

It is estimated that from among six thousand existing languages spoken around the world only a few hundred of them will survive in the next centuries. Under the influence of the globalization processes, modernization, the new media, changes of lifestyles and mobility of people, a gradual, yet visible language uniformization of the world is taking place. The issue also affects Europe. Among endangered languages there are two Sorbian languages: Upper and Lower Sorbian. They belong to Slavs, living in Germany in the territory close to the borders with Poland and the Czech Republic.

According to sociolinguists, the essential criterion posing a threat to the language's existence is a low dynamics of its intergenerational transmission. With such a decline, each generation knows the language of their ancestors to a lesser extent and ultimately the entire community moves on toward using the dominating language. Such a process is taking place in the majority of minority language communities in European countries, i.e. the Sorbs. At the same time, the process of the Sorbian languages revitalization have started due to which they gained access to the local public life, administration, the mass media, and primarily to schools. The Upper Sorbian language has been functioning in schools in Upper Lusatia since post-war times when schools were established in which Sorbian was the language of instruction and in which classes were open where pupils from German-speaking homes could learn Sorbian.

In a situation of a weakened or severed transmission of minority languages within family, it is the schools that play the most significant role in the process of revitalizing the languages. It is the schools where young people who come from linguistically assimilated homes have a chance to learn their ancestor's language and acquire competences which allow them to use the language also in real life outside school. Success of revitalization of minority languages depends on whether this happens or not. Unfortunately, for the most part, pupils from the families where a minority language is not used do not acquire sufficient language competences and/or experience blockages to speak the languages outside their school. Thus, they do not become *new speakers* of the languages and do not progress beyond the level of minority language *learners*. To research what factors influence the phenomenon becomes, therefore, one of the most important challenges facing the sociolinguists and anthropologists for whom minority languages constitute the focus of their interests.

The aim of the project is to observe what factors (cultural, social, economic, *etc.*) are the reason for the situation where young people who come from German-speaking families and who learn the Upper Sorbian language rarely want or are able to use the language after graduation. Pupils motivation to learn the language, the way communities of practice related to the use of Sorbian are created, reasons, process and results of the antagonisms between Sorbs and Germans, as well as the prevalent ideologies with regard to the Slavic minority's language and culture will be examine. All that factors may be the reason of the Sorbian language revitalization failure.

Designed as interdisciplinary and comprehensive, the research will aim at highlighting the issues concerning the attitudes of German-speaking pupils to the Sorbian language and culture as well as the possibilities of their entering the Sorbian-speaking community, the relationships between the linguistic ideologies and the willingness to join the group, functioning of strong ethnic boundaries and the influence of the latter on the success of revitalization projects.

Not only will our focusing on the research subject matter allow us to understand this specific educational case in Lusatia but also acquire a better knowledge about cultural and social mechanisms which lead to revitalization of minority languages or which constitute an obstacle thereto.