Meta-diversity, or the Uniqueness of the Lambs

Abstract. The research project ELDIA (European Language Diversity for All), funded by the 7th Framework Programme of the EU in the years 2010–2013, had the overarching goal of producing generalisable results and compatible analyses of the state of highly diverse minority languages, based on a centrally planned research design (questionnaire survey and interviews) and a maximally broad range of different multilingual situations. The main goal of the project was achieved: a tool for measuring the vitality (or the state of maintenance) of endangered languages was developed, and the case studies produced new, valuable information and data for further research. However, it also became clear that the linguistic *meta-diversity,* diversity of diversities, sets some obvious restrictions for the comparability and compatibility of the factors which determine the vitality of a minority language.
In this paper, based on the experiences from the ELDIA project (and specifically the case study on Hungarians in Austria), some central problems of generalisability in the research of minority languages will be presented. The assessment and comparison of very different types of language endangerment is problematic or even risky, and it is possible that the dimensions of meta-diversity have not yet been adequately observed. However, taking up the challenge of meta-diversity is of vital importance, as some minorities still tend to see themselves and their position as something unique or even "incomparable".

1. Breaking the silence of the lambs: from European language diversity to the idea of metadiversity

Language diversity, the fact that many different languages are spoken in the neighbourhood of each other and partly even by the same speakers, is now often celebrated as a goal of language policies, although "many modern governments, while apparently more tolerant of diversity than before, still consider that toleration need not imply positive action" (Edwards 2010: 20). The worldwide attention now paid to linguistic human rights and to the predicament of numerous endangered languages has led to an important insight: we are not merely speaking of the fate of individual languages and the cultural and ideological values which their speakers connect to them, we are also speaking of the maintenance of language diversity in general, on a more abstract level. True, this idea has not yet come through to the policy-makers. This was one of the main results of the law research team in the ELDIA project: nowhere does legislation protect multilingualism as such, what is protected is, in the best case, the right of a certain group of people in a certain area to use a certain language.[I]

Of course, it must be noted that the idea of language diversity is far from clear, although there have been attempts to define it from both political and sociolinguistic points of view already in the 1960s (Pool 1969: 142). The main dimensions used for these definitions are either the number of languages spoken (in an area or in a population), the number of speakers of non-dominant languages (that is, diversity can be understood as something essentially related to the presence of linguistic minorities) or the

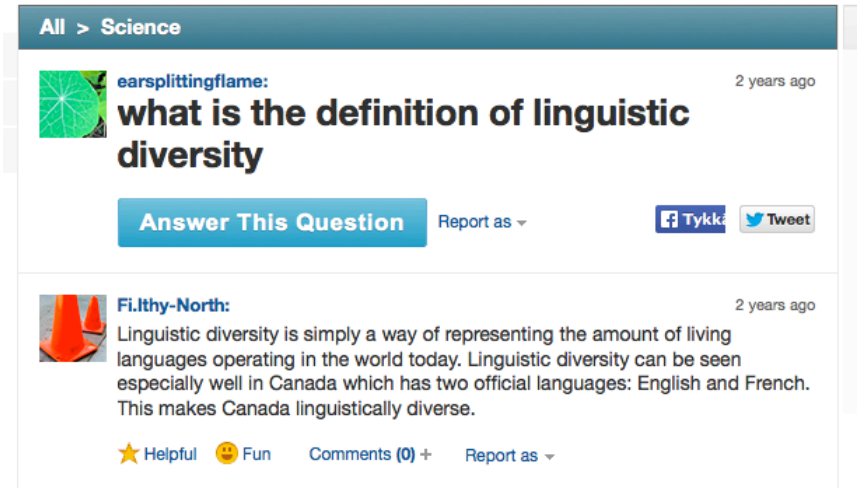
[I] The results of the law research team, led by Sia Spiliopoulou Åkermark, have been presented in the country-specific reports and summarised in the ELDIA Comparative Report. The Comparative Report is currently being edited into a full-length monograph; an abridged version has been published online. (See Laakso &al. 2013: 80.)

genealogical or typological distances between the languages in question. (In the latter sense, "language diversity" can be understood even as denial of universal grammar hypotheses, meaning simply that languages are fundamentally different and cannot be derived from a common universal structure; see e.g. Evans & Levinson 2009.) A simple Internet search shows that definitions of diversity are, indeed, diverse. There are sophisticated calculations or indices as on the *National Geographic* website, which offers a colour-coded map of language diversity worldwide.

> The Linguistic Diversity Index measures the diversity of languages spoken in a country. The scale ranges from 0 to 1. An index of 0 represents no linguistic diversity, meaning that everyone speaks the same language. An index of 1 represents total diversity, meaning that no two people speak the same language. No country has an index value of exactly 0 or 1.

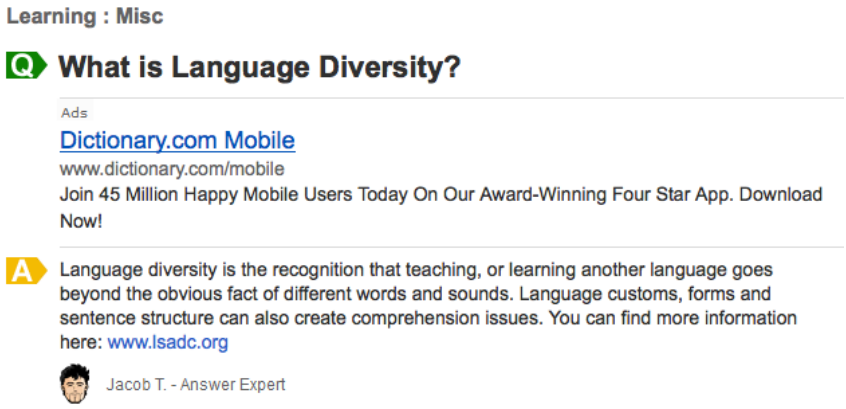
(education.nationalgeographic.com/education/maps/language-diversity-index/)

There are references to the (surprisingly surprising) fact that not only are diverse languages present even in Western societies but that (outside the U.S.A.) they can even have an official status of some kind:



(www.ask.com/answers/42104081/what-is-the-definition-of-linguistic-diversity)

There are somewhat confused-looking "relativist" references to the interconnection between the non-universality of languages and the possible connections between language and culture, from the point of view of language learning:



(answers.reference.com/learning/misc/what_is_language_diversity)

And, finally, this primitive definition, which isn't actually that primitive. After all, where there are many languages, there will most probably be at least some people who can speak more than one of them.

(wiki.answers.com/Q/What_is_the_definition_of_language_diversity?#slide2)

Moreover, the idea of language diversity in general, as a measurement, is not inevitably clear to the speakers of many endangered languages. Many of them are inclined to regard their language as an *idioma incomparabile,* something completely different from anything else (in Europe, Hungarian – represented by two case studies in the ELDIA project – is a notorious example of this). Furthermore, many of them do not necessarily feel a compelling solidarity with other minorities of the region or the world. In the ELDIA case studies, it was fairly typical that minorities compared themselves with other minorities of the region, often to highlight their (unduly) disadvantaged position. The Karelians in Russia did not consider it quite fair that the Veps were included in the list of Indigenous Small-Numbered Languages of the Russian Federation while the Karelians were not (Karjalainen &al. [forthcoming] 161). At least some Meänkieli and Kven activists seem to think that the Sámi, by virtue of their indigenous status, are in a more privileged position in the implicit hierarchy of minorities. The Hungarian migrants in Austria or the Estonian migrants in Germany pointed out that more numerous immigrant groups such as the Turks get more attention and more linguistic favours from the authorities – at the same time, especially the Hungarians in Austria readily emphasised their willingness to integrate and learn German, in contrast to the "bad"

immigrants coming from conspicuously "more different" cultures. (Berényi-Kiss, Laakso & Parfuss 2013: 83, 111, 113, 177, 179.)

One of the main ideas behind the research project ELDIA was to overcome this "national" bias and move on to a higher level of abstraction. Alongside the European added value which we wanted to produce, we also hoped to break the "silence of the lambs", making European minorities more visible not only on the regional and national level but also internationally. Our pious wish was, of course, that our project and other similar enterprises could help minorities give up their traditional inclination to see themselves as something completely unique and encourage them to join forces. In fact, as we know, promoting collaboration is not so easy, considering the fact that many minorities are even internally politically fragmented and split by various controversies.

Comparing the statuses of minorities in different countries and situations – which was, in essence, the main practical goal of ELDIA – revealed that we cannot speak of a singular "language diversity". Language diversity, even in the widest possible sense – understood as referring to the presence of both societal and individual multilingualism, the actual use of many languages as well as opportunities or wishes to use them, from the side of individual language users as well as institutions and authorities – comes in numerous different varieties, and so does people's, minority and majority language users' understanding of "language diversity". This is important not only for projects like ELDIA which, to quote a Viennese colleague, "try to compare what is incomparable", but for the making of language policy on interregional, international and European level. We must try to understand what we speak of when we speak of the celebrated language diversity and how users of different languages understand this concept.

In what follows, I will thus try to outline the phenomenon of meta-diversity, the diversity of diversities on the linguistic map of Europe. One practical point of departure will be the ELDIA questionnaire survey, which was conducted, using the same questionnaire in different (and sometimes problematic) translations, among 13 minority-language communities across Europe. Now this part of our research particularly suffered from the problems with the project partner in charge (who, finally, had to leave the project in the middle of the fieldwork phase): the planning of the questionnaire was seriously delayed, there never was a proper discussion on the goals and major principles of the research design, and the questionnaire had to be finalised under extreme time pressure, by people who had no direct access to the original plans. This resulted, among other things, in ambiguously worded and badly formulated questions, some of which turned out to be difficult to translate. But even if the formulations and translations had been flawless and understandable in themselves, there are still major differences in how quite fundamental concepts are understood and interpreted among different minority-language communities.

2. Dimensions of meta-diversity

The ELDIA project set out from the idea of investigating a broad range of multilingual speaker communities across Europe, large and small, traditional and migrant, well-established and cultivated languages as well as only recently acknowledged and literarised ones, etc. Thus we can claim that the idea of diversity in two forms, that is, diversity of languages and their situations, was at the heart of our enterprise already

from the very beginning. What was not so clearly formulated was the idea of meta-diversity, which means the interface between language diversity and the diversity of language situations. Although ELDIA was, in principle, about vehicular languages and multilingualism, that is, about how multilingual speakers and speaker communities use their diverse languages, minority and majority ones, we did not really try to deal with these aspects in a more systematic way – and we ended up measuring the vitality or maintenance of individual minority languages, not multilingualism or language diversity as such. In what follows, I will continue from where we stopped and attempt to break down the idea of linguistic metadiversity into different dimensions.

2.1 Languageness: Polylanguaging vs. Metalinguistic Multilingual Awareness

Already in the first ELDIA research plans, the concept of *languageness* was applied. By this term, Garner (2004) refers to the culturally constructed idea of a language as a system, a unit, something with an independent existence. *Languageness* means that a language has a grammar, it has rules, certain elements, words and expressions belong to it while others don't. What doesn't belong to the language either belongs to some other language or doesn't even exist, "*ain't" ain't a word.* Now Garner claims that languageness is a cultural construct and does not necessarily exist for all languages or their speakers: for some speakers, languages are simply ways of speaking, linguistic expressions do not have an abstract existence but only actualise when they are needed, which means that pragmatically meaningless expressions cannot even be elicitated. Garner (2004: 165) has had similar experiences with Australian aborigines as M. A. Castrén had with his Nenets informant: instead of translating a sentence into his language ("my wife is ill"), the speaker refuses to cooperate because the expression doesn't make sense and hence, does not exist ("but my wife is well!").

The idea of languages being just pragmatically conditioned ways of speaking has been gladly picked up by various researchers especially of urban, Western and immigrant multilingualism. In this view, languages as entities are merely "practical academic arrangements" or "ideological constructs", and in societies and situations where the polylingualism norm is observed, language users just "employ whatever linguistic features are at their disposal to achieve their communicative aims as best they can, regardless of how well they know the involved languages" (Jørgensen 2008: 163). Languages as systems do not exist, what exists are actions of speakers who are "languaging", or, in polylingual contexts, "polylanguaging". Or, in the words of Garner (2004: 212), multilingual code-switchers are not speaking "different languages" but "simply communicating in patterns that [are] familiar to them".

This approach has obviously come into being as a reaction to the monolingual bias or the idea of multilingualism being just "parallel monolingualisms", and it is a welcome reminder of the nonsensicality of vulgar mentalist relativism, the idea of one language, *the mother tongue,* constraining our brains or setting the parameters so that everything else becomes secondary. It is obvious that our language capacities are inherently multilingual. Yet, the idea of "polylanguaging" misses an important point, or, actually, does not even tackle the question of languageness: how real the distinct language systems are to their speakers. Even if multilingual speakers feel free to employ linguistic features from whatever source they can access, they normally also know which feature or element comes from which source, and if they consider it necessary, they can often

stick to a monolingual norm as well, without overt code-switches. Speaking of polylanguaging may obscure an important distinction between two different things: whether languageness is perceived as real, and whether it compels or constrains the speakers.

The idea of polylanguaging in its extreme form would imply some kind of a paradise of absolute linguistic freedom, a state in which speakers do not even have to be aware of "languages" as separate entities or assign each linguistic expression to such an entity. Now the problem with this state of freedom is the same as with the state of "equilibrium" hypothesized by Dixon (1997): even if it existed somewhere, it can never be directly observed, because the presence of Western linguists means in practice that the "innocence" has been lost, the conditions for free diffusion and exchange of linguistic expressions do not exist any more. In the ELDIA study as well, languageness was reproduced already in our questionnaires and interview templates: we could not ask questions about the use of diverse languages or respondents' attitudes towards them without naming and labeling the languages, and sometimes also explicitly reacting to debates which are taking place around some of these names and labels.

Anyway, it seems that modern European minorities everywhere are indoctrinated with the idea of languages as distinct entities which are better kept apart. This idea is obviously connected with opinions on prescriptivism and language correctness and the general concern felt everywhere in the Western world that modern modalities of communication "corrupt" especially young people's language, as shown in this example from the ELDIA case study on North Sámi (Marjomaa, forthcoming):

> *Jo dat lea hui olu seaguheapmi earenomažit daid de, na go bohtet nuoraidskuvlii, dahje jo álg- de olu álget nuorat seaguhit ja de lea mobiltelfongiella šaddan hui olu, ja mobiltelfovdnii lea álkibut čállit dárogillii ja de vel oanidit daid, ja de seaguhit daid sámegillii dan die dan hupmangillii ja de gal šaddá dakkár giella de dan ipmir mihkkige.*
> 'Yes there is lot of mixing, especially those, well those who come to secondary school or well, well many young people begin mixing and a lot of that mobile phone language has developed, and it is easier to write in Norwegian with a mobile phone and to abbreviate those, and they mix that in Sámi, in that spoken language, and then it becomes a kind of language where you can't understand anything.'

Yet, there are differences between the attitudes of the groups under study, and these differences do not just relate to perceived relatedness or intelligibility, or lack of it, but seem to be culturally conditioned. Of the speakers of Seto, almost two thirds (Koreinik 2013a: 79) considered mixing Estonian and Seto acceptable at least to some extent, while the Estonians in Finland, even if their everyday language is characterised by code-switches into Finnish, often have a generally negative attitude towards mixing Estonian with Finnish, sometimes even stating that "whichever language you speak, you should speak it properly" (Praakli forthcoming a). A very eloquent difference could be observed in the ELDIA case study on Hungarian in Austria: almost half (46%) of the respondents in Burgenland, mostly representatives of the traditional, regional minority, stated that mixing languages is acceptable, but only 20% of the respondents in Vienna, mostly first-generation migrants, were of the same opinion (Berényi-Kiss, Laakso & Parfuss 2013: 166).

This indicates that speakers socialised in prescriptivist "standard-language cultures" (Milroy 2001), of which Hungarian is a good example (see e.g. Szabó 2012), have a different attitude towards the mixing of languages and probably towards language diversity in general as well: they are more likely to understand languages as distinct entities and their relationship as a zero-sum game or competition for shared, restricted resources. Speakers of less well established and less codified languages, in contrast, may be more tolerant towards polylingual norms and practices. This means that multilingualism, or linguistic diversity, consisting of Hungarian and German in Vienna, is not the same thing as linguistic diversity consisting of Standard Estonian and Seto in Southern Estonia.

2.2 Languageness (2): Codification and Cultivation

A related issue was also well represented in the ELDIA material: we worked with different grades of relatedness, from complete lack of relatedness and intelligibility (as between the Finno-Ugric languages and their Indo-European neighbours) to very close relatedness and contested status, as in the case of the Finnic minorities. Probably, the Seto informants' positive attitude towards the mixing of Seto and Estonian partly stems from the fact that Seto, traditionally and officially regarded as a dialect of Estonian[2], is in practice mixed and intertwined with Standard Estonian, as noted by one informant (Koreinik 2013a: 79):

> *asi om tolleh ka rohkem et kirjakeele pääle ikka läinu ma ütle et puhast seto keelt om küllältki vähe*
> 'it's also rather so that, as one who has shifted to the standard language, I can say that pure Seto hardly exists at all'

This example actually shows both sides of the coin: the informant, himself using a mixture of Seto (*tolleh* 'in that', *om* 'is', *seto* instead of *selles, on, setu*) and Standard Estonian features (*läinu(d)* 'gone' instead of *lännüq*), contests the existence but confirms the idea of a "pure" Seto language. In the framework of the Estonian nation-state project and the strongly monolingual ideology (cf. also Koreinik 2011, Meiorg 2012), great value is attached to the codification of the national language as an "ideal code" with "minimal variation in form" (Haugen 1966: 931). Seto, due to its variable and mixed character, obviously does not fit in with this ideal; the underlying folk-linguistic ideology is probably that a *language* is a "pure" code, and Seto, failing to meet this ideal, is less than a language, "merely a dialect".

As can be expected, the Hungarians, again, represent the opposite attitude towards their language, as shown by the answers to the question (question 57 in the ELDIA questionnaire) whether there is a "pure" or "correct" version of the language at issue and who speaks it. Of the Hungarian respondents of the ELDIA case study in Austria, 46% believed that such "pure" Hungarian exists (as opposed to 12.7% of the Seto respondents), and only 13% answered "no" (as opposed to almost a third of the Seto respondents; Koreinik 2013a: 76). Similarly to the Seto respondents, the Meänkieli-

[2] The current language law in Estonia (issued in February 2011) uses the terms *eesti keele piirkondlik erikuju* ('regional form of the Estonian language') and *murdekeel* ('dialect language'). (*Keeleseadus*, available at https://www.riigiteataja.ee/akt/118032011001 .)

speaking ELDIA respondents (Arola, Kangas & Pelkonen forthcoming) also doubted the existence of a pure or correct language variety, only a little more than 10% answering "yes" to this question. The Hungarian respondents in Austria also had very clear opinions as to who the speakers of this pure and authentic language are: with only a few exceptions (for instance, the idea that Transylvanian Hungarian is the most authentic and original variety was supported by a couple of respondents), they emphasise the role of education and literarisation and condemn the use of regional dialectalisms (Berényi-Kiss, Laakso & Parfuss 2013: 157):

> *Az iskolázott emberek mind beszélik, minél műveltebb az ember, annál tisztábban beszél*
> 'educated people all speak it, the more cultured a person is, the more purely s/he speaks'
> *Az irodalmi magyart főleg Budapesten és inkább intelektuellek beszélik*
> 'literary Hungarian is spoken mainly in Budapest and rather by intellectuals'[3]
> *Akik tájszólás mentesen beszélnek*
> 'Those whose speech is free of dialect'

What this means in terms of language diversity: speakers of codified and standardised languages are probably more likely to understand language diversity as the coexistence of distinct, autonomous systems or even "parallel monolingualisms". Speakers of language varieties with a contested status ("dialects"), in contrast, may have a different point of view: their language diversity perhaps does not consist of distinct, equal entities but of fuzzy variation carrying positive (ethnic and emotional identification) and negative values (less prestige). This type of diversity cannot be sharply separated from the kind of diversity which so-called monolingual speakers of major European languages experience as well ("language-internal multilingualism", *innersprachliche Mehrsprachigkeit,* de Cillia 2010; "mother-tongue multilingualism", *muttersprachliche Mehrsprachigkeit,* Wandruszka 1979): all speakers know and master different varieties and styles of their mother tongue.

2.3 Languageness, Formal Learning, and Codification

The issue of codification is also essentially connected to the dimension of language learning and teaching. We can assume that speakers of a language with a strong "languageness" ideology believe that their language, with its grammar and rules, must be specifically learnt, taught, and developed. On the other hand, if speakers regard their language rather as a culture-specific pattern of behaviour, they will probably pay less attention to formal teaching – or even think that their language is so intimately

[3] The regionalisms of the Hungarian language spoken in the capital region are, paradoxically, evaluated in two opposite ways, as shown in the sociolinguistic survey conducted by Kontra & al. in 1988 (Kontra (ed.) 2003: 244–252), where the respondents were asked, among other things, where in their opinion the most beautiful and the ugliest Hungarian is spoken. On the one hand, it seems that Hungarians generally appreciate the "civilised" speech of Budapest, on the other hand, a self-stigmatisation ("the language of Budapest is ugly") can be observed especially among the more educated people of the capital region. In a further question (op. cit. 252–255), asking the respondents to rank the qualities of "beautiful Hungarian speech" in an order of importance, features such as "definitive, decisive" *(határozott),* "polite" *(udvarias)* and "precise" *(pontos)* were ranked highest, while "of genuine Hungarian flavour" *(ízes-magyaros),* an expression which might be interpreted as referring to regional dialectalisms, was considered the second least important (the least relevant was "witty", *szellemes*).

connected to the traditional culture and way of living that doesn't make sense to teach and learn it in a formal context. Again, an example from the Seto case study (Koreinik 2013a: 91):

. *mina näiteks olen setu keele õpetamise vastane koolis sest noh ma leian et no ta (.) tulebki seest ja selleks peab ka olema kodu kogukond*
. 'I for instance oppose teaching Seto at school because, well, I think, that, well, it... comes from inside and there must be a home community too for that'

Moreover, the transition from oral use to formal and written modalities may not be free of problems; speakers may feel that the standardised and literarised language is not the "real thing" any more, as shown by this example from the Võro case study (Koreinik 2013b: 91):

> *umma lehte tuud tuud ma piä hindä jaos ümbre tõlkma tuu om väega määndseski kohitsedu keeleh üldiselt kirotõdu*
> *'Uma Leht* [the Võro-language bimonthly], that, that I must translate for myself, it's very much, written in a kind of castrated language in general'

The idea of a relativistic connection between culture or way of living and language will also express itself in ideas about language teaching and language learning. In the ELDIA questionnaire, there was a question (Q34) asking whether the respondents' parents had supported them in learning the minority language at issue. Of the Hungarian respondents in Austria, 90% answered "yes" (Berényi-Kiss, Laakso & Parfuss 2013: 161), while of the Seto respondents, 62.5% claimed that their parents had *not* supported their language learning (Koreinik 2013: 78). This may partly reflect real discrimination and suppression of the Seto language; obviously, many parents of present-day Seto speakers had chosen not to encourage their children to speak the stigmatised language. However, as it turned out in the interviews, at least part of the respondents answered *no,* their parents had not specifically supported the language, because the use and transmission of Seto was seen as something natural, it was "simply spoken" at home.

The backgrounds, of course, are different: Seto used to be a stigmatised minority "dialect", while Hungarian has long been a well-established, codified and officially glorified national language. But this is not only a prestige issue: Hungarian speakers obviously grow up with the idea that languages are distinct units which have to be consciously learnt and taught (even in a monolingual environment such as the childhood families and communities of many Hungarian migrants in Austria), while many Seto speakers traditionally don't. Interestingly, this distinctness may also explain why in the ELDIA case study on Karelian in Russia, a clear majority of respondents (70.7%) reported that their parents had supported their learning of Karelian, if only simply by speaking Karelian at home (Karjalainen & al. forthcoming, 139–140). Although Karelian is still fairly weakly codified and cultivated, its presence in the public sphere is weak and the official support to its use has always been insufficient, its existence as an independent language was acknowledged already in Soviet-time censuses and ethnopolitics. Languageness has long been part of the linguistic culture in Russia, where prescriptivist standard-language ideologies are dominant.

2.4 Legitimacy: The right to diversity

Recently on the Facebook wall of a colleague, I got engaged in a discussion about what János Pusztay has supposedly claimed in his recent book: that languages with less than 100,000 speakers are doomed to die out and it is no use to try to revitalise them. Numbers sound scientific, and policy-makers just love playing with numbers (which is why some minorities refuse to participate in this number game). We are all socialised with the idea that there are "large" and "small" languages, and the primitive vulgar Darwinist narrative tells us that languages which are too small to maintain nation-states or nation-state-like structures will be ousted by bigger ones – this, in turn, is also connected to the monolingualist ideology, the idea that multilingualism can only be transitory, a stage on the way to language shift.

In practice, language diversity means individual multilingualism at least to some extent and at least for a part of the population, and the attitudes towards individual multilingualism will be of key importance in the maintenance of language diversity. These attitudes, in turn, are conditioned by the linguistic cultures of each country or region. It can be expected that in countries with a strong monolingual state-language culture, the idea of everyday multilingualism is less widely accepted than in countries where there are many official languages or where minority languages enjoy a strong institutional support. Again, this might be connected with the idea of languageness and parallel monolingualisms: it is supposed that since there is a state language, everything in the public sphere should take place in the state language, because the state language also means a neutral common ground. (In many European countries, there are practices restricting the use of minority languages for instance on work places or at schools, in the name of equality and non-exclusion; see e.g. Laakso &al. 86.) In this view, minority languages are a private matter, something that decent ladies and gentlemen can do as long as they do it in their private sphere behind closed doors. In fact, actually everybody living in a nation-state and enjoying all rights which come with the citizenship should automatically acquire the state language. This attitude is illustrated by this answer by an Austrian Hungarian respondent (Berényi-Kiss, Laakso & Parfuss 2013: 204):

> (Q9: Where and from whom did you first learn German?) *Als österr. Staatsbürger – logisch.* ('As an Austrian citizen – logically.')

The ELDIA questionnaire included some questions explicitly about legislation and its role: whether there are laws which support the use of the minority language or the use of multiple languages in society in general or specifically in the labour market. Now anti-discrimination laws and language laws which specifically offer some kind of support to minorities do exist in all countries under study, and in many cases they have been passed or amended quite recently. Yet, across all case studies, it can be said that minorities in general are surprisingly badly informed about the legal protection which their languages enjoy. Moreover, respondents didn't have a clear idea of what legal protection can mean; in their comments to these questions, they typically referred to attitudes, social practices or NGO activities rather than laws, or to practical accommodations made to more numerous minorities in particular (Berényi-Kiss, Laakso & Parfuss 2013: 190, 177):

> (Q44: Do you think that laws in your country support the use of Hungarian?)

Ausztriában bizonyos szervezetek támogatják a magyar nyelvet 'In Austria, certain organisations support the Hungarian language'.
számomra a magyar nyelv használata nem ütközött semmilyen akadályba Ausztriában 'for me, there has been no hindrance to the use of the Hungarian language in Austria'
(Q46: Do you think that laws in your country support the use and knowledge of many languages in the area where you live?)
ausztria hivatalai támogatják a török és a szerb nyelvek használatát (ezért) kellene a magyart is 'Austrian authorities support the use of Turkish and Serbian, so Hungarian should be (supported) too'

The expectations of our respondents were obviously geared towards a monolingual "big picture". Although they generally knew that their minority language *should* be tolerated or even promoted, or at least shouldn't be discriminated, they were well aware that the general societal norm is monolingual. In some cases, however, most notably among the North Sámi speakers in Norway and the Hungarians in Slovenia, the minorities are not only strongly protected by law but also relatively well aware of the existence of protective legislation. What this means in terms of diversity: there are major differences between diversity supported in principle and diversity supported in practice, and our questions were actually measuring three different things: differences in legislation, differences in social practices, and expectations conditioned by these two.

3. Conclusions

These have been just a few examples of the problems with comparing what is incomparable. Part of the problem, of course, lies with the questionnaire surveys and the interview templates: despite our attempts, some expressions could be and sometimes were translated in a wrong or misleading way, and some concepts were misunderstood in many case studies. (For instance, our attempts to ask separately about the use of the languages at issue as the medium of teaching and as a subject of language classes were in vain: many respondents confused these two.)

However, what makes the multilingual situations already within our sample of Finno-Ugric minorities of Europe fundamentally different seems to be mainly connected with the fact that, in the words of Harold Schiffman, language and languages mean different things to different people. The speaker communities – themselves heterogeneous and fragmented, of course – live in different linguistic cultures; linguistic culture is defined by Schiffman (2006: 112, 121) as "the sum totality of ideas, values, beliefs, attitudes, prejudices, myths, religious strictures, and all the other cultural 'baggage' that speakers bring to their dealings with language from their culture".

As concerns language diversity, a key component of linguistic culture is the idea of languageness and how it is reflected in the everyday understanding of what makes a language: distinctness from other languages (which is constituted both by perceived relatedness, or lack of relatedness, and by codification), codification and cultivation, legal status and institutional protection as well as the public visibility of each language in the public sphere, in the education system and in the media – for the latter aspect, I didn't have any time any more in this brief presentation.

One of the leading ideas of the ELDIA project was to look beyond the dualism which characterises European language policies: the division into "good" multilingualism, which means the learning of useful vehicular languages such as English and constitutes a practical goal for national and European language teaching policies, and "problematic" multilingualism, which means the multilingualism of minorities, seen as an ethnic attribute (a "genetic handicap") and a burden for society. Now there really are differences between how multilingualism and linguistic diversity are understood – but what we urgently need is a more fine-grained analysis of these differences. Instead of general lip service to multilingualism or linguistic diversity, we still need ideological clarification.

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