

314. Kontra, Miklós, Lewis, Paul M. & Skutnabb-Kangas, Tove (2016). Afterword: disendangering languages. In Johanna Laakso, Anneli Sarhimaa, Sia Spiliopoulos Åkermark and Reetta Toivanen (eds). *Multilingualism beyond rhetorics: towards openly multilingual policies and practices in Europe*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters, 217-233.

We are grateful to the authors for their thoughtful overview of the conceptual and terminological confusion that complicates the analysis and description of both language vitality and of policy development and implementation. Below we add to this complexity by suggesting a couple more definitions, especially of the much debated concept of “mother tongue”. The multiplicity of terms and the variation in their definitions reflects the complexity of the phenomena themselves. This reveals very clearly where our understanding of what we are observing has not, even yet, fully reached the point where we can say that we know how language acquisition, use, endangerment, loss, maintenance (and the relationship of all of that to identity, education, and policy) really works.

In addition, the reflexive analysis of the ideological perspectives and ingrained assumptions of both linguists/sociolinguists and language users alike is a useful effort to peel back the surface appearances to help us get closer to the roots of the language/identity/policy interactions and dynamics.

In this Afterword, we present a few observations on some of those larger ideological themes, in addition to some examples and smaller additions to them.

What happens to survivors of nation-state formation?

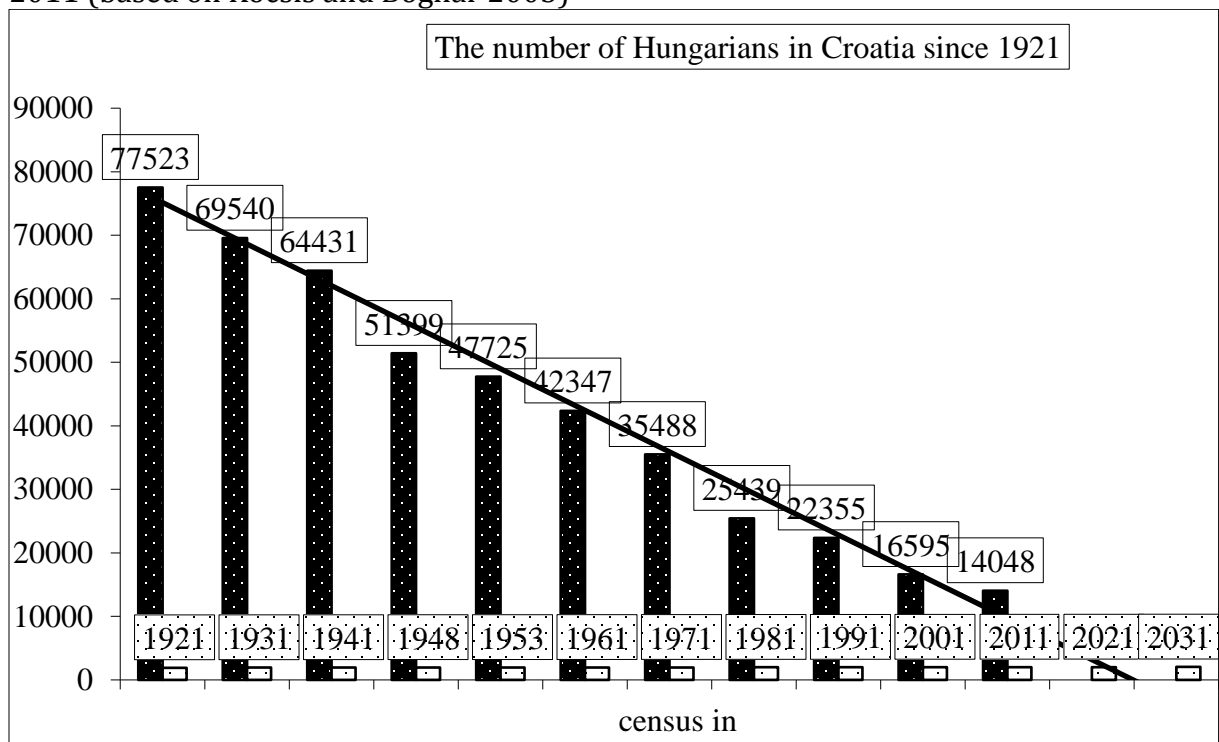
One of us has hypothesized elsewhere (Lewis 2015) that the colonial past in Europe is at a much greater time depth than that of the European colonies in the New World (and beyond) and so the patterns of language maintenance and use—the remaining survivors of nation-state formation—that are described in this volume may well represent the longer term outworking of those monolingual assimilatory policies. In addition, new waves of immigrants, bringing with them hundreds of languages not traditionally considered to be languages of Europe, further complicates the linguistic ecologies that policy makers must consider. Though the authors make mention of the growing diversity of diversities, the ELDIA study made no attempt to go beyond the Finno-Ugric heritage minorities. By providing depth in the study of the situation of those languages, it is to be hoped that similar methodologies might prove useful in understanding the situation of and guiding policy development for the “new” minorities. The effects of more recent policies, however, are yet to be seen and may, in fact, be too little too late for some of the heritage languages of Europe.

Consider, for instance, Hungarian in Slovenia, a country that “has fulfilled all formal requirements for minority protection”, nevertheless “the maintenance and future of the Hungarian language in Slovenia are endangered” (p. 56, Section 3.1.1).

According to the 1921 census 14 065 persons reported Hungarian as their mother tongue in Prekmurje (15.2% of the total population of the region), but by 2002 their number had decreased to 6 609 (8%) (see Kocsis 2005). While the decrease in the number of speakers of Karelian in Russia is much greater (248 100 in 1926 down to 60 815 in 2010, p. 97, Section 3.7.1), Karelian in Russia may be less endangered than Hungarian in Slovenia because there are about 10 times as many speakers in Karelia as in Slovenia.

In some cases the time when a heritage language will die can be predicted with a good deal of certainty. For instance, the speakers of Hungarian in Croatia (an EU member state and a signatory of the ECRML) show a steady decrease since 1921. As the trend line shows in Figure 1, the census in 2021 will show a few speakers left, but that in 2031 – none. The disappearance of the now 14 000 Hungarian speakers in about the next decade, i.e. the death of this heritage language in Croatia and other similar heritage language communities in Europe could only be forestalled if “the European Union genuinely sided with multilingualism” (p. 200, Section 5.7) and if “strategies for sustainable bilingualism and multilingualism” (p. 195, Section 5.4) were to be created and implemented. If the “empty wordmongering” (the authors’ precise phrase, p. 198, Section 5.6) will be replaced with real proactive measures.

Figure 1: The decrease of the number of Hungarians in Croatia between 1921 and 2011 (based on Kocsis and Bognár 2003)



Is legal protection of languages enough? Or just “wordmongering”?

The ELDIA team presents due criticism of the lacking legal protection of language rights of minorities. In some contexts, they seem to be, in our view, somewhat optimistic about how “nice” states are in interpreting legal provisions, though. When discussing clauses such as “whenever necessary”, “where appropriate”, etc, which abound in Council of Europe’s Framework Convention for the Protection of Persons Belonging to National Minorities, they admit: “If used too extensively, such clauses can in practice annul the protective function of the provisions concerned.” (p. 165). Still they continue (ibid.): “In legal theory and practice, however, restrictions of recognised rights are to be implemented as narrowly as possible and should not make the concerned provision void of any meaningful content”.

This should be compared with law professor Patrick Thornberry’s 1997 comments on the Framework Convention. He quotes the Parliamentary Assembly of Council of Europe, which issued strong criticism of the Framework Convention:

The convention is weakly worded. It formulates a number of vaguely defined objectives and principles, the observation of which will be an obligation of the Contracting States but not a right which individuals may invoke. Its implementation machinery is feeble and there is a danger that, in fact, the monitoring procedure will be left entirely to governments (Thornberry 1997. 352).

In Thornberry's view, 'The preamble wavers in its terminology of purposes and objectives' (ibid., 351). Thornberry also notes that the vagueness is intentional, and that the Explanatory Report on the Convention in fact makes it clear that the provisions are not to be interpreted as real provisions: “The Explanatory Report on the Convention states ... that ‘the purpose of this last recital is to indicate that the provisions of this ... Convention are not directly applicable...’. ... The effect is to lend a remote, indirect and programmatic element to the Convention, a reading borne out in other areas of the text. The substantive text ... already gives the States a great measure of discretion on their reading of obligations”. (ibid., 352). This also means that individuals have no right to complain if the provisions are not being met. In Thornberry's words: “There is no place in such a scheme for a system of applications by individuals” (ibid., 352). After a thorough critique of its details, Thornberry’s general comment on the Convention (here about local names) is:

In case any of this [provisions in the Convention] should threaten the delicate sensibilities of States, the Explanatory Report makes it clear that they are under no obligation to conclude "agreements", and that the paragraph does not imply any official recognition of the local names. Despite the presumed good intentions, the provision represents a low point in drafting a minority right; there is just enough substance in the formulation to prevent it becoming completely vacuous (Thornberry 1997: 356-357).

At the same time as ITMs are working for the right to mother tongue-based multilingual education, where the mother tongue/s is/are defined by self-identification, claims for compensation for mother tongue loss should be raised in

courts. This loss is often a result of (linguistic and cultural) genocide, as Skutnabb-Kangas & Dunbar (2010) have shown, using the United Nations *International Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide*, E793, 1948) as the starting point. In Canada, the language loss in residential schools has recently (April 2015) been officially called cultural genocide by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (2015). The Introduction to the 382-page report starts as follows (p. 1):

For over a century, the central goals of Canada's Aboriginal policy were to eliminate Aboriginal governments; ignore Aboriginal rights; terminate the Treaties; and, through a process of assimilation, cause Aboriginal peoples to cease to exist as distinct legal, social, cultural, religious, and racial entities in Canada. The establishment and operation of residential schools were a central element of this policy, which can best be described as "cultural genocide".

Physical genocide is the mass killing of the members of a targeted group, and *biological genocide* is the destruction of the group's reproductive capacity. *Cultural genocide* is the destruction of those structures and practices that allow the group to continue as a group. States that engage in cultural genocide set out to destroy the political and social institutions of the targeted group. Land is seized, and populations are forcibly transferred and their movement is restricted. Languages are banned. Spiritual leaders are persecuted, spiritual practices are forbidden, and objects of spiritual value are confiscated and destroyed. And, most significantly to the issue at hand, families are disrupted to prevent the transmission of cultural values and identity from one generation to the next.

In its dealing with Aboriginal people, Canada did all these things.

When trying to understand *why* the languages of several of the northern minorities in the book (at least the Saami and the Kven in Norway, Meänkieli speakers in Sweden, the Karelians and the Veps in Russia, maybe also Karelians in Finland) have become endangered in the first place, it would be useful to check which traits from the Canadian report might fit their history too. At least for the Saami in all Nordic countries and Russia it is very clear that both cultural and linguistic genocide have been committed in fairly recent history, and physical and biological genocide has been attempted historically. As the Canadian report shows, many of the consequences still linger on, even down to third and fourth generation of residential school victims. Similar consequences of cultural and linguistic genocide might also partially explain some of the attitudes in the northern groups described in this book, as Skutnabb-Kangas & Dunbar 2010 have illustrated in some of their examples,

The Monolingual Bias – do languages and mother tongues exist?

The Monolingual Bias as a fundamental feature of structural and Chomskyan linguistics is an important ideological perspective of those approaches to the study of language. As the authors point out, it was (and in some cases, remains) the dominant research paradigm. And, as the authors also remind us, it is largely the

ideology held by most users of languages, in spite of the facts that surround them in their multilingual and super-diverse daily life.

While the focus of the ELDIA project is on the heritage Finno-Ugric languages of Europe, the dynamics described are not confined to Europe alone. Language policies based on the monolingual assumptions as described in this volume are typical of almost all post-colonial nation-states as well and the effects of those policies are very clearly seen in Latin America, the United States, Canada, and Australia in particular.

This volume provides a valuable service to language policy developers and heritage language users by making them aware of the Monolingual Bias and by attempting to guide both research and its application in policy formation in a more well-informed direction.

But addressing the issue of monolingualism, inevitably leads one (as it did the authors) down the path of language identification and into the complexities of fuzzy linguistic boundaries and linguistic variability. Here again, as the research paradigm shifts the popular perspective can be seen as lagging behind – or, it is simply different. As a result, as linguists increasingly question the usefulness of the concept of autonomous languages (language as particle, cf. Lewis 1999; Pike 1959), many users of the heritage languages claim ever more strongly a linkage of “their language”, “their mother tongue”, to “their identity”. First we add some definitions of what these users might mean when they claim these linkages; then we come back to “language as particle”. Some of the definitions that the ELDIA book uses (or, often, does not really give) could be usefully added to. ‘Mother tongue’ is one of the concepts that could be defined in more detail, thus avoiding some of the challenges that the authors have had. Here we use definitions by Skutnabb-Kangas.

Table 1. Short definitions of mother tongue(s)

CRITERION	DEFINITION
ORIGIN	the language(s) one learned first
IDENTIFICATION a. internal. b. external	a. the language(s) one identifies with b. the language(s) one is identified as a [native] speaker of by others
COMPETENCE	the language(s) one knows best
FUNCTION	the language(s) one uses most

(Skutnabb-Kangas 1984, 18; parentheses around ‘native’ added)

Skutnabb-Kangas has also presented several theses about the definitions (below are extracts from her 2008: 86-88; 2000:105-115, with very minor changes):

1. The same person can have different mother tongues (MTs), depending on which of the definitions in Table 1 is used.
2. A person's MT can change during her life-time, even several times, according to all other definitions listed in the Table except the definition by origin.
3. A person can have several MTs, especially according to definitions by origin and identification, but also according to the other criteria, depending on the domain discussed.
4. The MT definitions can be organised hierarchically according to their degree of linguistic human rights awareness. This degree in a society can be assessed by examining which definition(s) the society uses in its institutions, including laws, explicitly and/or implicitly.

For **linguistic majorities** (e.g. speakers of Norwegian in Norway, or speakers of Russian in Russia) all the definitions usually converge. They have learned Norwegian/Russian first, they identify with Norwegian/Russian, are identified by others as native speakers of Norwegian/ Russian, know Norwegian/Russian best and use Norwegian/Russian most. Thus, a combination of all the definitions can be used.

If **linguistic minorities** live and work where the majority language dominates, the majority language usually becomes their most used language in most formal domains and often also informally. Therefore it is not fair to use a mother tongue definition by function – they have not chosen freely to use the majority language most. The expression ‘not fair’ here means that the definition does not respect linguistic human rights, and here especially the right to choose freely what one’s mother tongue is.

If **linguistic minorities** get their education in submersion programmes, i.e. through the medium of the majority language, the majority language often becomes the language they know best in most more formal domains. Therefore, it is not fair to use a mother tongue definition by competence either.

If the school, for instance, says that the MT of an Indigenous /Tribal, Minority or minoritized (ITM) child is the dominant language because that is the language the child uses most, or knows best, this use of the definitions of competence or function shows little awareness of the fact that an ITM child in most cases cannot choose which language to use most or learn best in formal contexts such as school and other institutions. Schools often fail to consider that lack of proficiency in the original mother tongue/s (= mother tongue/s according to the criterion by origin) is a result of not having been offered the opportunity to use and learn the original mother tongue/s well enough in those institutional settings where many especially western children spend most of their day (day care centres, schools, organised after-school activities). Lack of use leads to lack of competence, especially with children. A ‘poor’ competence in the original mother tongue/s (which is a result of the neglect of the mother tongue/s in institutions earlier on, i.e. a result of earlier oppression) is then often used to legitimate additional oppression. The child is labelled as a majority language speaker, or she is denied teaching in the original mother tongue/s on the grounds that she does not know it/them well enough or because she knows the

majority language better and therefore does not 'need' mother tongue teaching. Many Indigenous people (Saami in the Nordic countries, Aborigines in Australia etc) may officially not always be counted as members of the group, if they no longer know the original mother tongue (which they have been prevented from learning), or if their parents or grandparents did not know it. The dwindling numbers can then be used to legitimate lack of services offered in the Indigenous language (see e.g. Aikio 1988 for the Saami), which then leads to still less use and competence. The same numbers game is used to deny services in immigrant minority languages. Often denying language rights to both children and adults (in case of adults, for instance the right to information or voting or using the mother tongue in the work place) is implicitly based on a definition of function or competence.

Often a combination of mother tongue definitions by origin and by internal identification is a good mother tongue definition for linguistic minorities. But there are exceptions where not even this is a good, fair and respectful definition. One important exception is forcibly assimilated ITM children. If the forcible assimilation has taken place already in the parent or grandparent generation, it is not fair to use a mother tongue definition by origin either, because the parents have not spoken (or have not been able to speak) the mother tongue (e.g. Saami or Maliseet or Ainu or Veps or Meänkieli) to the children. In this case a mother tongue definition by internal identification can be the only possible fair definition.

Another important exception is the Deaf. 90-95% of Deaf children are born to hearing parents. If the children were to get a good education, they would learn Sign language early on, and receive most of their formal education through a Sign language. In this case, children and parents do not have the same mother tongue. For most Deaf children the fairest mother tongue definition is: the language that they identify with (often, at least later on, also in combination with an external identification: the language that they are being identified as (native) speakers of by others). For Deaf children, a Sign language is the only language that they can express themselves fully in. They cannot do this in any spoken language, except in writing. Therefore we can, for them, also add a modified definition by competence: The mother tongue is the language that they identify with and that they can express themselves fully in.

But what if a Deaf child or an Indigenous child is NOT one of those fortunate ones whose parents have used the mother tongue by identification from the very beginning, and where the child has had most of her education through this mother tongue? What if the child does not know the mother tongue by internal identification? Our claim is that it is possible to identify with a language that one does not know. It is possible to have a mother tongue that one does not have (any or 'full') competence in (see, e.g., the quote from a Karelian speaker in Finland, p. 52 in this book).

If this were to be accepted in international law (and it has not yet been tried in court), those few rights that exist for mother tongue medium education and for learning the mother tongue as a subject, would also apply to ITM children in various revitalisation programmes.

When forcible assimilation has led to a language being seriously endangered ('dying', 'moribund', in need of revival) or 'neglected' (endangered, in need of

revitalisation), the strategy could (or should?) be to ONLY use a mother tongue definition by internal identification, when demanding full Linguistic Human Rights for individuals and collectivities, regardless of whether the individuals are receptive or productive users or non-users.

The **external identification** criterion has become more prominent with the various ITM revitalisation movements. ILO 169, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, UNDRIP, The UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, and many local Indigenous organisations emphasize the group's/people's collective acceptance of individuals as members of the Indigenous/tribal group/people. The Saami Parliament in Finland has had major debates as a result of not accepting people on their voting rolls who have Saami ancestors and identify as Saami, often having relearned the language; the Parliament's criteria are fairly strict. The non-status "Indians" in North America have similar challenges. In Africa, there is a continuum from "we are all indigenous" to only those groups being seen legally as Indigenous who are members of the UN Permanent Forum.

With these definitions, there is no 'Mother Tongue Mystique' (p 23 in this book). Many of the discussions of what somebody's mother tongue/s is/are may become clearer, and multiple affiliations and changing identities (e.g. p. 167 in this book) more natural, in the way the authors really wanted.

Back to whether concrete languages and thus also the mother tongues of minorities exist.

Albert Einstein, Max Planck and Niels Bohr showed already at the beginning of the 1900s with their experiments that light could behave both as waves and as a particle. Likewise Einstein showed that space and time are not unchanging, and the same for everybody; they can vary on the basis of, for instance, the movement of the observer. My both/and view is that one has to be able *also* to see languages as something that can be captured, counted, learned, even written down, also in dictionaries - even if languages are never stable; they change all the time, as do the hierarchising relations between languages; these are processes. Sociolinguists might be able to learn from physics. There is no contradiction between treating languages as processes and, *at the same time*, as concrete. Claiming that it is only one or the other is illogical and unhelpful either/or thinking, in a world of both/and/and. People must also be able to claim languages: "X is MY language", or "X and Y are my mother tongues". Claimants of languages/mother tongues must have the right to agency; it is speakers (and signers) who decide whether they "have" languages/ mother tongues, and what these are. No outside researcher has the right to do this. It is thus also linguist behaviour to deprive ITMs of their agency if outsiders decide whether they (can) have a mother tongue (or two) and then to proceed to hierarchising the languages and their speakers on the basis of language, all at the same time as claiming that languages do not exist (Skutnabb-Kangas 2015).

Another contribution of this volume, particularly for policy makers, is the identification and discussion of what the authors have labeled as "the

ethnolinguistic assumption". This is the belief that "there is a simple 'one-to-one' relationship between a normal, monolingual and monocultural subject's language use and his/her ethnic identity" (p. 18, Section 1.2.3). In a super-diverse world, the ethnolinguistic assumption must be examined carefully. While it is clear that there is some relationship between language and identity, that relationship is hardly simple, and rarely one-to-one. Stephen May's latest articles (e.g. May 2014a, b, 2015) discuss this relationship in an enlightened and respectful way, showing that there is more to it than many linguists and political scientists admit. But what's more, the notion of a monolingual and monocultural person must be understood to apply to a very small and unrepresentative sampling of the general population in most contexts.

The challenge this presents is how to retain what's true: language and identity are indeed intertwined and interrelated phenomena, while rejecting what is clearly not so: just as the monolingual bias must be rejected, so must the notion that a person participates in only one culture, has only one identity, is either this or that. Just as with mother tongue definitions, identities are social constructs, not inherited givens; they are ever changing and dynamic, not static, they are hybrid and nomadic, not static; people may claim several of them at the same time and be multilingual and multicultural, and "multi-ethnic", or "bicultural".

Members of minority communities clearly recognize that the maintenance of their communal identity is closely associated with and highly dependent on at least some level of maintenance of their heritage language. They believe they can identify what that language is and define its boundaries (some more inclusively, some less so). For researchers and analysts to deny that linkage would be to take a step back to the decontextualized analysis of language competence without reference to its use in real life performance.

In discussing what terms to use (pp. 20, 22-23) - minority (vs majority); "language minority"; "language-based community" or "speech community" - the authors try to avoid what they call "the ethnolinguistic assumption" because it according to them falsely homogenises a group. This could possibly be avoided by extending Erik Allardt's criteria for and his theses about an ethnic group to "language-based groups". Allardt's criteria for an ethnic group are

1. self-categorization (self-identification);
2. common descent (factual or mythical);
3. specific cultural traits, e.g the capacity to speak a specific language; and
4. a social organization for interaction both within the group and with people outside the group' (Allardt & Starck 1981: 4; see also Allardt et al. 1979).

According to Allardt, there are *no* criteria for inclusion in an ethnic group that *all* the members of the group have to fulfill. But it is necessary that *some* members fulfill *all* the criteria, and *every* member must fulfill *at least one* criterion. Often most members fulfill all the criteria, but there are also some ethnic lukewarms and ethnic self-haters who do not categorise themselves as members despite fulfilling all the other criteria except self-categorization and despite being categorized as members

by others. There is 'a firm and a stable nucleus where (reminding us of Barth 1969) 'the stable features in an ethnic group are not the boundaries but rather the existence of mechanisms which maintain and regulate them' (Allardt & Starck 1981: 12). One could add here 'and reproduce them' - that is one of the important reasons why minority education issues are so decisive, and why there is so much resistance to schools which use other mother tongues as media of education. Mother tongue medium education enables the group to continue to exist as a group.

At the same time, the realities of super-diverse contexts with languages and identities in complex and hybridizing relationships means that we must also avoid an ideological bias that the authors mention briefly: what might be called Multilingual Idealism. This ideology is, in fact, a corollary of the Monolingual Bias in that it sees multilingualism as two or more completely parallel monolingualisms. It is the expectation that a multilingual person will, in daily life, talk about any topic, in any situation, with any interlocutor in any of the languages in their linguistic repertoire. Such Multilingual Idealism is often assumed to be the goal of positive, open, and progressive language policies. But just as monolingualism is rare in the real world, so such completely balanced multilingualism is rarely encountered and an oddity in the daily life of multilingual, multicultural people who live in situations marked by a diversity of diversities.

Just as the Monolingual Bias divorces language competence from performance, Multilingual Idealism divorces language performance from the functions that languages perform in society. This volume addresses that issue somewhat tangentially by acknowledging the hierarchical arrangement of more "useful" global and vehicular languages in contrast to the "less useful" languages used by minority communities. From a policy perspective, Multilingual Idealism, raises the bar very high for non-dominant languages in terms of official recognition and even in terms of their visibility. The cost of development of languages which have traditionally been primarily an oral means of communication to the level where they can be used for any function, including the proverbial "rocket science", is prohibitive and leads to the categorization of vehicular languages as resources and heritage languages as burdens. In addition, if reducing oral languages to writing is not done extremely skillfully, this process may not only reinforce existing inequalities but even create new ones, also by losing some of the benefits that orate people have as compared to literate people (see the part Oracy and Literacy in Nurmela et al. 2012, pp. 166-169).

On Languages of Contested Status

The ELDIA research deals with a number of "languages of contested status". For instance, in Norway Kven was "traditionally regarded as merely a dialect of a state language" (p. 132, Section 3.11.4) which has been standardized very recently. In Estonia the Võro and Seto communities advocate adopting the term "regional languages" but the Language Act uses "regional varieties of the Estonian language" (p. 76, Section 3.4.2). Karelian is not officially recognized as a national minority language in Finland but in 2009 "it was added to the list of minority languages on

which Finland obliges itself to report to the European Council” (p. 107, Section 3.8.2). We also learn that “Generations of Karelian speakers have been taught to consider their language just a nonstandard version of Finnish, and Karelian had until recently no chances to achieve an official position in the Finnish education system or in the media” (p. 16, Section 1.2.3). When discussing some of the problems that “roofless” language varieties such as Karelian in Finland face, the authors mention that languages which have a “linguistic homeland” or a “kin-state” seem to be in a stronger position than those without one, “However, the statuses of languages may change and be contested, and kin-state support can also turn out as politically problematic and counter-productive” (p. 22, Section 1.3.4).

One notoriously difficult such question is posed by the Csángós in Romanian Moldavia. They are a “Hungarian or ‘Hungarian’ speaking minority in Moldavia” (Trudgill 2003: 32) who are rapidly going through language shift to Romanian due to the harsh assimilation policies of the Roman Catholic Church and the Romanian State. In 2001 the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe adopted Recommendation 1521 on “Csango minority culture in Romania”. The Assembly recommended that the Romanian government ratify and implement the ECRML and support the Csángós, particularly in instruction in the Csángó language, in providing Roman Catholic services in the Csángó language, in the correct registration of Csángós in the next census, in setting up specific programs to promote Csángó culture etc.

It has been a matter of scholarly and political debate for quite some time whether Csángó is a dialect of Hungarian or a language different from Hungarian. (Mutual intelligibility between ‘Hungarian’-speaking Csángós and Hungarians in Hungary varies to a great extent and can sometimes approach zero.) Some have argued that it is an archaic dialect of Hungarian, while others have claimed that it is a language different from Hungarian. In these debates historical linguistic claims clash with politically motivated arguments based on the intelligibility problems. As any sociolinguist knows, this is a case of comparing apples and oranges; furthermore, calling something a language or a dialect is always a political decision. However, the linguistic problem “Csángó language or dialect?” also has an important political consequence – as Tytti Isohookana Asunmaa, the Finnish rapporteur of the Council of Europe regarding the Csángó minority explained to leaders of a Csángó organization in 2002: the Council of Europe can provide legal protection for the Csángó language, but not for a dialect of Hungarian. Csángó can certainly be an endangered language and hence deserving of protection, but the Hungarian language or Hungarian dialects are safe and sound and need no protection. “A language spoken by fifteen million and a large national culture doesn’t need any protective measures” (Tánczos 2012: 270). The EL DIA researchers deserve credit for their discussion of roofless language varieties (and also of migrant languages), but more research is needed to disentangle the complex web of linguistic, political, educational and human rights aspects of such varieties.

Minority Language Rights or Universal Language Rights?

In the last three decades we have witnessed significant changes concerning the desirability of protecting minority languages and their speakers. In 1984 Edwards advocated “transitional bilingual education” as a reasonable activity (i.e. he promoted linguistic assimilation) and said that “maintenance” education was “not so easy to defend, from an all-society point of view” (1984: 301). A decade later several linguists disagreed with Edwards (1994) on how he presented “ethnolinguistic pluralism and its discontents”. For instance, with regard to the Irish case of language shift, Dorian (1994: 118) criticized him for raising “a misleading image of a freedom of choice that people in such a position can scarcely be said to have.” Romaine (1994: 182–183) showed that the Saami in Sweden, rather than exercise their freedom of choice in weighing the decision to assimilate or not as Edwards suggested, were only officially Saami if they engaged in reindeer herding.

Then, after Krauss (1992), the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (1992/1998), the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (1995), Skutnabb-Kangas (2000) and other important publications, the pendulum seems to be swinging towards maintaining endangered minority languages. But Trudgill’s (2000: 58) hope that in the 21st century there would be no more “failures to attempt to defend the rights of linguistic minorities” by academic linguists still has not been realized. The authors of this book have made a significant contribution to researchers, politicians, NGOs, and, last but not least, to the many speakers of European and other heritage languages. They have made available rich research findings on a dozen little-known Finno-Ugric minorities which, without exception, show the insufficiency of non-discrimination rights and the absolute necessity for affirmative or positive rights.

In Section 4.1.2, pp. 151–152, the authors discuss minority-language-education and correctly state that “The low supply of opportunities is often explained in financial terms – ‘the society cannot afford to invest in education in a language spoken by a small number of people’. However, providing *Opportunity in Education* is not just a simple financial question but a matter of life and death for endangered languages.” While we can’t but agree with “a matter of life and death”, we would strongly disagree with the wide-spread suggestion that a majority society cannot afford to invest in minority education. It can, if it does not regard minority language rights as a privilege but regards both majority and minority rights explicitly as human rights, without discrimination. In other words, if language rights are Universal Language Rights (see, e.g. Andrásy 2012 and Kontra 2009), then mother-tongue-medium education is affordable within any country’s economic means. Skutnabb-Kangas (2012: 239, building on Kontra, Nekvapil & Kielkiewicz-Janowiak 2010: 362–363) illustrates such an attempt in the following paragraph:

“Linguist-philosopher Sándor N. Szilágyi (1994) has presented a suggestion for a ‘Bill on the Rights Concerning Ethnic and Linguistic Identity, and the Fair and Harmonious Coexistence of Ethnic and Linguistic Communities.’ In principle, it is a non-discrimination bill, but it defines *rights for both majorities and minorities*. Minorities are defined demographically, as consisting of minimally 8 per cent of the population of a local administrative district. His definition of ‘equality of chances’ means that a minority must, for instance, have the same

chance as the majority to use its own language in administration, as a teaching language in school and at university, etc., without needing to bear extra costs. Otherwise the minority is forced to finance majority-language-medium services for the majority through their taxes, without getting the same services for themselves—and this is the most common situation today. This would specify majority LRs and make minority LRs equal to them.”

An important lesson to be learned from these observations is that in the formation of policy and in the preservation of heritage identity, recognition and promotion of the functional assignment of the languages in question is an important activity. Multilingualism is good, without a doubt, but the important question for every heritage language community is “What is our heritage language good for?” Too often, policy makers focus only on the instrumental value of a language—its ability to facilitate communication, to increase participation in a global economy, to foster the peace and tranquility of a nation-state both politically and socially. Just as important a consideration is the role of heritage languages in the social, psychological, and spiritual wellbeing of those who associate their identity with them. These less tangible and non-utilitarian features of language represent another kind of value that rarely gets taken into account when cost-benefit analyses are carried out. But in addition, the many benefits of multilingualism should also be added to the considerations. Despite the impressive multidisciplinary of the ELDIA team, it seems that the authors might strengthen their arguments by adding some psycholinguistic literature about these benefits. On p. 15, under the subtitle *New insights from research: multilingualism is good for you, and it is natural – in fact, everybody is multilingual*, the authors write:

In fact, in recent years several studies have been published which indicate that multilingualism is beneficial for the individual. Knowing many languages may have positive effects on the individual’s creativity (Ricciardelli 2011) and language learning abilities (Errasti 2003; Abu-Rabia & Sanitsky 2010), perhaps even on the individual’s cognitive abilities in general (or, at least, no overall negative effects can be shown; cf. Bialystok & Feng 2010). It has even been claimed that multilingualism can delay the onset of dementia or Alzheimer’s disease (see e.g. Chertkow & al. 2010, Alladi et al. 2013). In the light of this evidence, multilingualism cannot be considered detrimental or even an anomaly but, rather, the normal state.

The oldest reference here is to 2003. In fact, the turning point was Peal and Lambert’s 1962 article, showing that bilinguals consistently performed better than monolinguals when social class was held constant. This was over 50 years ago! This cannot be called “recent”, or “New insights”. There are literally thousands of articles and hundreds of monographs showing cognitive and other benefits of bilingualism and multilingualism. The references here seem completely haphazard. The “perhaps even” and “at least no overall negative effects” disregard the research completely. Obviously one has to be careful but there is no doubt whatsoever about the positive

effects of many different kinds and in many areas. The best summary account of this that one of us (TSK) has seen is in Chapter 3 of Ajit Mohanty's book (forthcoming).

Mohanty also corrects the western biases in research, both in the new book and in his PhD (1995). Mohanty has been able to control factors which in western research have been impossible to control (social class, cultural differences, the impact of literacy, the impact of formal education). In most western research the monolingual and bi/multilingual groups have represented different social classes and had different cultural backgrounds. Mohanty's extremely thorough long-term studies in Odisha (earlier called Orissa), India, compared hundreds of people from two groups (young children, youth, adults), using dozens of tests and participant observation. One group is bilingual in Kui, the mother tongue, and Odia, the official language of Odisha. The other group is monolingual in Odia (but they say Kui is their mother tongue). Both have the same culture, rituals, traditions, festivities, etc. Both groups are extremely poor, and have similar occupations. Some could read or write, some did not. Some had no formal schooling, others had some years, so the effect of formal education could be controlled. Likewise some of those who were literate in Odia had learned it in school, whereas some who had no formal education had learned to read on their own, without ever having attended school. In almost all tests the bilinguals did better than the monolinguals, and most results were statistically significant.

After a really thorough examination of earlier literature from more than 100 years, including his own, Mohanty concludes in his book, in short: "There is now robust evidence of positive benefits associated with experience of multiple languages in respect of cognition, creativity, development of metalinguistic awareness, reading and literacy related skills". For all these, he gives detailed examples of various subcategories. Thus the hesitancy in the ELDIA book about benefits of multilingualism represents clear understatements. Likewise, the claims about delayed Alzheimer and other types of dementia are based on thorough longitudinal research.

Ending on an additional positive recommendation, we note that the authors mention many times how difficult it is for minority parents to start speaking the minority language to their children, even if many express the wish to do so. Their recommendations to individual parents include (p. 198): "**language transmission in families**, if possible, and early language learning (for instance, pre-school language immersion) must be supported and parents informed of their responsibility as language educators"; "**language users need encouragement**: support for families in transmitting the language to children (breaking habits of family-internal communication is very difficult)"; "**language users must be better informed** of their rights". We would like to add one practical recommendation. One of us has held literally hundreds of "parent evenings" (from the late 1960s onwards; often teachers and politicians were present too) in two of the field work areas of the ELDIA project (Saami in Norway and Finns in Sweden). What seems to have motivated parents most in starting to use Saami with their children was partly a stick but mainly a carrot. The stick was the shock that Saami parents experienced when the long-term consequences were made clear: the language would disappear if THEY did not start using it with the children.

Similar efforts aimed at motivating ongoing and increased use of non-dominant languages (in this case, Catalan and Basque) is reported on by Suay (2005). He describes workshops in which the aim is to increase the “willingness to communicate” (MacIntyre 2007). These workshops allow participants to analyse their own language use and then help them develop more assertiveness, reducing their discomfort and increasing their satisfaction with the use of their heritage language. The goal is to increase assertiveness while maintaining respect for all languages and their users

This book gives the so far most sophisticated tools globally for appreciating the sticks. The carrot was – and should be – to thoroughly discuss and inform parents of the research results on individual and group-level benefits of bilingualism and multilingualism. Which parents would NOT like to support their children in becoming more cognitively advanced and flexible? And more capable of divergent thinking, more creative, more metalinguistically aware, better focused, better in interpreting non-verbal feedback, better in learning additional languages? Once parents are motivated, networking starts, practical strategies are exchanged, and demands for more facilities and Linguistic Human Rights start growing too.

Reading this book offers, in addition to rich research results, both the sticks and the carrots needed.

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