

ABSTRACTS

Albert Barrera i Vidal

SYMPATHETIC BUT CRITICAL OBSERVATIONS REGARDING LANGUAGE POLICY IN CATALONIA TODAY

Catalonia offers many insights into the mechanisms of language policy in border regions since the Països catalans are not confined to Spain but include adjacent countries as well. The history of the Catalanian language dates back to the 13th century. From the end of the 16th century Catalanian cultural life underwent a process of degradation that continued up to the Renaissance (*Renaixença*) in the 19th century. This Renaissance tried to bolster the linguistic and cultural identity of the Catalonians especially during the two periods of autonomous administration (*Mancomunitat* 1914–1925 and *Generalitat* 1932–1939). After 1939 the language policy of the Franco dictatorship aimed at systematic repression of all aspects of Catalanian cultural life. The process of democratisation after 1975 brought all minority languages equal rights. On this basis the Catalanian language received official support and was promoted in all areas of public life. Today the language is co-official with Spanish. Recent attempts to give the Catalanian language priority over Spanish threaten to reverse the former situation of Spanish domination. Certain organizations even advocate the transformation of Catalonia into a purely monolingual area. This attitude is criticised by many both inside and outside of Catalonia.

Adrien Finck / Maryse Staiber

REGIONAL LANGUAGE IN ALSACE

This study of language policy in Alsace today focuses on the importance of „regional language“. It is primarily aimed at stating the problem; it also presents and justifies the authors' point of view. The main point of the argument is that „regional language“ in this context is to be defined as encompassing both Alsatian – used as a term designating the rich variety of dialects spoken in the Alsace – and German – i.e. „Hochdeutsch“ as the standard language or written language of the koine. This definition reflects a linguistic and historical reality which is still in existence today. The study also attempts to present future perspectives in a European context.

Lutz Götze

ON THE POSITION OF THE GERMAN LANGUAGE IN THE STATES OF THE CIS, THE CZECH REPUBLIC AND HUNGARY

The author describes the current situation of German minorities in the successor states of the former Soviet Union, in the Czech Republic and in Hungary. He also analyses the teaching of German at school and university level. Special attention is paid to the increasing demand for German language courses in Central and East European countries, a demand that cannot always be satisfied by the institutions of German cultural policy abroad. As a conclusion the author proposes an outline of future policies promoting the German language, a policy that is not tainted by visionary zeal.