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Leoš Šatava

The Ethnolinguistic Situation of the Aromanians (Vlachs) in Macedonia: Young People in Kruševo as Indicators of Ethnic Identity and Attitude to the Language

The text presents the outcome of a sociolinguistic questionnaire survey conducted among the pupils attending lessons in the Aromanian (Vlach) language at a primary school in Kruševo (Macedonia). The survey focused on: the rate of use of Aromanian in individual language domains; the proportion of Aromanian in the overall framework of speaking activities; the reception of Aromanian culture and active participation in this culture; and subjective ethnic, linguistic and cultural attitudes and assessments. With respect to the current situation of the Aromanian language, the questionnaire detected decisive differences among individual respondents concerning the mother tongues of the parents, gender and other aspects. Computing the (non)homogeneity of the answers proved highly relevant as well.

Keywords: Aromanians (Vlachs), Macedonia, Kruševo, youth, ethnolinguistic situation, sociolinguistics.

Etnolingvistični položaj Aromunov (Vlahov) v Makedoniji: mladi v Kruševu kot kazalci etnične identitete in stališč do jezika

Članek obravnava izid sociolingvističnega vprašalnika, na katerega so odgovarjali učenci pouka aromunskega jezika na osnovni šoli v Kruševu (Makedonija). Vprašalnik je bil osredotočen na pogostost rabe aromunščine v posameznih jezikovnih domenah, na delež aromunščine v celotnem okviru govornih dejavnosti, na recepcijo aromunske kulture in aktivno participacijo znotraj te kulture ter na subjektivna etnična, jezikovna in kulturna stališča ter vrednostne sodbe. Vprašalnik je glede na današnji položaj aromunščine zaznal odločilne razlike med posameznimi anketiranci v zvezi z maternim jezikom staršev, spolom in drugimi vidiki. Za zelo pomembno se je pokazala tudi (ne)homogenost odgovorov (standardni odklon).

Ključne besede: Aromuni (Vlahi), Makedonija, Kruševo, mladina, etnolingvistični položaj, sociolingvistika.

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1. Introduction¹

Aromanians (Arumanians) – according to territory, language or period called also Vlachs/Vlahs, K(o)utsovlachs, Pindovlachs, Tsintsars, Macedorumanians, Arvanitovlachs, *Çoben* and other names – nowadays live in a scattered fashion in all the Balkan countries. They may be found in Northern Greece and in Southern Albania in particular; and also in Macedonia, Bulgaria, Serbia and as re-settlers in Romania as well.

To give the total number of the members of the ethnic group is far from easy; realistic estimates, however, suggest several hundred thousand members.

Under the impact of historical circumstances the Aromanians did not experience the phase of the rebirth of small European nations in the 19th century and did not, therefore, become a standard ethnic group. This fact, together with their inner diversity and dispersion in a number of countries, has so far made all attempts to analyse their ethnicity difficult. They, moreover, have displayed traditionally significant multilingualism – the parallel use of several languages and switching has been the norm. Because of the ability and willingness of Aromanians to adapt their ethnic identity to the geopolitical and social situation of the moment – which is a rather rare phenomenon in the modern European context – the members of the group have been attributed with the designation “chameleons of the Balkans”. In general, many findings and theses on the effects of stigmatisation and responses to it may be applied to the situation of the Aromanians in the political-social context.

Today Greece and Albania are the countries with the highest numbers of Aromanians. However, beside the specific case of Aromanians resettled in Romania, Macedonia is the only country granting this ethnic group certain linguistic and cultural rights.

In this country, where about 15,000 – 20,000 Aromanians are living at present, Aromanian cultural manifestations (the instruction of the language in schools, publication activities, radio and TV broadcasting, and others) have been made possible and financed by the state since the early 1990s. In the given context we may, to some extent, even speak about language planning or ethnolinguistic revitalisation; the practical application in many cases is, however, questionable.

The absence of a considerable Aromanian ethnic consciousness and of political activities has been conspicuously noticeable in the current situation of the Aromanian language in the whole Balkans. They continue to be exposed to assimilation and numerical diminution. The image of the Aromanian language is not very good and its prestige is quite low; at present it is the language of socialisation and everyday life of an extremely small number of children and young people.

2. Kruševo: Historical, Ethnic and Linguistic Background

The above general facts are also valid for the situation of the Aromanian population and its members in Macedonia. Yet in this country there are several enclaves in which Aromanian (at least to some extent and in some domains) is still the language of everyday communication.

The most remarkable of these enclaves is the city of Kruševo (Crushuva/Cruşuva in Aromanian) in southwest Macedonia, a city of great symbolic significance as a traditional Aromanian centre. Towards the end of 18th century Aromanian resettlers came to Kruševo in two waves (1769, 1788) having fled the flourishing city of Moskopole and villages in its neighbourhood (in today's southeastern Albania) after their destruction;² during 1812–21 these migration waves were, moreover, joined by re-settlers from the Grammos mountain range (Koukoudis 2003, 354).³ An unimportant shepherd settlement until then, Kruševo turned into a prosperous centre of crafts and trade and acquired the characteristics of an urban area, rather than that of a rural one. For the middle of 19th century over twelve churches are reported (Trifunoski 1955–1957, 187–188). Beside schools with Greek and Bulgarian as languages of instruction, there were also Rumanian schools from 1876.⁴ Yet people who were conscious of their Aromanian origin, even in the heyday of Romanian propaganda at the end of 19th century, were a minority in Kruševo, unlike some other Aromanian settlements in southwestern Macedonia (e.g. Ohrid, Malovište or Gopeš), where pro-Greek orientation was very strong (Weigand 1895; 41, 309).⁵ Although an independent Aromanian church with services in Rumanian was built (1904), Greek influence in the Orthodox Church remained considerable and even the Bulgarian language was used (Matkovski et al. 1987, 331–333).

Kruševo became a significant symbol, a *sui generis* replacement of Moskopole as the Vlach spiritual centre;⁶ the city seems to have maintained this significance in the context of Aromanian national mythology and attributes (even in the eyes of the non-Aromanians) until today (Nowicka 2011, 229–230). The city, moreover, is an important landmark in Macedonian history as well; it became famous because of the anti-Osmanli insurrection – known as the Ilinden Uprising – of 1903, which has been highly appreciated in the context of Macedonian historiography and national symbols. The context of the Ilinden Uprising is widely used also in Aromanian national propaganda, for among its leading personalities and heroic characters were Aromanians, too (Pitu Guli, Nikola Karev).⁷ On the other hand we may also speculate about the extent of the influence that regular commemorative days of the uprising and emphases on the importance of its locality in the Macedonian national discourse may have on the shift of the Kruševo Aromanian population to a much more prestigious Macedonian identity (Brown 2003).

Over the past 150 years the data on the number of Aromanians and their proportion within the population of Kruševo have kept changing, probably not being always fully valid; the proportion of the original majority Aromanians, however, seems to have decreased gradually. For year 1868 S. I. Verković (1889; cited in Gołąb 1984, 20) claimed that there were 8,108 Aromanians (i.e. 73.8 per cent) among the total of 10,984 inhabitants of the city. For the year 1870 a local teacher, I. Šumkov (cited in Matkovski et al. 1987, 331), wrote that out of 2,500 families living in the city 1,900 were Aromanian, the mean number of members of one family being estimated at five. According to the founding father of Aromanian studies, G. Weigand (1895, 33, 287) at the time of his visit to Kruševo (1889) there were 7,000 Aromanians out of a total of 12,000 inhabitants. Detailed statistics by V. Kānčov (1900, 240) of 1900 records 4,000 Aromanians out of 9,350 inhabitants in Kruševo. In the 20th century, after the city was devastated during the Ilinden Uprising, but especially under the influence of the isolation from modern transport routes, the number of inhabitants fell (in 1921 there were only 3,862 inhabitants); one of the consequences of the decline in the importance of Kruševo was the transfer of the administrative offices to Prilep in 1952 (Trifunovski 1955–1957, 188, 199). For the year 1937 D. Popović (1937, 290) estimated the number of Kruševo Aromanians at about 1,500. The 1947 Census gives 2,328 Macedonians and 1,312 Vlachs, i. e. Aromanians (Trifunovski 1955–1957, 192). A personal observation by J. Trifunovski (1971, 343) made in the 1950s speaks of about roughly 260 Aromanian families in the city. Only a little later the Polish linguist Z. Gołąb (1984, 24) calculated the number of Aromanians as “a half of the population of the city at least”. In his detailed statistical survey of Aromanian villages T. Kahl (1999, 147) gave the position of Aromanians in Kruševo in the “high proportion” and “50 % at least” sections – in the latter, however, he mentions the assimilation in the 19th-20th centuries and the emigration of a part of the population.

It was especially in the course of 20th century that a great number of the Kruševo inhabitants (a total of 11,000 – 12,000) gradually emigrated to other Balkan countries and also overseas (Popović 1937, 298–300).

According to the 2002 census, Kruševo had 5,330 inhabitants – 1,020 (19.1 per cent) of whom declared themselves Vlachs. The city is thus the locality with the highest proportion of members of this ethnic group in the country.⁸ However, it may be believed that the number and proportion of the inhabitants of Kruševo of Aromanian origin, or of those using Aromanian actively or at least identifying with Aromanian traditions to some extent, will be considerably higher.⁹ In 2005 in Kruševo Aromanian (as in the only place in the world!) was proclaimed an official language – next to Macedonian and Albanian (Minov 2012, 62). Even though the city has traditionally been considered an Aromanian bastion, it is obvious that a considerable decline in the use of the language as the means of everyday communication and language erosion are under way

here as well (Gołąb 1961, 177). In the context of only rare transmission of the language to the children, due mainly to the low prestige of Aromanian, the term “language shift” may be applied. This fact is amplified by the exceptional occurrence of young endogamous Aromanian marriages. All this contributes to the socialisation of today’s young generation of Aromanian families in Kruševu being carried on almost completely in Macedonian, which leads to a consequent preference for Macedonian ethnic orientation (Minov 2012, 60).

The Aromanian substrate in Kruševu is little noticed today; at first sight the city looks purely Macedonian. In the context of the linguistic landscape there are practically no signs in Aromanian. Moreover, from the point of view of the majority (but of a great part of the Aromanians living here as well) “Aromanian-ness” is not defined distinctly dichotomically, i.e., in opposition to “Macedonian-ness”; at the everyday level the former is rather often viewed as an alternative cultural expression of the latter (e.g., in the form of presenting Aromanian songs at local festival). To a great extent we can talk about a “hidden minority”. Despite the existence of many enthusiastic Aromanian activists and activities of cultural organisations *in situ* the uninformed visitor can come and look round Kruševu without noticing, even after a long stay, the presence of the Aromanians. This fact is meaningful and confirms the weakening ethnolinguistic vitality of the Aromanian part of the population of Kruševu.

The Aromanian dialect of Kruševu is based on the Moskopole dialectal variety (supplemented with later Gramostean influences), which is found rather sparsely in Macedonia. Despite its greater prestige (in the context of the urban character and earlier literary production), it is the Gramostean version that at present seems to be assuming the efforts at Aromanian revitalisation in this country; this version, though, is common particularly in the east (Štip, Sveti Nikole), and also in some localities in the southwest of the country between Ohrid and Bitola (Friedman 2001, 43).¹⁰ Although a somewhat compromised standardised form of Aromanian has been in existence since 1997 (Cunia 1999; Ianachieschi-Vlahu 1993); individual dialects and local varieties are still alive and in use in both media production and school instruction.¹¹

3. Domains of the Use of Aromanian, Language Attitudes and the Reception of Aromanian Culture Among the Young People of Kruševu

3.1 Basic Information and Research Methods

There are practically no recent sociolinguistic studies on the situation and use of Aromanian in Macedonia. In June (school year 2010/2011) and in November (school year 2011/2012) the author administered a sociolinguistic questionnaire

survey to a total of 68 students in their 8th year at the local elementary school in Kruševo.¹²

The above generation cohort was chosen because Aromanian as the language of everyday communication is at a critical turning point. In many families the language shift to Macedonian has already occurred, in others it is drawing near. In this respect the conclusion of Welsh sociolinguist H. Gruffudd claiming “language choice in the case of bilingual youngsters will probably provide a more accurate guide to the state of vitality of the endangered language than statistics on language ability” is still relevant (Gruffudd; paraphrased in Williams 2000, 37). The findings derived from the answers of the young respondents in Kruševo can, therefore, be taken as conclusive evidence of the present state of vitality and prospects of the Aromanian language.

In the 2010/2011 school year a total of 135 students out of about 800 underwent instruction in Aromanian at the local school in Kruševo. Classes with Aromanian instruction do exist in other cities as well (Skopje, Štip, Bitola); the instruction there is often quite formal and the students’ attitude to Aromanian is radically less engaged than in Kruševo.

The main purpose of the research was to obtain fixed quantitative data on which the analysis and interpretation might be based, and on which future research might build as well. The main hypothetical assumption was an anticipated dominance of Macedonian over Aromanian in most language domains; the prime concern was oriented at the rate of this dominance (which, till today, remains virtually unrecognized and unspecified), or its situational image. The language used in the questionnaires was Macedonian.

The following thematic levels were pursued:

- the extent and proportion of Aromanian in individual language domains and in overall speaking activity;
- the reception of and active participation in Aromanian culture;
- the phenomena of ethnic consciousness and cultural ties; self assessment of Aromanian and Macedonian language competence (and attitudes to them); viewpoints on the general situation of the Aromanians in Macedonia.

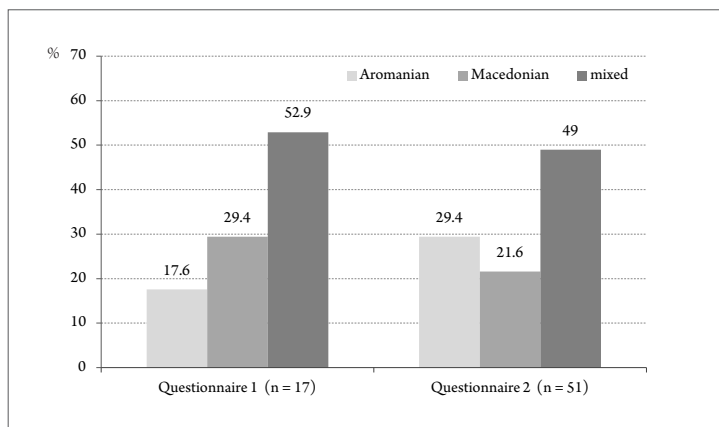
3.2 Respondent Groups

Students in their 8th year (aged 14–15 years) were selected who had been taught Aromanian as a voluntary, optional subject for two lessons per week since their 4th year. In terms of the level of the Aromanian competence and the frequency of its use, considerable differences could be traced within each student group. Along with the contemporary (i.e., since 1997) standardized (Macedonian) form of Aromanian, the local dialect of the language is widely used in teaching as well. At the time the research was being conducted there were three local native teachers. The teaching of the language is made difficult by a serious shortage of textbooks and other teaching materials.

The research was implemented during the two separate months and in two groups (68 persons altogether): 1) questionnaire I (June 2011) – 17 persons; 2) questionnaire II (November 2011) – 51 persons.

3.3 Linguistic/Ethnic Origin of the Respondents

Figure 1: Students' language background, according to the reported mother tongue of the parent or parents (in percent)



Because of the low status of Aromanian and a strong social pressure on members of the less numerous ethnic groups of the country to declare oneself as Macedonian, a direct question about “ethnicity” was not asked in the questionnaire; one question, however, was directed at the degree of Aromanian identity.

The query concerning the mother tongue was answered by almost all respondents as “Macedonian”, the only exception being two respondents who gave the term “*vlaški*” (i.e., “Aromanian”).

The declared information about the parents’ mother tongue(s), therefore, appears to be the main source of identifying the respondents’ language background. At this point information about Aromanian appears much more frequently. Three groups were distinguished in this respect: 1) Aromanian background (both parents, AROM¹³); 2) Macedonian background (both parents, MAC¹⁴); 3) mixed Aromanian and Macedonian background (AROM/MAC¹⁵).

It is a symptomatic and surprising fact that even those students who gave Aromanian as the mother tongue of both parents marked Macedonian as their own mother tongue. In this respect it would be necessary to analyse more closely to what extent the intergenerational language shift has already been taking shape, or to what extent it is rather the manifestation (in part or whole) of a proven departure from the Aromanian tradition and an inclination to the much more prestigious Macedonian ethnolinguistic level.

3.4 Processing

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Within the found values on the scale¹⁶ in both the total and in individual groups statistical mean (\emptyset), standard deviation (SD) and median were calculated. The respondents' answers were further compared in terms of their gender, language background and information on the mother tongue(s) of their parent(s).¹⁷

4. The Use of Aromanian in Individual Linguistic Domains

One of the aims of the research was to observe the degree and proportion of the use of Aromanian (or Macedonian) in various linguistic domains.

In the context of life in Kruševo we may speak about bilingualism as an individual competence in two languages – namely Macedonian and Aromanian – used by a certain part of the local population in everyday life. (This bilingualism is found mainly among the Aromanian part of the population.) On the other hand, here as well as in many other minority regions of the world, we encounter diglossia, i.e., the use of the given languages based on the social context. The Aromanians – for purely practical and other reasons – use and alternate both language codes in connection with the functional distribution, i.e., discriminating between specific language functions.

A diglossic community can be defined as “a social entity sharing (as to prestige) the same H (i. e. ‘high’) and L (‘low’) varieties of the language.” (Fasold 1992, 34–60) In the given context Aromanian in Kruševo is clearly a language in the L position.

In terms of investigating communicative domains, i.e., spheres of the practical use of the language and its frequency, a greater or smaller range of context can be differentiated. The greater the number of communication spheres that the language is used in, the more common the means of communication it is and is perceived as such.

In minority languages the family domain stands out the strongest and most frequent, followed by the community domain – see, e.g., similar findings among the West Frisians in the Netherlands (van der Plank 1987, 16–17) or among the Sorbs in Germany (Nelde & Weber 1996, 60; Šatava 2005, 44–45, 134–138).

A mere mechanical account of the given degree of the use of Aromanian in individual communication domains cannot in itself lead to fully valid conclusions. Attention must be also paid to social and psychological aspects and contexts.

In relation to language choice, Herman (cited in Fasold 1992, 187), for example, speaks about three psychological positions in which bilingual persons find themselves at the same moment. They are the level of personal needs; other situational aspects linked to social groupings: i.e. the immediate situation; and also the background situation. The situational background alone can be of

extraordinary importance, a phenomenon affecting language choice by members of the minority, related to whether a particular person wishes to demonstrate their belonging to “wider social milieu, that are not directly involved but yet may influence the behaviour” (Herman; cited in Fasold 1992, 187).

Various manifestations of how this potential conflict is solved can, indeed, be found in everyday language practical behaviour of the Aromanian population in Kruševo.

**Table 1: “In the following situation I speak...”
 (five-point Likert scale; mean)¹⁸**

	1 always Macedonian	2 mostly Macedonian	3 Aromanian and Macedonian in the same extent	4 mostly Aromanian	5 always Aromanian					
				language background			mother		father	
	total	M	F	AROM	AROM/ MAC	MAC	AROM	MAC	AROM	MAC
n	51	19	29	15	25	11	15	35	37	11
n	50	19	28	14	25	11	15	35	36	11
1/ mother	2.36	2.26	2.43	3.29	2.36	1.18	3.13	2.03	2.83	1.18
SD	1.26	1.24	1.32	0.91	1.22	0.60	1.06	1.20	1.13	0.60
median	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	1.00	3.00	1.00	3.00	1.00
n	50	18	29	15	24	11	15	34	36	11
2/ father	2.98	2.83	3.00	4.07	3.08	1.27	3.87	2.56	3.64	1.27
SD	1.46	1.34	1.56	0.59	1.41	0.65	0.99	1.48	1.13	0.65
median	3.00	3.00	3.00	4.00	3.00	1.00	4.00	3.00	4.00	1.00
n	48	19	26	14	23	11	14	33	34	11
3/ grandparents	3.36	3.50	3.151	4.43	3.63	1.36	4.36	2.95	4.13	1.36
SD	1.54	1.52	1.57	0.94	1.17	0.67	1.15	1.47	0.92	0.67
median	4.00	4.00	4.00	5.00	4.00	1.00	5.00	3.00	4.00	1.00
n	47	18	26	13	23	11	14	33	34	11
4/ siblings	2.04	2.22	1.88	2.62	2.22	1.00	2.50	1.85	2.44	1.00
SD	0.95	1.00	0.91	0.65	0.95	–	0.76	0.97	0.82	–
median	2.00	2.50	2.00	3.00	2.00	1.00	3.00	1.00	3.00	1.00
n	51	19	29	15	25	11	15	35	37	11
5/ schoolmates at school	1.97	1.87	2.03	2.47	1.98	1.27	2.47	1.79	2.23	1.27
SD	0.95	0.88	1.02	0.92	0.96	0.47	0.92	0.90	0.96	0.47
median	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	1.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	1.00
n	50	18	29	14	25	11	14	35	36	11
6/ schoolmates outside school	2.26	2.22	2.24	2.71	2.32	1.55	2.71	2.11	2.53	1.55
SD	0.96	1.00	0.91	1.14	0.80	0.69	1.14	0.83	0.91	0.69
median	2.00	2.00	2.00	3.00	2.00	1.00	3.00	2.00	2.50	1.00
n	50	19	29	14	25	11	14	35	36	11
7/ friends in place of residence	2.38	2.58	2.28	2.86	2.60	1.27	2.86	2.23	2.83	1.27
SD	1.16	1.07	1.22	1.03	1.15	0.47	1.03	1.17	1.03	0.47
median	3.00	3.00	2.00	3.00	3.00	1.00	3.00	2.00	3.00	1.00
n	51	19	29	15	25	11	15	35	37	11
8/ neighbours	2.63	2.95	2.45	2.80	2.80	2.00	2.80	2.60	2.89	2.00
SD	1.09	1.13	1.06	1.08	0.96	1.26	1.08	1.09	0.94	1.26
median	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	1.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	1.00
n	50	19	29	14	25	11	14	35	36	11
9/ teachers at school	1.91	2.16	1.78	2.11	1.92	1.64	2.11	1.86	2.04	1.45
SD	0.84	0.69	0.92	0.84	0.86	0.81	0.84	0.85	0.85	0.69
median	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	1.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	1.00

1 always Macedonian	2 mostly Macedonian	3 Aromanian and Macedonian in the same extent	4 mostly Aromanian	5 always Aromanian								
					language background			mother		father		
					total	M	F	AROM	AROM/ MAC	MAC	AROM	MAC
n	50	19	29	14	25	11	14	35	36	11		
10/ clerks in offices (in place of residence)	1.78	1.74	1.82	2.29	1.80	1.09	2.29	1.60	2.06	1.09		
SD	0.95	0.99	0.98	0.99	0.96	0.30	0.99	0.88	0.98	0.30		
median	2.00	1.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	1.00	2.00	1.00	2.00	1.00		
n	50	19	28	14	25	11	14	35	36	11		
11/ in shops, catering facilities (in place of residence)	1.95	2.21	1.77	2.29	2.10	1.19	2.29	1.84	2.21	1.18		
SD	0.93	0.90	0.94	0.99	0.90	0.40	0.99	0.89	0.91	0.40		
median	2.00	2.00	1.00	2.50	2.00	1.00	2.50	2.00	2.00	1.00		
n	39	16	20	13	18	11	13	25	29	8		
12/ when I am angry, annoyed	2.18	2.63	1.90	2.23	2.50	1.38	2.23	2.20	2.48	1.38		
SD	1.10	1.09	1.02	0.93	1.20	0.74	0.93	1.19	1.06	0.74		
median	2.00	3.00	1.50	3.00	3.00	1.00	3.00	2.00	3.00	1.00		
n	41	15	23	14	18	9	15	26	30	9		
13/ with domestic animals/pets	2.46	2.67	2.35	2.71	2.78	1.44	2.60	2.38	2.87	1.44		
SD	1.14	1.11	1.10	0.91	1.26	0.53	0.99	1.24	1.04	0.53		
median	3.00	3.00	2.00	3.00	3.00	1.00	3.00	2.50	3.00	1.00		
n	34	15	18	9	17	8	9	24	23	8		
14/ I think in	2.35	2.47	2.33	2.22	2.76	1.63	2.22	2.46	2.78	1.63		
SD	1.39	1.25	1.53	1.20	1.39	1.41	1.20	1.47	1.28	1.41		
median	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	3.00	1.00	2.00	2.00	3.00	1.00		
n	36	15	20	10	17	9	10	25	24	9		
15/ I dream in	2.19	2.33	2.15	2.10	2.53	1.67	2.10	2.28	2.54	1.67		
SD	1.31	1.11	1.46	1.20	1.50	0.87	1.20	1.37	1.39	0.87		
median	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	1.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	1.00		
n	51	19	29	15	25	11	15	35	37	11		
16/ total	2.32	2.44	2.24	2.78	2.47	1.39	2.73	2.17	2.70	1.37		
SD	1.20	1.16	1.23	1.14	1.19	0.73	1.16	1.18	1.15	0.72		
median	2.00	2.00	2.00	3.00	2.00	1.00	3.00	2.00	3.00	1.00		

Summing up: As to the proportion of the use of Aromanian in various situations, the hypothesis that the main domain of the language is the sphere of the home, i. e. communication within the family (but with the exception of siblings!) was confirmed. As other European minority languages, Aromanian is used mainly in private and family relationships; in public communication it fulfils only a secondary role. In general, the highest values by far were achieved in spoken contact with grandparents (mean 3.36; median 4.00; in the group of 15 students of Aromanian origin value 4.43; median a surprising 5.00). In terms of the intergenerational maintenance of AROM this domain is, therefore, clearly the most significant one. Considerably lower values were registered for contact with parents, with a considerable difference between the communication with the father (2.98) and that with the mother (2.36). It is natural that in the groups of students of AROM origin the given values noticeably increased, namely to 4.07 (father) or 3.29 (mother). Quite high also is the value of communication with

neighbours (2.63); due to the randomness of this situational domain, it shows no significant difference when paired with an AROM background. The spoken contact in AROM with siblings is unexpectedly low (2.04), even among students of fully Aromanian background (2.62). Speaking to domestic animals (2.46) is, to some extent, part of the family sphere.

*Table 2: Five linguistic domains with the highest rate of use of Aromanian*¹⁹

	Domains	total	M	F	language background			language background / gender			
					AROM	AROM/ MAC	MAC	AROM -M	AROM -F	AROM/ MAC-M	AROM/ MAC-F
n		51	19	29	15	25	11	6	8	9	14
o	1/ mother			2.43	3.29			3.17	3.43		
	2/ father	2.98	2.83	3.00	4.07	3.08		4.00	4.13		3.29
	3/ grandparents	3.36	3.50	3.15	4.43	3.63		4.67	4.14	3.72	3.58
	6/ schoolmates (outside school)						1.55		2.63		
	7/ friends	2.38			2.86			3.00	2.75	2.89	
	8/ neighbours	2.63	2.95	2.45	2.80	2.80	2.00	3.17		3.11	2.71
	9/ teachers						1.64				
	12/ swear words		2.63								
	13/ animals/pets	2.46	2.67	2.35		2.78				3.00	2.78
	14/ thinking					2.76	1.63			3.13	2.63
	15/ dreaming						1,67				

It was somewhat surprising that lower or average values were gained even in private spheres, such as levels of “thinking” or “dreaming”; these are difficult to attain and very subtle. This fact seems to confirm the hypothesis about the importance of Aromanian in the socialisation of the sample of youth under observation.

As expected the highest values of use of Aromanian languagewere found among students of fully AROM background within the family domain – e.g., the instance of male students speaking with grandparents (4.67) yields the highest result in the whole questionnaire. As to speaking with siblings, however, unexpectedly low values (AROM–M: 2.83; AROM–F: 2.33) were obtained. This fact documents the assimilation trend in the youngest generation who perceive Aromanian as a language little suited for communication with one’s peers.

Somewhat lower overall values were yielded by the answers of the respondents from mixed marriages. Also, a quite distinct group was formed by students who reported a Macedonian language background; their preference of use of AROM logically appear in quite different domains and contexts, among others also as a “secret language”.

Nevertheless, data obtained in connection with communication with the family or neighbours cannot be compared only mechanically. It is also necessary to take into account the existence of ethnolinguistically mixed marriages, in which communication with the mother's or father's parts of the family may be carried on in different languages, or, as the case may be, in both languages, in varying quantity and quality. Due, among other causes, to the relatively small number of respondents, the random element plays a crucial role, e.g., in the possibility of communication with neighbours.

In terms of gender comparison, the results are not fully conclusive. In 10 out of 15 questions and also in the total sum, however, male respondents of the AROM group reported a little higher rate of use.

When comparing the language background of the respondents, the values obtained from the pupils from AROM or AROM/MAC families are, as expected, the highest in a number of domains. A considerable difference in the group of pupils with MAC mothers (2.17) in contrast to the respondents with MAC fathers (1.37) is obvious. This disproportion can be explained by the fact that while the marriages of the Macedonian fathers were practically endogamous, most Aromanian fathers had married Macedonian women.

The calculation of the standard deviation, assessing the extent of the statistical dispersion of the responses, confirmed their rather low homogeneity.

4.1 The Proportion of Aromanian in Overall Language Activities

Table 3: "The proportion of Aromanian in all my language activities equals..."²⁰ (per cent)

	n	0 %	0–10%	10–3 %	30–50%	50–70%	> 70%
total	42	4.8	7.2	11.9	26.2	40.5	9.5
Males	18	5.6	5.6	11.1	33.3	44.4	–
Females	21	4.8	9.5	9.5	23.8	38.1	14.3
AROM	13	–	–	–	30.8	61.5	7.7
MAC	8	12.5	37.5	25.0	12.5	12.5	–
AROM/MAC	21	4.8	–	14.3	28.6	38.1	14.3
mother AROM	14	7.1	–	–	28.6	57.1	7.1
mother MAC	28	3.6	10.7	17.9	25.0	32.1	10.7
father AROM	31	–	–	3.2	32.3	51.6	12.9
father MAC	9	22.2	33.3	22.2	11.1	11.1	–

Summing up: The merged value of two highest percentage categories (i.e., reports where the declared proportion of the use of AROM was over 50 per cent) reached unexpectedly high values. In the total set under observation, it was 50.0 per cent; women scored higher (52.4 per cent) than men (44.4 per cent). Only women are also represented in the over 70 per cent category.

The highest declared percentage spoken values were obtained in the category of the Aromanian language background respondents (69.2 per cent), or respondents with AROM speaking mother and/or father (in both cases over 64 per cent). The proportion of those who (reportedly) used Aromanian in the “mixed” AROM/MAC category is surprisingly high as well – 52.4 per cent). As to the comparison of children with AROM fathers and AROM mothers, the results (the sum of two highest categories) are almost identical (64.2 per cent and 64.5 per cent).

On the contrary, pupils declaring a Macedonian language background gave the expected lowest value of the above-the-average use of AROM (12.5 per cent). As in other responses, an appreciable difference was found between respondents with a Macedonian speaking mother (42.9 per cent) and father (11.1 per cent). Due either to a probable “overestimation” of the subjectively perceived degree of the use of AROM, or to the danger of a possible observer’s paradox in Labov’s terms,²¹ it would be necessary to carry out a more detailed, exact and verifiable survey, and to check the validity of the data arrived at by means of questionnaires and participant observation, and to carry out closer comparison of the overall outcomes.

5. Reception of and Active Participation in Aromanian Culture

Table 4: “It doesn’t concern me in the given situations...” (five-point Likert scale; mean)²²

	1 never	2 sometimes	3 often	4 every day			5 very often; always			
				language background			mother		father	
	total	M	F	AROM	AROM/ MAC	MAC	AROM	MAC	AROM	MAC
n (total)	51	19	29	15	25	11	15	35	37	11
n	51	19	29	15	25	11	15	35	37	11
1/ I read Aromanian magazines	2.27	2.21	2.31	2.60	2.40	1.55	2.33	2.17	2.54	1.45
SD	0.90	0.71	1.04	0.91	0.87	0.52	0.72	0.86	0.87	0.52
median	2.00	2.00	2.00	3.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	3.00	1.00
n	51	19	29	15	25	11	15	35	34	11
2/ I read Aromanian books	2.15	2.13	2.14	2.73	2.06	1.55	2.47	1.93	2.36	1.45
SD	0.84	0.85	0.88	0.88	0.58	0.82	0.74	0.69	0.77	0.82
median	2.00	2.00	2.00	3.00	2.00	1.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	1.00
n	47	17	27	14	22	11	14	32	37	11
3/ I listen to Aromanian radio broadcasts	2.36	2.47	2.26	3.14	2.36	1.36	3.00	2.06	2.76	1.36
SD	1.13	1.07	1.16	1.10	0.95	0.67	1.24	0.98	1.02	0.67
median	2.00	3.00	2.00	3.00	2.50	1.00	3.00	2.00	3.00	1.00
n	51	19	29	15	25	11	15	35	37	11
4/ I watch Aromanian TV broadcasts	2.69	2.58	2.79	3.27	2.84	1.55	3.20	2.49	3.14	1.45
SD	1.22	1.22	1.29	1.16	1.14	0.69	1.26	1.17	1.08	0.69
median	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	1.00	3.00	2.00	3.00	1.00

	1 never	2 sometimes	3 often	4 every day	5 very often; always						
				language background			mother		father		
	total	M	F	AROM	AROM/ MAC	MAC	AROM	MAC	AROM	MAC	
n	49	19	27	15	24	10	15	33	36	10	
5/ I sing Aromanian songs	2.69	2.47	2.74	3.00	2.88	1.80	3.00	2.58	2.97	1.90	
SD	1.23	1.02	1.35	1.13	0.90	1.69	1.13	1.28	1.00	1.66	
median	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	1.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	1.00	
n	51	19	29	15	25	11	15	35	37	11	
6/ I actively participate in Aromanian culture (member of singing/ dancing group, etc.)	2.16	2.42	2.03	2.40	2.36	1.36	2.40	2.09	2.46	1.36	
SD	1.12	1.22	1.09	0.99	1.22	0.67	0.99	1.17	1.12	0.67	
median	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	1.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	1.00	
n	50	18	29	15	24	11	15	34	36	11	
7/ Correspondence with family and friends in Aromanian	2.26	2.39	2.14	2.60	2.58	1.09	2.60	2.15	2.72	1.09	
SD	1.14	1.24	1.06	1.12	1.06	0.30	1.12	1.13	1.00	0.30	
median	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	3.00	1.00	2.00	2.00	3.00	1.00	
n	45	18	25	15	19	11	15	29	31	11	
8/ I write my personal writing (notes, diary...) in Aromanian	2.00	2.28	1.80	2.80	1.84	1.18	2.80	1.62	2.35	1.18	
SD	1.11	1.18	1.04	1.15	0.96	0.40	1.15	0.86	1.14	0.40	
median	2.00	2.00	1.00	3.00	2.00	1.00	3.00	1.00	2.00	1.00	
n	49	18	28	14	24	11	14	34	35	11	
9/ I count in Aromanian	2.69	2.72	2.68	3.07	2.79	2.00	3.00	2.59	2.97	1.91	
SD	0.98	0.89	1.09	0.73	0.88	1.18	0.88	1.02	0.79	1.22	
median	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	2.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	2.00	
n	47	18	27	14	23	10	14	32	34	11	
10/ I pray in Aromanian	1.72	1.89	1.63	2.14	1.74	1.10	2.14	1.56	1.97	1.09	
SD	0.93	1.13	0.79	1.17	0.81	0.32	1.17	0.76	0.97	0.30	
median	2.00	2.00	1.00	2.00	2.00	1.00	2.00	1.00	2.00	1.00	
n	50	18	29	14	25	11	14	35	36	11	
11/ I speak Aromanian on the phone	2.14	2.08	2.12	2.57	2.20	1.45	2.50	2.00	2.44	1.45	
SD	0.88	0.73	0.90	0.85	0.80	0.69	0.94	0.83	0.76	0.69	
median	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.50	2.00	1.00	2.50	2.00	2.50	1.00	
n	51	19	29	15	25	11	15	35	37	11	
12/ I speak Aromanian with people whom I know slightly but who, I know, can speak Aromanian	2.32	2.21	2.36	2.80	2.38	1.55	2.80	2.16	2.61	1.45	
SD	1.06	1.03	1.13	1.26	0.83	0.82	1.26	0.90	1.02	0.82	
median	3.00	3.00	2.00	3.00	3.00	1.00	3.00	2.00	3.00	1.00	
n	50	19	28	15	24	11	15	34	36	11	
13/ I speak Aromanian with Aromanians outside the Kruševo area	2.30	2.21	2.36	2.73	2.25	1.82	2.67	2.15	2.50	1.82	
SD	1.02	0.98	1.10	1.10	0.68	1.33	1.18	0.93	0.88	1.33	
median	2.00	2.00	2.00	3.00	2.00	1.00	3.00	2.00	2.00	1.00	
n	50	18	29	14	25	11	14	35	35	11	
14/ I also speak Aromanian even in the presence of Macedonian speakers	2.09	2.19	1.97	2.50	2.02	1.73	2.50	1.96	2.26	1.73	
SD	1.19	0.99	1.24	1.22	1.16	1.19	1.22	1.17	1.20	1.19	
median	2.00	2.25	1.00	3.00	2.00	1.00	3.00	2.00	2.00	1.00	

	1 never	2 sometimes	3 often	4 every day	5 very often; always					
				language background			mother		father	
	total	M	F	AROM	AROM/ MAC	MAC	AROM	MAC	AROM	MAC
n	49	18	29	14	24	11	14	34	35	11
15/ I speak Aromanian so that strangers may not understand me (as a secret language)	2.61	2.44	2.76	2.93	2.79	1.82	2.79	2.53	2.94	1.82
SD	1.06	1.04	1.06	1.00	0.78	1.33	1.12	1.05	0.76	1.33
median	3.00	2.50	3.00	3.00	3.00	1.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	1.00
n	51	19	29	15	25	11	15	35	37	11
16/ total	2.30	2.31	2.28	2.75	2.37	1.53	2.68	2.14	2.60	1.50
SD	1.08	1.02	1.12	1.07	0.97	0.92	1.09	1.03	1.00	0.92
median	2.00	2.00	2.00	3.00	2.00	1.00	3.00	2.00	3.00	1.00

Summing up: In comparison with the language sphere (Table 1), lower values for cultural reception stand out noticeably.²³ The given average values mostly range between 2.00 and 2.50. The spheres with the highest average values are: “watching TV programmes”,²⁴ “singing AROM songs” and “counting in AROM” (all 2.69), as well as using AROM as a “secret code” (2.61).²⁵

In terms of respondent gender the values obtained for most questions are almost identical or very similar. The boys gave higher figures related to the active participation in AROM culture (M: 2.42; F: 2.03) or writing personal diaries in AROM (M: 2.28; F: 1.80). The girls, to the contrary, use AROM as a “secret language” more frequently than boys (M: 2.44; F: 2.76).

Language background: the highest values were obtained from pupils of Aromanian origin. Some data – e.g., receiving AROM television and radio broadcasting – even exceeded 3.00 (i.e., “I often receive”). The highest positions were taken by watching TV (3.27), listening to the radio (3.14) and counting (3.07). In general, in the cultural sphere under observation, a pure Aromanian origin influenced the extent of the given results practically as much as in the language communication domains (cf. lines 16 in Tables 1 and 4). On average, responses from pupils with AROM/MAC background result in rather lower figures. Pupils of MAC origin provided values considerably lower; among these, the highest were: singing songs (1.80) and “secret language” (1.82) – while the heretogeneity of the respondents was extraordinary. As in Table 1, in Table 4 too, on line 16, a considerably lower rate (1.50) of reception of AROM among pupils with a MAC father showed as compared with recipients with a MAC mother (2.14), which is related to the fact that Macedonian mothers often lived in ethnically mixed marriages while the fathers did not.

Standard deviation shows a medium to high degree of disunity (it approaches or even surpasses 50 per cent of the mean) – e.g., “when participating in AROM culture”. Exceptions are, e.g., reading books, watching AROM TV broadcasts

and some levels of speaking in AROM (questions 12, 15) with a higher degree of homogeneity. Among pupils of AROM origin the uniformity of replies is generally much higher; the same, for the most part in a reversed form, applies to pupils of MAC origin.

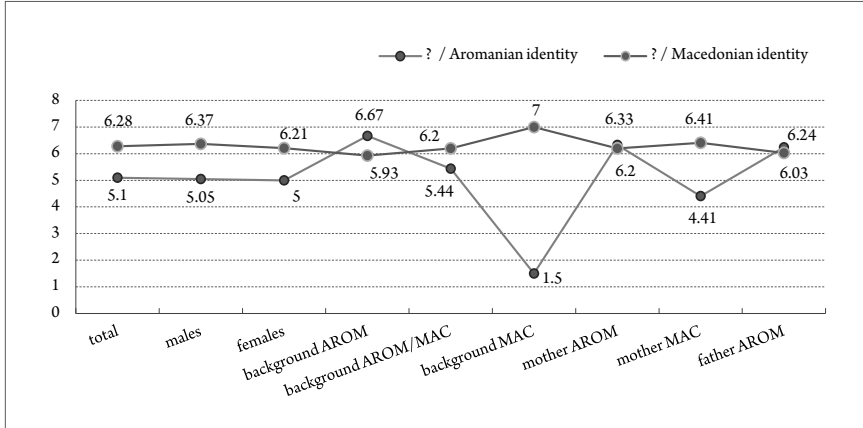
6. Ethnic and Cultural Attitudes and Judgements (Autostereotypes)

Table 5: (seven-point Likert scale; mean)

1 Lowest value	2	3	4	5	6	7 Highest value				
	language background			mother		father				
	total	M	F	AROM	AROM/ MAC	MAC	AROM	MAC	AROM	MAC
n (total)	51	19	29	15	25	11	15	35	37	11
n I.: "How strongly do you feel Aromanian?"	50 5.02	19 5.05	28 5.00	15 6.67	25 5.44	10 1.50	15 6.33	34 4.41	37 6.24	11 1.45
SD	2.39	2.30	2.43	0.62	2.00	0.97	1.59	2.49	1.23	0.93
Median	6.00	6.00	6.50	7.00	6.00	1.00	7.00	5.00	7.00	1.00
n II.: "How strongly do you feel Macedonian (disre- garding citizenship)?"	50 6.28	19 6.37	28 6.21	15 5.93	25 6.20	10 7.00	15 6.20	34 6.41	37 6.03	11 7.00
SD	1.09	0.76	1.29	1.28	1.08	-	1.01	0.99	1.17	-
Median	7.00	7.00	7.00	6.00	7.00	7.00	7.00	7.00	6.00	7.00
n III.: "How important is the maintenance of the Aromanian language and culture for you?"	49 5.44	19 5.42	28 5.43	15 6.20	25 5.68	10 3.70	15 6.20	34 5.15	37 6.05	11 3.73
SD	1.66	1.46	1.83	0.94	1.49	1.77	0.94	1.81	1.20	1.68
Median	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	3.50	6.00	5.50	6.00	4.00
n IV.: "How do you assess your language compe- tence in Aromanian?"	49 5.34	19 5.26	28 5.29	15 5.93	25 5.56	10 3.90	15 5.73	34 5.21	37 5.92	11 3.64
SD	1.72	1.48	1.92	0.96	1.66	2.08	1.53	1.81	1.16	2.16
Median	6.00	5.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	3.50	6.00	5.50	6.00	3.00
n V.: "How do you assess your language compe- tence in Macedonian?"	49 6.56	19 6.32	28 6.82	15 6.47	25 6.44	10 7.00	15 6.67	34 6.59	37 6.51	11 7.00
SD	1.03	1.20	0.61	1.06	1.19	-	0.82	1.05	1.02	-
Median	7.00	7.00	7.00	7.00	7.00	7.00	7.00	7.00	7.00	7.00
n VI.: "What is your assessment of the general situation of the Aroma- nians in Macedonia?"	49 5.80	19 5.37	28 6.04	15 6.20	25 5.88	10 5.00	15 6.20	34 5.68	37 6.14	11 4.91
SD	1.54	1.80	1.35	1.26	1.33	2.16	1.26	1.63	1.25	2.07
Median	7.00	6.00	7.00	7.00	7.00	5.50	7.00	6.50	7.00	5.00

6.1 Ethnic Identity

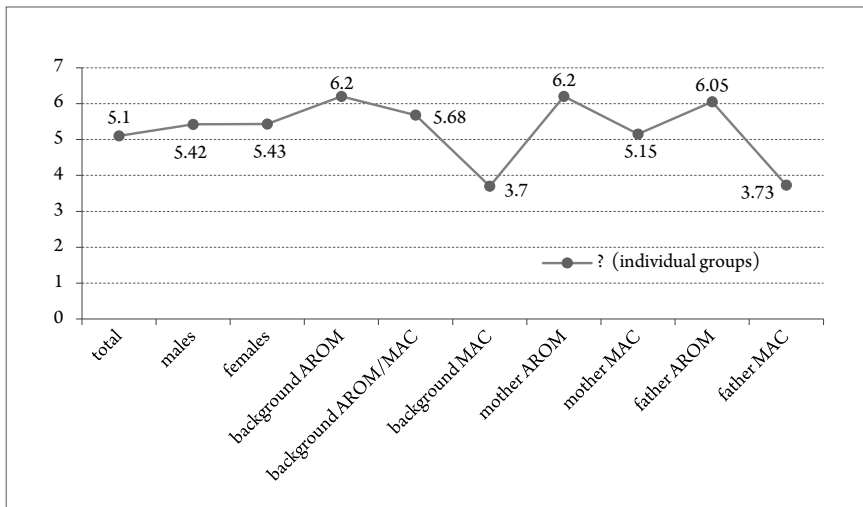
Figure 2: Questions I, II.



The results clearly showed the dominance of the Macedonian identity over the Aromanian identity in almost all groups. Exceptions are: first, a subgroup of students with AROM language background: there is a considerable difference in favour of the AROM identity of 6.67 compared to MAC identity of 5.93; and, second, subgroups with AROM mother or father (compared to MAC identity, the differences within this subgroup are, however, only small).

6.2 Concern for Maintaining the Aromanian Language and Culture

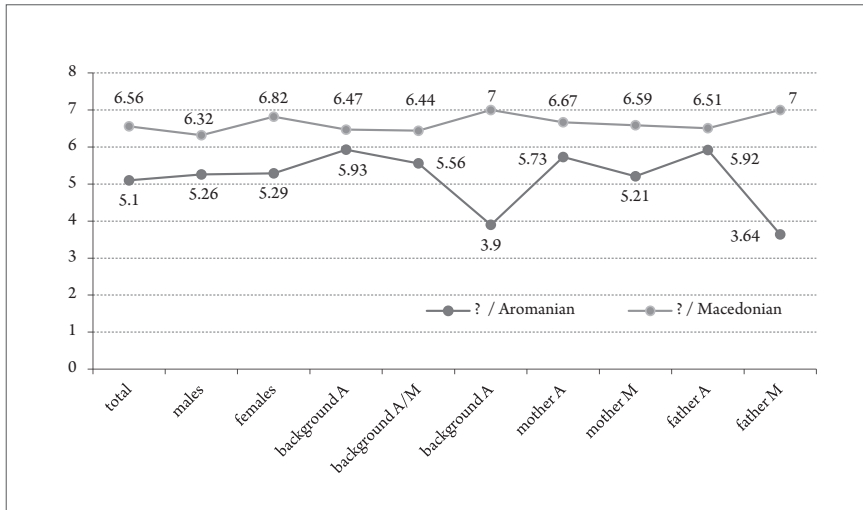
Figure 3: Question III.



The average values derived from the responses to this question are relatively very high; they, however testify only a declared, abstract degree of concern for the maintenance of AROM language and culture. The highest values were given by students of purely Aromanian background.

6.3 Self Assessment of Linguistic Competence (Aromanian; Macedonian)

Figure 4: Questions IV, V.



Self assessments (or, autostereotypes) of language competence (both in Aromanian and in Macedonian) showed considerable differences between the languages. Competence in MAC itself is reported as very good by all individual respondent cohorts (between 6.32 and 7.00); students of Macedonian background gave only a little higher values than those of Aromanian background.

Differently than for MAC, assessing one's own competence in AROM yielded a much lower range of values (around 5.5) with most of the respondents. The highest mean response was gained from the cohort with AROM background (5.93). From students of MAC background the line of the graph falls dramatically (down to 3.64).

Nevertheless, among the 49 students who answered both questions, there were five respondents who estimated their competence in AROM higher than that in MAC. Another 16 respondents considered their competence in both languages comparable.

7. Conclusion

The sociolinguistic questionnaire survey about some aspects of the ethnolinguistic situation conducted among the Aromanian young population in Kruševu (Macedonia) confirmed a number of presumed facts and hypotheses.

The chief conclusion is the clear dominance of Macedonian over Aromanian not only in the practical sphere (in most of the linguistic domains) but also within the sphere of language attitudes and autostereotypes. The rate of this dominance, however, fluctuated with individual language domains, and related to the respondents' language backgrounds and other aspects. In spite of the noticeable trend towards language assimilation of Aromanian in Kruševu, the complete lack of competence and zero communication in the language among its young people were not confirmed. At the same time, a statistical analysis of the survey results showed some relative strengths of the Aromanian language as well.

The level of ethnic self-identification and mother-tongue identification is quite specific, whereby most of the respondents of Aromanian background are inclined towards a Macedonian orientation.

Computing the relative homogeneity of the answers proved highly relevant as well. The survey detected a rather small homogeneity within the set – i.e., considerable differences between individual respondents, particularly in relation to their language background.

Despite certain progress in the domains of its use in the cultural area over the past two decades, Aromanian remains a highly threatened language even in Macedonia. If the assimilation trends continue, the intergenerational transfer of Aromanian may come to an end; the language may gradually retreat into the home sphere of some families, and may even die out. The young generation under observation in this study could thus become the last one for which Aromanian, at least to some extent, is the language of socialization and of use in some situational domains.

Abbreviations

AROM – Aromanian; Aromanian language background; Aromanian phenomenon

MAC – Macedonian; Macedonian language background; Macedonian phenomenon

AROM/MAC – linguistic/ethnically mixed group; Aromanian/Macedonian phenomenon

M – males

F – females

Notes

¹ The text was delivered at the International Conference on Minority Languages XIV (11 – 14 September 2013, Graz, Austria) and is an extract from a detailed study published (in Czech, Šatava 2013).

- ² Unusually for Aromanian families generally, they did not live a semi-nomadic way of life but were craftsmen and tradesmen.
- ³ The first wave of Aromanian re-settlers set out from the village of Nikolicë, which is today in southeastern Albania (Goļab 1984, 19; Trifunoski 1955–1957, 193–194; Trpkoski-Trpku 1986, 78–79).
- ⁴ For the year 1889 in Kruševo gives two Rumanian schools with the total of 200 students, a Greek school with 900 students (including 550 Aromanians) and a Bulgarian school with 250 students (Weigand 1895, 306–308).
- ⁵ Next to Greek and Romanian,, the local population, which in the second half of 20th century was not yet fully ethnically formed, was subject also to Bulgarian and Serbian propaganda (Matkovski et al. 1987, 333).
- ⁶ Popović (1937, 149) even speaks about the inhabitants of Moskopole as a unique “Aromanian nobility”.
- ⁷ Today the Aromanians in Kruševo identify with this liberation revolution tradition, even though for the early 20th century a large part of the ethnic group may, paradoxically, be allegedly described as politically pro-Ottoman and pro-bourgeois (Winnifrieth 1997). At present the search for symbolic “famous native” Aromanian patriots moves along an extraordinarily wide spectrum: from Alexander the Great or the shepherds singing to baby Jesus via Zorba the Greek to Mother Teresa, Herbert von Karajan or Michael Dukakis (Vaňková 2012).
- ⁸ Even though, according to the 2002 census, the administrative units with the highest numbers of Vlachs can be found in Škopje with over a half of a million inhabitants (2,557 Aromanians, i.e., 0.5 per cent) and also Štip in eastern Macedonia (2,074 out of the total 47,796 inhabitants, i.e., 4.3 per cent).
- ⁹ The present (2011 – research by L. Š.) estimate of an informer from Kruševo gives a 25 per cent share.
- ¹⁰ For instance, the distinguished codifier of the Macedonian version of the standard Aromanian language D. Cuvata (Đ. Dimčev) comes from the village of Dobrošani near Štip. The Štip (Gramostean) variety also has a strong position in Aromanian broadcasting on state Macedonian television (Friedman 2001, 43; Gica 2009/2010, 2010/2011; Kara & Guddemi 2000/2001).
- ¹¹ The difference between the two varieties is not significant enough to make understanding really difficult. The general tendency to use Macedonian as “a more appropriate” language in the social contact seems to be a greater barrier to using the language in encounters with other Aromanians not met previously.
- ¹² In the school year 2008/2009 out of the total of 207,505 pupils of elementary schools (compulsory eight-year education, age level from 7 to 15) in Macedonia, 307 (0.15 per cent) reported Aromanian ethnicity. Of 14,189 teachers, 45 (0.32 per cent) declared Aromanian nationality. Seven teachers participated in the instruction of Aromanian (Ministry of Education and Science 2010, 40–46).
- ¹³ For this and other abbreviations see the list of abbreviations at the end of the article.
- ¹⁴ For this and other abbreviations see the list of abbreviations at the end of the article.
- ¹⁵ For this and other abbreviations see the list of abbreviations at the end of the article.
- ¹⁶ Some scales were 1 – 5, others 1 – 7.
- ¹⁷ With the small size of the sample and relatively slight differences in the found values, it would not, apparently, be possible to confirm these differences at the generally accepted significance level in terms of statistics. When, however, comparing facts and tendencies obtained by means of participant observation, interviews and the like, the numerical data can still be considered a valid illustration of these facts.

- ¹⁸ The greater the value of the mean, the higher the use of Aromanian.
- ¹⁹ Out of the total of 15 situational domains under observation; calculated for the whole respondent group and for each subgroup.
- ²⁰ In the course of a current week.
- ²¹ The danger lies in the students (deliberately or unintentionally) modifying their replies to comply with the (assumed) expectations of the person carrying out the research.
- ²² The higher the value of the mean, the higher the use of Aromanian.
- ²³ In the given context, there is a similarity with a number of other minority populations in Europe, e.g. the Sorbs (Šatava 2005, 51 and others) or the Gaels in Scotland (MacKinnon 1994, 513).
- ²⁴ Based on the information (2011 – research by L. Š.) of the Aromanian section of Macedonian state TV in Skopje, its broadcasts are watched in Macedonia by about 10,000 people; together with viewers in Albania and Greece it could be approximately 40,000 recipients.
- ²⁵ To a certain extent among the pupils of Macedonian origin as well.

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Zaira Vidau*

The Legal Protection of National and Linguistic Minorities in the Region of Friuli Venezia Giulia: A Comparison of the Three Regional Laws for the “Slovene Linguistic Minority”, for the “Friulian Language” and for the “German-Speaking Minorities”

This article presents a comparison between three regional laws, namely the contents of Law 26/2007 for the protection of the “Slovene linguistic minority”, Law 29/2007 for the protection of the “Friulian language” and Law 20/2009 for the protection of the “German-speaking minorities” adopted by the Friuli Venezia Giulia Region in Italy. The analysis is based on the framework of diversity management theories and the related functions of minority legal protection and decentralization models. The author concludes that the system of minority protection in FVG is asymmetrical, as the regional legislation has a similar structure but is separate for each group. The differences regard also the protection of minority languages and their dialects as well as the legal sources and subjects.

Keywords: diversity management, Friulian language, German-speaking communities, minority rights, national minorities, regional languages, Slovene national minority.

Pravno varstvo narodnih in jezikovnih manjšin v Deželi Furlaniji Julijski krajini: primerjava treh deželnih zakonov za “slovensko jezikovno manjšino”, “furlanski jezik” in “nemško govoreče manjšine”

Prispevek predstavlja primerjavo med zakoni Dežele Furlanije Julijske krajine v Italiji o varstvu “slovenske jezikovne manjšine” št. 26/2007, “furlanskega jezika” št. 29/2007 in “nemško govoreče manjšine” št. 20/2009. Avtorica umešča analizo v teorije upravljanja različnosti in funkcij pravnega varstva manjšin in modelov decentralizacije znotraj le-teh. V zaključkih ugotavlja, da je sistem manjšinskega varstva v FJK asimetričen, ker se je razvila sicer po strukturi podobna deželna zakonodaja, a ločena za posamezno manjšino. Razlike se ob enem pojavljajo tako pri varstvu manjšinskih jezikov in njihovih lokalnih govoric kakor tudi na ravni pravnih virov in akterjev.

Ključne besede: upravljanje različnosti, furlanski jezik, nemško govoreče skupnosti, manjšinske pravice, narodne manjšine, regionalni jeziki, slovenska narodna manjšina.

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1. Introduction

Between 2007 and 2009, the Italian Region of Friuli Venezia Giulia (FVG) adopted three important regional laws regulating the protection of the “Slovene linguistic minority”, the “Friulian language” and the “German-speaking minorities” (the disparity in the terminology follows the wording of the titles of the laws themselves). Compared to regional legislation of the 20th century, this more recent legislation presents an important milestone. FVG now plays the role of the enactor of policies aiming at the preservation and development of its historical minorities. It thus assumes an active role in managing ethnic diversity in the field of national and linguistic minorities in the region. In part, these policies are already in the implementation phase and also stipulate certain forms of funding. Some of these provisions are of a planning nature and as such delineate the strategies for future development.

The policies of diversity management of decentralized state administrations such as regions are crucial to national and linguistic minorities, as they directly affect the processes of their conservation and development. Without the support of the state and its local administrations, the interests determined by a minority community on the basis of its organizational structure would be difficult to attain or even unattainable. In fact, local administrations are those legal entities that enable the implementation of minority rights in everyday life. In Italy, their role in this field intensified following the introduction of Norms Concerning the Protection of Historical Linguistic Minorities in Italy (Law 482/1999) and following the reforms enacted in the last twenty years that have allowed for a decentralization of functions and responsibilities in the field of the protection of national and linguistic minorities as well.

2. Objective and Methodology

The central research question of this paper comprises a comparison of the contents of the three regional laws regulating the legal protection of the Slovene, Friulian and German-speaking communities in the FVG region. The analysis draws upon contemporary theories on diversity management at the socio-political level and on the functions of legal protection of minorities and their decentralization models. The comparison of the three regional laws is based on the texts of Regional Norms Concerning the Protection of Slovene Linguistic Minority (Law 26/2007), Regional Norms Concerning the Protection, Valorisation and Promotion of Friulian Language (Law 29/2007) and Regional Norms Concerning the Protection and Promotion of German Speaking-Minorities of Region Friuli Venezia Giulia (Law 20/2009). In particular, it focuses on the aspects of the recognition of these three communities, on the public use of minority or regional languages and on the education provided in these languages. These aspects were explored within the research project entitled Managing

Ethno-Linguistic Diversity: The Case of Friuli Venezia Giulia – a research project leading to a doctoral thesis pursued at the Faculty of Social Sciences of the University of Ljubljana, conducted by the author at SLORI – the Slovene Research Institute in Trieste.

In the FVG region, in addition to the aforementioned minorities, there also exist various newly immigrated communities and other historical communities that were established there during economic migrations in the period of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, e.g., the Serbian, Croatian, and Jewish communities. They do not have specific socio-political objectives comparable to those of national and linguistic minorities. Nor do they fall within the scope of the national and regional legislation on the protection of historical linguistic and ethnic minorities and for this reason they are not treated in this paper.

3. The Legal Protection of National and Linguistic Minorities and Decentralization as Specific Fields of Study within Diversity Management Theories

At the socio-political level, the concept of diversity management concerns the methods and techniques developed and applied by countries and their socio-political institutions in order to yield better socio-political results at the level of social cohesion, peace and overall development. In this context, national, ethnic, linguistic and cultural aspects of the diversity of social groups are considered to be a socio-political added value or function of the social, political and economic development of a country or a community. This concept represents a transition from the “multicultural jargon” made up of metaphors, optimistic stereotypes and slogans (e.g., valorization of differences, enrichment of cultures, opportunity to meet, merging horizons, diversity in harmony) (Piccone Stella 2003, 19), which often seem like statements of principles and desires, towards specific policies for the management of a modern multicultural society. Therefore, the concept of diversity management marks a leap from ideological multiculturalism to structural-functional models of the actual management of the interests of different social groups by the state and its institutions.

Within a part of the discipline studying minority issues (Palermo & Woelk 2003/2004; Schneckener 2004; Wolff 2004; Žagar 2007, 2008; Malloy 2008; Marko 2008), a theoretical framework on diversity management has been conceptualised. According to Žagar (2008, 321–322) diversity management is a broad framework and concept which includes strategies, policies, programmes and activities for the regulation and management of pluralities, diversities and asymmetries in contemporary societies. It devotes special attention to ethnic and cultural pluralism and relations, protection of minorities, prevention, management and/or resolution of social crises and conflicts (especially of those that are perceived and interpreted as ethnic conflicts).

The concept of diversity management is a complex notion, which should be defined on the basis of the object and the context of the study. This paper deals with an analysis of a specific example of ethnic diversity management that covers nationally, culturally and linguistically mixed or multicultural and multi-national environments consisting of several historically present national and linguistic groups. These groups recognize each other as different on the basis of their history, language and culture. They each have their separate structure of organizations and institutions aiming to maintain their respective ethnic and linguistic communities. Thus they enjoy cultural autonomy and, within more developed models of ethnic diversity management, they may also enjoy a certain political autonomy. In terms of power, according to Boileau et al. (1992, 12, 36–37), these groups can be defined as non-dominant minorities (possibly sharing the same territory), who live in an environment that is usually governed by the dominant ethnic majority. Consequently, the broader concept of diversity management can be defined as the management of relationships between dominant and non-dominant social groups which possess varying degrees of socio-political power and therefore also different possibilities of articulating and pursuing their collective interests in the processes of socio-political decision-making. There are therefore certain power relations between national majorities and national minorities that enable national and linguistic minorities to express their presence in a certain settlement area through the public use of a minority or regional language (e.g. through visible bilingualism on public signs and signposts, through the use of language in schools, public administration, media). Minority communities may pursue their interests through political participation of their representatives in decision-making and in determining development guidelines for their settlement area. As stated by Žagar (2007, 24), social cohesion weakens without appropriate tools which provide for democratic expression, reconciliation and coordination of all the interests expressed – thus also those of national and other ethnic minorities – as well as for the formulation of common interests. This can lead to a possible crisis and escalation of conflicts, most frequently when distinct communities and individuals feel exploited and/or discriminated against.

Various authors (Palermo & Woelk 2003/2004; Schneckener 2004; Malloy 2005; Marko 2008) analyse the legal protection of national and linguistic minorities within the framework of theories on diversity management. The legal framework of minority protection is the basis for diversity management and can, as such, be realized through special minority rights “guaranteed by international law (legally binding conventions, treaties, political declarations etc.), by the constitution, by a particular law on minority protection and various single laws (i.e. laws on language, education, media etc.)” (Schneckener 2004, 23). Palermo and Woelk (2003/2004) stress that in the model of diversity management, minority rights are not treated as a privilege, but rather as differentiated rules that are based on cultural diversity and that enable minorities to engage in the same activities as the majority. The authors emphasise that this “law of diversity” is based on three

elements: asymmetry of its application and its individual instruments, whereby the differentiation of the legal position of social groups becomes the norm; pluralism of legal sources and entities, which creates an obligation of mutual recognition, reciprocal consideration of each group's positions and interests, as well as mutual acceptance; and negotiation of its content in a practically contractual framework that transcends the pre-defined concepts of national majority and minority.

Schneckener (2004) categorizes the legal protection of minorities as one in the set of four strategies of recognition of ethnic or national groups within a country. In addition to the latter, he also defines institutionalized power-sharing systems between ethnic or national groups within the country, models of territorial autonomy and federalism, as well as bilateral and multilateral international régimes. However, legal systems for minority protection differ from each other as they take into consideration the social and political situation of the particular national or linguistic minority. Nevertheless, the author defines three categories of minority rights: equality rights, cultural rights, and the right to self-government and representation. Equality rights guarantee that minority members are treated equally to other members of society by state institutions and other socio-political entities without having to deny their group affiliation. Cultural rights allow them to express themselves freely and to preserve and develop their cultural and linguistic heritage. The right to self-government and self-representation acts as a negative or positive protection of the minority group in relation to the central government and the dominant majority. Negative protection protects the national minority against those governmental policies that might endanger the existence of the minority. Positive protection concerns the possibility of requesting those legal and political measures that enable the national minority to preserve its distinctiveness.

The legal instruments of minority protection occur in various forms of individual and collective rights that lie on the continuum between two ideal types, namely the basic human rights at the one end and equal representation and participation of ethnic groups and the political process at the other (Marko 2008, 271–273). This legal system allows for autonomy and integration, which are, according to the author, acceptable models of diversity management as they represent “functional prerequisites for the maintenance of different ethnic groups as well as a culturally pluralist social and political system” (Marko 2008, 272–273). The author further assesses that such models represent the best possible way of managing ethnic conflicts and societies with severe divisions, when they occur. At the same time, unless the politics of integration and autonomy are balanced, it may amount to the assimilation or ghettoization of ethnic groups. In this model, autonomy is seen by the author as a combination of three types: individual, cultural and territorial. Integration, on the other hand, is carried out through the representation and participation of minority members in the decision-making processes.

The problems of the decentralization of government systems and its impact upon the national and linguistic minorities in the field of ethnic diversity management has been dealt with by many authors (Lapidot 1997 in Benedikter 2007; Žagar 1997; Piergigli 2001; Keating 2001, 2007; O'Leary 2003; Pan & Pfeili 2003; Schneckener 2004; Wolff 2004; Benedikter 2007, 2008; Marko 2008). Decentralization refers to the transfer of functions and powers from the central government "downwards" to the level of constitutional, legal and political systems, and this then allows local authorities such as regions, provinces, municipalities or other local political-administrative units to enjoy various forms of administrative and political autonomy (Žagar 1997, 12). Occurring in the form of federalism, regionalism and local self-government, it allows for the expression of cultural pluralism and supports the preservation and protection of historical traditions of the national community's various components on a territorial basis, including the specificities of historical linguistic minorities (Piergigli 2001, 497). It represents the ways in which different social identities are allowed collective and free institutional expression (O'Leary 2003, 60).

Decentralization may directly affect the protection of ethnic and national minorities in cases where the typology of decentralization coincides with territorial autonomy and with the forms of the national minority's self-government, such as, for example, in Catalonia, Wales or South Tyrol. Decentralization thus occurs as a political-administrative system in which multiculturalism is the ideology in the choice of state policies towards its ethnic and national minorities. Such systems are aimed at preserving ethnic and linguistic diversity, not merely as a unique feature of the social fabric, but as recognized communities that in their participation in political processes and in the functioning of public administration are to the same as the subjects identifying themselves with the national majority. These cases therefore indicate a connection between the different forms of self-government and the political-administrative autonomy of regions, where the majority of the population belongs to a national or ethnic minority or is composed of speakers of the regional language. Decentralization may indirectly affect the level of the protection of national minorities in cases where they enjoy a cultural but not a territorial autonomy if they are not the majority population in a specific region or province, or if their members are dispersed. Such is the case with the national and linguistic minorities in FVG that are the focus of the present paper.

4. National and Linguistic Minorities in Friuli Venezia Giulia

The FVG region covers the tri-border area of Italy, Slovenia and Austria. Here, one can discern the presence of three minorities: the Slovene, the Friulian and the German-speaking minority groups. These three minorities can be distinguished

on the basis of their status, form, characteristics, structure, history and expression of collective interests. Their common denominator is autochthony, i.e., a historical presence in the area where they live today. In the Italian Constitution and legislation as well as in the legislation of the FVG Region, all three communities are identified as linguistic minorities, irrespective of their socio-political and socio-linguistic situation. The use of this term is controversial, as in this case the term is used by the majority nation in order to diminish the political significance of the presence of the three minorities. Consequently, the problem of minority rights is reduced to merely a problem of language, regardless of the fact that the nature of the minority is usually multifaceted and also includes the problem of political and wider social engagement. It should be noted, however, that the term "historical linguistic minorities" has become common in Italian legislation for practical reasons as well. Such a definition is the minimum possible common denominator of all legally protected types of minorities in the Italian peninsula.¹

4.1 The Friulian Linguistic Community

The Friulian-speaking area covers 177 municipalities in the provinces of Gorizia (*Gurize*), Udine (*Udin*) and Pordenone (*Pordenon*).² The main cohesive element of the Friulian-speaking community is the Friulian language with its various dialects. It is an example of a European regional language that is currently experiencing a period of revitalization owing mainly to its introduction into the school system and public administration.

Friulian is a Romance language that has been influenced by various languages with which it came into contact throughout history: by pre-Romance languages, such as Gaelic and Venetic, by Germanic languages such as Gothic, Langobardic and German, and by Slavic languages (Vicario 2006). Its development is associated with the political history of Friuli. Its existence has been conditioned by the fact that in the period of the Patriarchate of Aquileia between the eleventh and fifteenth centuries Friulian continued to be spoken among the common people, while the ruling elite spoke mostly German (Strassoldo 2006). The transition under the rule of the Venetian Republic in 1420 marked the beginning of the period of assimilation. The underlying causes were related to the reduction of the cultural and administrative-political autonomy of Friuli, the supremacy of the Venetian dialect over the Friulian language and the community's incorporation into the Italian cultural context (De Clara 1998; Janežič 2004). In 1866, the area of present-day Friuli became part of Italy.

Historical sources testify to the fact that the Friulian language has existed in written form for at least 1,000 years (Vicario 2006). In the nineteenth century, the people of Friuli, like other European nations, developed their own literature and language as the foundation of their regional identity. Modern Friulian comprises four basic dialects and the standard language with its official script. The latter has

been developed on the basis of the literary tradition of the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries, which was based on the dialect spoken in central Friuli.

The number of people fluent in Friulian has been estimated at approximately 500,000 speakers (Janežič 2004; Vicario 2006). If we take into account people's cultural and territorial sense of belonging to the Friulian community, these estimates amount to 850,000 people, a figure that represents 71 per cent of the regional population (according to the 1991 ISTAT census – Janežič 2004, 224). To these, we may also add a few thousand emigrants and their descendants around the world who still speak Friulian in their homes.³ Friulian is also used in different communicative situations outside the traditional family language environment, e.g., in schools, universities, cultural activities, public administration, media, as well as in work environments (Picco 2006).

There are numerous cultural associations active in the field of the valorization, preservation and development of the Friulian language and culture that are scattered across the entire territory (Cisilino 2006; Janežič 2004). They are active mainly in the field of theatre, music, film and literature. Media available in the Friulian language include various print and online media, as well as a private radio station. To a somewhat lesser extent, radio programs in this language are also present in the regional headquarters of Italy's national public broadcasting company RAI for FVG. Moreover, Friulian can also be heard in various private local radio and television stations.

4.2 German-Speaking Communities

German-speaking communities are linguistic minorities too. While these communities relate partly to German as their language of reference, some of them also continue to use their local dialects of German origin. In this case, we can therefore speak of the process of revitalization of archaic dialects as elements of a particularly relevant regional cultural and linguistic heritage. German-speaking minorities live in a total of five municipalities in three areas within the province of Udine, namely in Sauris (*Zahre*) and Timau (*Tischlbong*) in Carnia and in Val Canale (*Kanaltal*) near the Austrian border.

In regional legislation, the definition of German-speaking minorities occurs in the plural as it conveys a plurality of language uses and identities. The regional German-speaking communities have not developed a common collective identity as they did not participate jointly in the process of the German nation-building process and in the creation of the Austrian state. This was the case with the German population living near the Austrian border, which (similarly to the Slovenes) acquired the status of a border minority due to the placement of state borders in the twentieth century. Following the plebiscite of 1939, the majority of this population then moved to the Austrian side. In terms of linguistic and identity features, the two remaining German-speaking communities living in the

municipality of Sauris and in the village of Timau are more similar to the Greek-, Albanian- and Croatian-speaking islands of southern Italy. The variant of German spoken by these communities has preserved the archaic features from the period of their original settlement in this area.

The first German colonists began settling in Val Canale in the eleventh century, when the Church of Bamberg, which had its headquarters in the north-eastern corner of Bavaria, took control of this area (Goldschmidt 1998; Perini 1998). In 1759, the land was bought by the Habsburg Monarchy, which ruled there until 1919 when Val Canale was annexed to Italy. The history of the towns of Sauris and Timau is closely associated with the history of Friuli (Protto 2004). From the first German settlers, who probably settled in this area in the thirteenth century, the history of the territory was thus first associated with the rule of the Patriarchs of Aquileia, then, from 1420, with transition under the rule of the Venetian Republic and at the end of the eighteenth century with annexation to the Habsburg Monarchy. In 1866, the territory of both towns was incorporated into the Kingdom of Italy.

Val Canale is a highly multilingual area where one can even find cases of quadrilinguality (in German, Slovene, Friulian and Italian) (Kravina 2004; Janežič 2004). Today, German is spoken by about 15 per cent to 20 per cent of the population in the three municipalities of Tarvisio (*Tarvis*), Malborghetto-Valbruna (*Malborgeth*) and Pontebba (*Pontafel*). The German dialect spoken in this territory belongs to the family of Carinthian dialects and was also traditionally influenced by standard German. In the 1990s, German became part of the regular curriculum of primary schools in a variety of formats that provided for multilingual instruction together with Slovene and Friulian.

The respective dialects spoken in the towns of Sauris and Timau belong to the language group of Southern Bavarian German dialects (Protto 2004; Unfer 2004). According to the latest estimates, German dialect speakers in these places account for about 70 per cent of the population. The percentages vary greatly among the members of younger generations, who have a mainly passive command of these two dialects, and older people who still speak them. The dialects are used primarily within the family circle and in the workplace, in shops, in church and in public places. Since the early 1980s, the towns of Sauris and Timau have been known to incorporate their local German dialects into kindergartens and primary schools in addition to Friulian and Italian. Val Canale and the towns of Sauris and Timau have various cultural groups, associations and parishes which are actively engaged in the valorization of the local culture and language and which occasionally publish various publications in German and in the local German dialects.

4.3 Slovene National Community

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The Slovene national community is a border-area national minority in the traditional sense of the term. Its traditional settlement area in FVG covers a total of 39 municipalities (Bogatec 2004). From a formal aspect, according to the list of municipalities drawn up on the basis of the Norms Concerning the Protection of the Slovene Linguistic Minority in Region Friuli Venezia Giulia (Law 38/2001), the presence of this community is documented in a more narrow territory of 32 municipalities in the provinces of Gorizia (*Gorica*), Trieste (*Trst*) and Udine (*Videm* or *Viden*) in the areas of Benecia (*Benečija*), Resia (*Rezija*) and Val Canale (*Kanalska dolina*).⁴

The history of Slovenes now living in Italy is closely tied to the history of the entire Slovene nation and to the history of the Slavic tribes who had settled in this area in the sixth century. The beginnings of a national formation can be traced back to the sixteenth century, to the period of the Protestant Reformation and Counter-Reformation which marked the consolidation of the Slovene language (Sussi 1998). Slovene national identity in the modern linguistic, social and political sense began developing, for the most part, in the nineteenth century during the period of European movements for the establishment of modern nations and nation states. At that time, the first Slovene reading clubs, societies, and political organizations were formed within the Austrian Empire in Trieste and Gorizia. For a short period of time between 1797 and 1866, the regions of Benecia and Resia were joined together with the rest of the Slovene settlement territory under the Habsburg Monarchy, but after that they were annexed to Italy.

The Slovene settlement area of Trieste, Gorizia and Val Canale was severely affected by the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian Empire after World War I, which denoted a transition to Italian rule. This shift was followed by a period of forced assimilation which reached its peak during the Fascist period. What followed were various forms of violence launched against institutions, associations and representatives of the Slovene minority and other citizens of Slovene nationality (Stranj 1992; Sussi 1998). As a result, Slovenes had already begun developing forms of an illegal anti-Fascist resistance movement by the mid-1920s. From 1941 onwards, this movement found its outlet in the Liberation Front of the Slovene Nation that joined the Yugoslav National Liberation Army, an anti-Nazi and anti-Fascist resistance movement. During the post-war period, the Slovene settlement area bordering Italy was divided into several political units. Benecia and Val Canale were immediately re-annexed to Italy. The area of Trieste, Gorizia and Istria, on the other hand, was divided into two parts: Zone A comprising Trieste and Gorizia came under Anglo-American administration and Zone B covering Istria came under Yugoslavia. With the Paris Peace Treaty of 1947, Gorizia was annexed to Italy and thus separated from its hinterland. As for Trieste, provisions were made for the establishment of the Free Territory of

Trieste, which never actually came into effect. Trieste in Zone A and part of Istria in Zone B remained divided in this way until 1954, when under the London Memorandum an agreement was reached between the two parties, namely that Zone A with Trieste would remain under Italy, and Zone B with Istria would remain under Yugoslavia. This delineation was confirmed by the 1975 Treaty of Osimo concluded between Italy and Yugoslavia.

Members of the Slovene national minority in Italy speak both standard Slovene, which is the state and official language in the Republic of Slovenia, as well as its various local dialects or variants (Sussi 1998; Janežič 2004). Moreover, they are all fluent in standard Italian and/or its local dialects. In the province of Udine there are also examples of individuals who only speak a local Slovene dialect, but due to the lack of educational opportunity in the Slovene language, are not familiar with standard Slovene. They have since been given this opportunity through the establishment of a bilingual school centre in San Pietro al Natisone (*Špeter*) which first operated as a private school, but was subsequently incorporated into the state school system.

Unfortunately, there are no current estimates regarding the number of members of the Slovene minority in Italy in the twenty-first century. According to the most recent population estimate from 2002, Italy is home to 95,000 members of the Slovene minority, a total of 100,000 speakers of Slovene and a total of 183,000 people who understand the language (Bogatec 2004). There are considerable differences between the population estimates from the 1970s and the 1990s, according to which members of the Slovene minority number between 46,882 and 96,000 (Sussi 1998).

Slovenes in the provinces of Trieste, Gorizia and Udine have established a thriving network of activities, institutions and associations which focus mainly on cultural and sports activities in the framework of professional institutions or in grassroots associations, parishes and other centres (Sussi 1998; Janežič 2004). A system of Slovene-language state schools has been set up in the provinces of Trieste and Gorizia and a bilingual school centre in S. Pietro al Natisone in the province of Udine. Media communication in Slovene takes place at the level of public radio and television within the regional headquarters of Italy's national public broadcasting company RAI and through various forms of print and online media. As opposed to Friulian and German-speaking communities, the Slovene national community also has its political representatives elected to various administrative and political bodies, such as the Italian Senate, the Regional Council of Friuli-Venezia Giulia and other provincial and municipal bodies. These representatives are politically active either in Italian majority parties (especially in those of the centre-left, and to a lesser extent in the centre-right parties) or in the Slovene ethnic party.

5. Comparison of the Legislation of the Region Friuli Venezia Giulia for the Slovene, Friulian and German-Speaking Communities

Like the Regions of Valle d'Aosta, Trentino Alto Adige, Sicily and Sardinia, the Autonomous Region⁵ of Friuli Venezia Giulia⁶ enjoys a special autonomy (it is a so-called region with a special statute), which in Italy differs from the regular autonomy⁷ granted to the remaining fifteen regions (regions with an ordinary statute) (Brandt 1998, 141). The regions with special autonomy are distinguished from ordinary regions by different processes of approval of statutes and regulations of their operation, by the scope and quality of their powers and by the different organization of their financial relationship with the state (Bartole & Mastragostino 1997, 27).

Article 3 of the Special Statute of the Autonomous Region of FVG (Constitutional law 1/1963) acknowledges a general right to equality for all ethnic and linguistic elements in the region, but does not mention any explicit guarantees for the protection of the Slovene, Friulian or German national communities as constitutive elements of the regional society and administration. Nor does it envisage any specific minority legislation or exclusive powers in the field of minority protection, as is the case in the Autonomous Regions of Trento and Bolzano and Valle d'Aosta (Palici di Suni Prat 1998, 158; 2000, 102; 2002, 54). It was not until the beginning of the 21st century that certain significant changes occurred in this field. The Amendment of Section 5 of the Constitution (Constitutional Law 3/2001) granted new powers to the regions in the fields vital to the protection of minority languages, such as education (Cisilino 2004, 106). Moreover, on the basis of the provisions stipulated by Article 18 of Law 482/1999 for the protection of historical linguistic minorities, the Autonomous Region of FVG was granted the freedom to adopt additional forms of interventions in the field of linguistic minorities that were included in the rules for the implementation of its special statute. The contents of Article 3 of the Statute were thus converted into an actual competence based on Legislative Decree 223/2002 regarding the Rules for the Implementation of the Special Statute of the Autonomous Region of FVG, which envisaged a transfer of functions in the field of safeguarding the language and culture of historical linguistic minorities in the region. Over the following years, the Autonomous Region of FVG began developing its own legislation for the three linguistic minorities, thus assuming the role of an institutional policy-making body. This provided the legal basis for the adoption of Regional Law 26/2007 for the protection of the Slovene national minority, Regional Law 29/2007 for the protection of the Friulian language, and Regional Law 20/2009 for the protection of German-speaking minorities.

The more recent legislation of the FVG Region on the protection of minorities falls within the scope of Italian national legislation in this field and is exercised

at the regional level. The principle of the protection of national and linguistic minorities forms part of the Constitution of the Italian Republic. In it, Article 6 stipulates that the Republic shall protect its linguistic minorities by means of special provisions. Law 482/1999 for the protection of historical linguistic minorities, which forms an organic basis for the legal protection of historical linguistic minorities in Italy, represents a turning point at the level of state legislation. Its provisions bridge the former distinction between border-area minorities that are legally protected by specific statutes of countries and by international agreements, and other minorities of regional languages and language islands and archipelagos which were previously largely without legal protection (Palici di Suni Prat 2002, 106; 2006, 639; Cisilino 2004, 105). As stipulated in Article 2 and according to Article 6 of the Constitution, this law protects the language and culture of the "Albanian, Catalan, German, Greek, Slovene and Croatian population as well as of the citizens who speak French, Franco-Provençal, Friuli, Ladin, Occitan and Sardinian." The law regulates mainly the following areas of use of minority languages: education, public administration, public broadcasting, public, first and last names, toponymy, etc.

The Slovene national community acquired its State Protection Law 38 in 2001 when the state Framework Law 482/1999 for the protection of historical linguistic minorities, to which Article 1 of Law 38/2001 also refers, had already been in effect. The two Laws therefore share certain similarities in structure, content and certain procedures. Referring to the forms of minority protection in the post-war period, Law 38/2001 for the protection of the Slovene linguistic minority highlights the unique position of the this minority in Italy as compared to other historical linguistic minorities recognized by Law 482/1999.⁸ It recognises the Slovene national minority living in the provinces of Trieste, Gorizia and Udine as a single entity, whose members enjoy equal rights regardless of their province of residence. The Law covers various aspects of minority rights: the right to use one's name and surname in the mother tongue; to use spoken and written Slovene in interactions with public institutions; to use Slovene in elected assemblies and collegiate bodies; to a visual use of bilingualism and to bilingual topographical indications; to education in the minority language; to the restitution of property that had been confiscated during the Fascist period to Slovene organizations; to the protection of historic and artistic heritage also at the level of public planning, land use, economic, social and urban planning; to trade unions and trade organizations; to criminal proceedings related to expressions of intolerance and violence committed against members of the Slovene minority, etc.

5.1 Recognition of National and Linguistic Minorities

In 2007, the FVG Region adopted Law 26 on the protection of the Slovene minority, which represents an innovation⁹ when compared to previous regional

laws. As stated in its Article 1, the Law positions the protection of the Slovene national minority in the framework of the region's policy strategies aimed at protecting and developing the cultural and linguistic diversity within its territory and its national minorities—Slovene, Friulian and German. In that same year, Law 26/2007 for the protection of the Slovene national minority was followed by Law 29/2007 for the protection of the Friulian language, which outlines the language policy on the protection of the Friulian language. This law represents an expanded and updated version of the Regional Norms Concerning the Protection and the Promotion of the Friulian language and Culture (Law 15/1996), but does not replace it entirely. Law 29/2007 for the protection of the Friulian language does retain the principles expressed in the preceding regional law, as well as the definition of the Friulian-speaking area and a few other provisions. However, in comparison with Law 15/1996 for the protection of the Friulian language, Law 29 is of an executive type and significantly expands the preceding law, especially in the fields of education and language policy. In 2009, the FVG Region also adopted Law 20, which regulates the protection of German-speaking minorities. This represents another step towards the revision of the regional policy on the valorization of the linguistic and cultural features of FVG.

In the case of all three laws, the FVG Region regards its minorities as part of its historical, cultural and human heritage. The contents of the three laws express the legal principles of the protection of minorities as stipulated in Article 6 of the Italian Constitution and Article 3 of the Special Statute of the Autonomous Region of FVG, which recognizes the cultural and linguistic diversity of the region. At the same time they also refer to the most important international documents in the field of minority protection and the protection of human rights (the United Nations Universal Declaration on Human Rights, the European Convention on Human Rights, the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, the CEI Instrument for the Protection of Minority Rights, the OSCE Recommendations Regarding the Linguistic Rights adopted by Italy, and the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages). The regional laws also take into account the Law 482/1999 for the protection of historical linguistic minorities. It is clearly stated that the Autonomous Region of FVG shall be responsible for the protection of minorities on the basis of Legislative Decree 223/2002 or Rules for the Implementation of the Special Statute of the Autonomous Region of FVG regarding the transfer of functions related to the protection of language and culture of the historical linguistic minorities in the region from the national to the regional level. Law 26/2007 for the protection of the Slovene linguistic minority also refers to Law 38/2001 for the protection of the Slovene linguistic minority. The latter contains Article 5 on the protection of the German-speaking community in Val Canale and is therefore also referred to by Regional Law 20/2009 for the protection of German-speaking minorities. Law 29/2007 for the protection of the Friulian language refers to Law 15/1996, i.e., the first regional law for the protection of the Friulian language.

In general, the policies of the FVG Region related to the protection of its national minorities are oriented towards promoting the multicultural and multilingual situation of the regional and the Slovene-Italian and Austrian-Italian border areas. The FVG Region's vision for safeguarding individual national communities is thus included and integrated into the development of other regional national minorities and of interculturality as a feature and a value of the regional territory. It is based on cooperation between minority and majority operators and national minorities both at regional as well as at cross-border and international levels. To this end, it provides the possibility for new legal entities to be established. In the context of the laws for the protection of Slovene and German-speaking minorities, the FVG Region itself is an institutional entity which fosters cross-border and international relations for the benefit of these minorities. The FVG Region thus assumes an institutional role of supporting its minorities at the level of inter-minority cooperation.

The legislation of the FVG Region on the protection of its three minorities recognizes various institutions and organizations as essential for the preservation and development of individual minority communities. It therefore regards the national minorities as subjects that enjoy cultural autonomy. All three minorities differ with regard to the structure of their organization, and this is reflected in the fact that the procedures for the recognition of these institutions within individual regional laws differ as well. Their legal recognition is a prerequisite for obtaining funding. This is similar to the procedures stipulated by the preceding Regional Law 46/1991 for the Slovene national community. The institutions that have achieved recognition act as representatives of national and linguistic minorities and as interlocutors in relations with the FVG Region. Currently, their topics of discussion focus mainly on financing. In most cases, they do not concern the participation of the FVG Region in outlining the development policies for each minority community. The FVG Region plays an active role only in developing the language policies for the Friulian language, as that is the responsibility of ARLeF (*Agenzie regional pe lenghe furlane* - Regional Agency for the Friulian Language), which acts under its jurisdiction.

5.2 Public Use of Minority and Regional Languages

The three laws of the Autonomous Region of FVG governing national or ethnic and linguistic minorities do not explicitly grant official language status to the protected minority languages (Slovene, German and Friulian). However, neither do they explicitly state that the official language is Italian, as is the case in State Law 482/1999 for the protection of historical linguistic minorities. On account of the provisions allowing for the bilingual and multilingual operation of public administrations and a visible bilingualism or multilingualism in these languages, these minority languages have in practice acquired a status that is similar to that of an official language. Thus, Poggeschi (2009, 23) speaks of the "semi-official

linguistic recognition” of these languages, while Cevolin (2009, 27) uses the term “the region’s own language” in relation to the definition used in the Regional Law 29/2007 for the protection of the Friulian language. They are referring to cases where the public use of minority languages in public administration and in the toponymy of the settlement areas of the minority language speakers has been legally acknowledged.

In the context of the public use of minority languages, there are some common points between the legal provisions for the protection of the Slovene national minority in the Law 26/2007 and for the Friulian language in the Law 29/2007. In effect, they summarise the guidelines stipulated in state legislation on the public use of minority languages, or more specifically those stated in Laws 482/1999 for the protection of historical linguistic minorities and 38/2001 for the protection of the Slovene linguistic minority. They regulate bilingual operations of public administrations on the principle of territoriality, according to which the protected area is defined on the basis of the delineations of municipal administrations. Law 26/2007 for the protection of the Slovene national minority specifically addresses the public use of Slovene in relations between citizens and the FVG Region, as the public use of Slovene in relations between citizens and other state institutions is already covered by Article 8 of State Law 38/2001 for the protection of the Slovene linguistic minority. The provisions of Law 29/2007 for the protection of the Friulian language regarding the public use of Friulian do, on the other hand, concern all local institutions, their dependent structures and public service authorities. In both laws, the public use of the minority language in oral and written communication between an individual and a public institution refers to various forms of communication of public institutions with the public (notifications, publications, notices, etc.), various types of documents and forms issued by the institutions, as well as toponymy. The key difference between the public use of Slovene and that of Friulian as minority languages lies in the fact that the public use of Friulian is included in the general language policy plan, which must be established and then implemented by all public institutions in the legally defined area of the presence of this regional language. The General Language Policy Plan as introduced by Law 29/2007 for the protection of the Friulian language requires each public institution to apply its guidelines and at the same time set up its own language policy plan which will be a prerequisite for obtaining the funds for bilingual operation. This system also provides for assessments. However, as for the public use of Slovene, no provisions have been made for a general or specific language plan, nor for an institution which would coordinate language policy in this area.

At the level of regional legislation of FVG in the field of the protection of national and linguistic minorities, the relationship between the standardized language and various dialects is in the foreground. The dialects of Slovene origin in the province of Udine and of German origin in Sauris and Timau represent a

unique cultural wealth, which is why in the present legislation specific provisions have been made for these dialects that were not present in the State Law 482/1999 for the protection of historical linguistic minorities. Owing to a relative isolation of the speakers of these dialects, who have traditionally lived in the mountainous areas, these dialects have been preserved in their specific original forms, which have been lost elsewhere due to the effects of standardization and education in national languages. This also raises the question of the extent to which these dialects can still be used in communication in modern and post-modern society and in the era of information technology. It is also not clear whether or not it would be sensible to include these dialects in the language of public administration. Law 29/2007 for the protection of the Friulian language does not devote particular attention to dialects. Quite the contrary, it encourages the use of the standard language and script.

5.3 Education in Minority and Regional Languages

In the field of education in regional or minority languages, regional legislation shows considerable dissimilarities between individual national or linguistic communities. The reason for this lies in the differences between the individual models of teaching in minority and regional languages that have been established in the FVG region over the decades. As opposed to the Friulian and German communities, the Slovene minority has a separate state school system with Slovene as the language of instruction and a regional education office for Slovene schools. Despite the fact that Slovene schools have been re-established in the period after World War II, they are governed by national legislation dating back to the 1960s and 1970s.¹⁰ Friulian began to be introduced in kindergartens and schools in the 1990s, on the basis of the regional legislation of that time. This legislation has since been updated and expanded.¹¹ As for Friulian and German, these minority languages are incorporated into school programmes for a limited number of hours, whereas Slovene has the status of a language of instruction along with a separate school system. For Friulian as well as for German, both regional legislation and national Law 482/1999 for the protection of historical linguistic minorities are important milestones on the path towards consolidating the presence of minority languages in the state school system, while these laws do not introduce any significant novelties into Slovene-language education. The regional legislation concerning Slovene and German also places emphasis on cooperation with foreign universities with a view to consolidating the knowledge of these languages among the minorities. In the field of education, regional legislation is certainly the most elaborately detailed for the Friulian language, as it also makes provisions for a competent advisory committee and for a suitable language policy.

6. Conclusions

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Palermo and Woelk (2003/2004) propose three elements to the aforementioned “law of diversity”, and on these we base the conclusions in this study. The first element concerns the existence of legal instruments for an individual minority community. From this aspect, the system of legal protection of national and linguistic minorities in the FVG region is based on three regional laws and is therefore asymmetrical. Each national or linguistic community has its own law, the contents of which derive from its distinctive political and social as well as cultural and linguistic situation. Thus, the regional legislation that has been developed and adopted remains separate for each minority, albeit structurally similar. The asymmetry of minority protection is also associated with the requirements for each minority’s recognition of its linguistic and identity distinctiveness which is based on the dialects and the needs of their speakers. The laws for the protection of the Slovene national minority and of the German-speaking communities make separate provisions for the protection of the local languages.

Secondly, Palermo and Woelk (2003/2004) state that in the “law of diversity” there is a need for the pluralism of legal sources and subjects. From this perspective, the more recent regional legal system on minority protection is based on different legal texts. What all three laws have in common is the national legal framework of minority protection, represented by Law 482/1999 for the protection of historical linguistic minorities, and by international and European reference texts and documents in this area. The three laws vary at the level of their additional legal sources: Law 26/2007 for the protection of the Slovene minority draws on the contents of the State Law 38/2001 for the protection of the Slovene linguistic minority and other post-war legal sources; Regional Law 29/2007 for the protection of the Friulian language builds upon the preceding Regional Law 15/1996 for the protection of the Friulian language; while Regional Law 20/2009 for the protection of German-speaking minorities is a fundamental law as it is not preceded by any relevant legal sources at the state or at the regional level. The texts of all three laws express mutual recognition between the Italian national majority and the three minorities, and at the same time stress the importance of acceptance and cooperation between the three minorities. This is also an aspect given particular attention by Palermo and Woelk (2003/2004) in their theory on the models of diversity management.

The third question raised by Palermo and Woelk (2003/2004) as well as by some of the other aforementioned authors (Schnekener 2004; Marko 2008) concerns the area of the right to self-government, representation and political participation, which are not dealt with in the present paper. As this is a broad topic, it undoubtedly requires separate treatment. Based on the analysis presented, we can certainly conclude that the diversity management system in the FVG region provides the three recognized minorities with the right to equality and with cultural rights, while the aspect of self-government is not in the foreground. In

the Italian national legal system of minority protection, to which the legislation of the FVG Region is linked, territory definitely represents a fundamental element. It is the municipal territory that defines and limits the implementation of the stipulated minority rights. However, the same municipal territory has no specific forms of self-management that would draw upon the ethnic diversity of its population. And this, according to the authors on diversity management, is an essential condition for the success of minority protection and preservation of ethnic pluralism in terms of national minorities and regional languages.

The more recent legal framework of the FVG Region in the field of national and linguistic minorities raises a number of additional research questions concerning the implementation of the provisions made. At the forefront in this context are the socio-political circumstances allowing for their implementation, e.g., the political pressure exerted by the national majority, public opinion of the regional population, bureaucratic processes of the public administration, financial sustainability of the system of public use of minority languages and the intensity of use of minority rights by members of the minorities and speakers of minority languages.

Notes

- ¹ Among these we can find national minorities such as the Slovene one in the FVG region, the German one in South Tyrol and the French one in the region of Valle d'Aosta; regional languages such as Friulian, Ladin, Sardinian, Occitan, Franco-Provençal and Catalan; language islands or archipelagos such as the Albanian-Arbëresh- and Greek-speaking communities in southern Italy and the Croatian-speaking minority in the region of Molise.
- ² The legal definition of the Friulian-speaking area in FVG is evident from the list of municipalities from two Decrees by the President of the Regional Council of the Autonomous Region of FVG: Decrees 412/1996 and 160/1999. This list was subsequently confirmed by the Regulations on the Implementation of Law 482/1999 (Decree of the President of the Republic 345/2001). The Friulian language environment also includes certain areas around the city of Portogruaro in the province of Venice in the Veneto region (the towns of Gruaro, Teglio), Fossalta, San Michele al Tagliamento (Vicario 2006).
- ³ Members of these communities emigrated for economic reasons during the period extending from the annexation of the territory to Italy in 1866 to the 1960s. Especially numerous are emigrant communities in Northern Europe, Germany and Belgium, Canada, Argentina and Australia. These communities preserve contacts with their native Friuli through a network of expatriate organizations such as *Fogolârs furlans* (Friulian fireplaces) and *Fameis furlanis* (Friulian families) (Vicario 2006).
- ⁴ On the basis of popular demand, municipalities were added to this list if they had at least 15 per cent of the population, or one-third of municipal advisors. The Joint Institutional Committee in charge of issues related to the Slovene minority then finalised this list and submitted it for approval to the Ministerial Council in Rome. The list was approved on 3 August 2007, and on 12 September 2007 the President of the Republic Giorgio Napolitano signed the decree of its validity (Udovič 2007). There is a possibility for this list to be extended if additional municipalities apply for inclusion.
- ⁵ The region is the largest and most important of the territorial units of the Italian state. It is characterized by the autonomy of its political and administrative direction (Brandt 1998, 141). Its

aim is to pursue the local interests of the natural aggregates of population which extend past the provincial and municipal borders of a given territory (Bartole & Mastragostino 1997, 43). The structure of the Italian state also provides for smaller administrative units within the regions in the form of provinces, municipalities and metropolitan cities. Similarly to the regions, the principle of autonomy also applies to these smaller units (Vandelli & Mastragostino 1996, 24). They have the official authority to pursue the goals and interests of their communities on the basis of their political and administrative direction which is different and, in part, independent. Just like the regions, they also enjoy financial autonomy in terms of financial independence related to the expenses and the power to determine their own taxes (Palermo 2005, 191).

- ⁶ In Italy, this region represents a special case as it has been dealing with ethnic and linguistic pluralism since its creation in the 1960s, due to the presence of the Slovene, Friulian and German minorities. The Autonomous Region of FVG came into existence in 1964 as the last of the Italian regions (Constitutional Law 1/1963), following the resolution of the “Trieste issue” in 1954 by the London Memorandum (Bartole & Mastragostino 1997, 17–19; Bartole et al. 2003, 13). Due to the international dimension of this situation and the border between Italy and Yugoslavia, approval of the statute of this region was previously impossible. Upon the establishment of the region, Slovenes and Friulians saw the special autonomy as a possibility of explicit recognition, also through forms of cultural and political autonomy of minority communities, which was not brought into effect (Stranj 1992). In fact, some authors point out that the special statute of FVG is due primarily to the presence of the Slovene-speaking population (Paladin 1973, 18–19; Bartole & Mastragostino 1997, 25; Bartole et al. 2003, 40). In any case, the issue of national minorities was not in the foreground at that time. The aim of the special statute was the socio-economic integration of the provinces of Friuli and Venezia Giulia, as up to 1963 these areas were historically and economically detached (Paladin 1973, 18–19; Bartole and Mastragostino 1997, 25; Bartole et al. 2003, 40).
- ⁷ The administrative and political structure of the Italian state consists of twenty regions: Abruzzo, Apulia, Aosta Valley, Basilicata, Emilia-Romagna, Friuli Venezia Giulia, Calabria, Campania, Lazio, Liguria, Lombardy, Marche, Molise, Piedmont, Sardinia, Sicily, Tuscany, Trentino-Alto Adige, Umbria, Veneto.
- ⁸ The first international legal source that provided Slovenes living in Italy with a basic form of legal protection was the Special Statute of the London Memorandum of 1954, which laid down a number of political and social rights for the Slovene minority in Italy, namely the right to use their language in interactions with administrative services and judicial authorities; the right to bilingual public signs and bilingual printed publications; the right to bilingualism in educational, cultural and other organizations; the right to public funding intended for these organizations; and the right to instruction in their mother tongue and the right to preserve the existing Slovene schools (Stranj 1992). These rights continue to form a model for protection of the Slovene minority in Italy. The territorial scope of these rights was limited only in the area of the former Zone A, which covered the present province of Trieste. This meant that the Slovene population in the area of Gorizia and Udine was in a different legal position. In the area of Gorizia certain acquisitions from the period of the Allied Military Government between 1945 and 1947 were preserved (e.g., the public use of Slovene language and bilingual signs in some municipalities with an entirely Slovene population) (Troha 2003). In the area of Udine, the Slovene population was not legally recognized until 2001, and until the adoption of the Protection Law 38. The Italian government adopted the content of the London Memorandum in 1975 by signing the Treaty of Osimo (Petrič 1980). This treaty finally resolved the issue of the border between Italy and Yugoslavia (later Italy and Slovenia). It also promoted cooperation between the two countries and discussed their minorities.
- ⁹ Before this time, an important milestone in the regional legislation related to the protection of the Slovene minority and the Friulian language in FVG occurred in the 1990s. On the basis of the national legislation of the time, the Autonomous Region of FVG adopted a regional law, which for the first time explicitly dealt with the financing of Slovene organizations and institutions in Italy (Law 46/1991). The Region also developed a series of laws aimed at the protection of the

Friulian language, the most important of which was Regional Law 15/1996 for the protection of the Friulian language. It represents the first legal document establishing the policy for the protection of the Friulian language and a series of linguistic rights for the speakers of this language. In 1999, the Autonomous Region of FVG also introduced the first forms of providing financing to institutions active in the protection of German-speaking minorities. Prior to these laws, the treatment of minority issues was only non-systematically included in other regional laws relating to the protection of regional cultural heritage. In these very beginnings of regional legal protection of minorities, the dividing line between the protection of Slovenes, the Friulian language and the German minorities was not clearly drawn. These provisions expressed a general positive attitude towards regional linguistic diversity in the spirit of Article 3 of the Special Statute of the Autonomous Region of FVG. They did not make any provisions for a clear system of regulation of the minority issue. They were mainly concerned with more of a cultural promotion and protection of regional and minority languages. At the same time they pertained mainly to Article 9 of the Italian Constitution on cultural heritage, and less to Article 6, which deals specifically with the protection of historical minorities (Cisilino 2004).

¹⁰ The Slovene-language education system in the provinces of Trieste and Gorizia is subject to State Laws 1012/1961 and 932/1973 and Protection Law 38/2001 (Bogatec 2004).

¹¹ In the 1990s, three regional laws pertaining to the protection of the Friulian language and culture were adopted (6/1992, 36/1993 and 48/1993); these laws began to address a systematic protection of the Friulian language. They were later replaced by Regional Law 15/1996 for the protection of the Friulian language. The first of these (Law 6/1992) makes provisions for the regional funding of the initiatives for the benefit of research on the issues related to the Friulian language and culture in the historical, social, cultural, economic and linguistic context (Article 2), supports the distribution of publications and other tools of Friulian-language instruction in schools (Article 3) and the creation of publications and radio and television broadcasts in the Friulian language (Article 4). It is complemented by the second of the aforementioned laws (Law 36/1993), while the third (Law 48/1993) deals explicitly with the financing of Friulian language teaching in schools. With regard to education in the Friulian language another important law is Regional Law 3/2002, which provides for the funding of projects in this field from the regional budget (Picco & Carozzo 2008).

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Interaction of Foreign-Speaking Persons with the Public Services: Community Interpreting in Slovenia

The article presents a pilot study as part of on-going research on community interpreting. It investigates the interaction of foreign-speaking persons with officials in public service administration by exploring the settings, the participants and the characteristics of these situations through empirical survey research. Despite fair language skills, immigrants and officials often encounter difficulties in mutual understanding, whereas an impromptu interpreter may either mistakenly take control over the conversation or empower clients to exercise their rights. Above all, results show that different steps should be taken to enhance successful interlingual interaction and that employing trained interpreters for facilitating communication in the public services should become standard in order to enable equal opportunities for all, regardless of immigrant background.

Keywords: interlingual interaction, community interpreting, Slovenia, communication, public services, immigrants, officials.

Sporazumevanje tujegovorečih oseb v postopkih pred državnimi organi in javnimi službami: tolmačenje za skupnost v Sloveniji

Članek predstavlja pilotno študijo, ki je del raziskovanja tolmačenja za skupnost. Predmet empirične raziskave je sporazumevanje med tujegovorečimi osebami in uradniki v državnih organih in javnih službah. Kljub ustreznemu jezikovnemu znanju se migranti in uradne osebe pogosto srečujejo s težavami v medsebojnem sporazumevanju, pri čemer priložnostni tolmač lahko ali zmotno prevzame nadzor nad pogovorom ali pa opolnomoči stranko, da uveljavi svoje pravice. K boljšim možnostim za uspešno medjezikovno sporazumevanje lahko pripomorejo različni ukrepi, sodelovanje s šolanimi tolmači v javnih službah pa bi moralo postati standard, ki bi omogočil enake možnosti vsem, tudi priseljencem.

Ključne besede: medjezikovno sporazumevanje, tolmačenje za skupnost, Slovenija, komunikacija, javne službe, priseljenec, uradna oseba.

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1. Introduction

Globalisation and increased migration flows make immigrants a fact of today's world; everyday interaction across languages is more visible than ever and the situation in Slovenia is no different. The consequence is more frequent interlingual contacts in the public services, and this, too, is finally receiving more attention. As a means to the equal treatment of all, community interpreting and translation represent a reference point in the level of democracy by safeguarding linguistic human rights of the weakest members of society (Gorjanc 2010, 141).

The article presents a pilot study as a part of on-going PhD research and looks at immigrants' experiences with officials in public service administration in Slovenia from the point of view of community interpreting.

2. Methodology and the Research Question

Rather than setting up a hypothesis, the article poses a research question as a starting point for the exploration of interlingual communication and interpreter-mediated interaction in the contacts of foreign-speaking persons in Slovenia – predominantly immigrants who do not yet understand or speak Slovenian – with public services and their officials. The focus is on general and social service administrative offices as the least regulated fields, which at the same time encounter a high number of foreign-speaking clients. The objective is to look at the settings, the participants and the characteristics of these situations, and to finish by considering the potential consequences.

Discussion and analysis of that part of the broader research presented here primarily draw on empirical research in the form of a survey with (online) questionnaires, while the mixed methods approach (Hale & Napier, forth coming), which is employed otherwise, is here only applied complementarily.

The pilot study survey was conducted in a non-probabilistic sampling method (ibid.) using both snowball and especially opportunity sampling, whereby invitations were sent to groups having an expected high proportion of immigrants. Asylum seekers were not included in the sample, since while they have this status they are officially granted an interpreter, even outside their Asylum centres when it is needed. The results are, as expected, more subjective than with probability sampling; however, since the study is qualitative, the respondents' representativeness is not of the highest importance. Bilingual Slovenian-English questionnaires were mostly filled in using the online survey tool *Ika – EnKlikAnketa*¹ and also on paper, from autumn 2012 to spring 2013. In total, 128 respondents adequately filled in the questionnaire, but as not all questionnaires are complete, the proportion of valid answers is calculated for analysis.

To gain another perspective on these situations, a separate pilot survey was aimed at the views of the officials involved: online questionnaires were sent to

administrative offices and social work centres across Slovenia to gain feedback about language in these situations. These two settings were chosen as being less regulated and more likely to deal with a wide immigrant population. In addition, a higher reply rate was expected than, e.g., the response in health care, which was the subject of a previous study (Morel 2009), or in the police, where information is given by the central public relations office, distancing it from the practical issues of direct language contact. Also, results for Slovenia are expected to be analogous to Pöchhacker's study (1997) for Austria, in that the need for mediated communication in the general public services and health care is predominantly met informally by ad-hoc interpreting (Pöchhacker 1997, 222), while further studies in Slovenia will still be welcome to complement the data collected here for other domains. So far, the leaders or human resources managers of 48 offices adequately responded by filling in the data for their entire teams with regard to foreign language knowledge, meeting foreigners and encountering interlingual interaction in their public service offices.

3. Foreigners in Slovenia

On the surface, Slovenia has traditionally been a fairly homogenous country from a linguistic point of view: the last detailed data on mother tongue from the Population and Household Census in 2002 reported 87.75 per cent Slovenian mother tongue speakers and a total of 8.06 per cent native speakers of languages from other former republics of Yugoslavia (Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia 2002, cf. Vertot 2009, 57).

Immigrants from former Yugoslav republics, who have been important economic migrants since the 1970s, still embody a high proportion of the 11.1 per cent of immigrants (Dolenc & Šter 2011) – inhabitants with their first domicile abroad – but so far they have not meant major communicative issues, due to the mutual history (Gorjanc & Morel 2012, 53–54)². The number of other foreigners in Slovenia has however risen increasingly after both Slovenia's entry into the European Union and the 2007 enlargement; and, despite a considerable numerical decline caused by the economic crisis, the net migration of foreigners in Slovenia is persistently positive. After two years' stagnation, the share of foreigners has risen again – to 4.4 per cent (Razpotnik 2013).

Nowadays immigrants come, frequently as asylum seekers, from very diverse and previously unfamiliar linguistic environments, and this only worsens potential difficulties in the facilitation of successful communication in the public sphere. Theoretically, this is where community or public service interpreting come into the picture, to enable the comprehension process.

In this article, community interpreting is understood in the general and broad sense as discussed by Pöchhacker (1999), meaning "interpreting in the institutional settings of a given society in which public service providers and individual clients

do not speak the same language” (Pöchhacker 1999, 126), whereby the “intra-social language contact settings are limited neither to particular institutions nor to particular language or cultural groups” (Pöchhacker 1999, 127).

4. The Legal Background and the Provision of Community Interpreting

The right to use one’s own language in front of state officials and in public services in Slovenia is by the Article 62 of the Constitution of the Republic of Slovenia a constitutional right, and is also written in the Article 62 of the General Administrative Procedure Act.

The target group with the most comprehensively applied interpreting regulations in Slovenia is the deaf, namely through the Act on the Use of Slovene Sign Language, but as a field of its own with specific practical aspects, sign language interpreting is exempt from our research.

In Scandinavian countries the provisions for interpreting in administrative and other settings are more detailed and advanced: interpreting services are understood as part of the integration process in Finland, where they cover all basic needs (Pöllabauer 2008, 4); and immigrants in Sweden are entitled to interpreting services, which are mostly paid for by society (Niska 2004, 8). The situation is different in Slovenia, which follows a legalistic attitude to interpreting, according to Ozolins (2010). As in most European countries, it is only for specific fields, such as court interpreting (Pöllabauer 2008, 3), and particularly vulnerable groups, such as asylum seekers, that linguistic rights are explicitly regulated in the relevant acts (e.g. Criminal Procedure Act, Minor Offences Act, Courts Act, International Protection Act; cf. Kocijančič-Pokorn et al. 2009).

The Patient Rights Act ignores the issue completely, even though successful communication presents a basis for the doctors’ ability to exercise their explanatory duty, meaning that interpreting should be perceived as key to satisfactorily treating a foreign-speaking patient. Other than this, interpreting in healthcare and public services is insufficiently regulated, and only by the aforementioned General Administrative Procedure Act, which in its Article 62 vaguely states that a person has the right to follow the course of the procedure through an interpreter if they do not speak the language of that procedure, whereby the administrative body is obliged to instruct such persons of this possibility in a language the party understands. The administration of costs depends on the interest in the procedure: the authorities do not pay for procedures on a client’s demand but only for those in the public interest (Upravna posvetovalnica 2012), although this may be debatable as mutual understanding and hence interpreting is requisite for officials to perform their duty (Wadensjö 1998, 13), and this places it also in the public’s interest.

Taking into account all of the above, the right to interpreting can and should be applied on the principle of subsidiarity: the absence of a specific law (so-called *lex specialis*) suggests that the most general law, i.e. the General Administrative Procedure Act, applies, and any foreign-speaking person in Slovenia has a legal right to follow the administrative procedure through an interpreter (Morel 2009, 35).

Exact comparison to other European countries with respect to community interpreting provisions is problematic, as “many countries rely on ad-hoc solutions” and there is “a lack of complete and exhaustive data” (Pöllabauer 2008, 6.). The question whether and how this legal ground is translated into practice in Slovenia is precisely what we try to ascertain in this article.

5. Public Services – The Settings of Interlingual Communication

Interlingual interaction in the public sector in Slovenia has become the subject of academic interest fairly recently, originating mainly with integration (Medvešek & Bešter 2010; Medica et al. 2010), linguistics (Gorjanc 2010) and increasingly in interpreting studies (Gorjanc 2013; Kocijančič-Pokorn et al. 2009; Morel et al. 2012), but research is now steadily increasing. On the other hand the use of minority languages in ethnically mixed areas has a longer tradition and has received more attention but is not part of the present research.

In this respect Kejzar and Medved (2010), from the viewpoint of integration studies, focus through interviews on immigrant rights and their contacts with state administration and institution officials, and this is also the interest of Balazić Bulc and Požgaj Hadži (2013), using questionnaires to analyse, especially, the communication issues of migrants from South Slavic areas in a predetermined set of public service environments.

Our pilot study, on the contrary, has not strictly limited recounting experiences in interlingual interaction to specific situations, but has presupposed a certain logic in the occurrence of such contacts. As understood above, only legal settings regulate interpreting by not only foreseeing it, but requiring it in the procedures, thus making the arrangement of interlingual interaction in court and the police of lesser interest in this article. Also, legal interpreting and translation has been a subject of additional regulation with the Directive 2010/64/EU on the Right to Interpretation and Translation in Criminal Proceedings, obliging EU Member States to implement minimum standards.

Any immigrant to Slovenia will sooner or later pay a visit to an administrative unit: to apply for a residence permit, to arrange health insurance at the Health Insurance Institute of Slovenia, to be entered in the tax register at the tax office administrative unit, and also, perhaps, to apply for financial assistance at a social work centre. Those still in the education process will deal with a school

or university enrolment office; the unemployed may come in contact with the Employment Service of Slovenia; any accidents or criminal offences will result in meeting the police and/or the courts; while contact with the health services depends on an individual's health, but eventually does mean finding a general physician in a community health centre, and even entering into hospital care or going to a medical clinic for people without health insurance. The practical implementation of these situations was questioned in our pilot study.

Results confirm the above-mentioned propositions. Multiple answers were possible. Only 9 per cent of respondents claim not to have had any contact with the public services as others arranged everything for them. The majority, 80 per cent, encountered the city administrative unit (e.g. Tobačna Ljubljana), 62 per cent visited a doctor, a community health centre or a hospital, 50 per cent went to the Tax Administration of the Republic of Slovenia, 47 per cent visited an education institution and 38 per cent the Health Insurance Institute of Slovenia; for more details, see Table 1. Besides these most basic and common contact points, open answers include other potential encounter settings, mainly in the private sector, such as banks, phone companies, etc. These are excluded from this research as we can imagine that their commercial nature influences their willingness to overcome linguistic barriers as an example of positive discrimination.

Table 1: Immigrants' encounters with the public services (multiple answers possible).

None. Others arranged everything and the immigrant was not present.	9 %
City Administrative Unit (e.g. Tobačna, Ljubljana)	80 %
Doctor's; Community Health Centre; hospital	62 %
Health Insurance Institute of Slovenia	38 %
Employment Service of Slovenia	17 %
Information Point for Foreigners	9 %
Tax Administration of the Republic of Slovenia	50 %
Court	2 %
Police	23 %
Education institution (school or university)	47 %
Other:	24 %
- Bank	7 %

6. Participants in Interlingual Interaction in the Public Services

Over and above the common casual complaints about complicated procedures, endless paperwork, long delays or unfriendly officials, language may present a major obstacle for fulfilling an errand in the public services: interlingual contact adds a new dimension to the everyday social communication, especially when a

third person, e.g. an interpreter, is present for its facilitation (Wadensjö 1998). Considering that participants in these situations in the public services are officials and immigrants, sometimes accompanied by a relative or friend, let us look at what they bring to the communication process.

6.1 Public Service Officials

Previous research reports public servants as ignorant to foreigners' difficulties with the Slovenian language, as possessing overly limited foreign language skills and as finding excuses in the fact that Slovenian is the official language in Slovenia (Kejžar & Medved 2010, 101ff.). Presumably, all this will reduce opportunities for a possibly even partly successful communicative interchange to achieve the administrative goal.

Representatives of the public services agree that non-Slovenian-speaking clients are, quite frequently or at least sometimes, present: 38 per cent have daily and 13 per cent weekly experiences with them (see Table 2).

Table 2: Public servants' report on the frequency of clients with communicative difficulties in Slovenian.

Every day	38 %
At least once a week	13 %
At least once a month	20 %
A couple of times a year, very rarely	29 %

To what extent, then, can officials really communicate in foreign languages? The results are only estimates by the heads of departments, but nevertheless they show that there remains a high number of persons speaking at least elementary Croatian/Bosnian/Serbian, and that there are still people who do not speak or understand English.

These items of information correlate with a question for migrants, namely which language the public official spoke in order to help facilitate communication. Although 67 per cent of officials were reported to have spoken only Slovenian, they also used English (50 per cent), one of the South Slavic languages to help out (Croatian, Bosnian, Serbian – 10 per cent) or another language (3 per cent).

6.2 Immigrants and Their Linguistic Helpers

Respondents originate in a great variety of countries, where only a few language groups can be said to stand out, e.g. English (17 per cent), Macedonian (12 per cent) and three former-Yugoslavian languages: Croatian, Bosnian and Serbian with joint 11 per cent. Nonetheless, almost all respondents stated they can communicate in English (97 per cent); other frequently mentioned foreign

languages were French, German and Croatian (27 per cent each), Serbian (23 per cent), Spanish (19 per cent), Bosnian (18 per cent), Macedonian, Italian (14 per cent each), and Russian (13 per cent).

Despite their presumably broad language knowledge, immigrants usually arrive in Slovenia without understanding and speaking much Slovenian, verifying the results of Balažič Bulc and Požgaj Hadži (2013, 192): 74 per cent feel that they did not understand anything, 19 per cent said they had basic language skills, while only 7 per cent thought that they were at either intermediate or advanced level. Incidentally, their language skills do increase with time: only 17 per cent report remaining a complete beginner, 31 per cent claims to possess basic, 32 per cent intermediate and 19 per cent advanced language skills. Turning our attention back to those who have just arrived, 52 per cent went on an errand to a public office alone (*cf.* Balažič Bulc & Požgaj Hadži 2013, 192) and the other 48 per cent had assistance (see Table 3).

Table 3: Immigrants' report on assistance when running errands at public services.

None – went alone.	52 %
Slovenian native-speaking relative/friend.	37 %
Foreign-speaking relative/friend who speaks Slovenian better.	8 %
Foreign-speaking relative/friend who speaks English/another language better.	1,5 %
Interpreter/translator.	0 %
Interpreter/translator assigned at the public service office.	1,5 %

We can explain their seeking help (or not doing so) by realising that in administrative procedures, at the client's demand and their own interest, it is they who decide and pay for interpreting, unless the procedure is in the public interest. Customarily, as already shown in previously-mentioned data, relatives and friends are recruited for this purpose, but sometimes also volunteers from non-governmental organisations (NGOs), who offer individuals, mainly refugees, psychosocial aid and assist them with integration into society.

Only 19 per cent of respondents reported having used an interpreter, yet their replies as to who that interpreter was show that many people do not differentiate a professional interpreter from an amateur one, since also relatives, friends and colleagues from work were mentioned as interpreters.

7. Interlingual Interaction in Practice

So how do participants' characteristics affect the communication process and how successful is it in the end? Of those immigrants who freely spoke about their individual experiences, 20 per cent were positive about officials' helpfulness and felt that their English was sufficient, whereas 43 per cent reported that public

servants did not speak English sufficiently and showed a negative attitude even to foreigners who tried to speak Slovenian (6 per cent). Information is most commonly missing, due to information being scattered or taken for granted.

Despite what has already been written about language skills, leading officials claimed that language never represented an insurmountable problem and did not necessitate a repeated meeting. Yet 5 per cent of responding immigrants replied that language got in the way of a successful outcome, meaning that they could not make any arrangements and had to have another appointment. The majority of officials and immigrants, however, believe that goodwill can overcome these obstacles, whereas the rest think that language does not affect the situation that much (see Table 4).

Table 4: Perception of success in interlingual communication in the public services.

	Officials	Immigrants
Without any problems, the meeting was successful.	35 %	36 %
Language was a bit of barrier, but good will helped to solve all problems.	65 %	57 %
Language was too big a problem; the client could not make any arrangements and had to come again.	0 %	5 %
Other	0 %	2 %

The importance of goodwill has already been discussed (see Kocijančič-Pokorn et al. 2009, 177) and it recurs in some of immigrants' responses, as here:

It would help if staff didn't try to send you away or seek assistance without first trying very hard to understand what you were asking for (Immigrant comment 1).

On rare occasions, however, communication with Slovenians proved to be quite a challenge, but in my opinion, this is mostly related to lack of kindness or goodwill (Immigrant comment 2).

This is particularly important when communication has to involve two languages without an (ad-hoc) interpreter. It is the stronger participant, namely the official as the holder of the social power (Garber 2000, 16), who decides how interaction will develop and on whose goodwill it all depends. Sometimes, officials call for a more or less abrupt end of the interaction, as Pajnik (2010, 32) reports a doctor who demanded that a patient learn Slovenian before ever returning (which is especially problematic in healthcare as it questions the ethics of the doctor's profession); or an official is simply unable to speak a foreign language, as here:

In the [hospital] I asked at the information desk for directions and the response I received was "I don't speak English" and then the person turned away. I also had the same experience in the [administrative office], I was trying to complete my residency papers and the worker refused to deal with me as I didn't speak Slovenian. I had to go back with a friend to translate (Immigrant comment 3).

However, even the opposite situation may cause the same effect: a beginner in Slovenian may try their best to communicate in Slovenian but quickly encounters impatience and intolerance:

I've had some experience of trying to communicate in basic Slovenian by myself. / ... / This I found virtually impossible. In one telephone conversation the person in question hung up the phone while I was mid-sentence, asking them (in Slovenian) to please repeat what they said but slowly so I would understand better (Immigrant comment 4).

At the administrative unit I spoke Slovenian, the problem was that the official did not want to speak slowly and clearly in her own language. Communication at the administrative unit / ... / was very difficult especially because of the negative attitude of officials to foreigners. I have spoken Slovenian there from the start, but I fear every visit nevertheless (Immigrant comment 5; translation AM.).

The officials' responses regarding using other languages, on the contrary, vary somewhat, but in general they feel that while Slovenian is the official language, using foreign languages represents a non-standard procedure and is mostly used to give basic information; after which they require the presence of an interpreter.

Communication in a foreign language is first and foremost the goodwill of the public servant, when they possess more than enough foreign language skills in the profession or field of their expertise (Official comment 1; translation AM).

The official language is Slovenian. At the Department for Foreigners (and the Register Office), the legal wording on official language use regularly needs to be bypassed. If we dismiss a client for not understanding their language and telling them to come with an interpreter next time, we are instantly labelled as heartless. Officials' language skills are simply so-called added value, while it is not appreciated (i.e., paid for) by the superiors (Official comment 2; translation AM).

However, as explained above, it is the official's legal duty to inform the party of their right to use an interpreter, and to do this in a language that the party understands. Accordingly, speaking a foreign language cannot be regarded as simply "added value."

Let us finally look at the implications of interaction with unequal language knowledge. Immigrants as well as officials report uncertainty in mutual understanding:

We've been twice to handle registering addresses and both times, the official who helped didn't speak any English (this is quite funny because this is supposed to be the section that handles foreigners!). Even though we managed to achieve what was needed, it was difficult not knowing exactly what the official was saying, especially since this was quite an important part of the residence process (Immigrant comment 6).

At the administrative unit, we could get by with poor Slovenian/English, but we were unsure if we got the "correct" answer (Immigrant comment 7).

To some extent, this can be at least partly prevented if immigrants receive help from friends or colleagues with similar experiences, i.e., help to learn about the administrative requirements facing them, enabling them to act more efficiently:

Before going to any of these institutions I asked my native Slovenian colleagues what I would have to do there and what to expect (Immigrant comment 8).

You need to know exactly what questions to ask, in what order, and then like magic, the doors open wide and you can finally complete your errand (Immigrant comment 9).

At the same time, giving important legal instructions to persons who barely understand Slovenian (*cf.* Kejžar & Medved 2010, 103) or allowing children to act as interpreters presents difficulties for public servants as well:

When filing applications or when a client wants information, children often act as interpreters, since they have a much better command of Slovenian. But there is always a question as to whether they understood the matter correctly (Official comment 3; translation AM).

The last example is already one of the issues of using impromptu interpreters. As they are not aware of playing multiple roles (of a caring relative and a neutral interpreter), a serious risk exists of their overseeing the actual client and taking over the conversation (*cf.* Kejžar & Medved 2010, 100):

Even if you want to try to speak or understand, they just want to speak Slovenian so they all the time ask my girlfriend instead of trying to speak with me, even if I was able to understand (Immigrant comment 10).

Similarly, one of the interviewed immigrants reported feeling left out when taking her husband along to arrange papers, since public servants would only talk to him, a Slovenian native speaker. Conversely, NGO employees, who offer aid in administrative matters especially to refugees in the immigration process, report that linguistic assistance minimises officials' negative attitudes by making them aware of everyone's rights and obligations. Enabling interaction in this way is, in fact, also the purpose of community interpreting: to empower the weaker members in the conversation by allowing them to fully exercise their rights.

8. Conclusion, or: How to Enhance Successful Interlingual Interaction in the Public Services

To sum up: Increased migration draws questions of multicultural and multilingual societies closer to Slovenia, and with it the issues of interlingual interaction in the public services. Throughout the public services, officials meet immigrants and their linguistic helpers in interlingual contact, trying to arrange matters (whereby these attempts have no particular consequences on the procedure). However, according to our survey, the majority of foreign-speaking clients in the public

services feel disadvantaged, receiving unequal treatment due to their limited knowledge of Slovenian. They perceive that even access to basic information about the necessary procedures regarding, e.g., paper work in the public services, is highly restricted for foreign-speaking persons and difficult to grasp; thus the administration process is slowed down, and they are compelled to ask ad-hoc interpreters for assistance; this makes them even more vulnerable. Public servants, on the other hand, argue that their knowledge of foreign languages is not considered as part of their job qualification, which means that using it presents added value to their work.

In response to the issues presented above and with the number of such encounters rising, measures should be considered at the state-level and with long-term vision; already now, however, interim solutions should be discussed. Even though our study only focuses on selected fields of the public services where interlingual communication takes place, its practical application to the enhancement of successful communication between foreign-speaking persons and public servants can be generalised and expanded to all potential settings of this type of interaction, including the legal environment, health care, employment services, etc. If we admit that the ideal answer to the demands of the market is to systematically build up the rudiments of community interpreting – if not yet its complete professionalization –, the variety of situations in need of interpreting means that “it is practically unavoidable that ‘natural interpreting’ by family members or friends will persist at least in a number of less formal circumstances” (Pöchhacker 1999, 135). Nevertheless, single steps can be proposed to support client-oriented public services.

Initial information about administrative procedures in the public services for foreign-speaking persons can be improved. Additional research will be necessary to find out why the existing information does not suffice; such research may be carried out both online and using printed sources, as prepared by the Info Point for Foreigners³ in form of different leaflets in various languages. A possible explanation may be the problems involved in their distribution and elimination.

As explained above, the official has to inform the party of their right to use an interpreter in a language that the party understands. Consequently, the need for public servants to speak foreign languages should not only be acknowledged, but also required and continuous language learning appropriately stimulated. As Bešter (2003, 84) points out, integration is, or should always be, a reciprocal process, involving adaptation both on the part of immigrants as well as on the part of the majority. In this respect, public servants should be specially trained for interlingual communication as the users of interpreters. In this way, they will not only understand interpreters’ work better, but also understand the nature of each situation and be thus able to react suitably.

This can best be performed by interdisciplinary cooperation, as is for example pointed out by Corsellis (2006), to connect researchers, trainers and practitioners.

Let us just mention two best-practice examples in this area, both of which come from the field of interpreting studies research.

First: Perez and Wilson (2011) of Heriot-Watt University, Edinburgh, cooperated with the Scottish Police in reciprocal training, on the one hand offering practice in interpreting to students, and on the other hand providing the police officers with knowledge about the nature of, and raising their awareness about, the participants' roles in interpreter-mediated interaction.

Second: a government project in Norway (Radanović Felberg 2013, 57) showed that those who used interpreting in the public services expressed the need for more information on using and working with interpreters in everyday situations; this resulted in various ad-hoc training sessions being conducted all over Norway, and also in specific shorter, on-the-job training courses for public officials run by the Oslo and Akershus University College for Applied Sciences. The development project Communication via Interpreter for Public Service Employees enabled the synchronisation of interpreters' and interpreter-users' training, so that their functions would not be contradictory, but result in "a shared understanding of their areas of responsibility", contributing to better job satisfaction for all the parties involved (ibid.).

Regrettably, the Slovenian environment only rarely enables the employment of professional interpreters; many times the circumstances do not allow this, be it for emergency reasons, a lack of funds, or the non-availability of an interpreter for a specific language. In these cases, it is relatives, friends, acquaintances, colleagues or other public servants who enable basic conversation by acting as ad-hoc interpreters. Therefore basic steps should be taken to make things easier: on the officials' side, they should allow clarification questions and with allowance for extra time, while maintaining control over the meeting and giving information. Especially in interaction with untrained interpreters, shorter sentences and checks on understanding with the client are helpful. The ad-hoc interpreter, on the other hand, should be aware that this role requires respecting some simple rules (adapted from the IMIA Medical Interpreting Standards of Practice⁴): to translate everything to everyone concerned without filtering any information; to try to be as neutral as possible to both the client and the official; to say if certain words are not understandable, and especially when they are crucial for the procedure – in which case it is better to check together online, etc., rather than using a wrong word; and to keep the content of the meeting confidential for the participants alone. Using ad-hoc interpreters who may be available should however be considered as an emergency strategy only.

Engaging trained interpreters for errands in the public services, i.e., in community interpreting, not only as is already expected in conference and court interpreting, but also, especially, in healthcare, mental health and all other complex professional settings, will allow fair interaction and enable equal possibilities for all in society.

Notes

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- ¹ “Ika” is an online tool for designing web surveys, established by Social Informatics at the Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Ljubljana. For more see website <http://www.ika.si>.
- ² For more on the status of South Slavic languages in Slovenia, see Balažič Bulc & Požgaj Hadži (2013, 187–188).
- ³ Info Point for Foreigners is a part of the project “Promotion of Employability, Education and Social Integration of Migrant Workers and Their Families”, run by the Employment Service of Slovenia with the objective to increase job opportunities, enhance their work effort and facilitate entrepreneurship to foreign workers and their family members. Online information is provided in five most commonly used foreign languages. Information for foreigners in different languages is also available on a special website prepared by the Ministry of the Interior at <http://www.infotujci.si>. For more see Employment Service of Slovenia (2008).
- ⁴ For more on these standards see International Medical Interpreters Association (1995).

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Abhimanyu Sharma

The Language Question in the EU and India

The main objective of the paper is to undertake a brief comparative study of the language question in the EU and India in order to analyze the role of power in the formulation of language policies. The basic ground for comparison is provided by their similar political and linguistic situations. Apart from being two of the largest linguistic communities in the world, they exhibit stark similarities in their political structure and objectives, as both of them function on principles of democracy and 'unity in diversity', and pursue common goals of bringing equality (including linguistic equality) to their citizens and protection of linguistic minorities. As the research into linguistic policy and planning is driven by examining 'domains of enquiries', the basic research approach is to analyze how far the objectives of these polities correspond to the measures undertaken to achieve them.

Keywords: language planning, language policy, Indian linguistic policy, European linguistic policy, European Union.

Jezikovno vprašanje v EU in v Indiji

V tem prispevku je avtor predstavil kratko primerjalno študijo o jezikovnem vprašanju v Evropski Uniji in v Indiji, v kateri je raziskoval, kolikšna je vloga moči pri oblikovanju jezikovnih politik. Indija in EU imata podobne politične in jezikovne razmere in to podobnost predstavlja osnovo za primerjavo. Poleg tega sta to dve med večjimi jezikovnimi skupnostmi na svetu, ki sta si podobni tudi po politični strukturi, saj obe delujeta na osnovi demokratičnih načel in po načelu "skupnosti v različnosti". Poleg tega si obe prizadevata za enakost (vključno z jezikovno enakostjo) med državljani in zaščito jezikovnih manjšin. Prispevek se osredotoča na vprašanje, v kolikšni meri se cilji na področju jezikovnih politik in jezikovnega načrtovanja skladajo z ukrepi, katerih namen je v osnovi doseči omenjene cilje.

Ključne besede: jezikovno načrtovanje, jezikovna politika, indijska jezikovna politika, evropska jezikovna politika, Evropska Unija.

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1. Introduction

If anyone spoke earlier of European integration, they had to face the challenging question of whose integration was being talked about, for the former European Union (EU) constitutions themselves pursued the rhetoric of European integration while at the same time maintaining the idea of preservation of national identities, and even the most vociferous supporters of European integration found it hard to deal with this *contradictio in adjectio*. 1 December 2009, however, marked a turning point in this series of events because – after nearly a decade of negotiations – the Treaty of Lisbon entered into force: this was the day that was hailed as a “the beginning of a new era of European integration” (Waterfield 2009). This was an historic development in the sense that the new treaty promised to convert the former seemingly futile efforts at integration into a movement. Although the aforementioned treaty has not quite been able to solve the issue of democracy deficit (The Economist 2012), one cannot deny – considering the measures undertaken by the EU in the fields of education and culture – that the EU has made sincere efforts to keep its promise alive, notwithstanding the severe economic crisis that has been looming for years.

As the language question¹ is an important aspect of this movement, the extent to which it has contributed and can contribute to achieving the goal of integration, which the EU has been striving for through a multitude of programs such as the Erasmus Programme, The European Year of Languages (2001) and The European Year of Intercultural Dialogue (2008), among others, will be examined. Keeping such programs in view, it may be useful to assess to what extent the EU can learn in this field from other societies where coexistence of numerous linguistic communities has been a tradition. This requires a critical and comparative study of language policies in these polities as well as a systematic assessment of the relevant political-linguistic research.

This is precisely the focal point of the present paper, in which a comparative study of the language question in the EU and India is undertaken. In this context I want to examine the nature of the language question; i.e. to find out how far these two polities have been able to achieve the goals they have set for themselves as democratic polities and to what extent their language policies have helped protect their linguistic diversity. This inquiry is driven by an analysis of the role of political power in these polities in the context of language policy and planning.

2. Grounds for Comparison

The first problem that such a comparative study is confronted with is that of the grounds of comparison. One may ask on what grounds the EU and India can be compared, as their fundamental political constitutions are entirely different. While India is a democratic republic constituting 28 states, the EU is a supranational

structure. India has its own constitution which is respected, valid and in force throughout its territory, whereas the different countries of the EU are entirely sovereign states, and the persisting aforementioned democracy deficit continues to be a barrier for the EU. The sovereignty of different member states is taken as grounds for underestimating the influence on such policies.

This conundrum of fundamental comparability can be solved using three arguments. Firstly, a comparative study of two polities should not merely be reduced to questions of formal political structure. It is equally important to focus on the similarities in goals and objectives and the EU and India have these in abundance. Not only do they vow to achieve and/or maintain integration, but they also pursue the goal of protecting linguistic minorities and maintaining language diversity. Apart from that, the language ecologies of the EU and India exhibit striking similarities. Both of them have almost two dozen official languages (the EU has 24, while India has 23) and follow the three-language formula as a policy to promote multilingualism and maintain linguistic diversity. The increasing dominance of English is a problem that both polities have in common, as they both consider their goal to be achieving linguistic equality. Thirdly, and most importantly, one should also consider the relation of discretionary powers of the center and its states on a particular issue. While on a central level, the EU and India do formulate language policies, it is eventually at the discretion of the respective federal state to implement these policies or not. Therefore, in the context of language and education policy, EU and India have a similar center-state relationship, and this provides an ideal background for comparison.

3. Theory, Methods and Approaches

While introducing the readers to the theories and methods used in the field of language policy, Ricento (2006, 10) states that there is no overarching theory of language policy and planning, in large part because of the complexity of the issues that involve language in society. As researchers and policy analysts, Ricento (*ibid.*) adds, we ask basic and varied questions about events in the world, and while in some cases it is possible to develop a theory or model for a specific phenomenon based on triangulation of a preponderance of the best available empirical evidence,² designing a general theory applicable to all phenomena may be impossible.

Keeping this important postulate in mind, I shall use the term approach or approaches instead of theory or method, and shall refrain from trying to develop my own theory or method. This decision, however, should not be understood as an evasion of theory. The basic approach shall, at first, be the following: as the EU and India are based on the principles and ethos of democracy, the ideal way of conducting a brief comparative analysis would be to examine how far their objectives as democratic polities correspond to the measures undertaken to

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achieve such objectives in the field of language policy. Their precise objectives are to be concluded from the self-perception and vision of these polities as mentioned in their respective constitutions or treaties.

Having deduced the objectives, the next step will be to expose the inconsistencies in policy implementation. This will be done by focusing on the lack of harmony between goals and the measures undertaken to accomplish them. The domains of inquiry in this case consist of the following guiding questions:

- a) How many languages are there in the EU and India, how many of them are recognized as official, and what is relative status of official languages among themselves?
- b) What is state of linguistic minorities in the EU and India? To what extent are they actually protected?
- c) How does political power influence the formulation of language policies in the EU and India?³

The official discourses of the EU and India will be analyzed – as part of these questions – using critical discourse analysis in order to expose the hitherto latent power structures behind the decisive political processes. The guiding principle is borrowed from van Dijk (2012, 3) as I approach the language question by focusing on the role of discourse in the (re)production of dominance, where dominance is to be understood – as defined by van Dijk (ibid.) – as the exercise of social power by elites, institutions, or groups that results in social inequality, including political, cultural, class, ethnic, racial or gender inequality.

However, first of all, I would like to briefly discuss the complexity and vagueness of the terminology regarding the field of language policy and planning, and cite the reason behind my decision to choose “language question” as a good alternative.

4. Terminological Aspects

Terminological vagueness seems to be the biggest problem of all newborn disciplines. This fits into the context of the area being investigated in this paper, as during the inception phase of this discipline there was a state of indecisiveness over how the newborn discipline, which deals with the interplay of language and power, should be termed. Studer et al. (2009, 7) point out that while looking for an apt term for this discipline, one finds a multitude of contradictory interpretations describing the terms as multi-faceted and multi-layered political, sociological, philosophical and cultural constructs. Terms like language politics, linguistic politics, language policy, language planning, language policy and planning, and language policy-planning (Studer et al. 2009, 11) have been suggested to describe the various aspects of the discipline concerning the interplay of language and politics. Blommaert (1997, 1) talks of the dilemma of linguists at a conference

focusing on this topic and elucidates how difficult it was to coin a term for the interrelationship between language and power:

When we decided to hold the 1995 Annual Conference of the Linguistic Society of Belgium on the topic of political linguistics, we knew that we were doing something dangerous. We were toying with the terminology. Our intention was to have a conference in which the interplay between language, in its most general sense and politics, in its most general sense, could be discussed. Neither did we want to stick to more or less established disciplinary identifications, such as 'critical linguistics', 'critical sociolinguistics' or other 'critical' subdisciplines dealing with language and politics / ... / The most common denominator for the topics and approaches presented by the scholars who attended the conference, was language politics / ... /.

An important factor in the nomenclature of the discipline concerning the interplay of language and power has been the issue of its political neutrality. While today applied linguistics by means of critical discourse studies has established itself as a discipline with undaunted political inclination, during its inception phase such politicization put linguists in a topsy-turvy position. Blommaert (*ibid.*) talks in this regard of a gradual paradigm shift in the attitude of linguistics towards the political neutrality of their subject:

This political dimension is probably a new element in the discourse of language planning. In the past, the tradition of studies on language planning was often marked by an assumption of political and ideological neutrality, by rationalism and by a belief that an objective inventory of real linguistic needs would yield the best language plan for any given country. The failure of many rationally designed language plans, the upsurge of nationalism and identity politics (resulting in heightened sensitivity to 'linguistic rights'), and the political agenda set by the new South African Government after the fall of Apartheid, have all demonstrated how secondary purely scientific considerations in determining the most appropriate sociolinguistic profile for a society / ... / Language Planning is, perhaps more than any other domain of present-day sociolinguistics, one field in which linguists have to think and analyze politically.

Blommaert's appeal to the other linguists is relevant insofar as it can be interpreted in terms that paradigms can be de- and reconstructed, and there is nothing inappropriate in linguists taking a political stand if required. While Blommaert (2009) does make a valuable contribution here, the fact is that the problem of terminology remains unsolved. As the general understanding of the terms "language policy", "language planning", and "language policy and planning" is marred by their ambiguity, one needs a term that can effortlessly point out the problematic of the language-power relationship. The term "language politics" seems to perform the latter desired function better, but it does away with the former meaning, i.e., that of policy and planning. This impasse is overcome by Sarangi's (2009, 2) following postulate:

I use the term language question to refer to those multiple domains where language and politics interact and result in tangible historical and political outcome of a certain

kind. The language question should not be reduced simply to the problem of language planning, policy, and programmes but should take into account the ideological power of languages(s) and its various forms of domination and subordination.

A thorough reading of this postulate does give the impression that even Sarangi (ibid.) thinks of the terms “policy” and “planning” as being politically neutral, but on the other hand, she does come up with a suggestion that solves the problem of terminological vagueness, as the term “language question” undeniably possesses a greater semantic width than “language policy” or “language planning”, and retains the component of controversiality while not doing away with the sense that it concerns questions of policy and planning, too.

5. The Language Question in the EU

5.1 The EU’s Self-Perception and Vision

Although financial concerns do play a pivotal role in the EU, it is more than just an institution dedicated to economic cooperation. It is true that after World War II, the EU began – in the form of the European Coal and Steel Community – as an initiative of six countries (Belgium, France, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, and West Germany) that shared control of coal and steel in order to ensure the prevention of further armed conflicts and to secure a more peaceful future for Europe. Now however it cooperates on an array of issues (such as the environment, transport, unemployment, etc.), and most important of all, it focuses on preserving European culture, which implies the preservation of its languages, too.

In order to understand the EU, it is important to investigate how the EU perceives itself. Such an understanding can be construed by means of an analysis of the documents that define the EU, e.g., the treaties and the charters. These texts are vital for understanding the EU, because it is through them that the EU presents itself to the world. An apt example of such a defining document would be the Treaty on European Union (also known as Treaty of Maastricht) from 1992 that marked the foundation of the EU in its present-day form.

The Treaty on European Union (TEU) describes freedom, democracy, the rule of law, and human rights as the founding stones of the Union. Furthermore, it emphasizes that “the protection of the rights and interests of the nationals of its member states should be guaranteed” (Article B, TEU) and strengthened through “the introduction of European citizenship as an important objective of the union” (Article B and Article 8, TEU).

A similar goal is pursued by the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, in that it states in its preamble that the “people of Europe are determined to share a peaceful future by focusing on a Union closer than ever”. The decision to share a peaceful future can be understood as an indirect reference to

the unrest of the past and the desire to avoid such troubles in future. This preamble declares that the Union will be founded on the values of human dignity, freedom, equality, and solidarity. To preserve and develop these values is its first target, and the preamble of the Charter maintains this should be done while respecting the diversity of the cultures and traditions of the peoples of Europe as well as the national identities of the member states. As a first step to achieving this objective, the Union recognizes the fundamental rights of the people. In order to grant its citizens equality, the Charter in its Article 21.1 imposes a prohibition against discrimination of any kind and that includes a prohibition against discrimination based on language, too.

5.2 Linguistic Minorities in the EU

One can conclude from the texts of the Treaty on European Union and the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union that the EU seeks to eradicate discrimination and guarantee equality. However, the problem arises when it comes to implementing these ideas, as the EU's language policy suffers from several inconsistencies. The EU's objectives and the measures taken to fulfill them do not correspond to each other in the desired way.

The most noteworthy example would be that of the linguistic minorities. Although the EU has the protection of linguistic minorities and their rights as its goal, it does not grant protection to migrant languages. The binding document in this context, The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (ECRML), clearly states that it does not protect the rights of migrants:

For the purposes of this charter:

“regional or minority languages” means languages that are:

- 1) traditionally used within a given territory of a State by nationals of that State who form a group numerically smaller than the rest of the State's population; and
- 2) different from the official language(s) of that State;
it does not include either dialects of the official language(s) of the State or the languages of migrants;

One cannot help wondering why the most important document would decidedly reject certain languages when the guiding principle is to secure equality for all. Studer et al. (2009, 65) paraphrase this problematic accurately:

[The] Charter for Regional and Minority Languages (1992) / ... / explicitly excludes migrant languages and language varieties from the scope of its application. The Charter carries a potential for controversy in that it is highly ideological in its preamble but very limited in actual scope. As a result, the current discourse stressing the necessity of citizens' mobility contradicts the actual legal situation of migrant communities. In the Charter, for example, many large and established migrant communities, such as the Turks in Germany or the Albanians in Switzerland, are not protected, while historically older language communities, which may be much smaller in size than migrant communities (e.g. German speakers in Hungary), enjoy full benefits.

This state of disparity – as mentioned in the analysis presented above – clearly indicates that the EU has yet to fulfill its promise of bringing equality and ending discrimination. The key expression that shapes the discourse of dominance here is “traditionally used” languages. Simply by using one word (traditionally), the policy makers have succeeded in excluding migrant languages from the ECRML’s scope, because – as a rule of thumb – migrant languages tend to have a shorter history in the country of migration. Even if the firm supporters of the ECRML would argue along the lines that the Turkish language in Germany does not have a tradition as old as the German language in Hungary, they might want to rethink their standpoint, as there are also other languages that have a long tradition and are still unprotected, e.g., the Arbëresh language in Italy.⁴

5.3 Official Languages and Their Relative Status

A biased protection policy for regional and minority languages is not the only problem that shapes the language question in the EU. Even the so-called majority languages become victims of discrimination at the hands of policy makers, and this situation is only worsened by the ever-increasing dominance of English. The EU has 24 official languages⁵, but to speak of them as equal would be an inappropriate description. To give an example, the official documents of the European Commission are first produced in English, French, and German, the so-called vehicular languages, and then translated into other languages. However, due to financial constraints and lack of time, only relatively few working documents are translated into all languages. The European Commission tends to use English, French, and German as working languages, whereas the European Parliament provides translations in various languages according to the needs of its members (European Commission 2013).

5.4 Political Power and Policy-Formulation

The third and last aspect of the language question in the EU concerns the role of the European Commission in formulating language policy. The monopolistic role of the European Commission in realms of language policy, as Studer et al. (2009, 66) postulate, may lead to grave consequences:

Although the strong restriction of the procedural process is aimed at limiting controversy and conflict, it is precisely this strongly formalized and circular character of the policy-making procedures that bears fruit for controversy with regards to formation of policy dealing with multilingualism. Due to its restrictive character, language policy-making procedures allow for potential of biased policy leading to conflicts of interests and a degree of dependence on European Commission approval of proposed drafts as well as to very limited communication possibilities outside the formalized structure.

One cannot deny, therefore, that there is always the danger that language policy could be instrumentalized by the European Commission to serve its purposes, or, as Studer et al. (ibid.) put it, to “serve ideologies compatible with Commission values”.

6. The Language Question in India

The Republic of India has a federal structure and invites comparison with the EU in terms of political and linguistic situation, as stated in the introductory chapter above. It consists of 28 states⁶ and seven federal territories (also called ‘union territories’)⁷ as compared to the 28 member states of the EU. Both the polities have an enormous linguistic diversity: While the EU has over 150 regional and minority languages apart from the current 24 official languages,⁸ India has – according to the webpage of the reference work ‘Ethnologue’ that intends to catalog all the known living languages of the world – 447 living languages (Ethnologue 2013a). These languages belong to five different language families, namely Indo-Aryan, Dravidian, Austro-Asiatic, Tibeto-Burman, and Andamanese.⁹

When it comes to having multiple official languages, India is not far behind the EU. India has two trans-regional official languages, namely Hindi and English, and in addition to this, has 21 other official regional languages.¹⁰ The very first thought that may strike someone dealing with the Indian linguistic situation is why only 22 Indian languages have had the privilege of becoming official, when there are hundreds of other languages. The answer is a complex one and needs explication, which is why it is important to refer to India’s view of itself as a modern state.

6.1 India’s Self-Perception and Vision

Like the EU, the Republic of India sees modern democratic values as its founding cornerstones, as one can infer from the preamble to the Constitution of India mentioned below:

We, the people of India, having solemnly resolved to constitute India into a sovereign socialist secular democratic republic and to secure to all its citizens:

- Justice, social, economic and political;
 - Liberty of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship;
 - Equality of status and of opportunity;
- and to promote among them all
- Fraternity assuring the dignity of the individual and the unity and integrity of the Nation;

As in the EU’s case, the Indian constitution talks of bringing sociopolitical and economic justice and equal status to all its citizens. This would imply the equality of languages, too, which is sadly not the case because of the problem mentioned

above. In spite of the huge linguistic diversity, only 22 Indian languages have official status.¹¹

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6.2 Official Languages and Their Relative Status

Currently, India has 23 official languages, but having so many official languages was not the original plan of Indian language policy. The government of India tried to implement Hindi as the sole official language of the union, and the non-Hindi speaking states were given a time-span of 15 years – starting from 26 January 1950, the day the Indian Constitution came into effect – to learn Hindi, to which the non-Hindi speaking states originally agreed, but later they refused to accept the imposition of Hindi (Ram 1978, 1012). This policy to implement the language of the majority as the national language can be understood better when put into a broader perspective, as done by the following postulate of Kaplan (2001, 1):

While the European nations had had centuries to evolve their national linguistic models, it was assumed that the newly emergent polities could transplant and evolve similar structures in merely decades / ... / additionally, since no one had ever kept an account of the actual processes and costs involved in the development of the European models, it was not recognized that full implementation of the new processes were beyond the means of what were at the time among the poorest communities in the world.

As should be clear from Kaplan's postulate, any attempts at direct emulation of European linguistic models were bound to fail. The consequences of this problematic paradigm in the Indian case were fierce, as it led to widespread protests in the southern states (Chandhoke 2008):

Confrontation was pre-empted by postponing the implementation of Hindi as the national language till 1965. But by 1963 the anti-Hindi agitation in Tamil Nadu assumed appalling proportions. Sections of the Constitution were publicly set on fire, and student unions and political parties joined the massive protests against the decision to impose Hindi on non-Hindi speaking populations. January 26 1965, the day, when the switch to Hindi was to be implemented, was marked by public mourning, hoisting of black flags, rioting, police firing, killings, and self-immolation. The central government had no option except to assure states that Hindi would not be imposed, and that they could continue to use English for official purposes.

As Thapar (1967, 1686) aptly described it, "language or linguism carries within it too many undefined frustrations, superstitions, fears and aspirations to be played around by policy-makers who live for the moment". The Indian Government had to bow to the demands and vehement agitation of the Tamil-speaking community, and as the government could not venerate only Tamil as another official language, it decided to include 12 other Indian languages (apart from Hindi and Tamil) in the 8th Schedule, the part of the Indian Constitution listing the official languages of the state (see footnote 11), in order to avoid agitations and protests from other linguistic communities that might have disliked

the favoring of Tamil over them. This list added one more language (Sindhi) in 1967, three more (Konkani, Manipuri, Nepali) in 1992 and four more (Bodo, Dogri, Maithili, and Santhali) in 2003.

The privilege of being included in the 8th Schedule means that these languages acquire a certain degree of cultural capital, since they play a crucial role in social mobility (Sarangi 2009, 27). This has led to a neck-to-neck rivalry amongst speakers of various languages (e.g., Bhotia, Lepcha, Mizo, Nicobari, Sambhalpuri, Tulu et al.) to get their languages enlisted in the 8th Schedule in order to achieve official status (Sarangi 2009, 28). The most relevant statement in this context comes from Saxena (1997, 272), who postulates that there are no demographic, cultural, or linguistic criteria for inclusion or non-inclusion in the 8th Schedule, and that it has evidently depended largely on the ability of a language group to influence the political process.

6.3 Political Power and Policy Formulation

The perils of Indian language policy are best described by the way in which the Government of India views and describes its language policy. The following is an excerpt from the overview of language policy as mentioned on the website of the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) of India (Ministry of Human Resource Development 2013):

The Language Policy of India relating to the use of languages in administration, education, judiciary, legislature, mass communication, etc., is pluralistic in its scope. It is both language-development oriented and language-survival oriented. The policy is intended to encourage the citizens to use their mother tongue in certain delineated levels and domains through some gradual processes, but the stated goal of the policy is to help all languages to develop into fit vehicles of communication at their designated areas of use, irrespective of their nature or status like major, minor, or tribal languages. The policy is accommodative and ever-evolving, through mutual adjustment, consensus, and judicial processes.

This statement is in itself a dominance-generating discourse. The talk of “accommodative and ever-evolving (policy) through mutual adjustment, consensus and judicial processes” can be seen as sugarcoating a policy that has never existed in the first place. Wodak (1989, xv) speaks in this context of the necessity for demystifying social processes to make mechanisms of manipulation, discrimination, demagoguery, and propaganda transparent. I understand the above-mentioned sociopolitical discourse as a part of social processes, too, and would hence try to demystify it. The “mutual adjustment” that is being addressed here should not be understood as if all the linguistic communities lived together in perfect harmony and have always been willing to adjust to the needs of each other. What these words successfully manage to hide is the power politics and struggle between different linguistic communities since India’s independence.

6.4 Linguistic Minorities in India

The situation of linguistic minorities in India can be plainly described as abysmal. A perfect example of the Indian Government's careless attitude towards its linguistic minorities is demonstrated by the very fact that on the same website where it declares its official language policy there is no mention of the languages of the Andaman.¹² This is really a sad state of affairs and demonstrates that negligible political power amounts to negligible recognition, protection, and maintenance. Some languages were able to make it to the 8th Schedule, but this happened only after the integrity of the state was put at stake and, as Thapar (1967, 1686) puts it, India was forced to choose between Hindi or unity. Thus, one finds that the language policy of India, which the MHRD describes as "ever-evolving", is nothing but a mere interplay of power hierarchies and identity politics. An appropriate description of the Indian language policy is given by Gupta & Abbi (1995, 4), in which they postulate that it is led by an assimilationist ideology:

Perhaps the ideology of assimilation is at the back of the ES (Eighth Schedule). Constitution makers, perhaps, felt that the only way to contain the multilingual giant was to create a short, select list of 'major', 'dominant' Indian languages which shall take over, one after the other, all public domains of education, administration and so on, and that in due course of time, the 1600 odd other languages will be submerged under these mainstream languages. The assimilationist goal / ... / will swallow the small fish – the languages not included in the ES. Either these small fish will have to grow big and strong enough to fight their way into the ES or major Indian languages (Languages of the ES) will take them over.

An apt example of a "small fish" turning into a "big fish" would be the inclusion of the Maithili language, which was long considered a dialect of Hindi (and thus ignored), in the 8th Schedule after its speakers pressurized the central government for years for this cause. This political move is surprising, though, as there are two other major languages spoken in Bihar (Bhojpuri and Magahi) that are still considered dialects of Hindi despite being spoken by millions of people, and which are yet to receive official status.¹³

It goes without saying that such an assimilationist language policy driven by power politics has been highly detrimental to the smaller and minority languages. According to a recent nationwide survey called the People's Linguistic Survey of India, India has lost over 220 languages in last 50 years (Lalmalsawma 2013). Eminent linguists like Skutnabb-Kangas (2009, 1) have gone as far as calling the Indian language policies "a crime against humanity" or "linguistic genocide". There are still a number of languages in India spoken by only a very small number of speakers and which need to be protected. The UNESCO Atlas of World's Languages in Danger (UNESCO 2013) counts as many as 194 Indian languages that can be classified as vulnerable, definitely endangered, critically endangered or severely endangered.

This grave linguistic situation is a scathing indictment of Indian language policies and proves that they are definitely not “language survival-oriented” as proclaimed by the Indian Ministry of Human Resource Development (2013). They have not been able to secure sociopolitical justice for a number of Indians, nor have they managed to bring equal status to them. There is a great divide between the measures and goals as set by the constitution of India.

7. Comparison and Conclusions

The present paper has looked at the language question in the EU and India in the context of the following issues: a) official languages and their relative status, b) linguistic minorities, and c) political power and policy formulation. As should be clear from the analysis conducted above, political power defines and shapes the language question in the EU as well as India. There are certain clear inconsistencies to be noted. Policies in these polities tend to be formulated from the perspective of the dominant group or institution and consequently are (or are not) met with resistance. Governing bodies in the EU as well as India operate with discourses that either tend to cover up the real problems through mystification (see the official statement by the MHRD), or are instrumentalized to subtly generate dominance, as evident from the exclusion of migrant languages or varieties in the ECRML.

Certain languages, which of course belong to the dominant groups, have managed to gain a politically legitimized status that acts as a tool to assert their dominance and reproduces it in that their certain chosen vehicular languages or official languages make it imperative within the given political territory that they are better protected and favored in education, the media, and other relevant spheres due to the prestigious status they have. Migrant and minority languages are at the receiving end of such policies, as due to their negligible participation in the political processes, their cause is seldom promoted.

It can, therefore, be concluded that the measures taken by these polities do not quite realize the goals set by their constitutions or treaties. It becomes evident from this study that the EU and India need to take stronger measures and reconfigure their power hierarchies in order to deal with the persisting language question. As India has its own set of problems, it is difficult to say if it can currently offer an apt solution to solve the European language question. However, the very fact that India has maintained its unity despite inner differences shows that the EU can still take a cue from the greater will to integration which India has demonstrated.

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Notes

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- ¹ To avoid terminological conflicts and vagueness, I borrow the term “language question” from Sarangi (2009, 1–2), who uses this term to “refer to those multiple domains where language and politics interact and result in tangible historical and political outcome of a certain kind”. A detailed analysis of the terminological aspects is given in the 4th section of this paper.
- ² An example of such a model, as mentioned by Ricento (*ibid.*), would be the Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (GIDS), which lists eight stages of a regional or minority language in competition with (an) other dominant language(s) for survival. GIDS was developed by the eminent US-American sociolinguist Joshua Fishman in his book “Reversing Language Shift: Theory and Practice of Assistance to Threatened Languages”. See Fishman (1991) for details.
- ³ These questions are addressed under the sub-sections Official languages and their status, Linguistic minorities and Political power and policy formulation, respectively.
- ⁴ Arbëresh is a variety of Albanian spoken in southern Italy by groups of Albanians who have migrated to the south of Italy in different waves since the fifteenth century (Perta 2008, 1217). The Ethnologue website mentions that the language has no official status (Ethnologue 2013e), and Perta (2008, 1218) notes that these dialects are experiencing the threat of language decay and, in some cases, of death, because of the intense contact with Italian and surrounding Italo-Romance dialects.
- ⁵ The official languages of the EU are as follows: Bulgarian, Croatian, Czech, Danish, Dutch, English, Estonian, Finnish, French, German, Greek, Hungarian, Irish, Italian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Maltese, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Slovak, Slovene, Spanish, and Swedish (European Commission 2013).
- ⁶ The names of the Indian states are as follows: Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Goa, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Orissa, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, and West Bengal.
- ⁷ The following federal territories are defined as union territories: The Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Chandigarh, Dadra and Nagar Haweli, Daman and Diu, Lakshadweep, National Capital Territory of Delhi and Pondicherry.
- ⁸ These numbers are taken from the European Commission’s report called “Many Tongues, One Family. Languages in the European Union”. See European Commission (2004).
- ⁹ The renowned Indian linguist Anvita Abbi, noted for her work on the languages of Andaman, talks of the existence of a sixth language family in Indian in her paper “Is Great Andamanese Genealogically and Typologically Distinct from Onge and Jarawa?”. See Abbi 2008.
- ¹⁰ The names of official Indian languages other than Hindi are: Assamese, Bengali, Bodo, Dogri, Gujrati, Kannada, Kashmiri, Konkani, Maithili, Malayalam, Marathi, Meitei, Nepali, Oriya, Punjabi, Santali, Sanskrit, Sindhi, Tamil, Telugu, and Urdu (See Ministry of Law and Justice 2013 in bibliography). English has had the status of “associate official language” since 1967 (Sarangi 2009, 27).
- ¹¹ A language is declared official after it has been listed in the 8th Schedule of the constitution. It is to be noted that although English has the status of “associate official language” in India, it is not included in the 8th Schedule, as it is not an Indian language (Sarangi 2009, 27).
- ¹² This information was last updated on 7 November 2013 (see Ministry of Human Resource Development 2013).
- ¹³ The number of speakers of Magahi was 14 million in 2001 (Ethnologue 2013c), while Maithili had 30 million speakers in 2000 (Ethnologue 2013d). Bhojpuri’s figures are the greatest with a total of 37.8 million speakers for the year 2001 (Ethnologue 2013b). Maithili was conferred official status in 2003.

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Articles that are submitted must be original, unpublished material and should not be simultaneously under consideration - either in whole or in part - for publication elsewhere.

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Authors who do not have native or equivalent proficiency in English must prior to submission have the article read by someone with this proficiency. This step ensures that the academic content of your paper is fully understood by journal editors and reviewers. Articles which do not meet these requirements will most likely not be considered for publication.

Manuscripts should be submitted in electronic form and must include:

- the submitted article, with the title in the language of the article and in English;
- an abstract of the article in the language of the article and in English; this should include a brief presentation of the issues discussed, the methodology used, the main findings and the conclusions;
- 3 – 7 key words in the language of the article and in English.

The length of the title, the abstract and the key words in one language should not exceed 1,100 characters (including spaces). More detailed information about the form of submitted manuscripts is presented in the prescribed template, available at the journal's website (<http://www.inv.si>).

In a separate document please submit: the title of the article, the author(s) name and a brief biographical note on each author with full contact information (for publication in the journal). Please refer to the template (at the journal's website) for further detailed information.

All submitted manuscripts are subjected to peer-review procedure by at least two reviewers. The review procedure is double blind. Authors may be asked to revise their articles bearing in mind suggestions made by the editors or reviewers. The final decision on publication rests with the editorial board.

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Format and Style — The preferred **length for articles** is between 30,000 and 45,000 characters, including spaces (between approx. 4,500 and 6,500 words). Longer articles may be accepted at the discretion of the editorial board. A limited number of endnotes are permitted, if they are used for explanatory purposes only. They should be indicated serially within the article.

Authors should take into careful consideration also the **style and format requirements** of the journal, which are presented in the template (available at <http://www.inv.si>) in more detail. Particular attention should be paid to the formatting of references, single spacing throughout and the inclusion of keywords and abstracts. Articles that do not meet these requirements will be returned for modification before being read and reviewed.

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