

**Language planning between pluralism
and assimilationism.
Reflections on Hungarian mother tongue instruction
in Sweden**

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Abstract

Most of the immigrant groups, wherever they settled down, have frequently wished to maintain their language and central aspects of their culture over one or more generation(s). However, to which degree and in which way the language maintenance efforts of the immigrants have been assured in different countries has been shown to depend mostly on the host societies and their language policy and just barely on the immigrants themselves (Glenn & de Jong, 1996). Sweden is internationally known as a pluralistic country, providing supplemental instruction in the languages of immigrant minorities as part of the regular education. However, the mother tongue instruction system established in the 1970s has undergone several changes during the last decades. In an earlier study the effects of current Swedish language policy and its implementation on a micro level have been examined, using Hungarian, one of the country's minor immigrant languages, as an example (György-Ullholm, in press). This paper examines the second generation's opportunities to reach active bilingualism, the officially expressed goal of Swedish minority education. Nevertheless, the results of the study indicate that monolingualism or in the best case passive bilingualism are the most probable outcomes of the current language-in-education policy for these pupils.

Key words: immigrant languages, minority education, community-based programs, top-down and bottom-up language planning.

Resumo

A maioría dos grupos inmigrantes, calquera que sexa o lugar onde se asenten, frecuentemente quixeron manter a súa lingua e os aspectos centrais da súa cultura durante unha ou máis xeracións. Sen embargo, no tocante ó grao e o xeito en que os inmigrantes teñen realizado eses esforzos de mantemento lingüístico en diferentes países, vese que depende nomeadamente das sociedades receptoras e das súas políticas lingüísticas máis ca dos propios inmigrantes (Glenn & de Jong, 1996). Suecia é coñecida internacionalmente coma un país plural, que fornece ensino suplementario nas súas propias linguas ás minorías inmigrantes coma parte do ensino regrado. Porén, o sistema de ensino das linguas maternas establecido nos anos setenta sufriu varios cambios nas últimas décadas. Nun estudo previo, examináronse os efectos da política lingüística sueca actual e a súa posta en marcha a un nivel micro, tomando o caso do húngarés, unha das linguas minoritarias inmigrantes, como exemplo (György-Ullholm, no prelo). Este artigo examina as oportunidades da segunda xeración para acadar un bilingüismo activo, que é o obxectivo oficialmente declarado do ensino sueco para as minorías. A pesares disto, os resultados do estudo indican que o monolingüismo ou, no mellor dos casos, o bilingüismo pasivo son os resultados máis habituais nos alumnos da actual política de linguas no ensino.

Palabras clave: lingua dos inmigrantes, educación das minorías, programas baseados na comunidade, planificación lingüística dende arriba e dende abaixo.

1. Introduction

At present, 15 percent of the pupils in Swedish schools are foreign born or have immigrant parents (SOU, 2002/27: 197). Moreover, the country has five autochthonous minority groups, whose children just partly are included in this figure¹. The linguistic diversity is huge: according to Statistics Sweden more than 150 languages are spoken in the country. At the same time, the distribution over the different language groups is very uneven. 60 percent of the pupils entitled to mother tongue instruction² in Swedish compulsory

¹ The Finnish group in Sweden has been recognized as an autochthonous group, still there are many first and second generation immigrants in the group. These children are of course included in the above mentioned 15 percent, but not the third or fourth generation. The other autochthonous groups have their roots in Sweden since many centuries ago and just few of their group members are immigrants (Hyltenstam, 1999; Huss, 2001).

² The terminology referring to the instruction of minority children in their heritage or native language is not consistent between different countries. Here, I will use the acronym MTI (mother tongue instruction) in accordance with current Swedish terminology.

schools (grade 1-9) are speakers of the 10 largest minority languages, each of them having more than 4,000 eligible pupils yearly (Skolverket, 2001). The remaining 140 “small” languages make up 40 percent of the immigrant pupils’ mother tongues and the number of eligible pupils lies between 3,000 and a few in each of these languages.

1.1. An earlier study on Hungarian mother tongue instruction

In an earlier study (György-Ullholm, in press) the effects of current Swedish language policy and its implementation on a micro level have been examined. Hungarian was studied as a representative of Sweden’s minor immigrant languages, especially those spoken by groups living geographically scattered and physically integrated into Swedish society. The theoretical frame of the study consisted of a somewhat modified version of Kaplan and Baldauf’s language-in-education policy model, presented in their work *Language Planning –From Practice to Theory* (1997: 124). For further details on the theoretical frame and its adaptation see chapter 4.

1.2. Methods for data collection

The results of the study are partly based on secondary analysis of the available data in national reports, on official webpages (Sweden Statistics, The National Integration Board and The National Agency of Education), as well as those published in the Swedish-Hungarian community’s own newspaper, and on different community webpages (see webpages at the end of this article).

However, a general lack of data on the Hungarian community in Sweden as well as on their language usage made a more language- and group-specific investigation necessary. For this reason a number of people have been interviewed, including eight Hungarian mother-tongue teachers working in Swedish schools, three civil servants on the municipal level, four teachers working in the Hungarian community, four parents, five pupils attending different kinds of MTI, one of the Hungarian protestant priests in Sweden, and six other key members of the Hungarian Community involved in mother tongue promoting activities.

1.3. Aim of this paper

The aim of this paper is to review the findings of the earlier study with a new focus in mind: the second generation’s opportunities to reach the

officially formulated goals of minority education. The paper is divided into five sections. Next chapter summarizes the societal context of the matter. Chapter 3 gives some basic information about the Hungarian community in Sweden, while chapter 4 makes up the main part of the paper, describing two different kinds of language planning approaches aiming to promote bilingualism among the second generation. Finally, in chapter 5 the implications of the earlier discussions are presented.

2. The historical and ideological background

2.1. The mother-tongue instructional system in Sweden and its decay

Generally, there have been three ways of promoting the immigrants' language transmission: either through (1) a community-based mother-tongue education movement outside the regular school, or through (2) formal mother-tongue education sponsored by homeland governments, or through (3) some kind of mother tongue support provided by the regular educational system (Glenn & de Jong, 1996: 315-34; Extra & Gorter, 2001: 32). Sweden, Norway, the Netherlands and Australia are some of the countries, which have chosen to provide supplemental instruction in the languages of immigrant minority groups as part of their regular educational system. The main reason for doing so was that the policy-makers saw the upholding of state sponsorship and the control of education authorities over the maintenance programs as the best way to avoid dangers associated with (1) community-based programs, that may contribute to segregation, and with (2) programs sponsored by other countries, that may promote undesired political agendas (Glenn & de Jong, 1996: 325 ff.).

Winsa (1999) summarizes the changing policies concerning minority languages in Sweden. Traditionally Swedish language policies towards minorities have been nationalistic, reluctant, and directed towards assimilation. High labour immigration, which began in the late 1950s, eventually effected bilingual education. The history of modern Swedish language policies begins in the 1970s, when a State Commission on Immigrants was set up and guidelines for a structured immigration policy were developed. Its motto, "Equality, Freedom of Choice and Co-operation" (SOU, 1974/ 69), came to play a central role in political decision-making for a couple of decades. Among other changes in public life, pupils with mother tongues other than Swedish could receive mother tongue instruction (MTI) at

least two hours a week as part of the regular educational system. The intention of policy-makers was to provide supplemental instruction in *all* immigrant languages as part of regular schooling, irrespective of the number of pupils in a certain language or of the size of the municipality where the pupils lived. Sweden has to be considered as revolutionary in many respects, but especially because of the explicit “home language” criterion applied for the eligibility in MTI, rather than a problem-oriented view in form of socio-economic status or generation criterion most common in the countries focused upon in Broeder & Extra (1998).

Unfortunately, this progressive educational policy turned out to be hard to implement on a local level (Municio, 1987). Instead of developing the system, toughened criteria for participation were introduced in combination with decentralization of decision making and budget cuts. As a result, the earlier MTI-system rapidly depleted (Hyltenstam & Tuomela, 1996; Lainio, 1997, 2001a; Boyd, 2001). Pupils in larger cities tend to attend MTI to a greater degree than on the countryside, but since 1991 the numbers are falling, both relatively and absolutely. The situation is similar in secondary school and a great variation in participation according to language is clearly visible in current statistics. Unfortunately, since the middle 1980s, in national reports only figures for the ten largest languages are presented individually, the other 140 languages are comprised to one single figure (e.g. Skolverket, 2001). Many official reports concerning mother tongue instruction laborate with percentages across all language groups and municipalities so that lacking implementation can not easily be distinguished neither on a local nor on a language level (e.g. Skolverket, 1992, 2000, 2002). Scientific studies focusing on the education of particular language groups are rare and cover only three of the national minority languages (Wingstedt, 1996; Lainio, 1997 and 2001b; Svonni, 2001).

2.2. The late 1990’s: A new political-ideological era in Sweden?

Another for pluralism worrying tendency is the last decade of public debate concerning immigrants, culminating prior to the parliamentary elections in September 15th 2002. The main lines of argumentation were *integration contra segregation*, often on a pseudolinguistic basis. *Folkpartiet*, one of the liberal parties, stressed, for example, immigrant’s obligations and suggested Swedish language test mandatory for Swedish citizenship. The proposal was heavily contested by many linguists and even experts in other

sciences.³ However, the general opinion was convinced: the *Folkpartiet* reached an unexpected popularity-peak in the elections 2002. Of course, the mastering of the majority language is an important tool of integration. But few parties discuss the question how to enable immigrants to integrate. All parties agree that segregation is undesirable, but no discussions are conducted on how other alternatives of settling could be made attractive for immigrant groups that wish to maintain their cultural and linguistic heritage. The how-to-do-it part of the integration is left to the immigrants. Unfortunately, this kind of political-ideological discourse has very few common points with pluralism, in terms of cultural and linguistic diversity, but shows more tendencies towards assimilationism (see also the discussions conducted in Boyd, 2001).

Changes in the political sphere have implications also for the educational system. In a situation where immigrants and their children are perceived as a social problem and many immigrants experience economic and social marginalisation, the question of whether to use minority languages in education can take on a significance which is no longer simply instrumental but deeply symbolic, both for the immigrants and for the host society.

2.3. The objectives of Swedish minority education

Since 1977, when the so-called “Home Language Reform” took effect, *active bilingualism* has been the explicit aim of Swedish minority education (Hyltenstam & Tuomela, 1996: 45). However, the terminology is based on two discourses. In early linguistic research the term was used for contrastive purposes in defining different types of bilingualism (passive vs. active bilingualism, cf. Romaine, 1995: 11 ff.). While the competence criterion is mostly relevant in our case, this kind of categorization has its obvious limitations. It focuses only on language production abilities in general, without taking into account the individual’s everyday language use, or of his/her changing needs and competencies over the time and different domains, nor does it tell us anything about the individuals’ socio-cultural sensitiveness (Baker & Prys-Jones, 1998: 5 ff.).

³ A short summary of the protests is to be found in the daily newspaper Dagens Nyheter 2003-02-22, where Andreas Bergh from Lund University, Kenneth Hyltenstam and Olle Josephson from Stockholm University and Mats Myrberg from the Teacher Training College in Stockholm are cited.

Promoting active bilingualism amongst the second generation implies the existence of an open-minded, pluralistic society with conscious and well-implemented language planning strategies to protect minority languages. In a society with assimilationist or segregationist assumptions, the result of growing up as an immigrant child is likely to be monolingualism or at best passive bilingualism. We may ask the question: does the regular education system make it possible for immigrant children in Sweden to achieve active bilingualism? If this is not the case, it has to be due to the inconsistencies of the language planning system. Then the question will be: what can and should be done to provide better language learning opportunities for these children? I will exemplify my points by drawing a portrayal of the existing mother tongue programs for Hungarian speaking pupils in Sweden.

3. Hungarian immigrants in Sweden

One of the first largest refugee groups in Sweden arrived from Hungary, as a consequence of the revolution in 1956 against the Soviet-influence in their home country. The group consisted of about 6,000 young people, many of them being students and intellectuals (Svensson, 1992). Later on, even more Hungarians chose Sweden as their host country, mostly of socio-economic and political reasons (Szabó, 1988, 1997). Presently, there are nearly 15,000 Hungarians recorded in the databank of Statistics Sweden, not including the Hungarian speaking immigrants coming from the neighbouring countries, such as Romania, Slovakia and the former Yugoslavia. Taking these late-time refugees into consideration, the Hungarian group in Sweden is counting between 25,000-30,000 first generation immigrants, according to the Association of Hungarian Immigrants in Sweden.

The group is relatively well organized:⁵ it has a countrywide immigrant association with 32 local branches and around 5,600 active members, a youth organisation, its own newspapers, an independent protestant church with Hungarian-speaking services, an association of Hungarian-speaking researchers, and several informal groupings.

Taking the current political-ideological discourse concerning immigrants into consideration, it can be of special interest to examine the Hungarian

⁵ The webpages of the above mentioned organisations are listed at the end of the article.

group's strategies to cope with the demands of a harsher society, especially their efforts to maintain mother tongue instruction as an aid for intergenerational language transmission. One of the reasons is that the group has a 50 years long history in the country, comparable to the history of minority education in Sweden. The other reason is that it could represent the ideal of an immigrant group in today's integration-oriented Swedish society. According to the Swedish-Hungarian ethnologist Mátyás Szabó (1988, 1997), and confirmed by my own observations, the Hungarians are living geographically widespread and physically integrated in the majority society. Many of them are urban citizens, have high status jobs and marriages to Swedes are quite usual.

4. Two language-planning approaches

The decay of the MTI-system concerned all languages, but hit particularly hard against the "small" immigrant groups. As a consequence, more and more minority groups are developing community-based programs to ensure that their children do learn the ancestral language. Now the unusual situation occurs that two kinds of language planning approaches are present at the same time in Sweden: (1) the old system, founded and promoted from the top of the society, by majority-group members, in our case the different state committees and organisations consulted by the Swedish government, and (2) a new system, initiated and run by minority parents directly interested in language transmission. In Kaplan & Baldauf's terms we can talk about *top-down* and *bottom-up planning* (1997: 197 ff.). In this paper these two terms are used in order to illustrate the different perspectives of the actors in the language planning process and their differing possibilities to implement ideas and realize their goals.

There is however an important difference between Kaplan and Baldauf's model (1997: 124) and that applied in this paper: in their model, community policies represent one of the chains in the planning system, whereas I consider the community as a language planning force in itself, and describe community efforts in parallel to the MTI provided in regular schools.

The modified model, providing the theoretical frame of the earlier study (György-Ullholm, in press) consists of the following stages: (1) planning stage; (2) policy formation; (3) curriculum policy; (4) personnel policy; (5) materials policy; (6) evaluation policy; and (7) feedback. However, the

limited scope and length of this paper does not admit the presentation of all findings. Instead, some central parts of the model will be discussed, where the two language-planning approaches differ considerably: (1-2) planning stage and policy formation; (3) curriculum policy, and (5) materials policy.

4.1. Planning stage and policy formation

Designing a mother tongue program for the immigrants' children is one of the most problematic areas of education planning, because the immigrant groups as well as the individuals within the groups may differ both in their expressed desires and in their actual practices. Therefore, as Kaplan and Baldauf (1997: 87-120) points out, a carefully designed and implemented survey is an absolute necessity before planning and legislating the program. Surveys are needed to estimate the number of pupils in different language groups, the resource-needs in these languages, and most of all, the costs combined with different solutions, so that the policy-makers can calculate on the systems cost-effectiveness.

As described in section 2, the language-in-education planning efforts of the Swedish state have been documented as a part of a more structured immigration policy in the 1970s. In fact, MTI existed already between 1962 and 1972 in some municipalities in form of experimental programs, but without a common ground. Since 1966, there has been government funding for MTI, but without any legislation. In 1966, the National School Board (Skolöverstyrelsen) presented a circular stressing the importance of remedial instruction in Swedish and MTI for the immigrants' children's normal cognitive, linguistic and identity-development. According to my respondents, MTI for Hungarian-speaking pupils has existed at least since 1971 in the two main cities Stockholm and Gothenburg (Göteborg) and in the town Borås.

A small scale language survey has been undertaken in 1983 at a Child Nursery Centre in Stockholm by Natchev & Sirén (1985), otherwise the limited statistics of the experimental MTI-period have been used to estimate the numbers of the pupils belonging to different language groups. In the community no such estimations have been made, and the numbers of the participating pupils are steadily increasing.

As of the Hungarian community, the development of an explicit language policy is quite a new phenomenon. During the last decade, several local branches of the Hungarian Immigrants Association in Sweden independently have organised MTI for Hungarian speaking children. Hungarian parents,

who wanted to develop an alternative to the collapsed MTI-system, initiated all the community-based programs. In 1997 the association set up a mother tongue section responsible for supporting and joining these community based forms of mother tongue promoting activities. The section also offers in-service teacher training to all Hungarian mother-tongue teachers irrespective of whether they teach in schools or in community based activities. Finally, the section develops and distributes new teaching materials and methods. An information technology based form of distance tuition has been developed, but in lack of sufficient funding it has never been implemented. In summertime, when the community school not operates, the association organises two-week vacation camps in two different localities. This summer a total of 103 children from 7 to 16 years of age participated.

Even though the program is in its initial phases, it has to be considered as a huge leap in the language maintenance efforts of the Hungarian community (cf. Fishman's *GID-scale*, 1991). Moreover, in this paper it is argued that a combination of the two programs could and should be taken advantage of, because it is the only chance for the second generation to achieve active bilingualism under the given circumstances.

Unfortunately, before designing the program, no cost estimations have been made, whether for the officially provided MTI, or for the maintenance program organized by the Hungarian community. The financial resources of MTI were originally determined as earmarked, i.e. direct state-funding for mother tongue instruction and were directly distributed to the affected schools. However, in 1991 the municipalities were given greater liberty to distribute funding from the government as they saw fit. Since 1993, the government distributes one single grant to every municipality for education, without marking funds for special purposes.

The mother tongue programs of the Hungarian communities are mainly working through member fees, but receive also some minimal support from the Swedish Integration Board, through the Swedish Association of Hungarian Immigrants as well as some indirect state-funding from Hungary in form of teaching materials and teacher training scholarships. (See Table 1).

Table 1. Pre-planning stage and policy formation.

	Top-down language planning (MTI in schools)	Bottom-up language planning (Community-based programs)
Research on bilingualism	Yes, but mostly after 1980	No
Cost estimation	?	?
Test period	Yes, 1962-1977	Yes, since 1994
Survey for collecting data	Partly under test period, small scale language survey 1983	No
Design policy strategies	Yes	Partly
Financial resources	<u>Originally</u> : Earmarked, direct state-funding <u>Since 1991</u> : Indirect, budget cut state-funding, according to municipality priorities	Mainly member fees + Indirect state-funding from the Swedish Integration Board, through the Swedish Association of Hungarian Immigrants, + Indirect state-funding from Hungary (some teaching materials, teacher training scholarships)

4.2. Curriculum policy

Regarding curriculum policy the four most interesting issues will be highlighted here: (1) the objectives of education; (2) language requirements; (3) grouping policy; and (4) the content of education (see below Table 2).

4.2.1. The objectives of education

The objective of MTI in schools is active bilingualism, providing a normal cognitive, linguistic and identity development for minority children. The objectives of the community-based programs are more language and culture specific. They could be summarized as strengthening the pupils' Hungarian identity, and maintaining and developing their Hungarian language skills.⁶

⁶ The objectives of the community-based programs are formulated in the statutes of the "Mother Tongue Section", a working unit within the Swedish Association of Hungarian Immigrants.

4.2.2. Language requirements

In both programs, a good command of the mother tongue is required for participation. The state-founded program originally had no requirements, but gradually stricter formulations have been introduced. Besides having a good command of the language at the *beginning of the program*, daily language usage is required in order to be eligible for MTI in school. In the Hungarian community, a good command of the Hungarian language is required *at all stages*, not just at the beginning of the program. The community would like to teach beginners as well (i.e. pupils of Hungarian descent whose parents regret that their children cannot speak the language), but cannot afford to broaden the scope.

4.2.3. Grouping policy

Group size was not determined originally, when MTI was introduced in Sweden. However, since 1991 the municipalities are no longer obliged to offer MTI in languages, which cannot make up a group of at least five pupils within the municipality or the school district (Hyltenstam & Tuomela, 1996: 98).

Looking at the statistics of the Hungarian group it is quite clear how the five-pupil rule affects speakers of the minor immigrant languages. According to Sweden Statistics, before 1990, Hungarian ranked as the eleventh largest mother-tongue group in the Swedish school, with about 2,000 pupils eligible for MTI in compulsory school and 500 pupils at the upper secondary school level yearly. Since 1995, the number of eligible Hungarian pupils has been nearly halved along with the participation rates. Consequently, the remaining groups are much more *heterogeneous* regarding both age and language skills of the participants. Under these circumstances it is a challenge even for the most enthusiastic and best prepared teacher to create good learning conditions, according to both the mother tongue teachers and the pupils interviewed for the study.

As a good command of Hungarian is required *at all stages* in the community-based program, and as the grouping policy is strictly age-related, relatively *homogenous* groups can be attained. As a consequence, for these groups there are likely to be much better teaching conditions.

4.2.4. Content of education

The national curriculum includes mother tongue in two forms: MTI as a subject and mother tongue support in other subjects. However, Hungarian exists in practice *only as a subject* in Swedish schools. The teachers involved in Hungarian MTI focus on the communicative use of the language, grammar and cultural comparisons.

Community-based education, on the contrary, teaches other subjects, such as literature, history, geography, folk music, drama, etc., *through* the Hungarian language. In a limited way community teachers are practicing an approach known as “teaching across the curriculum” (see Kaplan & Baldauf, 1997: 133).

Table 2. Some aspects of curriculum policy.

	Top-down language planning (MTI at school)	Bottom-up language planning (Community-based programs)
Objectives	“Active bilingualism”, providing a normal cognitive, linguistic and identity Development	Strengthening the pupils’ Hungarian identity, maintaining And developing their Hungarian language skills
Language requirements	<u>Originally</u> : No requirements <u>Since 1985</u> : daily language usage and good command of The language at the start	Yes, good command of the Hungarian language at all stages
Grouping policy	<u>Originally</u> not determined, <u>Since 1991</u> : at least 5 pupils from the same language group living in the same municipality or school district ⇒ heterogeneous groups	7 -15 pupils/group Age-related grouping ⇒ relatively homogenous groups
Content of education	MT as a subject. Focus areas: grammar, communicative use of the lg., cultural comparisons	MT as the medium of instruction. Focus areas: literature, history, drama, geography, folk music, pottery, gymnastics, etc., And cultural comparisons

4.3. Materials policy

The main methodological problem experienced by mother tongue teachers, especially those working in schools, is the choice of relevant study

material (see Table 3). It is a confirmed fact that most immigrant children do not develop their mother tongue in the same pace as monolingual children do in their home countries (e.g. Namei, 2002). The extremely limited range of registers and the very short time these children are exposed to the mother tongue at school (10-110 minutes a week) ensures –even with L1 support at home– that the older they get, the wider the gap will be between their cognitive maturity and their linguistic abilities in the mother tongue. To overcome this problem, most MTI teachers in schools choose to work in MTI with simplified language materials or authentic materials designed for monolingual children of lower ages. Although simplified language may be more accessible, it may also fail to attract the students’ interest, which may be one of the causes why few pupils continue MTI in the higher grades.

In contrast, teachers in the community-run mother-tongue program are using authentic materials, directly related to the subjects they are studying, i.e. literature, history, geography, drama. This way they are providing a wider range of registers for the participating pupils, widening their lexical knowledge and at the same time making communication in the mother tongue more meaningful.

Another relevant difference is the fact that homework is unusual in MTI at schools, while it is required in the community-based mother-tongue program and used as an important pedagogical tool.

Table 3. Materials policy.

	Top-down language planning (MTI at school)	Bottom-up language planning (Community-based programs)
Where from?	From Hungary, the From World Wide Web, and some translated material	Hungary, its neighboring countries, and the World Wide Web
Content	Simplified language materials and/or authentic materials for lower ages (rhymes, songs)	mostly authentic, subject-related materials, providing a wider range of registers
Methodology	Interactive, mostly talking, no homework	Interactive, talking and writing, homework required

4.4. Geographical distribution

The map presented below (see Map 1) shows the geographical distribution of the different mother-tongue programs for Hungarian-speaking

pupils. The map shows southern Sweden and is marked with filled and unfilled circles, each of them representing municipalities where mother tongue programs are actually offered for Hungarian-speaking pupils in Sweden. The unfilled circles represent municipalities where only MTI at school is available. The filled circles represent municipalities where pupils have access to both kinds of programs, both school-run and community-based. According to the arguments discussed above, we can conclude that the unfilled circles equal passive bilingualism or monolingualism, while filled circles represent good opportunities for active bilingualism. Looking at this map it becomes obvious that most of the pupils with Hungarian descent today end up as monolinguals or as passive bilinguals in Sweden. Especially, as only 35 out of the 92 municipalities⁷ hosting Hungarian-speaking pupils provide Hungarian MTI at school. In comparison, community-based programs today only work in seven municipalities. I.e. most of the pupils *do not get any* mother tongue instruction at all –whether at school or from the community.

The number of participating pupils is also very low: since 1997, in the Hungarian MTI program offered at schools, less than 500 pupils have participated yearly⁸, steadily decreasing. In the community-based programs this figure is around 160, although steadily growing. These numbers are remarkably low taking into consideration that the number of first generation Hungarian-speaking immigrants is around 25,000.

5. Implications and conclusions

In order to be eligible for MTI in Sweden as well as for participation in community-run programs, the child has to have good language skills in the mother tongue when he or she starts school. This in turn implies that the parents much have recognized the importance of consistent mother tongue usage from the beginning (Baker & Prys-Jones, 1998: 30). If not, their children will be denied access to both kinds of mother-tongue education. Furthermore, in small municipalities the earlier mentioned five-pupil rule (see section 4.2.3.) denies access to MTI for many children, including those

⁷ The total number of municipalities in Sweden is 289.

⁸ According to Sweden Statistics database on the web. (Table: “Elever med annat modersmål än svenska/Sv2 i samtliga skolor” / “Pupils with mother tongues other than Swedish in all schools”).



Map 1. Hungarian MTI provided by the school and the ethnic communities in Sweden.

coming from Hungarian-speaking families and with good initial conditions to develop bilingualism. A denial will in turn discourage unconvinced parents to make any more efforts to communicate with their children in their mother tongue. Therefore, *monolingualism* is likely to be the result of growing up in Sweden for many minority children.

Passive bilingualism is to be expected if the child's only chance to use the mother tongue outside the home is one hour a week at the MTI lessons at school. This pattern is probable even when the parents continue to use the language as the child grows up, because of the two languages different status,

power and distribution in the surrounding society (see Kaplan & Baldauf, 1997: 136 f.). In this scenario, the child still uses the mother tongue with other speakers of the language even outside the home for some hours a month, but still in a limited range of situations. Even if the child would be attending MTI throughout his or her schooling, contrary to the common pattern for the Hungarian speakers, he or she will most probably end up only as a passive bilingual, with restricted knowledge in the parents' mother tongue.

In order to achieve *active bilingualism*, a child needs access to a wider range of registers than he or she can be exposed to at home and on MTI once a week. In this respect the community-based programs offer a valuable complement to the officially provided MTI. Comparing the mother tongue teachers' student attendance lists with each other, it becomes clear that all of those pupils, who are attending the mother tongue program offered by the communities, are attending, or at least have been attending, MTI at school. According to my respondents, those who dropped out of MTI, did so for practical reasons: the MTI lessons did not fit into their activity-schedule, or/and the school building where the lesson took place was too far from their own school and home. Those pupils who received both MTI at school and mother tongue education offered by the community had the best command of their mother tongue according to my respondents (school- and community-teachers, parents and pupils). This was also confirmed by my own experiences during later research within the community.

A high level of bilingualism requires years of intensive exposure to both languages in native or native-like environments. This exceptional situation may occur for a pupil of Hungarian descent only if he or she gets the chance to a longer stay in her parents' country of origin, for example, by studying on college or university. However, passing the entrance examination in Hungary requires a high level of Hungarian language proficiency. From the discussions conducted in chapter 4, we can conclude that only those pupils who receive mother tongue education in both school and the community have a real opportunity to be admitted to academic studies in Hungary and thus develop a more balanced bilingualism.

Under given circumstances the best options for fostering active bilingualism seem to be *co-operative arrangements* between the local immigrant communities and the municipalities. This kind of co-operation is in fact already a reality in five of the seven municipalities where the local

Hungarian community runs a mother tongue program⁹. The advantages of co-operation between the school and the immigrant community are great, since the pupils can be recognized as belonging to two linguistic and cultural worlds and can be supported from two sides (the school representing the majority society and the community representing his or her own ethnic group). Unfortunately, so far few decision-makers have recognized the potential of co-operations.

Until recently, no overall language-planning document existed in Sweden.¹⁰ MTI and bilingual education was simply considered as an overlapping part of the immigrant policy and the educational policy. As a consequence, the state financed programs are based on individual rights and not on group rights. As we have seen, this political decision is in fact not promoting bilingualism among the second-generation, unless the group members are living concentrated in the same area –which is undesirable from an integrational view. A paradox is created. Today, minority groups living segregated have much better chances to preserve their culture and language in Sweden. At the same time these groups run a much higher risk to get stigmatized in the majority society. On the other hand, immigrant groups living integrated into the Swedish society receive, as we have seen on the example of the Hungarian community, far less support for their language maintenance efforts. This language policy seems to leave minority groups with two rational choices: getting segregated or assimilated. From a pluralist point of view, none of these solutions are desirable, neither for the host society nor for the immigrants themselves.

If integration implies pluralism, and if active bilingualism among the second-generation immigrants is a truly desired goal of the minority education, then bottom-up language planning efforts and cooperative forms of language maintenance programs should get much more attention and support in the future.

⁹ The name of the five localities and a detailed description of the different kinds of co-operations between municipal and community-based mother tongue programs is to be found in György-Ullholm, in press.

¹⁰ In 2002, a state committee published a report stressing the official status of the Swedish language, also dealing with English, the national and regional minority languages as well as with the immigrant languages (SOU, 2002/27).

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Webpages

- Statistics Sweden: <<www.scb.se>>
- National Education Board: <<www.skolverket.se>>
- Mother tongue instruction related links of the National Education Board:
<<<http://modersmal.skolutveckling.se/projekt/>>>
- Swedish Integration Board: <<www.integrationsverket.se>>
- SIOS-The Cooperation Group for Ethnical Associations in Sweden: <<www.sios.org>>
- Hungarian newspapers, organizations and informal groupings in Sweden
- <<<http://www.geocities.com/hunsor/>>>: A trilingual Information Resources Center monitoring the Carpathian Basin and Scandinavia from Sweden.
- <<www.members.tripod.com/korosicsoma>>: The local branch in Gothenburg.
- <<<http://www.keve.se>>>: The Hungarian Protestant Church in Sweden.
- <<www.somit.net>>: The youth organization of the Hungarian community.
- <<<http://www.geocities.com/moraklub/>>>: The local branch in Solna.
- <<<http://www.peregrinuskлуб.freeurl.com>>>: Hungarian-Speaking Researchers in Sweden.
- <<http://hem.fyrlistorg.com/sall_laszlo/Irodalom6/>>: A bilingual newspaper promoting Art.
- <<<http://www.geocities.com/istjan/>>>: An interactive information cite (private initiative).
- <<<http://user.tninet.se/~wlc327n/>>>: One of the eight local branches in Stockholm.
- <<www.hhrf.org/magyarliget>>: Southern Sweden's Hungarian Family Magazine (Lund).