

Cross-border Cooperation and the Maintenance and Revitalization of Minority Languages

Abstract: The paper discusses the role of cross-border cooperation in revitalizing or maintaining minority languages in Europe, focusing on the case of Catalan. It highlights how a minority language, when spoken in a border area adjacent to a state where the language has a more established sociolinguistic status, can benefit from cross-border cooperation projects. For example, there's relatively easy access to the cultural market and media across the border, and the language can be seen as a tool for professional improvement, enabling access to a broader job market. Thus, cross-border cooperation can become a tool for maintaining and potentially revitalizing the language. The paper includes data on the linguistic use of various languages (Catalan, Spanish, French, and English) in everyday operations of a selection of cross-border cooperation projects (ranging from large INTERREG projects to micro-projects) in the Catalan cross-border space. It analyses the use of these languages in interpersonal communication among stakeholders on both sides of the border (language used in meetings, emails, etc.), as well as in project management documentation (meeting records, financial documents, etc.) and public documentation (linguistic materials and project advertising).

Keywords: minority languages, communication, cross-border projects, micro-projects