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Judit Navracsics: Living with two languages and cultures.
The complexity of self-definition for bilingual individuals
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Living with two languages and cultures. The complexity of self-definition for bilingual individuals

Abstract
A legtöbb európai országban az „egy nemzet – egy nyelv” ideológia uralkodik annak ellenére, hogy területükön nemzeti kisebbségek élnek. Mindeközben az utóbbi időkben, a nemzetközi migrációnak köszönhetően az Európai Unió nemzetállamainak identitása megváltozott. A változás elsősorban a városi környezeteket érinti, ahol egyre növekszik a vegyes nyelvű és kultúrájú populáció aránya, és a kétnyelvűség és kétkultúrájúság normává válik.

Az identitás kérdése meglehetősen komplex a két nyelvvel és két kultúrával élők számára. Az egyénnek joga van eldönteni, hogy az ethnos (azaz a családi kötelékek, barátok, érzelmi hozzáállás, nyelv, kultúra, irodalom, szülőföld stb.) vagy a demos (azaz a demokratikus és polgári jogok gyakorlása, a társadalomban való érvényesülés, iskoláztatási jogok stb.) hat az önazonosítására. A döntés még nehezebb, ha a kétnyelvű egyén vegyes házasságból származik.

Jelen tanulmány a két nyelvvel és két kultúrával élők önazonosítási nehézségeinek kérdéseit járja körül, és egy sor argumentációt hoz példaként a kétnyelvűek identitásának komplexitására. Elengedhetetlenül fontos, hogy megértsük a több nyelvvel és kultúrával élők – az egynyelvűség és monokulturalitás szemszögéből különösnek látszó – önazonosításának meghatározó tényezőit. Ezzel társadalmi és politikai szinten is elfogadóbb, toleránsabb és nyitottabb társadalmak születhetnek a megváltozott geopolitikai helyzetben.

1. Introduction

The two approaches when studying identity are aspects of ‘demos’ and ‘ethnos’ (Smith, 1986). Demos is the public sphere, which reflects identity at the state and societal levels, and which demonstrates the person’s possibilities to practise his/her democratic, civil, educational, etc. rights in a given culture. Functioning in a culture is impossible without language, and thus it is a crucial question what language the person can use to exercise the given human rights. Ethnos is the private sphere, which expresses the person’s emotional attitude towards the language used with the relatives in his/her private life and culture, as well as the bonds to the history and literature of the homeland. Both aspects are related to language, so the question of language use may be decisive in how a person regards him/herself. In a monolingual environment the two spheres in most cases coincide, and so the monolingual person with one major culture normally has no problem with self-definition.

In the past decade or so, the expansion of the European Union has triggered many changes in the ethnic composition of the member states, due to which many people have become bilingual and/or bicultural. In such circumstances, the ‘one nation, one language’ ideology has to be reconsidered all over Europe. In today’s Europe, most of the countries have regional or immigrant ethnic and linguistic minorities (Extra & Gorter, 2008) who use at least two languages on a daily basis. There has been a significant change in the connection of language and national identity in the 20th century (Oakes, 2001).

i. As a result of international migration, the traditional identities of the nation states, especially in the urban environments, have changed in the EU member states.
ii. Due to growing cooperation and integration, the notion of ‘European identity’ has been introduced.
iii. At the global level, due to fast information flow and the constantly developing communication technology, the world is becoming smaller and more interactive.

Globalization impacts on multilingual Europe in two ways: both convergence and divergence can be observed. At the international level, convergence can be experienced with the spread of English as a lingua franca. The main goal of multilingual education in Europe is the teaching of English as a third language besides the majority and minority languages (Cenoz & Genesee, 1998; Cenoz & Jessner, 2000; House, 2008). At the same time, at the national level, divergence is spreading with the revitalization of lesser-used languages, and with the changing of the status of some minority languages (c.f. Catalan, Welsh, Basque, Frisian, Romansch, etc.).

Convergence and divergence can be studied from the social psychological perspective as well. The historic root of convergence is CAT (Communicative Accommodation Theory) (Sachdev & Giles, 2006). Partners in interaction feel the urge to accommodate themselves and their linguistic, paralinguistic and non-verbal tools to each other in order to make the partner feel solidarity. This phenomenon is of the utmost importance in a bilingual situation. Attempts directed at social integration, linguistic and cultural identification always create a positive attitude in the recipient. On the contrary, divergence stresses linguistic and cultural differences. Bilinguals are expected to use the strategies of convergence and divergence in their everyday lives in the different social domains.

In sum: there is a paradox in the multitude of languages and cultures. At the European level, multilingualism is welcome. At the national levels, multilingualism is a source of danger for national identity, and it may hinder integration. At the individual level, multilingualism may be a source of many conflicts: within the person, within the society, politically, just to mention but a few.

2. The bilingual individual

Bilingual people often have problems with defining themselves, and monolinguals consider this abnormal and blame it on the fact that they speak two (or more) languages. The most accepted definition of bilingualism is given by François Grosjean (2008, p. 14): „… the bilingual is a fully competent speaker-hearer; he or she has developed competencies … to the extent required by his or her needs and those of the environment. … Levels of fluency in a language will depend on the need for that language.” Apparently, the bilingual person needs at least two languages in everyday communication: one for the ethnos and one for the demos sphere. Furthermore, bilingualism is not a stable state; languages may change their roles in the person’s life. As Grosjean puts it: „...the bilingual's language repertoire may change over time: as the environment changes and the needs for particular language skills also change, so will the bilingual's competence in his or her various language skills. New situations, new interlocutors and new language functions will involve new linguistic needs and will therefore change the language configuration of the person involved.” (Navracsics, 2002, pp. 107-108).

In his first book on bilingualism „Life with two languages“, Grosjean (1982) gives many examples of bilinguals’ attitudes and feelings toward their bilingualism. The majority of bilinguals and multilinguals are happy and enumerate the benefits and advantages of their ability to speak two or more languages. Let me quote some confessions from Grosjean’s book (p. 271). A Burmese-English bilingual expresses the possibility of separating the ethnos and the demos spheres: *“I can speak to my Burmese friends in Burmese if I don’t want the people around me to know what we are saying.”* A Spanish-English-French trilingual says: *“It broadens your scope. It means you have two worlds instead of one (friends, cultural aspects, job possibilities).”* Others find it beneficial that they feel at home wherever they go because they do not face language barriers, they can communicate with people from different cultures, they get insight into other cultures, they can read literature in the original, they are tolerant and open. A German-French-English trilingual claims (p. 272): “*Being a trilingual has helped me in various ways. I have achieved greater stature in my work environment; I have developed my lingual capacities; I have become more open-minded toward minorities and more aware of their linguistic problems; ... Being trilingual has been a guide to understanding and helping others.”*

There are some that feel uncomfortable because of the difference in the proficiency levels of their languages. The natural code-switching and language mixing make them feel uncomfortable, and they do not like having to act as translators, which is quite frequently expected of them by monolinguals. However, apart from language problems that may cause discomfort for some bilinguals, there are also complaints relating to culture. Some feel that they do not belong to any specific cultural group or that belonging to two cultures at the same time may be a source of conflict.

3. Myths about the advantages and disadvantages of bilingualism

The evaluation of bilingualism was not always positive in the Western world. In fact, it was very ambiguous at the turn of the 20th century. Bilingualism was not a research field in its own right; it was mainly psychologists that dealt with it. Psychologists regarded infant bilingualism as an obstacle in the cognitive development of a child, a cognitive and mental burden that might slow down the natural linguistic development, and, consequently, lead to a lower level of IQ. They also questioned the possibility of the acquisition of two or more languages at a time. In addition, at the beginning of the century there were experiments resulting in lower IQ measurements in bilinguals. However, as it turned out later, these experiments were methodologically misconceived as they mirrored the monolingual, fractional view, against which Grosjean has raised his voice many times (Grosjean & Pi, 2013; Grosjean, 1998). The subjects of the experiments were English–Welsh bilingual children from working-class miner families with a very disadvantaged social background, living under poor conditions. The tests applied were designed for middle-class monolingual English children. It was inevitable that the results would be misleading.

Up to now there have been a number of methodologically more appropriate experiments carried out among bilinguals. It has been clarified that bilingualism does not create an extra burden in the development if the acquisition of the languages goes on at a normal pace, under natural circumstances and without any protests or objections from the bilingual-to-be. In an ideal situation, we can speak about additive bilingualism, which means the person gains from being bilingual both linguistically and mentally. Language learning, management and maintenance skills contribute to ‘language awareness’ or ‘metalinguistic awareness’, which has been identified as one of the cognitive advantages bilinguals develop due to contact with two or more languages and cultures.

Becoming bi- or multilingual has a tremendously positive effect on cognitive development in general (Bialystok, 2001; 2004; 2007; Bialystok & Barac, 2013) though some researchers (cf. De Bot, in press) question the bilingual advantage. Bialystok underlines that children exposed to two or more languages in their early childhood must acquire and apply different strategies while developing their languages. This improves brain activity, and impacts not only on the acquisition of a new language but also on any sort of learning (Marian & Shook, 2012) and mental activity. Evidence has been provided for a bilingual advantage in children, adolescents and elderly adults. In a meta-analysis of the bilingual advantage by Adesope et al. (2010) bilinguals were found to outperform monolinguals on combined measures of metalinguistic and metacognitive awareness. A delay has been reported in the onset of symptoms of Alzheimer’s

Disease (Bialystok et al., 2007) and in dementia (Freedman et al., 2014) in the elderly population.

De Bot has raised a critical voice (2015) concerning the bilingual advantage. Referring to a review of the literature on bilingualism and cognition (Valian, 2015) and an article by Paap and Greenberg (2013), he casts doubts on the real cognitive benefit, as in the experiments the cognitive effects may well have been due to some positive factors, such as socio-economic status of the subjects, or due to the correlation of bilingualism with other properties (e.g. stimulating environment, playing a musical instrument, high levels of education, etc.) that are difficult to separate from bilingualism. Another reference for de Bot is that de Bruin et al. (2014) found a strong publication bias for studies reporting a positive effect. De Bot (2015) himself found a citation bias as well. Having looked at the number of citations generated by publications showing a bilingual advantage and not showing it, he discovered that the number of citations was larger for the studies with a positive result.

De Bot comes to the following conclusion:

“Research on the BA (bilingual advantage) is now entering a third and new phase: after the initial sensational findings there has been a countermovement that problematized some of the issues involved, such as the compatibility and validity of tasks, the selection of informants and the designs of the original studies. The state of play is that there may be a BA for different populations, but it may be difficult to single that out among many other factors that may be beneficial over someone’s life-span. This third phase will entail the integration of the two previous stages, in which different types of advantages for different populations will be the object of research. The fact that being a bilingual is beneficial both socially and psychologically is beyond doubt, but the specifics are waiting to be explored.”

Experiments with neuroimaging procedures recently have also resulted in findings that confirm the positive effects of bilingualism. Grey matter density has been found greater in bilinguals than in monolinguals (cf. Mechelli et al., 2004), and this has its cognitive advantages. Grey matter density is in a positive correlation with language proficiency level and in a negative correlation with the age of acquisition of the second language.

Being bilingual, as it turns out, makes the person smarter. It can have a profound effect on the brain, improving cognitive skills not related to language and even shielding against dementia in old age.

4. Language development and its influencing factors

In the course of multilingual development, the immediate linguistic environment substantially influences the speaker’s language repertoire and linguistic configuration. The main factor facilitating the development of the multilingual system, the general language effort, is determined by the speaker’s recognition of his/her communicative needs (Herdina & Jessner, 2002). Factors determining language acquisition progress, i.e. the rate of change in positive or negative language growth, can be subdivided into several factors, among which the leading ones are the age factor and the motivational factor. During childhood, it is the parents' responsibility to support and make it possible for the child to meet his/her communicative needs in all the languages under acquisition.

De Houwer (2001) carried out a large-scale study of data collected in Flanders on trilingual families trying to find out what proportion of the possible trilingual families gives a realistic chance for their children to become trilingual. The findings of the study, as the author outlines, are quite disappointing: only about two fifths of the children in the survey, who could have been speaking three languages, actually do. This says a lot about how difficult it is to maintain and transmit all three languages in the family. As far as children are concerned, De Houwer believes that the likelihood of becoming trilingual is affected by the parental input patterns, i.e. whether Dutch (the language of the external environment) is spoken at home, and also whether the parents' language use overlaps entirely, partially or not at all. The presence of Dutch may be an inhibiting factor since – being the language of the environment – there is no real communicative need for the use of the other two languages.

The age factor in second language acquisition has been both supported and rejected. Supporters of the Critical Period Hypothesis (c.f. Lenneberg, 1967) believe in the age-related benefits and constraints of language development both in the first language and in additional languages. They do believe that the age of second language acquisition has an effect on bi- or multilingual development, especially at the phonetic level. Due to the plasticity of the brain, in early childhood, the articulatory base adapts more easily to the sounds of the language(s) under acquisition, which is less successful at later ages. However, there are also reports of adult language learners (e.g. Ioup, 1995), who attained a native-like accent and proficiency in their new languages.

Singleton (2014) believes in the key role of motivation in multilingual development and claims that good results in second language learning can be achieved at any age as long as the person has perseverance. Motivation is mentioned mostly in educational research (cf. Dörnyei, 2001). However, the notion of integrative orientation also has an impact on the developing multilingual, which may efficiently influence the language acquisition process and its outcome. Given a positive attitude and motivation to learn additional languages and a desire to fulfil the effective and perceived communicative needs will make multilingual development successful.

Many researchers claim that the quality and quantity of input from the target languages play a crucial role in the configuration and proficiency levels of the languages in the multilingual mind. Some infant bilingualism researchers (e.g. Deuchar & Quay, 2000) propose the situational framework of linguistic exposure for bilingual families, which may create a more balanced amount of input in the two or more languages. While the 'one parent – one language' strategy works excellently in most cases, if either parent has significantly less chance to provide input for the child in their language, the bilingual development does not lead to a quasi-balanced state of the languages in the mind.

A number of studies deal with how parental input relates to children's language development and what strategies bilingual parents use to socialize their children's use of two (or more) languages (Lanza, 2007; Quay, 2008). Tare and Gelman (2011) analyzed English-Marathi bilingual families' dyadic conversations, and they highlight the importance of pragmatic differentiation, metalinguistic strategies and sociolinguistic factors in the language choice of the children. In their study, in the presence of a third (monolingual) party, the children did not show pragmatic sensitivity, which reflects the children's knowledge of the limitations of the monolingual speaker. Metalinguistic strategies used by the parents help the children develop their metalinguistic awareness through discussing language differences, asking the children to give translation equivalents, etc.

Learning through instruction at school or in a naturalistic setting not only enhances different brain and mental activities, but also determines the degree of emotionality of the languages in speakers of more than one language (Räsänen & Pine, 2014). One might suggest that the degree of emotionality is related to language dominance: the more comfortable one feels in a language, i.e. the higher the proficiency level in that language compared to the other language(s) spoken by the person, the more intimate one's relation to that language. One would think that emotions might be best expressed and articulated in the language that provides comfort for the speaker. Räsänen and Pine (2014) in their study found support for age and proficiency relevance in language and emotions, but Aycicegi and Harris (2004) came to the conclusion that non-native language has the same, or even stronger, emotional connotations than the native language. Navracsics in her study (2014) demonstrates that the dominant language of a multilingual child is not necessarily the one that provides the greatest amount of input. The level of intimacy may have a greater impact on the development of the dominant language and on the constellation of languages than the amount of input. Implicit learning is very important in childhood, and sometimes the least frequently used language may gain such an importance that this is the one that has the greatest influence on the other, more frequently used languages. What is learnt implicitly is related to emotions.

There is also a presumption that a graded emotionality exists across the languages spoken by a person. These contradictory results prove that further research is needed to find out the determining factors of the degree of emotionality in bi- or multilingual individuals.

5. Biculturalism

Language and culture go together, and very often speaking two or more languages involves belonging to two or more cultures. Similarly to the definition of bilingualism, which implies that the bilingual person is not the sum of two monolinguals (Grosjean, 1989), biculturalism is not the sum of two cultures, but a unique configuration of two cultures. Just as there are hardly any balanced bilingual people, so there are hardly any balanced bicultural people. A person may be able to speak

- one language but belong to two cultures (e.g. the Jewish communities that linguistically assimilated all over the world to the majority languages of their host societies, but they keep the traditions of their Jewish culture; or Armenians in Hungary, who claim that they have lost their first language, but consider themselves bicultural);
- two languages but belong to one culture (e.g. the Chinese communities all over the world, or bilingual people who learn the second language in school);
- two languages and belong to two cultures (e.g. linguistic and ethnic minorities all over Europe).

6. Self-definition of bilingual individuals

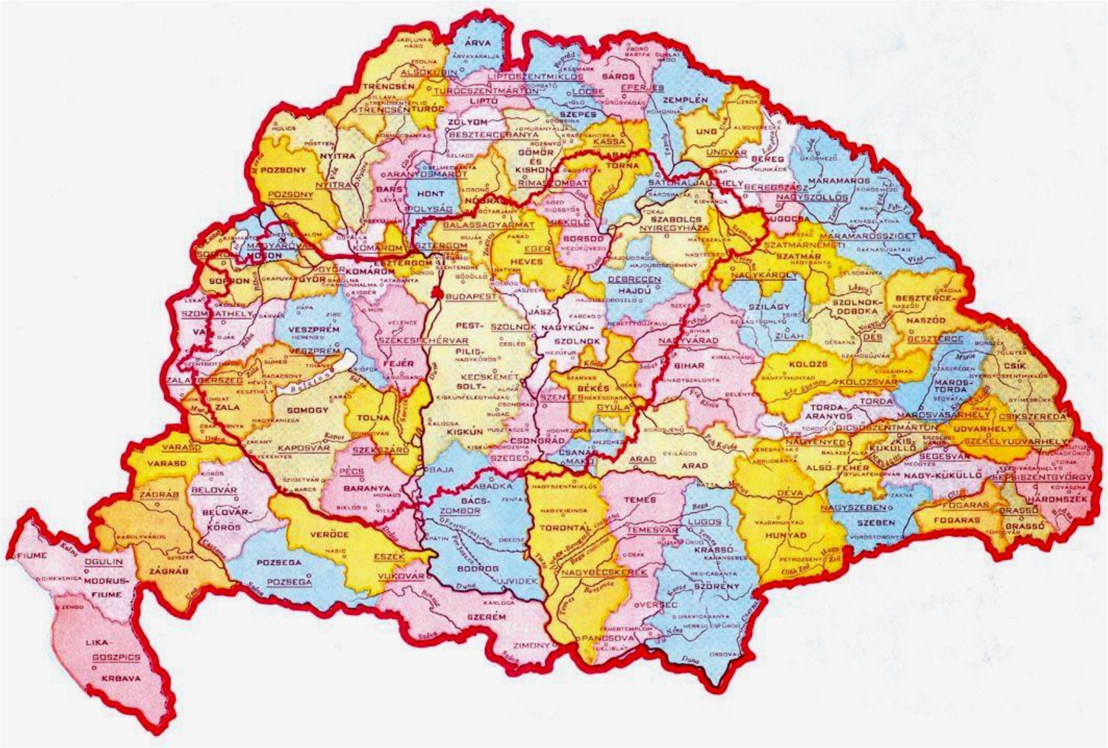
Joshua Fishman and Ofelia Garcia edited the *Handbook of Language and Ethnic Identity* in 2010. The volumes of the book describe how language, ethnicity and identity are variable and changeable, and the essays provide sociolinguistic, psychological, political and economic perspectives. In our chapter, we take a different direction. We examine how the bilingual individual may think about his/her self-definition, and what the influencing factors are in the decision about identity.

When someone makes an attempt at self-definition, it is usually the culture that plays a role in deciding where they belong, what their identity is. However, in many cases it is hard to identify where the person belongs for various reasons. Most bilinguals do not even think about their identity. But if they do so, they can argue with the impact of both language and culture. The problem is that in the nation states, the monolingual population may very well perceive people who actually live hybridity and simultaneous multiple identities as misfits.

7. People belonging to national minorities – a special focus on Hungarians in the Carpathian basin

Ethnic minorities can be found in most European countries, and thus European identity is to a great extent determined by cultural and linguistic diversity. Guus Extra and Durk Gorter, in their edited volume *Multilingual Europe: Facts and Policies* (2008) introduce the best-known regional minority languages in Europe with a focus on Catalan in Spain, Frisian in the Netherlands, Hungarian as a minority language in Central Europe, and Saami in the Nordic countries. We go beyond the facts and figures and deal with the identity questions and the fears behind them in the Hungarian context.

Hungary has always been a multinational country. Several national communities have lived together in her territory since the foundation of the state in 1000 AD. After the Ottoman occupation a mass spontaneous migration and organized resettlement of people took place in the 17th-18th centuries. Towards the end of the 19th century, non-Hungarian nationalities living within the borders of the country constituted more than 50% of the total population. Following the revision of the borders after World War I, this proportion changed significantly. Some 33% of Hungarians living in the Carpathian Basin (3.3 million people) found themselves outside the country's borders.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UNG
BEREG
NYITRA
POZSONY
BARS
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NÓGRÁD
BORSOD
SZABOLCS
MÁRAMAROS
UGOCSA
SZATMÁR
MOSON
GYŐR
KOMÁROM
ESZTERGOM
HEVES
SOPRON
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VESZPRÉM
PEST-PILIS-SOLT-KISKUN
JÁSZ-NAGYKUN-SZOLNOK
HAJDÚ
BIHAR
SZILÁGY
SZOLNOK-DOBOKA
BESZTERCE-NASZÓD
KOLOZS
TORDA-ARANYOS
MAROS-TORDA
CSÍK
ZALA
FEJÉR
SOMOGY
TOLNA
BÉKÉS
CSONGRÁD
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BARANYA
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TORONTÁL
TEMES
KRASSÓ-SZÖRÉNY
HUNYAD
ALSÓ-FEHÉR
SZEBEN
FOGARAS
BRASSÓ
VARASD
ZÁGRÁB
BELOVÁR-KÖRÖS
VERŐCE
POZSEGA
SZERÉM
MODRUS-FIUME
LIKA-KRBAVA
FIUME

Figure 1. The map of Hungary before 1920 (The Versailles Treaty)

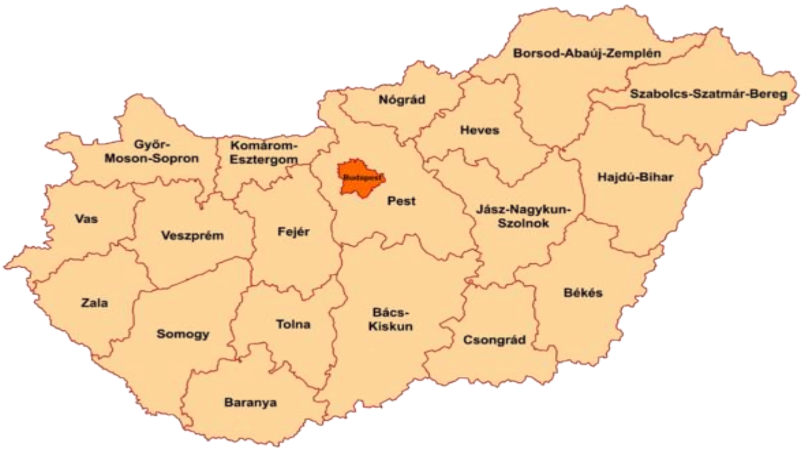

Figure 2. The map of present day Hungary

The number of minorities living within the borders has declined. Today, the minorities make up some 10% of the population. According to the Minority Act (1993), “all groups of people who have lived in the territory of Hungary for at least one century, who represent a numerical minority in the country’s population, whose members are Hungarian citizens, who are distinguished from the rest of the population by their own languages, cultures and traditions and who demonstrate a sense of belonging together that is aimed at preserving all of these and at expressing and protecting the interests of their historical communities are national and ethnic minorities recognized as constituent components of the state” (Act LXXVII of 1993 on the Rights of National and Ethnic Minorities, Chapter 1, Section 1, Subsection (2)).

In this sense, there are 13 national minorities in Hungary: Armenian, Bulgarian, Croatian, German, Greek, Polish, Roma, Romanian, Ruthenian, Serb, Slovak, Slovene and Ukrainian. Minorities live scattered geographically throughout the country in some 1,500 settlements. The 1993 Minority Law provides rights for minorities with respect for them and with esteem for their moral and historical values. Minorities have the right to use their mother tongues, to be educated in their own first languages, to run their own cultural institutions, to keep their traditions, to have their media and to be represented in the National Assembly.

How the state handles minorities is reflected in the number of people belonging to minorities (Table 1.). Positive political acts encourage people to maintain their self-definition.

The size of Gypsy population increased tremendously between 1980 and 2011 as governments took and still are taking steps in order to raise the living standards of the Gypsies. Many social political acts have been carried out, from which the Gypsies can benefit. However, keeping ethnic identity does not imply keeping the first language as well. While there is a manyfold increase in the cultural and identity aspects, in language use the growth among the population is only twofold. The Gypsies do not consider it important to maintain their first language as much as their culture.

Table 1. National minorities in 1980, 1990, 2001 and 2011 (Source: Central Statistics Office)

	Number of people belonging to national minority				**Number of people with minority language as L1**			
	1980	1990	2001	2011	1980	1990	2001	2011
Bulgarian	..	..	1 358	3556	..	1 370	1 299	2899
Gypsy	**6 404**	**142 683**	**190 046**	**308957**	**27 915**	**48 072**	**48 685**	**54339**
Greek	..	..	2 509	3916	..	1 640	1 921	1872
Croatian	13 895	13 570	15 620	23561	20 484	17 577	14 345	13716
Polish	..	..	2 962	5730	..	3 788	2 580	3049
German	**11 310**	**30 824**	**62 233**	**131951**	**31 231**	**37 511**	**33 792**	**38248**
Armenian	..	..	620	3293	..	37	294	444
Romanian	8 874	10 740	7 995	26345	10 141	8 730	8 482	13886
Ruthenian	..	..	1 098	3323	..	..	1 113	999
Serbian	2 805	2 905	3 816	7210	3 426	2 953	3 388	3708
Slovak	**9 101**	**10 459**	**17 693**	**29647**	**16 054**	**12 745**	**11 817**	**9888**
Slovene	1 731	1 930	3 040	2385	3 142	2 627	3 187	1723
Ukranian	..	..	5 070	5633	..	674	4 885	3384
Total:	**54 120**	**213 111**	**314 060**	**555507**	**112 393**	**137 724**	**135 788**	**148155**

The 20th century brought quite severe treatment as well for some minorities in Hungary. The multiethnic, multilingual and multicultural country, in the course of history, lost a great number of people having non-Hungarian identities (Table 2.).

Table 2. Self-definition of people in Hungary in the past 100 years

	1910	**1990**	**2011**
Hungarian	88.4%	98.5%	91%
German	7.3%	0.4%	1.27%
Slovak	2.2%	0.1%	0.28%

The major decrease in the proportion of population who define themselves as Slovaks or German is due to political acts that were unfavourable to these minorities. The transportation of those defining themselves as German after World War II to East and West Germany thus separating families who could meet up later only in Hungary made people hide their original identity and claim that they were Hungarians. Slovaks were also made to leave the country and move to Czecho-Slovakia, and Hungarians in Czecho-Slovakia were moved to Hungary in return. This was the so-called „population exchange” that discouraged people from confessing their original identity. At the same time, linguistic assimilation was also going on, and with the more widespread use of Hungarian, minorities started to lose their first language.

After the change of the regime, the Hungarian government considered it very important to support the decreasing minority populations, and provided financial support for educational and cultural institutions that encouraged the revival of minority languages and cultures. The greatest support was given to the German minority, which resulted in a great increase in the population confessing their German origin. However, the number of people claiming that their first language is German is increasing very slightly. Most of the state supported German nationality educational institutions function as dual language schools, and the students are monolingual Hungarians who have or do not have German ancestors, and who learn Standard German (High German) in a great number of hours weekly.

Similar trends can be observed in connection with the Slovak population. However, this is true only for the nationality question. While the number of people with the Slovak self-definition has almost doubled, those who claim that Slovak is their first language has been decreasing.

The above examples demonstrate that after the 20th century’s harmful minority policy in Hungary, it is hard to restore the trust, belief and hope of people to be able to live their lives as minorities in 21st century Hungary.

Even minorities that had no political reason to shrink do so for various reasons. In an interview with two elderly ladies belonging to the Croatian national minority in Hungary, it became evident that the home country can have a very decisive role in self-definition. They were born in a village with a Croatian speaking population in Hungary, and their first language was Croatian. Everybody in the village used the Croatian language at home, and the village has a Croatian name in addition to the Hungarian one. They started to learn Hungarian at school at the age of six. Between themselves they speak in Croatian even now. They spoke about their lives, about their language use, about their customs and traditions that were all related to the Croatian culture. Even their weddings were held according to Croatian customs. When they were asked about their identity, they both answered without hesitation that they were Hungarians because they were born in Hungary, they had Hungarian passports and identity cards and because they were Hungarian citizens.

The tendencies are clearly seen from the data available from the Censuses (Tables 1. and 2.). However, to what extent these data are reliable is a question. While in 2001 the number of people who would not wish to answer the question what nationality they belonged to was 570,537, by 2011 this number reached 1,455,883. The same concerns the question of the first language: in 2001, 541,108 people did not answer this question, by 2011 the number of people who refused to answer the question also tripled: 1,443,540 did not wish to reply. While the number of people hiding their nationality and first language tripled from 2001 to 2011, the proportion of those regarding themselves as Hungarians dropped from 92% to 84% by 2011. This calls for further investigation. Is the question of identity outdated? Is European identity gradually replacing national identities? How do bilingual people feel about their identities? In the following sub-chapters we will look into this matter.

8. Cosmopolitan identity

The number of mixed marriages has been growing as a result of international migration, student exchange programs and job opportunities. Two people living together with their own cultures may have conflicts because of the cultural differences. When two late bilinguals meet and they end up in marriage, each of the couple has to become socialized into the other language and culture. In order to maintain a happy, free of stress life, both parties of the couple have to make efforts to neutralize the cultural differences (Piller, 2002). They are advised to concentrate on the similarities, emphasize the cultural closeness rather than the distance, play down national identity and stress common identity – with this they enhance a cosmopolitan identity.

Cosmopolitan identity is reached when the person does not feel at home in his/her own country any more. Accommodation to the new country accelerates alienation from the home country, and the person cannot decide any longer where he/she feels at home. As language proficiency is growing so the social possibilities of the person open up: new friends, colleagues appear, which makes life more interesting and exciting. It is natural that the person wants to become accepted by the new society. However, quite a few bilinguals admit that no matter how good their language command in the second language is, they have to accept the fact that they do not belong to the new culture as they have their own history, childhood and family memories, school experience, which will always make them be seen as a foreigner to a certain extent. At the same time, they confess they do not feel home in their own country any more because they have changed and they are not the same people they used to be when they lived in their home country.

In the reverse situation, when a person is born into an immigrant family and both parents try to maintain their original identity, the grown-up offspring may encounter identity problem when he/she moves back to the homeland of the parents. This was the case with a Hungarian-English person, who was born in England into a monolingual Hungarian family.

> *„Well, to tell the truth, I felt very different. The fact that the school was of very international character – there were many Polish, Pakistani, American students – so it was a mixed community, and I never felt echte Brit. I knew that my name was different and I spoke a strange language that nobody spoke in my school. And with my parents we always spoke in*

> *Hungarian at home. We ate Hungarian dishes, so I was sure I was Hungarian, but then I thought „what is Hungary like"?"*

The change of the regime was in 1989 in Hungary, and this person decided to move back to Hungary in 1993 when he was 23 years old. In England he defined himself as Hungarian, but when he settled in Hungary, he started to feel insecure about his identity. This is what he had to say about his identity:

> *„Neither Hungarian nor English, and this is the hardest part about it. In England I have no problems with solving practical things, I can make myself understood, I speak the language well, I lived there more than 20 years... But still, there is one 'plus' that makes me feel different. I never wanted to be British. This is one thing. The other: now I'm here in Hungary, I have a Hungarian passport, I get Hungarian salary, and still I can't pretend that I am 100% Hungarian. To my surprise, people can hear that my language is different, my behaviour is not like that of other* (i.e. monolingual) *Hungarians, and they make me feel different with the smile on their faces. "*

From this sample it is evident that the ethnos and demos parts of the person are in conflict in both countries. In England the practical things in society are easy for him to do, but in private life he feels different. While he lived in England, his Hungarian identity was strong because the family ties were more important for him, due to which he felt different from others. In Hungary, even though he manages in society, in his private life he feels different from others because of his behavior and language variety, which causes a twist in his identity. His behavior is influenced by British culture whether or not he wants it. His language is different partly because he speaks a slang variety of Hungarian of the 1950s, which was the language of his parents in their 20s when they emigrated. Since the parents had no chance to keep in touch with the home country and with their relatives, the two of them preserved and used the language variety they spoke at the time of leaving Hungary. The child grew up in such an immediate language environment. But language changes, and the use of the slang of the 1950s in the 1990s made his Hungarian friends smile, which made him feel uneasy.

A possible explanation of why Hungarians are so critical about the Hungarian language is that this is a language island surrounded by Slavic, Germanic and Neo-Latin languages (Austrian German, Slovene, Croatian, Serbian, Romanian, Ukrainian and Slovak). In addition, Hungarian is considered to be a very difficult language because of its agglutinative character. The typology of the language is different from the surrounding Indo-European languages, and as genealogically it is related to Finno-Ugric languages, what is more to the Ugric branch, the words do not resemble any of the words existing in Indo-European languages. No transparency can help learners of Hungarian in spite of the fact that there are many loan words from the Turkish and Slavic languages. These loan words went through changes in the course of history and now they obey the phonotactic rules of the Hungarian language, so they are unrecognizable for even Turkish and Slavic speakers. All this explains that there are very few people in the world who take up learning Hungarian as a foreign language, and Hungarians are not used to foreign speakers of Hungarian. As a result, Hungarians are quite critical about accent or any linguistic diversity that is strange to the standard monolingual variety of Hungarian.

9. Immigrants' identity

9.1. First generation

Immigrants may leave their home country for many different reasons: for political, economic, etc. issues. It is their own decision, and in many cases they are absolutely devastated and desperate about starting a new life, sometimes by seriously risking their lives while they get to their destination. They hope for a better life in the new culture, but they do not want to lose their identity. In immigration, the ethnos part of their personality is very strong, and they wish their offspring to continue the family traditions even in situations where it is not very attractive for the second generation.

The excerpt from an interview with an American-Hungarian second-generation bilingual person demonstrates an average example of how parents in immigration struggle to preserve the identity and language in the family.

> *„The truth is that I could improve my Hungarian only here in Hungary. Although we spoke in Hungarian at home in the family, and with some adult friends, but I didn't spend too much time with adults. I rather spent time with my friends, so I spoke more English than Hungarian. But still, I acquired Hungarian thanks to my father because he thought it was very important, and I respect him for that. He made us read books in Hungarian, and we had to write diaries in Hungarian, and he would read them and correct the grammatical mistakes."*

Immigrants share the same feelings all over the world. Sarfraz Manzoor, who comes from a Pakistani family and who has been living in England since the age of two, in his book *Greetings from Bury Park. Race. Religion. Rock'nRoll*. (2007) says the following about the ambition of the first generation:

> *„It was what every conversation amongst adults seemed to eventually settle on: how to try and protect the children from temptations and reinforce their Pakistani identity."*

9.2. Conflicts between first and second generations

What the first generation desires is not always met with pleasure by the second generation. Even though second generation immigrants usually use the parents' first language at home and keep the customs and traditions of the parents' home culture, by getting out of the family circle and into the institutions of the society where the majority language is spoken and the majority culture is accepted, they start to rebel against their roots.

> *„My parents had assumed that once I graduated I would return to Luton with a degree and a job, but despite my lack of career and cash I was still not willing to come home. In Manchester I was free; I could stay out late, play music as loud as I wished, wear black leather trousers and red velvet shirts and shake my dreadlocks to Lenny Kravitz. Once a month I would make the three-and-a-half-hour train journey back to Luton to see the family but only out of a sense of obligation. ... When I walked through the front door of my parents' home in my blue corduroy jacket with a 'Born to Run' enamel badge pinned on its lapel and my rucksack on my back, my headphones still plugged in my ears, I could sense my father's confusion. I knew he was thinking, 'What are you doing with yourself?' and the worst part about it was that I could never explain it to him. When I rang my father to tell him I had secured my first writing commission he was silent for a few seconds. 'How much will they pay you?' he finally asked in Urdu. I never spoke in English to my parents."* (Manzoor, 2007, p. 2)

The question of identity also comes up in a teenager's life. The more time youngsters spend with their friends the more they try to accommodate and adjust in every respect.

> *„I defined myself in opposition to my father. All that he believed, the values, the ambitions he cherished I rejected as embarrassing and outdated. When he said he was Pakistani, I declared I was British; he was Muslim, I was confused; he believed in family, I championed the individual…"* (Manzoor, 2007, p. 6)

Immigrants in many countries organize weekend schools where their children can learn in the first language about the culture of the parents. Many parents believe that they can shield their children from the alienation from the first language's culture if they meet children of the same nationality family background. In weekend schools children can make friends as well, and this may well be a way for the first language to be maintained even among the youngsters. However, it is not always the case that this method can be successful as is seen from the interview with an American-Hungarian bilingual.

> *„... Once our parents wanted us to go to Hungarian school. The first day we went there, we with my brother went into a room and there were Hungarians dancing there in old traditional clothes. My brother and I, when we saw this, decided we would never go to that school. We told our parents: 'Do you really believe that we will come to this school?' And I told my father seriously that I would never go, not for a minute, so let's go back to the old school because I don't want to go to Hungarian school and I don't want to dance Hungarian dances in Hungarian clothes."*

As time flies by, these rebellions fade away, and in many cases the offspring regret treating their parents the way they did. Manzoor in his autobiographical memoir admits he was wrong: *„When I was younger I didn't want to know who my father was because I believed my father had nothing to do with me. How wrong can a son be?"* (Manzoor, 2007, p. 6). The American-Hungarian bilingual, who refused to go to the weekend school, after a crisis in his life, at the age of 26, decided to move to Hungary, and he is still living there.

10. Language and personality

Language and culture are interrelated; they influence each other. To what extent one is related to the other is beyond the scope of this chapter. However, we must mention that many people believe that our thoughts are ruled by our language. We deny this position, and one of our counter-arguments is the flexibility of bilinguals in terms of using their languages appropriately to express their thoughts without changing their minds in the flow of thought. Those who support the Sapir-Whorfian hypothesis might believe that bilingual people are split personalities. What is behind this assumption?

Many bilinguals think that they behave differently when they use their languages. However, this is not due to the language but to the context, style and to the ability to accommodate to the partner, i.e. due to CAT. A Russian-English bilingual person, for instance, is gentler if he speaks with a Russian person, and more business-minded when his partner is English. An Arabic-French bilingual treats women in a more authoritarian way if the women are Arabic and in a more easy-going way if the women are French. In a test by Ervin-Tripp (cited by Grosjean, 1982, p. 281), Japanese-English bilingual subjects had to finish sentences in both their languages. The sentences had very different endings in the two languages.

> *When my wishes conflict with my family…*
> *Japanese: it is a time of great unhappiness.*

English:	*I do what I want.*

I will probably become…

Japanese:	*a housewife.*
English:	*a teacher.*

Real friends should…

Japanese:	*help each other.*
English:	*be very frank.*

Apart from some extreme cases that have psychological history resulting in personality problems, bilinguals are not split identities. At the same time, due to the different proficiency levels in their two languages, bilinguals might feel that with the reduced language skills they have a reduced personality in one of the languages. Some complain that if their linguistic abilities are weaker in one language, they feel that their personalities are more boring as they cannot express themselves the way they can in the other one.

> *„The two* (i.e. language and personality) *are absolutely interrelated. I am a different person when I speak in Hungarian, German and English.”*
>
> *„When I speak in German, I feel this is me. When I speak in Hungarian, I think it’s different. It is like as if I put on a coat. Then I am not like naturally. This is strange. "*
>
> *„In Hungarian I can be very amusing and quite sarcastic. In German I can’t.”*

One of the languages of the bilingual person, as a rule, is more dominant than the other. In many cases the first language remains the dominant language for the bilingual, but it is also possible that the first language becomes the weaker language and shows signs of language attrition (Bátyi, in press; Schmid, 2013). The first language may become the weaker language if the person moves to another country, or if the access to that language has been reduced. A 19-year-old Russian-Hungarian bilingual male, who was born in a mixed marriage in Belarus but has been living in Hungary since age three, and whose first language was Russian, says the following:

> *“I think I am bilingual, but still my mother tongue is Hungarian. So even if you have a double citizenship, you have one that you are more closely related to. The other is somehow artificial. And I think that in spite of the*

> *fact that I was born there and I learnt how to speak Russian earlier than Hungarian, I think for 16 years I spoke only Hungarian."*

His dominant language is Hungarian, and he thinks the following about his Russian:

> *"As my second mother tongue, I think it has already soaked in; I don't have to think about the words. Formulating the sentences is a matter of time because as Hungarian is our mother tongue, and this is what comes easy, we need time to think it over that now we should talk in Russian. Plus, no matter how good our Russian is, we can speak in Hungarian obviously much faster."*

When a person becomes bilingual at a later age, they may change their place of living for the second language environment, and though the person tries to maintain the first language, this intention is not always successful. There are many reasons that may lead in the long run to language attrition in the course of adjustment to the new culture. A 30-year-old Russian-Hungarian young mother, who moved to Hungary at the age of 23, explains her language choice with her children:

> *„If I walk into a grocery store with a one and a half-year-old child and the child starts screaming, or with a three-year-old and he takes something off the shelf, I can't tell him in Russian that you have to put it back because I think when I say it to my child, I also say it to the shop-assistant, who is worried about the goods on the shelves. If I speak in Russian, the shop-assistant won't know whether I have told my son "please put the chocolate into your pocket" or "please put the chocolate back on the shelf". And obviously, in public places I speak in Hungarian, not because I'm ashamed of speaking in Russian, but because I think this is what is normal because this is not only about us."*

Bilinguals can compare the quality of their speech production in the two languages, and when they see signs of attrition, this may influence them in the decision about their dominant language. The more they use the language of the society in which they are living, the more attrition comes into the picture in the less frequently spoken language. This may lead to a change of first language, and second language may easily become the dominant language. With the attrition of the first language, people may feel that their personality changes, and in the end, they will face problems with defining themselves.

> *„In the beginning, I switched between languages a lot. As time passed, in my bilingual home, this problem was solved. Now I rarely switch. I think I'm losing my mother tongue, and I keep admiring monolingual Finnish speakers, the idioms they use and that have vanished from my language variety."*

> *„Your mother tongue will deteriorate if you spend some years outside your home country. You don't have the same knowledge about your culture, your society any more, you don't understand the idioms, and there are words that you don't know. Obviously, you can't improve your language command as you don't have the opportunity."*

11. Closing remarks

The paper has given an insight into "Who we are, whom we become and the degree to which we are self-directed or other-directed", the question raised by Stuart Holland (forthcoming). From the confessions in the interview excerpts it is clearly seen how difficult self-definition can be in different demographic, political, psychological and emotional contexts. We should make it easier for bilingual people to think about themselves, and we should understand that the ability to speak more than one language is beneficial and not harmful to self-identity.

Lay people often ask bilinguals questions about what language they dream, count and think in. They assume that these mental activities show which is the more important language, the better language, i.e. the dominant language for the person. They also believe that once a person has reached a language proficiency level in which they are capable of doing these skills in a second language, they have become dominant in the second language. Lay people also identify language dominance with cultural identification, from which they deduce identity questions. However, I have a firm assumption based on my interviews with bilingual people that this is just a myth. Bilingual people count in the language they learnt how to count. A Polish-Russian-Hungarian trilingual person confessed that she defined herself as Hungarian after living in Hungary for 35 years. She admitted that she did two things in Polish, i.e. in her first language: counting and praying. The language of the dream is usually determined by the context of the dream. It may be added, however, that language skills can improve in one's dreams – as one desires to be as fluent in the second language as in one's first language. Thinking is again a different question. It does not show the language proficiency. It rather either reflects conscious thinking about a certain topic in a certain context – then it is inner speech. Latent thinking does not even need words, many times it is just feelings, intentions, desires, imagination, so it is not related to language.

Lay people's agony over bilingual people's language capacity and thus identity is reflected in the following answer of an English-Hungarian bilingual.

> *"I can count in both languages already, so if I count something, I sometimes count it in English, other times in Hungarian. I speak quite often in my dreams. And I think 50% I speak in English and 50% in Hungarian. So it would be very good to learn from an expert what my real mother tongue is. In my case, maybe it is impossible to tell. I don't know."*

Prejudice in society is even worse. When the person has a different physical appearance from others in the community, but they speak the majority's language as a first language, it can confuse the personality and make him/her think about where they belong in fact. Manzoor's confession about how he felt in the 1980s in England tells us everything about this topic.

> *„If I could have summoned a genie who could have rubbed my brownness off... as it was impossible, I settled on being invisible. That was how I felt being Pakistani during the eighties: I wanted to be invisible and anonymous so that no one could point at me and say: 'You are different and you don't belong.' This country doesn't seem to accept me as one of its own, and yet where else did I have that I could call home?"* (Manzoor, 2007, p. 255)

Growing up in a bilingual family, where the parents speak two different languages and belong to two different cultures, also gives a hard time to the children in self-definition. They love both their parents and they do not want to hurt either of them. Lay people might also think that the children in this situation will have split personalities. But in fact they will not. They just demonstrate that two languages and two cultures can live together peacefully in one person. And that person can love equally both their parents, both their languages and both their cultures. This should be the most important thing to understand for monolingual people living with one culture. Here is a story by a Russian father, who lives in Hungary with his Hungarian wife raising two bilingual sons with the 'one parent – one language' strategy.

> *"Once I sat down with the boys to watch an ice-hockey match. The Russians played against Hungary. I asked my sons in Russian: 'Who do you support?' 'Russians' they exclaimed proudly. After a while my wife came into the room. She asked in Hungarian: 'What are you watching?' The boys answered: 'Ice-hockey.' 'And who do you support?' 'Hungarians, of course!'"*

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