.

3. To trace alterity and diversity in the stages of LPP formation and to delimit the linguistic, cultural, and social framework of alterity in LA policies.

4. To outline the micro and macro-context of researching alterity in LA policies and to develop the Model of macro and micro-context research of alterity in language acquisition.

5. To delimit the methodological framework of critical theories applied to research on the dimensions of alterity in speech communities' language acquisition process in the Republic of Moldova during the period 1991-2014, and to track the dynamics between 2015-2022/23.

6. To apply the Model for outlining the macro- and micro-context of alterity investigation in language acquisition for the analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data gathered during the research.

7. To identify the dimensions of alterity according to the languages most frequently used in the RM in the public Secondary Education system, to the languages of instruction and the languages learned, and according to the representations of perceived usefulness of the studied content in the LA process.

The **research hypothesis** is rooted in the observation that one of the essential components of language policy and planning is language acquisition, especially in public Secondary Education. LA plays an instrumental role in opening the way to other socioeconomic activities of the state through the linguistic resources and models of social interaction made available. However, depending on the specificities of the speech communities in which LA activities are implemented, students may face learning difficulties. The linguistic variants brought by students from the linguistic, cultural, and social context of their first socialization can substantially influence the language education process and may require personalized approaches to meet the needs of the learners. Therefore, in planning and implementing language acquisition activities, the environment in which the language teaching/learning process takes place should be taken into account.

The present study aims to argue that, depending on the diversity of social stratification and the inherent linguistic variation, as well as the quality of interaction in the linguistic educational microcontext, the dimensions of otherness can have repercussions on:

- students' attitudes towards the linguistic variety learned in the educational environment;
- teachers' attitudes towards the linguistic varieties brought by students from the speech community or communities to which they belong;
- motivation to learn the standardized linguistic variant.

Methodology for researching language acquisition policies and dimensions of alterity in speech communities in public secondary education in the Republic of Moldova.

The methodological and theoretical scientific support of the research is configured in line with the transdisciplinary nature of the topic under investigation, which involves identifying practical issues at the intersection of linguistic, cultural, and social aspects. In the process of researching the dimensions of alterity in speech communities by identifying and analyzing representations of LA in the secondary education system, we combined quantitative and qualitative research methods. The first stage was an exploratory one, focused primarily on qualitative methods (Z. Dorney, 2007; Ph. Blanchet, 2000) [17, p. 308; 22] utilized for investigating the linguistic, social, and political context of language education in the Republic of Moldova, as well as for identifying the directions and the theoretical and methodological framework for the general mapping of the research topic.

At the first stage of the research:

- we proposed a research hypothesis to explore the relationship between dimensions of alterity within speech communities and the experiences of language acquisition in the secondary public education system;

- after conducting an analysis of several methodologies, we utilized a combination of sociological methods (quantitative research using a structured questionnaire) and anthropological methods (qualitative research through interviews based on a semi-structured questionnaire) to form the research corpus [17, p. 101]. This resulted in the testing of two questionnaires based on conventional methods and techniques for data collection.

o Quantitative research was conducted using structured questionnaires, processed through correlation methods and tests of statistical significance, including basic sociolinguistic parameters such as geographic origin, gender, and age, as well as those considered essential for correlation such as ethnic identification, spoken languages, level of education, income level, and social status [15, p. 192]. The quantitative research was carried out by the Centre for Sociological, Political and Psychological Analysis and Research CIVIS on a statistically representative sample for the general population of the Republic of Moldova and generated a corpus of 27 tables. The research questions were included by CIVIS Centre in one of the national sociological surveys that investigated knowledge, attitudes, and behaviours towards social issues, which was conducted from October 23 to November 22, 2012. The study was conducted across 95 different locations in Moldova, spanning a range of settlement sizes from major urban centres and district hubs to smaller communities. The margin of error did not exceed statistical limits, constituting $\pm 2.6\%$. The sample size, excluding Transnistria, was 1415 people aged between 15 and 64 years old. The wide range of age allowed for the monitoring of dynamics in the period from

1991 to 2012. The analysis of the sample structure showed a similar population distribution to that of the 2004 census [28]. Subsequently, the data was compared with that of the 2014 census [29] and relevant statistical data from the period between 2015-2022/23 [31; 32; 33].

o	Qualitative research was based on an orientation questionnaire, using data obtained from quantitative research. The qualitative method included focus groups and in-depth interviews with key-persons form the language education sector, organized between September and November 2013 and February 2014. The focus groups and interviews generated a corpus of 6 hours and 40 minutes of audio recordings. Three focus groups were organized as follows:

- two focus groups with students from the Faculty of Foreign Languages at the State University of Moldova, bachelor's level: one with students who studied in Russian during their secondary education and another with students who studied in Romanian, organized in September 2013;

- focus group with master's students from the Gagauz Autonomous Region, who studied different degrees at universities in Chisinau, organized in February 2014. One student who was unable to participate in the focus group chose to respond to the questions in writing.

Three interviews were conducted with key-persons from the field of language education:

deputy minister of education, specialized in language didactics and the modernization of language education curriculum, interviewed in September, 2013;

- a university lecturer, Romanian language teacher, author of textbooks, and member of working groups for the development of language teaching curricula, interviewed in September, 2013;

- an expatriate English language teacher, who had been teaching groups of different ages at foreign language teaching centres in Moldova for several years, as well as providing private lessons to people who needed to learn English for their professional activities.

The research process was conducted in accordance with the methodological recommendations used in applied linguistics and language sociology. Each person interviewed, both in the quantitative and qualitative research, was informed about the research goals and gave consent to participate. No personal data that could directly link to the interviewed individuals were collected during the interviews. In order to track the linguistic, social, and political dynamics of the investigated issues, we analyzed a corpus consisting of 24 publications on news portals from the Republic of Moldova, Russia, and Ukraine, covering the period from 2015 to 2022/23, and also examined relevant statistical reports. The temporal and spatial parameters that were used to collect and analyse the quantitative and qualitative data serve as the foundation for the statistical analysis and conclusions of our study. These parameters may be subject to change if we decide to extend the study's components in the future.

At the second stage of the research:

- we conducted a study on the emergence and development of language planning and policy as a field of research within the domain of sociolinguistics, focusing on its research priorities and developmental periods;
- we identified the fundamental concepts and themes and analyzed the causes of inequalities in the development of the field in different geographical areas;
- we tracked to what extent the research themes were reflected in the studies of linguists from the Republic of Moldova and Romania.

At the third stage:

- we carried out a synthetic-analytical investigation of critical theories on language policy and planning, linguistic variation, and language contact;
- we analysed the prevalent approaches and topics in research on language acquisition policies, while also examining the particularities and influence of linguistic diversity and alterity;
- we analysed the dimensions of alterity in the process of language acquisition in secondary education in the Republic of Moldova through the lens of critical theories. This was done through applying the Model for outlining the macro- and micro-context of alterity investigation in language acquisition.

The practical value. The transdisciplinary approach used in this research provides practical implications for various fields. The results can inform the development of university courses focused on philological specialties such as sociolinguistics and language sociology. Moreover, the findings can inform language acquisition activities and education policies, as well as contribute to continuous training programs. While acknowledging that a single study cannot offer all-encompassing solutions, it can facilitate an assessment of available options, a comparative outlook, and novel research avenues.

This study does not aim or intend to propose specific steps or universal solutions for those responsible for developing and implementing language policies through this research. The hope is that the study will provide a comprehensive understanding of the realities and opportunities in this field to individuals involved in language policies, especially those in charge of language acquisition planning.

The obtained results are scientifically novel as they investigate and analyse alterity and its management possibilities in the language acquisition process. The study's originality lies in applying the concept of alterity to both micro- and macro-contexts of language acquisition and examining the potential influence of alterity dimensions on the learning process of languages included in the public secondary education curriculum.

The obtained results' potential to answer a significant research question lies in the conceptualization of the theoretical framework and the development of the tool for identifying dimensions of alterity in the language

acquisition process. This tool is based on considering the specificities of the micro-context of language education, the speech communities from which students come, and their linguistic, cultural, and social macro-context. This contributes to the elucidation of potential difficulties related to linguistic alterity in the language learning process for both theoreticians and practitioners, as well as suggests possible ways to reduce them.

SUMMARY OF THE THESIS SECTIONS

The introductory section of the doctoral thesis highlights the significance and relevance of the research topic, the object of study, the guiding hypothesis, the proposed aim and objectives, the research corpus and methodology, the novelty and originality of the study, the theoretical and practical implications of the research, the scientific problem addressed, and offers a brief outline of the three main chapters.

Chapter 1, *"Language Policy and Linguistic Alterity in the Conceptual and Terminological Framework of Sociolinguistics,"* is organized into three sub-chapters, offering an analytical synthesis of the specialized research dedicated to the key concepts of the epistemology of language planning and policy, with a focus on language acquisition. The chapter highlights the complementarity between linguistics (delineating languages through their uniqueness as separate systems) and sociolinguistics (describing points of contact and explaining relationships between languages). A space characterized by the convergence of diverse languages, cultures, and social identities is commonly referred to as multilingual. The corollary phenomenon of multilingualism is code-switching, based on the principle of alterity (E. Coșeriu 1975/2009). The principle of alterity, in this sense, can be interpreted as accommodating diversity by changing or adjusting linguistic and cultural codes according to the circumstances of interaction.

Subchapter 1.1, *The formation of the epistemology of language policy in North America and Europe, including the Republic of Moldova*, reviews publications in the field, highlighting the evolutionary-historical nature of the deliberate regulation of language and linguistic behaviour in any human society as an integral part of cultural, social, and political events (R. Cooper 1989; W. Tollefson 2002; J. V. M. Alpatov 2000; G. Moldovanu 2004, 2007) [16, p. 1 - 27; 21; 26; 11; 9, p. 9]. The organization of linguistic space, delimited as a research direction by a variety of terms at different stages and in different cultures, is traced back to the theories of U. Weinreich (1954) and E. Haugen (1959) [Apud. 9, p. 19 – 29; 16, p. 201-202] who emphasized the need for a normative framework for written and oral interactions in a heterogeneous speech community.

This subchapter focuses on a unique aspect of the education systems during the emergence of LPP theories in the 1960s – their increased accessibility to the public and the resulting diversification of the educational environment based on social stratification criteria. The issue of diversification, linguistic variations, and migration has been an ongoing topic of interest for researchers since the 1960s. It has been studied through interdisciplinary

and transdisciplinary approaches to identify challenges faced by educational systems at both global and local levels.

The first section (1.1.1) of the study pays particular attention to the conceptual and terminological interpretations of PPL. The evolution of this field has been influenced by social and political changes at the global and local levels, which have led to the recognition of the interconnections between language, economics, politics, and ideology. The section highlights that activities related to language planning and policy are not limited to linguistic aspects, but also involve the complexities of these interconnections.

From an epistemic perspective, E. Coșeriu [Apud. 13, p. 312; 4, p. 133, p. 144] attributes LPP to the sociology of language when studying the status and sociocultural relations of different languages within a community, and to the sociology of language when studying the social status of linguistic variants or styles. P. Bourdieu (1982) [24, p. 42] holds the same view. According to him, the role of sociolinguistics is to investigate the correlation between linguistic differences and social differences on the linguistic market, while the role of the sociology of languages is the study of the language market [24, p. 35]. D. Hymes [Apud. 18; 19], also places LPP within the sociology of language, arguing for the macro-linguistic nature of research activities undertaken by governments regarding the languages used in a social-political framework. Sociolinguistics investigates the micro-level of human interaction and speech ethnography, collecting narratives specific to situations experienced by speakers. Therefore, studying both micro-level and macro-level perspectives is beneficial for research in the field of language policies.

The subchapter discusses language policy and acquisition, examining the linguistic conflict [2] theory and the dominant-dominated language relationship proposed by L.V. Aracil and R. Nyinoles. It highlights the global connections between languages that have experienced domination and the challenges encountered in implementing LA policies. After the collapse of the USSR, dominant-dominated language relationships came to the forefront, leading to language development as well as emancipation in the former republics, including the Republic of Moldova. Disadvantaged from the starting line, the majority language of the Republic of Moldova has faced difficulties of an economic, political, and legislative nature, as well as from a human resources aspect in the process of designing and implementing the Language Policy Law.

The subchapter emphasizes the artificial terminological duality created around the name of the majority language [48, p.94] as well as the consequences of said duality. Chapter 3 goes on to utilize empirical and research data in order to illustrate and analyse some of these consequences. In this context, the subchapter addresses the linguistic legislation of the Republic of Moldova by investigating its dynamics during the time up to the adoption of the Law implementing the decisions of the Constitutional Court of the RM regarding the name of the language

[34]. The significance of this Law lies in the fact that the phrase "Moldovan language" will be replaced with "Romanian language" in all state legislation. As a result, additional frequently used substitutes such as "official language", "state language," and "mother tongue," will also be replaced with "Romanian language". It is worth noting the profound symbolic significance in the above-mentioned law, as it represents a new stage in the self-affirmation of the linguistic, cultural, and social identity of the Republic of Moldova.

As a result of this and other political events at the international and national levels, in the last few decades, LA has been debated by linguists, sociolinguists, sociologists, anthropologists, education specialists, and social psychologists. These discussions revolve around the social factors that influence language acquisition in public education (N.H. Hornberger, 2000, 2006a, 2006b, 2008, 2009; M. Istrati, 2014, 2019; A. Jaffe, 2011; D.C. Johnson, 2010; D.C. Johnson and T. Ricento, 2013; F.V. Tochon, 2015; J.W. Tollefson, 2002; M. Pérez-Milans, 2015; L. Verhoeven, 2017; J. Jaspers, 2018, 2019; F.M. Hult, 2018).

Subchapter 1.2 follows the linguistic and sociological genesis of the concept of alterity in language and culture contact through the lens of integral linguistics (E. Coșeriu), communicative linguistics (P. Ricœur, P. Charaudeau), language education (G. Zarate), and phenomenological philosophy (J.-P. Sartre, M. Heidegger, E. Levinas). In the period examined in this work, the epistemology of LA interprets diversity, first and foremost, through the prism of cultural differences and social representations that emerge in the identity vs. alterity or Self vs. Other [6] relationship within the same language, the same culture, and only then in relation to other languages and cultures.

The dynamics of cognitive processes question existing approaches in defining the term "culture" [27], bringing nuance to, and transcending perceptions and definitions of culture as "action" to culture as "state." In the context of this research, a higher degree of precision is revealed in the perspective of social psychology on culture (C. Clanet, 1993; N. Hidalgo, 1997) [Apud. 23, p. 113; Apud. 1, p. 9-10] as an essential framework and reading grid based on a system of values, norms, and shared meanings by a human group that allows the individual to interact with other people and interpret the symbolic significance of human behavior, reflecting it in their own behavior.

The previous subchapters suggest that alterity plays a crucial role in language acquisition due to differences between the standardized language taught in schools and the socially marked varieties that students bring from their first socialization environment. By examining alterity in language acquisition policies, language teaching and learning can be improved through their personalization according to the needs of learners.

In correlation with the concept of alterity, the concepts of *linguistic variety* and *linguistic community* are also investigated (subchapter 1.3). As a marker of alterity, linguistic variety triggers stereotypes and engages

value judgments about what is correct or incorrect, adequate or inadequate, acceptable or unacceptable in linguistic interactions within a community (P. Charaudeau 1988; G. Zarate, 1993; W. Labov, 2001, 2006; I. Horváth 2008; E. M. Tódor, 2011; A. Lefstein 2013; A.-M. Țepordei, 2014; L. Verhoeven, 2017; A. Soltan and L. Zbanț 2022a, 2022b). In this sense, the study highlights the need to recognize that educational systems are not actually able to find universal solutions for the whole range of problems related to differences between the standard language and the variants brought by students. According to L. Verhoeven [22, p. 391-92], among the problems that derive from the socio-cultural diversity of the linguistic educational environment, educational systems must first recognize those related to access, teacher training, and curriculum development.

Chapter 2, *Linguistic, Cultural and Social Contextualization of Language Policy and Linguistic Alterity,* is structured into 4 subchapters and represents an analytical synthesis of global and European studies aimed at defining the linguistic, cultural, and social framework of alterity in LA. During the time period investigated in the study, the key competence that language acquisition policies tend to develop in relation to a language speaker is "interpretation" (Ph. Blanchet 2010, Pérez-Milans 2015; L. Verhoeven 2017), which is the linguistic performance that allows for an appropriate decoding of the context and social representations that define it. Language as a structural system of signs and grammatical norms provides incomplete data, and interpretation also requires rules of contextualization: (1) a "universal system of meanings to which a discourse belongs and that determines its validity and meaning" (E. Coșeriu) [3, p. 324]; (2) knowledge of "non-linguistic circumstances perceived directly by speakers" (F. – T. Olariu, 2011) [13, p. 323]; and (3) the awareness that there is always an implicit meaning that may be difficult or impossible to decode.

Subchapter 2.1 encompasses the analysis of the periods of formation of linguistic policy and planning theories in correlation with the views on linguistic diversity and contact that PPL has prioritized throughout its development. We have delimited (Table 2.1) four stages in the epistemology of LPP, and the period covered by this paper is situated in the second and third stages.

Table 2.1. Stages in the formation of the epistemology of linguistic policy and planning (developed by the author)

Stage	Particularities
I **1960s-70s**	processes of modernization in developing countries; technical concerns related to standardization and emancipation of dominated languages, acquisition of standardized linguistic code in the education system; diversity is perceived as a problem in state development; emphasis on the mass study of national languages and languages of international circulation
II **1970s-80s**	research oriented mainly towards political, economic, and social aspects of languages in contact and recognition of the inevitable ideological substrate in actions aimed at organizing linguistic space
III	postmodernism of language policies and the development of critical theory in LPP with two defining particularities for research orientation: massive migration of a large number of people and the rekindling of national/ethnic or linguistic identity sentiments; without underestimating the importance of acquiring

Mid-1980s to early 21st century	national languages and languages of international circulation, the focus is on researching ways to preserve diversity by maintaining first socialization languages (minority languages, regional languages, migrant languages, etc.); research on the influence of ideologies on LPP
IV First decades of the 21st century	revisiting ethnographic methods for application in LPP research; evolution and diversification of theories aimed at empirical studies of global language acquisition processes against the background of intensifying migration, development of informational technologies, and political and socio-economic transformations; research on the globalization versus glocalization relationship: global policies versus national policies, national policies versus local realities. Emphasis is placed on the role of individuals and social interaction in the educational micro-context (discursive or educational community).

In the first stage of LPP development, there is a tendency to underestimate the socio-political context, with language being viewed primarily as a neutral technological tool. However, the observation (E. Haugen) [7, p. 236] that there is a "clear conflict of interest between those who have acquired a linguistic norm and those who have not" implies the inevitability of social factors that privilege certain members of society in linguistic education and limit access for others. The social-political transformations in Eastern Europe and the USSR in the mid-1980s also highlight the intrinsic connection of LPP with social events: the revival of linguistic, ethnic, and national identity feelings, migration, and the revision of relations between European languages, etc. In this period, R. L. Cooper (1989) [16, p. 45] includes LA as the third dimension of linguistic planning characterized by "deliberate efforts to influence the behaviour of others regarding the acquisition, structure, or functions attributed to language codes". LA is also seen as an essential component of language policy [16, p. 160] since "language policy consists of the set of decisions adopted by the authorities concerned with the desired form and use of languages by a group of speakers".

In the early decades of the 21st century, scholars such as R. Wodak (2006), E. Shohamy (2006), E. Shohamy and D. Gorter (2009), F. M. Hult (2010, 2018), J. Jaspers (2018, 2019) explored the intersections of ideologies and language education practices in legislative regulations, linguistic tests, language in real and the digital public spaces, everyday practices, political discourse, etc. Regarding the Republic of Moldova, the influence of linguistic policies and ideologies from the USSR on the discourse of language acquisition and use is emphasized based on opinions from W. Kymlicka and F. Grin (2003) and M. H. Ciscel (2008). The discourse revolves around (1) linguistic correctness and justice, (2) feelings of frustration related to the use and acquisition of both majority and minority languages.

Discussions on language-usage correlations versus competence-performance [12] aim to shift focus from the sole acceptance of the standard language to the social and functional aspects of language, particularly in education. The emphasis is on developing social and linguistic competencies, including the ability to choose an appropriate linguistic variety based on the circumstances of interaction, rather than relying on a binary of correct/incorrect language usage.

In subchapter 2.2, we delimit the linguistic, cultural, and social framework of alterity in language acquisition policies, emphasizing that despite the expansion of public education to different social classes and cultural communities in the second half of the 20th century, the investigation of alterity in the context of LA has developed disproportionately in different geographical areas. Thus, educators typically have tools on the linguistic and normative side, while social aspects, including emotional-affective ones, are often insufficiently reflected. For example, the role of emotion as a subjective, individual, and interpersonal component "based on the relationships between interlocutors, relationships that can be epistemic, social, or affective (D. Rovența-Frumușani)" [Apud. 14, p. 221] is frequently underestimated.

On the affective side, F. V. Tochon [20, p. 441] emphasizes the importance of motivation as "the driving force behind the actions of human beings, an internal state that activates and directs behaviour." Motivation is often determined by social factors over which the teacher's influence is limited. Thus, the importance of developing students' autonomy [Ibid., p. 31] is highlighted as a precondition for identifying motivation and adapting the teaching-learning process to personal needs. The classroom, in this context, constitutes a formalized linguistic community, that is, a discursive community in which cognitive processes take place through interactions (written or oral) between the individuals involved in the organization, and progressive development of linguistic and social competences.

Subchapter 2.3 focuses on outlining the macro- and micro-context of investigating alterity in language acquisition policies based on the theories examined earlier, with the aim of developing an analysis model of the dimensions of alterity (Fig. 3.1, Chapter 3). Given the diversification of factors (cultural, social, linguistic, economic, technological, and informational) included in the analysis of language acquisition policies during the period under consideration, we have chosen, respectively, language market (P. Bourdieu, 1982, 1984) [24, p. 35] and linguistic market [25, p. 123] as the first two frames for delimiting the macro- and micro-context (Fig. 3.1, Chapter 3).

The language market is where languages and their varieties meet, just as linguistic practices occur in the linguistic market. We have placed linguistic capital [24, p. 42 – 44] in the third frame, which combines linguistic and social competence. Linguistic capital is determined by the legitimacy of language mastery in a given interaction, where the language or variety with the highest value is used in a specific temporal, spatial, social, cultural, or linguistic context.

Scholars (M. Nystrand, 2006; J. Maybin, 2007; F. V. Tochon, 2015; M. Pérez-Milans, 2015; L. Verhoeven, 2017) emphasize that building linguistic and social competence requires student-teacher and peer-to-peer interaction, with the teacher taking on the role of a coach or mentor. This approach is effective and

flexible, allowing for personalization of the language acquisition process in diverse environments. The quality of teacher-student interaction impacts all aspects of language acquisition, including accessibility of language education, teacher training, curriculum development, and teaching strategies. To enhance accessibility, a teacher who acts as a coach can aid in the learning process by providing constructive feedback, motivational support, and personalized learning strategies. Such a coaching approach can assist in teacher training by allowing teachers to better understand and utilize the linguistic and social characteristics of their students' environment through interaction in a coaching position. The coaching approach enables adjustments to be made to the curriculum framework and teaching strategies based on the unique characteristics of the educational setting. Consequently, the language being taught is viewed not only as a set of constraints but also as a set of freedoms that offer endless possibilities while preserving the functional conditions of the linguistic tools (E. Coșeriu) [5, p.100].

Personalized approaches in LA are becoming increasingly significant, and it is rational to assert that teachers cannot possess the full range of necessary expertise in diverse and changing contexts. Hence, teachers must teach students to identify personalized learning content and strategies. The Model of student-teacher interaction based on the coaching approach (subsection 2.3) has been designed using questions that help identify dimensions of alterity related to the language and culture being taught/learned. However, a more comprehensive exploration of alterity can be achieved by combining this model with the Model for outlining the macro- and micro-context of alterity investigation in language acquisition (Figure 3.1, Chapter 3). The use of both models together can be mutually beneficial.

Subsection 2.4 describes the methodology for researching the policies and dimensions of alterity in linguistic communities in the Republic of Moldova from 1991 to 2014, as well as the methods for monitoring dynamics from 2015 to 2022/23, while also arguing for the methodological framework and research stages.

Chapter 3, "*The Dimension of Alterity in Language Acquisition Policies: Analysis of the Research Corpus*" is structured into four subchapters and presents a detailed description of the study results by applying the Model for outlining the macro- and micro-context of alterity investigation in language acquisition (Fig. 3.1). After critically reviewing the literature, three contextual frameworks were identified and outlined (Fig. 3.1) for investigating alterity in linguistic acquisition that correspond to levels of social interaction: 1) Individual, or the manifestation of linguistic and cultural differences in interaction with other individuals; 2) Societal, or social behaviours determined by belonging to or participating in a speech community; 3) Ideological, or social representations related to systems of values, ideas, and social practices, political and economic doctrines promoted within the state, which have an impact on language acquisition.
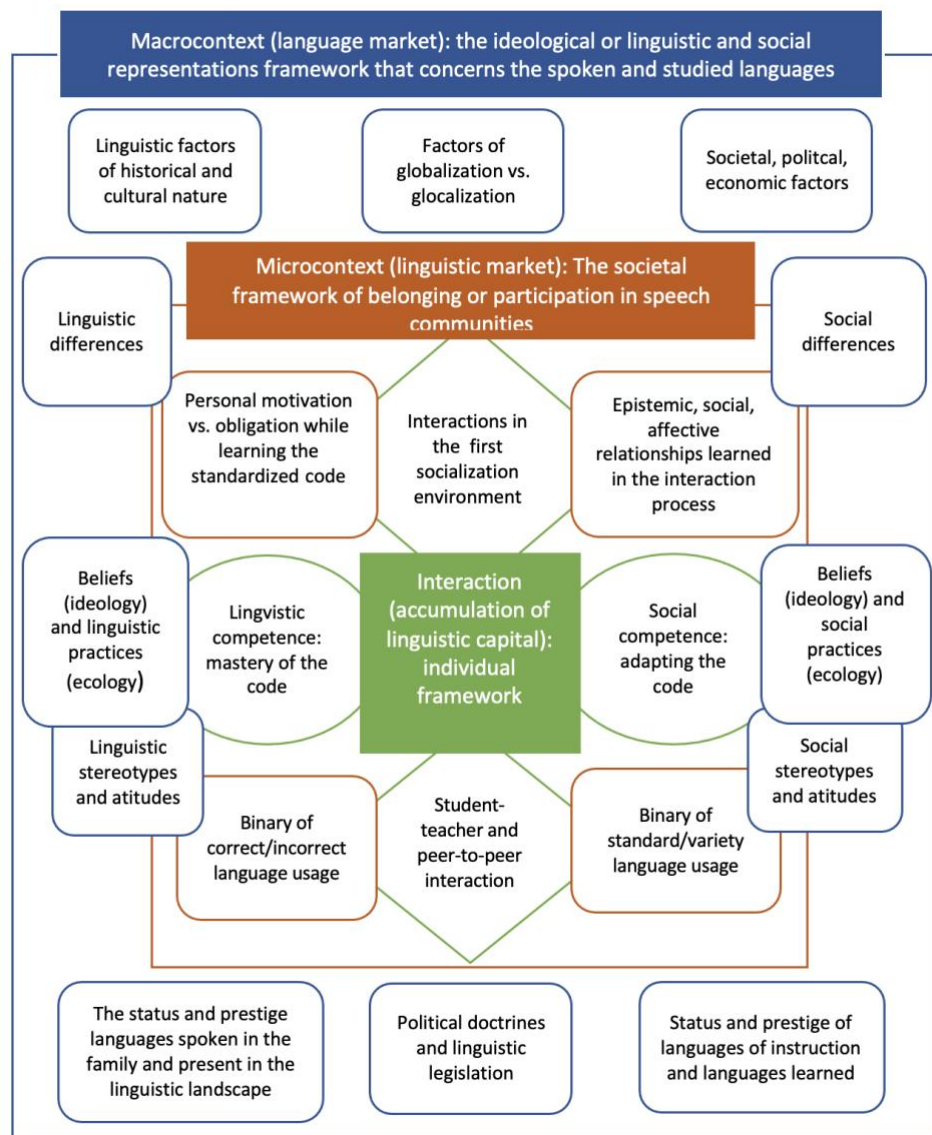
Figure 3.1. Model for outlining the macro- and micro-context of alterity investigation in language acquisition (developed by the author).

Based on the Model (Fig. 3.1), in Chapter 3 we analyse the outcomes of the empirical investigation (national survey) processed with the SPSS software. The survey examines the following: the socio-demographic profile of speakers in relation to their choice of the official language name; language acquisition characteristics, as well as dimensions of speech communities' alterity correlated with the languages of instruction and languages learned; and representations of the usefulness of content and methods used in the process of acquiring languages at the secondary education level.

The languages used in the Republic of Moldova and their frequency of use were identified in the survey based on questions regarding:

- the language preferences of respondents (what languages they speak at home, which languages they prefer to speak, in which languages they express themselves more easily);
- the languages spoken at the workplace;
- the languages of instruction studied in secondary education;
- the activities that underpinned the study of languages in secondary education and the perception of the usefulness of the content studied for future activities.

In qualitative research, based on the orientation questionnaire using data obtained from quantitative research, we aimed to describe, understand, and clarify idiosyncratic experiences in language acquisition. Subchapter 3.1 focuses on the empirical data obtained from the responses to the questions regarding the languages spoken in the Republic of Moldova. Questions L1 (In which language do you prefer to communicate more?) and L3 (What language(s) do you speak in your family?) highlight that in addition to the majority and official language, four other languages are used by a number of speakers exceeding 1%. We observe that for the majority and official language, the participants used two terms. Thus, 49% of the survey participants used the term "Moldovan language" regarding the language they prefer to communicate in more, while 51.9% used the same term regarding the language they speak in the family. At the same time, 25.4% of respondents opted for the term "Romanian language" with reference to the language in which they prefer to communicate, and 30.2% used the same term when referring to the language they speak in the family. As for the other languages, 20.2% prefer to communicate in Russian, and 31.4% speak it in the family; 0.8% prefer to communicate in Ukrainian, and 3.0% speak it in the family; 1.4% prefer to communicate in Gagauz, and 3.0% speak it in the family; 2.4% prefer to communicate in Bulgarian, and 3.4% speak it in the family.

Based on social representations regarding the preferred language for communication, the present study is able to outline a speech community that prefers to speak in the official language, which accounts for 74.4% of the respondents. Within this community, we highlight two different types of representations regarding the name of the official language. If we consider the criterion of the language spoken in the family, we can outline a community representing 82.1% of the respondents who speak the official language at home, and the same two different representations regarding the name of the official language.

To the community of those who prefer to communicate in Russian can be attributed 20.2% of the respondents, while the community of those who speak Russian in the family is 31.4%. These figures demonstrate a relative fluidity and overlap of speech communities depending on the criteria by which they are delimited. Fluidity indicates the mobility of speakers between communities, while overlap – participation in different linguistic communities. A person who belongs to one or more communities based on the language spoken in the family can also participate in other communities based on the language(s) they prefer to speak, use at work, etc.

Question L2 (In what language/languages do you express yourself more easily?), for example, shows significant variation for the Russian language, where 62.3% of respondents consider that they express themselves more easily in this language. We observe a slight increase in respondents who express themselves more easily in Ukrainian – 5.9%, compared to the questions above. Regarding the official language, 52.6% of respondents consider that they express themselves more easily in Moldovan, the number being close to that of people who say they speak it in the family – 51.9%. The same situation is observed for people who opted for the term Romanian when referring to the language in which they express themselves more easily – 32.7%, the figure being close to that indicating the proportion of people who answered that they speak Romanian in the family – 30.2%.

Interpreted through the lens of the Model for outlining the macro- and micro-context of alterity investigation in language acquisition (Fig. 3.1, p. 111), the above data outlines a macro-context for the use of Russian language on the language market in the Republic of Moldova. This macro-context is defined by various dimensions of alterity, such as:

- historical and cultural factors which have contributed to the imposition of the dominance of the Russian language by promoting ideologies and stereotypes that emphasize its linguistic functionality and superiority;

- social and political factors have created favourable conditions for Russian-speaking individuals, promoting linguistic practices that prioritize the use of the Russian language. This has been achieved through linguistic regulations that have granted the Russian language the status of an interethnic communication language, thereby increasing its prestige and encouraging its use in both formal and informal interactions.

The answers obtained for the L2 question (In what language(s) do you express yourself more easily?) contribute to clarifying the nature of the numerous disagreements revealed in public discourse regarding the ambiguous status of the Russian language in the Republic of Moldova. It is important to note that a certain confusion regarding the status of the Russian language exists. Even though it appears to be a minority language at first glance, it remains, de facto, a dominant regional language with an imposing presence in the former Soviet republics. The significant number of people who perceive Russian as one of the languages they express themselves more easily in demonstrates the high standing of this language on the language market in the Republic of Moldova, given that 85.3% of respondents also confirmed their ability to use the official language without difficulty. Comparing data on languages spoken in the family and languages preferred for communication according to ethnic identity, we can see, for example, that the majority of respondents who identified themselves as Ukrainians and Gagauz indicated Russian.

Comparing the data obtained from the national survey we conducted in 2012, in which 93.9% of Gagauz respondents indicated Russian as the language of instruction (Table 3.11, p. 142), with the data from the National Bureau of Statistics [30] on primary and secondary education in the 2022/23 academic year, we find that 92.5% of students in Gagauzia continue to study in Russian. The data confirms that no structural changes have occurred in favour of the Gagauz language as the language of instruction, nor in favour of Romanian. The adoption of Russian as the

priority language of communication and instruction, accompanied by Russian propaganda, has had an isolating effect on the Gagauz community.

After the outbreak of the war against Ukraine, we identified debates on news portals regarding the messages and values that the Russian language conveys. The most problematic discourse is that of propaganda targeting economic and social vulnerability and Soviet nostalgia, trying to revive behaviors of submission programmed by Soviet ideology and education. If, until February 24, 2022, the local significance of Russia and the Russian language could be justified through historical and ideological reasoning, V. Ciobanu [30] is of the opinion that after this date, "we are talking about a moral choice". However, the author [Ibid.] points out that the Russian language is also the language "through which Moldovans learn the unmediated truth about the horrors of Putin's army, about the struggle of the Ukrainian people for their freedom and for our freedom."

Subchapter 3.2 investigates the alterity of linguistic communities in the Republic of Moldova based on the choice of the official language name, since this phenomenon has characterized the macro- and micro-context of language acquisition policies in the Republic of Moldova, causing disagreements and confusion both in research and in public and political discourse after 1991. A sociolinguist from the Republic of Moldova, M. Istrati [8, p. 94], sees in this controversy as more than just a problem of naming the language. Historically, we are faced with the result of the native language "folklorization" (use in restricted contexts, such as the family environment, or in order to mimic cultural diversity) – a phenomenon frequently attested in the dominated-dominant language relationship.

Interviews and focus group discussions have also revealed the significant influence of television and radio programs and the print media in the Russian language in the Republic of Moldova (in Fig. 3.1 linguistic ideologies and stereotypes on the language market) in shaping perceptions of the Romanian language, also influencing the emergence, maintenance, and development of colloquial variants of the Romanian language marked by contact with the Russian language. In our empirical quantitative research, we examined attitudes towards the official language name, analysing responses to questions L1-L3. Our findings indicate that the ratio of individuals who identify the majority language as Moldovan versus Romanian does not significantly vary, regardless of how the question about linguistic preference is framed. However, we did observe a significant difference in the number of individuals who feel more comfortable expressing themselves in Romanian, which increased by 7% compared to the 25.4% who prefer to communicate in Romanian.

Studying the data in the micro-context of the linguistic market (Fig. 3.1, p. 111) allows us to classify these options into social competencies of adapting the linguistic code to interaction circumstances. In the macro-context of the language market, these options are determined by social and political conditions for language use, as well as the status and prestige of the linguistic varieties used. Thus, the term Moldovan language was predominantly agreed upon by respondents from rural areas, over 40 years old, without higher education, with a below-average income level. The name "Moldovan language" is mostly perceived among the general population as a hidden prestige variant, reflecting

group membership. We have not accumulated enough evidence to claim that the speakers who choose this name have a language different from Romanian in mind. The dynamics of social representations regarding the name of the official language were investigated in the surveys conducted by the Institute of Public Policies within the Public Opinion Barometer in the period 2014-2017 [33]. We have not identified significant differences compared to the data from the national survey conducted by us in 2012. At the same time, it is important to note that after 2017, the Barometer no longer included questions about the name of the official language of the Republic of Moldova.

Subchapter 3.3 explores the alterity of speech communities in the Republic of Moldova based on their languages of instruction and learned languages. During the focus group discussions on language teaching methods, participants offered suggestions for optimizing the teaching of Romanian as a second language. These suggestions were of particular interest to Gagauz participants compared to other language groups. The participants argued for strategies to increase students' interest in the official language and improve the quality of Romanian language instruction, especially given the competition with Russian language instruction. While the use of Romanian in Gagauzia remains limited to the educational environment, the Russian Federation continues to invest in maintaining the dominance of the Russian language in this region. In this regard, Gagauz student participants in focus groups mentioned the importance of extending the teaching-learning process of Romanian outside of the classroom, towards learning through activities and situations in which different modes of interaction and communication styles are used. Through examination of the representations of the types of activities intended for learning languages spoken in the Republic of Moldova and foreign languages, it was found that the majority of respondents (92.5%) mentioned grammar exercises and learning rules as predominant activities in the process of teaching spoken languages of the linguistic communities in the Republic of Moldova (Romanian, Russian, Ukrainian, Gagauz, Bulgarian). A similar situation is also observed in the study of foreign languages, where exercises and grammar rules as main activities are mentioned by approximately the same number of participants (88.3%).

During the investigation of the representations of the usefulness of language education content in the Republic of Moldova, the study found that the responses obtained generally indicated a low level of perception of its usefulness. It was observed that different perceptions regarding the usefulness and applicability of the learned content were related to the socio-demographic profile of the respondents, such as their rural or urban environment, income level, age, and ethnic identification. Particularly notable differences were found with respect to the respondents' area of residence (urban/rural) and age. These dimensions of alterity in perceptions can provide insights into the factors that influence language learning outcomes.

Subchapter 3.4, analyses the linguistic acquisition components that generated feelings and attitudes among interview and focus group participants, creating dominant representations in discourse. The qualitative research data (interviews and focus groups) was organized into three main dimensions based on their frequency in the participants' discourse: interaction between students and teachers, curricular content, and the teacher's role in adapting it to the

linguistic acquisition micro-context, and evaluation of the quality of linguistic education. Due to space constraints, only the most representative examples will be presented.

In the focus group discussions, the most commonly discussed topic was *the interaction between students and teachers*, which confirms the critical theories of Language Policy and Planning that were investigated, emphasizing the role of teachers in implementing language education policies. Participants in the interviews and focus groups pointed out the successes and failures of language education, with a primary focus on the interaction with the teacher. The research results confirm that the student-teacher interaction is (1) transversal to all three components of language education policy, and (2) determined by the teacher's need to understand to what extent they can be autonomous in decisions regarding curriculum implementation and to what extent they can develop students' autonomy.

The curricular content and the role of the teacher in adjusting it to the microcontext of language acquisition. School curricula are revised every five years, and the 2010 revision aimed at transitioning from a model based on achieving curricular objectives to a model based on developing students' skills. According to the research data, there is no widespread consensus, neither regarding the languages spoken in the Republic of Moldova, nor the foreign ones. Although more positive attitudes towards the dynamics of language education are observed compared to previous years, there are expectations for possible transformations that will facilitate the work of teachers. For example, the Romanian language curriculum for national schools is considered more flexible and adapted to the educational context than the Romanian language curriculum for non-native schools. The research data suggest that the teacher's abilities and characteristics play a crucial role in building a bridge between the educational setting and the students' communicative environment. The degree to which the classroom is disassociated from the students' communicative milieu, or whether it is linked to the communities where students engage, is largely dependent on the teacher's level of competence, motivation, and autonomy in forging this connection.

Evaluation of the quality of language education. According to key people in the education sector, it is necessary to periodically clarify and specify the criteria for evaluating the quality of teaching. The basic criterion for evaluation remains the fulfillment of curricular provisions, as such, evaluation focuses more on quantitative aspects. In this regard, interviews with key people highlight the need for more specific indicators to monitor the quality of language education based on the educational environment, the background of the students, and the formulated goals.

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The outcomes of the study conducted on the subject of "Policies and dimensions of alterity in speech communities of the Republic of Moldova after 1991" substantiate the initially proposed hypothesis that language acquisition is a crucial component of language policy and planning. The study also shows the effects of alterity on language education based on the unique features of the community or communities where students originate from,

and the linguistic variations derived from their environment of first socialization. Having achieved all the initially proposed research objectives, the study results lead to the following conclusions:

1.   The evolutionary-historical analysis of specialized literature on the epistemology of language policy and planning (LPP) allows us to confirm the assumption that, especially since the 1990s, LA has been recognized as an essential component and a major research direction in LPP, along with corpus planning, language status, and language prestige. Since language learning activities involve mass cognitive processes related to social interaction, language contact, culture, and social classes, both research and planning of LA presuppose the identification and examination of contextual factors with potential influence on teaching/learning processes. The research results demonstrate that, in the Republic of Moldova, the macro-context of language acquisition is characterized, first of all, by the specific affinity at the global level of languages that have been dominated by other languages and have remained in contact with them. The dominated languages face economic, political, and affective-emotional difficulties in the implementation of language policies. Thus, the majority language in Moldova has faced unfair competition with the Russian language, which has rendered it vulnerable in regard to status and social functions and has created terminological confusion with political substrates regarding its name. These factors have also had repercussions on language acquisition.

2.   The examination of specialized literature and of empirical research data suggests that in the complex macro-context of the Republic of Moldova, which is linguistically, culturally, and socially heterogeneous and with a high potential for linguistic conflict, the identification and study of dimensions of alterity is necessary to reduce the difficulties that students may face in the process of language education. Research on linguistic alterity as a type of social representation, which generates feelings, attitudes, and behaviors towards linguistic differences, can contribute to improving language learning by personalizing it based on the particularities of the communities where LA policies are implemented. In this context, the speech community is considered not only as a group of speakers who use the same linguistic forms, but especially as a group that shares the same social norms and attitudes regarding the languages and varieties spoken and learned. It is necessary to emphasize that in any linguistic community, there is a social conflict of linguistic acquisition between those who have acquired a linguistic norm and those who have not.

3.   Although in certain historical periods, the learned language was perceived merely as a neutral technological tool, the study results indicate that cultural and ideological values and norms are markers of linguistic alterity and have a substantial impact on the LA context. Participants in the LA process (teachers, students, parents, etc.) bring to the educational context social representations of alterity specific to the communities they come from. Therefore, an adequate interpretation of the context is a key competence for both learners and those involved in language acquisition policies. At the same time, it is reasonable to assert that the teacher may not have the range of expertise necessary for diverse and changing contexts; consequently, they must teach students to identify personalized learning content and strategies. Thus, the study suggests that the importance of personalized approaches in language learning will become increasingly significant in this context.

4.   The study's conceptualization of the Model of student-teacher interaction based on a coaching approach can contribute to the organization of communication in the language classroom as a process of exchange and negotiation. As such, the classroom becomes an educational discursive community and, at the same time, a linguistic marketplace in which students learn models of social interaction and adapt them to the circumstances of interaction. The Model emphasizes the mentor role of the teacher in guiding students who face difficulties in assimilating the standardized linguistic code. Students are expected to be included in the process so that they are not just recipients of content, but also active participants in identifying personalized strategies for overcoming difficulties related to linguistic alterity.

5.   A Model for outlining the macro- and micro-context of alterity investigation in language acquisition (Fig. 3.1) was developed based on a variety of factors (cultural, social, linguistic, economic, political, technological etc.) that had an impact on LA policies during the targeted period. Through critical literature review, three contextual frameworks for investigating alterity in LA were identified and outlined. These frameworks correspond to the different levels of social interaction:

a.   The individual level, which deals with the manifestation of linguistic and cultural differences in interaction with other individuals. In this framework, linguistic and social competencies are accumulated, constituting linguistic capital. Linguistic capital is determined by the degree of mastery of the legitimate language, i.e., the language that enjoys the highest valuation in an interaction situated in a temporal, spatial, social, cultural, linguistic, etc. context.

b.   The societal level, which deals with social behaviours grounded in belonging or participation in a speech community, where the linguistic market is formed (a place of linguistic interactions and practices) as soon as discourse is produced. In this framework, discourse is the result of a competition of circumstances, where what is said and what is written depends on the identities of the speaker and the interlocutor, as well as their intentions, and the physical conditions of the interaction. Discourse serves to construct the reality of an educational community, which is reproduced, naturalized, and sometimes revised in the process of social interaction, in the light of significant historical, political, and socioeconomic events.

c.   The ideological level, which deals with social representations regarding systems of values, ideas, and social practices, as well as political and economic doctrines promoted within the state, and which have an impact on language acquisition. This is the framework of the language market, which constitutes a language exchange and where each language has a valuation.

6.   The investigation of alterity dimensions in the process of linguistic acquisition has benefited from the application of an integrated research methodology that combines transdisciplinary analytical study of specialized literature with the examination and interpretation of statistical data obtained through a national survey, as well as data obtained from interviews with key persons in the field of linguistic education and focus groups. This approach has allowed for:

a. Obtaining results that can be generalized for the Republic of Moldova due to the representative sample (1415 individuals).

b. Focusing on specific regional particularities (e.g. difficulties in acquiring the Romanian language in Gagauzia) and on three dimensions of linguistic acquisition highlighted by the frequency of their occurrence in the discourse of participants: student-teacher interaction; curricular content and the role of the teacher in adjusting it to the micro-context of linguistic acquisition; and evaluation of the quality of linguistic education, thanks to the use of focus groups and interviews.

However, the research does not reflect other possible regional particularities that could be investigated in further research by using the tools developed in this study. Additionally, teachers from the secondary education system were not sufficiently represented in the interviews and focus groups.

7.   Through the lens of the Model for outlining the macro- and micro-context of alterity investigation in language acquisition, the results of the empirical research confirm that the subject of the official language denomination in the Republic of Moldova represents a dimension of alterity specific to the LA context. The research data shows that regardless of how the question about the spoken language was formulated, the ratio of respondents who identify the language as Moldovan and those who identify it as Romanian varies insignificantly. However, it is observed that the respondents who agree with the Moldovan language denomination are mostly rural residents, aged over 45, with a medium level of education and low income. The empirical research data and opinions from the media sources consulted indicate that the use of the term "Moldovan language" by speakers in the Republic of Moldova is more of a social and political problem than a linguistic one. This problem poses a significant risk because the propaganda machine of the Russian Federation and the political parties that support its interests strongly politicize the use of this term. The propaganda and politicization mainly focus on economically, socially, and educationally vulnerable social categories. Through manipulation, propaganda contributes to maintaining economic and social vulnerability, a sense of linguistic insecurity and injustice, and divides society by linguistic criteria. These findings confirm the necessity of identifying and examining the cultural and social particularities of the macro-context and how they influence attitudes towards the languages that are taught and learned.

8.   According to the results of empirical research, attitudes towards language learning activities in the Republic of Moldova, both for native and foreign languages, reveal lines of demarcation of alterity that are determined by socio-demographic variables such as place of residence, age, level of education, and income. The most significant differentiation occurs between rural and urban areas. Respondents from rural areas had a higher perception of the usefulness of the content taught in Romanian and Russian, while respondents from urban areas had a higher perception of the usefulness of the content taught in foreign languages. However, the overall perception of the usefulness of language education is low. The participants' reports in qualitative interviews lead to the conclusion that the perception of the usefulness of the content studied was largely determined by the ways in which students interacted with teachers

and peers and by the ambiance created by the teacher, both in urban and rural areas. These findings confirm the hypotheses put forward at the beginning of the research, that depending on the diversity of social stratification, inherent linguistic variation, and the quality of interaction in the linguistic educational micro-context, the dimensions of alterity can have repercussions on:

a. students' attitudes towards the linguistic variant learned in the educational environment;
b. teachers' attitudes towards linguistic variants brought by students from the communities or linguistic communities to which they belong;
c. motivation to learn the standardized linguistic variant.

The conclusions formulated as a result of this study have contributed to conceptualizing a theoretical framework and developing a tool for identifying dimensions of alterity in the process of linguistic acquisition. This will help to shed light on the potential difficulties related to linguistic alterity in language learning and possible ways to reduce them for theorists and practitioners in this field. The research results have allowed for the formulation of the following recommendations to improve LA in the public education system at the secondary level:

a. The questionnaires and models developed in this study can be adjusted and applied in different educational contexts (classroom, school, community, university courses, etc.) and for different languages for further research purposes or for identifying solutions to difficulties related to accommodating alterity in the teaching/learning of languages.
b. The results of this research and the developed models can be used to conduct specific research on the role of alterity in the teaching/learning of a language at the national or community level. The research results can also be used comparatively to monitor the dynamics of the linguistic educational context from the perspective of accommodating alterity.
c. The theoretical framework and research results can be used in university courses, in continuing education, and in training language teachers to raise awareness of the role of alterity and social variables, stereotypes, and linguistic attitudes associated with the process of linguistic education.
d. An aspect that remains unexplored in the quantitative and qualitative questionnaires of this research, which is gaining attention among researchers, is the role of digital technologies, particularly language technologies, in the process of language education. The use of technology in language education is a significant factor in improving literacy, increasing language attractiveness, and enabling personalized learning strategies. Future research should include questions on the use of technology in language education to better understand its potential impact on the accommodation of alterity.

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ADNOTARE

Angela SOLTAN „*Politici și dimensiuni ale alterității comunităților lingvistice în Republica Moldova după 1991*”, teză de doctor în filologie, Specialitatea: 621.03. Fonetică și fonologie; dialectologie; istoria limbii; sociolingvistică; etnolingvistică, Chișinău, 2023.

Structura tezei: introducere, trei capitole, 174 de pagini de text de bază, 34 de tabele și 35 figuri, concluzii și recomandări, bibliografie din 355 de titluri, 12 anexe, declarația privind asumarea răspunderii și CV-ul autoarei.

Rezultatele tezei: au fost reflectate în 17 publicații științifice, 3 teze ale comunicărilor științifice.

Cuvinte-cheie: alteritate lingvistică, planificare lingvistică, politică lingvistică, achiziție lingvistică, educație lingvistică, variație lingvistică, comunitate lingvistică, competențe lingvistice, competențe comunicative, capital lingvistic, piață lingvistică, piața limbilor.

Scopul cercetării: identificarea dimensiunilor alterității comunităților lingvistice în contextul lingvistic, cultural și social al politicilor de achiziție lingvistică prin analiza reprezentărilor față de procesele de însușire a limbilor în educația publică de nivel mediu din Republica Moldova, aplicând Modelul de conturare a macro- și microcontextului de investigare a *alterității* în politicile de *achiziție lingvistică*.

Obiectivele cercetării: prezentarea și analiza conceptelor-cheie ale epistemologiei politicii și planificării lingvistice; examinarea viziunilor și a interpretărilor politicii și planificării lingvistice cu privire la achiziția lingvistică în Republica Moldova după 1991; urmărirea genezei lingvistice și sociologice a conceptului alteritate; examinarea abordărilor și a definițiilor conceptului comunitate lingvistică prin prisma achiziției lingvistice și a alterității; urmărirea alterității și a diversității în etapele de constituire a politicii și planificării lingvistice; delimitarea cadrului lingvistic și social al alterității în politicile de achiziție lingvistică; conturarea micro și macrocontextul de cercetare a alterității în politicile de achiziție lingvistică; delimitarea cadrului metodologic al teoriilor critice aplicate cercetării dimensiunilor alterității comunităților lingvistice în procesul achiziției lingvistice în Republica Moldova în perioada 1991 – 2014, 2015 -2022/23; identificarea dimensiunilor alterității în funcție de limbile utilizate cel mai frecvent în Republica Moldova, în funcție de limbile de instruire și limbile învățate în sistemul de educație publică de nivel mediu.

Noutatea și originalitatea științifică: conturarea cadrului lingvistic, cultural și social al cercetării alterității în politicile de achiziție lingvistică și a motivației personale de a studia limba pornind de la investigarea: rolului alterității și diversității în epistemologia politicii și planificării lingvistice; potențialului repercusiunilor alterității asupra achiziției lingvistice; rolului interacțiunii elev-profesor; factorilor macro- și microcontextului.

Problema științifică soluționată: delimitarea cadrului teoretic și praxiologic de investigare a dimensiunilor alterității în procesul achiziției lingvistice cu scopul creșterii motivației de a însuși limba standard inclusiv prin aplicarea Modelului de interacțiune elev-profesor bazat pe abordarea de coaching în micro- și macrocontextul lingvistic, cultural și social.

Semnificația teoretică: analiza complexă a studiilor teoretice actuale ale politicii și planificării lingvistice și a rolului achiziției lingvistice într-un cadru determinat de diversitate, de reconfigurări ale contactelor dintre limbi, varietăți și comunități lingvistice care dictează identificarea periodică a modelor viabile de acomodare a alterității.

Valoarea aplicativă derivă din rezultatele obținute în urma investigării alterității în contextul educațional lingvistic al Republicii Moldova din perspectivă transdisciplinară. Modelele teoretice, materialele, rezultatele și concluziile cercetării pot fi utilizate pentru cercetări ulterioare, drept suport pentru lucrări științifice, pentru pregătirea și formarea continuă a cadrelor în domeniul educației lingvistice și pentru elaborarea politicilor lingvistice educaționale.

Implementarea rezultatelor științifice a fost demonstrată prin participarea la proiecte, colocvii, conferințe naționale și internaționale și prin activități științifico-practice în context universitar.

ANNOTATION

Angela SOLTAN *"Policy and Dimensions of Alterity in Linguistic Communities of the Republic of Moldova after 1991",* Doctoral dissertation in Philology, Specialty: 621.03. Phonetics and phonology; dialectology; language history; sociolinguistics; ethnolinguistics, Chisinau, 2023

Structure of the dissertation: annotations in Romanian, English and Russian, list of abbreviations, introduction, three chapters that comprise 173 pages of body text, 34 tables, 35 figures and diagrams, conclusions and recommendations, bibliography of 355 titles, 12 appendices, declaration of compliance, author's CV.

Key-words: language policy, language planning, language education policy, linguistic alterity, language community, language variation, language acquisition, language competence, communicative competence, language capital, language market, market of languages.

Purpose of research: identifying the dimensions of alterity in language communities, in the linguistic, cultural, and social context of language acquisition policies through the analysis of representations of language acquisition processes in public education at the secondary level in the Republic of Moldova, applying the Model for outlining the macro- and micro-context of alterity investigation in language acquisition policies.

Research objectives: presentation and analysis of the key concepts of language policy and planning epistemology; analysis of views and interpretations of language policy and planning regarding language acquisition in the Republic of Moldova after 1991; tracing the linguistic and sociological genesis of the concept of alterity; exploration of the approaches and definitions of the language community concept through the prism of language acquisition and alterity; tracing alterity and diversity in the stages of language policy and planning formation; delimitation of the linguistic and social framework of alterity in language acquisition policies; outlining the micro and macro-context of alterity research in language acquisition policies; delimitation of the methodological framework of critical theories applied to the research of the dimensions of alterity in language communities in the process of language acquisition in the Republic of Moldova during the periods of 1991-2014 and 2015-2022/23; identification of the dimensions of alterity based on the languages most frequently used in the Republic of Moldova, based on the languages of instruction and the languages learned in the public education system at the secondary level.

Scientific novelty and originality: outlining the linguistic, cultural and social framework of research into alterity in language acquisition policies and personal motivation to study a language by investigating: the role of alterity and diversity in the epistemology of language policy and planning; the potential implications of alterity on language acquisition; the role of student-teacher interaction; macro- and micro-contextual factors.

Scientific problem solved: determined by the need to define a theoretical and practical framework for identifying and investigating linguistic representations and dimensions of alterity in the process of language education in order to increase the level of motivation through the application of the Model of student-teacher interaction based on coaching relationships.

Theoretical significance: comprehensive review of current language policy and planning studies including the role of language acquisition in a context defined by diversity, reconfigurations of language contacts, varieties and language communities which require periodic identification of viable models for accommodating alterity; designing the Model of student-teacher interaction based on coaching relationships and a transdisciplinary Model for outlining the macro- and micro-context of alterity investigation in language acquisition based on temporal and conceptual vectors outlined by the works of E. Haugen, E. Coșeriu, P. Bourdieu, R. L. Cooper, B. Spolsky, N. H. Hornberger, J. Jaspers, L. Verhoeven, F. V. Tochon, L. Vygotsky and by the analysis of theories and trends.

The applicative value of the research resides in the results obtained from the study of alterity in the language acquisition context of the Republic of Moldova from a transdisciplinary standpoint. The theoretical models, materials, results and conclusions of the research can be used for further research, as support for scientific works, for the continuous training and formation of staff in the field of language acquisition and for the development of language education policies.

The implementation of the scientific results has been proven by participation in national and international colloquia and conferences, as well as carrying out scientific and practical activities in a university setting.

АННОТАЦИЯ

Анжела СОЛТАН *«Политики и соизмерение инаковости языковых сообществ в Республике Молдова после 1991 года»*, Диссертация на соискание учёной степени кандидата филологических наук, Специальность: 621.03. Фонетика и фонология; диалектология; история языка; социолингвистика; этнолингвистика, Кишинев, 2023

Структура диссертации: введениее, три главы, 173 страниц основного текста, 34 таблица, 35 диаграмм, выводы и рекомендации; библиография (355 источников), 12 приложений, заявление об ответственности и резюме автора.

Ключевые слова: языковая политика, языковое планирование, политика языкового образования, лингвистическая инаковость, языковое сообщество, языковая вариация, овладение языком, языковая и коммуникативная компетентность, языковой капитал, языковый рынок, рынок языков.

Цель исследования: выявление измерений инаковости в языковых сообществах, в лингвистическом, культурном и социальном контексте через анализ представлений о процессах овладения языком в образовании общего среднего уровня в Республике Молдова с применением модели макро- и микроконтекстного исследования инаковости в политике овладения языком.

Задачи исследования: представление и анализ ключевых концепций эпистемологии языковой политики и планирования языка; анализ взглядов и интерпретаций языковой политики и планирования языка в отношении овладения языком в Республике Молдова после 1991 года; отслеживание лингвистического и социологического происхождения концепции инаковости; изучение подходов и определений понятия языкового сообщества в свете овладения языком и инаковости; исследование влияния инаковости и разнообразия на этапы формирования языковой политики и планирования языка; выделение лингвистического и социального контекста инаковости в языковой политике; определение микро и макроконтекста исследования инаковости в языковой политике; определение методологической основы критических теорий, применяемых к исследованию измерений инаковости языковых сообществ в процессе овладения языком в Республике Молдова в период с 1991 по 2014, 2015-2022/23; выявление измерений инаковости в зависимости от языков, наиболее часто используемых в Республике Молдова, от языков обучения и изучаемых языков в системе среднего образования.

Научная новизна и оригинальность исследования: инаковость и языковые установки, рассматриваемые в меж- и трансдисциплинарных рамках образовательной языковой политики в связи с мотивацией к изучению языков и Моделью взаимодействия ученик-учитель, основанной на отношениях коучинга.

Решенная научная задача определяется необходимостью разработки теоретической и праксеологической основы для выявления и исследования лингвистических установок и измерений инаковости в процессе языкового образования с целью повышения уровня мотивации посредством применения Модели взаимодействия ученика и учителя, основанной на отношениях коучинга.

Теоретическая значимость исследования: всесторонний анализ текущих исследований в области языковой политики и планирования, включая роль овладения языком в контексте, определенном разнообразием, переконфигурациями языковых контактов и языковых сообществ, требующими периодической идентификации жизнеспособных моделей для понимания инаковости; разработка модели взаимодействия студентов и учителей на основе отношений коучинга и трансдисциплинарной теоретической модели для исследования инаковости в овладении языком.

Аппликативная значимость исследования: полученные результаты исследования инаковости в контексте овладения языком в Республике Молдова из трансдисциплинарной перспективы могут быть использованы для дальнейших исследований, научных работ, для непрерывной подготовки и обучения кадров в области овладения языком и разработки политик в области языкового образования.

Внедрение научных результатов продемонстрировано участием в национальных и международных коллоквиумах и конференциях, осуществлением научно-практической деятельности в университетском контексте.

SOLTAN ANGELA

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