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DANGERS AND DEVELOPMENTS:

On Language Diversity in a Changing World

Edited by Johanna Laakso

eldia
european language
diversity for all

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Foreword

This collection of papers is one of the last milestones in the history of **ELDIA (European Language Diversity for All),** an interdisciplinary research project of seven European universities or research institutions. Financed by the 7th Framework Programme of the European Union, ELDIA operated from March 2010 to September 2013, producing detailed case studies on legislation and institutional multilingualism, media representations of minority languages, language use and language attitudes among twelve multilingual communities in eight countries, and the *EuLaViBar (European Language Vitality Barometer),* a tool for assessing the vitality or endangerment of minority languages. In addition to case-specific studies, based on both desk research and an extensive empirical study with a questionnaire survey and interviews with selected individuals and focus groups and composed according to centrally planned templates, separate media analyses and analyses of legal and institutional frameworks in each country were conducted. The results and publications of ELDIA can be found on the project website *www.eldia-project.org* or in the digital permanent repository PHAIDRA at http://phaidra.univie.ac.at/o:80789; at the moment, the final editing of some of the case-specific reports is still in progress. The final report, authored by Johanna Laakso (dissemination leader), Anneli Sarhimaa (coordinator-in-chief and instigator of the whole project), Sia Spiliopoulou Åkermark (leader of the legal and institutional framework analysis team) and Reetta Toivanen (leader of the media analysis team), is available on the project website as an abridged version; the complete version is currently being edited into a full-length monograph.

The dissemination of ELDIA and its results was mainly directed to stakeholders, decision-makers, "language practitioners" and users of the languages involved, also the interested non-academic public at large. Most of the information events which ELDIA organised in its target areas concentrated on popularising the project results and targeted the general public. This was also due to the general goals defined by the EU funding: as an FP7 project, ELDIA was expected to deliver "products" of general relevance and practical value rather than basic research results as such. However, from the very beginning of the project, the ELDIA consortium also wanted to participate in academic discourse and exchange of ideas with the academic research community. Specifically for this goal, two conferences were organised to which colleagues from outside ELDIA were invited. The papers in this volume are based on talks originally given at these conferences.

The first of these conferences, entitled *Changing Linguistic Landscapes,* took place in Mariehamn on 27th September 2012, organised by the Åland Islands Peace Institute and its director Sia Spiliopoulou Åkermark; the programme and more information about the conference can be downloaded from the ÅIPI website at *http://www.peace.ax.* To this conference, papers were invited on themes such as

- Conceptualisations of 'language' in law and other fields
- Recent developments in language policy and legislation in Europe
- Language regulations and policy in autonomous regions
- Language regulation and practice in the private sphere
- Entrenching multilingualism in and through law
- Language requirements in citizenship procedures.

In this volume, two articles are based on presentations given at this conference. **Isabelle Bambust** analyses the complicated and opaque language situation in Belgium from the point of view of court processes and (civil) judicial proceedings. Belgium, a multilingual country with three official languages (Dutch, French, German) at the heart of European integration processes and globalisation as it affects the whole Western world, did not belong to the target area of the ELDIA studies. This study, resonating with the ELDIA legal and institutional framework analyses, throws light on further issues of "false official multilingualism", the gap between aspirations and reality in language policy and its consequences for the citizens' linguistic rights in the civil judicial system. **Petteri Laihonen** has conducted field research on linguistic landscapes in Southern Slovakia, among a Hungarian ethnic minority which is numerically larger and politically more significant (and also more problematic) than the relatively small and "harmless" Hungarian minorities in Slovenia and Austria which were investigated in ELDIA case studies. In fact, one of the Hungarian settlements under study, with its overwhelmingly large Hungarian majority, represents a less typical and less often studied situation in which a minority ethnic group is in a majority position at the local level. Focusing on private linguistic landscapes, i.e. private signage, Laihonen's study illustrates the implicit norms behind private language choices and their relationship to the numerical and power relations between a linguistic minority and speakers of the nation-state language.

The second and last ELDIA conference with a more general academic profile, *Maintaining Languages, Developing Multilingualism,* took place in connection with the project closing event in Vienna, on the 10th of June 2013, and was organised by the ELDIA team of the University of Vienna (dissemination leader Johanna Laakso; special thanks are due to dissemination assistant Hajnalka Berényi-Kiss and conference assistant Michaela Pasterk). The conference programme with abstracts can be downloaded from http://phaidra.univie.ac.at/o:292765.

Of the five papers in this volume which are based on material from this conference, the most "ELDIA-relevant" is perhaps the article by **M. Paul Lewis** and **Gary F. Simons**, authors of EGIDS or the *Extended Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale,* an elaborated version of the famous GIDS created by Joshua A. Fishman. The EGIDS, now used in the most recent edition of the Ethnologue database, is an evaluative framework for assessing and categorising the endangerment of languages. In this paper, Lewis and Simons focus on language endangerment specifically in Europe, where the situation clearly differs from other parts of the world. Although technically completely different from the EuLaViBar, the EGIDS when applied specifically to the vitality of the languages of Europe yields results which fit in with the results of ELDIA, especially as concerns the importance of institutional support and formal development.

The minority groups investigated in the ELDIA project were all speakers of Finno-Ugric languages. This was a conscious choice: we wanted to widen the scope of the discussion on European minority languages, which has been largely dominated by well-known and widely investigated Western European (and mostly, with the exception of Basque, Indo-European) traditional minority languages such as Catalan, Gaelic or Frisian. However, for numerous practical and technical reasons ELDIA had to exclude most Finno-Ugric minorities of Russia, the state where most of the Finno-Ugric languages are spoken. (The only exceptions were Karelian and Veps in the Republic of Karelia in the Russian Federation; these case studies were realised by the ELDIA team of the University of Helsinki with the strong support of colleagues from Petrozavodsk.) From this point of view, two Finno-Ugric contributions in this volume are particularly valuable.

Elena Vedernikova writes about language activism and revitalisation among the Mari in Russia. Mari is a numerically strong language with hundreds of thousands of speakers and an official position in the Mari Republic, yet clearly endangered, as especially younger and urban speakers are shifting to Russian. In Post-Soviet Russia, the institutional support for the Mari language has experienced something like a crisis following the first years of enthusiasm in the 1990's, but now a new grassroots activism especially among younger speakers is evolving.

The Mansi language in Western Siberia, in contrast, is an example of a very small and acutely endangered minority language: the numbers of speakers have plummeted in the last few decades, from a few thousand to less than a thousand, and in most families the transmission of the language to children has ceased, especially in urban settlements where more and more young Mansi live. Under these circumstances, some activists are attempting to launch new forms of language teaching to support children's acquisition of the Mansi language. These attempts, in turn, as **Csilla Horváth** shows in her article, would direly need a new type of textbooks, planned for children who do not live in traditional Mansi-speaking communities any more.

The two remaining articles deal with minority multilingualism in Finland, a country where, despite the traditions and standards of Nordic democracy, despite explicit non-discrimination policies at national and European levels, the situation of many minorities is very problematic even in our days. (This belonged to the most interesting results of the whole ELDIA project: of the minority languages investigated in ELDIA, the three with the weakest vitality scores – Kven in Norway, Meänkieli in Sweden and Karelian in Finnish – are all spoken in the Nordic countries. This indicates that mere non-discrimination and equality policies at a general level do not automatically suffice to compensate for the consequences of earlier nationalist assimilatory policies.)

Zsuzsa Duray has conducted a longitudinal study on language shift among speakers of North Sámi in two municipalities in the southern parts of the Finnish Sámi area, viz. Soadegilli/ Sodankylä and Eanodat/Enontekiö, where after centuries of assimilation and internal migration only a minority of the population are ethnic Sámi. (This study forms an interesting contrast to the ELDIA case study on North Sámi, conducted in Norway and partly in areas where the Sámi language is in a demographically much stronger position.) Her study confirms that the language shift is still in progress – Sámi is clearly most widely used in informal domains – and that this process affects the whole community: neither patterns of language use nor language attitudes correlate clearly with the usual socio-demographic variables such as age, gender, education or occupation. However, no rapid and total assimilation of the Sámi is in sight. The process of language shift has apparently slowed down, thanks to increasing institutional support (for instance, Sámi language teaching), and Sámi speakers' attitudes towards the Sámi language and culture are generally positive.

With the exception of the Sámi and other old minorities, Finland was ethnically and linguistically very homogeneous until the 1970's or 1980's – even among the old minorities, only the Swedish-speaking population (note that Swedish, de jure, is not a "minority language" but one of the two state languages) amounted to more than a few thousand or a few hundred. This situation is now dramatically changing: there are more than 300,000 first- or second-generation immigrants living in Finland. Contrary to the usual stereotypical belief which often surfaces in Central European discussions on the Finnish education system and its successes in PISA tests ("but it's so much easier for you, your schools are not flooded with immigrant children"), especially in urban areas of Southern Finland there already are districts and schools in which large proportions of the children have a "foreign" (neither Finnish, Swedish nor Sámi) mother tongue or heritage language. In her study on the language skills and language use of immigrant children representing the extended second generation (born in Finland or immigrated in pre-school age), **Mari Honko** describes the continuously changing linguistic environment and its effects.

Honko's conclusions and the questions she raises at the end of her paper are valid and relevant for many other European countries as well. The heritage languages of the immigrant children are not just of immeasurable importance for their emotional and intellectual development, they also represent a cultural capital which might play an increasingly significant role for the whole society. It would be important not only for migrant groups and old minorities but also for the majorities, if multilingual individuals were seen as a valuable resource. However, these questions are seldom discussed publicly, and especially the minorities' and migrant groups' own voice is seldom heard.

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The editing of this collection of papers has taken a long time, for numerous practical reasons. My most sincere thanks to all reviewers for their work and to all contributors for their patience! The project ELDIA, officially ended already more than a year ago, is now really approaching the end of its dissemination activities. However, the ELDIA consortium – in charge of the project database and its use – will live on, and so will, I hope, the numerous new networks, collegial relationships, cooperations and friendships within and beyond ELDIA which came into being in the course of our project.

Vienna, December 2014

Johanna Laakso

A Profile of Danger and Development of the Languages of Europe

M. Paul Lewis & Gary F. Simons

Abstract

In this paper we offer an update to the statistics on the status of language vitality in Europe. The most recent edition of the Ethnologue (Lewis, Simons, & Fennig 2013) provides an estimate of relative safety versus endangerment for every language on earth using the Extended GIDS (Lewis & Simons 2010). The profile of danger and development for Europe is unique when compared to the rest of the world with a greater proportion of the languages of Europe being developed (or developing) and a much smaller proportion being endangered. We also analyze the European profile in light of the ratification of the European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages (ECRML) in each country. In general, where the ECRML has been ratified there are fewer endangered languages. However, most of the languages that are recognized under the ECRML are kin-state languages with relatively fewer roofless languages (Haarmann 2005) achieving that recognition. Already developed languages are more often recognized than the weaker languages which are in greater need of the protection offered by the ECRML.

Introduction

The most recent edition of the Ethnologue (Lewis, Simons & Fennig 2013) implemented a means of categorizing the state of endangerment or development of every language of the world. The Expanded Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (EGIDS) (Lewis & Simons 2010) is based on Fishman's Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (GIDS) (Fishman 1991) but adds stages that go beyond those included in the GIDS thus allowing any language to be evaluated, not just those considered endangered. Using the Ethnologue database and its preliminary EGIDS evaluations as our source, we are now able to develop profiles of both endangerment and development for the languages of the world (Simons & Lewis 2013). In this chapter, we focus on Europe aligning our presentation with the multidisciplinary approach taken in the ELDIA project.

In this chapter we will first briefly describe the EGIDS as an evaluative framework. We then show how the EGIDS can be used to generate profiles of endangerment and development using the five major world regions identified by Ethnologue as examples. The profile of Europe is examined more closely. Following that, the European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages (ECRML) which we use as a benchmark of language policy in Europe, is described briefly. And then, for the countries which are part of the Council of Europe, we examine the overall profile of language vitality in relationship to the status of languages under the ECRML. We conclude with some general observations about the patterns of language endangerment and development in Europe and the role of legislative instruments such as the ECRML in safeguarding endangered languages and promoting those languages which are already developed.

EGIDS

The Expanded Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (EGIDS) is an expansion of Fishman's now classic GIDS. The basic premise of the GIDS (Fishman 1991) is that language shift, ending in language death, occurs as a language loses functions in society. As a language loses functions, it becomes less useful and also typically loses users. This usually occurs one generation to another and so is referred to as the loss of intergenerational language transmission. Fishman's GIDS focuses primarily on that loss of transmission and describes a series of levels, or stages, that a language passes through as it declines from vigorous oral use (GIDS Stage 6) to use by only a few elderly speakers (GIDS 8). Fishman proposed that the process of reversing language shift requires concerted activities that would restore, first and foremost, intergenerational transmission, but that full safety for a language would be achieved if it moved above GIDS Stage 6 acquiring a greater number of functions as a language of literacy, education, or with official recognition for purposes of work and governance. This is illustrated in figure 1.

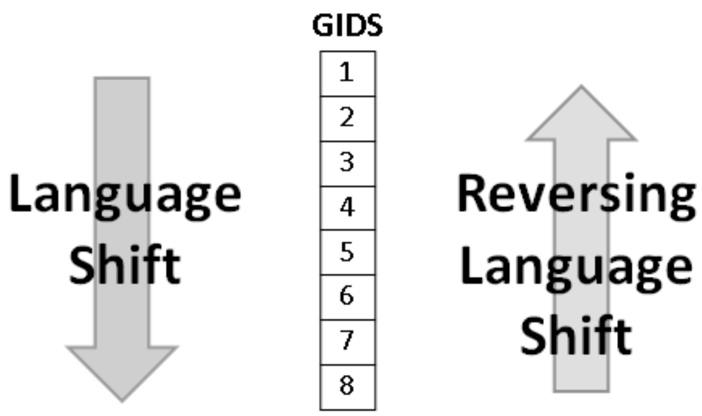

Figure 1. The Basic Premise of the GIDS

The GIDS has become the most widely used evaluative framework of language endangerment and vitality though others have been proposed (Brenzinger, Yamamoto, Aikawa et al. 2003; Edwards 1990; Krauss 2001/2007; Landweer 1991) and used for a variety of purposes. A detailed examination of some of these and the rationale for expanding the GIDS is covered at length in Lewis & Simons (2010) but the major factors that motivated this development are:

1. The GIDS stages do not cover all possible vitality statuses and so can't be used comprehensively to describe all of the languages of the world.
2. The GIDS does not provide enough granularity in its descriptions of the stages of language shift. Several of the GIDS stages needed to be split.
3. While Fishman's focus on intergenerational transmission was well-founded and accurate for those languages experiencing language shift, achieving more secure stages on the scale (development) involves several other factors that build on intact intergenerational transmission.

The Expanded Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (EGIDS) attempts to address these shortcomings by adding three levels to the scale, one at the top (EGIDS 0 – International) and two at the bottom (EGIDS 9 – Dormant, EGIDS 10 – Extinct). The latter two additions, in particular, recognize that many efforts to reverse language shift are taking place in languages that have no fluent speakers and are already beyond the lowest stage of the GIDS—those with only "rememberers" (EGIDS 9) and those with only documentary sources (EGIDS 10).

In addition, the needed granularity was introduced by splitting GIDS 6 into two levels—EGIDS 6a and 6b—taking into account the observation (King 2001) that the presence or absence of stable multilingualism (diglossia) in communities where intergenerational transmission is still ongoing is a significant factor in predicting the trajectory of the language on the scale. EGIDS 6a represents the level where stable diglossia is present and intergenerational transmission is intact. EGIDS 6b is the stage where the stability of diglossia is eroding and intergenerational transmission of the language is weakening.

Finally, the EGIDS more clearly defines the significant factors beyond intergenerational transmission that indicate stages of development above EGIDS 6a. These are the introduction of literacy (EGIDS 5), the institutionalization of the language in formal education (EGIDS 4), the vehicularity of the language (EGIDS 3) and the official recognition and use of the language for work and governance at both provincial (EGIDS 2) and national (EGIDS 1) levels. The use of a language for official purposes supra-nationally is in focus at EGIDS 0. The three strongest levels on the EGIDS (international, national, provincial) are defined carefully both to indicate the significant differences between those kinds of recognitions and to navigate a bit more carefully the terminological confusion that sometimes surrounds the notions of "national" and "official" recognition (e.g. Zamyatin 2014).

The EGIDS is deliberately modeled on the GIDS because of the widespread use and understanding of the GIDS categories and descriptions. While the GIDS is largely a measure of disruption as its name clearly states, the EGIDS more explicitly presents EGIDS 6a as the fulcrum between endangerment and development. Languages undergoing endangerment have greater disruption and have higher numbers on the scale, while those with lower numbers on the scale demonstrate greater levels of development. The 13 levels of the EGIDS are listed and briefly defined in figure 2.

Level	Label	Description
0	International	The language is widely used between nations in trade, knowledge exchange, and international policy.
1	National	The language is used in education, work, mass media, and government at the nationwide level.
2	Provincial	The language is used in education, work, mass media, and government within official administrative subdivisions of a nation.
3	Wider Communication	The language is widely used in work and mass media without official status to transcend language differences across a region.
4	Educational	The language is in vigorous oral use and this is reinforced by sustainable transmission of literacy in the language in formal education.
5	Developing	The language is vigorous and is being used in written form in parts of the community though literacy is not yet sustainable.
6a	Vigorous	The language is used orally by all generations and the situation is sustainable.
6b	Threatened	The language is still used orally within all generations but there is a significant threat to sustainability because at least one of the conditions for sustainable oral use is lacking.
7	Shifting	The child-bearing generation can use the language among themselves but they do not normally transmit it to their children.
8a	Moribund	The only remaining active speakers of the language are members of the grandparent generation.
8b	Nearly Extinct	The only remaining speakers of the language are elderly and have little opportunity to use the language.
9	Dormant	There are no fully proficient speakers, but some symbolic use remains as a reminder of heritage identity for an ethnic community.
10	Extinct	No one retains a sense of ethnic identity associated with the language, even for symbolic purposes.

Figure 2. Expanded Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (Lewis & Simons 2010)

The EGIDS is not intended to provide a thorough description of all the factors that affect either the endangerment or development of any given language. It is a fairly broad and shallow shorthand approach that enables us to more easily quantify our understanding of the state of the languages of the world. More in-depth and detailed analyses in each case (such as those carried out by the ELDIA project) are always warranted. We view the EGIDS as a means of providing a general overview, focusing attention on those contexts where that deeper investigation of issues of endangerment and development ought to be a priority.

Profiles of Endangerment and Development

In an earlier study (Simons & Lewis 2013) we looked at the state of the world's languages 20 years after Krauss's " call to arms" (Krauss 1992) regarding the endangerment of the world's languages. We proposed that the distinctive patterns of language endangerment that could be identified using the EGIDS seem to indicate the existence of ethnolinguistic eco-zones, each with characteristic configurations of language shift, maintenance, and development. While the Americas and Australia seem to be zones that have demonstrated the greatest levels of endangerment and language death, other regions seem to be less affected by the threat.

Figure 3 presents overall language status profiles for the five major world areas as defined within Ethnologue: America, Europe, Africa, Asia, and Pacific. In the profile graphs, we count each language only once using the EGIDS level reported for it in the country identified by Ethnologue as its primary country. This is usually the country of origin or the country with the largest L1 speaker population. The bars in each graph are color coded to indicate a more general set of categories: violet indicates languages that have institutional recognition (EGIDS 1–4), blue indicates languages that are developing (EGIDS 5), green indicates languages that have vigorous oral use (EGIDS 6a), yellow indicates languages that are in trouble (EGIDS 6b–7), red indicates languages that are dying (EGIDS 8a–9) and black indicates languages that are extinct (EGIDS 10). The graphs in figure 3 show that the distribution in the Americas is skewed toward endangerment, while in Europe it is skewed toward development. In the other three areas there is a bell shaped distribution, with Africa standing out as the area having the lowest incidence of endangerment.

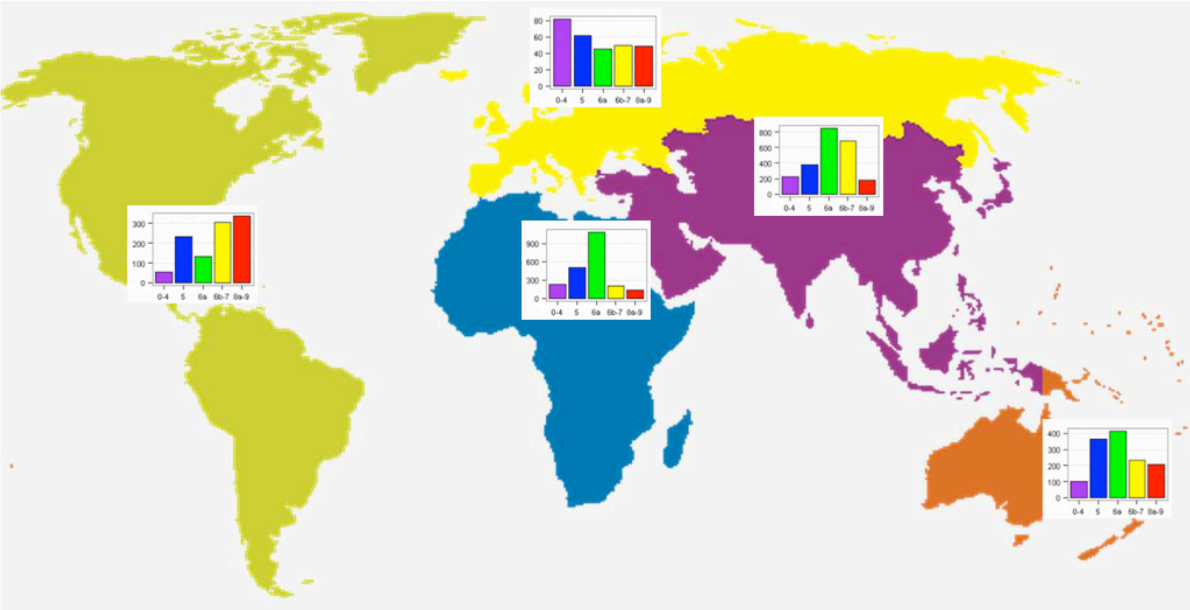

Figure 3. Vitality profiles by world areas

Table 1 gives the numerical breakdown of languages by EGIDS level for Europe versus the rest of the world. The practice in Ethnologue (Lewis, Simons & Fennig 2013) is to define Europe in accordance with the scheme of geographical regions defined by the United Nations Statistical Division (2013). This definition is reflected in figure 3. For the purposes of this study, however, we adopt a slightly different definition of Europe. In table 1 and in everything that follows, Europe is defined as comprising the countries which are members of the Council of Europe. The difference involves 8 countries: Belarus which is part of the UN's Eastern Europe region is not a member of the Council of Europe, nor are the Isle of Man and Vatican City for which Ethnologue has country entries. On the other hand, 5 member countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Cyprus, Georgia, and Turkey) are part of the UN's Western Asia region. We adopt this definition of Europe in order to align with the geographical coverage of the European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages (see below).

EGIDS Level	Europe		Rest of World	
0 (International)	4	(1%)	2	(0%)
1 (National)	31	(10%)	63	(1%)
2 (Provincial)	22	(7%)	48	(1%)
3 (Wider Communication)	1	(0%)	166	(2%)
4 (Educational)	30	(9%)	315	(4%)
5 (Developing)	64	(20%)	1,470	(21%)
6a (Vigorous)	49	(15%)	2,453	(34%)
6b (Threatened)	43	(13%)	982	(14%)
7 (Shifting)	19	(6%)	437	(6%)
8a (Moribund)	10	(3%)	276	(4%)
8b (Nearly Extinct)	28	(9%)	404	(6%)
9 (Dormant)	10	(3%)	178	(2%)
10 (Extinct)	9	(3%)	366	(5%)
Totals	320	(100%)	7,160	(100%)

Table 1. Language status in Europe versus the rest of the world

Figure 4 presents the information in table 1 as a pair of bar graphs showing the relative distribution of EGIDS levels among the 320 languages of Europe versus the 7,160 languages in the rest of the world. Notable in this comparison is that the proportion of languages in Europe that are developed to the institutional level (EGIDS 0–4) is more than 3 times higher than in the rest of the world, whereas the proportion of languages that are vigorous and not developed (EGIDS 6a) is less than half of what it is in the rest of the world. The proportions in the other EGIDS levels are comparable. If we focus on EGIDS 0 to 2 the difference is even more striking. That is, 18% (57 of 320) of the languages of Europe have official status at the international, national, or provincial level, whereas the proportion for the rest of the world is only one-tenth as great at 1.6% (113 of 7,160).

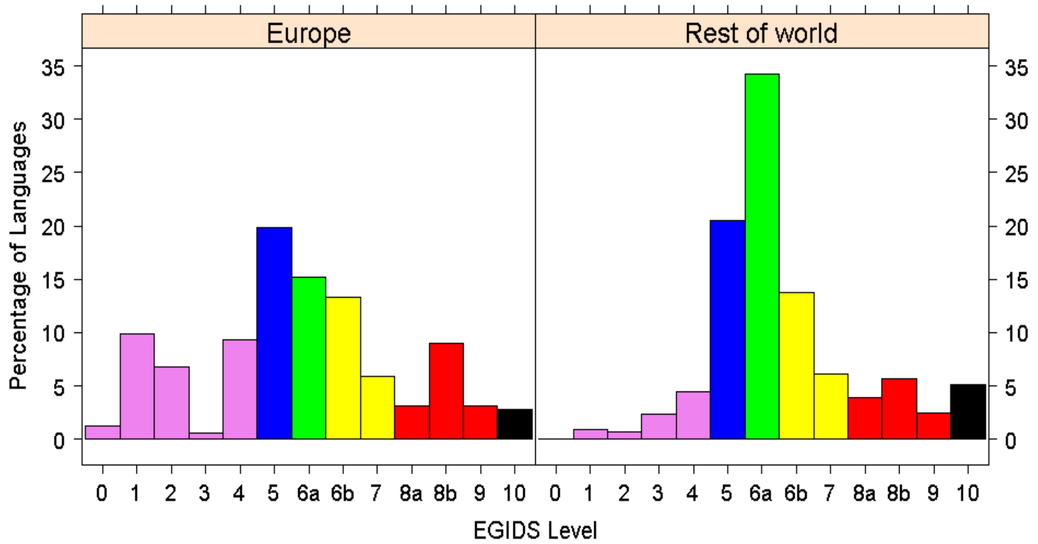

Figure 4. Vitality profiles of Europe and the rest of the world

The European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages (ECRML)

With these profiles of language status now available, we can begin to investigate the relationship between the policy environment and the status of endangerment and development of the languages in Europe. Each country within Europe has its own history and the contexts of policy formation and political and socioeconomic development differ. In spite of the fact that in some cases, entrance into the European Union was conditional on its ratification (Sasse, Hughes and Gordon 2004), the European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages (ECRML) represents a shared policy instrument that can be used as a proxy for evaluating the policy environment and the prevailing attitudinal milieu within which less-commonly-known languages especially are being used.

The ECRML is a treaty created in 1992 under the auspices of the Council of Europe for the purpose of providing protections for the historical regional and minority languages within the countries encompassed by the Council. The Charter's focus is on those languages traditionally used by nationals of the various countries. It also specifies that the languages in view are those which differ significantly from the majority language(s) in use within the country. This effectively excludes languages of recent immigrants and allows the government of each country to exclude varieties that it would prefer to classify as dialects of the national or official language or of some other majority language.

The Charter provides for two levels of protection. The lower level is obligatory for all signatories. Optionally, signatories may declare their intention to provide the higher level of protection under the Charter for specific languages. The activities available to each government under the Charter are extensive and varied. Apart from the specific actions that any government might take in implementing the ECRML, we propose, for the purposes of this analysis, that signing and ratifying the Charter is itself an indicator of a generally positive attitudinal posture and a disposition of the signatories to look favorably on the preservation of the endangered languages within their borders. As with many political instruments, however, there may be a significant gap between the posture and the actual practice.

We make no claim that there is any cause-effect linkage specifically between the status of the ECRML and the endangerment or development status of any particular language. There are so many variables that could possibly affect the endangerment or development of a language that singling out one factor, such as the ECRML, in isolation isn't likely to be very helpful. Nevertheless, the country by country profiles can be examined to see if there is a correspondence between the status of the ECRML and the status of the languages within those countries.

Methodology

In order to investigate the relationship between the ECRML and the vitality of languages we extracted information from the Ethnologue 17th edition database to build a dataset. The dataset contains one row for every language that has an entry in Ethnologue for one of the countries that is a member state of the Council of Europe. In addition to columns for the identification of the country and the language, the dataset includes the population of the language community within that country and the EGIDS estimate for the status of the language within that country. Note that in this dataset, a given language may occur more than once and that its EGIDS level in different countries may be different, reflecting the level of development or endangerment which it has in that country. An additional column indicates whether the given country is the primary country for the language; for each language, one and only one country is designated as primary.

The ELDIA Comparative Report (Laakso et al. 2013:21-22) identifies the distinction between "kin-state" and "roofless" languages as being significant when looking into the status of regional and minority languages of Europe. Languages that are officially recognized in another country are referred to as kin-state languages. By contrast, roofless languages (from German *dachlos*, e.g. Haarman 2005) have no official recognition anywhere. For the purposes of this study we used the Ethnologue's (EGIDS) categories to identify those languages with official recognition of some sort in each of the countries within Europe. The Ethnologue data was used to add a column for this to the dataset. The column has three possible values: "Official" if the language is EGIDS 1 in that country, "Kin-state" if it is EGIDS 1 in another country, and "Roofless" otherwise.

To the information extracted from the Ethnologue, two additional fields of information were added to reflect status within the ECRML. The first such column is simply a Boolean value to report whether or not the country in focus for the record has ratified the ECRML. This was taken from the official list of ratifications published online (Council of Europe 2013); at the time of the study, 25 of the 47 member states had ratified the charter. The second additional column is filled in only in records for countries that have ratified the charter. It specifies the recognition status under the ECRML as being either recognized or not recognized. This was determined by consulting the "List of declarations" that is published on the website for the ECRML to see what languages are specifically named as being recognized by each ratifying country. It should be noted that not all countries published fully specified declarations.

Findings

We first look at the relationship between ratification of the ECRML and language vitality by comparing the EGIDS profiles for the countries that have ratified the ECRML versus those that have not. Of the 320 languages shown in table 1 as originating in Europe, 126 originate in countries which have ratified the ECRML while the other 194 are from countries that have not ratified the ECRML. Table 2 shows how these languages are distributed among the EGIDS categories.

EGIDS Level	ECRML is Ratified		Not Ratified	
0 (International)	2	(2%)	2	(1%)
1 (National)	17	(13%)	14	(7%)
2 (Provincial)	13	(10%)	7	(4%)
3 (Wider Communication)	0	(0%)	1	(1%)
4 (Educational)	8	(6%)	21	(11%)
5 (Developing)	33	(26%)	30	(15%)
6a (Vigorous)	25	(20%)	24	(12%)
6b (Threatened)	6	(5%)	37	(19%)
7 (Shifting)	9	(7%)	12	(6%)
8a (Moribund)	3	(2%)	9	(5%)
8b (Nearly Extinct)	4	(3%)	24	(12%)
9 (Dormant)	4	(3%)	6	(3%)
10 (Extinct)	2	(2%)	7	(4%)
Totals	126	(100%)	194	(100%)

Table 2. Language status in countries that have ratified the ECRML versus those that have not

Figure 5 shows the percentage data in table 2 as comparative bar graphs. On inspecting the graphs, one sees that the countries that have ratified the ECRML have a greater proportion of languages on the development side of the scale (that is, in purple and blue) whereas the countries that have not ratified the ECRML have a greater proportion on the endangerment side (that is, in yellow and red).

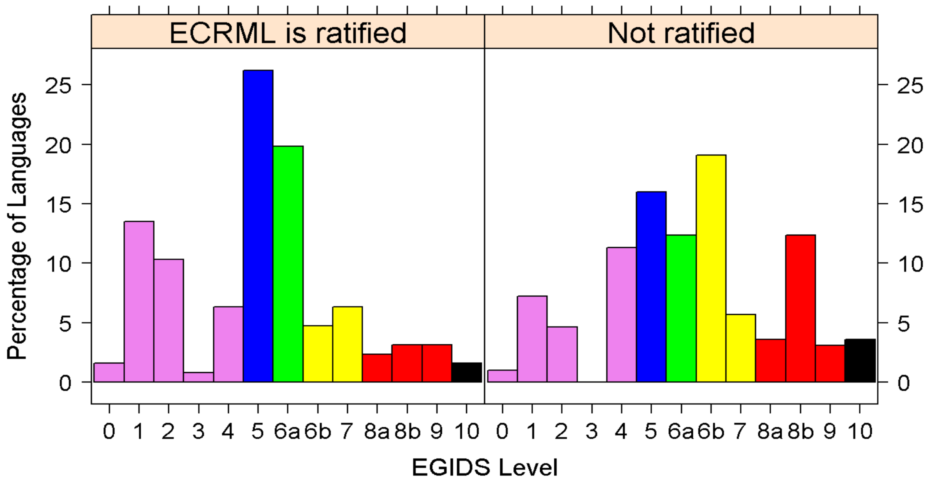

Figure 5. Vitality profiles of countries that have ratified ECRML versus those that have not

The trend toward greater development where ECRML has been ratified and greater endangerment where it has not is summarized in table 3. There we see that the proportion on the development side is nearly one-and-a-half times greater in the countries that have ratified, whereas the proportion on the endangerment side is more than twice as high where it has not. A chi-squared test of significance shows the probability that such a distribution is due to chance to be well below .001.

Language Status	ECRML Ratified	ECRML Not Ratified
Institutional or Developing (EGIDS 0–5)	73 (58%)	74 (39%)
Vigorous (EGIDS 6a)	25 (20%)	25 (12%)
In Trouble, Dying, Extinct (EGIDS 6b–10)	28 (22%)	95 (49%)
Totals	126 (100%)	194 (100%)

Table 3. More language endangerment where ECRML is not ratified

It bears repeating here that we are not making any claims as to causation. We simply note the correlation. Causation could be conjectured about in either direction:

A. Language activism (behaviour) motivates the policy. The policy environment in countries where the ECRML has been ratified is a response to the heightened interest and concern of the speaker populations themselves in strengthening the vitality of their languages.

B. Alternatively, the adoption of favorable policies (such as ratification of the ECRML) has created space for minority languages to flourish. This policy climate has resulted in increased activity in language maintenance and development. Policy fosters the behaviour.

The first explanation views the heightened levels of language maintenance and development and the ratification of the ECRML as being effects of the same general trend. The second includes the ECRML as only one possible contributor to the more positive situation of the minority languages. Neither of these interpretations take into account other factors (such as ratification of the ECRML being a condition for participation in the European Union) which might affect policy or behaviour or both.

We now turn our attention to the countries in which the ECRML has been ratified in order to investigate the characteristics of recognized versus non-recognized languages. Table 4 reports the results for the recognition of kin-state languages versus roofless languages. In the 25 countries that have ratified the ECRML, the dataset contains 270 records for languages that are not a majority language of the country or treated as a dialect of a majority language. Among those instances, a kin-state language is recognized in 79% (75 of 95) of the cases, whereas roofless languages are recognized in only 43% (75 of 173) of cases. (A chi-squared test shows this difference to be significant at $p < .001$.)

	Kin-state Languages	Roofless Languages	Totals
Recognized	75	75	150
Not Recognized	20	98	118
Totals	95	173	N = 268

Table 4. Recognition status of non-majority languages in the countries that have ratified the ECRML

One could hypothesize that the likelihood of recognition for a kin-state language is relative to its population within that country. Table 5 reports the data for testing this hypothesis. It turns out that a kin-state language has been recognized in every case in which the population within the country is greater than 250,000. Below this threshold, however, there appears to be no correlation between population and likelihood of recognition. The rate of recognition for kin-state languages with fewer than 250,000 speakers is 78% (61 of 78) and this holds all the way down to languages with fewer than a thousand.

	100-999	1,000-9,999	10,000-99,999	100,000-249,999	250,000 or more	Unknown	Totals
Recognized	2	22	26	11	11	3	75
Not Recognized	1	6	7	3	0	3	20
Totals	3	28	33	14	11	6	N = 95

Table 5. ECRML recognition status of kin-state languages by population

For roofless languages, by contrast, the rate of recognition is much lower—43%, as reported above. Table 6 shows the relationship between recognition and population in the country for roofless languages. The same trend emerges as for kin-state languages; every language with a population in the country greater than 250,000 is recognized and below that threshold there appears to be no bias toward population. Even 5 out of 9 languages with fewer than 100 speakers are recognized.

	0-99	100-999	1,000-9,999	10,000-99,999	100,000-249,999	250,000 or more	Unknown	Totals
Recognized	5	11	19	22	3	9	6	75
Not Recognized	4	6	16	21	5	0	46	98
Totals	9	17	35	43	8	9	52	N = 173

Table 6. ECRML recognition status of roofless languages by population

Finally, table 7 shows that there are significant correlations between ECRML recognition and the level of development as measured by EGIDS. At the high end of the scale, 88% (30 of 34) of the roofless languages that have attained the relative safety of EGIDS 4 or higher also have recognition under ECRML. By contrast, only 27% (26 of 97) of vigorous language that have not attained educational status (EGIDS 5 and 6a) enjoy recognition under ECRML. For them there is hope of rising on the EGIDS scale, but this is not so likely for the other 73%. Another observation that can be made from table 7 is that endangered languages are more likely to be recognized than the vigorous ones.

	Institutional (EGIDS 1–4)	Vigorous or Developing (EGIDS 5–6a)	In Trouble or Dying (EGIDS 6b–9)	Totals
Recognized	30	26	19	75
Not Recognized	4	71	23	98
Totals	34	97	42	N = 173

Table 7. ECRML recognition status of roofless languages by vitality level

Summary and Conclusions

In summary, the overall profile of endangerment and development of the languages of Europe is unique with a preponderance of developed and developing languages that is not seen in any other area of the world. As described elsewhere (Simons and Lewis 2013) most of the other regions of the world have relatively fewer developed languages and some regions (the Americas and Australia) have much higher levels of language endangerment. Africa is characterized by greater numbers of vigorous oral languages and relatively few developed languages.

In this study, though we cannot attribute causality, the policy environment does seem to make a difference in language maintenance and development of minority languages within the countries of Europe, though by itself a positive policy environment is not sufficient to ensure ongoing language maintenance. The ECRML, for a variety of reasons, is not the best proxy for language policy throughout Europe in spite of its widespread ratification.

Most notably what emerges from this study is that in spite of a policy focus on minority languages as embodied in the ECRML, already developed kin-state languages more often receive recognition under the ECRML than do the less developed roofless languages. While languages that are clearly endangered also receive attention under the ECRML, it is the vigorous but undeveloped oral languages (EGIDS 6a) that are more often either overlooked or simply taken for granted by the governments of Europe.

Further study based on a more detailed analysis of language policy legislation and practice in each country, along with improved evaluations of the EGIDS status of the languages of Europe would undoubtedly provide a better picture of the interplay between policy and language status.

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The understandable language in Belgian civil proceedings – The wrong way

Isabelle Bambust

As Aristotle said, since we cannot bring together all the things we are discussing about, we must explain them by their names as symbols. Therefore, the first problem is the need of language. Strangely enough, in this connection the problem of multilingualism will surface. As it is impossible to create a world with only one language, one may wonder whether language problems would exist if everybody could speak all languages. Taking into account the phenomenon of language identity in its entire context (political ideologies, media, education,...), language problems will undoubtedly remain, ironically even regardless of the language proficiency of those involved. Speaking different languages is not just a matter of skills, but also of preference. A person might be able to speak two languages equally well, yet might prefer the particular vocabulary or emotional value of a particular one of the two.

The multilingual reality is not an exception anymore. It has become a society norm. In that light, the Belgian legal system has of course also to cope with a multitude of languages it is confronted with. Those languages should not be only the three Belgian official languages (French, Dutch and German), but all possible languages that may arise during civil proceedings. Although, the Belgian Act of 15 June 1935 regarding the languages used in judicial proceedings[1] primarily focusses on the three Belgian official languages, i.e. the French language, the Dutch language and the German language.

The Belgian language situation is very complicated and opaque, even for insiders. This is as well the case with regard to language use in civil proceedings. Sometimes 'not knowing' is a great advantage. It creates a distance between the observer and the analyzed subject. So, the spectator can approach a certain language use with a fresh, clean and non-tendentious view. Therefore, this conference seems to me extremely important. It makes possible to exchange distinct justifications of language use between different entities in the bosom of this admirable Åland Islands Peace Institute. So, my only sincere hope and desire is that this may bring us closer to an ideal common, global and just language protection situation.

In the first place, I shall pay attention to the Belgian language history and the current public language structure.

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[1] *Moniteur belge*, 22 June 1935. Hereafter called "Language Act".

Secondly, throughout a general overview of the Language Act, I shall try to reveal some disturbing effects of the Belgian language use in civil proceedings. Indeed, I consider a series of bizarre language rules and phenomena. Following particular elements attract my attention: the strictly territorial language protection and false multilingualism; the exorbitant language protection status of documents introducing the proceedings at the Supreme Court; another exorbitant language protection status regarding the documents in German (from the German-speaking Belgian East Cantons) that have to be served in Brussels; the narrow establishment of a more modern language protection mechanism concerning the Belgian collective debt settlement; the breach between the language protection of the writ of summons and the language protection the citizen may experience before the court; the rupture between the language protection of the writ of summons and the possibility to ask the change of the court language.

Finally, I propose some possible solutions to smooth the Belgian language situation in civil proceedings and their language bizarreries. In my view, there are possibilities to obtain a broader focus on the understandable language in Belgian civil proceedings. I am thinking about the following ideas. First of all, in the use of languages more attention should be paid to what can be considered "understandable language" by the citizen, independently of the official territory language. There is indeed an external language tension between the official language and the understandable language from the point of view of the citizen (which need not correspond to the official language). Secondly, there should be quality criteria for determining understandable language. Indeed, sometimes, the understandable language is taken into consideration, but without employing fair standards to determine what is understandable language. I call this last tension an internal language tension. In other words, one should think about an eventual larger application of the concept of understandable language (vis-à-vis the official language) and a just concretization of the understandable language.

A brief historical introduction to the current public language structure

The Belgian language rules result from complicated historical processes. In my view, the historical context is interesting but may not provide the best solutions for future language protection. An overemphasis of history may unearth buried language frustrations. Sometimes it is better not to know…

In order to see the Belgian language division in its true context, we have to go far back in history. Richard Cullen explains that 'the linguistic frontier between Romance and Germanic languages was fixed at the point of maximum (stable) Roman conquest. It remains at this point, essentially, today.'[2] Also, Luc Van Durme confirms that 'the roots of the early medieval

[2] R. Cullen, 'Adaptive Federalism in Belgium', *University of New South Wales Law Journal* 346 at 348 (1990).

language border are to be found in the boundary line of the late Roman Empire.'[3] When the Romans dominated the current Belgian territory, the local language was a Celtic language. The occupants spoke Latin as lingua franca. Around the year 250 the Germanic Franks crossed the Rhine. Basically, the Frankish language developed into Dutch. In the South, the popular Latin had a stronger influence and this grew into French.[4]

After the fall of the West Roman empire, Germanic languages were spoken in the northern part of the Frankish empire, while Romance languages dominated in the southern area. There is no consensus among historians on the origin of that linguistic border. However, that border would not be much different from the current Belgian language border. According to J. Clement,[5] who refers to M. Gijsseling, the main reason could lie in the Roman influence of the church. However, in our view the direct influence of the Roman domination itself should not be underestimated.

In 1830 Belgium became independent from the Netherlands. One of the causes for the desire of the southern provinces to become independent was the increasing use of Dutch in the administration. The main official language in that new State was French. The everyday language in the north was Flemish while Walloon dialects were spoken in the south. In the north, the supremacy of the French language soon started to cause resentment. The Flemish movement promoted the establishment of Dutch as an official language. In the 19th and 20th centuries, several language laws in judicial and administrative matters were passed.

After the First World War, the Treaty of Versailles of 1920 transferred the German cantons of Eupen, Malmedy and Sankt Vith on a provisional basis to Belgium. In 1925 this region was included permanently in the Belgian State.

The principle of territoriality was introduced in Belgium in 1921, and confirmed in 1930 and 1962. This means that language regions were outlined: the language for each region was the language spoken by the majority of the population. Every ten years a census was conducted. A municipality could only change its linguistic status according to the findings of the census. This resulted in a flexible principle of territoriality, with the possibility for minorities representing at least thirty per cent of the local population to obtain services in their mother tongue. However, this system was not approved generally, and since 1962 each municipality belongs to only one fixed language area. From then on, modifications of the linguistic regime are only possible after changing the law, which requires a majority of each language community. Thus, it is a rather surrealistic fact that, more than forty years later, we still do

[3] L. Van Durme, 'Genesis and Evolution of the Romance-Germanic Language Border in Europe', *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development* 9 at 12 (2002).
[4] For a complete and detailed overview of the national language history from the early Middle Ages, see J. Clement, *Taalvrijheid, bestuurstaal en minderheidsrechten – Het Belgisch model* (2003), at 926.
[5] *Ibid*, at 11.

not have a clearer and more correct view on the language use in Belgium. There are no reliable statistics of the languages spoken by the population in those language territories.

The Belgian Constitution splits the country into three communities: the Flemish Community, the French Community and the German-speaking Community.[6] In 1970, four language areas were established: the Dutch language area, the French language area, the bilingual (French and Dutch) area of Brussels-Capital and the German language area.[7] Each Belgian municipality belongs to one of these four language areas, and this language affiliation can only be changed by a special law supported by specific majorities. We thus see that the use of languages is strictly regulated in Belgium, and territorially determined. Belgium has no single lingua franca. French, Dutch and German are used in the official life of their specific territories. Theoretically, the Dutch, French and German languages are not indicated in the Belgian Constitution as official languages. Nevertheless, because of the constitutional demarcation of language areas, Dutch, French and German have obtained an official character.

However, section 30 of the Belgian Constitution also enshrines the right to use any language. This right may be limited only by legislation and only for acts of public authority or for legal proceedings. These exceptions may be imposed by the federal authority and thus for the whole country. However, the French, Flemish and German-speaking[8] Communities,[9] within the limits of their territories, regulate three other aspects of language use, namely 1) in administrative matters, 2) in education institutions created, subsidised or acknowledged by the public authorities, and 3) in social relations between employers and employees, as well as in the acts and documents of enterprises made compulsory by the law and regulations.[10]

Clement describes a teleological interpretation of the freedom of language.[11] An interference with the freedom will only be a violation if it does not fall in the scope of one of the specific language restrictions provided for by law. The author refers to the current interpretation of the freedom of language (in public matters), arguing in favor of a modern freedom supported by a duty for the State. According to this interpretation, the government must (only) ensure that the residents of a certain language area can conduct their legal proceedings in the language of that area. Thus, in interpreting the freedom of language, the author is strongly influenced by the territorial character of language protection. Such interpretation makes the protection inflexible. German speakers in Belgium amount to only 70,000, but they remain protected because they live in a particular area. Larger language

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[6]Sec. 2 of the Belgian Constitution, 1994. Sec. 3 establishes three regions, territorially determined. The regions have powers in matters such as the environment and they will not be further discussed in this article.

[7]This has been reiterated by the 1994 Constitution, sec. 4.

[8]The German-speaking community only intervenes in education language matters.

[9]It is not the Regions, but the Communities that issue decrees about languages.

[10]Sec. 129 and 130 of the Constitution, 1994.

[11]See J. CLEMENT, 'De taalvrijheid in de Grondwet. Ontwaakt de schone slaapster?', in A. ALEN and S. SOTTIAUX (eds.), *Taaleisen juridisch getoetst* (2009), 17-32.

groups in Belgium that are legally not considered as language minorities (e.g. the dispersed Italian speaking population) are not afforded the same protection.

An overview of the Belgian language use in civil proceedings and of some disturbing effects

The Belgian language history and the current public language structure are reflected in the current language use of civil proceedings. Under section 30 of the Belgian Constitution, the Language Act was voted.

This Act contains an unusual mixture of, on the one hand, a severe territoriality principle[12] regarding the language of the proceedings and the written notifications, and, on the other hand, a personality principle[13] concerning the language spoken by the citizen in court. The language rules are not to be taken lightly: if they are violated, the proceedings are null and void ex officio.[14] However, a judicial decision after trial corrects the eventual nullity of the preceding judicial instruments. Nevertheless, the annulled instruments will interrupt the period of prescription and the deadlines of proceedings. The sanction of invalidity persists, even if there is no harm (for instance when the party understands the used language perfectly well). This practice forms of course a severe obstacle, and a breach of procedural economy.

The language of the proceedings

The principle of territoriality and the principle of monolingualism are two main rules in legal proceedings in Belgium.[15] I make a distinction between horizontal and vertical monolingualism. Horizontal monolingualism means that the specified language of the proceedings is maintained during the whole proceedings, even for legal remedies. Vertical monolingualism signifies that the legal documents of the proceedings themselves must be established in the unique language in which the proceedings were conducted.

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[12]The rule as to the language used in a certain area follows the accepted language limits and does not consider the own language of the person living in that area.

[13]The language of every person will be respected, regardless of the residence of that person.

[14]Sec. 40 of the Language Act.

[15]See. B. DEJEMEPPE, 'Une langue peut en révéler une autre', *Journal des Tribunaux* 407 (2009), case note on Cass. 22 May 2009 and the mentioned references; D. LINDEMANS, 'De eentalige akte in de Gerechtstaalwet', *Tijdschrift voor procesrecht en bewijsrecht* 322 (2008); D. LINDEMANS, 'Schipperen tussen taaleigenheid, anderstaligheid en aantasting van eentaligheid', *Rechtskundig Weekblad* 672, (2009-10), case note on Cass. 22 May 2009 and the mentioned references; P. VERGUTS, 'Taal van de procedureakten: Dura lex sed lex', *European Transport Law* 220 (2004), case note on Court of Appeal of Antwerp, 2 February 2004.

Horizontal monolingualism

In the civil, commercial and labour courts in the French-speaking provinces[16] or in the French-speaking districts,[17] the entire procedure takes place in French.[18] The same principle is applied to the Dutch-speaking provinces[19] and in the Dutch-speaking district,[20] where the entire procedure is conducted in Dutch.[21] In the courts of the German language district,[22] all procedures are conducted in German.[23]

In the courts of Brussels, proceedings are initiated in French when the defendant resides in the French-speaking part of the country, in Dutch when the defendant resides in the Dutch-speaking area, and in French or Dutch (at the plaintiff's choice) if the defendant resides in the Brussels-agglomeration or when he or she has no known residence in Belgium.[24] However, when the proceedings are brought in Brussels on the basis of a jurisdictional link to one of the Dutch-speaking areas that fall within the judicial district of Brussels, the proceedings will be conducted in Dutch.[25] This is the so-called *extra muros* rule. When several defendants are in the game, the majority of the defendants living in the Dutch-speaking or in the French-speaking area will be taken into account.[26] Without pronounced majority the language of the proceedings will be Dutch or French at the plaintiff's choice.[27]

Except for an immediate demand of a changing of the language of the proceedings (that we shall discuss hereafter), the point of departure of the Language Act determines the use of the same language throughout the entire procedure.

Further, an appeal must be lodged in the language of the contested decision.[28] Arguments in support of the appeal must be in that same language.[29] In the same vein, proceedings before the Supreme Court are conducted in the language of the contested decision.[30] However, for purposes of the language Act, the opposition by a third party is considered as a new

[16]Hainaut, Namur, and Luxembourg.
[17]Nivelles, Liège, Huy and Verviers.
[18]Sec. 1 of the Language Act.
[19]Antwerp, East Flanders, West Flanders, and Limburg.
[20]Leuven.
[21]Sec. 2 of the Language Act.
[22]Eupen.
[23]Sec. 2*bis* of the Language Act.
[24]Sec. 4 §1 of the Language Act.
[25]Sec. 3 of the Language Act. This is the so-called *extra muros* rule.
[26] The defendants living in Brussels are left aside; see Cass. 28 March 1985, JT 1985, at 684.
[27] Sec. 6 § 1 of the Language Act.
[28]Sec. 24 of the Language Act.
[29]Cass. 18 October 2004, RW 2005-06, at 547, RAGB 2005, at 854, Pas. 2004, I, at 1605; Cass. 16 November 2009, C.09.0254.N; Court of Appeal of Ghent, 8 March 2010, 2008/AR / 1103; Court of Appeal of Antwerp, 18 April 2007, 2007AR582.
[30]Sec. 27 and 27*bis* of the Language Act.

procedure.[31] The request for interpretation or correction of a sentence is also considered as a new claim.

If documents are submitted in a language other than the language of the proceedings, the court, upon request of the party against whom the documents are invoked, may make a reasoned order that the document be translated into the language of the proceedings.[32]

For purposes of making statements to the court, or lodging objections or presenting an address to the court, the party can use the language he or she prefers. The same rule is applied to the interrogation and for the taking of the oath. When the judge does not understand the language used or when a party does not understand the language of the proceedings, a sworn interpreter will assist. The cost of translation is borne by the State Treasury.[33]

Witnesses are also heard in the language of the proceedings, unless they request the use of another language. When the judge, the police officer who must interrogate the witness, or one of the other parties does not understand that language, a sworn interpreter assists. The cost of translation is borne by the State Treasury.[34]

The judicial decisions and documents dealing with enforcement of the judgment are prepared in the language in which the proceedings were conducted.[35]

Vertical monolingualism

The principle of vertical monolingualism is applied absolutely, even when the concerned person understands the foreign language perfectly well.[36]

The case law has refined the exact meaning of the principle of monolingualism in this regard. First, non-essential remarks such as explanations or illustrations may be in another language.[37]

Second, remarks may be in another language if they are explained in or translated into the language of the proceedings.[38]

Third, words or expressions in another language are accepted if those belong to normal use or to the language of business, such as the English expressions 'no cure no pay', 'field

[31] Cass. 26 November 1999, RW 2000-01, at 772, JT 2000, at 419, with case note by H. BOULARBAH and J. ENGLEBERT.
[32] Sec. 8 of the Language Act.
[33] Sec. 30 of the Language Act.
[34] Sec. 32 of the 1935 Act.
[35] Sec. 37 of the 1935 Act.
[36] Court of Appeal of Brussels, 29 April 2008, 2007/SF/3.
[37] Cass. 20 November 2003, *Pas.* 2003 I, at 1861 and Cass. 17 June 2010, C.09.0494.N.
[38] Cass. 2 April 2003, *Journal des Tribunaux* 630 (2003); Court of Appeal of Brussels, 29 April 2008, 2007/SF/3.

worker', 'plumbing manager', 'extremely upgraded', or 'WC-madame'[39]; if the expression is included in commonly used dictionaries, like 'quod non'[40], 'lucrum cessans', 'damnum emergens' and 'expressis verbis'[41]; if it is a commonly known and accepted expression, like 'nul ne plaide par procureur'[42] or 'accessorium sequitur principale'[43] or 'lucrum cessans' and 'damnum emergens'[44] or 'exceptio non adimpleti contractus' and 'pacta sunt servanda'[45]; if the expression is understood in its context, such as the English expression 'stand-alone'[46]. The fact that the average litigant does not understand those terms, has nothing to do with the language law but with the intelligibility of legal terminology.[47]

Fourth, a judgment may also mention the plaintiff's address in French in its considerations after it has been mentioned in Dutch.[48] An address in the French-language area may be used in French, even if the proceedings are in Dutch (and vice versa).[49] An address may also be mentioned in both the language of that area and in the language of the proceedings.[50] When names or addresses have no legal translation, there is no violation of the principle of monolingualism.[51]

Changing of the language of the proceedings

The possible changing of the language of the proceedings is very complicated and not uniform. It is essential to notice that this change is only a matter of the existing Belgian official languages. So, the Dutch language will eventually be replaced by French or German, French by German or Dutch, or Dutch by French or German. In higher courts the language change is not possible.

There exist two ways to ask the change of the language of the proceedings, each with a different scope and with different application conditions.

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[39]Cass. 20 December 2004, *Rechtskundig Weekblad* 556 (2005-06).
[40]Cass. 19 September 2006, P & B 2008, at 335, *Pas.* 2006, I, at 1797 and *Rechtspraak Antwerpen Brussel Gent* 267 (2007).
[41]Court of Appeal of Ghent, 27 May 2009, 2007/AR/2896.
[42]Cass. 22 May 2009, *Rechtskundig Weekblad* 671 (2009-10) and *Journal des Tribunaux* 407 (2009).
[43]Cass. 16 March 2007, *Pas.* 2007, I, at 549 and *Tijdschrift voor procesrecht en bewijsrecht* 23 (2008).
[44]Court of Appeal of Ghent 27 May 2009, 2007/AR/2896.
[45]Court of Appeal of Antwerp 18 April 2007, 2007AR582.
[46]Cass. 20th February 2009, *Revue de Droit Commerciale Belge* 233 (2010); with case note by K. Wagner, 'De sanctieregeling in de taalwet van 1935: Quousque tandem abutere patientia nostra?' at 238.
[47]Court of Appeal of Ghent 27 May 2009, 2007/AR/2896.
[48]Cass. 24 May 1993, *Rechtskundig Weekblad* 443 (1993-94).
[49]Cass. 9 June 2006, *Pas.* 2006, I, at 1377 and *Rechtskundig Weekblad* 1245 (2007-08); Cass. 7 June 2007, Pas. 2007, I, at 1177 and *Rechtspraak Antwerpen Brussel Gent* 1170 (2007).
[50]Cass. 19 January 2010, P.09.1340.N.
[51]Cass. 14 November 1996, *Rechtskundig Weekblad* 225 (1997-1998).

First of all, the **parties may jointly request the change of the language of the proceedings**.[52] The applicant may ask the language change in the writ of summons or the defendant can do the request, but both parties have to accept the request before any other objections.[53] In such case, the proceedings will continue in the language requested, without consideration by the judge. Depending on its own statutory language, a court can then either continue the proceedings in the other language, or refer them to another court. This regime counts for the whole country. But, strangely enough, in the courts in Brussels, the joint request to change Dutch in French or the other way around is not possible… Gosselin tests that *curiosum* against the constitutional principles of equality and non-discrimination.[54]

Secondly, in some cases the defendant may ask that the proceedings continue in the other language. This is possible in the courts of Brussels where the defendant[55] [56]may ask that the proceedings initiated in French or Dutch continue in the other language (Dutch or French).[57] This exception should be raised before any other objections, and the judge has a discretion when considering this request. He may reject the application if the elements of the case show that the defendant has an adequate knowledge of the language of the proceedings. Nevertheless, the language change is not possible for the earlier mentioned *extra muros* application. The same language change (but only Dutch changing in French) is nonetheless possible in the police courts of Halle and Vilvoorde (Dutch speaking municipalities near Brussels without linguistic facilities).[58]

Defendants living in municipalities belonging to the language frontier districts[59] can also request the proceedings to be conducted in French or in Dutch in the courts of their living area.[60] This exception should also be raised before any other objections, but the judge has no discretion to consider this request.

In the justice of the peace courts of Kraainem, Sint-Genesius-Rode and Meise, the language change request can also be made by defendants domiciled in the Brussels municipalities

[52]Sec. 7 § 1 of the Language Act.
[53]Sec. 7 § 1 *in fine* of the Language Act.
[54]GOSSELIN, F., "La langue de l'acte introductif et la demande de changement de langue devant les tribunaux bruxellois siégeant en matière civile" in VLAAMS PLEITGENOOTSCHAP BIJ DE BALIE TE BRUSSEL en CONFÉRENCE DU JEUNE BARREAU DE BRUXELLES (eds.), *De taal van het proces – La langue du procès*, Antwerpen-Cambridge, Intersentia, 2011, 19.
[55]The defendant can live everywhere in the country or even abroad.
[56]Also defendants domiciled in the Brussels municipalities with linguistic facilities (Drogenbos, Kraainem, Linkebeek, Sint-Genesius-Rode, Wemmel, Wezembeek-Oppem). Sec. 4 § 3 of the Language Act.
[57]Sec. 4 §1 of the Language Act.
[58]Also if the defendant is domiciled in the Brussels municipalities with linguistic facilities (Drogenbos, Kraainem, Linkebeek, Sint-Genesius-Rode, Wemmel, Wezembeek-Oppem). Sec. 4 § 3 of the Language Act.
[59]Moeskroen, Komen, and Sint-Martens-Voeren.
[60]Sec. 7 §1*bis* of the Language Act.

with linguistic facilities.[61] This exception should be raised before any other objections. The judge has a discretion when considering this request. Again, the judge may reject the application if the elements of the case show that the defendant has an adequate knowledge of the language of the proceedings.

What if there are several defendants? In that case the language requested by the majority of the defendants[62] prevails. When there is no majority, the judge statutes according to the necessities of the case.[63]

As we have seen, the appeal for the change of the language of the proceedings may be rejected if the applicant (this is the original defendant) has a sufficient knowledge of the language of the proceedings. Unfortunately the Language Act does not define the words 'sufficient knowledge'. By virtue of the same Section 4 the judge must take into account the elements of the cause. Naturally, the "elements of the cause" risk to leave the door wide open to unclear standards. H. Kaptein calls this kind of legal reasoning the 'carpenter's eye' (in Dutch: *timmermansoog*) of the judge.[64] In practice, the judge founds his decision on his findings in court or on the documents deposited by the parties. Consequently, he will refuse the request when he discovers an entire correspondence between the parties in the language of the proceedings. The fact that the defendant proceeded in another case in the language of the proceedings (which is now the subject of his request) or that he did not ask for a language change (while he was able to do so) does not prove his sufficient knowledge of that language. Besides, having a residence in a particular language area does not demonstrate one's language proficiency. On the contrary, a Brussels decision of the 17 November 1995 – a real linguistic declaration of war – did not accept that a lawyer, working and residing in Brussels, does not sufficiently know the Dutch language.[65]

[61] This concerns the following six municipalities where minorities acquired the right to obtain services in their language of origin: Drogenbos, Kraainem, Linkebeek, Sint-Genesius-Rode, Wemmel, Wezembeek-Oppem; Sec. 7*bis* of the Language Act.
[62] Without regard to their domicile.
[63] Sec. 6 § 2 of the Language Act.
[64] H. KAPTEIN, "Kat is hond. Of: Recht is Taal, maar niet helemaal.", *Raster* 2006, nr. 115, 63-64: "*Als de rechter er met de regels (en eventueel analogie en precedent) niet meer uit komt, grijpt hij terug op redelijkheid en billijkheid, of op 'de bijzondere omstandigheden van het geval' of hoe dat verder in verschillende rechtsgebieden mag heten. Dat heet: het timmermansoog van de rechter. Op zich (weer) een aardige analogie, zij het dat echt timmermanswerk gewoon wordt nagemeten als daaraan twijfel rijst. Bij rechters- en ander juristenwerk kan dat niet. Juist omdat duidelijke maatstaven ontbraken moest een beroep worden gedaan op discretie als 'redelijkheid en billijkheid'*."
[65] For all those cases, see F. GOSSELIN, "La langue de l'acte introductif et la demande de changement de langue devant les tribunaux bruxellois siégeant en matière civile " in VLAAMS PLEITGENOOTSCHAP BIJ DE BALIE TE BRUSSEL en CONFÉRENCE DU JEUNE BARREAU DE BRUXELLES (eds.), *De taal van het proces – La langue du procès*, Antwerpen-Cambridge, Intersentia, 2011, 21-22.

Service of documents

If service of procedural documents written in French, Dutch or German must be effected in another language area, a translation should be added in the official language of that other language area.[66] So, here again, the translation is just a matter of the existing three Belgian official languages.

The service of a procedural Dutch or French document in the bilingual (Dutch-French) area of Brussels is not explicitly ruled by Sec. 38 of the Language Act. No translation is required. So, the inhabitant of Brussels is implicitly considered as a bilingual (Dutch speaking and French speaking) person. Even though, all German documents served in the bilingual area of Brussels must be accompanied by a translation in Dutch and in French. In our view this rule is not only inconsistent (since the inhabitant of Brussels seems obviously considered as a bilingual person) but also not in line with the principle of procedural economy.

There exist several exceptions to the rule of Sec. 38 of the Language Act. For example, the translation rule does not apply when the addressee accepted the language of the document or when he chose for that language (language of choice principle).

The translation rule is not applied to the appeal in cassation (which is the appeal to the highest instance – the Court of Cassation – on a point of law). This exception represents a *real* exemption. By this I mean that the exception is categorical in terms of result. In fact, there is no language protection at all for the service of the appeal in cassation. Therefore the exception contrasts sharply with the general rule of Sec. 38 of the Language Act. In principle this language rule is applicable to the service of the whole range of procedural documents. It does no matter whether it is a writ of summons, an appeal, an opposition to a judgment, a decision,… However, in 1935 the exception did not exist. Only in 1947 the Belgian legislator decided to this strict non-application of Sec. 38 of the Language Act. In the preparatory works we find clues about the purpose of the exception. At that time the legislator ensured that the amendment should not affect the principles of the Language Act and that the interests of the citizen should be guaranteed. The reasons given for the amendment were multiple. First of all the legislator mentioned the practical feasibility and the charges (time, volume and costs). The legislator also develops an argument based on the special nature of the appeal in cassation procedure. He believes that the translation of the appeal in cassation would not be useful because the language of the proceedings in cassation is fixed (see Sec. 27 of the Language Act), for the proceedings take place in writing and between the lawyers, and finally because the language protection regarding the writ of service (by which the appeal in cassation is served) remains. The question arises whether such an exception, based on the above argumentation, still agrees with legitimate ideas concerning language protection. My critical comments are numerous. A first objection is that the legislator

[66] Sec. 38 of the Language Act.

identified the practical problems in 1947. At that time those problems had been tolerated for 12 years… Before that time the translation of the appeal in cassation was required.

The mentioned practical considerations are not proportionate to the exception and the language prejudice involved. Those practical arguments hold the language protection hostage. Existing language protective mechanisms may succeed in a better and feasible language protection.

Besides my argument against the practical considerations, I do not understand why the legislator hides behind the language of the proceedings in cassation and behind the language protection regarding the writ of service (by which the appeal in cassation is served). This gives no protection with regard to the language of the appeal in cassation *itself*. I must underline that my criticism is not meant for the written nature of the proceedings neither for the office of the lawyer at the Court of Cassation. The essence of my argument is that I do not accept that one calls in the particularity of the cassation proceedings to support the exception. So I wonder why the defendant does not have the possibility to judge the success rate of the appeal in cassation. I think it is first of all up to the defendant to see whether the game is worth the candle and if it's worth the effort to invoke the assistance of a lawyer at the Court of Cassation. However, that margin of appreciation is now restricted, precisely because of the fact that the defendant does not have a translation on his disposal. In my opinion, the defendant must stay master of his or her own case.

The application of the translation rule of Sec. 38 of the Language Act is particular concerning the Belgian collective debt settlement. Roughly speaking, we can say that, when the court informs the creditors about the collective debt settlement decision, there is no automatic translation. The information only includes the message that the addressee has the possibility to ask a translation. However, the creditor has not that possibility if the underlying agreement (from which arises the debt) was completed in the language of the proceedings. Is it acceptable to use in a procedural environment the language of the underlying contract as an understandable language just like that? The European Court of Justice goes not that far regarding the language of correspondence.[67] Regarding a cross-border service[68] the

[67]European Court of Justice, 8th May 2008, case nr. C-14/07, Ingenieurbüro Michael Weiss und Partner GbR/ Industrie- und Handelskammer Berlin.
[68]See article 8 of the European Service Regulation 1393/2007:
Refusal to accept a document.
1. The receiving agency shall inform the addressee, using the standard form set out in Annex II, that he may refuse to accept the document to be served at the time of service or by returning the document to the receiving agency within one week if it is not written in, or accompanied by a translation into, either of the following languages:
(a) a language which the addressee understands;
or
(b) the official language of the Member State addressed or, if there are several official languages in that Member State, the official language or one of the official languages of the place where service is to be effected.

European Court of Justice pronounced that the choice of the language of correspondence does not offer any presumption about the understandable language of the addressee. That choice forms a simple language indication that the court may take into account. In other words, the European Court of Justice does not find a direct connection between the selected language of correspondence and the understandable language. Now, what language reveals the linguistic identity the most? The language of the contract or the language of correspondence? We believe that a language of correspondence exposes in a more explicit way some information about the language of the person concerned. So, based on the decision of the European Court of Justice, and on an *a fortiori a maiore ad minus* reasoning, we would expect that the Belgian legislator does not automatically consider the language of the contract as an understandable language.

I now come back to the general translation rule of Sec. 38 of the Language Act. As the language protection for served documents is placed in that cozy little circle of the three official languages, each in their own language box, there is of course a good chance that the addressee of the document does not understand the language in which the document has been served. Once the defendant has "trudged" to court – I use the verb "to trudge" because of the fact that the defendant did not catch the message of the received document – the gates of language eternity open… Indeed, like we have seen before, for purposes of making statements to the court, the party can use any language he or she wants, even other languages than the official languages, and his/her choices of spoken language are supported by providing the assistance of an interpreter. This discrepancy between the language protection of the service of documents and the oral language protection in court seems not balanced to me.[69] The same incongruity occurs when a party asks and obtains the change of the language of the proceedings; he or she may not understand the language of the writ of summons but (after the accepted language change) there is no regulation of that initial language trouble.

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2. Where the receiving agency is informed that the addressee refuses to accept the document in accordance with paragraph 1, it shall immediately inform the transmitting agency by means of the certificate provided for in Article 10 and return the request and the documents of which a translation is requested.
3. If the addressee has refused to accept the document pursuant to paragraph 1, the service of the document can be remedied through the service on the addressee in accordance with the provisions of this Regulation of the document accompanied by a translation into a language provided for in paragraph 1. In that case, the date of service of the document shall be the date on which the document accompanied by the translation is served in accordance with the law of the Member State addressed. However, where according to the law of a Member State, a document has to be served within a particular period, the date to be taken into account with respect to the applicant shall be the date of the service of the initial document determined pursuant to Article 9(2).
4. Paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 shall also apply to the means of transmission and service of judicial documents provided for in Section 2.
5. For the purposes of paragraph 1, the diplomatic or consular agents, where service is effected in accordance with Article 13, or the authority or person, where service is effected in accordance with Article 14, shall inform the addressee that he may refuse to accept the document and that any document refused must be sent to those agents or to that authority or person respectively.

[69] As if injustice in written (and moreover "at distance") language protection were more acceptable…

Possible solutions to smooth the Belgian language situation in civil proceedings[70]

As I said in the introduction, there is an external language tension between the official language and the understandable language. There is also an internal tension about the understandable language itself. The concept of understandable language is often realized in a bizarre way, due to the advantage of the official language or the court language (that is most of the time the official language or one of the official languages).

More attention for the understandable language of the citizen

It is clear that the Language Act focuses on the protection of the three official languages. Even when the understandable language is to a very limited extent discussed regarding the language of the proceedings, it is just a matter of choice between official languages.

First of all, it may of course happen that the understandable language of the citizen is the official language itself. So, in some cases the official language will be an understandable language for the party and in other cases it will not be an understandable language for the party. The problems occur when there is a dissimilarity.

Is there a possibility to pay more attention to the understandable language of the citizen instead of the official language criterion?

"Official languages may give way to understandable languages"

By "giving way to the understandable language" I mean promoting the chances that languages (official and "understandable") might coincide.

Belgium suffers from false official multilingualism. We have seen that Belgium has very severe rules on language use. These rules are based on strong principles of territoriality and monolingualism (except for the bilingual area of Brussels). So, even if Belgium is a so called multilingual country, this idea of multilingualism is, at least in my opinion, completely false. Definitely, when we take the map of Belgium to play darts with it, the thrown dart will end in a monolingual area. And even if the result is Brussels, there again: Brussels is a so called

[70]National language solutions in civil proceedings should not be different from language resolutions on an extra national level, for instance the European language situation. When one thinks of language protection and of the use of language in a particular country, one might consider the place of official languages of particular importance. In multilingual states the relation between the various official languages poses indeed interesting questions. However, the relation between the use of official and non-official languages is not fundamentally different in a single-language and a multilingual state.

bilingual area, but, nevertheless, this is untrue whit regard to civil proceedings: bilingual courts do not exist; the courts are either Dutch speaking or French speaking.[71]

When a country has several official languages, it is unfortunate that those languages do not prevail over the whole territory of that country. Superposition of official languages could be beneficial. That superposition could be concretized by the establishment of trilingual courts, although keeping the real proceedings monolingual. One could consider this trilingualism only for civil proceedings purposes. So, the language areas could remain, only the courts becoming trilingual, and the concrete proceedings staying monolingual[72]. Nevertheless, the existence of the Dutch, German or French language as potential languages of the proceedings all over the country should be a step forward. In this way the options regarding the languages of proceedings become wider and this creates a larger potential language coincidence (between the language of proceedings and the understandable language). Moreover, the superposition of the official languages could mean a progress relating to the current language change processes. In the context of those processes, I am reminded of the saying: we cannot see the wood for the trees... Once all official languages are superposed, the language change processes – the joint request or the request of the defendant – could be generalized and uniformized.

"Official languages may be discarded"

Is it possible to *do without* the three Belgian official languages in favour of the understand-able languages of the parties? I guess the official languages and their most fanatical followers suffer from separation anxiety.[73]

About the language of the proceedings I shall pay some attention to a beautiful[74] German project. In the following sentences I shall summarize a few points Huber wrote on that subject.[75] After that, I will try to formulate some brief personal comments.

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[71]Europe has the same problem. When we take the European map to play darts with it, nothing remains of multilingualism. Principally, Europe is a puzzle of adjacent official languages each limited by a tight language protection. Europe promotes the diversity of languages but does not intervene in the determination and functioning of the official languages at the national level of the Member States. Further, Europe states that this non-interference supports language diversity. Thus, in reality, Europe only accepts a puzzle of languages without worrying about the eventual multilingual vibrancy that may not correspond to the determined official languages.

[72]This rest of false multilingualism does not really hurt. Indeed, it is not a major problem, because when the parties have different understandable languages, there should in any case be an intermediary language protection (see point 3.1.3).

[73]There are three fears of death: the fear of suffocation, the fear of falling, and the fear of being who one really is. The separation anxiety is certainly a variant of that last fear.

[74]Despite the fact that this project has been established on the basis of a competitive international struggle between England and Germany to make the respective forums and laws attractive. There was a fear that the use of German as the language of the proceedings might be a grave disadvantage.

In May 2010, the German parliament adopted a bill[76] that allows to establish special court chambers for transnational commercial disputes where the proceedings can be entirely[77] conducted in English. Huber supports the standpoint that the conflict with the principle of public proceedings can only arise if that principle requires more than physical accessibility to the courtroom. All the provisions about the principle of public proceedings pursue a double aim: protecting the parties against judicial arbitrariness and strengthening the public confidence in the judicial system. They do not confer on citizens who are not party to the proceedings an individual right to attend a specific hearing; they establish a subjective right exclusively for the parties, although it concerns a subjective right of public interest. The parties have the possibility to waive their right to a public hearing if it does not conflict with an important public interest. So, in Huber's view, the choice of the parties to have English as the language of the proceedings constitutes a waiver.

About the protection of third parties, Huber writes the following passage:

> "The draft law proposes to give the third party the right to refuse acceptance of the third-party notice if the document is written in English. If the third party exercises this right, the party who has issued the third-party notice can either refrain from the third-party notice or provide the third party with a German translation. If the third party decides to participate in the proceedings, he has a right to an interpreter and the tribunal can even decide that the proceedings are to be continued in German. This last solution would also apply in cases where a voluntary intervener has a legitimate interest in participating."

Huber states that this solution undermines the parties' choice of the English language. The author more likely wants to make a distinction between a third-party notice and a voluntary intervention. About the third-party notice he writes that

> "(…) it would be preferable to let the parties choose between a very high degree of certainty of having English as the court language at the price of the exclusion of third-party notices if the third party is not willing to accept English as the court language and keeping the unlimited right to issue a third-party notice at the price of a lower degree of certainty of having English as the court language. If a contract contains a clause providing for the proceedings to be conducted in English and excluding third-party notices, such clause should be respected. Consequently, one party – usually the defendant – could not deviate from this clause and issue a third-party notice with the aim of switching the language button and thereby slowing

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[75] See S. Huber, "The German Approach to the Globalisation and Harmonisation of Civil Procedure: Balancing National Particularities and International Open-Mindedness" in X. Kramer en C. Van Rhee (eds.), Civil Litigation in a Globalising World, Den Haag, Asser Press, 2012, 295-297 and 305-312.

[76] It is not yet sure if the draft will become statute.

[77] From the first claim to the judgment.

> down the proceedings. Alternatively, the parties to a contract could agree on a clause which obliges the party that wishes to issue a third-party notice, with the consequence that the proceedings will be conducted in German, to bear the costs of changing the language, irrespective of the outcome of the proceedings."

Finally, about the voluntary interveners Huber notes that

> "[t]he parties cannot deprive third persons of their right to participate if those third persons are affected by the outcome of the proceedings. (…) There are only two alternatives *de lege ferenda*: either the third party has no right to participate if he is not willing to accept proceedings conducted in English, but then the final decision cannot have binding effect on him; or, where the efficient administration of justice requires such a binding effect, the third party must have the right to participate and use German – at least if he does not have an adequate command of English."

The optional English language as a language of the proceedings wants to avoid a language clash between the language of the contract and the language of the proceedings. Of course, there is also the language of the applicable law. Thus, the German projects thinks about special procedural rules for transnational cases. Even some substantive law has been translated in English, and one places one's hope in the optional instrument of European Contract Law.

Thinking about another optional language of the proceedings then the official languages (where the courts are situated) is an interesting idea. Why should we not accept it, if the parties agree with the optional language of the proceedings and if the concerned State makes that language of the proceedings (that is not an official language of the place where the court is situated) possible. I find regrettable that the project only concerns commercial and transnational litigation, but what can I do against the "business as usual" principle…

Concerning the publicity problem, I do not agree with Huber's standpoint. As I see multi-lingualism as a current society norm, I am not in favour of his theory of waiver. Even without another optional language of proceedings, the principle of public proceedings carries the effects of societal multilingualism. It is indeed wishful thinking to believe that today's language of the proceedings (being the official language of the place where the court is situated) is located in the middle of a public understanding this official language.

Regarding Huber's vision on the protection of third parties, I am not so fond of the difference between the third-party notice and the voluntary intervener. In both situations there can be a final interest or a definite non-interest for a party or for the third party (or the voluntary intervener). So, in my view, it is not advisable to link the solution of the language problem to a non-presence of the third party (or the voluntary intervener) if this presence was first planned. Now the German language has initially be left by both parties, I feel more for the preservation of the English language as the language of the proceedings combined with an eventual proper oral and written language protection for the third party (or the voluntary intervener). Besides, falling back on the German language could be totally superfluous if the third party (or the voluntary intervener) does not understand German. In my eyes the optional language should be qualified as a kind of *ad hoc* official language, a new possible centralizing language of the proceedings.

The problem of language clashes is and will be at all times and all places. The Europeanization of substantive law and procedural law could form a first great step to mitigate them.

The translation of legal documents is absolutely catastrophic in Belgium. Only the three official languages (French, Dutch and German), each on their own territory (except in the Brussels bilingual area), are used as the language in which served court documents are translated. In my view, there is no other way out: the legal documents should be translated into a language the addressee understands.

The European Court of Human Rights has dealt with linguistic rights under different rights guaranteed by the Convention. The Court has pointed out that linguistic freedom as such is not one of the rights governed by the Convention. With the exception of the specific rights in criminal matters, the Convention does not explicitly guarantee the right to use a particular language in communications with public authorities or the right to receive information in a language of one's choice. In principle, States party to the Convention are free to regulate the use of their official language(s).[78] However, the European Court of Human Rights has not yet had the opportunity to rule on the issue of language rights with specific reference to a fair civil trial.[79] A necessary condition for a fair trial is not merely access to justice, but also intellectual access to justice.[80] In other words, when a person is summoned before a judge, he or she must be able to understand the claim. The question arises how the language protection must be given form as an element of a fair trial. Is translation always necessary? Does the recipient of a writ in a foreign language (which he or she does not understand) have the right to obtain the document in a comprehensible language? According to Matscher, it is first of all essential that the summoned person has effectively been informed of the procedure. It is also important that the transmission of documents somehow provides

[78]See 'Cultural rights in the case-law of the European Court of Human Rights, Council of Europe / European Court of Human Rights, January 2011, www.echr.coe.int.

[79]See 'Manuel pratique sur le fonctionnement de la Convention de La Haye du 15 novembre 1965 relative à la signification et la notification à l'étranger des actes judiciaires et extra-judiciaires en matière civile ou commerciale', (2006), at 88, nr. 227: 'La Cour européenne des Droits de l'Homme à Strasbourg n'a, à notre connaissance, pas encore eu à se prononcer sur l'exigence d'une notification dans la langue du destinataire dans le cadre d'une affaire civile ou commerciale'.

[80]See N. Fricero, 'L'acte introductif d'instance et la transmission des actes au regard de la Convention européenne des droit de l'homme', in *Nouveaux droits dans un nouvel espace européen de justice : le droit processuel et le droit d'exécution* (2002), at 47 and 49.

the addressee the opportunity to understand the contents of the message. A translation should not be necessary in every case. In other words, Matscher supports the view that the linguistic right, and the right to translation in particular, is not an autonomous right but a right that is situated under the umbrella of a fair trial and the principle of equality.[81] If the right to language (and by extension the right to translation) is not an independent right, the result might be that the addressee does not fully understand that important document introducing the proceedings, but that only his or her lawyer understands it. The addressee would in fact have to know the language of the place where he or she lives in order to maintain a firm grip on the proceedings. But is such fiction still tenable? E. Brems argues that existing jurisprudence of the European Court of Human Rights offers no guarantee that the principle of territoriality would remain immune to international control mechanisms concerning human rights.[82] So, the question remains whether the right to language (including the associated right to translation or interpretation) is a right in itself, or whether it is one of the elements to the right to a fair trial. If it is such an element, the right to language only exists to the extent that a litigating party or an accused person was unable to exercise his or her right to a fair trial, due to the language barrier. There is no doubt that these questions will increasingly be posed on both national and international courts. In my opinion, there is no margin: a non-observed right to language is a non-observed right to a fair trial.

Choice between source language protection and intermediary language protection

As I currently see it, the possible remedies concerning the external tension must be limited.[83] Otherwise we risk only to obtain a Pyrrhic language victory. What I mean is that currently[84] the language of the proceedings cannot be multiplied without limits. What are we really discussing? We are arguing about the organization of the language of the proceedings as an understandable language for the party. By that we offer a source language protection[85] to the party. Of course, in a contradictory setting, that party does not stand alone. There is another party or there are other parties. So, sooner or later, when the parties do not speak the same language, there will be one of the parties not understanding the language of the proceedings. Theoretically spoken, even if all possible languages were languages of proceedings in a specific case in a particular court, it should of course be possible to have parties that do not speak each other's language (for, obviously, one cannot require that all the parties speak all that possible languages). And so, one or more parties

[81] F. Matscher, 'Sprache der Auslandszustellung und Art. 6 EMRK', 4 *IPRax* 274 (1999). See also Ch. van Heukelen, 'Taalproblematiek bij de betekening aan een buitenlandse bestemmeling', in M. Pertegas, S. Brijs and L. Samyn (eds.), *Betekenen en uitvoeren over de grenzen heen* (2008), at 49-75.

[82] E. Brems, 'Vlaamse taalvereisten getoetst aan internationale mensenrechtenverdragen', in A. Alen and S. Sottiaux (eds.), *Taaleisen juridisch getoetst* (2009), at 7.

[83] We shall see that the language protection will of course not be limited but only the way in which the language of the proceedings becomes an understandable language of the party.

[84] We can of course dream about totally computerized proceedings and translation software producing 100% adequate translations.

[85] This means that the party is protected in a direct way.

(and it does not matter if it is the applicant or the defendant) would suffer from not understanding the language of the proceedings. So, due to the multiplicity of the parties and their respective languages there is a centralizing language aspect in the language(s) of proceedings, because not all the different languages concerned can become languages of the proceedings.

The intermediary language protection[86] quality taken for granted, my standpoint is that source language protection or intermediary language protection offer the same protection. I argue that all other thoughts are ideologically weakly founded. And in this debate language ideology seems a jejune argument to me. Because, even if one accepted a belief in language ideology, should a claim for source language protection regarding the language of the proceedings really serve the language ideology at issue? This is my first intuitive conviction that is certainly far too strongly expressed. The hopeful part in my standpoint is that the language protection (source protection or intermediary protection) itself knows no limit; only the boundaries between source and intermediary protection must be determined.

The inner quality of the understandable language

Taking the concept of “understandable language” into account, we have to examine what is understood by it. It makes no sense to secure the use of the understandable language if the concept is not concretized in an adequate way. Our concern is to guarantee the quality of the understandable language. Instead of the ‘carpenter’s eye’ of the judge we need a more stable and just norm to determine the understandable language. I am convinced that the external language appreciation by the judge should be substituted for an internal appreciation by the person concerned. Who else but the party itself may in fact have something to say about his own language?

Concretization of the understandable language plan

Concerning the above mentioned external an internal language tension, it will not be easy to enlarge the scope of the existing official languages in Belgium or to leave an official language in favor of an *ad hoc* official language or to accept an understandable language only appreciated by the person mainly involved.

The Belgian language situation seems currently irreversibly stuck. The last institutional agreement[87] does not bring any change. Concerning the language situation, the institutional

[86]This means that the party is protected in an indirect way of translation or interpretation.
[87]Institutioneel akkoord voor de zesde staatshervorming – Een efficiëntere federale staat en een grotere autonomie voor de deelstaten, 11 October 2011, *http://www.dekamer.be/kvvcr/pdf_sections/home/NLdirupo.pdf*

pact cares mainly about the mini-language-wars between Dutch and French speakers (magistrates and others) in Brussels.

The question arises if the judges in Belgium (with their invariable Belgian substantive law) are prepared to adopt another language. If not, we should not really worry about that. We have a splendid neighbour backyard indeed: The Netherlands, Germany, France and Great-Britain and their respective official languages – three of them same as the three Belgian official languages and one corresponding to the uprising commercial *lingua franca* – could bring support. If the Belgian judges do not want to assume other languages, maybe the "backyard foreign judges" (with their invariable language) would be ready to come to Belgium to apply Belgian law. More generally and to promote *real* language protection in civil litigation, I think the European Union should seriously consider the mobility of European judges on the European territory. Moreover, it will become much less difficult in the future to embrace the Belgian law that will of course be more and more submitted to the European harmonization. Further, I would prefer the coming of external judges for it should be a process without or with lesser ideological meaning. The complicated Belgian language situation would be a kind of virginal field for those peripheral judges, and so they would enter in a prolific "not-knowing-arena".

As concerns the concretization of the inner quality of the understandable language I am an avid fan of the realization of individual language identity cards.

Conclusion

In accordance with Sections 4 and 30 of the Belgian Constitution, which respectively deal with the language areas and the freedom of language use, Belgium has three official languages which are not explicitly pronounced: Dutch, French and German. These languages are fixed to their concerned language areas (principle of territoriality). The Belgian language protection focuses on three official languages, each of them in their own 'language territory box'. Next to the principle of territoriality, a second Belgian principle is the extreme belief in procedural monolinguism. Non-official languages are not taken into account (as it concerns the language of the proceedings or the translation of served documents).

'Selective incestuous language protection' would be an appropriate description of such language protection. 'Incestuous' because of the fact that the language protection always leads (or better: returns) to an official language. And 'selective' for the reason that there is no superposition of those three languages[88] and that therefore language protection only serves particular language minority concentrations (the language areas themselves or the municipalities with linguistic facilities).

[88]See the thoughts of H. DE SCHUTTER, "Let's Brusselize the world!" in A. Grosserier and Y. Vanderborght (eds.), *Arguing about justice - Essays for Philippe Van Parijs*, 2011, 199-206.

There does not exist any modern creative, practical and useful language protection evolution in Belgium. It seems that the only and main motivation is the language ambition of the different language areas. In my opinion, too much ambition in language use kills the brilliance in language use. The use of different languages should be thought about in a restful, calm and enriched language setting. We need to search for language solutions in a non-competitive language environment. *It is just a language… so what!?* By exposing that last sentence, I do certainly not want to underestimate the importance of language protection, but still, the language problem needs more openness and tolerance.

Moreover, it has been pointed out that the strict territoriality principle, as prescribed by the Language Act, may possibly not survive the test of the right to a fair trial.

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Activism of the Mari younger generation in the maintenance of the Mari language

Elena Vedernikova

Abstract

The Mari language policy dates back to the early 1920s, when the literacy and education levels rose and language usage increased throughout the speech community. The result of that movement was the creation of two literary standards (Meadow and Highland). The Mari language revitalisation process started in the early 1990s, focused on the active involvement of Mari in various spheres of life and the strengthening of the position of Mari in Russian society. Hovewer, for both internal and external reasons, the progress stalled some years later.

In the current paper, the author will review the 21st-century bottom-up language activism which has already increased the frequency of Mari speaking in the region. The target population of the activists consists of young Mari and the aim of the movement has been to improve the attitude of native speakers to the Mari language.

The efforts of activists can be divided into three categories: ideological, social and cultural. The results of their informal activities have been rather positive and, considering the decrease of institutional support, these efforts provide a basis for some optimism regarding the survival of the Mari language.

Introduction

At present numerous minority languages in modern society find themselves in a constant struggle for survival. Various actions have been taken, including enacting appropriate laws, creating social institutions and making rules to assist the maintenance and further development of these languages.

This situation is also faced by the Mari, a Finno-Ugric people located in the central part of Russia. The Mari language revitalisation process started at the beginning of the 1990s as an increased language shift and a decline in the use of Mari in various domains of society became a matter of concern for a wide audience. This time was marked by the activism of the newly established *Mariy Ushem*[89] ('Union of the Mari') organisation. The whole movement of that period was focused on the formation of a strong Mari society via extension of the role of language in the Russian context. However, after some years the activism subsided due to disunity, a split in the movement, a change in leaders [Martyanov, 2010: 50] and other reasons. Since about 2004 there has been bottom-up activism by young people concerned with the language situation in Mari El. Initially, their target population consisted of the young Mari: an effort was made to improve the attitudes towards the native language by using methods that would appeal to youth. The activism resulted in a limited increase in the popularity of the Mari language and culture among the rising generation and, to some extent, decreased ethnic divergence. However, despite some success at an informal level, formal institutional support of Mari has continuously declined, which makes the future of the Mari languages rather uncertain.

Mari language policy in the twentieth century

The Mari language policy was created gradually in the 1920s and early 1930s as the literacy and education levels rose and language usage increased throughout the speech community. Such a process was typical among the Finno-Ugric languages of the Soviet Union in the post-revolutionary period. It was due to a "broadening of the social functions of the language... helping to remedy the stigmatized image of minority groups" (Lallukka 1990: 177), although the same developments mainly served to increase the power of the Russian language and, thus, its influence among the population. Despite some contradictory results, the language policy of that period had an overall positive effect on the development of minority languages. This is exemplified by the creation of literary standards for literary promotion, as "the absence of guidance of the expanding publishing tended to be carried out arbitrarily in accordance with the dialectal attachments of individual editors and writers" (Lallukka l.cit.). In the case of the Mari, this was of particular significance as it assisted in uniting separate Mari dialect groups and building one strong ethnic society (Ivanov 2003: 113, 115). The Mari movement resulted in the creation of two literary standards:[90] Meadow and Highland. Attempts to bring the standards together were not successful for some internal (e.g. disagreement among members; Ivanov 2003: 146) and external (e.g. the political situation of the state) reasons.

The start of the Mari language revitalisation process began in the 1990s, when the rights of the Mari and the limited sphere of the language were widely discussed. Revitalisation was common throughout post-Soviet Russia. Due to large-scale changes during that period, numerous ethnic regions had opportunities to strengthen their positions in Russian society.

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[89] The first "Mariy Ushem" was created in 1917 and existed until 1922.

[90] The term "standard" is a source of debate among some Mari linguists, who insist on considering Meadow and Highland Mari as separate literary languages.

Mari El was one of the regions where ethnic intelligentsia in alliance with local authorities were quick to take advantage of the situation. Such a movement started in 1989 as public meetings united people in an effort to create an ethnic agency. Those meetings finally resulted in the founding of *Mariy Ushem* ('Mari Union'), which was rather influential at the end of the twentieth century (Martyanov 2010: 24). Due to the campaign started by *Mariy Ushem* in 1992, the Mari El region was officially recognised as a state national republic with its own language (through the law "About language in Mari El", 1995). An agenda was created[91] to promote the active involvement of Mari in various spheres of life, thus, strengthening the position of the Mari language in the Russian context. One important issue of that agenda was extending the functions of the native language. This included teaching in Mari in all subjects at all educational levels and switching most official documentation to Mari (Ivanov 2000: 9). In order to bring the ideas to life, some educational and cultural events (meetings, and lectures on the history of the Mari and the ideas of the movement) were arranged by activists in and outside the Mari El region (in Tatarstan, Bashkortostan, Udmurtiya, Perm, Kirov and other regions) (Martyanov 2010: 24). As a result of those actions, there was an attempt to create one common Mari literary language on the basis of two standards, but it failed due to the strong positions of those who felt that this would lead to the extinction of the Highland Mari language[92] (Ivanov 2003: 279).

However, despite the teeming activity of the 1990s, there was little significant increase in the status of the Mari language and the ethnic population. This was due to a set of factors that finally thwarted the desired result of the vast campaign. Firstly, there were steady alterations in internal policy and there was a severe economic crisis in post-Soviet Russia, which, in combination with ideological deficiencies, resulted in erratic policies in the administrative regions of the ethnic minorities. Secondly, the native population was not ready for sudden changes in the extension of Mari language functions (in science, economics, politics etc.), and this turned a significant number of people against some aspects of the campaign (e.g. school teaching in Mari). The Mari people were already accustomed and resigned to the dominance of Russian and the decreasing importance of their ethnic language (Ivanov 2000: 9). For this reason, too, the ethnic population remained passive towards some of the activities which aimed at enhancing the importance of the Mari language in the Russian context. The third important factor that had a negative influence on the Mari movement was the weak training of its activists and the absence of unity in their ideological approaches. This finally resulted in a split in the national movement and a decline in activism (Shamiyev 2010, Martyanov 2010 and Ivanov 2000).

The situation worsened due to changes in the local government in 2000, after which the cooperation between Mari non-governmental organisations and the authorities decreased.

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91 The agenda was created by the Mari National Association, a branch of "Mariy Ushem".

92 Since the 1990s, the two literary standards have been considered to be separate languages.

New people and different policy directions led to a lower priority for the issue of the Mari people in Mari El. The situation was aggravated by the continuing decrease in institutional support for the Mari language. Due to these factors, the outcomes of the activism in the 1990s were rather modest (Ivanov 2000: 9). However, it became clear that the Mari were eager to engage in the issues of language maintenance and development.

The failure of language policy in Mari El

Since the beginning of the 21st century, the conditions for an effective language policy and support of language have worsened considerably. In comparison with the 1990s, public discussion of the promotion of the Mari language has become rather limited, as the relationship between the population and the authorities has changed. To some extent, the language revitalization policy has been transformed into a movement for the development of Mari culture. As a result, various attempts to improve the language situation have not been as successful as desired. The main problem lies in the indifference and reluctance of the population regarding the issue. This is particularly true of the younger generation, as their unwillingness to learn the mother tongue has become a roadblock to progress. This reluctance is due to several factors. One of them is the limited amount of teaching of school subjects in Mari (two hours per week, and in some schools it has been eliminated), insufficient to initiate children into the study of their native language.

Another factor is parents' low enthusiasm for the teaching of Mari, which has had a negative impact on the attitudes of the next generation. Nowadays, a practical approach to the issue of language study is emphasised. The words of a Mari teacher of a township school best exemplify the common position of most contemporary Mari parents:

> "Unfortunately at present our school is becoming Russianised very rapidly. Most Mari children neither speak nor know their native language. The main reason for that is the attitude of the parents, who do not care whether their children speak it or not. In their opinion, the Mari language is absolutely unnecessary and it prevents them from studying other subjects more carefully. They think it is better to study the Russian language as it will be useful in future life. That is why parents neither speak Mari, even at home, nor encourage learning their native language"[93] (Nadezhda, 45, April, 2013).

Such an opinion is rather common among Mari parents, who try to protect their children from the "odd burden" (a literal translation of the Mari expression) of studying Mari, to help the children get a deeper knowledge of Russian and other subjects. It is considered more important to focus on adaptation to the modern society and involvement in the future social

93 The informant is a Mari language teacher at the Pomar school (Vozhsk district, Mari El)

and work life (Ivanov 2000: 10). Undoubtedly, that attitude toward native language teaching has also promoted the assimilation of the Mari.

The reluctance of the younger generation is also generated by lifestyle changes. Reconsidering their life values, younger Mari speakers see their native language as a disadvantage in comparison with Russian. As has been stated, the modernisation of society can lead to the destruction of moral principles (Kozyreva 2011, Baidarov 2013) through a distortion of the comprehension of “good” and “bad”, and a replacement of true values (e.g. love, friendship and honesty) with false ones (e.g. popularity and wealth). The active development of information technologies, acceleration of urbanisation and the intensive influence of mass media have contributed considerably to this trend.

The Mari, as a part of Russian society, are also involved in this process. With regard to the younger generation, this is expressed in attempts to reject traditional values already at an early age. Such a rejection is also evident in the depreciation of customs and beliefs as “obsolete realias” and their replacement by material goals. According to M. Ehala (2010), this process can be seen as a transition from traditionalism to utilitarianism.

Another factor negatively influencing the willingness of young Mari to learn their language is the relatively remote location of the community. Nowadays, the native language is likely to be heard mainly in rural areas, as the ethnic population is not highly urbanised. Due to the history of the Mari and their way of life, the language and culture have so far been preserved (Ivanova 2011). As a rule, young Mari born in rural areas begin speaking and thinking in their native language from childhood. After graduating from school, however, most young people move to cities or townships to continue their education or to work. On leaving the native speaking community, they find themselves in a multinational and multicultural society. The dominance of the Russian language and culture as well as the changes in basic values influence young people’s attitudes and worldviews. Quite often this results in situations in which young Mari are shy about speaking in their native language in public places and about revealing their ethnic affiliation. Young people gain mastery in the Russian language and try to adjust to the new community, as this is encouraged by the dominant society. As a result, Mari language usage is mostly limited to the family context.

Language activism in the 21st century

The movement to improve the language situation in Mari El emerged around 2005, when young Mari (mostly students at Mari University and the Krupskaya Mari Pedagogical Institute) got organised to deal with the problem. This can be characterised as a new language activism (Spolsky 2009: 204), as in comparison with the previous revitalisation campaign the movement was confined only to this issue and aimed to influence only one group: the younger generation.

One outcome of the activism was the creation of the Mari El Radio broadcasting station in 2005, which was run by very young Mari. Due to this increase in Mari broadcasting, the popularity and influence of radio on the population increased. This issue requires separate research, but it is important to at least note the role of mass media on people's consciousness and perception of reality.

Another feature of the activism of young Mari is their work within the old non-governmental organization *U Viy* ('New Power'), which later separated into the new youth agency *Viy Ar* (in 2009), which dealt with language issues of young Mari in society, and with the development of cultural ties with other peoples ("ViyAr" 2009; Vtoroi vserossiyskiy slet 2010). Other non-governmental agencies (the *Supporting Fund of Mari Projects "Rodo"* ('Relative'), the *Kolumb Museum Center, the Mari El Community in Moscow* etc.) have often provided support for the organising of events. According to their stated goals, the activities can be divided into ideological, social and cultural categories.

Ideological activities include work with young Mari (seminars, meetings and lectures), aimed at improving their attitudes to the mother tongue and ethnic group, improving native language speaking levels and increasing knowledge of ethnic history, culture, politics etc. For instance, one such event is the Forum of Mari Youth, held every summer in the form of camps in various districts of Mari El. As a rule, participants are young Mari from all over Russia. Generally, all training sessions are held in Mari and led by ethnic specialists[94]. In addition, participants are taught to work in teams by designing projects, developing their leadership skills and re-establishing essential priorities [Vtoroi vserossiyskiy slet 2010].

> *...It was notable that participants also took care to only speak in Mari, and corrected each other when someone switched to Russian*[95]

It is necessary to evaluate the role of the Internet, particularly of social networks, which is, undoubtedly, a strong ideological influence. On having the opportunity to be frank in virtual reality, the most topical issues (*Why do the most active Mari leave Mari El?* etc.) are discussed in such networking groups as *Mari all over the world! Let's come together!*, *I am Mari. I live in the Mari way, Online Mari news!, Mari names, Chimari world* etc., on popular Russian web-sites: www.vkontakte.ru, www.odnoklassniki.ru, www.facebook.com, www.mariuver.wordpress.com etc.

The *social* activities of the young Mari include organising for social action (e.g. advertising campaigns and flash mobs) aimed at stimulating the young generation to speak more Mari in public places in urban areas. This seems to be an effective way to attract the attention of youth. For instance, the advertising campaign *I am Mari!,* and the flash mob *I do speak Mari!* [Flash-mob 2013], held regularly in Yoshkar Ola, have become rather popular and increase

94 Sometimes non-Mari specialists are allowed to lecture.

95 The informant is a former organiser of, and a regular participant in the annual Forum.

the involvement of native participants. The flash mob is a planned music campaign of young people who meet in a public place unexpectedly and start doing Mari dances, drawing the attention of passers-by.

The *cultural* activities are festivals, concerts and various ethnic events that are rather popular among locals. These activities have led to the emergence of some new genres in Mari art (e.g. variety shows and cinema art) and attract young Mari to participate in them. There are now favourable conditions for the development of native culture, as there is active support from local authorities. Enhancing cultural contacts with other groups of Mari living in different regions of Russia also adds to the success. All of these factors have led to an increase in interest of the local population in Mari culture and a feeling of ethnic pride. Mari activists sometimes exploit the situation in order to emphasise the significance of knowledge of Mari for the maintenance of the whole ethnic group.

At present, it is hard to evaluate the overall effect of the above-described activities on the self-perception of young Mari and their attitudes to the native language, but some observed outcomes are outlined below.

Current language situation among young Mari

One apparent outcome is an increase in Mari speaking frequency among young people in public urban areas. This indicates a rise in ethnic self-esteem to some extent as compared with the situation ten years ago[96]. It is always hard for an individual to change behaviour and break rules. So, switching to the native language mostly occurs when others are involved. Sometimes young people get carried away and speak Mari dramatically in the presence of representatives of different ethnic groups.

> *"We do not care what others think of us. We just speak our Mari language"*[97]

There have been a few instances in which young Mari parents, realizing the importance of language and culture, try to transmit them to the next generation by speaking Mari and involving their children in ethnic events beginning in early childhood. This is exemplified by the statement of an informant:

> *...I see a type of rise in speaking Mari …. I heard parents were speaking the native language with their children in supermarkets often. And, that was not a single instance…*[98] (information from the interview).

96 The informant is an employee of the Ministry of Culture of Mari El; May, 2013.
97 The informant is a student at Mari State University.
98 The informant is an employee of the Ministry of Culture.

One clear result of language activism is a rise in participation of young Mari in cultural events. This is particularity noticeable among students of colleges and universities, who have started taking part in festivals and concerts more actively and have begun doing their own creative ethnic work (the “Mari KVN” show etc.).

Another interesting phenomenon is the emergence of stylized ethnic fashion as an indicator of internal changes in Mari society. Thus, labels on cloths, cars and billboards *(Jumo arale* ‘God bless!’*, Mari Ulam* ‘I am Mari’; Aktsiya 2013) have gradually gained popularity among young people. This is, undoubtedly, due to Mari activists promoting the popularisation of ethnic culture, and the greater involvement of the population in the process.

As it is important for Mari to speak their mother tongue for their self-identification (Ivanov 2000: 17), enculturation involves acquiring those linguistic skills. The increase in native-speaking frequency among the younger generation is an obvious indicator of the effectiveness of language activities during the past eight years.

Interestingly, the understanding of the term “native language” among children has changed significantly.

Table 1: Native language for Mari children (age of 14-17):

Native language	**2000**[99]	**2013**
Mari	69 %	96.2%
Russian	31%	3.8 %

The data from the surveys in 2000 and 2013 indicate that for the last thirteen years the percentage of young native respondents who consider Mari to be their mother tongue has increased 27.2 percentage points. This indicates that contemporary children have a clearer understanding of the term “native language”. The attitude of Russian-speaking young people to the issue of Mari language teaching has become more positive as well, though it depends on their age and education. Thus, 5.7% of children considered it important to include compulsory teaching of Mari at all schools in the region. Among students of colleges and higher educational institutions, the rate is higher: 13.4%. The adult population is even more supportive (Pusztay 2004: 67).

Despite some positive changes, the problem of Mari language endangerment is still critical. There are both objective (e.g. decreasing institutional support of Mari) and subjective reasons. As the level of subjective factors (here, the self-perception of the Mari) has increased in recent years, ethnonihilism (Latypov 2013) among the Mari is still a frequent phenomenon (Ivanova 2013). Thus, one can see that the future of the Mari language is rather uncertain. Its survival mostly depends on what factors prevail in the Russian context.

[99] Data from a social research project conducted in 2000.

Obstacles to language activism

Despite some obvious positive results from bottom-up activity in Mari El, there is an internal problem with activism, conditioned by an external factor. The economic state of the republic in comparison with other regions is quite poor. According to various statistical studies, at present Mari El is one of the ten Russian regions with the worst ratings in terms of living conditions and development [Doklad OON 2013; Kak vam platyat “na rayone” 2013]. The lack of appropriate conditions for stable activity and low salaries often force young ethnic people to build their own lives far from the homeland (Ivanova 2011). Living in a different environment promotes a weakening or breaking of the ties of native speakers with their ethnic culture and language, and leads to assimilation.

The high rate of migration has led to a “brain drain”, which decreases the chances of the region overcoming economic crises and raising its standard of living. Naturally, economic difficulties have had a negative impact on other spheres of life in Mari El, preventing the development and implementation of numerous projects. In terms of language activism, a major problem is the lack of permanent involvement: a considerable number of young people have left for other regions and cities with better economic conditions (Moscow, Saint Petersburg, the Tyumen region etc.). Those who stay try to make up for the deficiency in language and cultural specialists by attracting ethnic students, but this has had little effect on “the personnel problem”. Firstly, students are only able to remain involved for short periods and their involvement is often casual[100]. Secondly, after graduation most current Mari students plan to migrate, which partly explains their casual attitude to the language issue. Such factors jeopardise overall language activism, as many former participants now live outside of the Mari El region.

If in the near future the organisers of the movement do not come up with a solution to the “personnel problem”, this may soon lead to a weakening of the activism and wipe out all the positive results.

Conclusion

The history of Mari language policy falls into three periods, characterised by types of activities. The first period (from 1921 to 1937) was a time of “struggling for one common Mari literary language (*standard*) by uniting separate dialect groups” (Ivanov 2010: 128). This resulted in the creation of two literary standards: Meadow and Highland.

The next extensive period of language policy started after the break-up of the USSR. A major effort for the promotion of ethnic mobilisation began, and it involved the development of almost all spheres of life of Mari society. The problem of language maintenance and

[100] The informant is an employee of the Ministry of Culture of Mari El; May, 2013.

development was a high priority in the policy. However, it did not lead to the intended results as there were major disagreements among the participants, and between the participants and the general population. In addition, radical changes in the local authorities created problems.

The third period of activism began in 2005, when young Mari organised in order to deal with the language issue. Their activities are mostly informal and directed at one group, young native speakers, with the goal of improving the whole language situation in Mari El. To a large extent, it was the reluctance of younger generation to study Mari in the 1990s that hindered various attempts to improve the situation.

According to the stated goals, the activities of young Mari can be divided into three categories: ideological (meetings, lectures and forums), social (flash mobs, advertising campaigns etc.) and cultural (national concerts and festivals). One common goal uniting all of the events has been to make young Mari re-evaluate the importance of their native language in their lives. Actually, this informal movement has increased the frequency of Mari speaking in urban areas and led to more active participation in national cultural events. Cooperation with other Mari non-governmental organisations, later separated into the "ViyAr" agency, and greater support from the local Ministry of Culture have made it possible to regulate and extend the activities almost to the formal level. However, the growth in young Mari activism has slowed due to the absence of permanent specialists.

At present, it is hard predict the future of the Mari language. However, informal efforts do seem to offer opportunities for the maintenance of the Mari language.

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On a longitudinal study of Finnish-Sámi language shift in Northern Sámi speech communities in Finland (2002–2012)

Zsuzsa Duray

Abstract

Although the simplest way to study language shift is to concentrate on collecting data in the present, the results cannot demonstrate the existence of a linguistic change in progress. Considering the Labovian concept of apparent time vs. real time investigations, the only way to solve the problems posed by studies in apparent time is by providing support for the research findings based on linguistic observation in real time, i.e. observing a speech community at two discrete points in time. In the field of research into Northern Sámi, there have only been a few studies inquiring into language shift and hardly any have taken the methodological approach featured in longitudinal studies of language shift.

In this paper I will introduce a longitudinal study I carried out in the Sámi speech communities of Enontekiö and Sodankylä, Finland. I will outline the research methods, analyse the results and consider the issues to be resolved in the second phase of the research. The first phase focused on exploring the major patterns of minority language use of Northern Sámi and Finnish bilinguals as well as their language attitudes towards minority and majority language use. Although the results implied that the Sámi community was in a language shift situation, the patterns of language use and the favourable attitudes of the community towards minority and majority language use indicated that the speech community was in an additive bilingual situation. The new research constitutes the second phase of the longitudinal study in the same minority community with the overall aim to follow-up on the 2001–2002 apparent-time research and collect real-time evidence to be able to justify the hypothesis that Sámi-Finnish language shift is truly an on-going process and obtain a reliable picture of the linguistic status of the Northern Sámi language in the area today.

1. Introduction

1.1 Linguistic minorities

A minority community can be defined according to its concentration, its territory, the way its minority situation evolved, and it can also be classified as an ethnic, linguistic, religious or political minority. Although there is no single established definition for a minority community, theoretical literature gives priority to definitions which emphasize the fact that a minority community has fewer members than the majority. Similarly, according to the definition applied in international law a minority community is numerically smaller than the rest of the population of a state, it is in a non-dominant position, its members make efforts to preserve their culture, traditions, religion or language, and it has a strong sense of togetherness (Girasoli 1996). Yet, relatively large numbers of the minority community cannot be the key element of minority definitions, as in some cases (for instance, in some African countries) it is the non-dominant community which represents the majority. Similarly, Fishman's definition (1991) does not consider large numbers as a criterion for defining minorities. In his view, there are only two criteria for a minority group: (1) the community should have a common history and culture, and (2) its members should have a continuous feeling of togetherness. Although the criteria vary, there is one feature common to all minority communities: their members live in a society where the mechanisms regulating the society mostly exist for the benefit of the majority, and thus the minority community is in a disadvantaged position.

Time is an essential aspect of minority definitions, as it helps in making the essential distinction between indigenous and immigrant minority communities. The Sámi community of this study is an indigenous one; its members are native to the territory they occupy, they regard themselves as belonging to the same indigenous community, their native language is not a majority language of any other state, and their community has managed to preserve its social, economical, cultural and political institutions. Minority definitions do not necessarily include minority language skills as a necessary criterion. According to Smolicz (1981), although the maintenance of the mother tongue is essential if one wishes to be a part of the minority community, in many cases it is the unique features of the minority culture that survive instead of the native tongue. Yet it would also be unusual to define a community as a minority if its members would not speak their mother tongue at all or if they would not express any wishes to revive and to maintain their heritage language.

1.2 Language shift and some related concepts

The analysis of the linguistic situation of a minority community requires some terminological remarks to be made with respect to language shift and related concepts.

It is estimated that in today's world between 3 000 and 10 000 languages are spoken, rarely in monolingual, more likely in bi- or multilingual communities. Thus most authors consider multilingualism a worldwide norm, a natural phenomenon as opposed to monolingualism (Grosjean 1982, Romaine 1995, Bartha 1999, Borbély 2001). In stable multilingual communities the languages in use are functionally separated, which helps speakers maintain the language they use. The majority of multilingual situations, however, are unstable and characterized by the diversity of skills, functions and attitudes. In an unstable multilingual situation, the multilingual community will gradually shift from minority to majority language use (Weinreich 1953, Fishman 1968, Gal 1979). Multilingual situations are only viable if the community supplies the minority language with specific functions, i.e. the minority language can fulfil a role that the majority language cannot and thus remains a tool of communication. The stages of a continuous language shift are illustrated by Haugen (1990) as follows:

A > AI/BII > BI/AII > B

A and B represent the languages involved in the language shift process, I and II show the dominance of language use in the speech community. The process of language shift involves code-switching when the speaker switches from one language to the other depending on the linguistic and social environment. Thus, code-switching can be considered as an individual and language shift a social phenomenon.

Language shift can in the long run result in language death. According to some estimates, 20–50% of the world's languages might become extinct in a couple of generations, and the majority of the world's 3,000–10,000 languages are spoken in regional varieties (Kraus 1992). Only some 10% of the languages, mostly majority languages with official status, are safe. Due to the fact that languages and linguistic situations change, the disappearance of language varieties as well as the emergence of new language varieties are natural phenomena. With regard to the Uralic language family, all Uralic minority languages spoken in the Russian Federation are endangered (Pusztay 2006).

As the process which a speech community experiences can be defined either as language shift or as language death (extinction), some authors consider these two terms synonyms. According to Paulston (1994), an extinct language can be defined as such if (1) it has no native speakers, (2) no member of the speech community uses it in everyday situations, (3) it is not characterized by the natural processes of linguistic change. It is also possible that nobody in the speech community at issue speaks the minority language but the language is still used on daily basis in another speech community, mostly situated in another state. According to what Bartha (1999) writes about the process of language shift, it is most likely to lead to language death in the Sámi communities of northern Scandinavia and in Finnish Lapland, as there is no other community outside these areas where Sámi could be spoken. Although the terms *language shift* and *language death* can both denote either a process or its consequence, sharing Gal's (1979) views about language shift as a process, I will use the term *language shift* when describing the linguistic situation of the Sámi and other endangered Finno-Ugric minority languages.

Language shift and language maintenance, together with their research, go hand in hand in a minority speech community. Language maintenance refers to a series of efforts that a minority speech community implements in order to defend themselves against the dominance of the majority language. Language maintenance implies the revitalization of the minority language; for this, the minority community will have to increase the number of domains in which the minority language is used. The success of language maintenance depends on several factors, including the linguistic practices in families, the consistent use of the minority language within families, social and political support of the minority language and most of all the attitudes of the majority and the minority community towards minority language use. Negative attitudes towards the minority language, emphasizing its insignificance, form the basis for linguicism, i.e. linguistic discrimination; this has long served as the ideological background for the assimilation of minority languages into the majority one. Such linguistic discrimination works against language maintenance and thus fosters language shift.

Aikio (1994) claims that language revitalization works on two levels. On the individual level, the speaker uses the minority language in an increasing number of domains, mostly in the family. On the societal level, the state makes decisions concerning minority language teaching, the public use of the minority language and minority language rights. The recognition of language rights is essential for the survival of a minority language. According to Skutnabb-Kangas (1997) the recognition of language rights on the level of the individual means that the minority speaker has the right to expect positive attitudes towards his mother tongue and to have others respect this positive attitude, no matter whether his mother tongue is a majority or minority language. The individual can have the right to learn the minority or majority language, to participate in minority or majority language education on elementary level and to use the languages in official situations. On the societal level, the recognition of language rights means that speakers of a minority language can expect that their language and culture are recognized by the majority community, that educational and cultural institutions can be established, that speakers can participate in affairs regarding national and ethnic minorities and represent their rights in political dialogues. The state will have to provide the legal background which makes it possible for the minority to enjoy those rights and fund the activities related to the maintenance of such rights.

1.3 The linguistic situation of a minority community

The minority speech community will not necessarily cease to exist when its language vanishes, as there are numerous factors influencing the process of language shift and assimilation. The majority of research on language shift focuses on detecting the factors which trigger the process of language shift, which slow this process down or speed it up. There is no one uniform list of factors that would characterize the language shift process in any minority community, i.e. each and every multilingual situation requires a unique model to be set up. In what follows, I will present some of the factors which are most frequently mentioned in connection with the process of language shift in a minority speech community.

The factors influencing language shift are generally not of linguistic nature, but are related to social, economical, political and geographical conditions (Swadesh 1948). Gal (1979) emphasizes the effects of economical, social and political changes on language shift, claiming that if an underdeveloped region experiences industrialization, urbanization and mobility, the social network of the community will loosen and language shift will accelerate (see: Comrie 1981, Haarmann 1985).

Language shift is promoted not only by economical development, industrialization and urbanization; it can also be motivated by a higher socio-economic status. Status here is determined by qualifications and income. Gal (1979) concludes that for the Hungarian minority in Austria shifting to German was essential in order to achieve a higher socio-economic status. According to Li (1982) those with lower socio-economic status are more inclined to shift to majority language use.

Another important factor, as already mentioned, is the number of minority speakers. If the community has only a small number of speakers and is thus unable to maintain specific institutions which support language maintenance, the process of language shift will speed up. The distribution of the community affects language shift more than the number of speakers: even if the number of speakers is high, if they live scattered in a large area, efforts to maintain the minority tongue are more likely to fail, facilitating language shift. The size of the speaking community is thus not a predictor of language shift. More relevant is the composition, i.e. age, gender and educational background, as well as the territorial distribution of the speech community. If the community preserves its territorial compactness, the contact network of its members is likely to change more slowly.

It is a natural process that speech communities in the same territories mingle, and this leads to an increasing number of interethnic marriages which can induce language shift. Research on interethnic marriages shows that the more prestigious language variety will prevail and become the dominant language of communication in the family. There is a tendency for the mother to preserve her own minority language, especially if it enjoys higher prestige that the variant spoken by the father (Romaine 1995). Language use in the family is also influenced by the power relations of the speech communities living together and their cultural norms.

1.4 Language attitudes

The notion of attitude is most often discussed in psychology (Allport 1935; Ajzen–Fishbein 1980; Cooper–Croyle 1984; Ajzen 1988), sociology (Kahle 1984) and education (Gardner 1982; Sharp et al. 1973; Lewis et al. 1982; Baker 1988). Measuring attitudes is most thoroughly dealt with in psychological research (Thurstone–Chave 1929; Likert 1932; Shaw–Wright 1967).

The definitions of attitude range from the specific to the general. According to Lambert (1967), Baker (1998) and Ladegaard (2000) attitudes are closely related to behaviour as far as they predispose people to a certain behaviour. Brudner and White (1979), however, claim that attitudes do not influence behaviour or vice versa. Research into language attitudes often accepts the socio-psychological definition proposed by Ryan and Giles, according to which language attitude is “any affective, cognitive or behavioural index of evaluative reactions toward different language varieties and their speakers” (Ryan et al. 1982: 7). Language attitudes are considered stable and thus, unlike other linguistic behaviour, they cannot be observed directly, nor can certain forms of behaviour be considered unequivocal proofs of a certain attitude. Yet, attitudes can help predict behavioural patterns. Opinion differs from attitude in a way that it expresses conviction about something and lacks the emotional nature of attitudes. Attitude should also be differentiated from interest or task-oriented motivation (Lewis 1982).

As language constitutes an integral part of society and individuals’ identity, people’s attitudes towards it have strong effects on its status within a given community. According to Lewis (1981) attitude is just as important a dimension of social structure as the size and the age distribution of the minority community and thus can indicate language health (Baker 1998). Similarly, a positive attitude is claimed to be a prerequisite for successful revitalization (Grenoble & Whaley 2006). When it comes to language maintenance the most important types of attitude are the attitudes of the minority community towards its mother tongue and its value as well as attitudes of the majority towards the minority language and culture (Gal 1979). Patterns of language use mirror language attitudes (Bartha (1995, 2001). The analysis of language attitudes and language use in the same survey can help reveal the potential mismatch between the hopes the minority community have regarding the survival of its mother tongue and the reality.

Sociolinguistic research on language attitudes in a minority situation can concern the attitudes of minority speakers towards various aspects of the multilingual situation, e.g. language preferences, language varieties, the role of varieties in contact, language maintenance etc. and the attitudes of majority speakers towards the minority language and its use. An investigation like this may shed light on the relationship between the minority and the majority community. In a wider sociolinguistic research context, language attitudes towards the role of minority/majority language in the community, its speakers and their language preferences, language use, maintenance and policies, are correlated with the social variables of age, gender, education etc. (Fasold 1984: 148).

The tools of attitude research are most often interviews and questionnaires. More rarely, diaries are used in which informants can report on their actual language choices and attitudes.

2. Research design

This paper will present some of the results of the first phase of a longitudinal research I started in 2002 in the Sámi speech communities of Enontekiö and Sodankylä in Finnish Lapland (Duray 2008). I selected these two municipalities because systematic sociolinguistic research which investigates language use and attitudes had not yet been carried out in the region. The overall aim of the research is to observe the multilingual situation in both communities over a long period of time, in this case a decade apart. A longitudinal research was launched in order to get more accurate observations about the process of language shift in these communities. The second phase of the longitudinal study was launched in 2012 and is in a preliminary stage. The focus at the moment is on evaluating the data from the questionnaires filled in by the same informants and on preparing the interviews with them.

The research project has two overlapping aims. The first is to identify the domains and degree of minority language use by looking at preferences of language choice. Secondly, I am also interested in how language use is reflected in attitudes towards Sámi and Finnish language use and Sámi-Finnish bilingualism. Thus, the following major topics are touched upon in the research: (1) the domains and degree of Northern Sámi language use, (2) preferences for language choice, (3) the attitudes of minority members to Sámi, Finnish and Sámi-Finnish bilingualism.

The following hypotheses have been tested throughout the research and verified:

(1) There are differences in the norms of minority language use across generations.
(2) The use of Sámi is strongest in the informal domains.
(3) The community has favourable attitudes towards the Sámi language and culture, as well as to specific features of their bilingual situation.
(4) The patterns of language use do not stand in strong correlation with the social and demographic variables of age, gender, occupation or education.
(5) The language attitudes of the community do not stand in strong correlation with the norms of language use or social and demographic variables.

The language of the North Sámi speech community in Finnish Lapland is considered threatened, and the speakers of North Sámi have been experiencing cultural and linguistic assimilation into the majority community over the past centuries. This has led to the eventual decrease in the functions of the minority language, making it difficult for the Sámi to pass their mother tongue on to younger generations. The linguistic situation of the minority community has been shaped both by the language shift situation and the measures which both minority and majority communities are implementing to preserve Sámi. The legal status of the Sámi and both minority and majority attitudes have improved considerably in recent decades.

Today there are about 1900 Sámi in whole Finland. 176 ethnic Sámi are living scattered in the area of the municipality of Enontekiö, concentrated in the central village of Hetta and in some other smaller communities. In Sodankylä there are 131 Sámi, living mostly along the main road leading through the central village of Sodankylä and the major reindeer pastures of the region.

Both communities are ethnically mixed, consisting of (1) Sámi, (2) Finns, and (3) Sámi-Finnish families and their descendants who consider themselves either Sámi or Finnish, on the basis of their family background or, mostly, on the basis of their self-experienced linguistic and cultural affiliation.

Figure 1. Finnish Lapland

In the research I stratified the sample according to mother tongue, place of living and age (25+). The survey included 60 informants, 35 women and 25 men, 60% of them (25 informants) earned their living from reindeer herding, while the remaining 40% included some unemployed people, a few teachers, and several entrepreneurs from the service sector engaged mostly in selling Sámi handicraft items. 66% of the consultants had obtained a secondary, college or university degree. 90% of them had acquired Sámi at home, the rest of them, mostly the youngest at school. All informants were bilingual, half of them also knew some other language(s) in addition to Sámi and Finnish.

The data were collected by means of a questionnaire which had been designed to allow both qualitative and quantitative analysis. Norms of language use and language attitudes were examined in relation to the social variables of age, gender, occupation and education.

3. Methods and Results

3.1 Language Use

The questionnaire consisted of two major parts. The first part concentrated on gathering data on the informants' language use in informal and formal domains with specific partners. The first set of questions focused on the primary domain of language use, i.e. the informal one involving family members, schoolmates, teachers, neighbours etc. as partners of interaction.

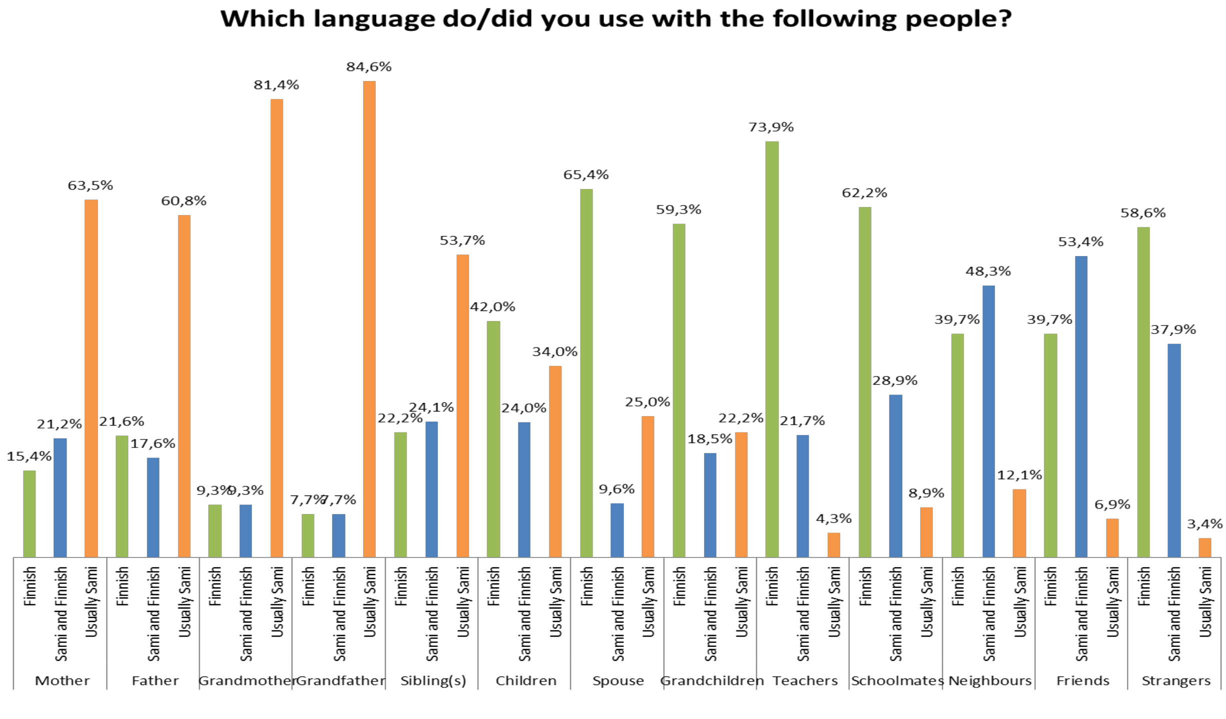

Figure 2. Language choice in informal domains of language use

The data clearly indicate that Sámi is mostly used in the family with parents and siblings. The mixed use of Sámi and Finnish is characteristic of the interactions between the informants and their children or spouse. These interactions are characterized by mutuality, i.e. each participant of the interaction choosing the same language variety for communication. Another set of questions inquired about language use in mostly formal situations where partners are dominantly Finnish speaking.

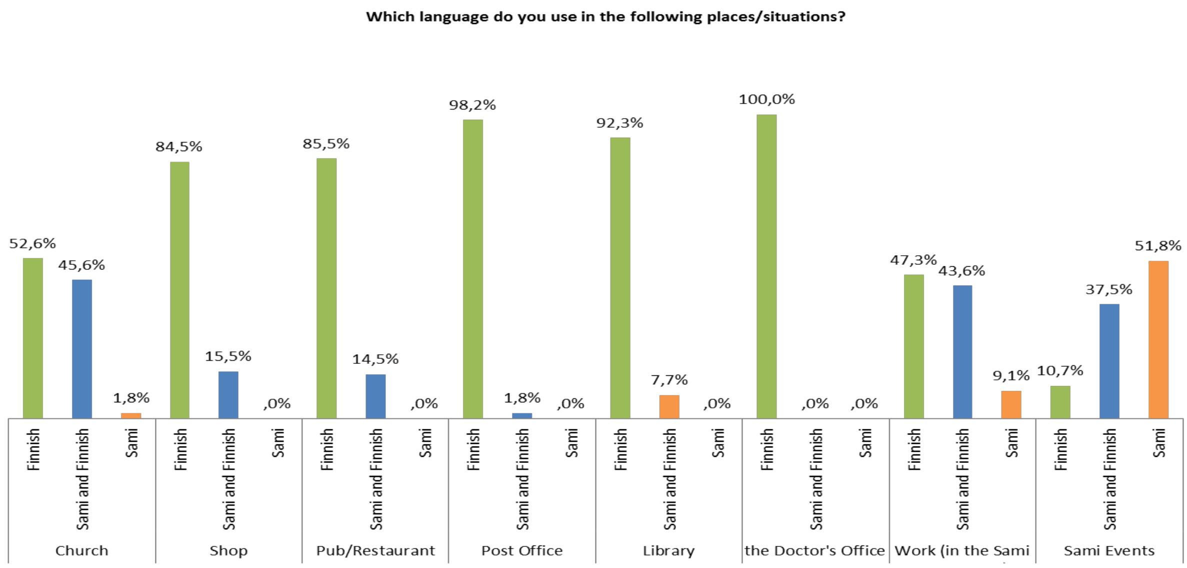

Figure 3. Language choice in formal domains of language use

The data above point to the tendency that informants for most of the time rely on Finnish in formal situations. Yet, there are some domains, i.e. cultural events organised for the Sámi, church and reindeer herding communities, which involve Sámi partners and in which situations the informants tend to use Sámi and Finnish or generally Sámi in their interactions.

Having compared the social variables with the norms of informal and formal language use I have found that none of the social variables of age, gender and occupation stand in strong correlation with informal or formal language use.

Through another set of questions I intended first to investigate the role the Sámi media play in influencing the patterns of language use and second, to gain insight into the practice of reading and writing skills in Sámi. Here I also designed some questions related to the linguistic automatisms in Sámi.

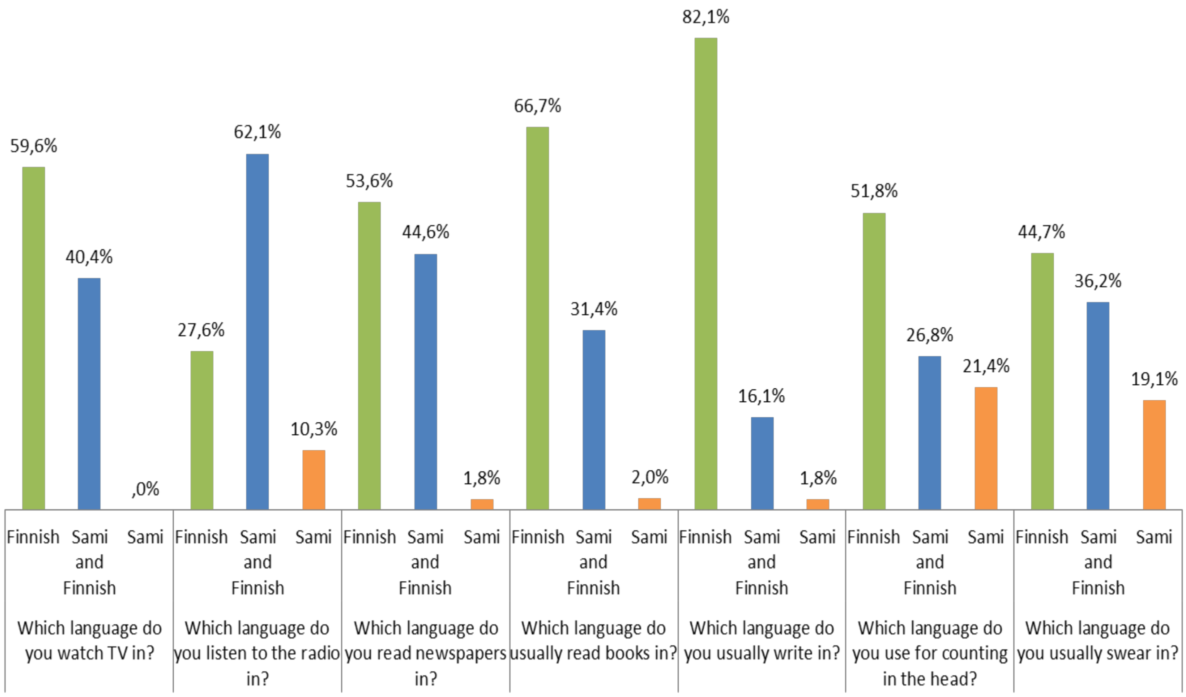

Figure 4. Language choice – Media, Language Skills

The data here reveal that the informants, being bilingual, read newspapers and literature as well as follow TV and radio programmes mostly in both Sámi and Finnish. Their writing skills, however, are largely dominated by Finnish. As for the social variables of age, gender and occupation the language choice of the informants concerning the media and language skills does not much depend on any of those. As for the automatisms the data demonstrate that Sámi speakers mostly rely on their mother tongues when it comes to counting in the head or swearing.

3.2 Language Attitudes

The second part of the survey contained 45 statements through which I investigated the informants' language attitudes. The first set of 20 statements was related to attitudes towards the mother tongue, the usefulness, the use, the learning and teaching of Sámi. The informants were required to react to the statements by indicating their agreement or disagreement on a five-point scale. The questionnaire included some open questions to allow informants to explain and elaborate on their language preferences.

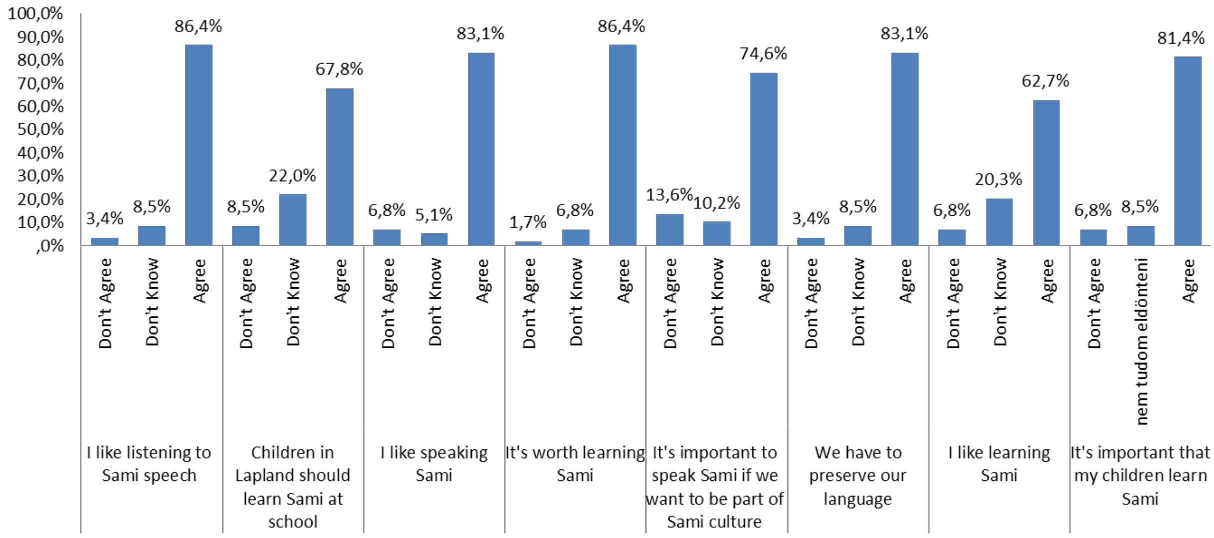

Figure 5. Language Attitudes towards Sámi

The analysis of instrumental attitudes has revealed that most informants' attitudes towards the pragmatic value of their mother tongue are either neutral or rather positive than negative, irrespectively of their age. 60–70% of them agreed that it is worth learning Sámi and most of them also believe that Sámi can be preserved. As for integrative attitudes, the data show that all age groups completely agree that it is important to speak Sámi if they want to belong to the Sámi culture.

The second set of 25 statements was concerned with attitudes towards Sámi and Finnish, as well as to several aspects of bilingualism.

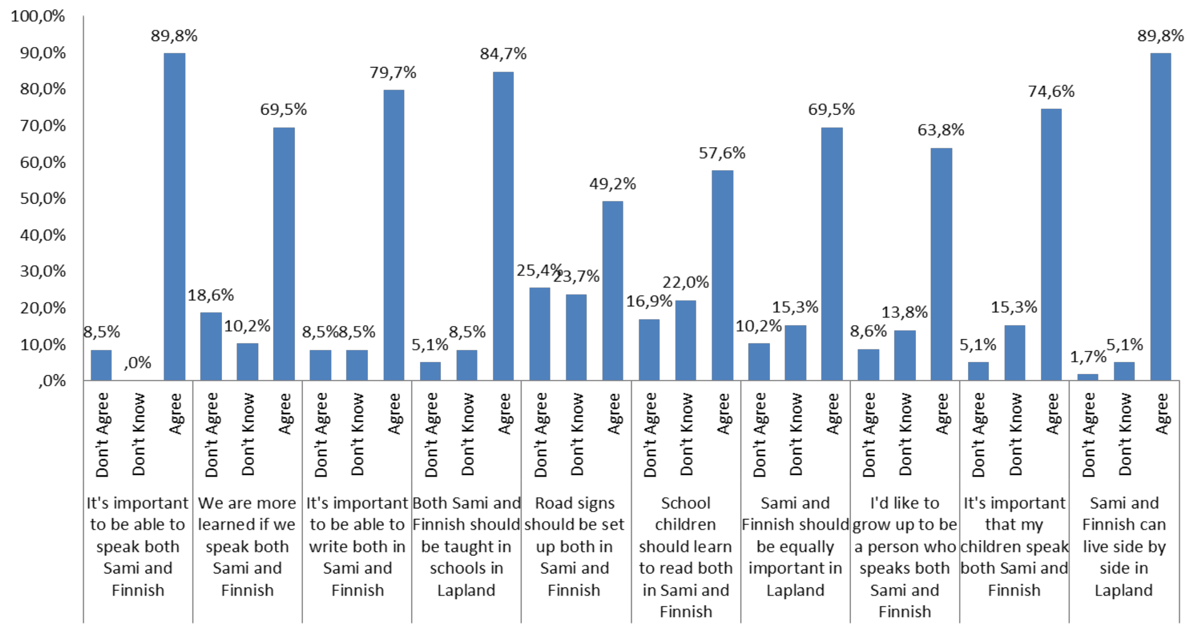

Figure 6. Language Attitudes towards Sámi and Finnish

Comparing the two sets of data in figure 5 and 6, I can claim that the Sámi community strongly agrees with the importance of preserving their own language and culture, and that it does not consider the Sámi-Finnish bilingual situation restrictive or negative in any way; rather, bilingualism is seen as something natural and positive.

In the survey I selected some of the attitude statements, again instrumental and integrative ones, concerning certain aspects of bilingualism and examined their relationship with some of the social variables and with the informants' writing and reading habits. I was particularly interested in the informants' attitudes towards bilingual language education and the Sámi-Finnish bilingual situation.

The data suggest that 80–90% of all age groups regard bilingual language teaching as an essential way of passing Sámi on to children. The informants also have positive attitudes towards reading in Sámi, even if most of them generally read in Finnish. Acquiring Sámi writing skills is equally important for the whole community irrespectively of the fact that its members mostly write in Finnish.

The final part of the questionnaire consisted of some questions about the beauty of the Sámi language. The results below convincingly show that the informants have strong emotional ties with their mother tongue. The richness and beauty of Sámi is just as much important as its value as a means of establishing contacts with other members of the Sámi community.

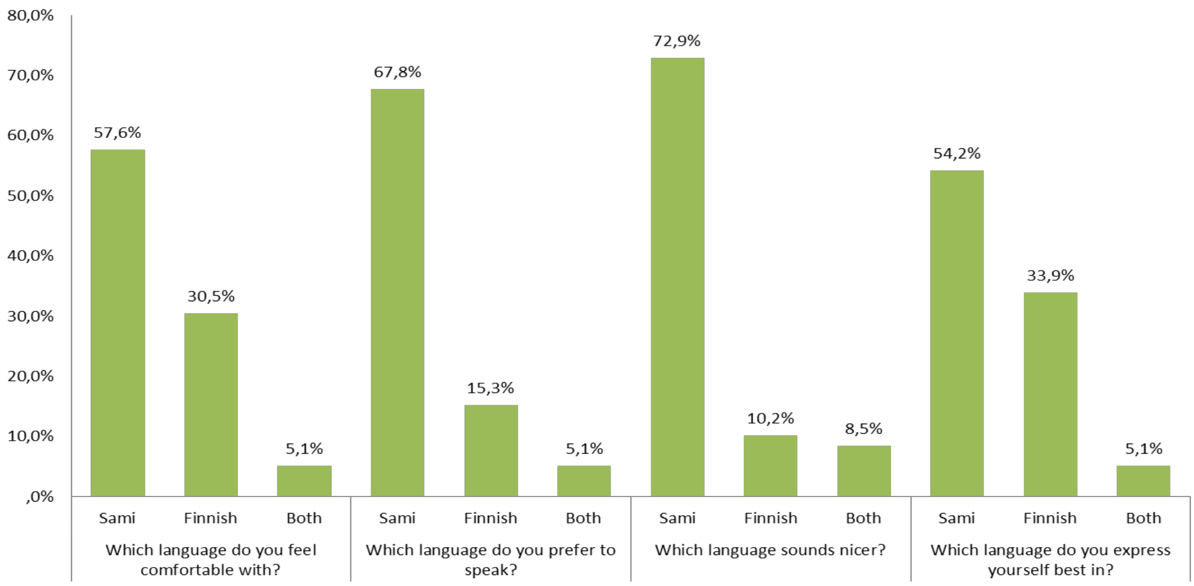

Figure 7. Integrative Language Attitudes towards Sámi and Finnish

Concerning both attitude questionnaires as well as the one enquiring about the value of the Sámi language and Sámi language skills the data indicate that each generation has positive attitudes towards the Sámi language and to certain aspects of bilingualism, irrespective of gender or occupation. I have not found any correlation between age and attitude in the statements which emphasise that it is important for Sámi speakers to preserve their mother tongue and pass it down to their children. The analysis has also shown that all of the informants have positive attitudes towards Sámi irrespectively of their actual language choice in formal or informal situations.

4. Conclusions

Following the analysis of the data obtained from the questionnaires and the relationship of minority language use and language attitudes with the variables of age, gender, occupation and education, the following conclusions were drawn.

The Sámi community is evidently in a language shift situation. Although it is impossible to predict when this phase of mixed language use will be replaced by the exclusive use of the majority language, the present patterns of language use and the favourable attitudes of the community towards minority and majority language use indicate that the speech community is in an additive bilingual situation. However, functional language loss, i.e. the gradual decrease in the domains of Sámi language use is an on-going process which is facilitated mostly by the fact that the community cannot preserve its compactness originating from its traditional livelihoods and that the influence of the majority language has become stronger, partly due to the role of the media, in both formal and informal domains of language use.

Several factors seem to have been contributing to the acceleration of language shift in the examined community. Still there are a lot of other factors which have worked against language shift in the past decades including the ever more popular Sámi language teaching, the institutions, both at governmental and local level, engaged in the development of goals, objectives and strategies to develop the Sámi language, the activities related to traditional Sámi handicraft and reindeer herding as well as Sámi cultural events.

In sum, from the current language shift situation it cannot be inferred that the Sámi ethnic group would quickly assimilate into the majority community. Today the process of language shift is not as fast as it once was, instead it has apparently slowed down. The Sámi language community has a noticeably positive attitude towards its mother tongue and culture as well as towards the present Sámi-Finnish bilingual situation which is no doubt a prerequisite for the community and the minority language to survive in its Finnish-dominant bilingual context.

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What should a Mansi speaking pupil know? Mansi textbooks in public and alternative educational institutes

Csilla Horváth

Abstract

In this paper I am going to present an analysis and comparison of Mansi textbooks used in state-owned primary schools and alternative educational institutes. In the analysis I focus on the books' language use, historical consistency with other printed materials in the Mansi language, and most important readings discussed. I also try to describe an ideal textbook for a teaching group of Mansi-Russian bilingual children and youth in present circumstances.

Beside textbooks I use information collected by participating observation during Mansi language classes and language courses, and semi-structured interviews with pedagogues of the Yugra State University and the Lylyng Soyum Education Centre during my fieldwork in the Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug.

1. Research questions

When investigating the revitalisation of the Mansi language, researchers need to observe different aspects of language vitality – intergenerational language transmission, language education, and various domains of language use – to understand the complexity and uniqueness of present situation. In the life of the Mansi language these three aspects together yield a contradictory result: even though the domains and intensity of language use are increasing and parents' attitudes towards language transmission are positive, the number of speakers is still low, especially among the youngest generation.

In view of these tendencies, the situation of Mansi language education begs further research. Problems in Mansi education, especially "the lack of appropriate textbooks" (Pusztay 2006: 151), are clear enough to draw the researcher's attention to issues of effective minority language teaching, language materials, the materials available and their successful adaptation. What kind of Mansi speaking pupils – if there are any left – would be the ideal users of the textbooks? What kind of textbooks would be ideal for pupils to learn from?

2. Language vitality

2.1 Demographic data

The Mansi ("Vogul") language is spoken in Western Siberia; together with Khanty ("Ostyak"), it forms the Ob-Ugric (sub)branch of the Uralic language family. According to the 2010 Russian census, 12,262 people defined themselves as ethnic Mansi but only 938 reported speaking the Mansi language. Comparing these results with the data from the 2002 census – 11 432 people of Mansi ethnicity, 2746 people speaking Mansi (Sipőcz 2005: 23-24) – the continuation of former tendencies is clearly visible: while the number of speakers has plummeted, the size of the ethnic group is slightly growing. Most ethnic Mansi (10 977 people) are residents of the Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug (Yugra) in Western-Siberia, others live in the neighbouring administrative areas of the Russian Federation: 637 people in other parts of the Tyumen region, 251 people in the Sverdlovsk area, and 8 people in the Komi Republic.

The Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug has about 1,600,000 inhabitants, of which only 0.78% are Mansi. The majority consist of Russians (68.1%), Tatars (7.1%) and Ukrainians (6%). Khanty-Mansiysk, the capital of the Autonomous Okrug has 90,961 inhabitants, of whom a larger proportion, about 3.7% belongs to indigenous minorities, and about 800 of them are Mansi.

2.2 Sociolinguistic situation

Mansi is an endangered language which plays a minor role in its Russian-dominated, multi-ethnic and multilingual environment. Its situation is heavily affected by the loss of traditional way of life and by the rapid urbanisation. Language shift has been going on in the Mansi-speaking community for decades already. Yet, because of various reasons, the prestige of the Mansi language is now rising, at the same time as the number of Mansi speakers is rapidly decreasing.

Traditionally, the Mansi language has been divided into four main dialect-groups. The Southern dialects were extinct by the 1950s, the Western dialects somewhat later. The situation of the Eastern Mansi dialects is uncertain; though some fieldworkers have claimed that there may still be a handful of isolated speakers (e.g. Fejes 2010), most researchers believe that Eastern Mansi is almost or completely extinct by now. Thus, the remaining Mansi speakers are almost exclusively using the Northern dialects, and the literary language is also based on these varieties. All the textbooks examined and quoted in this paper identify the Mansi language with the Northern Mansi dialect.

Because of recent economical and social changes in the Mansi society, the traditional model of language transmission and language use has been radically changed. Massive oil production and the restructuration of the labour market have brought immigrants representing dozens of ethnic groups to the area. In order to find better job opportunities and higher living standards, the majority of the Mansi population, including the most active middle-aged Mansi-Russian bilingual speakers, gave up their traditional lifestyle and moved into cities. The new lifestyle of multi-ethnic, Russian-speaking families affected the inter-generational transmission of Mansi negatively, and since the Mansi only formed a small minority of urban population, the language could only be used in a few domains. On the other hand, urbanization has also had positive effects on language use: it has changed the attitudes towards Mansi language (Horváth 2012: 65), activated some of the already existing linguistic domains (e.g. press and media), created new domains (internet, especially social media) and fostered attempts to revitalize the language.

Most of the Mansi population now live in towns and cities, and the children are growing up in multiethnic families in which Russian is the language of interaction. Since the family cannot provide a stable basis for language acquisition and language use, education plays an even more important role in fostering the spread of bilingualism and reversing language shift. On the territory of the Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug both state-owned and alternative educational institutes try to cope with the insufficient number of well-trained pedagogues and suitable textbooks; apparently, the lack of the latter is perceived as the worst problem.

2.3 Domains of language use

As mentioned above, the use of Mansi is possible in only a few domains, but within these domains there are even more significant factors which restrict the use of the language. It is a general tendency that Mansi speakers only use Mansi if they know their conversation partners relatively well, i.e. if they have an idea about each other's competence in Mansi, if they have a common history of using Mansi, and only when no third person without sufficient knowledge of Mansi is within range (to avoid confronting outsiders with an unintelligible language). This practice can be explained with the offences which today's Mansi speakers have suffered during their childhood in boarding schools because of using their mother tongue instead of Russian (Bartels & Bartels 1995: 56), and with the relatively low prestige Mansi has had until recently.

The domains of Mansi language use are expanding, but still limited. Mansi is not an official language, neither on regional nor on municipal level, it is barely present at official or semi-official domains, such as legislation, public transport or street signs. Mansi has no economic significance either, thus it is absent from the business sphere and only plays a marginal role on the labour market. Despite the long tradition of translating the Gospels and other biblical texts into Mansi, the language is never used in Orthodox (or other Christian) church services but only in the traditional Mansi religious rituals. Mansi has a small but growing importance in leisure activities (literature, theatre, non-traditional music, internet), and, compared to the previous domains, it has a relatively strong position in education and family life.

2.4 Language acquisition

The Mansi speech community can be roughly divided into three groups according to the correlation between age and command of the language. The first group, elderly speakers born before 1945, was born and raised in small Mansi settlements, in the traditional lifestyle and with very little formal education. These speakers are bilingual to some extent, though their command of Russian is clearly below the native-speaker level. The second group, the middle-aged generation (born between 1945 and 1975), was also born in Mansi families and raised in traditional Mansi settlements, but these speakers became balanced Mansi-Russian bilinguals during their school years. Many of them have college or university degrees, they live in urban settlements and in inter-ethnic marriages. The third group, the youngest Mansi speakers born after 1975, only constitute a tiny minority in their generation. Like middle-aged Mansi speakers, the youngest speakers have attended Russian-medium schools and during most of their adult life they have been living in urban settlements, even if they were born and raised in Mansi settlements and acquired Mansi language in their families.

The expansion of Russian as the dominant language within the family can be illustrated with the following table:

	born before 1945	born between 1945 and 1975	born after 1975
mother tongue	Mansi	Mansi	Russian, ?
family language (childhood)	Mansi	Mansi	Russian
family language (adulthood)	Mansi	Russian, other(s)(?)	Russian?

Table 1. Language use among Mansi speakers

The oldest generation of speakers has native competence in the Mansi language and has been using Mansi both in childhood and adulthood. The Mansi-speaking middle aged generation used Mansi only in their childhood and shifted to Russian when starting their own family. Though the representatives of this generation often live in an inter-ethnic marriage and report having learnt their spouse’s mother tongue as well, in practice they mainly use Russian. The youngest generation, born after 1975, has rarely acquired any other language than Russian, but even if they have, they almost exclusively use only Russian during their childhood and are very likely to continue using Russian in their own families as well.

The factors causing the interruption in intergenerational transmission can be observed in the independent adult life of middle-aged speakers; these factors can be explained by urbanisation. The three main variables controlling language choice are the place of residence, profession and marriage. Middle-aged speakers are living in urban(ised) type of settlements, i.e. in large villages, towns and cities of more than a few dozens of inhabitants. They have an occupation other than traditional fishing, hunting or reindeer-breeding, which means that the professional terminology they use is Russian. They also work together with people who are usually unable to communicate in Mansi. In settlements inhabited by both indigenous and immigrant ethnic groups, the majority of inter-ethnic marriages are between indigenous ethnic groups and other ethnicities (*Demografičeskie processy*). It is also a tendency that in multiethnic families Russian only is preferred. As the result of these three factors, middle-aged Mansi speakers use Russian in almost every sphere of their life, and they are unable to create a Mansi-speaking environment where they could teach Mansi to their children.

3. Education

3.1 The role of education in language acquisition

Children and adolescents studying the Mansi language in state-owned and alternative educational institutions come from very different linguistic backgrounds. According to Spodina’s survey among the indigenous students of the former Institute of History, Culture and Languages of the Ugric Peoples (i.e. the department for the Ob-Ugric languages and cultures at the Ugra State University), 70% of respondents named an indigenous minority language as their mother tongue, and 20% of them considered themselves being bilingual in Russian and a minority language. On the other hand, the same respondents stated that they had been using only Russian at home, and 20% of them came from families where no family member spoke any of the indigenous languages (Spodina 2011: 214). This survey illustrates the complexity of the problem of minority language acquisition. While there still are children who speak Mansi as their first language, start school as Mansi monolinguals and finish their studies as Mansi-Russian bilinguals (almost exclusively those who were born and raised in small settlements of Mansi majority), the majority of the Mansi population, including Mansi children, live in towns and cities, where children are growing up in multiethnic families with Russian as language of interaction. The family cannot provide a stable basis for language acquisition and language use, which makes the role of education in fostering the spread of bilingualism and reversing language change even more important.

Estimating the exact number of children learning Mansi in the territory of the Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug is a complicated issue. While Hungarian researchers were given information about only two pupils learning Mansi in 1990 (and none in 1992) in Saranpaul, the heart of the traditional Mansi-speaking area (Sipőcz & Dolovai 2001: 57), Lalaeva reported 1042 pupils in the whole Okrug at the beginning of the new millennium. (Lalaeva 2004, also quoted in Pusztay 2006: 150-151.) This number appears incredibly large if we compare it to the total number of Mansi speakers in the whole Russian Federation. The Department of Education and Youth Policy of the Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug published the most recent statistics; according to their data, in 2011 a total of 453 school children were learning the Mansi language.

3.2 Educational institutes

The Mansi language is taught in various types of educational institutions, from kindergarten to university in the territory of the Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug. A distinction can be made between so-called state-owned and alternative institutions. The former ones are financed by the state on federal level, the latter type is based on civil initiatives and financed by the Department of Indigenous peoples of the Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug. According to official statistics, in 2011 there were ten schools teaching Mansi in the Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug, three of them were completely or partially operating with preschool classes only. It is very important to note that neither in the city of Khanty-Mansiysk nor in other major cities of the Okrug do state-owned schools or kindergartens offer Mansi classes. Even the Department of Mansi Studies at the Yugra State University had to be temporarily closed in 2010.

In state-owned schools with an ethnic profile the ethnic language is a compulsory subject in the 1-9th grades and optional in the 10th and 11th grade. The teaching of Mansi faces various difficulties, of which the insufficient number of well-trained pedagogues is not the smallest. In the Okrug, there are about 560 members of indigenous ethnic groups who have university degrees (Horváth 2010: 17), 25% of them are living in Khanty-Mansiysk and altogether 60% in urban settlements, while the majority of state-owned schools with an ethnic profile are situated in small villages in the countryside.

In larger, urbanised settlements with a considerable Mansi population, alternative educational institutions have been founded in order to complement Mansi children's knowledge of their heritage culture and the Mansi language which they could not completely acquire within their family. To my knowledge, there are two such institutions with a Mansi profile, operating in Khanty-Mansiysk and Saranpaul; both welcome children from all ethnic groups, but their main aim is to convey the knowledge and skills which are necessary for constructing an Ob-Ugric identity. Therefore, these alternative institutions start to enroll children from the youngest age possible (by law, from age 4) and offer a full range of courses introducing different aspects of Mansi life, such as instrumental music, folk dance, handicraft, traditional sports, and the Mansi language.

The teaching of language and culture in alternative schools is embedded in life-like social practices rather than classic school-classes. On many occasions Mansi elders and esteemed artists are invited to participate in the lessons. Pedagogues try to pay equal attention to traditional and urban lifestyle, thus classes are often held outside the classrooms. On these occasions the pupils visit local parks and museums.

3.3 Mansi schoolbooks

Until the 1980s, the primary school was generally the first environment in which Mansi children were confronted with the supremacy of the Russian language and the Soviet culture. The aims of the school were to make the pupils literate in their mother tongue, to make them acquire the Russian language and to assimilate them into the Soviet society. The schoolbooks were clearly designed to serve these three purposes.

The Mansi primers and textbooks (e.g. Balandin 1964, Zuḷov 1933) were aimed for native Mansi speakers as they did not use another language as means of instruction. In lower classes the textbook materials focused on the terminology of traditional lifestyle, avoided neologisms and tended to overuse Russian loanwords. The textbooks were also loaded with heavy political content. Besides the usual topographic descriptions and animal stories, the books contained information about the Soviet state, its administration and its citizens' duties as well as stories aiming to intensify patriotic feelings. Texts for the Day of Victory, Labour Day and the Day of the Red Army were to be found in each and every Mansi textbook, along with texts about the little Octobrists' and pioneers' (members of the children's organizations of the Communist Party) duties, Lenin's (in earlier schoolbooks: Lenin's and Stalin's) biography etc.

Contemporary Mansi textbooks (e.g. Sajnaxova 2001) seem to have very similar structure and themes, which is not surprising, as these books in many cases are merely "amended" and "newly edited" versions of the Soviet ones. The editing process has not brought many changes beyond the ideological ones: directly political texts have been replaced with new chapters about oil production. Thus, Mansi textbooks consist of short introductions into urban life and the modern environment, as well as detailed descriptions of traditional lifestyle and Arctic flora and fauna. These books may be more useful in schools of small Mansi settlements, but are not very attractive for those pupils studying Mansi who were born and raised in urban settlements: these children would require more detailed vocabulary for urban life, and for them not only the Mansi but also the Russian words for Arctic flora, fauna and livelihoods (such as reindeer breeding) are unknown.

Realizing the shortage of Mansi textbooks and teaching materials meeting the needs of heritage language learners, the “Lylyng Soyum” Children’s Centre started to produce its own series of textbooks, though so far only a Mansi primer (Norova 2010) and an accompanying handbook for teachers (Norova 2011) have been published. During language classes printed materials are supplemented with ppt-presentations and handouts with short poems for the easier memorisation of new vocabulary as for example the following kinship terms:

Моя семья – колтагыл	My family, that’s *koltaɣəl*
Апщи – братик для меня.	*apśi*, that’s my little brother
Увщи – старшая сестра	*uwśi,* that’s the older sister
Йигирищ – сестренка	*jiɣiriś* [sic!] is the little sister
Самый старший у нас брат,	my brother is the oldest of us
По мансийски значит – канк.	in Mansi he is called *kank* [sic!].

To avoid problems with the typing and printing of special Mansi characters, these Mansi editions use the orthography preferred by Mansi press and media (as opposed to the orthography of linguistic publications).

In the Soviet time, primers and textbooks usually came with different kinds of accompanying handbooks or booklets. In most cases these booklets merely contained the Russian translations to the texts (e.g. Černecov 1933), but for some books, some very detailed instructions (Rombandeeva 1960) are also available which provide the teacher with a complete lesson plan. For example first grade pupils were supposed to practice the “quick and proper composition of sentences” according to the following discourse:

> *Учитель: Лавен, туйт тэли ма магыс, йивыт магыс ёмас ман люль? (Скажите, хорошо ли, что земля и деревья покрываются снегом?)*
> *Дети: Тэли ма йивыт туйтн лап-туявет, сака асирма атим. Тэли туйт тармыл суныл, ёсал яласаӈкве ёмас. Ворт хуйнэн порат туйтыл рахматэгн, асирмаӈ атим. (Зимой земля и деревья покрываются снегом, не очень промерзают. По снегу зимой хорошо ездить на нартах и лыжах. Во время ночевок в лесу забираешься под снег, не холодно.)* (Ромбандеева 1960: 8)
>
> Teacher: Tell me, is it good or bad for the earth and trees to be covered with snow?
> Children: In winter the earth and the trees are covered with snow, it is not very cold [for them]. It is very good to travel on the snow with a sledge or on skis. If you hide under the snow when you have to spend a night in the forest, it will not be cold.

The teacher’s handbook to the new Mansi primer for alternative education (Norova 2011) emphasizes the importance of using other teaching methods than the traditional frontal model, and it treats the Mansi language as an integral part of Mansi culture. Although the booklet does not explicitly deal with the issues of bilingualism or language shift (with the exception of a short remark on the ever decreasing number of young speakers), the author clearly wants to convey an image of urban language acquisition. The teachers’ booklet states that the aim of the educational program is to raise children's interest towards learning Mansi by introducing them to different kinds of decorative art, as well as literature and folklore (Norova 2011: 4). Moreover, the aim as defined in handbook is that the children understand Mansi speech by the end of the preschool curriculum (Norova 2011: 6, 22), which means that alternative schools do not count on any knowledge of the Mansi language brought from the family.

Pedagogues and linguists working in state-owned schools cannot keep up appearances of balanced Mansi-Russian bilingual children either and have started to publish supplementary materials for pupils, such as a "minimum wordlist" for lower grades (Afanas'eva & Akbaš 2007) or a booklet of charts summarizing grammatical features (Gerasimova 2004) for upper grades. Pupils' dictionaries have undergone changes as well. The first dictionaries, published during the Soviet times, were Mansi-Russian, one of them even containing the Eastern dialect forms beside the standard Northern ones (Balandin & Vaxruševa 1958). The most well-known and most popular Mansi-Russian-Mansi dictionary (Rombandeeva & Kuzakova 1982) was already two-sided, while lately only Russian-Mansi dictionaries have been published, such as the Russian-Mansi thematic dictionary (Afanas'eva 2008), which presents words in thematic groups such as fruits or trees, as well as numerals or verbs. Rombandeeva's large Russian-Mansi dictionary (Rombandeeva 2005, containing 11,000 items), which is more of a concise dictionary of Russian loanwords (e.g. Russian *трактор* 'tractor' translates to Mansi as *трактор*, explained as "*сельскохозяйственный машинат, сāвсыр тāрвитыӈ утыт хартнэ, автомобиль хурип машина*", 'agricultural machines, a car-like machine which is capable of pulling all kinds of heavy things', Rombandeeva 2005: 323), and tends to use Russian loanwords even if the lexical item would have a Mansi equivalent as well (e.g. *армия* 'army' is translated with *āрмия*, although there is also a native Mansi word *хōнт* 'army, battle').

There are practically no Mansi-language schoolbooks for other subjects than Mansi nor Mansi-language literature for teenagers and young adults. The only way children and youth can develop their knowledge of Mansi besides language classes is to read the anthology of Northern and Arctic writers (Afanas'eva et al. 2008) or other primary school readers. The situation is especially depressing if we compare it to the Soviet standards. During the Soviet times, there were Mansi-language schoolbooks for other subjects than mother tongue (e.g. for algebra, Pčëlko & Poljak 1956). Mansi-speaking school children could also read entertaining literature translated into Mansi, for example Nosov's popular novel about the little schoolboy (Nosov 1955) or Arsenev's records about his travelling in Arctic lands (Arsen'ev 1954).

4. The ideal pupil or the ideal textbook?

4.1 What should the pupils know?

The ideal, or to be more precise, the imaginary pupil using the textbooks, as can be deduced from their contents, would be a balanced bilingual Mansi-Russian speaker who is familiar with the vocabulary of Siberian flora and fauna. A pupil who is a conscious citizen of the Federation and the Okrug, but for whom Khanty-Mansiysk and Moscow are equally distant. A pupil who has some limited knowledge about urban life but who would not be particularly interested in it nor follow the technical development (the most modern equipment appearing in these textbooks is the radio). A pupil who will follow traditional or Soviet life-style when growing up, that is, a pupil who is very similar to what the authors themselves remember having been in their childhood.

The users of the traditional textbooks are expected have native competence in Mansi and some basic knowledge about the grammatical structure of the language, preferably in Russian, as some explanations given in Mansi may be difficult to understand. For example, 'vocabulary' is defined as "*лексика – ты акв лāтӈыт ōлнэ лāтӈыт*" – 'vocabulary, that's the words in a language' (Gerasimova & Xozumova 2007: 7), which sounds very strange in Mansi, as *лāтыӈ* means both 'word' and 'language' (and also 'speech, messages, news').

4.2 What should the textbooks contain?

As researchers and pedagogues are not able to deny reality, it would be a reasonable decision to reconsider the structure and content of Mansi textbooks, to design and publish a new series of Mansi textbooks, taking into account the background and needs of the pupils. An ideal textbook should equally represent contemporary rural and urban life, including the neologisms, necessary for the complete description of the surrounding world, at least those, which are already used in the Mansi press and media. The authors of the new textbooks should consider the issue of publishing and distribution, and should publish the new teaching materials in electronic formats as well.

5. Summary

To answer the questions given in the first paragraph: there are pupils who speak Mansi as their first language, though their number is continuously and radically reducing. Simultaneously, more and more volunteers appear who have no or very limited proficiency in Mansi but who would be interested in developing their language skills to a high level. Present facilities available in state-owned education are not flexible enough to serve the needs of both types of language learners. On the contrary, state-owned education follows its traditions as if the sociolinguistic situation had not changed and the main task of public education were still to "submerge" Mansi-speaking children into the Russian language. Alternative education, in contrast, recognizes the contemporary problems concerning language acquisition, the growing number of heritage language learners, and tries to find solution for their problems. Alternative education aims at maintaining language revitalisation, attempts to support complex curricula and create textbooks for the Mansi as heritage/second language learners. According to the principles of this kind of education, the ideal pupil could be anyone interested in studying Mansi.

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Hungarian private linguistic landscape in South-West Slovakia[101]

Petteri Laihonen

Abstract

In the field of Linguistic Landscape research little attention has been paid to the situations where a minoritized group gives the regional majority, such as South-West Slovakia where Hungarians form the majority. A clear majority of public signs, also in the region with a Hungarian majority, are only in Slovak, especially in the 'official', public sphere. In rural communities, signs posted by private citizens can be relatively frequent, too. In the truly non-commercial private sphere, minorities have autonomy in public language choice. I present the local practices and interpretations of the private linguistic landscape in two 'Hungarian' villages in South-West Slovakia in the light of photos, ethnographic observations and interview data. I conclude that the signs placed by private individuals follow tendencies in other domains and they are in flux. However, most importantly, they indicate best the local norms of signage and public language choice, as well as changes in local language ideologies.

1. Introduction

In this paper, I present the local practices and interpretations of private Linguistic Landscape in two 'Hungarian' villages in South-West Slovakia in the light of photos, ethnographic observations and interview data. My goal is to show the potential and significance of the private Linguistic Landscape to, among others, sociolinguistics, language policy and language shift. Through a theoretical model of language policy, macro level issues of international law will be connected to micro issues of single private signs on peoples' homes.

The study of Linguistic Landscape (LL), investigating visual language use, is an emerging field dealing with diverse geographical areas and various methodological issues. Even though recognizing the diverse origins of the field, most of the introductory works cite Bourhis & Laundry's (1997: 25) definition of LL:

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> The language of public road signs, advertising billboards, street names, place names, commercial shop signs and public signs on government buildings combines to form the linguistic landscape of a given territory, region, or urban agglomeration.

However, present studies follow a much broader spectrum of visual language use (for a recent summary, see Shohamy 2012), including the study of signs set up by private citizens as in our case. Furthermore, the term *Linguistic Landscape* is not the only term used to describe studies on visual language use, for instance Jaworski and Thurlow (2010) use *Semiotic Landscape* instead. Finally, other linguistic and everyday continuing associations of the term Linguistic Landscape range from general 'linguistic situation' (Gorter 2006: 1) to more technical ones such as mental dialect maps (e.g. Preston 1989).

In Shohamy's (2006) model of language policy, LL is seen among the mechanisms that link, interpret and transmit ideology into language practices. That is, the LL is a concrete device, similar to language education policies, through which the authorities form the ideological prestige of different languages and guide their hierarchy and choice in a given society. At the same time, not only dominant ideology can be transmitted through the LL. Resistance and transgressions to dominant ideologies by private individuals or activist groups are typically displayed in the LL as well (ibid. 123-125). This idea of LL as a transmitting device of ideologies to language practices is visualized below:

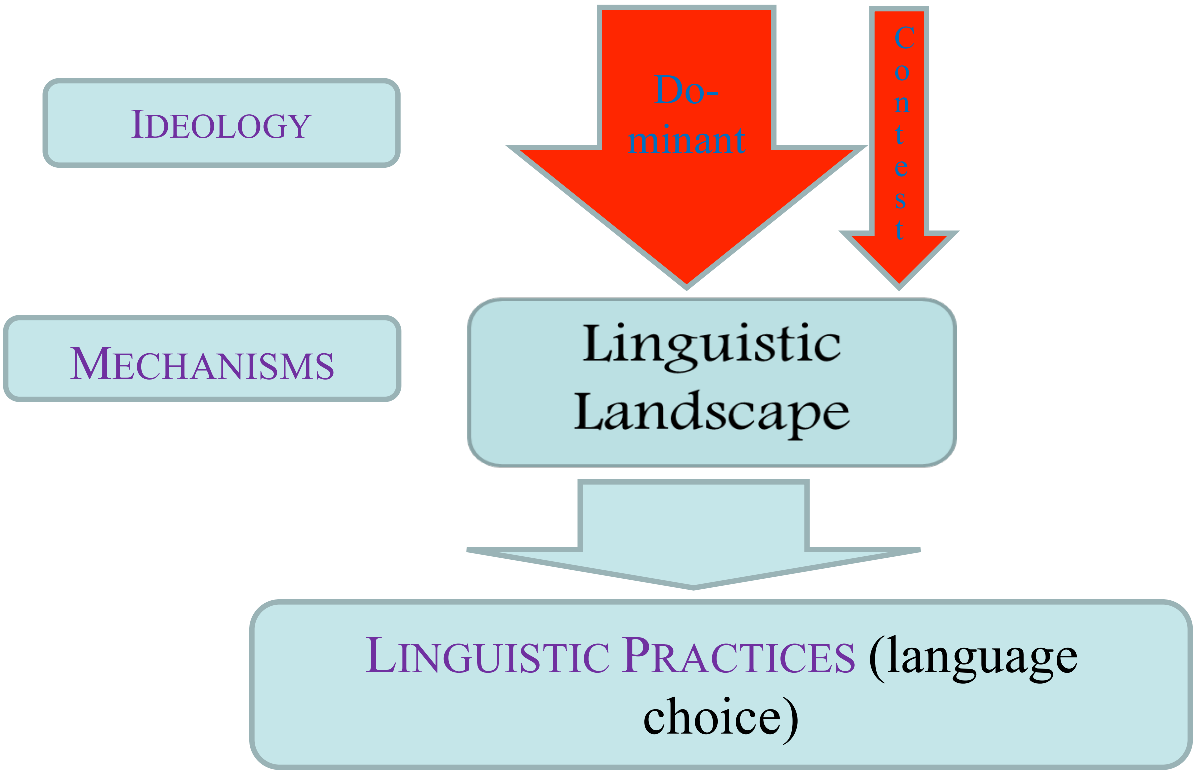
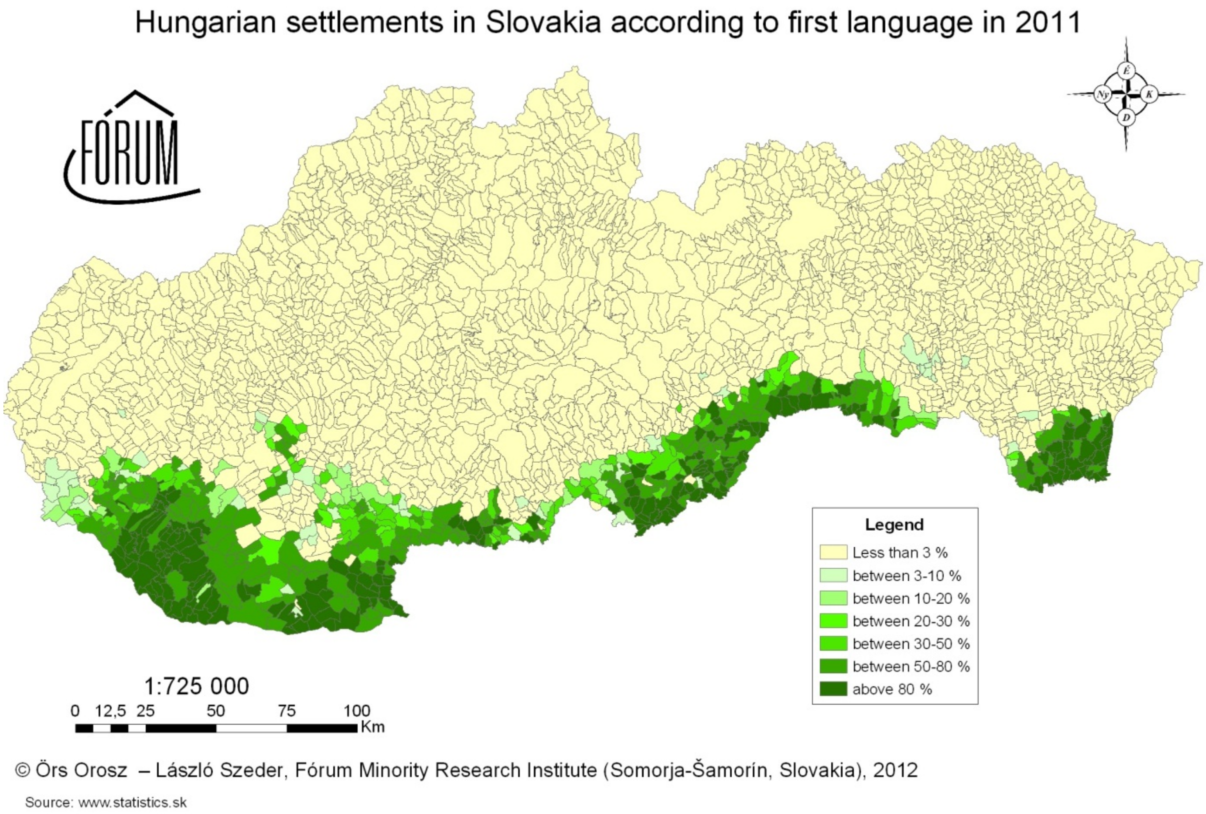


Diagram 1: LL as a mechanism of Language Policy (Shohamy 2006)

2. Historical, Geographical and Legal Background

So far, little attention has been paid to the LL where a minoritized group gives the regional majority. One such European region is South-West Slovakia where Hungarians are the majority (for details, see Lanstyák & Szabómihály 2005). As Sloboda (2009: 184) states, there is anxiety among the Slovaks "about the Hungarian inhabitants' possible disloyalty to the young Slovak state and about the possibility of southern Slovakia's secession." In his view this makes the regions linguistic landscape fundamentally different from many other European bilingual areas. The regions inhabited by the Hungarians can be seen in the following map, produced by the Forum Institute:



Until 1920, the territory of Slovakia was part of the Hungarian Kingdom. In the peace treaty ending World War I, large rural areas with an overwhelming Hungarian majority were ceded to Czechoslovakia due to access to the Danube and railroads (see Kamuszella 2012: 661). In 1993 Slovakia gained independence (for the second time), which was interpreted as a Slovak national awakening (see e.g. Kamuszella 2012: 884-886). The current period, beginning with the 1990 transition from socialist system to democracy is best characterized as a post-multinational era. That is, the 1990's did not bring about a *post-national* period as in the western world (Heller 2011) – rather, as Brubaker (2011: 1786) has established, Slovakia, together with the Baltic states, "appeared to be moving back to the nation-state, entering not a post-national but a post-multinational era." The nationalist reign of Mečiar in Slovakia in the 1990's resulted to numerous linguistic conflicts, including vandalism of Hungarian historical monuments (e.g. Kamuszella 2012: 887). A portion of Hungarians in Slovakia cling to rights they had been accustomed to in the socialist period, such as bilingual school certificates. Also the new municipality leaders began to use bilingual settlement names, and acts of vandalism by Slovak extremists against public signage have to some extent helped to mobilize the Hungarians in the cities (Schwegler 2008).

In 1998, Mečiar fell and Slovak moderates made some concessions to the Hungarian representatives, who have been included in two governments since then. A quick integration to Western alliances was followed by economic revival in the new millennium. However, the global recession around 2008 saw the return of the "Hungarian card" in Slovak politics. For the Hungarian population the most burning problem has been the infrastructural underdevelopment of the Hungarian region, now underlined by the swift development of Bratislava, the capital.

Figure 1: Senec (Szenc) Czechoslovakia (*Národná obroda* 1990 Sept. 1)[102]

This picture of a vandalized Hungarian war memorial was taken in the town of Senec (H: Szenc), which is located in the western border of Hungarian settlements. It shows that already in 1990 the idea of Slovak independence was conceptualized against the presence of Hungarian in the public space. The use of English and German may perhaps be explained as a token of the popular wish of those times to integrate into Western Europe.

[102] Thanks to István Neszméry for providing this photo.

In the Slovak constitution, the Slovak language has the “status as the only official language of an independent and sovereign state” (Ondrejovič 2009: 26). According to the law on state language (1996) it “takes precedence over other languages used in the territory of the Slovak Republic” (ibid. 16). So far, the European institutions – in which Slovakia has been eager to join – have taken actions in the interest of expanding and protecting language rights of the speakers of minority languages in Slovakia. However, during the last conflict in 2009 over the amendment of the Act on the State Language, the Venice Commission (2010) took a clear stand in favor of the monolingual Nation State. It is notable that the Venice Commission failed to even mention a legal model for putting the Hungarian language on an equal footing in the region where its speakers are in a numerical majority (for legal criticism of the Venice Commission’s opinion, see Pan & Pheil 2011). Instead, among others, the Commission legitimized the premise that “[t]he protection of the State language has a particular importance for a new State in which, as it is the case for the Slovak Republic, linguistic minorities represent a high percentage of the citizens of the population” (ibid. 10).

In general the Venice Commission gave a rare, vigorous and detailed justification of protecting and promoting the official language in Slovakia:

> The protection and promotion of the official language of the state is a legitimate concern common to many European countries. It pursues several legitimate aims; it protects *in primis* public order… It guarantees the development of the identity of the State community… It avoids that citizens may suffer discrimination in the enjoyment of their fundamental rights in areas where the persons belonging to national minorities have a majority position. (Venice Commission 2010: 26).

In brief, the areas where the Hungarians form a majority are seen as a threat to the state language. This was made very explicit through a shared concern by the Slovak government and the Venice Commission that “in the southern areas of Slovakia [...] [o]fficial announcements, notices on cultural and other events, notices and adverts in public spaces are in many cases provided only in the Hungarian language.” (*The Language Act*… 2009). However, neither of the above-mentioned organs referred to any study or data to substantiate this. In the next chapter, I will briefly show that a clear majority of public signs in a municipality with a 92 % of Hungarian speaking population are in fact in Slovak only.

In brief, on the state level, a discourse of the primacy of protecting and promoting the official language for reasons of public order and the rights of the state community (understood as citizens of Slovak descent) is dominant in relation to Southern Slovakia where Hungarians present a high proportion of the population. In this discourse a Hungarian dominant linguistic landscape is presumed.

Finally, we can agree with the latest (2013) monitoring report of the experts of the *European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages* that

> [t]here is a general tendency in the Slovak legislation to restrict the right to use minority languages to certain situations where specific statutory conditions are met. Even in these situations, the legislation often leaves it to the discretion of the authorities to what degree they want to implement the linguistic rights of minority language speakers. (*Report…* 2013: 10)

In other words, the Slovak language laws may be permissive in their letter towards the use of minority languages, however they clearly fail to "facilitate and/or encourage" the use of minority languages "in speech and writing, in public and private life", as it is requested in the *European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages*, article 7, 1/d (see also *Report*…2013: 6).

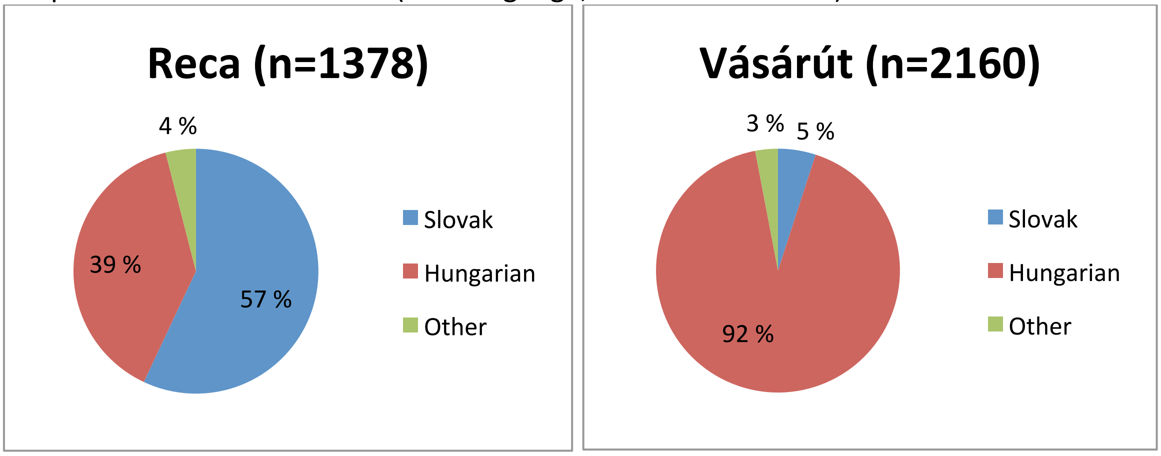
As Gorter et al. (2012) notice, investigating the LL may have an effect on the language policy of a region. In the case of Basque, a study on the LL made the policy makers realize that Spanish was much more dominant in the LL than they believed. As a consequence a new policy was drawn, which is now based on systematic establishment of bilingualism in all government signs and encouragement of the use of Basque in the private realm (ibid. 152, 159). As will be shown in the following chapters, similar measures would be needed in Southern Slovakia as well.

3. General Linguistic Landscape in Two 'Hungarian' Villages

First I will briefly describe the general LL in the investigated two villages in Southwest Slovakia, Reca (in Hungarian: Réte) and Vásárút (in Slovak: Trhová Hradská), where I carried out fieldwork during four weeks in November 2011. About one thousand pictures were taken and 40 interviews in Hungarian were carried out. The interviews were audio-recorded semi-open conversations at the local people's homes. The planned themes for discussion were issues of language use and included ideas about the LL. Most of the informants were Hungarians, but in addition, a Slovak and a Roma informant (family) were interviewed in each village. Since Hungarians are typically poorer and less educated than the average citizens in Slovakia (Lanstyák & Szabómihály 2006: 54), I tried to interview mainly those villagers who did not have a college degree or high economic status. In both villages, I interviewed ca. 15 Hungarians and their family members. In addition, I interviewed ca. five middle-class individuals, viz. school teachers, municipal officials and entrepreneurs. The villagers in general sympathized with my interest in their lives and experiences and I received several spontaneous invitations to meet people. My knowledge of Hungarian was an important factor and somebody carrying out the same research in Slovak would probably get different results. Besides the photos and interviews, many informal conversations were documented in fieldwork notes and various materials were gathered.

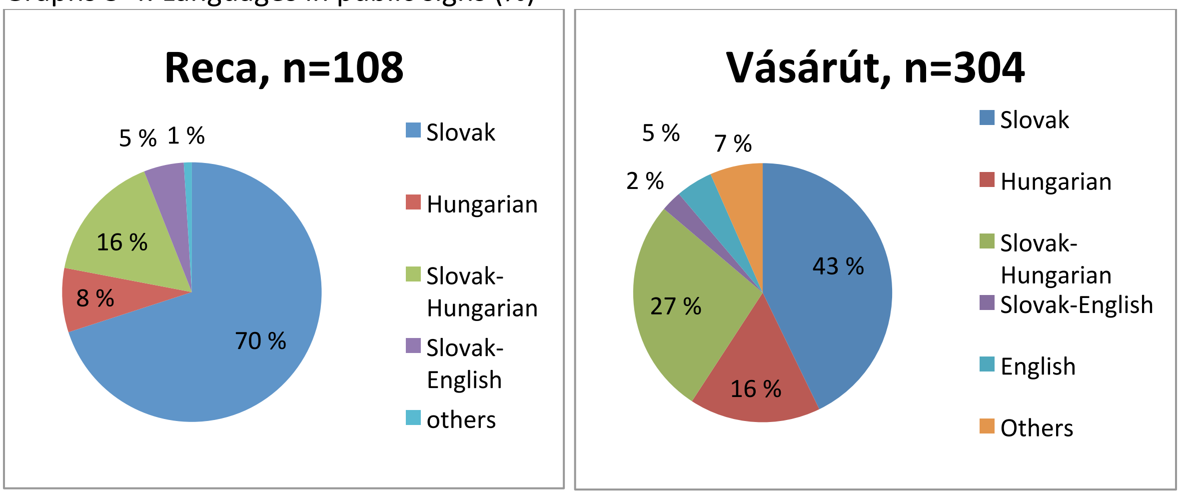
The distribution according to first language ('mother tongue') in the two villages was counted as follows in the 2011 census. Censuses should be taken with caution: for instance, they do not give information on bilingualism, which characterizes especially Reca.

Graphs 1-2: 2011 census data (first language, slovak.statistics.sk)



A general picture of the LLs from the viewpoint of language choice in the public space can be formed on the basis of the following graphs:

Graphs 3-4. Languages in public signs (%)



The difference between the villages' ethnic composition is clearly reflected in their linguistic landscapes. Reca, a community undergoing language shift, has a dwindling presence of Hungarian in public signs. In general, the proportions of languages in LL do not match with the linguistic affiliations of the population, rather they display power relations. For Reca the census shows 39 % of inhabitants with Hungarian as their mother tongue, however, only 24 % of signs include Hungarian, whereas Slovak speakers form 57 % of inhabitants but 70 % of signs are in Slovak only. In the case of Vásárút it is even more obvious that the numbers reflect the different statuses of the languages. For instance, in Vásárút only 5 % of the inhabitants report Slovak as their mother tongue, but 42.8 % of the signs are in Slovak only. Conversely, 92 % of the inhabitants are Hungarian first language speakers, however, 55.3 % of the signs do not contain any Hungarian elements. Monolingualism in general is frequent, bilingualism characterizes only one-third of the signs even in Vásárút. Autonomous (monolingual) use of Hungarian appears in 8 % of signs in Reca and 16 % of signs in Vásárút. However, in both villages, Hungarian is most often used in bilingual texts, typically after Slovak.

To achieve a general understanding of the LL in the villages, we can split the LL to different categories, based on the accounts I have gathered on the field. That is, informants more or less agree on different sets of signs and their typical linguistic and social implications. Next, other categories than private are briefly examined.

Table 1: distribution of languages in different categories of public signs, according to frequency, rare cases in brackets.

Category	**Reca-Réte**	**Trhová Hradská-Vásárút**
International	--	Slovak
State	Slovak	Slovak
Commerce	Slovak	Slovak, Slovak-Hungarian, (Hungarian, English)
Municipality	Slovak-Hungarian (Slovak)	Slovak-Hungarian (Slovak, Hungarian)
Church	Hungarian (Latin)	Hungarian (Latin)
Civil organizations	Hungarian (Slovak)	Hungarian
Private individuals	Slovak	Hungarian, Slovak

The investigated 'Hungarian' villages have a Slovak dominant LL with nests of bilingual, Hungarian and other signage. International (e.g. EU) and governmental signs are exclusively in Slovak. Typically signs pointing to non-local phenomena, such as mobility, transportation, communication, state or international relations are obligatorily only in Slovak, too. Some examples are provided next:

Slovak only signs. Figure 2[103]: EU-sign; figure 3: road sign; figure 4: post; figure 5: railway stop.

The Slovak only EU-related sign for the Hungarian medium school in Vásárút (see figure 2) is striking, since it was among the very few monolingual signs around this institution. The community leaders told me that they had received explicit orders "from the ministry" about what kind of EU-related signs should be placed and where. During the fieldwork I did not see any EU signs that would have included minority languages (in the border zone there were some Slovak-English bilingual EU signs).

In line with road signs (see figure 3), everything connected to transportation or communication is in Slovak only. In addition, Hungarian place names are very infrequently used outside their own settlements, and official maps never display them. It is noteworthy that even the maps in Hungarian schoolbooks produced in Slovakia had no Hungarian place names. Apart from road signs (as seen in figure 3), also all other traffic signs on bus stops or in train stations are displayed only in Slovak. The informants did not consider the bilingual road signs important for them. A typical account is illustrated in the following quote: "Well, for understanding the signs there is no problem, everybody knows the Slovak place names here, but perhaps we could feel a bit better if there were bilingual signs."

[103] The photos have been taken by the author and should not be used without his approval.

The national post is one of the emblematic symbols of the European nation states. Accordingly, due to internal regulation, the use of Hungarian signage is prohibited in the offices and mailboxes of the Slovak Post (see figure 4). According to a local post official, if over 50 per cent of the staff is Hungarian, they are allowed to use Hungarian in spoken communication. My experience from the post office was that both Hungarian and Slovak were used in spoken interaction in Reca, but I witnessed only Hungarian use in Vásárút.

The reluctance of the railroad administration to allow the use of minority place names aside Slovak ones (see figure 5) has been debated lately. There has been some cat and mouse play between Hungarian activists and transportation officials in the territory of railroad signs and road signs, too (see Orosz 2012). However, so far no concessions have been made and partisan bilingual signs have been removed promptly. In sum, the official and non-local signage has remained strictly only in Slovak and it shows how the official language can be forced upon minority speakers even in a region where they form the majority.

The municipalities in turn cherish Slovak-Hungarian bilingualism. Where the Hungarians present an overwhelming majority, there Hungarian appears in commercial signs, too. Nevertheless, also there Slovak is the default language and Hungarian is used only as a second language in bilingual signs. As a statistically insignificant exception to the rule, minority associations produce signs in Hungarian for their programs, and the churches have signage in Hungarian.

The Hungarians in Slovakia have been accustomed to use Slovak in all official written communication and in some official spoken communication. At the same time, it should be noticed that Hungarian literacy is widespread among Hungarians in Slovakia due to the relatively complete Hungarian medium education network; in this respect, Hungarians in Slovakia differ from typical Western European non-autonomous minorities. The infrequent signage in Hungarian in commerce and the absence of Hungarian signs in transportation or other non-local contexts have gone largely unnoticed until lately (for a late development of Hungarian bilingual activism, see Orosz 2012). As it was usually explained in interviews, people got used to these visual practices and (lack of) language rights in the Socialist period. New rights, such as the right to drop the Slovak female suffix *-ová* from female surnames (since 1994, see Misad 2012), have barely been practised (it is now a 'natural' norm among the Hungarians in Slovakia to attach *-ová* to females' surnames).

In general, Hungarians in Slovakia often avoid activism for the use of Hungarian, since, also amongst local Hungarians (cf. Sloboda 2009), language activism is easily connected to the revisionist claims still alive amongst extremist circles in Hungary. Furthermore, local Hungarians voiced the idea in interviews that the Hungarian region should fight for longed-for investments and economic development rather than provoke with language rights claims. During the fieldwork, even the most 'extremist' Hungarian organizations and persons in Slovakia seemed to fight for bilingualism for the Hungarian majority region, not for the autonomous use of Hungarian. Finally, among the Hungarians Slovak language laws have often been interpreted as more restrictive than they in fact are (see Langman & Lanstyák 2001).

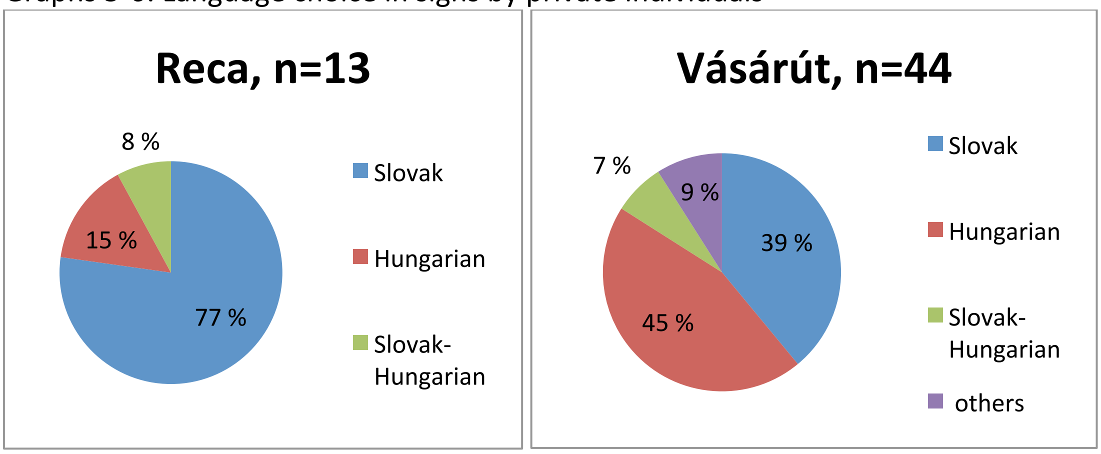
From the background of the Hungarian minority being accustomed to and content with the sight of Slovak monolingual official and commercial signage, I will next explore how local Hungarians practice visual literacy in their private life for the purpose of understanding how such signs reflect language policy and perhaps indicate future language policy and change in ideologies.

4. Private Linguistic Landscape in the Two Villages

Previous studies on linguistic landscape focus on public signage by state, municipal and commercial sector. However, in the typical rural communities inhabited by the Hungarians, private or individual sign use is widespread, too. In the private sphere, excluding highly regulated "private enterprise", minorities have autonomy in public language choice. Even though the Slovak law regulates language use in all public space, private persons cannot be punished (for a recent detailed summary of Slovak language laws, see *Third Report*…2012). Next, I will focus on the local practices and interpretations of individual linguistic landscape in two 'Hungarian' villages (Reca and Vásárút) in South-West Slovakia.

Public signs placed by private individuals make 13.8 % of all signs in the LL of the villages. Their distribution according to language choice is displayed in the next graphs:

Graphs 5-6: Language choice in signs by private individuals



In comparison to the general picture, there is a tendency towards monolingual signs in the private sphere. Beyond the lack of bilingualism, the choice of language for private persons is similar to that of the commercial sector. In Reca (which is undergoing language shift, with a dwindling 39 % of Hungarian speakers) most signs are only in Slovak, whereas in Vasárút (which has an overwhelming majority of Hungarian speakers, 92 %), private signs in Hungarian give a slight majority. Next I will analyze the different genres of signs inside the private category to show grassroots ideologies and language practices which explain the use of different languages in these villages and then demonstrate how they contest the dominant ideology of a Slovak only public sphere.

4.1 Beware of dog!

The most frequent genre of private signs consists of the “beware of dog” plates. The trade of such signs has met a significant demand in the villages, now participating in global consumerism. In Reca, Hungarians have purchased them in nearby shopping centers, where they are available only in Slovak.

Figures 6-7: commodity ‘beware of dog’ signs in Reca

The examples in figures 6-7 above are typical of new signs sold in the global supermarkets. Beyond a warning, they also have a humorous remark (‘I guard here!’, ‘The housewife is even worse’), as in figure 7 above. These signs can be seen to display the dog owner’s identity as an easy-going person through the humorous remarks. According to the informants, such signs have become popular in the last two decades, and they are available in shopping centers at a nearby town (Senec/Szenc). Bilingual signs or signs in Hungarian are not available in the new international supermarket chains in Slovakia.

A single bilingual sign from the socialist period is on display in Reca.

Figure 8: a bilingual Slovak-Hungarian ‘beware of dog’ sign in Reca

In the interviews, inhabitants of Reca claimed to prefer bilingual private signage, “so that everybody would understand them”, as many informants put it. However, this ideology was not transmitted to real life practices of private signage. The only bilingual sign in Reca in this genre of ‘beware of the dog’, shown in Figure 8, was an old sign – it was also the only sign including Hungarian. It will be most likely the last of its kind, which indicates the fading out of Hungarian and bilingual signs in this genre. Pietikäinen et al. (2011) investigated formerly destabilized Finno-Ugric minority communities in Northern Scandinavia that are now supported by a dominant ideology of minority language revitalization. However, in the seven villages now claiming minority language in other arenas, all the private signs they found were in the state language.

The visual semiotics of this sign – the lack of an image of a dog etc. – categorizes it as outdated, similar to the socialist bilingual inscriptions awaiting removal in Reca (e.g. ‘with culture for peace’ at a cultural center). When I asked the villagers about this sign they were puzzled by its placement. “But he is not a very Hungarian person”, they reacted. In other words, the sign was out of place, since such a display of a Hungarian identity would perhaps be seen as a nationalist activity, given the norm in Reca to use Slovak for private signs. In sum, use of Slovak only in private signage has been normalized in this formerly Hungarian majority village, where 39 % of residents still claim Hungarian as their mother tongue. In Vásárút, Hungarians have found solutions to use the language of the community by purchasing the signs in Hungary or patching up signs of their own. These can be seen as innovative forms of resistance:

Figures 9-10: ‘beware of dog’ signs in Hungarian (Vásárút), commodities from Hungary

In the Hungarian-dominant Vásárút, we find only two expressions in Slovak in this genre; either ‘I guard here!’ or the more standard ‘beware of the dog’ explicit warnings. Hult (2009: 98-99) finds that language choice in commercial signs is often influenced by whether the passage is used to communicate information on what is being sold or whether it is used for symbolic meanings, such as the notion of foreignness. In a similar vein, in the case of ‘beware of the dog’ signs in Vásárút, where bilingual signs are absent, only Hungarian is used for inscriptions that carry a humorous narrative or expression. The humorous expressions in turn can be seen to serve the purpose of mitigating the face-threatening warnings. In the case of Vásárút addressees in all such cases are Hungarian speakers. Put the other way round, in Hungarian dominant Vásárút, Slovak is used only to communicate information but not to display interpersonal relationships. Manufactured ‘beware of the dog’ signs are available only in Slovak (or English) in Slovakia, those in Hungarian have been bought in from Hungary. The villages are a one or two hours ride from Győr and Komárom in the Hungarian side of the Danube and Budapest is also a popular shopping destination for the villagers. However, inhabitants of Reca do not buy such signs in Hungary.

A further innovation in this category in Vásárút was to patch up self-made signs:

Figure 11: self-made Hungarian ‘dog bites’ sign in Vásárút

For language choice, self-made signs such as this offer more freedom of choice, since they are not constrained by the supply of signs available in the given language. Also in the case of commercial signs, self-made inscriptions such as daily offers are most likely to be in Hungarian in the villages with an overwhelming Hungarian majority. However, in some cases language insecurity by Hungarians was observable. For instance, in a single case, Slovak was used in a hand-made plate.

Figure 12: 'beware of dog' in Slovak, Vásárut

It can be speculated that the use of a Slovak-language sign in a more or less monolingual Hungarian village community is due to the dominant ideology of compulsory use of Slovak in public communication, or perhaps to insecurity in the written use of Hungarian. A local colleague, István Lanstyák explained that Hungarians in bilingual settlements in Slovakia rarely write anything in Hungarian since they might feel insecure in writing Hungarian and hence stick to Slovak for written inscriptions, even in the private sphere.

4.2 Mailboxes

Private individuals routinely display their identity in the public in the form of having a mailbox. At the same time, the national post is one of the emblematic symbols of the European nation states. Accordingly, the use of Hungarian inscriptions is prohibited in the offices and mailboxes of the Slovak Post.

Figures 13-14: mailboxes in Slovak

Figure 14 shows how private signs are typically monolingual: next to a Hungarian ‘beware of the dog’ sign, there is a Slovak mailbox. It also indicates that it is more difficult to resist the use of Slovak for mailboxes than ‘beware of dog’ signs. Mailboxes such as displayed in figure 13 are available at the local post office. In Hungary similar mailboxes are not used. However, resistance to dominant ideology in the form of autonomous use of Hungarian appears in Vásárút also in this category. Vásárútians have found innovative means to contest the idea that anything connected to the post should be in Slovak, namely e.g. in the form of putting together hand-made newspaper mailboxes (see figure 15).

Figure 15: ‘newspaper’ in Hungarian, Vásárút

4.3 Graffiti

Graffiti is typically not following the dominant norms and ideologies for signs. Furthermore, unlike the earlier genres, graffiti are not commodities which would follow the trends of global trade either. All this being said, the code choice for graffiti is rather unsurprising for both villages: Slovak and English for Reca and Hungarian and English for Vásárút. Still, graffiti is the only type of private sign that is not visible at all in Slovak in Vásárút. In Reca, graffiti is part of the global graffiti culture, whereas in Vásárút it is of local character. The different graffiti genres indicate that the youth culture in Reca is of global character, whereas Vásárút has a more local, Hungarian youth community.

Figure 16-17: Graffiti in Reca and Vásárút

In Reca, graffiti is part of the global hiphop culture (cf. Pennycook 2009). The peripheral but mobile placement and form of graffiti in Reca is typical, it indicates a global, transportable subculture, which is not aimed to carry a message understandable for outsiders to the subculture (Pennycook 2009: 302). In comparison, the graffiti in Vásárút is of local character. In Vásárút the location of the graffiti is also central: on the map of the village at main square of the settlement. It includes typical, generally understandable, insults in Hungarian (*faszopó* [sic!] 'dick sucker' and *buzi* 'faggot') and English (*fuck*). The different graffiti genres seem to indicate that the youth culture in Reca is of global character, whereas Vásárút has a more local, Hungarian youth community. That is, in Vásárút the Hungarian youth communicates in Hungarian with each other in the form of visual language. This is in line with my fieldwork observations, in Vásárút I noticed only youth groups that communicated in Hungarian, whereas in Reca I met no such groups, rather Slovak was used among the youth.

4.4 A war memorial

The autonomous Hungarian public signs placed by private individuals in Reca include a war memorial plate in the cemetery.

Figure 18: war memorial in Hungarian, Reca

It must appear peculiar that a private grave includes a war memorial to “the Heroes of Réte” (*Réte hősi halott honvédei*), all local Hungarians killed in the World Wars (1914-1918, 1942-1945). The name of the donor of the memorial plate is displayed on the right corner, together with the words *Drága véreim emlékére* (‘For the memory of my precious blood [relation]s’). According to the language laws, the plate could not be autonomously in Hungarian had it been produced by an official entity or a registered civil organization. As a demonstration of this, in the same cemetery there is a bilingual memorial plaque placed by the municipality for those buried elsewhere. That is, also in this case, the dominant ideology, displayed in language laws and official signage, is being contested in the private sphere, which is here stretched to include what might be also characterized as community signs.

5. Discussion

The dominant local discourse around the language choice for private signage, voiced in my interviews, is that the private visual language use should follow the predominant private spoken language use in the village. In Vásárút private signage should thus be predominantly Hungarian, whereas in Reca it should be Slovak dominant but bilingual. In the interviews, Hungarian informants in Reca often displayed the explicit norm of using bilingual signs, however their real-life practices did not reflect this preference. The informants in Vásárút stated that they “do not want any trouble”, but that they prefer Hungarian signage in the private sphere. Since “here everybody speaks Hungarian”, they do not see any reason to produce signs in Slovak.

The discourse of producing private signage as a deliberate political act, aiming at a greater visibility of the Hungarian language, was voiced only in one casual conversation. What is more, producing monolingual private signs in Hungarian with a symbolic intent was viewed negatively by most of the informants in both fieldwork sites. Finally, issues of personal identity may be at stake in the cases where Hungarian has been used against all the odds, that is, when a sign with Hungarian texts has to be handmade or purchased in Hungary. In the LL of Vásárút, mass produced humorous remarks or hand written frivolous insults are put into public display only in Hungarian. Furthermore, there seems to be a notable unwillingness to use Slovak signs among some Vásárútians and they can even go to excesses in turning them into Hungarian. At the same time, there is no discourse of a Hungarian community operating *en masse* in producing and placing private signs in either of the sites.

The dominant ideologies reflected on the other branches of LL have a great impact on the language community undergoing language shift. In Reca private individuals who speak Hungarian as their first language prefer Slovak in the public texts they produce, purchase and choose to put into display. This indicates that the LL has become a mechanism escalating the observable language shift in the village. The few examples of Hungarian use point to the past.

The choice of language in private signs in Vásárút indicates that Hungarian is the language of everyday use in the settlement. The general LL displays dominant norms and ideologies which are contested in the private signage. However, the dominant ideologies pop up also in private signage. Two general transmitting mechanisms were described: First, the trade of signs in Slovakia is based on monolingual Slovak signs. Second, the genre of signs connected to the national postal system reflect the ideology that the postal system is an emblem of the state. In these cases, resistance is displayed through signs purchased in Hungary as well as through self-made signs. This ideology of resistance is not present in local discourses, rather it can be derived from the local practices of visual language use.

According to the data on “official” signs and the general LL, Hungarian signs are not threatening the official language in any observable way. Rather, the already scarce visual use of Hungarian is dwindling in many categories, which points to the urgency of facilitating and encouraging the use of Hungarian language. For Reca it might be too late, since the dominant ideology of a non-Hungarian public space has already been internalized by the Hungarian speakers. In other words, in the informants’ opinion the use of Hungarian by private individuals in public is a nationalist provocation which should be avoided in order to maintain the positive aspects of the Hungarian identity.

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Languages of young school-age children representing the second generation: the vitality and proficiency of first and second languages in immigrant families in Finland

Mari Honko

Abstract

Until the beginning of the 1990s, education of immigrant children was a relatively invisible phenomenon in Finland, mostly because of the low number of immigrants. The need to rethink the linguistic environment (values, ideologies and practices) has arisen as a result of the changes in the population: in 1990 the total number of foreign citizens living in Finland barely exceeded 26,000 but the corresponding figure in 2012, after almost linear immigration growth, was nearly 200,000. This accounts for 3.6% of the whole population. Immigration of younger people is currently more prevalent, and at the same time numbers of second-generation immigrants are increasing. This is why the need for realignment of education and educational policy as well as the field of linguistic, sociolinguistic and pedagogic research has become evident. The main aim of this paper is to shed light on the fresh and invariably changing linguistic environment in Finland. This is done by describing linguistic reality – language education, skills and use – of one particular immigrant group, namely school-age children representing the widened (new) second generation (Rumbaut 2004, 2007). The data is gathered for my dissertation (Honko 2013). The usage-based theory of language learning serves as a theoretical framework for the study.

Multilingualism as a new challenge for schools in Finland

In 2012 there were approximately 250,000 speakers of languages other than long-established languages in Finland (mother tongue other than Finnish, Swedish, Sámi, Romani or the Finnish sign language) and about 300,000 first- and second-generation immigrants living in Finland (Statistics Finland).[104] The total number of foreign languages spoken as a first language was about 150 with Russian, Estonian, English, Somali and Arabic being the

[104] It is worth noting that the three figures presented overlap in the sense that a person can (although does not have to) belong to two or all of these groups. A second-generation child could be a Finnish citizen whose mother tongue is Arabic and who is also fluent in Finnish and Kurdish.

largest individual language groups. As everywhere in Western Europe, immigration is unevenly spread out nationwide: the proportion of pupils from an immigrant background may in some urban schools in Finland exceed 60 % or even 70 % while other schools have neither immigrants nor other (functionally) multilingual children at all.

Centralisation has both positive and negative effects on integration. From the educational perspective, it raises (local) awareness of cultural and linguistic diversity on the one hand and the availability and coverage of measures of support on the other. At least four pupils speaking the same language are required before native language (L1) lessons for this group of pupils can be funded by state grants. For Finnish language (L2) lessons as a second language, no such limit exists but it is helpful to have a decent enrolment in order to compose meaningful teaching groups. In addition, interpreters and preparatory instruction (year-long instruction for immigrant children that focuses on Finnish language; see Suni & Latomaa 2012: 72) are often easier to provide in areas with a substantial or moderate immigrant population. Teaching groups for preparatory classes as well as native language and Finnish as a second language may consist of pupils from several schools, potentially from more than one municipality.

At the societal level, centralisation determines – at least to some extent – the attitudes and actions concerning immigration and multilingualism. A common environment arising from these factors can affect many important language-related choices that families have to make either consciously or unconsciously: What languages should they use in everyday life? How do they value and support language learning and multilingualism in general? All these elements combine together to shape the way multifaceted identities of individuals are made up and at the same time the way in which individuals a) integrate in their (new) home country and b) maintain the heritage (culture, values, language, etc.) of their parents.

In Finland, simultaneously with the rapidly increasing immigration during the 1990s, the attention of policymakers and professionals working in the field of education turned to questions about organising, controlling and funding the young educational field of the "new Finns". Functional learning and a good knowledge of the Finnish language as well as L1 have been strongly recommended and funded by the Finnish government for the past two decades (see e.g. the decree of Ministry of Education[105] 29.12.2009 (Opetushallitus 2009); National Board of Education 2004; Suni & Latomaa 2012: 91). Instead of pushing through strong assimilation policy, the Ministry of Education and other organisations have shown attempts to support not only the adoption of a dominant language but also the maintenance of new minority L1-languages.

L2 and L1 lessons can for example be funded by specific state grants during both primary and secondary school (for more about mother tongue instruction in Finland, see Suni & Latomaa

[105] From the first of May 2010: Ministry of Education and Culture.

2012: 72–74). Disappointingly, government subsidies for teaching arrangements are not always applied for. As written by Suni & Latomaa (2012: 92), “not all local authorities show any interest in offering anything but mainstream education for all”. One logical explanation for this phenomenon is that all the special arrangements (including L1 instruction, L2 Finnish instruction in separate teaching groups and remedial teaching) are optional, although widely recommended and considered useful (Korpela 2006; Latomaa & Suni 2010: 161; Suni & Latomaa 2012: 92). The only languages with strong educational status in Finland are Finnish, Swedish and Sámi: these are the languages that are taught at schools as a mother tongue. The arrangements of mother tongue instruction of all other languages are dependent on the willingness of the local authorities, the number of pupils and the availability of a suitable teacher.

Furthermore, resources are limited. Where L1 school teaching is arranged, it usually means one or two extracurricular lessons in rather heterogeneous teaching groups. In addition, despite the aims to support L1-teaching, instruction in a new minority native language (L1) was made extracurricular in the curriculum reforms of 2004. Qualification requirements for L1 teachers have not been defined, and consequently, no university-level teacher training is currently available, for instance, for teachers of Arabic, Chinese or Turkish. Some projects aiming to improve these defects in the educational system have, however, already been initiated (see Pantzar, Merta & Stüber 2012 about the *Kuulumisia*[106]project). The lack of a consistent curriculum in L1 teacher education and the varying practices with work contracts have clearly had negative effects on the status of L1 school instruction. Even if many of the teachers are highly educated and experienced professionals, this is not the case for all of them. In addition, many of the teachers work under challenging conditions and on terminable contracts, both of which affect the continuity of language instruction at schools and make the job less desirable among professionals. Still, these shortcomings are rarely discussed. More effort is thus needed to ensure the development work of L1 teacher education and employment in the future, probably in co-operation with other European countries.

In 2005, regardless of the official status of L2 Finnish in school (as a syllabus called *mother tongue and literature*), a quarter of Finnish second language learners only studied Finnish in a Finnish native language teaching group (Finnish as L1), although Finnish was not their mother tongue (Korpela 2006), while full-time Finnish L2 instruction was only given to 12 % of the pupils. The general custom was to have not more than one or two Finnish language lessons in a separate L2 teaching group every week. Several reasons explain these figures, and many of them are practical: separate L2 teaching groups might, for example, be too small or too heterogeneous for reasonable instruction. Conversely, L2 instruction is not

[106]*Kuulumisia* is an education programme that is “addressed to people with an immigrant background engaged in teaching duties” (Panzar et al. 2011: 2).

always appreciated either. Parents are sometimes worried that their children might suffer discrimination or miss important tuition if they attend L2 Finnish classes instead of L1 Finnish. School personnel or even the children themselves do not always see the value of L2 Finnish instruction, especially if the pupil is already a fluent speaker in Finnish. According to Finnish language teachers, the language skills of immigrant pupils are, however, often overestimated at schools; this seems to be the case at least with subject teachers in secondary school (Latomaa and Suni 2010: 166). It is not assured, however, that pupils who speak Finnish fluently actually have strong knowledge of the language as a whole, or that fluent speakers will succeed in school. The study of Honko (2013), comparing the Finnish skills of second-generation immigrants and native speakers of Finnish, shows that even if second-generation primary school children do not stand out from native speakers in fluency of timed writing,[107] they lag behind the L1 Finnish control group in accuracy, complexity as well lexical knowledge and skills. Taking all of this into account, it is necessary to start the dialogue considering the status and forms of L2 Finnish instruction in the new social context in Finland.

An even more important question than funding and organising separate lessons of L1 or L2 is, of course, the atmosphere in everyday life during and outside of school hours. Although increasing and supporting functional bilingualism in Finland has been defined as a national goal (Hakulinen et al. 2009; Nissilä et al. 2009), neither multilingualism itself nor non-Finnish L1 skills specifically seems to have self-evident value in Finnish society, in every school or even in all families. Plans of action do not always result in action. As Suni and Latomaa point out (2012: 68) “the actual experiences of immigrant students and their teachers speak of a very different kind of reality” from the language of educational policies. During the past few years, simultaneously with the economic downturn in Europe, the idea that immigrants should be assimilated has become more popular in Finland. Increasingly often, opinions are expressed that immigrants should be more “Finnish” – which includes the idea of native-like Finnish skills, immediately and without any investments by the local administration. However, these ideas are seldom argued in depth. At the same time, voices reminding us of the value of immigrant languages as a resource for Finnish society are strengthening (Nikula et al. 2012: 47, 56–57).

At schools, families with school-age children are assisted with interpreter services when there are important meetings. Interpretation is necessary for many immigrant families and for several years after immigration, but the services are not always used most efficiently, or they are not always available. Some schools have developed practices such as “language of the day”, when all families speaking a particular language with school-age children can get together and meet school personnel with the presence of an interpreter. During the past few years, several books and booklets dealing with multilingualism and learning a second

[107] The task of this timed writing test was to write a narrative about the day of one’s dreams.

language have been published, but they have been directed primarily towards the Finnish-speaking authority (see e.g. Immonen-Oikkonen & Nissilä 2009 and Latomaa 2007). Latomaa together with the association of L1 teachers (2012) has launched an important initiative by writing a guide (translated into 25 different languages) for multilingual families, in order to inform families and to promote dialogue about multilingualism and language learning in Finland.

Finland could still use much more public debate about linguistic diversity, not only about the languages of immigrants but also about the dominance of English as the *lingua franca* at all educational levels. Moreover, a lot of research needs to be done considering the actual maintenance of the native language(s) of immigrant families and the progression in acquiring high levels of the second language (mainly Finnish). According to former studies, even pupils representing the extended second generation[108] do not always achieve the educational level expected. The number of students from an immigrant background progressing to upper secondary education lags behind the national average, nor do the school grades or the mean graduation level reach the national average if the socio-economic background of the student is not taken into account (Kosonen 2008; Kilpi 2010: 117–121, 126; Teräs et al. 2010: 92, 97). Nevertheless, former studies have mainly concentrated on surveying academic success, not the reasons that explain variation (Suni & Latomaa 2012: 69).

From L1 to many languages of the second generation – Finnish example

The model on generations used in this study comes from the work of Ruben Rumbaut (2004, 2007). In accordance with Rumbaut, the term “new second generation” is used purposefully to link together two groups with an immigrant background, namely generations 2.0 and 1.75. The former concept (generation 2.0) refers to those children who are born in a target country (Finland) but who have immigrant parents, whereas the latter (generation 1.75) refers to the children who have moved to the target country at the age of 0–5.[109] One of the major advantages of Rumbaut’s model of generations is that it makes it possible to value the diversity of the first generation; as former studies have shown, it is widely accepted that the possibilities of reaching a high level of a target language are different in the early and late immigrant groups. When using Rumbaut’s model, the group of L2 (Finnish) learners in this particular study, and also other studies including both second-generation and young first-generation informants, is much more homogeneous than when just concentrating on the birth place (first as compared to second generation) or even the mother tongue of the child.

[108] Children who are born in Finland or have immigrated to the country before school age.

[109] About 15 % of the immigrant children in the study slightly exceeded this age limit, but all of the children have attended Finnish primary school from the beginning. As will be discussed later in this paper, there are no remarkable differences in Finnish language skills between the 2.0 and 1.75 groups after five to six years of schooling, except fluency (Honko 2013: 249–250).

In Finland, the Population Register Centre will only accept one single language reported as the mother tongue. For parents of bilingual or multilingual children, this means a choice that is sometimes very difficult and contrived. As a consequence, two children from the same family, both born in Finland and living in quite similar circumstances, may have different native languages, at least according to the population register. However, this choice can be crucial from the point of view of education because it affects both the syllabus of languages (Finnish as first/second language), the language assessment and to some extent the funding of language instruction.

The story of Melissa, one of the second-generation respondents in this study, is an interesting and at the same time quite typical example of the complex concept of L1 at the individual level. According to Melissa's mother's responses, the Finnish language has an active and dominant role in the family. As defined by the mother, Finnish is Melissa's mother tongue and the first language spoken by Melissa as well as the main communication language between Melissa (at the age of 11) and her mother. According to Melissa, the language she shares with her father, namely Turkish, still plays an important role in her life. Melissa still considers Turkish to be her "L1" and her strongest oral language, even after five years of schooling in a Finnish-speaking environment. Contrary to what might be expected on the basis of the mother's responses, Melissa says that Turkish is her strongest written language, too, and emotionally the most important language ("language of the heart") instead of Finnish or both languages (or another foreign language). Turkish is actively used in the family with siblings and relatives and via media (including TV, books, websites and social media) as well. Melissa says that she often writes stories, poems and letters to her friends in Turkish, although she does not attend Turkish classes at school anymore.

It can be concluded, based on the responses to the study's surveys (n=110[110]), that the idea of a multilingual identity is more often acknowledged by the second-generation children themselves than by their parents. This claim can be supported by some of the quantitative findings of the study. At the end of primary school, after five to six years of schooling in Finland, about one-tenth (10 %) of the parents believe that their child already has more than one L1: in these cases both Finnish and one foreign language were mentioned as being spoken at home. When the children themselves were asked, the corresponding figure was much higher, ca. 25 %. In addition, parents tended to picture different communication situations outside the school time in a way that more often reflected a monolingual attitude towards language use. To the questions about the languages which the child uses in certain social contexts, responses in which only one language was mentioned were slightly more frequent with parents than with the children themselves. These questions concerned, firstly, those languages that were actively used among the children at home, and secondly,

[110] Responses from all of the families from at least one of the parents.

languages spoken with other relatives. The differences in responses can partly be explained by actual differences in the ways that children use languages and partly by the way that the parents see and hear them using these languages.

According to some recent studies on the language skills of second-generation immigrant children in Finland, there is no complete agreement of a) whether the linguistic and educational challenges for the second generation essentially differ from those of the autochthonous population (Kalliokoski 2009: 437; Kilpi 2010: 110) and b) whether there is a danger that attrition of L1 has already taken place among these children. The longitudinal study in which this paper is based on investigates the vitality and the proficiency in both L1 and L2 of children representing 2.0 and 1.75 generations (Rumbaut 2007).[111] In the next few sections I will report some essential findings of the study, conducted in order to fill the gap left by earlier studies. I will first describe the contexts of language use more specifically and then the correlative relationship between language use and skills of both languages. Also the general proficiency level of L1 and L2 as well as the maintenance of the foreign mother tongue will be discussed.

L1 and L2 of second generation in use

The main L1s in the study were Albanian, Arabic, Kurdish, Somali, Russian and Vietnamese. These, along with Estonian, are the same foreign languages that have the largest numbers of L1 enrolments in Finland (Kuusela et al. 2008: 45). In that sense the sample of this study is a representative sample of the population, although the sample of the study does not cover more than 3 % of the age-specific reference group (Kuusela et al. 2008: 45). At the beginning of primary school (2nd and 3rd grade, at the age of 8 to 11 years) 75 % of the children (n=127/171) in the study attended extracurricular L1 classes. After three years (5th and 6th grade, n=110), participation activity had decreased, but still over 50 % of the pupils voluntarily wanted to take part in L1 lessons. L1 instruction was then given in 11 different languages. As Suni and Latomaa (2012: 73) argue, the curriculum reform in 2004 impaired the status of native language instruction: L1 instruction became "complementary in nature". It is worth noting that lack of motivation (some pupils do not want to attain L1 instruction) and lack of teaching (L1 classes were not arranged in all of the languages or in all of the areas) are not the only problem; teaching groups were not always suitable for all pupils either.[112]

During the past ten years, grade marks of L1 have been given as a supplement to the school report – a practice that does not support the idea of linguistic and cultural equality. L1

[111] The study is part of the author's PhD project (Honko 2013) in which the main attention is paid to lexical skills of L2 (Finnish language). Additional data is collected about the use and general proficiency of both L1 (26 different languages) and L2 during primary school.

[112] Teaching groups are often very heterogeneous with pupils from kindergarten to upper class grades of primary school.

lessons can be arranged late in the afternoon or in another school building some distance from the local school and from a child's home. These issues have added to the lowered status of the L1 languages and may have affected the pupils' willingness to continue with native language instruction. Furthermore, participation figures for this study may actually be relatively high in comparison with the national average because all of the children in the study were living in middle-sized or bigger towns: it is probable that more than 25 % of second-generation children are outside the reach of native language instruction at every stage of their studies. According to some estimations, 40 % of the pupils with foreign L1 and even 70 % of all pupils with at least one immigrant parent do not regularly attend L1 instruction[113] (Latomaa et al. 2013: 172).

The activity and range of L1 use outside the school vary within the informant group, and they clearly affect the success in language learning (tables 1 and 2). There seems to be a great variance in L1 reading, writing and speaking activity in comparison to L2 Finnish. Almost all of the pupils (97 %) responded positively when asked if they thought that the knowledge of one's mother tongue was important for them. Still, according to suggestive summarised factors including four to five different assertions about language use, the usage of L1 was strongly polarised: face-to-face conversations were common and often daily routine in the second-generation group. TV was another main source of language, but reading and writing in L1 were not such active parts of these children's lives. Despite the fact that L1 was actively used in its oral form at the end of primary school, 98 % of the pupils said that during their free time their main written language was Finnish.

Although the factors used in correlation analyses can, of course, serve just as raw indicators of all possible language use, they are comparable with the information that represents the use of Finnish language. At the same time, when native language was mainly used in its spoken form (at least when L1 homework was not taken into account), Finnish language had clearly become an actively used functional language also in its written form. At the age of 11 to 13, Finnish was, on average, more regularly used than the children's L1 mother tongue. This was true in spite of the fact that Finnish often had the status of "second" language at least at school, and the foreign L1 was still usually the most important language shared by family members. As research has shown, a language shift usually begins with the second generation, the children of immigrant parents (Latomaa & Suni 2010: 168). Thus, it is interesting to notice that even if L2 might have taken the position of the functionally stronger language when approaching adolescence, there were no signs of total language shift in any of the families. However, five of the pupils (5 % of the group) already seemed to use their native language infrequently and in very restricted contexts; yet, for four of them this foreign language had been the (only) first language spoken according to parents'

[113] Pupils with one immigrant parent (2.5 generation) in addition to first and second generation.

responses. Whether these young Finns are going to maintain their mother tongue and transmit it to their own children later on remains unclear.

The usage of Finnish was more stable, although not uniform, among the second generation at the end of the lower primary school. According to the surveys, the Finnish language was used in a wide range of situations outside school. More than 96 % of the pupils (n=110) said that they met Finnish-speaking friends during their free time either often or occasionally. According to responses, most of the pupils (> 90 %) also read books and watched TV programmes in Finnish as well as used the internet to garner information from websites in Finnish. All but one of the pupils in the study said that they practised Finnish by doing homework after school hours (some more regularly than others). Although it is sometimes claimed that Finnish pupils do well in international surveys about school and education without having to do homework (e.g. Biljak 2013), this is rarely the case in practice; considering this, it is not so surprising that non-native Finns do school homework in Finnish. Furthermore, almost all of the pupils in the study were active in social media in one way or another, especially when using Finnish language. In conclusion, the Finnish language tended to be used more often and on a wider scale than any other languages among second-generation children.

The attitude towards the usage of Finnish seemed on average a bit more positive in comparison to L1. It is especially worth noting that responses to questions about the "willingness" to use the language revealed a clear difference between Finnish and the L1. Four-fifths (80 %) of the pupils stated that they were glad to speak in Finnish (in general) and according to the surveys almost as many (70 %) were willing to write in Finnish; however the corresponding figures for L1 were only 40 % (speaking) and 25 % (writing). It is possible that this difference in attitude explains (partly) those differences in language usage. Also the presence of a Finnish teacher during the study might have indirectly affected the responses[114]. Alternatively, it is likely that children feel comfortable using a language that they are good at. If – and when – L1 is used only in limited contexts, the skills of the mother tongue surely cannot develop to the full extent.

[114] Collecting the data was, in the local level, organized by the class teacher or the Finnish subject teacher one or both of whom were also teaching Finnish language to the child. This was done for practical reasons and to make sure that children understood the query correctly. It has to be admitted that even though teachers were not supposed to give any substantial advice to the children or enter into the answers later on, the presence of an authority could, nevertheless, have affected the results. If so, some of the children might have answered the questions considering Finnish more *positively* than they would have done in other circumstances.

Table 1: Free-time usage of L1 and L2 during the 5th and 6th grade (% of the informants)

	L1			L2 Finnish		
	never	**some-times**	**often**	**never**	**some-times**	**often**
Meeting friends	11	**59**	**30**	3,5	34.5	**62**
Books	**44**	**46**	10	7	**47**	**46**
Magazines	**75**	21	4	18.5	**47**	**45.5**
TV	23.5	32	**44.5**	7	34	**59**
Radio	**75**	20	5	**48**	34	18
Talking via internet*	30	**42**	**28**	28	22	**50**
E-mail	**58**	37	5	18	40	**52**
Chatting	**46**	**45**	8	18	19	**73**
Following blogs etc.	**57**	34	9	24	33	**53**
Facts from internet	**54**	31	15	8	33	**68**
Doing homework	27	27	**46 (n=78)**	1	11	**87**

*aunt, cousins, father, friends, granny, mother, sister, uncle, other relatives and loved ones… (e.g. Skype)

Language skills in comparison to language use

According to the usage-based theories, learning a language is strictly dependent on language use. One basic assumption of all usage-based theories of language learning is that proficiency is influenced by the *contexts* in which the language is used and by the *frequency* of its use. Language skills improve primarily in social interaction, and therefore are dependent, for instance, on the variety and the regularity of linguistic communication. (Tomasello 2003, 2009; Niiranen 2008; Behrens 2009; Lowie et al. 2010).

In this study three different measures were chosen to represent proficiency level of L1 and L2 during the 5th and 6thgrade: a) proficiency index, b) special difficulties in language learning and c) previous mark from the school report. The proficiency index is a summarised factor that includes estimations of oral and writing skills in addition to vocabulary knowledge and skills; it can thus be considered as a converging indicator of language skills. Estimations mentioned above are based on a 5-point scale (teacher’s questionnaire) or 3-point scale (child’s questionnaire) depending on the group to whom enquiries are targeted, and this difference has to be considered when comparing the results of each group. “Special difficulties” is also a summarised factor including 12 different declarative sentences as subsections. These sentences involve claims from all main areas of language skills: reading, writing, pronunciation and other oral skills, grammar, vocabulary and language anxiety.

Table 2: Correlations between free-time language use and linguistic proficiency of L1 and L2

	L1			L2 Finnish		
Writing activity vs.	r_s	p	n	r_s	p	n
prof. index, child	**0.39**	<0.001***	79	0.22	0.031*	111*
prof. index, teacher	**0.39**	0.007**	46	0.10	0.274 –	111
special difficulties, child	**-0.50**	<0.001***	81	-0.11	0.223 –	111
special difficulties, teacher	-0.30	0.045*	46	- 0.18	0.054(*)	99
previous mark	0.31	0.055(*)	40	0.22	0.035*	93
Oral activity vs.						
prof. index, child	**0.43**	0.001***	79	0.24	0.011*	111
prof. index, teacher	0.27	0.073	46	0.23	0.023*	99
special difficulties, child	**-0.47**	<0.001***	81	-0.22	0.023*	111
special difficulties, teacher	-0.29	0.051(*)	46	**-0.36**	<0.001***	111
previous mark	0.12	0.456 –	40	**0.30**	0.003**	93
Reading activity vs.						
prof. index, child	**0.52**	<0.001***	79	**0.36**	<0.001***	111
prof. index, teacher	**0.35**	0.017*	46	0.24	0.015*	99
special difficulties, child	**-0.57**	<0.001***	79	-0.15	0.115 –	111
special difficulties, teacher	**-0.43**	0.003**	46	-0.22	0.021*	111
previous mark	0.3	0.056(*)	40	0.22	0.035*	93

As shown in table 2, writing activity, oral activity and reading activity in a particular language (L1 and L2), measured by the summarised factor of language use, all correlate positively with the proficiency index in the language at issue. It has to be borne in mind that according to the responses given by all informant groups (children, parents and teachers) there were great differences in the vitality and proficiency of L1 of second-generation individuals. This spectrum was broader than what is seen in a parallel survey of Finnish usage and skills. The study indicates that the resolution of the language-specific writing factor was not high enough to reveal all possible and important differences in writing habits[115] (particularly for the Finnish language). Lower correlations between Finnish language use and skills can thus be partly explained by the characteristics of the factors. This finding can be taken as a shortcoming of the research method, namely the coverage of the questionnaire, but at the same time it supplies information on the ongoing shift in language dominance: there are fewer second-generation pupils with very restricted Finnish usage or skills, and an increasingly broad range of variation in vitality and knowledge of the mother tongue.

The results of the correlation analyses (Spearman's correlation) show that correlations between free-time language use and proficiency tend to be higher when the responses of the pupils are studied in comparison to the responses of the teachers. It became clear upon closer inspection of the whole dataset of the study that the language use may sometimes be

[115] Some of the questions were language non-selective and thus could not be used in language-specific comparisons.

restricted by a negative impression of one's linguistic capability rather than by the lack of skills itself. When the correlations between the mastering of Finnish vocabulary and the vitality of language use (writing, speaking and reading), for example, were studied both simultaneously and retrospectively,[116] the vitality of language was found to be significantly higher (see also Honko 2013: 404). Over time, a decrease in language use always makes it harder to acquire and maintain any language, which leads to even more reduced language use. Still, emotions and beliefs about language skills appear to play an important role when children make everyday choices concerning linguistic actions.

L1 of multilingual children as a foundation for all learning

It is not only for the purpose of L1 or L2 itself why language acquisition is important: languages support each other. Lehtinen (2002) has found that children from an immigrant background who attended native language classes in Finland during the first school year (≈ at the age of 7) performed relatively well in the Finnish language. Numerous other studies, including Skutnabb-Kangas's study (1988), indicate that the maintenance of the mother tongue in adolescence and adulthood has positive effects. As Ellis (1994: 225) summarises, maintenance of L1 helps the acquisition of L2 in two different ways. First, it has a positive effect on one's self-identity which helps to prevent negative attitudes towards L2 learning. Secondly, strong knowledge of L1 is important when trying to achieve cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP).

In accordance with the results of previous studies focusing on the different languages of multilingual individuals, a high proficiency level of L1 for the second-generation children in this study correlates positively with a high proficiency of L2. The correlation between school marks of L1 and L2 at the age of 11–14 was moderate and significant (r_S=0.42, p=0.012, n=35). In addition, a connection was found between native language marks and the mastery of Finnish vocabulary; correlation between L1 school marks – given by L1 teachers in 11 different languages – and ability in a structured vocabulary test was significant, although not very high (r_S=0.40, p=0.014, n=40). In other words, there was a tendency that pupils who performed well in school in their native language also performed well in L2 instruction and in L2 vocabulary tests (for further information, see Honko 2013). Furthermore, these results are essential from the point of view of further education and employment, according to earlier studies, as a strong lexicon is a key factor in explaining academic success (Saville-Troike 1984; Dockrell & Messer 2004), and without education it is extremely hard to find work in Finland.

[116] Vocabulary knowledge and skills during the second and third grade in comparison to language use three years later.

It is worth noting that the significance of correlations in language comparisons does not necessarily imply direct causality between the mastery of languages, at least it does not tell the direction of potential causality. Certain findings of this study show, however, that at some point during childhood – probably during the very first school years – Finnish might become the supportive language not only for the new foreign languages studied at school (which mainly means L3 English) but even for the mother tongue, especially the CALP. The correlative relationship between the mastery of Finnish vocabulary and the academic achievement in the native language was found to be higher when, instead of concurrent correlation, the predictability of L1 school grades by *former* knowledge of Finnish language was studied. Vocabulary test results at the age of 8 to 11 moderately correlated with the L1 school marks three years later and at a significant level (r_S=0.56, p<0.001, n=34). According to concurrent correlations, the relationship was not as clear (r_S=0.39, p<0.05, n=40), even though the relative (longitudinal) permanence of the individual results of vocabulary tests was high (Honko 2013: 395–399). If L1 school instruction strongly rests on the Finnish language, as it sometimes might be, it is of course an advantage for advanced Finnish speakers and an obstacle for the others. That is also why the manner of mother tongue instruction has to be given attention.

The mastery of Finnish language by the generations 1.75 and 2.0

Children representing the second generation are supposed to have very good opportunities to grow up to be multilingual and strong in all their languages. They are also expected to reach a high level of education and to find their places in working life. Hakulinen et al. (2009: 87) state that regarding Finnish skills, second-generation children walk side by side with people who have lived in Finland since time immemorial. However, if we are truly interested in the reality of the second generation, we need more concrete research instead of assumptions.

Honko’s study (2013) points out that in the general proficiency level of L2 Finnish, there is actually no significant difference between the 2.0 generation group and early immigrants (generation 1.75) after five to seven years of schooling in Finland, nor are there differences in the linguistic accuracy or lexical knowledge and skills of the Finnish language. Surprisingly enough, there were no noticeable differences in Finnish skills between these two groups even three years earlier, after only two to four years of schooling. This result might mean that even major differences in the time of immigration before school age do not affect the proficiency level under certain conditions, despite varying levels of fluency: firstly, if the immigrant has been in the country for at least a couple of years (in this case approximately four years) and secondly, if the schooling in the Finnish-speaking environment has lasted at least one-and-a-half years. The challenges that the first generation has to manage when integrating into Finnish society are, in general, of course much greater than those of the second generation. However, as Rumbaut (2004) emphasises, the timing of immigration seems to be extremely important for linguistic and academic success.

Maintenance of mother tongue in immigrant families

One crucial factor explaining the equal level of the Finnish skills of the generations 1.75 and 2.0 is that many children in both informant groups stay strongly monolingual until they attend day care or go to (pre)school. According to parents' surveys, the majority (83 %) of all children in Generation 2.0 (n=43) spoke only the language of their foreign parents as their first language during early childhood. This does not mean that second-generation children did not have any contact with Finnish-speaking society in their early childhood, but it reflects the dominance of L1 in everyday life, especially in those families that kept children in home care. Moreover, after 7 to 12 years of immigration (at the end of primary school), L1 was still a dominant language in daily use between the child and the immigrant parents in more than 90 % of the families.[117] In most of the families (63 %) both the native language and Finnish language were used but to varying degrees. One-third of the families had remained somewhat monolingual in the mutual communication between the family members: only the minority language was regularly used at home.

However, the maintenance of L1 did not seem as strong when languages spoken among siblings were examined. According to the questionnaires answered by children themselves, L1 remained the sole common language of second-generation children in only one-fifth (20 %) of the families. This can be a sign of language shift, as it usually begins with the children. According to self-assessments of the second-generation children, about half of the children felt that L1 was their strongest oral language during the first school years (at the age of 8–11). One-third of the children stated that this strongest language was already Finnish, and about 15 % of the children responded that their languages were equally strong. However, because of a) the young age of the informants (no schooling in other countries), b) some specific features of both of the languages and c) more time spent learning L2 than L1 literary skills at school, most (70 %) of the children already considered Finnish as their more advanced writing language. After three years of schooling, the positions of the languages had changed so that about half of the children now felt that Finnish was their stronger oral language, too, and even more (80 %) of the children considered Finnish to be their stronger writing language.

Importantly, the closest language emotionally was often defined to be L1 even if the proficiency level in L2 was higher: 56 % of the second-generation children responded that L1, their mother tongue, was their "language of the heart", even several years after immigration

[117] All statistics are based on the responses given to surveys and may not tell the whole truth of the language use in practice.

and even if their L1 in some cases had lost some of its uses. For not more than 22 % of the children, the language of the heart was Finnish, 20 % considered both languages this way and the remaining 2 % mentioned an additional language.

In contrast, when parents were asked to give a raw estimation of their child's L1 skills by choosing the best fit from three holistic descriptions ("limited skills", "sufficient skills in ordinary conversations", or "independent and wide-ranging skills"), only one-tenth of the children were estimated to have limited skills. Most of the children (90 %) were considered to have quite strong or very strong oral language skills, which is in line with the responses of L1 teachers as well as the responses of the children. These results are important and promising from the point of view of language maintenance as they show that L1 is not just a tick in the box for the native language in the population register but also a vital part of children's lives.

Oral skills are the most important means for second-generation children to communicate with their friends and family members in Finland and abroad. Even so, without strong literacy skills many other areas of life may be restricted. To be able to maintain language – whether at the society or individual family level – and to become a functionally multilingual member of society in Western Europe involves the skills of reading and writing in addition to spoken language. When no standards for literary language or university-level teacher training of particular foreign languages are available, international co-operation should be pursued in order to create such standards or guidelines and to offer co-ordinated teacher education throughout Europe.

Conclusion of the study: multilingualism from families in Finnish society

Most of the children who took part in the study were, according to the surveys and linguistic data, relatively proficient speakers in both (or all) of their languages – even if the literacy skills in L1 were often weak or at least much weaker than their Finnish skills. The fluency of L2 Finnish did not strongly differ from L1 Finnish peers, but complexity and accuracy lagged behind when measured, for example, by vocabulary knowledge and skills. Further research is needed to find out whether these differences in language skills will have effects on schooling later on. Honko's study (2013) clearly shows, however, how the vitality of language use links with linguistic proficiency and even more importantly with the positive self-esteem of the language user. These circular effects should not be left unnoticed when planning actions to support language learning and maintenance. Because of the clear and multifaceted differences in vocabulary skills that will possibly have long-term effects on the children's lives, it is worthwhile investing energy and time in supporting language development, especially vocabulary growth. The whole language or lexicon cannot be taught. Even so, activities that help children to use, analyse and learn vocabulary can and should be actively supported.

It cannot be emphasised enough how important the emotional part of language is to the second-generation children. Furthermore, it could be an advantage to Finnish society as a whole if multilingual identities of immigrant people could be more openly appreciated and supported. The linguistic and cultural "capital" that the second generation owns and offers is something unique in Finland, where the linguistic choices of L1 Finnish school-aged children are strongly directed to English. However, very often the value of multilingual children is not recognised or seen as a resource in society. In particular, it would be fascinating to hear more voices of people from an immigrant background in public discussion about the status and maintenance of foreign minority languages in Finland. Do we need these languages? Are all of the minority languages in Finland equal to each other and if not, should they be? Who benefits from the language maintenance and how? What kind of actions does maintenance of foreign minority languages demand and for how long? Who should take responsibility for these actions? It is time to open the discussion.

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