

# **Language Policy in Czech Lands in the 18th–20th century: School as a National Political Issue**

**Václav Velčovský**

Czech Language Department

doc. PhDr. Martina Šmejkalová, Ph.D.

## **Abstract:**

The thesis explores functioning of language in society through the prism of language policy (legislative and executive) in education and administration. Through the five probes, using methods of historical content analysis, it focuses on Czech-German relations since the end of the 18th century until 1945, overlapping to the present, and analyses the previously overlooked dimension of Czech-German coexistence. It is the education and administration that were crucial for the establishment of the Czech nation in the modern sense (the question of historical or constitutional settlement) and also forming specific attitudes to language, government and education with its both formative components and symbolic value. While education was crucial in educating future generations in their non-/mother tongue, and thus had a lasting impact on building national awareness, the area of administration worked primarily ad hoc as the up-to-date guarantee of the individual's access to justice and public authorities in his non-/mother tongue. In the process of two hundred years, the relationship between the official/state language and national minorities' languages was changing at all levels. One intersection, however, they have in common: subjectivisation of education and administration, respectively language as an instrument of education/administration, and the inability of an objective or at least objectified view of functioning of language in society.

## **Key words:**

language policy, Czech, German, Czech-German relations, nationalism, language contacts, history of education, educational communication, history of administration