

THE ASPECT OF TEACHING THE ITALIAN LANGUAGE IN THE ALBANIAN EDUCATION SYSTEM

Meri Gjoleka, PhD

The Department of Foreign Languages, the Faculty of Humane Sciences
The University of Vlora “Ismail Qemali”, Albania

Abstract

The beginning of the 90-s marks a watershed for the Albanian education system in the field of teaching of foreign languages such as: English, French, Italian, German, etc. The opening of Albania to other countries and the new needs for communication brought to the attention of Albanian specialists teaching foreign language, the immediate need to the renewal of the previous curriculum in the field of foreign languages in compliance with the new European models suggested by the Council of Europe. In this context, the teaching of the Italian language, as part of the European linguistic richness, took a special development by highlighting the achievements to date and the prospects for the future. It is through our article that we will try to give an overview of the development of teaching of the Italian language in Albania in all its levels, focusing in particular, on those levels where the interest of the Albanian students and their achievements have been most visible.

Keywords: Foreign language, Italian language, methodology, communication, bilingualism, multilingualism

Introduction

Foreign languages have always been an efficient communication tool in a world and culture which is different from one’s own culture. Even in Albania, the issue of the foreign language study has been and remains quite interesting. Especially, the Albanians have shown particular interest to the study of the Italian language. Of course, such growing interest in the study of the Italian language has its own reasons. After the fall of the communist regime in the 1990s, the distance between Albania and Italy was re-dimensioned. Italy quickly realized that the Albanian immigration problem would become a problem of itself as well. It was really surprising that all this mass of immigrants understood and spoke sufficient Italian language, which

facilitated their escape towards the Apennine Peninsula to more than any other European state and allowed the prospect of a faster integration of them to the Italian society. The Italian television and its popular TV programs for the Albanians have the merit of the Italian language recognition by the Albanians.

Noticing the natural dissemination of the Italian language, which grew intensively after the 1990s, due to the influence of Italian television channels, Italy, soon decided to take the initiative of a cultural and academic cooperation with Albania in the context of a global economic and social collaboration.

The situation of the Italian language today

While today Albanians find it easier to better understand and reply to an Italian tourist rather than to a Frenchman or Englishman, the education system follows a different logic in teaching foreign languages, despite the real popularity the languages may have. Initially, in the 1990s the French was the language that was most taught in the country and with the longest history in the Albanian education system since 1945, by becoming the first foreign language to be taught in Albania after the World War II. It was followed by the teaching of the Russian language and later by the teaching of the English language, which was introduced to the Albanian education system during the '78. While the Italian language teaching has its beginning in 1991, when for the first time it was experimented in 'Çajupi' high school in Tirana and gradually spread throughout the country. The social-political situation after the 90s brought about new changes in the educational policy of the MES (Ministry of Education and Science) in regard with the foreign languages, which began to rely on the guidelines and the strategies of the COE (Council of Europe) for respecting the multilingualism and multiculturalism and by thus being specifically reflected in its strategies and official documents. The second important document in relation to this matter is the law for the pre-university educational system, which determines that Albanian students must finish the school by learning two foreign languages, without specifying which will be mandatory, but one of them must be one of the languages of the Council Europe. But does the society reflect those reports and linguistic tendencies taught at school?

How much is learned and liked today the language of our neighboring country (the Italian language), spread from generation to generation, or even by just the TV during the communist isolation years, the language of over two hundred thousand emigrants or twelve thousand Albanian students in Italy? What place is it taking now and will it take to the public education system in the future? The only existing measuring tool, but not the only one to witness the wider reality, is the current educational

system, in which Italian is the second language most learned in the country, chosen by the students themselves on the basis of curricula, by being ranked as the first foreign language among the second foreign languages studied in Albania with 45%, whereas in comparison with other foreign languages like English and French it can be converted somewhere to 5%¹, in other words it is the third foreign language after the two main official languages of the EU as the nearest regional language for us apart from the Spanish and Chinese that are taught as second foreign languages as well.

The Italian-Albanian bilateral agreements

According to a recent study conducted by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the learning of the Italian language is growing all over the world. To the group of those who learn it for personal satisfaction, mainly for cultural reasons, is added the growing number of those who decide to learn it for study and work reasons. After the memorandums of 2006 or 2011 between the Albanian and the Italian government, in the framework of plurilingualism which was strongly propagandized by the Council of Europe, it was also requested a wider dissemination of the Italian language in the country. Today the Italian language is taught in the pre-university system from the third grade of the elementary school to the twelve grade of the high school and the vocational educational schools. It is taught in 62 Albanian schools in 19 counties such as: Kruje, Fier, Elbasan, Lushnja, Mat, Malesi e Madhe, Shkoder Pogradec, Kavaja, Durres, Kolonje, Lac, Lezhe, and no doubt in Tirana, Korca, Vlora and Shkodra. It is mainly taught in the elementary (9-year educational system) schools (38 schools in total) and less in the high schools (24 schools), and aspiring for the moment that in the near future it can reach 10% as a trend for the Albanian students to learn it in order to continue the studies in Italy, or as the language that becomes a bridge between the two countries and two old cultures in order to work together in a European context.

The Italian language courses offered by the Italian Institute of Culture

A substantial amount of work for the dissemination of the Italian language is carried out by the Italian Institute of Culture. The work of the Italian Institute of Culture consists in promoting the Italian culture and language through offering Italian language courses, meticulously choosing the staff of professors for enhancing the quality of teaching and the language courses in order that the process of learning the Italian language can prove to be worthy to each student.

¹ <http://agjencia.info/2012/03/14/italishtja-gjuha-e-trete-ne-shqiperi/>

These private Italian language courses have been organized by the Italian Institute of Culture in Tirana, Berat, Bilisht, Burrel, Durrës, Elbasan, Fier, Kavajë, Korce, Krujë, Kuvovë, Lezhë, Shkodër and Vlorë; The Italian Institute of Culture is a center accredited by the University for Foreigners of Perugia, to issue the certificate of the Italian language acknowledgment, Celi; the departments at the Universities of Tirana, Gjirokastra, Elbasan, Shkodra, Vlora.

These Italian language courses are offered to people who want to study or work in Italy, without excluding anyone, and by thus including all those who are interested in learning the Italian language through courses starting from children aged 5 to teenagers aged 11 to 14 years, or for students aged 17 and 18, who actually make up the majority of those who go to study in Italy.

The result of the work of this Institute consists in issuing the certificates of recognition of the level of the Italian language according to the European framework of the foreign languages, through the tests and certificates issued by the University for Foreigners of Perugia and the University for Foreigners of Siena, operating as a headquarter that offers Italian language courses and the opportunity to provide certificates for them. Students take courses for level C1 or C2 which are the highest levels in the Italian language. Or those, who want to take A1 or A2 level language courses, when the time comes to go to study in Italy they must have achieved the minimum level of B2 to be accepted in the Italian Universities.

Those who receive in Albania the certificate of the Italian language acknowledgment go in Italy to study and not to be employed. Those who have attended the Italian language courses at the Italian Institute of Culture and have received different certificates have had the opportunity to be employed in some Italian enterprises in Albania. What it helps the Albanian students when they receive the Certificate of Acknowledgement of the Italian language at this Institute is that it is easier for them to get integrated into the Italian society and to properly cope with the study. But the Albanian citizens can also be employed in Italy. According to a law of the Italian Ministry of Labor, which has a representative office in Albania, through an agreement between Albania and Italy, it accepts the requests of a group of Albanian migrant people in Italy for employment in various fields such as tourism, social services to the elderly, in the field of agriculture etc. Those people should receive a level of Italian language learning, which is lower than B2, so is A2, a level which enables them to obtain a residence permit in Italy. So, the attendance of such Italian language courses is valuable for anyone who wants to get employed or to study in Italy.

The Bilingual Sections in the Albanian education system

The Memorandum of Understanding signed by the Governments of the two countries, Albania and Italy, in April 26, 2002, began with the Italian-Albanian sections for the bilingual high schools. Their study program is bilingual and bicultural, and 50% of subjects are developed in the Italian language. The first bilingual sections began operating in Tirana in September 1998, while the two other sections in Shkodër and Korca started their activity in September 2000.²

In January 2011, a new Memorandum of Understanding was signed between Italy and Albania, replacing that of the year 2002 and providing a division between the elementary school (9-year education system) and the high school. In the elementary school from the grade VI to IX (four years) the Italian language is learned as a first foreign language. In high schools, from the grade X to XII (three years), it is required the learning of the Italian language and literature and of other subjects in the Italian language.

The teaching process of the bilingual section has combined the humanist tradition and the scientific knowledge, providing not only the education of students who will be able to successfully pursue their studies in the Albanian or the Italian Universities, but also to become a connecting bridge in the relations between the two countries and the two cultures, so that after their university graduation they can work in a European context. The Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs promotes the dissemination of the Italian language in Albania through the Italian-Albanian bilingual sections in the high schools in Tirane, Korca and Shkoder, in which the High School Diploma, together with the Declaration of Validity issued by the Embassy or Consulate, allows the student's enrollment not only in the Albanian universities, but also in the Italian ones without the need of the certification of language or through schools, part of the program "Iliria", in which the Italian is the first foreign language to be taught.

Starting from the 2011-2012, the bilingual sections have a completely renovated structure that is orientated towards a higher level of education equivalent to that of the high school.

The cities and the schools with the bilingual sections. The Italian-Albanian bilingual sections operate in the city of Tirana in the following elementary schools: "Peter Budi", "Red"; the high school "Ismail Kamal"; in the city of Korca in the elementary school: "The New School", "Sevasti Qiriazi" and in the high school, "Themistokli Gërmenji"; in Shkodra in the elementary school "Ndre Mjeda", "Ismail Qemali" and the school "28 Nentori". The teaching process is bilingual and bicultural. From the 10th

² <http://gjimnaziismailqemali.com/Shkollaitneal.pdf>

grade to the 12th grade the development of school curricula is 50% in the Albanian language and 50% in the Italian language.

The Italian language in elementary school (9-year education system). The Italian language teaching begins from the grades 6-9. It is taught with Italian methods and texts, which are distributed free of charge every year. While in the grades 8 and 9 begins the learning of the terminology that helps teaching in subjects such as: literature, math, science and history of world civilization. The level of knowledge of the Italian language at the end of 9th grade should be B1.

The Italian language in high school (3-year education system). The level of knowledge of the Italian language in high school admission must be at least B1. For the subjects such as: the Italian language and literature, history of world civilization, mathematics and physics, the teaching is carried out by Italian professors and Italian original texts, which are distributed free of charge to the students. For the biology and art history courses, the teaching is carried out by Albanian professors qualified to teach in the Italian language. The level of knowledge of Italian at the end of grade 12 should be C1. A statistic data of the Albanian Ministry of Education, indicates that the number of students enrolled in these sections, is as follows:

The students of the Italian-Albanian bilingual sections for the academic year 2011-2012

| Compulsory school | Grade VI | Grade VII | Grade VIII | Grade IX |
|---|---|---------------------|------------|--------------------------------|
| Tirana | 39 "Budi" school 31 "Red School" | 38 | 37 | 65 "Dardani" (2 classes) |
| Shkodra | 34" I. Qemali" school 30 "N. Mjeda" school | 37 | 36 | 35 36 |
| Korça | 35"S. Qiriazhi" school 28 "The New School" | 21 "The New School" | 16 | 19 18 |
| The Total number of the enrolled students | 197 | 96 | 89 | 173 |

| High school | Grade X The new system | Grade XI The Transitory system | Grade XII The Transitory system | Grade V The old system | The Total number of the enrolled students |
|---|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------|---|
| Tirana | 37 | 22 | 12 | 16 | 87 |
| Shkodra | 37 | 23 | 12 | 17 | 89 |
| Korca | 31 | 24 | 15 | 13 | 83 |
| The Total number of the enrolled students | 105 | 69 | 39 | 46 | 259 |

The Project "ILIRIA", the Italian language in the pre--university educational system

"Iliria" is a project between the Albanian Ministry of Education and Science and the Italian government and was launched in the academic year 2002-2003 in order to introduce the Italian language as the first foreign language in the elementary school (9-year educational system) and the high school education. In this agreement, which is the first of its kind, the Albanian party has undertaken to gradually introduce the teaching of the Italian language in schools, while the Italian party has financially supported for the teaching of the Italian language with experts and technical assistance. A first foreign language is called the one which starts to be learned in the third grade of the elementary school and continues to be learned until the end of high school.

The first foreign languages taught in the Albanian public schools are: English, French, and Italian, in which the percentage of the students, who learn foreign languages in Albanian Public schools, is:

1. 73% English,
2. 19:49% French,
3. 6.3% Italian³

So the Italian language has currently been learned by 21.4% of students of the elementary school (9-year educational system) and 6.3% of the high school students, while the English language is the first foreign language, learned by 73% of students in all cycles of general education. But taking into consideration the fact that Italy is one of the neighboring countries of Albania, the main donor in the field of education, the main trading partner and it is also the country from which derives the highest percentage of foreign direct investments, in the strategic plan, there will always be the need for a skilled labor force to learn the Italian language in order to respond to this economic relationship.

In addition to that, in the framework of the Project "Iliria" it has been established the center called FAST, in cooperation with the Education Directorate of the Italian Embassy in Tirana (Albania) and the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Albania, the Department of Pre-University Education supports the forms of cooperation in the field of didactics and research between the two countries, which has shown its willingness to promote projects aiming at recognition and dissemination of the Italian language and literature in Albania and a mutual recognition of languages, cultures of the Italian and the Albanian society.

³ <http://sherbim24ore.com/gencpollo/G.POLLO/index.php/janar-2006/185-mash-projekti-iliria-edhe-italishtja-ne-arsimin-parauniversitar>

In order to implement the signed agreements, this Center has started the implementation of a three-year project for the preparation of the Albanian lecturers of the *Iliria Program* since 2009, which provides lectures, learning modules in distance and the certification DITALS. This training program aims to develop the professional skills of the Albanian lecturers at all levels of the Albanian educational system.

The years 2009 and 2010 have been completed with satisfactory results and have provided a good hope for the future. The project has been awarded the Label european program of the languages for the year 2011, which is an award given to the best innovative projects in the European framework that promote the development of teaching and learning of the foreign languages.

The Italian Language in the vocational schools. The Italian language teaching has also been considered as a priority in the vocational schools. Thanks to an initiative of the Ministry of Social Welfare and Youth, which intends to restore the teaching of the Italian language as a compulsory foreign language in vocational schools,⁴ it is highlighted the fact that the Italian language has already become an employment recruitment tool for many young Albanians. To this purpose, it has been thought to enrich the school programmes of our vocational schools with Italian language courses intending to open new job opportunities particularly in the Teleperformance Albania, which is an international company founded in 1976 and headquartered in France.

Today it is present in 52 countries of the world. In Albania, the company was founded in 2008, initially settled in Tirana and later expanded its activity in Durres. Currently the total number of its employee is 1,488 (Tirana - 597 employees / Durres - 891 employees). Teleperformance Albania operates in two languages: the Italian and the Greek language with a short-term perspective in other languages like French, English, etc. However, so far the total number of students (the elementary and high school) is 36,710. The total number of students studying the Italian language in Albanian school system is 53,000 out of 297,471 students studying foreign languages.⁵

It can be noted that the tendency is growing and in this sense it is right for the Italian party to undertake initiatives for teachers trainings as well as for financing for the supply of books, CDs and in general for activities in schools.

⁴<http://www.sociale.gov.al/al/newsroom/deklarata-per-shtyp/gjuha-italiane-ne-shkollat-profesionale>

⁵ <https://sites.google.com/site/segreteriaufficioscolastico/sezionibilingui>

The Italian language in Albanian Universities

The Italian language is taught not only in the pre-university educational system but also in the Albanian universities. Currently, there are four Departments of the Italian language operating in Albania: in Tirane, Vlore, Shkoder and Elbasan. Each of these departments has its own history of development but all of these universities curricula is restructured according to Bologna Magna Charta Universitatum and aim at a complete education of the Italian language to the students starting from elementary levels to advanced ones according to the Common European Framework Referral of Languages. Let's give a summarized overview of the history of each of these departments.

a-The History of the Department of the Italian language at Tirana University

The Department of the Italian language at Tirana University was the first among the Albanian universities which has started to work in the academic year 1984-1985 and issue the first degree course in the Italian language. This year this Department celebrated the 30th anniversary of its foundation which was commemorated with an interesting scientific conference.

The Department of Italian Language Studies has numerous cooperation agreements with Italian universities such as Inter-University Consortium ICON and other foreign organizations operating in the dissemination of the Italian language such as "Dante Alighieri". It is also equipped with a rich library and a computerized laboratory and the presence of the Italian lecturers is secured with the continuous support of the Italian Foreign Ministry.

This department offers a 3-year diploma course of the first cycle of studies in the Italian language and culture and a Master of Science degree course of the second cycle of studies specialized in three areas: The didactics of the foreign language – with the diploma title- “Teacher of the Italian language”; “Translation and Interpretation”; and “Language and Intercultural Communication and Tourism”.

The Italian language is taught as part of the university curricula even in other different branches of the University of Tirana such as: literature, psychology, pedagogy, economics, medicine, nursing and law. Finally it should be stressed that the University of Tirana is the only university in Albania, which develops a Doctoral Course, the third cycle of studies, which represents in the major part of the cases the possibility for further qualifications in the Italian studies for the Albanian lecturers of the Italian language already working in Albanian schools and universities. Due to the cooperation with the Italian Embassy and the Italian Institute of Culture in

Tirana, the Italian Language Department also organizes numerous activities such as: conferences, artistic performances, exhibitions, etc. which promote the Italian language in Albania.

b- The History of the Department of the Italian language at Shkodra University

The Italian Language Diploma Course at the University of Shkodra has started from the academic year 1998-1999 in the framework of the Department of Roman Languages in the Faculty of the Foreign Languages. The Faculty of the Foreign Languages at the University of Shkodra consists of four language branches: English , German, Italian and French⁶.

After completing the studies, this faculty issues the following diplomas:

"BA in the English and American Studies"

"BA in the German Philology"

"BA in the Italian Language and Culture",

"BA in the French language and culture."

Professional Master in "Translation and interpretation of the German language"

Since its opening, this Faculty has developed an intensive cooperation with the University of Florence, which includes exchanges of docents and researches in the implementation of information and didactic technologies. The department has had collaborations with other Italian universities, particularly in the Adriatic area. The Italian language section has periodically organized training courses for Albanian teachers of the Italian language, working in elementary and high schools in northern Albania.

c – The History of the Department of Italian language at Elbasan University

The diploma course of the Italian language starting from the academic year of 2000-2001, is provided by the Italian section, which is part of the Department of Foreign Languages (Italian and French) in the Faculty of Humane Sciences.

1. The Department of French and Italian languages. The Department of French and Italian Languages is one of the six departments of the Faculty of Humane Sciences at the University "Alexander Xhuvani" in Elbasan. The Department of French and Italian was created after the division of the

⁶ <http://www.unishk.edu.al/sq/node/73>

Department of Foreign Languages in 2008. This Department consists of two learning groups:

1. The French language learning group. The group is responsible for administering and issuing the first level diploma "The BA in the French Language". It was established in 1998. Initially, with 35 graduated students from this Department, now it counts about 420 graduates who have successfully completed the market's need for Italian teachers in the city of Elbasan and beyond that. Some students, due to the preparation made by this department, successfully exercise the teaching profession in francophone countries. A good part of the permanent and the temporary staff of this department consist of students already graduated from it.

2. The Italian language learning group. The group is responsible for administering and issuing the first level diploma "The BA in the Italian Language". It was established in 2001 as a need to respond to the labor market with the Italian language specialists, not only in the education sector, but also in other sectors of the economy. Since the first year with only 30 students, this learning group continues to successfully prepare Italian language specialists who meet the growing market demand for specialists of this language. A good part of about 450 graduate students are involved in-depth studies of master and doctorate level, providing an invaluable and qualitative contribution in the most important teaching institutions in Elbasan, ranging from the elementary schools to the universities. Many of them work in the private sector as translators or guides with the aim to promote the values of the country. The Department of the French and Italian languages covers over 27 disciplines offered at different levels in all branches of the Faculty of Humane Sciences, but also in other faculties. In this Department there are also engaged professors with lots of experience and degrees qualifications of other departments of the Faculty of Humane Sciences who conduct the part of the curriculum in the Albanian language. In addition, thanks to a long-term and fruitful cooperation with the French Embassy in Tirana and the Italian Institute of Culture, the Department of French and Italian languages has made possible the presence of a French lecturer and an Italian lecturer as well who give their contribution in improving the quality of teaching process during the academic year. Thanks to the cooperation with various organizations in France and Italy, the Department of French and Italian languages has made it possible for 2 students to earn a full scholarship for master studies in France, while 20 other students have received short-term scholarships for different learning and cultural activities in France and Italy. Thanks to the project Interreg 3, Tempus, Creativita ', many professors have been specialized to improve the

didactic methods, to restructure the curricula as well as to understand the importance of historical and cultural values of the country. It is worth mentioning that thanks to them many scientific activities, conferences, seminars, workshops have been organized and many translations have been published in prestigious journals in and out of Albania. In project “Creativita” developed in collaboration with the University of Bari, many Albanian students have participated in training courses in Italy as well as in Albania and have proved to be serious and qualitative in their preparation.

Besides the didactic process, the Department of the French and Italian languages pays special attention to the organization of cultural activities with the direct participation of students such as film screenings, shows, preparation of plays, poetry evenings, photo-novels, contests, book promotions, cultural-intended trips etc. Some of the students studying the Italian language have participated in the summer courses organized by the University of Bari and Perugia. Usually, the summer courses are designated to further develop the knowledge of Italian language and culture of both the professors of the Italian language and the university students. The Albanian students studying the Italian Language have proved to be proficient and upon their return to Albania they have been the promoters of many other activities.

d- The History of the Department of the Italian language at Vloa University

The Department of Foreign Languages was opened in 1995, a year later after the opening of Vloa University, which at the time had started only with the study course of the English language. This study course was very necessary and only 21 students were enrolled in this language course. The teaching staff consisted of four professors. The Diploma title after the completion of this course was: “Teacher and translator of the English language”. In 2002, it began the Italian language course with its own students and professors. The Student Diploma Title after the completion of this course was: "Teacher of the Italian Language". Currently the Department is organized into 2 sections:

1. The English Language Section covering the English language course as a diploma branch.

2. The Foreign Languages Section covering the Italian language course as diploma branch and taught as a foreign language in other departments of this University such as in: the Business, Tourism, Nursing, pre-school education, naval engineering, navigation branches etc. Over these years, some of the most important activities of this Department in the field of scientific and didactic character have been:

Most of the professors with individual and institutional projects such as Tempus, IMG, JEP, and INTEREG 2 have been trained in short and medium term training courses in Albania and abroad. Most of the permanent staff of professors still continue further scientific qualification for the degree "Doctor of Science "PHD Title". This Department has collaborated closely with the Regional Education Directorate for the continuous training of the teachers of foreign languages teaching in elementary and high schools.

A part of this qualification has been developed in collaboration with the US Embassy and the Italian Embassy, through the education programs and with the Institute for Pedagogical Studies of Tirana. Domestic and foreign lecturers invited in such activities have made a significant impact on the improvement of the current didactic methods with the modern ones by avoiding the traditionalism and the rigor in the educational system.

The Department was involved in a 2-year IMG project for improving the Foreign Language curricula. The Contractual University was the University of Perugia (Italy) and the coordinator was the University "Alexander Xhuvani". In this project the University of Vlora has been one of the three partner universities in the country (the universities of Vlore, Korce and Shkoder) and three foreign universities such as those of Montpellier - France, Graz - Austria, and Cologne - Germany. The Department involvement in the project has resulted to be step toward the direct implementation of the Bologna Magna Charta Universitatum by placing the University of Vlora in the European parameters or rather the creation of a Unique European University, which will bring the University to the European contemporary standards and will enable the free movement of students. Taking into consideration the specifics of the foreign language learning curricula of this Department, a special contribution for a better professional and scientific level has been given by the American, the English and the Italian professors.

The Department has considered as a priority the involvement of the foreign professors in the educational process to keep it as close as possible to the modern language and contemporary levels. The work commitment and seriousness shown by these foreign professors has been a special support, an example of inspiration for the Albanian pedagogical staff as well as for the students "The teachers and the translators of the future ", who have already been involved on their way to new challenges.

e- The History of the Department of the Italian language at Gjirokastra University

The Italian Language Diploma Course has started in the academic year 2003-2004, being included in the Italian Language and Culture Section, which is an integral part of the Department of the Foreign Languages in the

Faculty of Education and Social Sciences. The Diploma title issued after a didactic specialization at the end of the 3-year course of study is “Teacher of the Italian language”. Most of the students, who attend this course, mainly come from the south cities of Albania (Gjirokastra, Berat, Fier, Lushnje, Saranda and Tepelenë) but some of them come even from the north of Albania. An Italian lecturer is always present from 2010-2011. The Department has recently received a ministerial approval for the opening of a new diploma course in "The Italian History and Language" which offers students a double qualification as "Teacher of Italian history and language." In the context of teaching, in the Illyria Program are included 6 schools with over 1,000 students and 3 primary classes, which integrate their school curricula with the Italian language courses and are highly appreciated by the local population. So, as it can be seen the existence of the Italian Language Departments in many Albanian universities attests the growing interest of the Albanian students for the Italian language as an opportunity for bringing them closer to the European Union and to this general trend the Ministry of Education is responding with its own supporting policies in this field.

Conclusion

The Albania socio-linguistic realities of the after 1990's brought as something immediate the change of the linguistic realities related to the teaching of the foreign languages, for both the public and education system perception. This change also caused the emergence of a number of bilateral interstate initiatives between Albania and Italy that responded to this new reality. In Albania, likewise in Europe it has been underlined a bilingual tendency in the context of foreign language teaching and based on the surveys and the studies carried out in different classes of Albania as in Tirana, Albania, Shkoder, Elbasan, Korca, Vlora, etc. it has been found that bilingualism, particularly the Italian-Albanian one despite the fact that it is more complex, favors the ability of conceptualization and the consolidation of the linguistic knowledge, in which the foreign language activities help students overcome some natural obstacles of the linguistic and cultural character.

The bilingual teaching in the Italian and Albanian Sections provides advantages for the learning of a foreign language; furthermore, learning a non-lingual discipline such as history, in another language, serves to deepen the knowledge of other disciplines as a very positive symbiosis in the context of language teaching as well as other disciplines contributing to the creation of multilingual competencies in the school system and to express at both the institutional and the individual level, the school and university plurilingualism, now considered as an important factor of the European education in Albania.

It can be concluded that the sociolinguistic situation in Albania in the last decade has undergone significant changes making the Italian language have a strong penetration not only to the cognitive level of the Albanian population but also to its didactic level into the Albanian education system highlighting the natural disposition of the Albanian people toward the Italian language acquisition and as a good opportunity to further approach the Europe, in which they wish to integrate.

Bibliografia:

- ¹ <http://agjencia.info/2012/03/14/italishtja-gjuha-e-trete-ne-shqiperi/>
- ² <http://gjimnaziismailqemali.com/Shkollaitneal.pdf>
- ³ <https://sites.google.com/site/segreteriaufficioscolastico/sezionibilingui>
4. <http://sherbim24ore.com/gencpollo/G.POLLO/index.php/janar-2006/185-mash-projekti-iliria-edhe-italishtja-ne-arsimin-parauniversitar>
5. http://centrofast.unistrasi.it/5/77/Formazione_nell-ambito_del_Programma_Illiria.htm
6. <http://www.sociale.gov.al/al/newsroom/deklarata-per-shtyp/gjuha-italiane-ne-shkollat-profesionale>
7. http://www.ambtirana.esteri.it/Ambasciata_Tirana/Menu/I_rapporti_bilaterali/Cooperazione+culturale/
8. <http://sites.google.com/site/segreteriaufficioscolastico>
9. http://www.ambtirana.esteri.it/Ambasciata_Tirana/Menu/I_rapporti_bilaterali/Cooperazione+culturale Istituti Italiani e Kulturë në Tiranë
10. <http://www.iictirana.esteri.it> Universitetet e Tiranës, Gjirokastrës, Elbasanit, Shkodrës, Vlorës.