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**PROOF**

## **Part III**

# **Migrations Past and Present**

PROOF

# 7

## Changes in the Linguistic Marketplace: The Case of German in Hungary<sup>1</sup>

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### Introductory remarks

For centuries, the German language has occupied a significant place on Hungary's linguistic map. It has been present as a mother tongue and minority language in the wake of the migration processes that have taken place since the Middle Ages, while as a foreign language it has played and continues to play a role as a result of Hungary's close ties with German-speaking countries. However, over the centuries, its social status, prestige and use have undergone considerable changes as a function of the changing power relations and political, economic and cultural interests of the time. Our aim in this chapter is to provide an overview of these changes in status and the reasons for them from a macro-sociolinguistic perspective (for a micro-sociolinguistic analysis of the present situation, see Knipf-Komlósi 2008: 265–327; Carl and Stevenson, this volume). We begin the (necessarily) sketchy review of the social history of the German language in Hungary with the eighteenth century,<sup>2</sup> as it was at the end of that century that the question of the status of the German language – or rather, the question of the German speech communities – first emerged. This was the time when, in Hungary, as in other European countries, language became the main carrier and symbol of national identity (cf. Gal 2006: 14f.). The Herderian concept of 'one language – one nation' established a close link between nation and language, and it cast language as a source of conflict, a mobilizing force in order to gain power and achieve political goals. It was this concept, then, that made it possible for the German language to become the political-ideological means of power, and, by the same token, its victim, in nineteenth- and twentieth-century Hungary (cf. Stevenson

2000: 109f.), crucially determining the status of the German speech community and the German language.

In the next section we introduce the historical and social layers of German speech communities in Hungary. We then outline and explain the fundamental changes in the status of German during the nineteenth century, which in turn determined the sociolinguistic events in the twentieth century. This is followed by a reconstruction of the process and the socio-political and ideological antecedents of the decline of German as a minority language in the twentieth century, and we conclude with a general survey of recent changes in the status of German as a foreign language in Hungary.

### **The historical and social layers of German speech communities in Hungary**

At the turn of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries we can see two layers of German speech communities in Hungary, clearly separable in historical and sociological terms:

- 1 The bourgeois layer which was concentrated in towns. It was literate, and, for this reason, standard-oriented in terms of language use. Its members had migrated during the Middle Ages mainly from the German Empire and in eighteenth and nineteenth centuries from the Austrian parts of the Habsburg Empire.
- 2 The other layer was concentrated in villages. Its members were peasants, who had a predominantly oral culture and a dialectal background. At that time its members lived in mainly monolingual German villages in the western regions of the country, creating closed communities in isolated settlements. These communities arrived at the end of the seventeenth and mainly during the eighteenth centuries, through organized settlement policies, the aim of which was to populate the areas which had been deserted during the Ottoman occupation.

These two layers and the language varieties spoken by the inhabitants show markedly different patterns, reflecting the political and related linguistic ideologies of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In time both were caught in the crossfire of power exactly because of the instrumentalization of language, an ethnic and national symbol, as a means of attaining and exercising power. As we shall see in the next section, nineteenth-century Hungarian linguistic nationalism proved fatal for

the first layer, and with it, for standard German. The second layer succeeded in securing ethnic survival, albeit at the cost of enormous losses and tragedies. Linguistic survival, however, as we shall see in section 4, was beyond their reach. We are witnessing this layer's language shift and the extinction of the German dialects in present-day Hungary.

### **Language, nation and identity: the nineteenth century**

The multiethnic and multilingual Hungary of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was dominated by the Habsburg Empire and, later, a dependent part of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, both exercising an assimilatory (that is, Germanicizing) language policy. Hungarian remained a subordinated language until 1844. The official language of the country was Latin, and later German. The German language, for this reason, gained symbolic significance from the eighteenth century and became the symbol of the oppressive power standing in the way of national independence and prosperity. Most of the country's bourgeois public as well as the mainstream language cultivation movement of the period came to consider German as a dangerous force, blocking a unified national language, and, through this, in preventing national unity as well (cf. Maitz 2008). Therefore, in the nineteenth century German-Hungarian societal bilingualism, which had evolved naturally and which had presented no serious conflicts in earlier centuries, became a source of deviance. German contact phenomena began to be seen as harmful and dangerous. At the same time, German as a mother tongue became an obstacle standing in the way of the social integration of German speech communities.

The adoption of the monolingual Herderian ideal and the factual multilingualism of the monarchy certainly resulted in ethnolinguistic conflicts. Through the newborn ideology of the 'national language' a basic means of power and a source of conflict developed, around which a widespread public discourse emerged. Herder became one of the main references of this discourse, especially in Hungary, since he projected the nightmare of the death of the Hungarian language in his main historical-philosophical work (*Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit*) to his bourgeois readers, who were highly sensitive to national questions at that time (cf. Gal 2001: 30f.). Herder predicted that:

Das einzige Volk, das aus diesem Stamm [das heisst, dem 'finnischen Völkerstamm'] sich unter die Eroberer gedrängt hat, sind

die Ungern oder Madscharen...Da sind sie jetzt unter Slawen, Deutschen, Wlachen und andern Völkern der geringere Teil der Landeseinwohner, und *nach Jahrhunderten wird man vielleicht ihre Sprache kaum finden.*

(The only people from this tribe [that is the 'Finnish tribe'] who managed to get to the rank of conquerors are the Hungarians or Magyars...They are now among Slavs, Germans, Vlachs and other peoples the minor part of their country's population and *in centuries to come even their language will probably be lost.*)

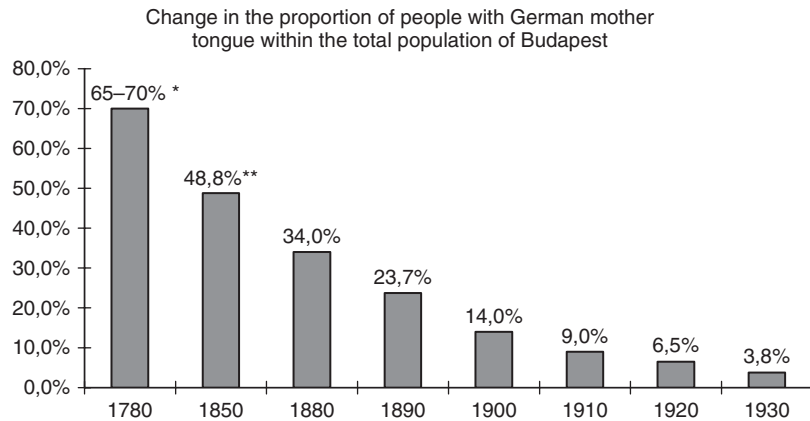
(Herder 1989: 688, emphasis added)

Contemporary Hungarian language cultivation, institutionalized at the time through the periodical *Magyar Nyelvőr* ('The Hungarian Language Guardian'), joined this national linguistic discourse. The main source of legitimation for language cultivation was provided by the creation of a unified national linguistic norm. Based on the concepts of the 'purity of language' and 'linguistic homogeneity', its main objective was to eradicate German-Hungarian societal bilingualism. According to their argument, the century-old contact-induced changes stemming from bilingualism were destroying the genealogical purity of the Hungarian language and endangering the native speakers' 'national language instinct', and so, it was claimed, were hindering the dissemination of a cultivated, unified national linguistic standard. As a result, contemporary language cultivation and public opinion influenced by language cultivation considered bilingual linguistic socialization harmful, and it was condemned, like most contact-induced phenomena (cf. Maitz 2008). The purist language cultivation project, not knowing, or rather, not acknowledging, the phenomenon of the bilingual norm stigmatized almost all forms of contact phenomena and labelled them 'Germanisms'. This notion became one of the most important topics of language cultivation, an influential means of linguistic stigmatization for decades. The struggle against 'Germanisms', referring to the national language as the main national value, represented the most emphasized thesis of contemporary language cultivation.

However, it is important to realize that the stigmatization of German based on the above argument did not affect all aspects of the presence of German in Hungary, or every scene of its usage. In spite of the fact that natural bilingualism and contact phenomena in the national language were considered dangerous and were condemned, the status and prestige of certain forms of the usage of German remained the same.

This can be attributed to three main factors. First, the contemporary official Hungarian state language policy was predominantly pluralist rather than assimilative, especially after the end of Habsburg oppression and the attainment of (partial) political autonomy in 1867 – in spite of some indisputable assimilative elements. The National Minority Law of 1868, which regulated the language rights of the country's ethnicities and remained in force until the end of the nineteenth century, is considered to be one of the most liberal regulations of its kind in contemporary Europe (for the text of the law, cf. Maitz 2005: 201ff.). Second, German remained the most important foreign language in Hungary throughout the nineteenth century until the recent past. The primary reason for this was certainly the political and economic interest of the Hungarian state and the native Hungarian population. Knowledge of German constituted considerable political, economic and cultural capital in contemporary Hungary forming a part of the Habsburg Empire with a large native German population. And third, the grounds for German as a minority language were not questioned, whether in politics or in public life. The national and linguistic rights of the Hungarian minorities were enshrined in law. Since the German language was claimed to be dangerous to the creation of a unified and purified national language, its usage became undesirable among the literate, standard-oriented speakers, namely, the German and Jewish bourgeois population. However, language use of the predominantly monolingual German dialectal speech communities with their peasant lifestyle was not a core issue in political or language cultivation debates. These speech communities were much less representative of the linguistic ideology of linguistic nationalism represented mainly by the bourgeois layer. For this reason, language maintenance remained much more characteristic of these communities than language shift until well into the middle of the twentieth century.

Therefore, it is the German-speaking (German and Jewish) bourgeois populations of Hungary that may be regarded as the 'real linguistic losers' of Hungarian linguistic nationalism. According to contemporary sources, these communities professed a definite Hungarian national identity, as a result of the continuation of their *Hungarus* identity, that is, their language- and ethnicity-independent state patriotism stemming from the Middle Ages. As a result of this and of the social pressure these communities were subjected to, they started to adopt the values of Hungarian linguistic nationalism; moreover, many of their members became the leaders of the Hungarian national movement of the time. As a consequence, in spite of the awakening national minority movements among



\* Based on estimates in the area of today's Budapest (cf. Berza 1993: 182)

\*\* Proportion of the German nationality

*Figure 7.1* Change in the proportion of people with German mother tongue within the total population of Budapest

Source: based on Fónagy (1998: 78).

other minority groups in Hungary during the nineteenth century, those initiated by the German population in Hungary were neither substantial nor successful. Therefore, the bourgeois German speech communities in the towns, as shown by Budapest's example (see Figure 7.1), through their Hungarian national identity, social mobility and individual economic and cultural interests, had undergone a language shift by the end of the nineteenth century. Consequently, standard German as a native language had become extinct in Hungary by the beginning of the twentieth century and since then has existed only as a foreign language. German as a mother tongue is present only in the form of non-standard vernaculars in the rural speech communities of modern times. Thus, in the following section, when referring to German minorities and their language use, we mean the mostly rural speech communities and the use of their vernaculars.

### German as a minority language in twentieth-century Hungary

In the twentieth century, the split in the history of native vs. standard German in Hungary has been completed. However, in the last decades of the century, their histories interfered again, causing unhappy consequences for the use of Hungarian German as a vernacular.



In the first decades of the century, the language policy of the Hungarian state towards the German minority was supportive in the sense that the state financed German primary education. On the other hand, there were no German high schools except in Transylvania, where the German-speaking minority had access to secondary education in their mother tongue. From the beginning of the century, bilingualism became a requirement for Hungarian German children. According to a law introduced in 1907, by the end of the fourth year all pupils were supposed to be able to read, write and speak fluently in Hungarian. Although the number of German primary schools decreased dramatically between 1880 and 1900, from 867 to 383, a slow increase began in the following years, and by 1917 there were as many as 447 German primary schools in Hungary.

In 1920, the Treaty of Trianon caused a dramatic turn not only in Hungarian history but also in the history of the Hungarian German minority. Hungary lost more than two-thirds of its territory and more than half of its inhabitants. Losing the main groups of its former minorities, Hungary became a largely monolingual and almost a mono-ethnic country. Its 1.9 million strong German-speaking population shrank to 550,000 as large German groups remained in Transylvania, Romania, Serbia, Czechoslovakia and Burgenland, Austria. Even with their remarkably decreased population, Germans became the largest ethnic minority in Hungary.

The Trianon Treaty strengthened the nationalistic ideology and this in turn had an impact on Hungarian minority educational policy. In 1923, three types of minority schools were established replacing the earlier practice by which the language of instruction had been the minority language. In type one, the language of instruction remained German; in type two, it was German and Hungarian, and in type three, the language of instruction was Hungarian, and German was taught as a compulsory subject. The development of types two and three shows a shift towards an assimilationist language policy. The change of conditions was also reflected in the minority parents' attitudes towards their native language: 75 per cent of them chose the second or third type of minority education.

During the Second World War and the preceding years some leaders of the Hungarian Germans played fateful roles for their Nazi-friendly politics had disastrous consequences for the future of the Hungarian German population as a whole. During the war, Hungarian Germans were able to enlist in both the Hungarian and the German armies, and many of them were successfully recruited into the *Waffen SS*. In the last

phase of the war, about 50,000 Germans left the country and many of those who remained were deported to labour camps by Soviet troops. After the war, as a 'penalty' for what was called 'collective guilt', large groups of ethnic Germans were expelled. About 170,000 were transported to the American Zone in West Germany, and about 50,000 to the Soviet Zone in East Germany (cf. Tilkovszky 1989).

The basis for the deportations was the data of the 1941 census when people were forced to make a categorical statement about their one and only national identity. Those who declared themselves to be Germans were entered on the list of people to be deported. This tragic event had grave, irreversible effects on both the status and the prestige of the German vernaculars. German national identity became a political stigma associated with the danger of being discriminated against, and in the German communities, strongly negative attitudes have evolved towards their own vernacular dialects. Language shift has therefore developed rapidly as a result of a conscious assimilation strategy.

The rejection of German and the fear of declaring it as a mother tongue are reflected in the fact that in 1949 only 22,455 people out of the 220,000 Hungarian Germans who remained in Hungary after the war identified, or rather, dared to identify, German as their mother tongue (see Table 7.1). As part of the accelerating language shift, another typical assimilation strategy emerged. Many members of the Hungarian German minority have changed their German surnames to Hungarian ones. The reason for this 'nominal assimilation', too, was the public rejection and renunciation of linguistic, and through this, ethnic affiliation in the hope of being spared expulsion or deportation. According to Kozma's (2002: 45) data, in the period between 1945 and 1948, by filing 24,000 applications, 50,000 people with a German background attempted to acquire Hungarian surnames.<sup>3</sup>

*Table 7.1* Changes in the size of the Hungarian population of German nationality and German mother tongue as reflected in census data

Year of census	German nationality	German mother tongue
1941	302,198	475,491
1949	2,617	22,455
1980	11,310	31,231
1990	30,824	37,511
2001	62,233	33,792

After a long decade, in the middle of the 1950s the extremely strong political pressure on the German speech communities started to ease. The German minority, who had not previously enjoyed collective rights, were officially recognized by law as a minority, along with other national minorities. In 1955 the focus of the minority policy shifted to the cultivation of cultural traditions, mainly of folk music and folk dance. At the same time, the state started to train teachers for minority education, a German magazine and a radio programme were established, and in 1960 three high schools started to teach some subjects in German. In the following decades, there was a remarkable increase in the number of German minority primary schools, especially in the late 1980s. In spite of the improving conditions, many parents, having experienced the political pressure in the communist era, consciously chose Hungarian as their children's first language.

The political conditions improved considerably after 1989. The Constitution was amended to include paragraphs on minority rights, and in 1993 the Act on the Rights of National and Ethnic Minorities was ratified by Parliament. The Act established individual and collective minority rights for autochthonous minority groups who have been living in Hungary for at least a century. The unification of Germany as well as the collapse of the communist regimes in Central Europe recontextualized attitudes towards German as a minority native language (cf. Gal 1995). Although the Hungarian German communities differ linguistically, ideologically and socio-economically, and the language shift processes are not uniform, the German minority are unique in that the self-declared ethnic and mother tongue population of the Hungarian German minority is increasing (Bartha and Borbély 2006: 346).

There is also a remarkable increase in the number of minority schools. In 1985 182 schools had adopted the German minority programme, and this number had grown to 284 by 1999. This increase, however, is partly the result of the fact that non-ethnic German Hungarian citizens also send their children to German schools in order to ensure their access to high quality foreign language education as the language of instruction in minority German schools is standard German (cf. Nelde 2000).

This practice has become one of the most powerful factors accelerating the language shift of the Hungarian German minority groups. For ethnic Germans, standard German is obviously inappropriate to express their Hungarian German ethnic and cultural identity, which is connected to the vernacular varieties (cf. Gerner 2006: 168). Compared to the overwhelming prestige of standard German strengthened by the authority of school, and to the prestige of Hungarian, the state language,

the non-standard German vernacular for youngsters seems increasingly redundant and not worth speaking (cf. Gal 2006: 27).<sup>4</sup> Therefore, the process of language shift seems irreversible, as sociolinguistic observations and surveys suggest (see, for example, Bindorffer 1998). In the German minority groups, only the elderly have native competence in the vernacular; the younger generations, as in many other language-shifting communities, use their dialects in fewer domains or only understand but do not speak it.

The 'mother tongue' data of the censuses show a rising tendency until 1990 (see Table 7.1). Although this seems to contradict what we have said above, the increase is only an illusion. In 1949, due to extremely strong political pressure, far fewer people than the actual number dared to identify German as their mother tongue. Thus the rising tendency observable in recent years is not a sign of an increase in the number of native speakers of German, but reflects the greater tolerance in the political climate. The fact that declaring German as a mother tongue reached its peak in 1990 is due primarily to the collapse of the communist era, the birth of the democratic state order and the restoration and establishment of familial, economic and cultural relations with Germany (e.g. twinned towns) (Bindorffer, 2003: 258).

The linguistic data of the 2001 census show a decreasing tendency and is an unambiguous indicator of language shift. The 2001 census, for the first time in the history of Hungarian censuses, allowed the informants to choose nationality, origin and mother tongue anonymously. The negative trend reflected by the data of the 2001 census shows the (f)actual processes signalled by the aforementioned sociolinguistic surveys and suggests language shift. In the background of the linguistic regression we can also see that the last, by now older, generations to acquire a German dialect as their first language and received primary school education in German are dying out (Bindorffer 2003: 258).

The census data also signal interesting trends in terms of the relationship between language and ethnic identity as it contains information about affinity to cultural values, traditions and the language used with family members and friends as well as about national identity and mother tongue (see Table 7.2).

The data show that in 2001 twice as many people identified themselves as Germans as in 1990 (see Table 7.1). The reason for this is only partly due to the anonymity offered; the positive changes in the socio-political environment are also definitely reflected in the numbers.

The other significant change mirrored in the 2001 data is the reversal of the relationship between the mother tongue and the nationality numbers. Previously, more people had identified German as their

Table 7.2 Linguistic and nationality data of the 2001 census

German nationality	Affinity to German cultural values, traditions	German mother tongue	Speaking German with family members or friends
62,233	88,416	33,792	53,040

mother tongue than as their nationality. In 2001, for the first time, significantly more (almost twice as many) people identified themselves as having German nationality than having German as their mother tongue. This clearly shows that the close link between German ethnic identity and the German mother tongue has been loosened. Many of those who claim Hungarian as their mother tongue identify themselves as members of the German minority. They are characteristically members of the younger generations. It seems that for them native language is not a marker of minority ethnic identity; this role has been taken over by cultural traditions (dances, songs, folk customs), and by awareness of German origin. This interpretation is supported by the large number of those who identified themselves as having an affinity to German cultural values and traditions, an even larger number than those who identified themselves as ethnic Germans (see Table 7.2). As Bindorffer (2003: 265f.) also highlights, this proves that language shift is not indicative of the extinction of a minority. The young generation's cultural affinity and the existential opportunities opening up for them thanks to the political and economic conditions create new perspectives for ethnic survival (cf. Gerner 2006). With the passing of the older generations, the traditional German dialects seem to be gradually disappearing from Hungary's linguistic map. However, there are signs that the younger generation's affinity to cultural values and traditions may replace this cohesion deficit brought about by the now apparently irreversible language shift (cf. Bindorffer 2003: 266). At the same time, while this may not be of significance for the (standing of the) indigenous German minority population, the prestige of standard German as a foreign language remains high, as it was throughout the twentieth century.

### **German as a foreign language in twentieth-century Hungary**

Before the Second World War German was unquestionably the first foreign language in Hungary as a result of the cultural traditions and the

history of the urban bourgeoisie, and because it had been the *lingua franca* in Central Europe. This function originated from the Habsburg period in several countries (Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia) and the cultural role of the German language in Poland.

Even though learning Russian became obligatory after the war, and even though German acquired negative connotations during the war, it seems that German kept its leading position on the prestige list until the mid-1980s. In addition to its role as a *lingua franca*, the main factors that stabilized the top position of German were the following: first, both Russian and German opened up the possibility for people to study or work in the Soviet Union and in the GDR; but in contrast with Russian, English and French, German was also useful to the overwhelming majority in the sense that it could be practised in real situations at Lake Balaton, which was not only the favourite holiday resort for Hungarians but also a meeting point for German families and friends separated by the German border. Other languages remained more or less classroom languages. Second, in the western part of the country, knowing German ensured advantages in finding well-paid jobs, as the Austrian restaurant and medical tourist industries expanded (in the 1980s). Furthermore, in the last decade of the communist era, retail tourism to Austria became fashionable, establishing another domain in which German was useful. Third, even if Hungarians mostly had direct contact only with East Germans, German was regarded as a Western language, which added to its prestige.

There were also negative feelings towards German, but they obviously did not outweigh the positive factors: for many people, it was associated with Nazi Germany, and according to a widespread folk linguistic judgement: German sounds 'unpleasant', 'too hard' and is 'harsh-sounding'.

However useful German was during this period, since the 1960s the most desired foreign language among young people is English. The yearning for the 'American dream', the spread of popular culture and, above all, the enthusiasm for pop music created a desire among young people to know English. When it turned out that English had actually become the new world *lingua franca*, it also increased its already high prestige. Access to the internet in this regard was the icing on the cake.

Today, the leading position of English has become unquestionable. Recent data on foreign language learning in Hungary (see Table 7.3) may be somewhat misleading, suggesting that German is still almost as strong as English. The data on foreign language learning do not reflect the real preferences of students. Once the obligatory teaching of Russian

Table 7.3 Changes in language learning between 1991 and 1999 (numbers of students)

	Russian			German			English		
	Primary	High school	Vocational	Primary	High school	Vocational	Primary	High school	Vocational
1991	485,000	76,000	3,500	186,000	54,000	14,000	130,000	71,000	6,000
1999	22,000	17,000	2,000	354,000	82,000	24,000	318,000	106,000	7,000

Source: The Ministry of Education.

was abolished after 1990, teachers of Russian were offered the opportunity to retrain in another language. German was a popular choice, so there are many teachers of German in the country. As a result, even if the pupils' preference is English, they are offered German, partly because of the lack of teachers of English and partly because it means that teachers of German can keep their jobs.

Nevertheless, trends in language choice and language policy clearly show that English will almost entirely overtake all other languages as the first foreign language in the near future. In high schools – the most prestigious form of public schooling – English had overtaken German as the language of choice by 1999. According to the law on public education (LXXIX/1993,133.§ (2)), from 2010 onwards, schools will be required to offer English classes. Although learning English is not compulsory, teaching English will become a legal obligation. It is therefore likely that German will lose its position as the first foreign language taught in Hungary; however, it will probably continue to be first choice as a second foreign language.

### Concluding remarks

German has played a role in the history of the Hungarian-speaking community ever since the Hungarian kingdom was established in the Carpathian Basin. The intensity of language contact changed over time, as did the status of German as a native and second, or foreign, language. German seems to have achieved its greatest prestige during the Habsburg era, supported by the strong political and economic power it symbolized; but it was this very association that led to a significant change in the attitudes towards German when the ideology of 'one nation, one language, one culture' evolved in the early nineteenth century. However, the nineteenth century brought another important change as well. The German-speaking population of the Hungarian towns – especially of Buda and Pest, assimilated by the end of the century – sporadically settled in the country, and German as a native language became a minority language largely confined to a few villages. In the minority communities, German kept its symbolic function of signalling minority identity until recently but as the 2001 census shows, for the younger generation of Hungarian Germans this role is being overtaken by the traditional culture of the community. Even after the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, German remained the foreign language of choice in Hungary until almost the end of the twentieth century; but since the 1960s English has taken over this position in line with the global tendency



and strengthened by the collapse of the communist order in Eastern Europe in which German was seen as a 'friendly' but at the same time 'Western' foreign language and functioned as a lingua franca. Today the leading position of English is unquestionable, and although German is still the second foreign language in Hungary, it is far from being the lingua franca of the region: English seems to dominate all other languages in this function.

### Notes

1. Peter Maitz's work was been supported by the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation. We would also like to thank Kristine Horner (Leeds) for improving our English.
2. For previous centuries, see Maitz (2005); Manherz (1998).
3. Only 63.3 per cent of the petitions submitted were approved. With a few exceptions, the petitions of those who had declared themselves German in the 1941 census were denied. Petitions of Hungarians with a German mother tongue were approved only if the applicant's left-wing, anti-fascist record was authorized by influential patrons. Furthermore, immediate rejection awaited the petitions of those who had already been registered on the list of deportees (cf. Kozma 2002: 45, 56).
4. The German minority groups living primarily on the western border, next to Austria, in the vicinity of the towns of Sopron and Kőszeg are perhaps an exception. The German (Bavarian) vernaculars they speak are practically identical with the vernaculars spoken in the neighbouring Austrian provinces. Thus the Hungarian German dialects, rather than representing the past and the traditions, actually represent important economic capital – one of the prerequisites of employment in Austria offering serious economic advantages.

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