

Trends in Teaching and Learning of Mother Tongue and English as a Foreign Language in Kosovo

Xhavit Rexhaj & Blerim Saqipi

AAB University, University of Prishtina / Prishtina, Kosovo

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ABSTRACT

Theories of language acquisition and learning show the differences and similarities in picking up mother tongue and second or foreign languages. As a result of differences in traditions, cultures, technologies, economic and social aspects, these differences and similarities are then reflected in various ways in different countries. We have carried out a research into the Albanian and English language teaching and learning in Kosovo to find out how are the similarities and differences between acquisition and learning reflected in the reality and practices of Kosovo schools. We have observed English and Albanian lessons of 15 teachers in 10 schools and five municipalities. The sample of schools and municipalities was selected to be representative mainly of the geographic areas and social backgrounds.

The preliminary results show that for most different reasons there is a mix of nativist and constructivist approaches translated in respective methods and strategies in today's teaching and learning of languages in Kosovo schools. In the small Kosovo, students are exposed to both communicative and grammar based approaches, teachers are sometimes facilitators and in other times all-knowing teachers, textbooks vary from most up-to-date to surprisingly old (sometimes older than the students using them!). Technology ranges from black-board-and-chalk to lap-tops with multimedia applications and internet access.

In the end the study identifies points for cross-language exchanges in order to mutually benefit from strengths and to overcome weaknesses in both systems. Results and recommendations of the study will be made available to the education authorities to use for the improvement of teaching and learning of languages in general in Kosovo. They will also be used to design an in-service teacher training module supported by the GIZ.