

THE ROLE OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES IN A SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Prof. Msc. Shqipe Husaj Lecturer
Shqipehusaj5@gmail.com**Abstract**

Foreign languages knowledge importance has been constantly growing within international cooperation in every field of life. The main body of this work will be focused on the role of foreign languages especially English language spoken by the local staff here in Kosova and elsewhere in a sustainable development and tourism, considering that no politics, no business no cooperation can be run properly if people are not able to speak the language of the partner/ the Global understanding Our international cooperation is positively influenced not only by the good international reputation of our country, as the youngest country but also by its location. Kosova is an extraordinarily attractive place for partners both from Europe and from overseas countries. In the years after the war tourist of the world have been very much interested to visit attractions of Kosova and afterwards they have expressed their interest in investing here. The main and the most important factor in our life – **Time** – is more important than anything else. Interpreters' intermediation requires a double time to understand the conversation and it also weakens the importance because no one can interpret our meaning better than we do it ourselves. By Global Understanding in a comfortable atmosphere, partners share information, opinions, values, attitudes and emotions. Partners email each other on a daily basis to openly discuss and evaluate their values and share their traditions. But, through one-to-one partnering, people see similarities among themselves, see positives in others, and de-emphasize the negative differences. This realization is key to changing negative stereotypes and understanding other cultures. In tune with the rapidly advancing wave of globalization, government should come up with different ideas and provide several programs for officials of various government departments and students in order to help them improve foreign languages. The "International Conference Specialist Course" and "Protocol Training Course" are among the programs which have been well received and practiced by many of the countries world wide. Many Universities also organize "International Relations Education Program for Youth" and hold the "Language Camps for College Students" during the summer and winter vacations. All members in the Government Departments should be required to demonstrate graduate level reading proficiency in a foreign language prior to completion of the degree program. Graduate level proficiency is the ability to understand accurately newspaper and professional journal articles in the field of foreign relations, using standard reference materials.

Key words; foreign languages, courses, government departments, global understanding, tourism,

JEL- Classification; A, A2

Introduction

The definition of sustainable development is broad in that it includes economical, ecological, social and educational aspects of sustainability. Thus, there are many different ways to approach the issue of creating more sustainable community. What is clear is the need of united efforts among governmental leaders and citizens throughout the country to achieve this goal. Communication, consequently, plays an important role in the progress of creating a sustainable way of life around the globe. People who are multilingual and multi-competent in communication strategies can have a greater appreciation for the interconnectedness of modern life. As Crystal (2001) alludes to, English is the growing lingua franca of international interaction.

The importance of foreign languages can be best realized by studying them and by having an opportunity to travel a lot and meeting people of different cultures and traditions. There are many reasons why one should learn a foreign language.

- Firstly, learning a language of another country helps one understand its culture and tradition. Language becomes a window to look at the nation's culture, its traditions and its history.
- Secondly, by speaking a foreign language one can understand one's own language better both grammatically and literarily as well as deepens the understanding of one's own culture.
- The benefits from knowing a foreign language in business are: cutting the time required for negotiations in half, being able to establish a relationship with other countries, and eliminates poor judgment due to insufficient data. and being able to speak the nation's language helps

one achieve goals much easier and much quicker Languages are a medium of communication as they are means of expression. They can become links joining dissimilar cultures and traditions. Knowing many languages improves one's cognitive skills and interpretive abilities. When talking about the importance of speaking a foreign language, the Italian film director Federico Fellini put it this way; **"A different language is a different vision of life"**. So, one must keep in mind that understanding foreign languages is indeed rewarding because one can save time, money and the most importantly one learns much more by traveling to foreign countries than by reading books about those countries. It's not the same reading about a nation as meeting that nation and reading their minds and behaviors. Carrie Harris (2006, The Importance of foreign language in Business) wrote about the importance of foreign languages (global understanding) in business, because of the following reasons: **having a deep desire to become his own boss, wanting to converse with diverse people freely, and wanting to have an edge over his competitors in his chosen field.** With this society becoming more diverse with other cultures and peoples beliefs, it is only natural and right to learn other languages to keep up with the change. In the developing business, one does not want to isolate people due to his/her handicap of not knowing their language, because that would limit one from providing services, lose money, and lose credibility throughout the community.

In regard to sustainable development, Ikeda says, "Because sustainable development is such a comprehensive concept, it can provide the links across otherwise non conversant

bodies of knowledge" (Ikeda, 2004). These "bodies of knowledge" are more various than ecology and environmental activism. They bisect politics, economics, sociology, the humanities, etc. Therefore, the discourses of English are directly linked to sustainable development because the English speaking world is, in part, made up of some of the most polluting, economically active, resource-wise, avaricious and militarily powerful regimes on the planet.

The role of educational institutions towards ELT

When we ask why should the government promote English language teaching and learning widely and what the effects may be of this ELT requirement, we are looking at the relationship between the global spread of English and local (regional, national, provincial) needs. According to the perspective of the government and the public at large, English has already played and will continue to play a significant role in the Kosova's present socio-economic development. And as English is taught in more and more contexts throughout the country, other questions arise about implications for other languages within Kosova education system, and about the possible social and cultural effects of such education. English and other foreign languages are not just subjects to be studied in school. There are indications that foreign languages are instrumentally involved in many areas of academic research. Medical researchers who want to get responses to their work find it more effective to publish in English than in other languages. Scholars in fields, such as the social sciences and humanities do not utilize foreign languages in publishing their work to the same extent as those in scientific and technological fields and, as a result, find themselves linguistically isolated from their foreign colleagues (Suzuki, 1987). Foreign language instructors are some of the most innovative teachers in education, and educational institutions should encourage their foreign-language teachers to increase teaching quality in the classroom. English language in Kosova apart from being used as an official language in all documents and papers issued by the government, it is widely used and recognized in education and in the private sector too. Students learn English mainly for instrumental reasons of education (graduate studies, to be research assistants, etc.) and better career opportunities. Today, English is not just a compulsory school subject, but "also a must" for most of the jobs in urban environment of Kosova, as in most of the other countries in the world.

ELT constitutes an important part of the student's preparation to *responsible citizenship* in societies that are becoming increasingly multilingual and multicultural. A natural task for language learning is to connect people from various cultural backgrounds and thus increase openness for human diversity. There is thus a new challenge for second and foreign language teachers to facilitate their students to grow beyond the boundaries of their own cultures (Kaikkonen 2001). Such a goal also entails a clear *socio-political dimension* in foreign language education: promoting student autonomy and democratic citizenship education as an inherent part of language education. To do so teachers need to encourage the pupils' active

participation and responsible action in the classroom community. They also need to enhance their students' *personal identities* as part of a wider European (and global) identity. (CEFR 2001; Beacco and Byram 2002;.)

The first language schools and colleges here in Kosova such as; Cambridge School, AUK (The American School of Kosova) and the others which started their activity here in Kosova after the war are having a great effect in young generations as student of these schools get prepared for their future career in English language because almost all school subjects are taught in English.. On the other hand conversation schools that emphasize foreign language abound throughout Kosova also have an important role. The difference between these institutions is that the motivations for those that attend these language schools include professional training, study as a hobby, preparation for a move overseas, and sometimes even a desire to seek an international marriage.

General English or English for Specific Purposes

There is a definite relationship between foreign language studies at precollege levels and the programs that exist within higher education. If high schools require foreign language training for graduation, then our high school graduates will not lack sufficient exposure to the world, and our universities and colleges will also require foreign language competence as a condition for entry and this way it will be easier for the government, businesses and other institution to communicate with the rest of the world. With colleges competing for students in order to alleviate financial burdens, it is no wonder that certain requirements, both entrance and graduation, are considered to be expendable, perhaps even as hindrances.

"Students must understand geography and have a sense of global awareness. They must know how to work appropriately and productively with others; be able to leverage the collective intelligence of groups when appropriate; and they need to be able to bridge cultural differences and use differing perspectives to increase innovation and the quality of work."

- Partnership for 21st Century Skills-

The lack of these skills is a growing concern for young people today. Most high school students even though they learn general English do not learn about these topics in their current curriculum. Hence, the Ministry of Education should be pushing for it to be included in national curricula so that students will be better prepared as they enter their academic and professional careers.

Therefore different types of English are required dependent on the field of study or the working place such as; ESP (English for Specific Purposes) according to Dudley - Evans (in Anthony: 1997) has been referred to as "applied ELT" (English Language Teaching) as the content and aims of any course are determined by the needs of a specific group of learners. ESP is often divided into EAP (English for Academic Purposes) preparing students for academic studies in universities around the world. Students learn skills such as writing academic papers, taking lecture notes and studying for exams, and EOP (English for Occupational Purposes) teaching English in general or particular

workplace training and development. Further sub-divisions of English for Occupational Purposes are sometimes made into business English, professional English (e.g. English for doctors, lawyers) and **Vocational English** (e.g. English for tourism, nursing, aviation, and bricklaying). Kiktauskienė (2006) states that teaching language for specific purposes is determined by different professional/occupational, social and other – needs of the learner. Therefore, English for specific purposes (ESP) includes specialized programmes which are designed to develop the communicative use of English in a specialized field of science, work or technology. To be able to speak a professional subject is not enough to know general vocabulary

Global Understanding Programms

Everyday life on our planet is undergoing transformation via cultural, social, economic, political and environmental processes which are separate and interrelated. From changing political maps to production processes reinvented by technology to transportation and communication innovations; these changes reach across all scales and boundaries. The globalized social and spatial effects on each person's daily life on our planet are unevenly distributed. Still, all aspects involve new combinations and re-combinations of the cultural, social, economical and the natural on one side, and the spatial and temporal on the other. 2009, Mathias 2009 **The IGU Initiative on Global Understanding**

World peace will require an appreciation for the richness and importance of diverse cultural, religious, and social systems and a strengthening of those traditions that contribute to a sustainable world civilization. Global understanding demands awareness of the interdependence of all things and a profound sense of responsibility for the fate of the planet and for the well being of humanity. Developing world mindedness requires a re-orienting of education to include among personal, local, and regional concerns the challenges facing the entire world. The establishment of a peaceful society requires the arts of consultation and collective decision-making.

Global understanding Programms help :

- Enhancing the abilities of Foreign Service Officers by offering professional courses to meet specific job requirements.
- Sharpening negotiation skills in bilateral as well as multilateral conferences
- Improving foreign language proficiency

Considering that Kosovo is an independent state and has its officers in a large number of European countries as well as in other countries of the world the primary purpose of these courses would be to enhance the abilities of newly recruited officers as diplomats. The Global Understanding Programs around the world provide students with the opportunity to increase and document their understanding of, and facility working with global processes. Students wishing to graduate in the Global Understanding Program complete a series of general education courses in which they learn, practice and demonstrate competence in global politics, global economics and cultural elements in a global world. They will also develop intercultural communication

and foreign language skills and have global experiences here and abroad.

Successful language and GU programs

- The "International Conference Specialist Course" and "Protocol Training Course" are among the programs which have been well received and practiced by many of the countries world wide.

- The Office of Education and Training of IFANS (The Institute for Foreign Affairs and National Security) is responsible for training world-class diplomats equipped with the competitiveness needed to maximize Korea's national interests and expand its influence in the highly competitive and rapidly changing international community. IFANS also plays a key role in providing international education programs for government officers and employees of other related agencies. (www.forlantra@mofat.go.kr)

- The Global Education Model of Schooling encourages an appreciation of the cultures, traditions and religions represented by each child at the school, and beyond the school and the nation, by the world at large. GEM also promotes student academic exchange programs, international month-long school camps, and international cultural exchange programs.

- Many Universities also organize "International Relations Education Program for Youth" and hold the "Language Camps for College Students" during the summer and winter vacations.

- The University of Prishtina is among those Universities that organize summer University program. This program comprises of 30 courses annually and brings together more than 250 international and local professors over the years. In total, more than 2000 students from Kosovo, South Eastern Europe and the rest of the world participated in the Summer University. As it has been successfully achieved previously at the University of Tuzla, the Pristina Summer University project was transferred to the University of Prishtina in January 2005 and has assisted the UP in adopting the Bologna Action Lines and improving the quality of the curriculum. Moreover, previous editions proved to be an enormous success in encouraging regional co-operation and inter-ethnic reconciliation.

- Taj Global Understanding – is an exchange program in the United States in which students choose to live in a foreign country to learn among others language and culture. TGU programs are aimed at fostering a greater awareness and understanding of humanity, thus creating a more peaceful world.

- In order to enhance the quality of the education, St. Edward's University has developed a plan that will provide to their students multiple and enriched opportunities to achieve a significant degree of **global understanding**.

These and many other educational institutions should be taken as models for our government to offer our students the opportunity to improve the way of life by becoming more effective for the society by being professionally and generally better prepared.

Conclusion

Because sustainable development is such a comprehensive concept, it can provide the links across otherwise non conversant bodies of knowledge. These "bodies of

knowledge" are more various than ecology and environmental activism. They bisect politics, economics, sociology, the humanities, etc. Therefore, the discourses of English are directly linked to sustainable development because the English speaking world is, in part, made up of some of the most polluting, economically active, resource-wise, avaricious and militarily powerful regimes on the planet. The participation of these nations in sustainable development is the key. However hard-fought it may be, language is the first step towards dialog and consensus. We have argued several points in this paper. First, that interconnectedness is the foundation of sustainable development, and that foundation is best built upon a deep-seated respect for multilingualism. Second, we argued that educators must be aware of the issues surrounding English as a global language, and must make such resources of information available to the students. As the empowerment in this sense means educating about the dominant discourses of English. Education about these discourses enables participation therein.

In tune with the rapidly advancing wave of globalization, government should come up with different ideas and provide several programs for officials of various government departments and students in order to help them improve foreign languages and therefore global understanding in general. In order to have a sustainable development and a better tourism, the government should spend a part of its budget for somehow impressing on the minds of children and parents alike the desirability of spending time and money on foreign languages and international studies.

If the educational institutions fail to interest students at an early age in learning about the world, then the whole process of creating the so-called "critical mass" from which to recruit experts for the service in government and business comes to the end.

The government conducts all international affairs in foreign languages /English. All members in the Government

Departments and other departments dealing with tourism, art, education, sport etc. should be required to demonstrate graduate level reading proficiency in a foreign language prior to completion of the degree program in cooperation with the Ministry of Education. Graduate level proficiency is the ability to understand accurately newspaper and professional journal articles in the field of foreign relations, using standard reference materials. The more the government emphasis the importance of foreign language education for the employees the more they feel appreciated in their working place if they master foreign languages. We further researched the obstacles for conducting business internationally, language was the main one. On foreign language skills, departments that have decision-makers who speak foreign languages are expected to have better performances than firms that have monolingual managers. Independent of technical business aspects, language proficiency becomes most important in the generic cognitive skills: finding contacts, meeting people, establishing partners, maintaining relationships and providing follow-up, etc. Foreign language knowledge is a tool with which to complete a job: it is a greater help when used properly but if used incorrectly it can become an expensive waste of time and money. We also noticed that Implementing Global Understanding Programs with the curricula that will meet the needs of all of its students regardless of their intellectual ability, offering a wide range of subjects including politics, business, languages etc is an inevitable requirement.

I would like to end up this work with the slogan "I do not want my house to be walled in on all sides and my windows to be stuffed. I want the cultures of all land to be blown about my house as freely as possible". The time has come to launch a flagship to transform Kosova – to prep the planet and to further the practice of internationalism for the next generation

References

1. Ikeda, D. (2004). Education for sustainable development. The Japan Times. Issue Nov 22, 2004.
2. Obben .J and . Magagula.P, Int. Small Busin. J. 21 (2003) 73
3. Swift. J, Eu. J. Market. 25 (1991) 36
4. www.the_importance_of_foreign_language_
5. www.globaleducation.org
6. Mathias H. (2009)- IGU Initiative on Global Understanding
7. Bhatia, V. (2001). The power and politics of genre in Burns, A. and Coffin, C. (eds.) *Analysing English in a global context*. London: Routledge.
8. Bethel, D. (ed.) (1989) *Education for creative living*. Birnbaum, A. (trans.) Ames, Iowa: Iowa State University.
9. Enderwick, P. and E.M. M. Akoorie, Int. Market. Rev. 11 (1994)
10. Palacios, J. (2004). Corporate citizenship and social responsibility in a globalized world. *Citizenship Studies*, 8 (4), 383-402. 200
- 11 <http://www.globaleducation.org/understanding.htm>
- 119 The IGU Initiative on Global Understanding
- 2009 The IGU Initiative on Global Understanding