Critical Discourse analysis of Kosovo educational documents after 2008:

Discursive construction of Kosovar identity

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ABSTRACT

Kosovo declared independence in 2008 and then started a process of re-imagining its national identity. But how do you produce an identity that will be inclusive and multi-ethnic in a post-conflict society, where a fight for one’s ethnic identity equals a fight for personal rights and values? This thesis acknowledges the power of education in social reconstruction and, through a critical discourse analysis of Kosovo’s educational reforms after 2008, uncovers the negatives and positives of the discourse utilized in education. Therefore, this thesis contributes to on-going research on the construction of the multi-ethnic identity. Additionally, this thesis confirms the hypothesis surrounding the fluidity of identities, the manipulation of discourse and the role of education in changing the perceptions of the young and subsequently future of the nation.

*Keywords:* Kosovo, education, post-conflict society, national identity, Critical Discourse Analysis, Vienna School of Discourse Analysis.
Table of Contents

1.  **INTRODUCTION** .................................................................................................................. 4
   1.1.  The relationship between education and conflict ................................................................. 5
     1.1.1.  The negative face of education ..................................................................................... 5
   1.2.  Research design .................................................................................................................. 8
     1.2.1.  Research problem .......................................................................................................... 8
     1.2.2.  Thesis outline ............................................................................................................... 9

2.  **CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK** .............................................................................................. 9
   2.1.  Identity .................................................................................................................................. 9
   2.2.  Multi-layered Kosovar identity ............................................................................................ 11

3.  **METHODOLOGY** .................................................................................................................. 14
   3.1.  Power of discourse ............................................................................................................. 14
   3.2.  Actors ................................................................................................................................... 15
   3.3.  The Critical Discourse Analysis ......................................................................................... 16
   3.4.  The Vienna School of Discourse Analysis .......................................................................... 17
     3.4.1.  Contents ......................................................................................................................... 18
     3.4.2.  Strategies ....................................................................................................................... 19
     3.4.3.  Means and form of realization ....................................................................................... 20
   3.5.  Data collection and description ......................................................................................... 20
   3.6.  Analysis outline .................................................................................................................. 22

4.  **HISTORICAL CONTEXT** ...................................................................................................... 23

5.  **DISCOURSE ANALYSIS** ..................................................................................................... 27
   5.1.  Textbooks and curriculum reforms .................................................................................. 27
     5.1.1.  Contents, strategies and means of realization in KCF .................................................. 27
   5.2.  RAE minority education .................................................................................................... 31
     5.2.1.  Contents, strategies and means of realization in SIRAE .............................................. 31
   5.3.  Segregated Kosovo education - Interviews .................................................................... 33
     5.3.1.  Contents, strategies and means of realization in interviews ........................................ 34

6.  **CONCLUSION** ..................................................................................................................... 37

**BIBLIOGRAPHY** ....................................................................................................................... 41
1. INTRODUCTION

“The answer to the question: ‘what kind of education do we need?’ lies in the answer to the question ‘what kind of society do we want?’” (Tironi as cited in Miklavčič, 2014, p. 4). Education is essential in promoting the prosperity of modern-day societies, however prosperity is not only understood in the economic sense, it also represents a central role in fostering democracy, human rights, and multicultural discourse, especially in the post-conflict societies, where “progress and institutional stabilization” is crucial (Miklavčič, 2014, p. 4).

In the aftermath of an ethnic conflict in Kosovo, the country was put under UNMIK\(^1\), leading to ambitious educational reforms following the turbulent history of the segregated educational system (ESI, 2014, p. 3). In 2008, Kosovo declared its independence from Serbia and started on a process of establishing a new Kosovar identity. This identity, which is formed around the six ethnic Kosovar communities, is shown in its six-star flag and a text-free anthem. These both act as a symbol of its multicultural system and European Union integration dreams (Maloku et al., 2016, p. 248).

However, a decade after declaring it independence, Kosovo has found itself in a social and political deadlock. Kosovo’s economy is largely dependent on “foreign donor assistance”, which composes 10% of GDP, while the diaspora remittances form 17% of GDP (CIA, 2018). Moreover, overall the unemployment rate is 33%, while youth unemployment is skyrocketing at 60%, leading to “unreported economy” (CIA, 2018). Moreover, the relationships with Serbia and the Serbian minority living in Kosovo are tense (Maloku et al., 2016) and have intensified after the murder of Serbian Kosovar politician Oliver Ivanovic in January 2018, who was advocating for neutral and peaceful coexistence of the two ethnic groups (Testa, 2018).

This thesis follows a discursive construction of Kosovo identity when addressing educational issues, these are discussed in more detail in the following sub-chapter. In this thesis, discourse is understood as a tool that can manipulate politics and society and contributes to the present deadlock seen in Kosovo (Wodak et al., 2009, p. 9). It is therefore crucial in the light of the

\(^1\) United Nation Interim Administration in Kosovo
Kosovo social-political and economic situation to undercover where mistakes in this discourse lies.

1.1. The relationship between education and conflict

In the following literature review, this thesis attempts to understand the complex multidimensional relationship between education and ethnic conflict. This relationship represents an umbrella approach under which we problematize the issues of discriminatory textbooks, exclusive minority education and segregated educational system. These issues continue to threaten the future of Kosovar society (Sommers & Buckland, 2004, p. 39).

Tawil & Harley (2004) note that in the late 1990s research on the relationship between conflict and education shifted to understanding these topics in a broader and more complex way (p. 3). They add that there has been a shift from understanding segregated education as solely a consequence of a bloody conflict to now understanding it as a factor contributing to the violence (ibid).

1.1.1. The negative face of education

In 2000, Bush & Saltarelli came to an important conclusion in their research. They used social identity theory to examine the process of ethnic socialization in children and concluded that education alone cannot prevent future conflicts. However, the education system can influence how identity or ethnic conflicts are managed and perceived (Weinstein and Freedman, 2007, p. 45). The authors have also investigated the negative and positive aspects of education. The misuse of education noted by Bush & Saltarelli (2000) such as: “manipulating history and textbooks for political purpose, segregated education to ensure inequality, education as a weapon in cultural repression, the uneven distribution of education and denial of education as a weapon of war” (p. 9–16) have been applied and are explored further in this thesis.

The research has sparked further investigation into the negative power of education in an ethnic conflict. Tawil & Harley in 2004 wrote a report on the “role of educational policy change in shaping social and civic identities and in redefining or reconstructing national citizenship within the context of identity-based conflicts” (p. 4). The authors observed that the
“educational content, structure and delivery system may, in themselves, be catalysts of violent conflict /…/” (Tawil & Harley, p. 3). By overlooking the negative side of the education, we dismiss the idea of the social and cultural conflict as important elements that influence the educational policy-making (ibid, p. 4). Tawil & Harley acknowledge the politicized role of education through analyzed “process of educational policy change in societies affected by identity-based conflict” (ibid). Although they do follow a similar narrative of nation and identity, a broadly similar aim of this thesis, their analytical framework appears rather vague and generalized. This thesis follows a critical discourse analytical framework, expecting more though-out methodological context and overall analysis.

Similarly, Smith & Vaux (2003) believe that all policies and practices in the educational system should be examined wherever they contribute to the escalation of the conflict (p. 10). Moreover, the authors explore the option of using education as part of a reconciliation and reconstruction process (p. 2). They argue that countries emerging from the conflict need to carefully examine the previous educational reforms ahead of fundamentally reconstructing them. They believe that education is a key player in the reconciliation process as it addresses history and the consequences of the conflict. However, they note the downfalls of premature reconstruction in Kosovo. This has created an environment where the educational system is even more segregated which has allowed for flourishing illegal activities and hostile discourses (p. 47). Dealing with the past is an important part of discourse analysis and does bring a great deal of clarity in understanding current power relations in society. In this thesis, we will analyse some topics Sommers & Buckland (2004) examined in Kosovo; such as understating the influence of history and politics on the current educational system and grasping the impact the educational reform on the communities and schools.

Sommers & Buckland (2004) have, at the time of research, concluded that “for both groups, history, identity, and education were deeply intertwined. An understanding of the roots of historical interpretations is important because it underlies many of the subsequent disputes over issues related to education” (p. 36). Education remains the biggest strain on the relations between Albanians and Serbs living in Kosovo and continues to be shaped by destructive and intense political deadlock (p. 20). Another reason is that most Kosovar Serbs live secluded lives in the Northern part of Mitrovica, a city divided by bridge, where the Serbian government oversees education and other parts of civic and social life (p. 58) keeping the parallel education system alive.
Bellino & Williams (2017) have, through their three-part volume of books, joined other researchers who have also acknowledged the importance of schools in connecting to the young, educating them about the past and thus influencing their political actions, ethnic belonging and ethical thinking (p. 1). However, they do look beyond oversimplified narratives and pinpoint the importance of school textbooks. The authors note that the textbooks are endless source of information, facts and, figures, through which we can analyse “a nation’s deeper or hidden social and political agenda” (p. vii).

Understanding the importance of textbooks is why Gashi (2016), according to his interview, is terrified by the contrasting facts he found which led him to believe that these textbooks could jeopardize the future peace and security in the Balkans (Gjinovci, 2016). In his research, he analyses Kosovo history in detail, and explores how its history is represented in the textbooks in primary and secondary schools in Kosovo, Albania, Serbia, Montenegro and Macedonia (Gashi, 2016, p. 6). He noted two opposing camps among the countries he analyzed. In one camp is Kosovo and Albania and the another is Serbia, Macedonia, and Montenegro (Gjinovci, 2016). The most unreliable pieces of information are found in Kosovo and Serbian textbooks (ibid). This thesis analyses the discourse utilized in the policy documents to understand, how come the textbooks reforms failed to project any concrete results.

This thesis recognises that much of the documented research is focused on the two main camps; Albanian and Serbian ethnic groups in Kosovo. However, not much has been written about other minorities living in Kosovo. These other minorities are Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians (RAE), which are represent in the Kosovar flag. These minorities they live in poverty and lack access to education, health care and some forms of employment. Overall, they live in secluded parts of Kosovo and thus have minimal influence on the political life in the country. In the education system they face “low attendance, high drop-out rates, limited participation and lack of study materials in their native languages” (Minority Rights, 2018). Moreover, what Youth Initiative Human Rights (YIHR, 2017) discovered is that most of the textbooks Kosovo used are nowadays highly politicized and discriminatory to minorities and sexist and homophobic. None of the conducted research has led to a discourse analysis of the educational documents in Kosovo nor has it explored how the discriminatory discourse in the educational sector has originated, this thesis hopes to fill this gap.
1.2. Research design

1.2.1. Research problem

The objective of this thesis is to understand how discourse that has been used in creating a new Kosovar identity after the declared independence in 2008 from Serbia has been realized. The multi-ethnic and inclusive character of Kosovo is demonstrated by their European integration dreams (Commission of the European Communities, 2009). However, this has apparently not materialized on a community level.

This study explores the discursive construction of a new Kosovar identity through Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to answer the overarching research question: To what extent does Kosovar post-conflict society re-imagine/re-define their identity through the pre-university educational documents after declared Kosovar independence in 2008? To answer the question, this study will look at three sub-questions, each addressing one of the issues that have been identified; discriminatory textbooks, exclusive minority education and segregated education.

Sub-questions:

SQ1: To what extent does Kosovar post-conflict society re-imagine/re-define itself through the pre-university curriculum and textbooks reforms after declared Kosovar independence in 2008? The question will be answered through the discourse analysis of Curriculum Framework for pre-University education in the Republic of Kosovo from 2011.

SQ2: To what extent does Kosovar post-conflict society re-imagine/re-define itself through the pre-university minorities education reforms after declared Kosovar independence in 2008? The question will be answered through the discourse analysis of Strategy for Integration of Roma, Ashkali, And Egyptian Communities in Kosovo 2007-2017.

SQ3: To what extent do interviewees, Kosovar youth, Kosovar post-conflict society re-imagine/re-define itself through the pre-university educational reforms after the declared Kosovar independence in 2008?

There are certain limitations to this thesis. It cannot analyze all the issues Kosovo educational is currently encountering. Additionally, it cannot analyze every discourse in all documents that have been produced after independence in 2008, this thesis only analyses two discourses.
Additionally, it is a sample of research, it simply interviews 98 students out of thousands, which exposes this thesis to the traps of generalization. Moreover, the permission to conduct interviews in the divided city of Mitrovica, where mostly Serbian Kosovar and Roma live has been denied, which consequently means that not every ethnic group has been incorporated in the research.

1.2.2. Thesis outline

In the following paragraph the outline of the thesis will be presented. In the first chapter a literature review is presented, where a reader is acquainted with the issues of Kosovo’s education system and consequently presented with the main themes this thesis will debate. After the literature review, the research problem and the design of the thesis is discussed. The second chapter devises a conceptual framework, where key concept of identity, nation and multilayered Kosovar identity are explained. In the third chapter, the methodological framework is explained through sub-chapters; discourse is power, actors and Vienna School of DA. Afterwards the outline of the analysis and the data collection is discussed. In the fourth chapter, the first part of the analysis, where the important historical events and educational milestones of Kosovo are discussed, create an important context for the discourse analysis in the fifth chapter. The analysis is divided within three educational issues: discriminatory textbooks, exclusive minority education, and the segregated educational system. Within each of issues, three dimensions of analysis are applied. The sixth chapter focuses on the interconnectivity of the separate findings of each of the analyses and answers the thesis’s overarching research question.

2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The following chapter will devise a conceptual framework where we will outline some of the basic hypothesis about the discursive construction of Kosovar identity. It focuses on the concepts of different types of identities and discusses the multilayered Kosovar identity which is explained through the Social Identity Complexity Theory. These are concepts and theories that we need to understand in order to project some general ideas before we follow the assumed transformation and construction of the Kosovar identity though the Critical Discourse Analysis of educational documents.

2.1. Identity
Identity as a concept itself is the center of many scientific discussions, however, for reasons of space, this thesis focuses only on the conceptual understanding necessary for this study (Wodak et al., 2009, p. 10). Schopflin (2001) describes identity as “anchored around a set of moral prepositions that regulate values and behaviors, so that identity construction necessarily involves ideas of “right” and “wrong”, desirable/undesirable, /…/ (p. 1). He continues that these norms are not static and have to appear everlasting to avoid being put under scrutiny (p. 2).

It is important that a distinction is made between the social and collective identity since this thesis deals with both of these identities. Frey & Hausser (1987) claim that ‘social identity’ is attributed to an individual person, with specific traits such as: age, class, sex etc., and corresponding prospects from the outside world (p. 3 in Wodak et al., 2009, p. 16). These traits and expectations is how an individual identifies himself, or at least is identified by the outside world (Wodak et al., 2009, p. 16). However, when we need to describe the characteristics of a social system, the term ‘collective identities’ is used (ibid). Frey & Hausser (1987) state that in the case of collective identity “the object of identification is not individual people, but rather groups, organizations, classes, cultures” (p. 4 cited in Wodak et al., 2009, p. 16). What is collective to these groups of individuals is the “system of moral regulations” (Schopflin, 2001, p. 2). These are crucial to their existence and is the ultimate goal of the “cultural reproduction” (ibid). The two types of identities are, however, often interlinked and thus cause confusion in theoretical discussions. An individual’s identity can be defined by one or in some cases, multiple collective identities at the same time (Holzinger, 1993, p. 12 in Wodak et al. 2009, p. 16).

However, before we focus solely on Kosovar identity we first need to understand how identities are constructed. The following hypothesis rests on the relationship between discourse and identity, and consequently connects the methodological section of this study with the conceptual framework.

Clark (2010) noted that in the past decades, interest among practitioners and theorists to research the relationship between language and identity from a sociocultural perspective has increased. This is mostly triggered by the consequences of globalization in multilingual societies, transnationalism, new economies and the impact of these processes on understanding identities in a “post-structuralist and interdisciplinary” way as “fluid, multiple and a site of
struggle, constructed in linguistic interaction” (p. 1). Moreover, Gee (1990) refers to discourse as an “identity kit”, accompanied with the instructions on how to write, act, talk to gain this “social role that others will recognize” (p. 142–3). He continues by stating we should understand the discourse as a way to show our “membership in a particular social group or a social network” therefore having mutual goals, activities and interests (ibid).

A membership of a certain group or community, according to Jano (2013), is a ‘dual process’ of including an individual and at the same time excluding another individual. Consequently, it comes to differing ‘us’ versus ‘them’ (p. 30). The process of exclusion and inclusion is necessary for a collective identity to survive, however it’s the policies of marginalization and exclusion that can escalate into the violent conflict we witnessed in Kosovo (ibid).

Until recently, we have established a few important hypotheses. Firstly; identity is fluid, secondly; it is constructed through discourse and thirdly; the collective identity bares a dual process of exclusion and inclusion at the same time.

2.2. Multi-layered Kosovar identity

Kosovar identity is a complex and ambiguous concept that needs further investigation. Questions such as: “Who actually are Kosovar, what it means being a Kosovar?” needed to be answered when Kosovo embarked on a process of creating a Kosovar identity in 2007. Migjen Kelmendi, a linguist and editor, who was a front-runner of the movement to reimagine Kosovo has said: "When you ask a Kosovar, 'are you a Kosovar?' they will answer, 'no', I am Albanian. If you ask a Serb, 'are you a Kosovar?', they will answer, 'no', I am a Serb. Then, who is a Kosovar?" (Bilefsky, 2007). The needed to create a national identity that will represent the multi-ethnic Kosovar society following the violent ethnic conflict between Albanian and Serbian groups (Bilefsky, 2007).

In light of the collective identity’s dual process of exclusion and inclusion, we turn to Jano’s (2013) concept of “multi-layered identity”, a proposed model where the excluded individual
on some level is included on another level (p. 30). He builds his model of “multi-layered identity” on a concept of “nested identities”\(^2\).

Jano understands:

\textit{national identity} as a first-order concept where collectivities identify themselves as belonging to a certain national identity based on a narrative of shared language, tradition and history. \textit{State identity} as a second-order concept describes communities as identifying themselves as belonging to a certain political identity based on a “common economy and territorial mobility, common legal rights and duties for all members”. The third layer is the \textit{supra-state (European) identity}, that can be seen a third-order concept where communities identify themselves as belonging to a wider political space than the state, \ldots\ (Jano, 2013, p. 31–2)

The “multi-layered identity” is supposed to move beyond dividing individuals into the opposite team of ‘us versus them’ along the nationalistic lines (Jano, 2013, p. 32). A hypothesis which will be put tested as part of the critical discourse analysis.

In the case of multi-layered Kosovo identity, this thesis investigates the concept systematically. Firstly, the thesis will identify \textit{national identity}; secondly, \textit{state identity} and thirdly, \textit{supranational (European) identity}.

Firstly, to look at the first layer - \textit{national identity}, individuals share the same characteristics such as ethnicity, tradition and language (Jano, 2013, p. 30). Kosovo is home to several number of collective identities; 93\% of population are ethnic Albanians. The largest minority are Serbs, while the others are Turks, Gorani, Ashkali, Bosniaks, Roma, and Egyptian, many of which believe their identity is not represented in Kosovo (Maloku, 2017, p. 113-4). Among the ethnic groups in Kosovo are many religious and language differences (ibid, p. 115-6). The biggest divide is visible between the Serbians who speak Serbian and are Orthodox Christian, and Albanians who speak Albanian and are predominantly Muslim (ibid). This divide is visible in each of these groups representation of themselves (Maloku et al. 2017, p. 116). Whether is it:

\(^2\) “Nested identities are lower and higher-order identities such that the latter encompasses the former” (Medrano and Gutiérrez, 2001: 757 cited in Jano, 2013, 30).
“culture, religion, race, language, tradition, tribe, heritage, history or myth” that outlines the ethnic identity, it has been often exploited by the leadership or elites to promote or even start a war (Duyvesteyn, 2005, p. 3).

The second layer concept is state identity, which in the case of Kosovo represents the new Kosovar identity. As mentioned, Kosovo is home to a number of different ethnicities. According to Maloku et al. (2016) if people regard themselves as belonging to the overarching common group identity, in this case, the Kosovo identity, it would have a positive influence on relations between the ethnic groups (p. 248). However, based on the theory of Social Identity Complexity by Roccas and Brewer (2002) belonging to an overarching identity is not enough. They therefore they tested the complexity of the Kosovar identity and the effect that it has on intergroup relations (Maloku et al. 2016). What Maloku et al. (2016, p. 255) have noted is that Albanian Kosovars, who have more complex identities, felt more warmth toward the Serbs and were willing to interact with them. While on the other side, Serbs who have identified themselves with the superordinate identity of Kosovo felt more warmth toward the Albanians and Kosovars (ibid). This gives us a very important point to consider when thinking about how to improve relations between both these groups.

The third layered concept is supranational (European) identity. European Union (EU) is accepted as a “sui generis engine composed by multifaced identities” (Carta and Morin, 2014, p. 43) where an individual can share universal norms and values (Jano, 2013, p. 30). This is what Stuart Hall (1996a, 1996b in Wodak et al., 2009) calls a “cultural hybridisation” (p. 17) that happens as a result of globalization and can consequently counteract the dual process of inclusion and exclusion of collective identities.

What we note in the case of Kosovar identity is how they tackled with what Checkel (2004, p. 237) calls “uneasy coexistence” of European identity’s discourse within European state national narratives. He points out an important part, saying that “constructivism (starts) at home” (Hopf, ch.1 in Checkel 2004, p. 237) and that the two identities and its discourses must coexist or better yet undergo the “cross-cutting interaction between the domestic and international level” (p. 238). With the declaration of independence on the horizon in 2007, Kosovo state symbols had to be created that had to be ethnically neutral. An anthem has been composed, without lyrics and with a name ‘Europa’. The Kosovo flag was designed to be blue with a Kosovo map at the center and seven golden stars above the map, each of these stars
represents one of the ethnic groups living in Kosovo (Maloku et al., 2016, p. 248). There are many EU characteristics used when creating the state symbols. These have been influenced by the EU integration dreams of the nation and formed a part of reimagining Kosovar memory (Kadrić, 2016, p. 114). Kadrić (2016) claims that the ‘transnational linkages’\(^3\), in this case, the European Union (EU), have the power to reimagine national identity by influencing their national policies. A nation uses transnational relations to justify their national identity and national sovereignty and, in a sense, creates the idea of ‘imagined communities’\(^4\)(p. 111). In this case, this is demonstrated by Kosovars feeling ‘European’ shown by the EU symbolism and discourse used in the state symbols and national policies.

This thesis analyses the concept of the nation, as according to Anderson (2006, p. 6); an ‘imagined community’. This can influence individuals through carefully conveyed discourse (Wodak et al., 2009, p. 22). In the case of Kosovo, cleverly selected state symbols were employed in order to reimagine Kosovar identity and promote an idea of a supranational identity (Wodak et al. 2009, p. 197). Ram (1994, p. 153 in De Cillia et al. 1999, p. 155) notes that nationality needs to be understand as storyline individuals tell themselves and others to make sense of social world they live in. Nevertheless, we also need to understand that these storylines do not appear out of thin air, but rather they are “brought forth, reproduced and disseminated by actors in concrete (institutional) contexts” (Wodak et al., 2009, p. 23).

3. METHODOLOGY

In the following chapter the basic hypotheses of discourse are explored. This chapter demonstrates why the Vienna School of Discourse Analysis is the right fit for this thesis to answer the research question and support the main objective.

3.1. Power of discourse

Wodak et al. (2009, p. 23) says that we need to understand the discursive construction of state identity as one that gravitates around the three important points of time: past, present and the

\(^3\) A concept developed by Akira Iriye, which refers to the connections established beyond national borders by an organization, for example EU. See Iriye (2013, ch 1).

\(^4\) A concept developed by Benedict Anderson describing nation as “an imagined political community”, “because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion.” (2006, p. 6).
future. Having this in mind, Foucault (1984) stated “that in every society the production of discourse is at once controlled, selected, organized and redistributed” (p. 109), therefore marking discourse as an “object of desire” and “the power to be seized” (p. 110).

An important question that sparked the research is: Why do actors in institutional context produce a certain discourse? Fairclough and Wodak (1997) have developed the following definition, which support the Foucault (1984) power claim:

“That is, discourse is socially constitutive as well as socially conditioned – it constitutes situations, objects of knowledge, and the social identities of and relationships between people and groups of people. It is constitutive both in the sense that it helps to sustain and reproduce the social status quo and, in the sense, that it contributes to transforming it. Since discourse is so socially consequential, it gives rise to important issues of power. Discursive practices may have major ideological effects – that is, they can help produce and reproduce unequal power relations between (for instance) social classes, women and men, and ethnic/cultural majorities and minorities through the ways in which they represent things and position people.” (Fairclough and Wodak, 1997, p. 258).

Martin (1995) has noted that this in particular applies to Kosovo. Discursive identity construction is that “the identity narrative channels political emotions (to) fuel efforts to modify balance of power; it transforms the perceptions of the past and of the present; it changes the organization of human groups and creates the new ones; it alters cultures by emphasizing certain traits and skewing their meanings and logic.” (Martin, 1995, p. 13 in Wodak et al., 2009, p. 28). Therefore, in this study we will embrace Foucault’s power claim and through CDA methodological framework attempt to further uncover any potential discriminatory discourse used in creating Kosovar identity.

3.2. Actors

As previously stated, this thesis uses educational documents to follow the discursive construction of Kosovar identity and to explore the social progress in educational reforms. However, the role of education is not solely diminished to a role in social progress but needs to be understood deeper. At this point we agree with Bourdieu (1994c, p. 7f in Wodak et al., 2009, p. 29), who stated that our national identity is shaped by a state, they shape our ‘mental structures’ by imposing norms, principles, which are set in law, educational structures and ‘social rituals. He states that our perceptions are designed through the educational system and the school.
Moreover, Gale (1996, p. 4) has highlighted the important role of the educational sector when explaining that there is “/.../the goal of the institution to maintain and continue the dominant discourse and the dominant culture.” Therefore, proposing the huge influence educators, teachers, policy makers have over the creation of knowledge, culture, and identity in a certain society (Escobar Alméciga, 2013, p. 49). To analyze the discourse that has been produced within the educational system in Kosovo we now turn to our analytical framework - Critical Discourse Analysis.

3.3. The Critical Discourse Analysis

In order to answer the research questions, this study employs The Vienna School of Discourse Analysis, which is situated within Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) (Wodak et al., 2009, p. 7). Van Dijk describes CDA as “a type of discourse analytical research that primarily studies the way social power abuse, dominance, and inequality are enacted, reproduced, and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context. With such dissent research, CDA takes an explicit position, and thus aims to understand, expose, and ultimately resist social inequality” (200, p. 352). According to Scollon (2001) CDA’s main argument is that by analyzing the discourse produced, you uncover social problems, however he notes that one must also be aware that the discourse itself is largely responsible for creation of social problems (p. 140).

The main tenets of CDA according to Fairclough and Wodak (1997, p. 271-80 cited in Van Dijk, 2001, p. 353) are: firstly, “CDA addresses social problems”; secondly, “Power relations are discursive”; thirdly, “Discourse constitutes society and culture”; fourth, “Discourse does ideological work”; fifth, “Discourse is historical”; sixth, “The link between text and society is mediated”; seventh, “Discourse analysis is interpretative and explanatory”; eighth, “Discourse is a form of social action”.

However, we at this point we need to address certain shortcomings of this analytical approach. Blommaert & Bulcaen (2000) have summarized some of the critiques that have been made by scholars regarding the CDA.
Firstly, they state the concepts and the models used in the analysis might not have been clearly explained or understood (Blommaert & Bulcaen, 2000, p. 455). Ideally, this thesis hopes to tackle this issue in the conceptual framework chapter.

Secondly, they note that critics believe each of the analysts display in their analysis their own political and social beliefs and may even predispose their own prejudice. Therefore, one has to question whether their writing can be considered objective (Blommaert & Bulcaen, 2000, p. 455). This critique is hard to challenge without talking into the account what we have already researched in this thesis, that everyone’s identity has been somehow constructed by a discourse in our environment and the society we live in. Moreover, an analyst needs to understand that by writing a critique of a discourse he/she has in fact situated himself within the discourse (Wodak & Meyer, 2001, p. 34). This is a critique that does not only apply to CDA but to most of the academic field.

Thirdly, they note that ethnography should be more present in CDA analysis and thus help to resolve some of the issues of interpretation and context CDA is believed to have (Blommaert and Bulcaen, 2000, p. 460). This is a valid point since it does add some value to understanding the context in which analyzed discourse is situated. From the beginning this thesis was devised to include ethnographic research, to not be stuck in an “ivory tower” but by interviewing high school students and drawing up a historical context, position the discourse within a set of real events (p. 461).

Lastly, the critics have noted the CDA overused “linguistic outlook”, which according to them “prevents productive ways of incorporating linguistic and non-linguistic dimensions of semiosis” (Blommaert and Bulcaen, 2000, p. 461). A point which has been taken seriously in this study by firstly understanding its own limitations and knowledge in linguistics but as well understanding discourse as power (Foucault, 1984) and social practice (Wodak et al., 2009). Solely analyzing institutional text without understanding the context will not undercover the dominant social position of certain ethnic groups and the submissive position of the other groups (Ricento, 2003, p. 615). This leads us to the next subchapter of this thesis which further explores why The Vienna School of Discourse Analysis as an adequate methodological approach when analyzing educational documents in Kosovo.

3.4. The Vienna School of Discourse Analysis
The Vienna School is a method that has been used when researching the discursive construction of national identities, racism and the image of ‘other’ (Van Dijk, 1998). To explore the interconnectedness of discursive practice and extra-linguistic social structures, the Vienna School engages the “principle of triangulation” (Wodak et al., 2009, p. 9). Hence, when approaching the discursive construction of Kosovar identity, we will employ an interdisciplinary approach of historical, socio-political and linguistic perspectives (ibid).

The principle of triangulation translates into three dimensions of analysis (Wodak et al., 2009, p. 31); “1. Contents, 2. Strategies, 3. Means and forms of realization”.

3.4.1. Contents

The first dimension of thematic contents is devised on the topics related to the discursive construction of Kosovo national identity to systematically analyze key issues in the Kosovar educational system; discriminatory textbooks, exclusive minority education and segregated educational system. The matrix of thematic contents has been borrowed but modified to fit our research from Wodak (2009, p. 30). The three ‘semantic macro-areas’ have been devised (De Cillia et al., 1999, p. 158):

I. The linguistic construction of Kosovo citizens
II. The linguistic construction of common past
III. The linguistic construction of the political present and the future

Within the first thematic content - The linguistic construction of Kosovo citizens, we analyze how state or cultural elements have been utilized in the documents to project the idea who a Kosovar citizen is (Wodak et al., 2009, p. 190). Since identity is understood as a set of values and behaviors (Schopflin, 2001, p. 1) this thesis focuses on the common legal rights and duties (Jano, 2013, p. 31–2), mutual goals and activities or interests (Gee, 1990, p. 142–3) projected through the analyzed documents.

Within the second thematic content - The linguistic construction of common past, (Wodak et al., 2009, p. 31) this thesis analyses the way the common Kosovar past is considered and acknowledged within the analyzed documents.
Within the third thematic content - *The linguistic construction of the political present and the future*, the focus is on “political achievements, current and future political problems, crisis and dangers, future political objectives and political virtues” (Wodak et al., 2009, p. 31). That mostly shifts the focus toward the key educational, political and economic issues that Kosovo is facing while paying attention to the EU integration process as a great political objective of the present and the future.

3.4.2. Strategies

Under the second dimension - *strategies*, the analysis will focus on the macro-strategies used in the discursive formation of Kosovo identity. The Vienna School takes the idea of strategies from a military framework, where a strategy is understood as a plan to achieve a certain political or any other social goal (Wodak et al., 2009, p. 31). It states that these strategies do not need to be precisely planned or executed but can be employed automatically (ibid, p. 32).

Discursive strategies are the following: “constructive, perpetuation, transformation, justification and dismantling or destructive” (Wodak et al., 2009, p. 33). “Constructive strategies” as the word itself explains are constructing a national identity by endorsing “unification” and also “differentiation” while the “perpetuation strategies” attempt to maintain the identity by “protecting and supporting” it. “Justification strategies” are usually exercised when we deal with the event in the past, as when present day *status quo* needs to be maintained by searching for justification in the past. Strategies of transformation is when a well-established national identity is transformed into another, an example of this would the transformation of a European identity. The Fifth strategy is “dismantling or destructive strategies”, these aim at destroying part of national identity (ibid).

When analyzing SQ2, which deals with minority education, we will deploy some sample questions, which are suggested by Wodak & Meyer, when trying to uncover discriminatory or racist discourse: “1. How are persons named and referred to linguistically? 2. What traits, characteristics, qualities and features are attributed to them? 3. By means of what arguments do specific persons or social groups try to justify and legitimize the exclusion, discrimination,
suppression and exploitation of others? 4. From what perspective or point of view are these labels, attributions and arguments expressed?” (Wodak & Meyer, 2001, p. 72–3).

However, the Vienna School believes that the strategies, although identified separately, do interconnect and together form a coherent “discursive act” (Wodak et al., 2009, p. 33). This is achieved through use of “topos”, “which belong to the obligatory elements of argumentation” and are “content-related” and present the conclusion of an argument (ibid, p. 34).

3.4.3. Means and form of realization

Under the third dimension this thesis examines the “linguistic means” in relation to the discursive construction of Kosovo identity, which projects “unification, unity, sameness, difference, uniqueness, origin, continuity, gradual or abrupt change autonomy, heteronomy” (Wodak et al., 2009, p. 35). Therefore, we are analyzing potential vagueness, passiveness and attempts to understand what has been obscured or discovered by using a vague or passive voice (ibid).

Nonetheless, the first-person plural pronoun ‘we’ is among the most complex linguistic means and has been utilized for “linguistic imperialism” (Wodak et al., 2009, p. 46). In some cases, the use of pronoun ‘we’ is to be understood to abstruse or underestimate the unbalanced power relations between the speaker and audience. This is what we are researching when analyzing Kosovo identity (ibid).

3.5. Data collection and description

Through qualitative data collection methods, two types of data have been gathered; two policy documents and 98 interviews conducted among high school students in Kosovo. First, the timeline of the research has been narrowed down to after the declared independence of Kosovo from Serbia in 2008. Second, key issues relating to the educational system in Kosovo have been identified and third, corresponding documents addressing the issues have been identified and collected.
This thesis has chosen two policy documents, each addressing one of the key issues of education sector in Kosovo and consequently answering each one of the sub-research questions.

- *Strategy for Integration of Roma, Ashkali, And Egyptian Communities in Kosovo 2007-2017*.

The *Curriculum Framework for pre-University education in the Republic of Kosovo*, was chosen for the analysis, as it is the heart of the education reform process in Kosovo. The curriculum oversees the teaching materials reforms - textbooks. It determines the objectives, key learning areas, topics, content, and above all it determines the nature of the textbooks (EU EDUCATION SWAp Project, 2010, p. 4). The document was issued in 2011 and, therefore, fits the timeline of this thesis.

The *Strategy for Integration of Roma, Ashkali, And Egyptian Communities in Kosovo 2007-2017*, will be analyzed in order to explore the discourse set out in the document. Therefore, this complements the second educational issue this thesis explores – exclusive minority education. The document is identified as one of the mechanisms of Kosovar strategy to include these communities in the Kosovo society (MEST, SIRAE, 2007).

The second type of collected data are interviews that have been conducted with 98 high school students, who are going through a level of personal development where the environment can strongly influence and define their identity. When formulating the questions for the interviews some of the inspiration came from a project called *Teaching Tolerance*, which analyzed with a School Climate questionnaire the students’ and teachers’ perceptions in regard to school environment and safety. Nevertheless, to fully comprehend students understanding of themselves and their identity they have been asked a series of questions regarding their personal perception of themselves and students from other ethnic groups and how they see the role of education in defining themselves and others. The aim of the interviews has been to complement the discursive analysis of Kosovo identity and to research if the discourse of educational policies had transcended into the school.
The interviews were conducted in March 2018 at three high schools in Kosovo in three different cities. In school A, which is a private Turkish school in Prizren, where they have students from 5th – 12th grade, there are 251 students in the secondary school and the main language in which the classes are held is English. They have numerous extra curriculums, such as the competition Genius, where the winning team represents Kosovo in a competition in the United States. Each year scholarships are awarded according to the entrance exam students take each April. The reason behind conducting interviews in Prizren, at a Turkish school is due to the fact that the biggest population of Bosniaks and Turkish minorities live in Prizren (OSCE 2015) thus contributing to the diversity of this research. Two classes of students in a year 11, 24 students in one and 22 students in the second class, combined 46 students have been interviewed.

In school B, which is a private school is in Pristina, the capital of Kosovo, they have students from the 1st through to the 12th grade, altogether this comprises 400 students. The classes are held in Albanian. In this school as well in the school A they learn four languages in the 11th and 12th grade: Turkish, Albanian, English and German. Nineteen students in year 11 have been interviewed. The reason why a private school in Pristina was chosen for the analysis is due to the fact that conducting interviews at a public school in Pristina without an official permission from the educational ministry in Pristina is against the law.

In school C is a public school in Vushtrri, a city between the divided city Mitrovica and the capital Pristina, in this school there are 1419 secondary students. A class of 33 students out of 511 students in year 11 were interviewed. The students are predominantly Albanian, and the classes are also in Albanian.

3.6. Analysis outline

As previously established, this thesis has, through the Vienna School of DA, employed the interdisciplinary approach of historical, socio-political and linguistic perspectives (Wodak et al., 2009, p. 9). Before we approach the analysis, the thesis outline must be explained.

Firstly, the historical context was explored in relation to the main historical and socio-political events of Kosovo in order to emphasize the importance of understanding the context in which analyzed discourse was developed.
Secondly, a discourse analysis of two policy documents and interviews is explored in a systematical order.

- Themes of each document were identified
- Strategies of constructing an identity have been recognized
- Linguistic means: vagueness, passiveness and technicality of language are explored

4. HISTORICAL CONTEXT

To understand Kosovo’s current situation in which the educational system is still severely influenced and contested by the political debate between Serbia and Kosovo, we will explore the history of the territory (Sommers & Buckland, 2004, p. 20). Much of the historical events represent a basis for present-day nationalistic rhetoric in Serbia and Kosovo which takes place to justify the claims for territory and influence state policies. Beforehand, we must bear in mind that writing about the history of a disputed territory such as Kosovo always can have numerous historical interpretations. Therefore, to convey an objective storyline, we will stick to international authors and organizations.

Albanian Kosovars consider themselves as the descendants of the Illyrians, which are believed to have populated the territory since the 1st century AD (Bieber & Daskalovski, 2003, p. 20; BBC News 2018). While the South Slavs populated the territory from 6th century which at that point was part of the Byzantine Empire (Encyclopedia Britannica 2018; CIA 2018). After the collapse of the Byzantine Empire in the Middle Ages, Kosovo became the center of the Serbian Empire and according to many popular beliefs became the cradle of the Serbian nation (ibid). As “the state, political, economic and cultural center of Serbian nation” Kosovo became flooded with Serbian Orthodox churches and monasteries and thus transformed into “spiritual nucleus of Serbs” (Bieber and Daskalovski, 2003, p. 12). By the 13th century, Roma settled in Kosovo, considered as “second-class citizens” (Minority Rights, 2018).

The Serbian Empire crumbled when the great battle of the Kosovo Polje in 1389 occurred, also known as the Kosovo Myth when Serbian troops were defeated resulting in 500 years of Turkish Ottoman rule of the territory (CIA 2018). Consequently, a significant portion of Turks and Albanian immigrated, while many Orthodox Serbs emigrated from the area (Encyclopedia Britannica 2018; BBC News 2018). The following centuries became symbols of the fight for Albanian language education, which later in the early 19th century transcends into a “chief
promoter of nascent Albanian national identity” (Kosovicova, 2005, p. 29). The dream became reality with the creation of an Albanian state in 1912, however, after the Balkans Wars, the inhabitants of the territory became part of Serbia. During that time Turkish and Albanian schools were prohibited, and Serbian schools were opened instead, where Serbian spirit was strongly generated (Kosovicova, 2005, p. 29–36; BBC News 2018). During the Communist period, after the WW II, Kosovar citizens gained access to education in their mother tongue and took the opportunity to use education as a focal point in their resistance (Kosovicova, 2005, p. 29).

It was in 1974 when the Yugoslav government awarded Kosovo a status of an autonomous province (BBC News 2018), which had a strong impact on the education in the province (Sommers & Buckland, 2004, p. 39). The cultural and national revival lay in education system as pupils were taught in their own mother tongue (Sommers & Buckland, 2004, p. 40). The stabilization of the relationship between Albania and Yugoslavia made it possible for Kosovar Albanians to use their own curricula and textbooks (ibid) and allowed them to discover their national identity (Kosovicova, 2005, p. 51). Albanian nationalism and education in the Albanian language were now symbols of the independence movement for Kosovo (Kosovicova, 2005, p. 52). This led to, after the death of Josip Broz Tito, a founder of Yugoslavia, mass student demonstrations in Kosovo (ibid). Moreover, a new constitution was issued, revoking Kosovo autonomy in 1989 (CIA 2018), which, in 1990, resulted in a physical division of people according to their ethnicity in every public sector in Kosovo (Kosovicova 2005, p. 52).

Serbia’s new leader Slobodan Milosevic embarked on a mission to contradict the ‘Albanization’ of Kosovo and made Serbian as the only official language (Sommers & Buckland, 2004, p. 42). Moreover, it suspended the “Provincial Parliament and Municipal Assemblies and led to the removal of almost all Albanians from the public service” (ibid). Much of the present-day exclusion of RAE communities is due to the fact they took over some of the ethnic Albanians jobs and were used by Serbians to bury the dead during the 1999 conflict, thus are viewed by many Albanians as collaborators of the Milosevic regime (Minority Rights 2018).

The years that followed marked education as an Albanian Kosovar political resistance in a shape of a parallel system, which ran at a grass-roots level, decentralizing education and uniting
Albanian school staff and the community to further offer education in their mother tongue, even if these classes took place in private homes and garages (Sommers & Buckland, 2004, p. 41). Separating Albanian education from Serbian education became a hard reality which exists till this day. Indeed, it helped to encourage the United Nations and the EU on their challenging missions of uniting the educational system and promoting inclusion (ibid, p. 42). As many as 386,511 Albanian students in 1995 attended classes in the parallel system, which had to be heavily financially supported from abroad (Crighton et al., 2001, p. 14 in Sommers & Buckland, 2004, p. 44).

By the second half of the 1990s, after the Dayton talks\(^5\) failed to address the Kosovar Albanian struggles, the Albanian resistance grew more violent and the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) emerged (BBC News 2018; Sommers & Buckland, 2004, p. 32). Many insurgency attacks by constantly-growing KLA group, provoked the Serbian military to start fighting, resulting in over 200,000 civilians displaced and the KLA retreating into the mountains bordering Albania (Encyclopedia Britannica 2018; Sommers & Buckland, 2004, p. 32). After a failed attempt of the international community to stop the conflict with a ceasefire agreement, the Rambouillet talks\(^6\) were held in February 1999. As the talks were unsuccessful, NATO commenced a bombing campaign, targeting Serbian targets in Kosovo and Serbia (Encyclopedia Britannica 2018). During the 78 days campaign, several Serbian and Albanian civilians were killed, while a million of Kosovar Albanians were displaced to neighboring countries (Sommers & Buckland, 2004, p. 33).

After the NATO bombing campaign in June 1999, Kosovo sector was taken over by the Department for Education and Science (DES), whose aim was to normalize the educational system (EACEA, p. 1). We can distinguish two key stages that the pre-university education went through from 1999 till 2007: the emergency phase and the development phase (MEST, 2008, p. 5).

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5 The Dayton Peace Agreement was initialed in Dayton, Ohio on November 21, 1995 between the Republic of Bosnia and Hercegovina, the Republic of Croatia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to bring peace and stability to a conflict in the region. See (STATE, 1995)

6 Rambouillet talks or Interim Agreement for Peace and Self-Government in Kosovo were held in Rambouillet to end violence in Kosovo with an Accord, which would adopt a new constitution for Kosovo and respect territorial integrity while as well establish the principles of self-government. The agreement was not signed. See (Security Council 1999).
The emergency phase lasted from 1999 till the end of 2002, when the main motivations in the first school year was to return students to the schools, to repair the buildings that had been damaged during the war and to redistribute responsibilities to the lead international organizations that were working in the field (EACEA, p. 1; MEST, 2008, p. 5). Following the formation of newly elected government in 2002, the responsibilities were formally handed over to the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST), to which the full right to the implementation of educational system developments were given, although some reserved rights belonged to the UNMIK (ibid).

The goal of the post-war educational reforms was to reach the European education standards, this is because Kosovo was still following a structure of a former Yugoslavia (Avdij, 2015, p. 630). The first action was to adopt a European educational model: 5 years of primary, 4 years of lower secondary education and 3 years of upper secondary education (ibid). A reform, which considering the socioeconomic situation Kosovo, was finding itself at that moment caught off guard the teachers and students. The teachers did not have any training during the duration of this parallel system. Indeed, there was a shortage of textbooks, which mostly were outdated, while the classes, due to lack of infrastructure and influx of people from the country to the city were, overcrowded (Beka, 2014, p. 183–4; Sommers & Buckland, 2004, p. 32). During this first phase of the educational system, efforts were made in drafting, approving and implementing documents such as: The New Curriculum Framework, Law on Primary and Secondary Education, Law on Higher Education and as well the Strategy for Development of Education of Kosovo 2002–2007 (MEST, 2008, p. 5).

The second, the Development Phase was from 2003 till 2008, mostly focused on implementing the new educational structures, such as teacher training, new curriculums and preparing new textbooks (MEST, 2008, p. 5). During the development phase, eight laws have been passed by the Kosovo Assembly7 (ibid). Moreover, in 2006, a Matura exam was introduced at the end of the fifth and ninth grade within the “scope of the external assessment process and achievements test” (Avdij, 2015, p. 632).

In 2005, the United Nations started talk on the future status of Kosovo. However, it was not until 2007 when Martti Ahtisaari, a UN envoy, submitted a plan that was to be endorsed by Kosovar Albanians. Although, this plan was rejected by the Serbian government (Encyclopedia

7 See (MEST, 2008, p. 6).
Britannica 2018). After failed negotiations with Serbia, Kosovo declared independence from Serbia on February 17, 2008 (ibid). In the first article of the Ahtisaari plan, it states: “Kosovo shall be a multi-ethnic society, which shall govern itself democratically, and with full respect for the rule of law through its legislative, executive, and judicial institutions” (UN Security Council, art. 1.1). Ahtisaari plan initiated in April 2007, focused on protecting the rights, identity and culture of the majority and minorities in Kosovo. With the declared independence, Kosovo made a binding commitment to implement the Ahtisaari Plan in full (STATE, 2008).

5. DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

In the following chapter we have devised an analytical framework, which presents us with an answer to our research question: To what extent does Kosovar post-conflict society re-imagine/re-define their identity through the pre-university educational documents after declared Kosovar independence in 2008? It will examine the narrative of Kosovar citizens, common Kosovar past, present and the future in the analyzed documents and interviews, while deal with the discursive strategies that together are bound to present us with a discursive construction of Kosovo identity that deal with educational issues.

5.1. Textbooks and curriculum reforms

The first issue this thesis identifies is the discriminatory textbooks with the presented first sub-question: To what extent does Kosovar post-conflict society re-imagine/re-defined itself through the pre-university curriculum and textbooks reforms after declared Kosovar independence in 2008? The question will be answered thought the discourse analysis of Curriculum Framework for pre-University education in the Republic of Kosovo from 2011 (from now on – KCF). The analysis of the document is executed in three dimensions: 1. content, 2. strategies and 3. means of realization.

5.1.1. Contents, strategies and means of realization in KCF

In order to analyze how the issue of discriminatory textbooks was used as a way for Kosovo society to reinvent itself, three thematic contents have been devised to analyze the KCF discourse. This contributes to a further understanding of the discursive construction of Kosovar identity.

8 Comprehensive Proposal for the Kosovo Status Settlement
Through the theme - *linguistic construction of Kosovo citizens*, we analyze the values and beliefs that are contained within the educational discourse projected to Kosovar citizens. Furthermore, we analyze a following paragraph in KCF that states:

“One of the main aims of education in Kosovo is the development of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values required by a democratic society. This will enable young people to become active and responsible citizens, so they deal constructively with the challenges of the diversity, as well cultivating and respecting their own rights and the rights of others” (MEST, KCF, 2011, p. 15).

This paragraph positions the Kosovar citizen within democratic society, with the values and rights that need to be obeyed in order to be a part of it. However, by using the verb - *required* it makes sure that the ideal is still understood as something that happens top down and thus reflects the international standards and political power (Weinstein & Freedman, 2007, p. 51). What is more concerning is the use of the term – *challenges of diversity*, as is positions Kosovo within the group of liberal-democratic governments, where multiculturalism is considered as a threat to rights in liberal-democratic societies, which consequently give power to the discriminatory discourse (Luiss University, 2015). Particular macro-strategies have been utilized in other to convey this message. With the use of “constructive and transformative strategies”, they build a new Kosovar identity through the use of common values, rights and belief while showing how transforming into an established democratic society, the Kosovo identity will be compatible with the European one (Wodak et al., 2009, p. 200). Whilst, with the use of “justification strategies” it attempts to support the narrative – *challenges of diversity* in order to justify the present political aims which refer to the events in the past, Kosovar conflict (De Cillia et al., 1999, p. 161).

Through the theme - *linguistic construction of common past*, we analyze the representation of past events in the document. This thesis acknowledges that the past influences present political decisions. Indeed, Sommers & Buckland (2004) note that in order to successfully reconstruct the educational system we need to address the drawbacks from the past.

Under the first aim of the education it states: “the development of personal and national identity, statehood and cultural belonging;” which is further elaborate with: “Education should
enable students to understand, respect and cultivate their national traditions and those of the community in which they live;” (MEST, KCF, 2011, p. 15). Through the “perpetuating strategy” the policymakers needed to emphasize and protect the importance of one’s collective identity, considering Kosovo’s past and how education has been used as a part of the resistance and the fight for the Albanian identity in Kosovo history. This aim projects the common past narrative. Additionally, it demonstrates the importance of collective identity in post-conflict societies which tends to surpass the importance of individual/personal identity (Weinstein & Freedman, 2007, p. 63). Consequently, this could lead to schools imparting their version of truth, further cultivating the nationalistic discourse through the school materials – textbooks (ibid). Although not directly the ‘we’ personal pronoun is part of “constructing strategies” of identity and is projected through the dividing ethnic lines of ‘us versus them’ and emphasized differences (De Cillia et al., 1999, p. 160), contradicting the image of multi-layered Kosovo identity.

However, the issue of discriminatory textbooks is not well elaborated nor discovered in the KCF (2011) document. The idea of creating new textbooks has been alive since in 2005. The Institute of Education of the University of London has, through their review of the 2001 Curriculum Framework, suggested some changes and revisions, for example involving teachers and students in the development of the textbooks (ESI, 2015, p. 6). By 2011, new textbooks standards were adopted as the critique of the textbooks of International Project in Education. They clearly stated that the material used does not represent the democratic society of Kosovo and thus they have set new guidelines (ibid).

KCF (2011) does mention textbooks by using “referential vagueness” (Wodak et al., 2009, p. 40). When addressing the subject of textbooks, they write “a variety of learning resources may be used rather than a single book”, or they resort to justifying the lack of textbook reform by looking for a “sustainable financial alternative” to produce textbooks based on the set standards (MEST, KCF, 2011, p. 56). Although they do promise developing new sample learning materials and the revision of the existing textbooks (ibid p. 59) the vagueness of the criteria needed and the lack of critical thinking in addressing or rather not addressing the issue of the insufficient quality of the textbooks brings us to the present day where ‘empty’ promises continue to be made. On 19th of June 2018 Minister Bytyqi stated that as a second priority, pre-university education must create new textbooks that fulfill international standards and has
already announced a public call for drafters, so new textbooks will be used in the academic year 2019/2020 (MEST 2018).

Through the theme - *linguistic construction of the political present and the future* this thesis analyzes how new Kosovar identity is shaped through current issues, crisis and political objectives such as European integration within the KCF (2011).

Identified within the document KCF (2011) is so-called main challenge and a priority of Kosovo, an ideal called *Learning to live together*, driven by the European Union’s integration process (MEST, KCF, 2011, p. 10). An ideal, which represents “the constructive management of diversity, peaceful conflict resolution, tolerance, self-respect, and respect for the others, intercultural understanding and effective communication”. Among other priorities the KCF document establishes is as well the principle of inclusion, “this principle refers to the right of every child to have equal access to quality education” (p. 22). The values and the rights project an image of a democratic society through the use of macro-strategies of construction and transformation. Yet as well fit the values and rights that a candidate state according to the article 49 Treaty on the European Union (European Union, 2007) must meet to be suitable to submit request for the EU membership. Which begs the question whether Kosovar society truly wants to reinvent itself or is this only a mean to fulfil a political goal of becoming an EU member?

Some argue that the abstract and the universalistic values that are imposed by the EU on nation-states present a threat to the state-building process (Kadrić, 2016, p. 116). Teaching about tolerance, democracy or conflict resolution has been introduced from the outside in a generic way, without taking into the consideration the context, especially in the post-conflict societies. A state should, according to Weinstein & Freedman’s research, question its effectiveness and ask itself whether a “challenging curricula and the long-term development for critical thinking skills” would not be more efficient (Weinstein & Freedman, 2007, p. 44). Since, in practice, in Kosovo, in 2015 textbooks have been published, which exclude people who are homosexual by portraying it as a disease in biology books (YIHR, 2017, p. 17). They also identified women’s brain task for talking, while males’ brain for doing (p.14). They even named Roma people as gypsies and Serbs as barbaric (p. 11). Many of these textbooks were published in 2015 and continue to be in use. Examples that promote homophobia, sexism, racism and hate in Kosovo textbooks and lack of reform do not project the values established in the KCF.
5.2. RAE minority education

The second issue that this thesis identifies is the minority education with the presented second sub-question: To what extent does Kosovar post-conflict society re-define itself through the pre-university minorities education reforms after declared Kosovar independence in 2008? The question will be answered through the discourse analysis of Strategy for Integration of Roma, Ashkali, And Egyptian Communities in Kosovo 2007-2017 (from now on – SIRAE). The analysis of the document is executed in three dimensions: 1. content, 2. strategies and 3. means of realization.

5.2.1. Contents, strategies and means of realization in SIRAE

In order to analyze how the issue of minority education has been used as a way for Kosovo society to reinvent itself, three thematic contents have been devised in order to analyze the KCF discourse. This thesis pays particular attention to the questions that explore racist and discriminatory discourse and have been subsequently discussed in the methodological section. The questions look at how people are referred to, described, and which arguments are used and from which perspective (Wodak & Meyer, 2001, p. 72–3).

Through the theme - linguistic construction of Kosovo citizens, we analyze the values and beliefs that are through educational discourse projected to the Kosovar citizens. First by analyzing an important paragraph that outlines the SIRAE’s vision:

“Kosovo – a knowledge and inclusive society, respecting diversity, fully integrated into European trends, offering equal opportunities for personal development of all individuals of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities, who in return contribute to the sustainable economic and social development.” (MEST, SIRAE, 2007, p. 7).

By opening the paragraph with “Kosovo”, a “strategy of construction” is employed which presumes “unification, inclusion and solidarity of a nation”, it constructs uniqueness of an identity (De Cillia et al., 1999, p. 160). It continues by – “a knowledge and inclusive society/…/” once again a “constructive and perpetuating strategy” is utilized, yet its objective is so-called “positive self-presentation” (De Cillia et al., 1999, p. 163), where, however general, positive characteristics have been used to describe a large group of people. Moreover, it further
transfers strong emotions, by utilizing a “topos of justice” (Wodak & Meyer, 2001, p. 75), which are based on a value “equal rights for all” (ibid) in this case translates into “equal opportunities /.../”. Furthermore, what is noted is the fact that the policymakers, “in return” expect contribution to social and economic development of Kosovo from the RAE communities. Thus, projecting the unification and inclusion of the communities into the Kosovar society, where the responsibility of the state towards its people is met with responsibility of citizens towards its state.

Through the second theme - linguistic construction of common past, we analyze the representation of past events in the SIRAE (2007) document.

Kosovo war is identified as one of the reason RAE communities lack access to quality education and face exclusion in Kosovo society. SIRAE (2007) with the “strategy of construction” recognizes the losses and the struggles of the RAE communities during and following the 1999 war, what is a step toward the creation of common past narrative RAE communities can share within Kosovo society, which will consequently make them feel more acknowledged and included. However, nowhere in the SIRAE they acknowledge the centuries’ long history of RAE communities in Kosovo. Weinstein & Freedman (2007, p. 66) note that every post-conflict society eventually must build a common framework to reconstruct the infrastructure and more importantly construct social networks that will unify the dived nation, this can be done through common myths or good deeds.

Through the third theme - linguistic construction of the political present and the future we will analyze how the new Kosovar identity is through the current issues, crisis and political objectives defined within the SIRAE (2007).

At the time SIRAE (2007) was adopted, only 1.1 % of the RAE pupils and students were included in educational system compared to the majority community and only 4.5 % had completed the upper secondary education (MEST, SIRAE, 2007, p. 14). The response policymakers gave to these figures was quite problematic: “The problems and difficulties these communities face in Kosovo are similar to those key face in other countries of the region” (MEST, SIRAE, 2007, p. 14). A statement, which if it’s understood within the “topos of culture” states that the problems of the specific group are a result of their culture (Wodak & Meyer, 2001, p. 76). Meaning in the case of RAE communities in Kosovo and the rest of the
Western Balkans, the issues that are facing in the educational systems are due to the RAE communities’ culture.

On the other hand, much of document is self-critical. They state although Kosovo has passed the anti-discrimination legislation, in practice cases violating legislation are being exercised against the RAE communities, admitting the stereotypes and prejudice are noticeable in the education system (MEST, SIRAE, 2007, p. 14). They blame the lack of cooperation between MEST and RAE civil society for insufficient communication, lack of decision making and alternative programs (p. 16). They acknowledge the reality of the current transitional phase, unguaranteed political status9 and the inter-ethnic dispute of Kosovo (p. 18) and thus through the “strategy of construction” this develops Kosovar’s unique identity.

The strategic objectives, the implementation plan and the budget are stretched over 40 pages of the SIRAE document. Programs are not only targeted at the RAE communities but also the Kosovo majority, and introduce the practices that are believed will prevent future stigmatization and prejudice (MEST, SIRAE, 2007, p. 26-7). An increase in school attendance has been noted among Roma (for 52%), Ashkali (20%) and Egyptian (38%) pupils when compared to the same statistic a decade ago (MEST, 2018b, p. 43). However, minority education in Kosovo still continues to be highly problematic and underdeveloped (Minority Rights, 2018).

5.3. Segregated Kosovo education - Interviews

The third issue this thesis identifies is the segregated educational system with the presented third sub-question: *To what extent do interviewees, Kosovar youth, see Kosovar post-conflict society re-imagine/re-defined itself through the pre-university educational reforms after declared Kosovar independence in 2008?* The question will be answered through the discourse analysis of interviews conducted with 98 high school students in March 2018, on three different high schools in Kosovo.

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9 The document has been adopted six months before the declared independence from Serbia (MEST, SIRAE, 2007).
Out of 98 students interviewed, 50% were females and 50% were males, 16 to 18 years old. When asked about their ethnicity 49/98 students (50%) identified themselves as Kosovar, 29 students (30%) as Albanian, seven students (7%) as Albanian Kosovar, four students as Turkish, one Ashkali, one Roma, one American and one as Bosniak Kosovar.

For each question or statement, students had a possibility to answer with numbers from 1-5. (1) = Strongly disagree, (2) = Mildly disagree, (3) = Neither agree nor disagree, (4) = Mildly agree, (5) = Strongly agree. On some particular questions a further elaboration of their answers was asked.

5.3.1. Contents, strategies and means of realization in interviews

Through the first theme - *linguistic construction of Kosovo citizens*, we analyze the values, beliefs and citizenship responsibility stated by Kosovo students who believe their school has given them and thus this reflects Kosovo educational system aims.

First statement within the first theme is: *My school is a place where I can develop my national and personal identity, and cultural belonging*. The most popular answer was they strongly agree (5) 36%, following mildly agree (4) 29% and third was mildly disagree (2) 18%. Overall positive feedback, since this statement asked for elaborate answer, we will now turn to the CDA of their answers.

Through the “strategy of perpetuation” and “positive self-presentation” the students utilize a “topos of a lovely, idyllic place” (Wodak et al., 2009, p. 39) when they describe the school as “Judge free zone”, “supportive in developing their identities” and with sentence “I can be myself at school”. Many used “constructive strategy”, particularly promoting unification when they state that their “Professors do not make differences between students”, as they “support and respect our traditions” and importantly “they respect Kosovo’s tradition” they utilize the strategy that functions to “build and establish a particular national ‘we group’” (De Cillia et al., 1999, p. 160). Although this strategy unites some, however, also means “distancing and marginalization of others” (ibid). Some students through the “strategies of dissimulation” (Wodak et al., 2009, p. 33) have though warned of the quality of homogeneity by emphasizing that “Discussions are mostly about Albanian nation and Albania”, a Bosnian girl said: “Nobody cares about my nationality” and one Albanian girl said: “The development of one’s identity is
only true if you are Albanian”. Some students used the “destructive strategies” (ibid) when Ashkali boy said: “There is no tradition, or culture”, and another noted: “Only national identity is developed, not personal”. Once again proving the importance of ‘multi-layered identity’ model.

Second statement: ‘At my school I am learning about responsibility to myself, towards society and the environment. It was extremely positively answered, 45% of students answered they mildly agree (4), while 35% said they strongly agree (5).

However, the third statement: At my school I learn about the values and practices regarding human rights, inclusion, democratic citizenship and intercultural vision, had a quite diverse span of answers and it was considerably different. At schools in Prizren and Pristina, where there are Turkish, Roma, Bosniak and Ashkali minorities students mostly answered with (3) - neither agree nor disagree, while in Vushtrri almost half of the students 46% answered with strongly agree (5). A research on whatever has this occurred due to the fact that the school in Vushtrri is predominantly Albanian and they are not in contact with different ethnicities, deserves further examination, unfortunately not in this thesis.

The second theme - linguistic construction of common past is left out due to the sensibility of the Kosovo history, the students and a concern that the interviews would not be otherwise accepted, the interviews did not specifically ask about the Kosovo past nor conflict.

Through the third theme - linguistic construction of the political present and the future we will analyze how the new Kosovar identity is thought of in the current situation, issues and future political objectives are redefined through the discourse and answers provided by Kosovar students.

First statement within the third theme is: Students at my school get along well. With this statement this thesis tested a general ambience and safety of a particular school. Students have to this statement mostly answered with mildly agree (4) or strongly agree (5), all over 35 % or 40%, there was no anomaly detected among the different schools.

Second question was devised into two statements. First statement is: I have changed the perception of who I am and how do I feel about my identity since starting school. More than
half of students 53% have answered they strongly disagree (1), 19% of students said they neither agree nor disagree (3). However, when we turn to the discursive analysis of their answers we get the following conclusions. Many students used “transformation strategies” (De Cilia et al., 1999, p. 161), when they say: “I become more comfortable with my ethnicity, embracing it”, or they state: “I changed for better future”, which all support the ideal of Kosovar education when in the Curriculum it states that “Education should enable students to understand, respect and cultivate their national traditions /.../” (MEST, KCF, 2011, p. 15).

Furthermore, the students through “strategies of construction” including strategy “we are all in the same boat” construct this sense of “inclusion, assimilation and intra-national similarity” (Wodak et al., 2009, p. 37): “No matter where you come from, it is important to be human” (Bosnian male, 17 years). Albanian female student (17 years) said: “No matter, which ethnicity you belong to, all Kosovar residents are Kosovars and have the same responsibilities toward the society in general, and the country as well. I learned this during four years in Kosovo”, another student said: “I have changed by meeting new people, new cultures”, these are all statements that support the aim “Learning to live together” (MEST, KCF, 2011, p. 10).

One student who said: “You do not see what happened to us, if you do not belong to us!” utilized “strategies of justification, singularity and victimization” (Wodak et al., 2009, p. 33), which can be used to support the problematic discourse or actions in order to defend an idea of national identity that in some ways was being put under scrutiny.

What is more interesting is the fact that many of the students understood the sentence as a way to put their identity in question, which was not the purpose of the statement and have reacted with sentences such as: “I have never changed, I am an Albanian and nobody can change that!”, which fit the “strategies of perpetuation” (Wodak et al., 2009, p. 33), which are used to protect a “threatened national identity” (ibid). This is common in post-conflict societies, and explicable in the context of Albanian identity, where in the 1990s the Albanian language and traditions were suppressed, and Serbian was the only official language (Sommers & Buckland, 2004, p. 42).

Second statement: I have changed the perception of who I think another ethnic group(s) are and how I feel about it/ them since starting school. The students answered following: 35% said that they strongly disagree (1), however 21% of students said they neither agree nor disagree (3), while 19% said they mildly agree (4), all together quite a range of different answers.
However, through the discursive analysis of their elaborated answers, many conveyed similar message. An Albanian female student said: “I got to meet people that are Bosnians, Turkish, Serbian etc. and I have learned a lot from them”, another Albanian girl said: “I thought some of them are unfriendly, but they are the friendliest”, “Yes I have changed, I did not think I would be such good friends with people of other ethnicities”, a Kosovar male students said: “I hated Ashkali, now I respect them”. They mostly utilize the “strategy of emphasizing the difference between then and now” when justifying through “trivialization” and using “topos of history as a teacher” (Wodak et al., 2009, p. 36), which means they changed and they give examples of how trivial they used to be. But more importantly, this thesis confirms that contact between ethnic groups after the ethnic conflict is an extremely important asset in fighting the stereotypes and prejudice in order to establish a multi-ethnic society (Maloku et al., 2017).

The final statement in the analysis and the interview is: *I learnt enough from school textbooks about other ethnic groups living in Kosovo*. Students have mostly answered this negatively; 32% have said they neither agree nor disagree (3), while 21% said they strongly disagree (1) and 20% mildly disagree (2). Some students answered that: “They teach us to respect others” or “We learn early on, that there are a lot of ethnic groups in Kosovo. We learn to respect them. Six stars in our flag are the six ethnicities living in Kosovo” these students through “strategy of construction” build Kosovo identity that promotes unity and solidarity of the nation (De Cillia et al., 1999, p. 160). Nonetheless, some students through “strategy of justification” shift the responsibility by emphasizing the differences (Wodak et al., 2009, p. 36) and point out the hidden power relations, such as: “They only speak about themselves” is what a Bosnian male student preserves, or a Turkish male student, that stated: “We read mostly about the majority, the others are left out because they are minority”. Some even go further by saying: “We only learn about other ethnic groups from the media and when we see them on the streets”, which contributes to the factor of alienation (ibid). This statement aims to explore how well other ethnic groups are represented in the school textbooks, and according to the results, it calls for a rapid reform.

6. CONCLUSION

Constructing a multi-ethnic and inclusive identity following ethnic conflict is a long process that requires numerous reforms, funds and most of all has to take into an account the socio-political circumstances. This thesis explored the discourse construction of the Kosovar identity
through the issues that face the education system and proved that the construction of a new identity is indeed taking place. However, it differs in regard to particular issues, measuring on three dimensions: linguistic construction of Kosovo citizens, linguistic construction of common past and linguistic construction of the political present and the future.

Summarizing the analysis, this thesis can answer the first research question: *To what extent does Kosovar post-conflict society re-imagine/re-defined itself through the pre-university curriculum and textbooks reforms after declared Kosovar independence in 2008?*

The identified issue of textbooks contains racist, homophobic, sexist and Albanian nationalistic discourse (YIHR, 2017). Through a discourse analysis of KFC (2011) three main discourse mishaps are uncovered. Firstly, the abstract, vague and universalistic stated values (Kadrić, 2016), although they construct an image of a democratic society of Kosovo, lack effectiveness. Secondly, utilizing “perpetuation strategies” to project the value of one’s collective identity surpasses the value of one’s personal identity in post-conflict societies, this is problematic (Weinstein & Freedman, 2007, p. 63) especially when it cultivates nationalistic discourse. Thirdly, the issue of textbooks has not been properly addressed within the document and utilizes the “referential vagueness” (Wodak et al., 2009, p. 40), which explains the lack of reforms.

Although Kosovo society has taken its first steps into re-imagining itself through the textbook reform, however the textbook issue continues to be the least explored (ESI, 2014, p. 5). It is believed that values and defining reforms suit the Kosovar context need to be adopted.

Summarizing the analysis, this thesis can answer the second research question: *To what extent does Kosovar post-conflict society re-imagine/re-defined itself through the pre-university minorities education reforms after declared Kosovar independence in 2008?*

Discourse analyzed in a SIRAE document projects a positive image of Kosovo identity. What this thesis notes is the use of discourse power or political emotions to change the perception of the past events (Martin, 1995, p. 13). By using “strategy of unification”, inclusion, “topos of justice and “common myth” (De Cillia et al., 1999, p. 160; Wodak & Meyer, 2001, p. 75) when acknowledging the shared consequences RAE communities and the Kosovo majority aftermath the 1999 conflict. This all contributes to the understanding RAE as Kosovo citizens, with all
the rights and obligation it comes with. Additionally, the document is fairly self-critical, which contributes to the future reforms since it reevaluates past mistakes. However, two important points have to be made. First, although the SIRAE document does recognize the shared history from the 1999 war, it does not acknowledge the centuries shared history of the RAE community within Kosovo society. Second, it shifts some of the responsibility and blame using “topos of culture” (Wodak & Meyer, 2001, p. 76).

In retrospect, the only positive improvements in the lives of RAE communities have been recognized in the educational system (MEST, 2018b), which contributes to the re-imagining of Kosovo society, however is still represents a massive issue in Kosovo society.

Summarizing the analysis, this thesis can answer the third research question: *To what extent do interviewees, Kosovar youth, see Kosovar post-conflict society re-imagine/re-defined itself through the pre-university educational reforms after declared Kosovar independence in 2008?*

Most of the students in their interviews utilized the “strategies of construction” (Wodak et al., 2009, p. 37) through which they project unity, solidarity, intra-national similarities and therefore contribute to the construction of multi-ethnic Kosovo identity. However, many interviewed students responded with “strategies of perpetuation” (ibid), which is manly used to protect a threatened identity. Which is quite common in post-conflict societies however, is counterproductive in creating a multiethnic identity. This thesis nevertheless proves that this could be avoided, by acknowledging that human contact is the ultimate tool to fight prejudice and stereotypes. Many students have through “transformation strategies” (ibid) recognized the difference in positive feelings towards other ethnic groups after actually meeting a person from other ethnic groups and thus has contributed to the re-imagining of Kosovo society.

Overall what this thesis proves is that the discourse used in classrooms and textbooks influences the students’ perception of themselves and others. However, to build a multiethnic society you need to build as friendly contacts between previously divided communities. To flourish this needs to be put in a neutral and safe school environment. By analyzing how students identify themselves, this thesis recognized the flexibility of identities. According to Maloku (2016, p. 248-255) if a person identifies themselves as belonging to overarching identity (in this case Kosovar 50%) or is high in social identity complexity (7%) this contributes to the improvement of the ethnic relations.
There are some areas, that in the future deserve further research. In particular: how different schools/environments foster different students’ perceptions. However, the participation of the Serbian minority in potential research is crucial and would address the limitations of this thesis.

Kosovo has a possibility to use education as a medium of inclusive discourse, there is space for improvement through the reforms of textbooks and minority education. However, we need to take into the consideration the socio-political and economic situation in Kosovo and acknowledge that the relationship between Kosovo and Serbia still contributes to segregated education, where Serbian minorities continue to learn under Serbian educational system. Additionally, we need to acknowledge that without visa-liberation, EU membership and economic growth these educational reforms are limited.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


