

Retrospective Insight on the Changing Status of the Romanian Language Spoken in the Republic of Moldova

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Abstract : From its transformation into a taboo and its hiding under the so-called “Moldovan language” or under the euphemistic expression “state language” to its regained status recognition as an official language, the Romanian language spoken in the Republic of Moldova has undergone impressive reforms in the last 60 years. Meant to erase the awareness of citizens’ ethnic identity and turn a majority language into a minority one, all the laws and regulations issued on the field succeeded into setting numerous barriers for speakers of Romanian. Either manifested as social constraints or materialized into assumed rejection of mother tongue usage, all these laws have demonstrated their usefulness and major impact on the Romanian-speaking population. This article is the result of our research carried out over 10 years with the support of students, and Moldovan citizens, from the master's degree program "Romanian language - identity and cultural awareness." We present here a retrospective insight of the reforms, laws, and regulations that contributed to the shifted status of the Romanian language from the official language, seen as the language of common use both in the public and private spheres, in the minority language that surrendered its privileged place to the Russian language, firstly in the public sphere, and then, slowly but surely, in the private sphere. Our main goal here is to identify and make speakers understand what the barriers to learning Romanian language are nowadays when the social pressure on using Russian no longer exists.

Keywords : linguistic barriers, lingua franca, private sphere, public sphere, reformation

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