Doctoral (Ph.D.) Dissertation

**Individual Varieties of Language Maintenance:
The Example of Transcarpathian Hungarians**

By

Réka Máté

Supervisor:

Prof. Ulrike Jessner-Schmid

Multilingualism Doctoral School

Faculty of Modern Philology and Social Sciences

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STATEMENT

This dissertation, written under the direction of the candidate's dissertation committee and approved by the committee members, has been presented to and accepted by the Faculty of Modern Philology and Social Sciences in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. The content and research methodologies presented in this work represent the candidate's work alone.

Réka Máté   28 August, 2023

Candidate   Date

Dissertation Committee:

_____   2023

Chairperson   Date

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Written by: Réka Máté

Supervisor: Prof. Ulrike Jessner-Schmid

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Abstract

Millions of people are surrounded by an environment where multiple languages are spoken on a daily basis. Today's Transcarpathia is no exception, as several languages are used in the region.

In the Hungarian context, in recent decades, there have been several linguistic studies of anthropological-interdisciplinary nature on particular speech communities. However, such studies that focused on the Transcarpathian Hungarian communities have not been conducted before. The aim of this thesis is to present, how the bilingual state of a small Transcarpathian community has been maintained over the years, through the real-life examples taken from some of its residents. The village of Zhnyatino is situated at the Hungarian-Ukrainian language border, and its population mainly consists of ethnic Hungarians and Ukrainians.

This study is based on approaches used in applied linguistics, borrowing methods from anthropology and ethnography. In its design, a grounded theory approach was followed. Besides the sociolinguistic-anthropological nature of the theoretical framework, Herdina and Jessner's *Dynamic Model of Multilingualism* was used to analyse individual aspects of language maintenance of the members of the community. The study aims to investigate the patterns, general tendencies, differences, correlations of language maintenance strategies on the macro and micro levels of the community, with a special focus on the members of its ethnic Hungarian population.

The thesis is heavily centered around the life stories of the participants, aiming to show the individual aspects of language maintenance as members of a bilingual community, accompanied by other anthropological tools such as participant observation, linguistic landscape analysis, and language mapping.

Acknowledgements

List of Abbreviations

CLIL   Content and Language Integrated Learning

DMM   Dynamic Model of Multilingualism

FL   Foreign Language

FLP   Family Language Policy

LL   Linguistic Landscape

LM   Language Maintenance

LS   Language Shift

LME   Language Maintenance Effort

LP   Language Policy

M-factor   Multilingualism Factor

SBM   Sustainable Bilingualism Model

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Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1 General Introduction

"These symbolic universes of language constitute the principal treasurehouse of the human intellect, and when one is lost, [...] we are all deprived". (Hill & Hill 1986: 446)

As many studies have proved in the last decades, multilingualism is the norm, not the exception. Despite this view getting more and more recognition, there still are some parts of the world, where the direction is heading to the monolingual norm, due to different historical, political, and economic events. Since we tend to regard what is common and usual as natural, many believe multilingualism is the normal language situation and monolingualism is the abnormal one (Ellis, 2007).

Ever since its independence, Ukraine has been a de jure monolingual state, with Ukrainian as the state language. However, de facto, Ukraine is a highly multilingual state. One of its most linguistically and ethnically colorful regions is Transcarpathia, located in the westernmost part of the country (see Csernicskó, 1998).

The monolingual norm refers to the societal expectation or assumption that individuals should be proficient in only one language, often the dominant language of a particular region or country and typically devalues the importance of multilingualism and favors the idea of a single, dominant language for communication and cultural integration.

For dominant groups, their rights have often been invisible: they take them for granted (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2012). In many societies, particularly those with a dominant language, monolingualism is often considered the norm, while other languages spoken within the community, especially minority languages or immigrant languages, are often marginalized or stigmatized. This can lead to different inequalities, and as a consequence, individuals may face discrimination, limited opportunities, or barriers to full participation in society. Various studies have been written on the constant narrowing of language rights[1] of minorities in Ukraine (e. g. Csernicskó et al., 2020).

However, it is important to recognize the value and benefits of multilingualism. Multilingual individuals can enjoy cognitive advantages, such as enhanced problem-solving skills, improved memory, and increased cultural understanding (Prior & MacWhinney, 2010). Studies have proved that multilingualism can play an important role

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[1] https://hodinkaintezet.uz.ua/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Strasbourg_2020-ENG.pdf

in preventing dementia in elderly people (see Bialystok et al., 2007, Alladi et al., 2013). Multilingualism also fosters inclusivity, facilitates communication across diverse communities, and helps preserve linguistic and cultural heritage.

Efforts are being made in various contexts to challenge the monolingual norm and promote multilingualism as a valuable asset. Recognizing the importance of linguistic diversity and providing support for the maintenance and revitalization of endangered languages can help create a more inclusive and equitable society that appreciates and celebrates multilingualism. Moreover, non-linguistic aspects of language sometimes can be more important in a society than linguistic ones (Eriksen, 1990).

Fishman (1972) argued that language behaviors are not just linguistic acts but also carry social and cultural significance. He emphasized the importance of considering the wider context of language use and the social behaviors associated with it.

According to Fishman, meaningful behavioral patterns encompass a range of language-related activities beyond simple communication. These patterns include language choices, language attitudes, language policies, language shift, language maintenance, and language revitalization efforts. Fishman's concept of meaningful behavioral patterns emphasizes that language is embedded in social and cultural contexts and cannot be separated from the behaviors, attitudes, and ideologies associated with it.

Millions of people are surrounded by an environment where multiple languages are spoken on a daily basis. Today's Transcarpathia is no exception, as several languages are used in the region. This is called a bilingual or multilingual situation (cf. Crystal, 1997).

1.2 Rationale of the study

Gal's research amongst the Hungarians of Burgenland (Obertwart) has shown how various social and economic factors can lead to language shift in a community (Gal, 1979). Gal's work emphasizes the importance of understanding the social, historical, and political contexts in which language shift occurs. She highlights the complex interplay of various factors, including power dynamics, globalization, economic factors, and language policies, in shaping language shift processes and their consequences. The use of another language in addition to or instead of the state language often appears to be a political danger from the point of view of the politically dominant people. But these "external" factors, such as industrialization or different policies, do not have the same effect on different people in minority language communities. Gal argues that it is not enough to

study the objective and material conditions. It is at least as important to know how these influence people's value system, their attitude towards language, and the symbolic value of language for them. These "internal" factors, as the author calls them, determine the language use of the group (Gal, 2018).

Gal's work was one of the first interdisciplinary studies that combined methods from the toolbox of sociolinguistics and anthropology. There has been a recent realignment between the two (Gumperz & Cook-Gumperz, 2008), with the growing interest in focusing on the social role of language, as Eckert argues (2000), there are some linguistic variables that can only be authentically presented through the perspective of the community (or the individual as the part of it).

In the Hungarian context, in recent decades, there have been several linguistic studies of anthropological-interdisciplinary nature on particular speech communities (e. g. Bartha, 1993; Heltai, 2009; Pachné Heltai, 2014; Borbély, 2014, discussed in detail in Chapter 6 of the Thesis). However, such studies that focused on the Transcarpathian Hungarian communities have not been conducted before.

The aim of this thesis is to present, how the bilingual state of a small Transcarpathian community has been maintained over the years, through the real-life examples taken from some of its residents. The village of Zhnyatino (Izsnyéte) is situated at the Hungarian-Ukrainian language border, and its population mainly consists of ethnic Hungarians and Ukrainians. There have been studies that examined the coexistence between the ethnicities in different settlements of Transcarpathia with mixed populations (cf. Doszpoly, 2021). However, the in-depth analysis of the complex phenomena, that lead to either language maintenance or shift in a community can be most successfully examined through the thorough observation of the dynamics of the community. In her study, Gal used participant observation, which is one of the classic methods of anthropology. As a researcher, I have been in a privileged position, as the community I examined has been my home for a little over seven years. As I was born and raised in a predominantly monolingual settlement, I was fascinated by the nature of this community, how different languages, cultures, ethnicities can coexist.

Romaine (2012) when describing multilingual speaking communities points out that despite linguists usually distinguish between individual and social multilingualism, it is not always possible to maintain a strict boundary between the two. Bilingual individuals can belong to communities of different sizes and types, and within communities, they can interact through a variety of networks, not all of which are necessarily multilingual. In

their 2009 book, Todeva and Cenoz draw attention to the opportunities personal narratives can offer in understanding individual varieties of multilingualism (Todeva & Cenoz, 2009).

This study is based on approaches used in applied linguistics, borrowing methods from anthropology and ethnography. In its design, a grounded theory approach was followed (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Besides the sociolinguistic-anthropological nature of the theoretical framework, Herdina and Jessner's (2002) Dynamic Model of Multilingualism was used to analyze individual aspects of language maintenance of the members of the community. The study aims to investigate the patterns, general tendencies, differences, and correlations of language maintenance strategies on the macro and micro levels of the community, with a special focus on the members of its ethnic Hungarian population.

1.3 Research questions

My main research questions are the following:

Q1: How do the different historical, political, social, economic changes on the macro level reflect on the language use of a small community?

Q2: Despite all the odds, how were different members of this community able to preserve their bilingual state?

Q3: Looking at different life stories, what does individual multilingualism look like in a bilingual community?

1.4 Outline of the chapters

Chapter 1 is the general introduction of the dissertation, presenting the rationale, significance and research questions of the study.

Chapter 2 reviews the relevant literature. It also contains the overview of the broader context, in which the study was carried out: an introduction to the Transcarpathian Hungarian community.

Chapter 3 introduces the context of the study, through a brief description of the community where the study was conducted. The chapter also contains the analysis of the Linguistic Landscape of the settlement.

Chapter 4 clarifies the design, methods, instruments, participants of the study. In this Chapter the rationale behind the choice of methodology and the research design is described in detail.

Chapter 5 contains the results of the study. The in-depth analysis of the life stories of the chosen participants is described in two parts. Firstly, the historical, political and social factors of LM are described. Secondly, the individual aspects of the development and maintenance of language systems are presented. In the third part of the Chapter, an addition to the results of the expert interviews, a language map of the settlement was designed as an additional tool to visualize the bilingualism of the village for the reader.

Chapter 6 contains the discussion and the final conclusions of the study.

Chapter 2. Literature Review

2.1 Introduction. Multilingualism as the societal norm

Multilingualism is the characteristic feature of individuals who have to or are able to use several languages. Practically, today there is no country or larger region where only one language is used. Several definitions have already been developed over the past decades (cf. Cenoz & Genesee, 1998). According to Haugen (1953), for example, bilingualism begins with the ability to produce complete and meaningful statements in the second language. Weinreich (1953) defined bilingualism simply as the alternative use of two languages. The holistic definition of bilingualism by Grosjean says that bilinguals are those who use two (or more) languages (or dialects) in their everyday lives. According to Grosjean (1982), a bilingual speaker is more than a combination of two monolingual speakers. There is a common misconception that multilingual speakers have equally perfect skills in all of their languages (Grosjean, 2010).

Crystal (1997) adds to his definition that being bilingual does not necessarily mean speaking all of our languages at a native-like level. Additive bilingualism refers to a language learning situation where individuals acquire a second language without negative effects on their first language. In this context, the second language is added to the individual's existing language repertoire, enhancing their overall linguistic and communicative abilities. Additive bilingualism promotes the development of both languages in a way that is beneficial and mutually reinforcing (Lambert 1974). ‟The distinction between additive and subtractive bilingualism thus provides the basic ingredients for an explanation of individual and societal bilingualism, which have to be seen as linked phenomena" (see Jessner, 1995 as cited in Herdina & Jessner, 2002).

Haugen (1956) stated that bilingual also includes plurilingual and polyglot. For a long time, studies have dealt with bilingualism as the most common form of multilingualism and many scholars still define bilingualism as the cover term for multilingualism. Multilingualism is often used as a synonym for bilingualism in the sense of learning and using multiple languages. According to more recent developments in research, the term multilingualism has been suggested to be used as the cover term for the acquisition and use of more than two languages (Jessner, 2006).

Gardner and Lambert (1972) were among the first to study sociopsychological aspects of second language learning, conducting numerous studies on the relationship of attitudes

and social context to the process. They proposed a distinction between integrative motivation and instrumental motivation. Integrative motivation refers to the learner's desire to learn a second language in order to integrate into the culture and society of the target language community. Learners with high integrative motivation are interested in the language and its associated culture and seek to develop meaningful relationships with native speakers. This type of motivation is often associated with more positive attitudes towards the target language community and a stronger desire to acquire the language. Instrumental motivation, on the other hand, refers to the learner's practical reasons for learning a second language, such as career advancement, academic requirements, or economic benefits. Learners with high instrumental motivation view the language as a tool to achieve specific goals and may be less concerned with the cultural aspects of the language or developing relationships with native speakers (see Dörnyei, 1994).

As explained by Fishman (1980), any member of a speech community speaks either monolingually or bilingually, because of their dependence on reward systems that could be the following: social (enforcing and recognizing membership in the family, in the community, in the society, in the people), fiscal (jobs, promotions, raises, bonuses), political (awards, contracts, appointments, public acclaim), and religious.

Multilingualism shows higher complexity than bilingualism, and nowadays we also know that a multilingual person uses different languages in different areas of life, and the level of language skills can be very different according to needs (Aronin & Jessner, 2015).

In the following Chapter, a selection of the most important and relevant pieces of literature will be collected and reviewed, regarding the individual and social aspects of multilingualism and language maintenance, and the description of the main theoretical framework of the study.

2.2 Individual and societal multilingualism

The following subchapter aims to explore the interconnectedness of the individual and social aspects of multilingualism.

2.2.1 The Dynamic Model of Multilingualism (based on Herdina and Jessner, 2002)

Over the last few decades, there have been several models to describe bilingualism/multilingualism. *Subtractive* and *additive* bilingualism (Lambert, 1974) are concepts that describe different experiences and outcomes in bilingual language development. These terms were introduced by Lambert in the 1970s.

Lambert's work focused on the effects of bilingualism on cognitive development, language proficiency, and cultural identity. He argued that additive bilingualism, where both languages are nurtured and supported, leads to positive outcomes in terms of cognitive flexibility, academic achievement, and self-esteem. In contrast, subtractive bilingualism, where the first language is neglected or replaced, may have negative consequences for individuals in terms of cultural identity and overall language skills.

It's worth noting that these ideas contributed significantly to the understanding of bilingualism and language education, but they are not the only perspectives on the subject. Other researchers and scholars have since expanded on these concepts and explored various aspects of bilingual language development. There have been more recent attempts to develop models of bilingualism that aimed to describe the nature of it in more specific ways.

García (2009) responding to the greater bilingual complexity of the past few decades has proposed that bilingualism could also be seen as being *recursive* or *dynamic*. These two models aim to go beyond additive or subtractive bilingualism, addressing the complexity of bilingualism, and going against the linear timeline.

Recursive bilingualism could be more likely interpreted in educational scenarios. According to García et al. (2011:2):

> Language minority communities who have experienced language loss and then attend bilingual schools in hopes of reacquiring this language undergo a process of recursive bilingualism. They do not start as simple monolinguals (as in the subtractive or additive models). Instead, they recover bits and pieces of their existing ancestral language practices as they develop a bilingualism that continuously reaches back in order to move forward.

In a more recent paper by Kremin and Byers-Heinlein (2021), the authors aim to draw the attention to newly developed models of bilingualism, such as *factor mixture model* (see Lubke & Muthén, 2005; McLachlan & Peel, 2004)*, or *grade-of-membership models* (see Erosheva, 2005), which suggest incorporating more complex models into definitions of bilingualism with the attempt of unifying bilingual and monolingual groups. As the authors suggest, these newly developing models "are the tip of the iceberg for how bilingualism can be defined and modeled" (Kremin & Byers-Heinlein, 2021:1570). We have to note, that the models above mainly focus on societal bilingualism.

The Dynamic Model of Multilingualism is a theoretical framework that describes how individuals develop and use multiple languages over time. According to the dynamic model, multilingualism is a complex and dynamic process that is shaped by various factors such as linguistic background, social context, and individual experiences. The model emphasizes that multilingualism is not just about the ability to speak multiple languages, but also involves a range of cognitive, social, and affective skills. The dynamic model proposes four main components of multilingualism: *language proficiency, language use, language attitudes, and language identity*. These components interact and change over time, reflecting the ongoing development and use of multiple languages. As one of the core concepts of the DMM is language maintenance and it has systematically united and included individual and societal multilingualism, DMM was the logical choice to rely on for the analysis.

Herdina and Jessner's model serves as a bridge between SLA and multilingualism research. In DMM, the speaker's language systems are not merely the result of adding two or more language systems but a complex dynamic system with its own parameters, which are not to be found in the monolingual speaker. A multilingual system includes two or more languages (Herdina & Jessner, 2002). The number of languages learned and the efforts spent on language learning and maintenance change from time to time. The languages in the speaker's language system can interact in unpredictable ways, learning languages other than the first language (L1) results in different processes (e.g. linguistic awareness). The qualitative change in the linguistic systems of the language learner can be seen as the result of the constantly developing meta-linguistic awareness.

According to the DMM, two processes take place simultaneously in the multilingual system: depending on the efforts invested in language maintenance, language loss, and language change can take place, depending on what "efforts" are made to maintain the language system (Jessner, 2008).

In the DMM, in comparison with monolinguals, multilingual speakers are advantaged and disadvantaged at the same time. Their disadvantage can be reflected in cross-linguistic influences, or insufficient language maintenance. For instance, Hansegård (1962) was the first to introduce the term semilingualism, to describe the linguistic difficulties Finnish immigrants had to face in Sweden, and defined it as 'half-knowledge' of the languages spoken. Semilingualism refers to a situation in which an individual has incomplete or limited proficiency in two or more languages. It can occur when a person is exposed to multiple languages at an early age but does not receive sufficient formal instruction in any of them, leading to a lack of mastery in any one language. This can also happen when someone is immersed in a culture where two or more languages are spoken but is not able to become fully fluent in either due to a lack of opportunity or resources. Semilingualism can lead to communication difficulties and may hinder academic or professional success. However, it has to be noted that most linguists have come to dismiss semilingualism as a scientifically flawed concept (see Salö & Karlander, 2018).

In fact, they also can be advantaged by their metalinguistic awareness. The multilingual system contains components lacking in the monolingual one and those that are shared have different significance. For a long period of time, linguistics had not viewed multilingualism in a holistic way, which highlights the positive effects of the contact between different language systems.

> In her 2006 study, Jessner emphasizes that ″[…] the inhibitions in the multilingual learner provoked by the perspective of the conventional monolingual norm should be replaced by a reorientation towards the dynamics of multilingualism, by stressing the cognitive advantages that contact with more languages can offer and using that as the basis of future language teaching" (Jessner, 2006:141).

Some of the key factors of the DMM are language loss and language maintenance which are dependent on language use and language awareness. Positive and negative language growth patterns are dependent on an individual's communicative needs. In the Dynamic Model of Multilingualism, language loss refers to the gradual decline in proficiency or use of a language in an individual's linguistic repertoire. This can occur due to a variety of reasons, such as disuse, lack of exposure, or lack of opportunities to practice the language.

The Dynamic Model of Multilingualism posits that language use and proficiency are constantly changing, and that the strength of each language in an individual's repertoire is influenced by a number of factors, such as the age of acquisition, level of exposure, and

social context. As a result, language loss can occur over time if an individual does not have regular opportunities to use or practice a particular language.

Language acquisition effort and language maintenance effort are in relation to each other. Where one is increased, the other may suffer. In the DMM, language acquisition efforts refer to the active and conscious steps taken by individuals or communities to learn and acquire a new language. Language acquisition effort is a key factor that influences the strength and use of a language in an individual's linguistic repertoire. In the dynamic model of multilingualism, language maintenance effort is a key factor that influences the strength and use of a language in an individual's linguistic repertoire. Language maintenance effort can refer to the various strategies and initiatives that individuals, communities, or institutions undertake to promote the continued use and vitality of a language.

An important aspect of the DMM is the position that, while the sequential acquisition of two languages leads to specific metaskills influencing language acquisition, three or more languages "[…] obviously constitute a more comprehensive or heavy language load for the respective speaker, which has an influence on language stability and LME, the effort required to maintain a substantial number of languages" (Herdina & Jessner, 2002:132). However, the individual capacity to learn and maintain more languages also plays a key role. Another factor would be the distance between the subsequent languages and one or more that have been acquired earlier, and the ability of the learner to link the two, something that is relevant to language learning. The distance between subsequent languages can have an impact on how quickly and easily a person learns a new language. If the new language is similar to a language already known by the individual, it may be easier to learn due to shared vocabulary or grammar structures. On the other hand, if the new language is very different from any known language, it may be more challenging to learn. Although, some individuals may have a greater aptitude for language learning in general, which may impact their ability to learn a new language regardless of its distance from their existing languages (see Bild & Swain, 1989; Bouvy, 2000; Jessner, 2006).

All in all, DMM suggests that multilingualism has various cognitive and social benefits, such as enhancing cognitive flexibility, creativity, and empathy, as well as providing access to different cultural perspectives and identities. However, the DMM also acknowledges that multilingualism can be challenging for some individuals, particularly those who experience language contact situations or discrimination based on their language use.

2.2.2 Multilingual speakers: competence and proficiency

In DMM, multilingual proficiency is defined as the dynamic interaction between the various psycholinguistic systems in which the individual languages are embedded, cross-linguistic interaction, and what is called the M-factor (Herdina & Jessner, 2002).

> According to the authors, "[…] the multilingualism factor expresses an essential difference between multilingual and monolingual speakers. We must assume that the multilingual system: (1) contains components the monolingual system lacks and (2) that even those components the multilingual system shares with the monolingual system have a different significance within the system." (Herdina & Jessner, 2002:130)

Jessner (2003) pointed out, that Grosjean's view on bilingualism (Grosjean 1982, 1992) and Cook's view on multicompenetce (Cook 1991, 1993) had an indisputable influence on research on bilingualism in the last decades.

The holistic view of bilingualism, as proposed by Grosjean, emphasizes the importance of understanding the bilingual experience from the perspective of the bilingual individual. The term "bilingual" in this context refers to individuals who use two or more languages in their daily lives, regardless of their proficiency or level of use in each language.

Grosjean argues that bilingualism is not simply the sum of two separate monolingual systems, but rather a unique and dynamic cognitive and linguistic system that is influenced by a variety of factors, such as the age of acquisition, level of proficiency, and social context. Bilinguals, according to this view, have a unique set of skills and abilities that enable them to negotiate and navigate multiple linguistic and cultural contexts.

The holistic view of bilingualism also emphasizes the importance of considering the bilingual experience in terms of its social and cultural dimensions. Bilingual individuals often have multiple cultural identities, and their linguistic and cultural practices are shaped by the social and cultural contexts in which they live and interact.

Cook's view of multicompetence (Cook, 1991) is a theoretical framework that describes how individuals who are exposed to multiple languages and cultures develop unique linguistic and cultural competence. The term "multicompetence" refers to the ability of individuals to use and control multiple languages and cultural identities, rather than viewing languages as separate and compartmentalized systems.

According to Cook, multicompetence is the result of dynamic and complex processes of language acquisition and use that are influenced by a variety of factors, such as age of acquisition, level of exposure, and social context. In contrast to traditional views of

bilingualism, which often focus on the mastery of two separate language systems, multicompetence emphasizes the interdependence and interaction between languages and cultures.

Cook argues that multicompetence allows individuals to draw on a range of linguistic and cultural resources in order to communicate and interact in a variety of social and cultural contexts. As a result, multicompetence can lead to increased flexibility, creativity, and adaptability in communication and cultural interactions (Cook, 2012).

2.2.3 Exploring verbal repertoires

Linguistic repertoire refers to the range of language varieties or languages that an individual can use or understand. It encompasses all the languages, dialects, registers, and styles that a person has acquired or learned throughout their life.

An individual's linguistic repertoire is influenced by various factors such as family background, educational experiences, social interactions, and exposure to different language varieties. Some people may have a wider linguistic repertoire than others, depending on their linguistic abilities, interests, and opportunities for language learning.

As a sociolinguistic concept, linguistic repertoire is associated with the work of John Gumperz in the early 1960s, who developed the notion of 'verbal repertoire', as he called it (Gumperz, 1964) in relation with the discussion of speech communities. In his ethnographic approach, Hymes (1974) argued that speakers' repertoires are functional units. Linguistic repertoires can be seen as valuable resources in today's globalized world, where multilingualism is becoming increasingly important.

In the work of Blommaert, the concept of 'verbal repertoire' is closely linked to the idea of superdiversity (Vertovec, 2007; Blommaert & Backus, 2013) and the study of language in diverse social contexts (Jörgensen et al., 2011). Verbal repertoires refer to the range of linguistic resources that individuals draw upon in their everyday communication. These resources include not only different languages but also language varieties, dialects, registers, and styles. Language use is not restricted to a single language but often involves the combination of multiple languages, dialects, and even non-verbal elements, or encounters with languages (Blommaert, 2013). Variation in linguistic repertoires can occur within and across individuals, reflecting their diverse linguistic backgrounds and experiences. Verbal repertoires highlight the flexibility and adaptability of language use. Individuals may switch between languages or language varieties based on social factors.

These repertoires are deeply linked to issues of identity and social meaning. Language choices and styles often carry social, cultural, and ideological meanings. Individuals strategically use specific linguistic features, varieties, or styles to convey their identities, affiliations, or attitudes, or to perform specific social roles (Blommaert & Backus, 2013).

Verbal repertoires are not fixed but develop through socialization and language learning processes. Individuals acquire and shape their repertoires through exposure to different linguistic environments, interactions with diverse speakers, and participation in various communities of practice. The acquisition and use of verbal repertoires are influenced by factors such as family background, education, peer groups, and media. According to Blommaert and Backus (2013:20):

> Formally and informally learned language and literacy resources merge into repertoires, and such repertoires reflect the polycentricity of the learning environments in which the speaker dwells. The precise functions of such resources can only be determined ethnographically, i.e. from within the group of users, from below.

2.2.4 Language maintenance: definition and its role in DMM

The development of the multilingual system can also be interpreted as a process of adapting to a constantly changing environment. Maintaining two or more language systems is much more demanding than having only one system because multilingual systems are less stable and require constant "correction" and activity. The DMM explains the processes taking place in multilingual systems: neither language acquisition nor language loss can be considered isolated processes, they must be considered as part of a dynamic and constantly changing system. The conditions for the development of multilingual systems also depend on the environment. The amount of work invested in the preservation of language systems depends on the available language systems. The "maintenance" of several systems naturally requires several investments (Jessner, 2006). A speaker's linguistic systems do not simply grow next to each other: they are in constant interaction.

When a language learner stops maintaining a language system over time, the system begins to disintegrate as a result. The rate of decomposition depends on several factors. Therefore, instead of examining the development of individual systems separately, we must also examine the totality of the systems owned by the individual (Jessner, 2008).

Language maintenance refers to the ability of an individual, community or group to maintain its language over time. Traditionally, applied linguistics has focused on language acquisition rather than on language maintenance or language loss. New methods

are being developed and evaluated for the benefit of new generations of learners of foreign languages. Remarkably little attention has been paid to factors that play a role in the maintenance of an acquired level of proficiency in a foreign language. Recently these aspects have received more attention because of the growing interest in language loss in general and foreign language loss in particular (De Bot et al., 2007). In the 1960s, Fishman suggested that the language shift and maintenance were such sociologically and politically important phenomena that they deserve a separate field of examination (Fishman, 1964). The following decades saw an increase in the number of studies dedicated to LM and LS. Most of them employed an ethnographic approach, but often used statistic data and historical materials (Gal, 1997).

Language maintenance means that the speech community, despite being bilingual, continues to speak their own, original language, and does not switch to using another language. Language shift is the historical process during which a community abandons their native language through different degrees of bilingualism, over several generations its original language and gradually switches to the use of another language (Gal, 1979). We can speak of language death if, as a result of language shift, there are no native speakers of the given language left, and as a result of language exchange, the language itself disappears from the languages used for communication purposes. Unlike community language shift, language loss is an individual process. In this case, the transition from one language to another is not at the community level, rather, it occurs at the level of individual speakers. For some speakers, the transition from using one language to another can already take place, while the community itself still bilingual (Csernicskó ed., 2010). To sum up, language shift and language maintenance are two endpoints of the same spectrum (see Bartha, 1999; Kiss, 1995). According to Pauwels (2004:719):

> The term language maintenance is used to describe a situation in which a speaker, a group of speakers, or a speech community continue to use their language in some or all spheres of life despite competition with the dominant or majority language to become the main/sole language in these spheres.

The ethnic support from within a group can often be seen as a key factor in long-term language maintenance. People who live in their ethnic communities will more likely to be language maintainers, due to a fairly simple reason: if they spend much of their lives in an L1 environment, they do not need an L2 to to get by in their everyday lives, or do not need to use it frequently (Giles et al. 1977; Stoessel, 2002).

Based on Thieberger (1990:334), language maintenance is:

"(1) a description of the state of shift that a language has undergone (that is, how much of the language is actually maintained)

(2) those activities engaged in with an aim of maintaining languages."

Language maintenance is not a static process, but rather a process that is constantly changing and evolving. Language use is influenced by the context in which it is used, and language users must constantly adapt to changes in their linguistic environment in order to maintain their language over time (Herdina & Jessner, 2002).

2.2.5 Multilingual Communities

According to Baker and Prys Jones (1998), a language community is formed by those who use a given language for their daily existence, partially or completely. According to the authors, there is no preferred term that is able to summarize all the complexity, dynamism and color that bilinguals existing in groups represent. Complex realities might be camouflaged as simple labels. One has to recognize the limitations of the terminology and to acknowledge the dimensions beneath the surface. As Sharp (1973) states, "each bilingual community is unique." Such communities may range in size from a few individuals to many thousands, a region, or parts of large settlements or cities. Most definitions of communities are not even concerned about the size or the geographical cohesiveness of the units, they may be as few as two people, or involve a lot more, thousands or even millions. Gumperz (1968:463) defined linguistic communities as

> […]a social group which may be either monolingual or multilingual, held together by frequency of social interaction patterns and set off from the surrounding areas by weaknesses in the lines of communication. Linguistic communities may consist of small groups bound together by face-to-face contact or may cover large regions, depending on the level of abstraction we wish to achieve.

Meanwhile geographic locations such as a neighborhood provide a context for interaction among members of a certain group, a language community does not need to have an absolute geographic reference or boundaries. In some cases, membership in bilingual communities of practice may be defined not so much by active use of two or more languages, but primarily in terms of passive competence and shared norms of understanding (Romaine, 2012).

According to Potowski (2013:321):

Multiple languages share geopolitical space for a number of reasons, including immigration (voluntary and involuntary), conquest, and other historical developments involving the migration of people and borders. In most multilingual nations, there is one dominant language used in wider society, and non-dominant languages can coexist within a state of relatively stable multilingualism in one of several fashions. There can be monolingual individuals of different languages […]. This is often referred to as societal bilingualism with individual monolingualism.

Multilingual communities offer great opportunities for in-depth analyses, including those focusing on the idea of language maintenance (LM) and shift (LS). Language shift and its results are among the most common consequences when different languages come into contact, because most often through social or political processes languages can become dominant at the expense of others (Cavallaro, 2005). An excellent example is Gal's now classic study on language shift, examining a Hungarian-German community in eastern Austria, Burgenland. In previous decades, Hungarian was used in all situations of social life in the community, but later on, the language became a symbol of membership in the local group and the occupation of peasant agriculture. The German language was first used only with outsiders and strangers, but a change took place over time, as the language was more and more associated with high status and public power, economic success and financial benefits. The rejection of the status of peasant agriculturalist, led to the rejection of the language that symbolized it (Gal, 1979).

Based on Thieberger's work (1990), there are several possible reasons why languages should be maintained. The author set up seven categories to describe the arguments that are commonly used to justify language maintenance:

    a)   from the national heritage point of view, preservation of the linguistic resources of the nation

    b)   social cohesion

    c)   identity

    d)   diversity

    e)   language maintenance as part of cultural maintenance

    f)   individual well-being

    g)   social justice

2.2.6 Multilingualism in the family domain

As reported by Spolsky (2012) each domain of language use has its own participants, with their own beliefs of language and language choice. For instance, at the national level, these could be the legislative bodies, civil servants, other bureaucrats. In the religious domain, there is a "key addressor" (author of sacred texts) and "addressee" (target of prayers), there are clerics (priests, imams, rabbis, ministers) and congregants, etc. There could be several other relevant domains, such as neighborhood, with the tendency of speakers of the same variety, concentrated on a small area (see Milroy, 1980). Another crucial domain is the workplace, when a job requires particular language skills. These, and many other domains constantly influence each other in various ways.

In the recent years, the family domain has been getting more and more attention in the academic literature. Studies on language maintenance and shift proved that the role of the family could not be ignored in the preservation of ethnic minority languages (Schwartz, 2010).

According to King and Fogle (2017), family language policy refers to the explicit or implicit rules and practices that a family establishes regarding language use and language learning within the household. Family language policy (henceforth FLP) examines child-caretaker interactions, language ideologies in the family (e.g. attitudes and ideologies about language(s) and parenting), and the overall language development of the children.. When investigating the core of the problems related to FLP, Spolsky (2012:7) states the following:

> A central problem in understanding family language policy is to explain the varying levels of commitment to acquiring the new dominant language on the one hand and to maintaining the heritage variety on the other. The regular answer is to contrast economic and practical arguments with questions of identity.

Parental attitudes to languages used in the family could depend on their assessment of their children's language situation. Parents, for instance, when aiming to preserve their own mother tongue try to modify their children's language environment. FLP also includes the strategies and policies that families use to manage their language practices and beliefs. This includes decisions about language use within the household, language education and language maintenance strategies, and the negotiation of language use in multilingual settings.

Fishman, as one of the pioneers of language maintenance-related research, also highlighted the importance of the family in home language maintenance. He viewed

families as the natural borderlines that enable to relieve outside pressures of the circumstances, making the family also resistant to the pressure of the society (Fishman, 1991). Many scholars underscore the role of the mothers, as (often times) the primary caregivers of the upcoming generation (Fishman, 2000).

As young children interact with their caregivers in socializing activities, they acquire linguistic and social skills as well as a culturally specific world view (Garrett & Baquedano-Lopez, 2002).

Additive bilingualism (Lambert, 1974), which is often celebrated for adding another language and without replacing the first, cannot be taken for granted. Bilingualism and multilingualism mean different things to different families and generations and even individuals within a family. Their differing views can impact the family relations and dynamics as well as the way individual family members perceive social relations and structures, and how they construct their own views and identities (Hua & Wei, 2016).

2.2.7 Multilingualism through instruction

Multilingualism can be achieved through various instructional methods and approaches. Here are some key approaches to instructed language learning:

Additive language learning. An approach that emphasizes the addition of a second or foreign language while maintaining and valuing the learner's first language. It promotes the idea that the acquisition of additional languages does not detract from or replace the learner's existing language(s), but rather enriches their linguistic repertoire. (Skutnabb-Kangas, 1990; Beregszászi, 2011, 2021).

Immersion Programs. Immersion programs involve teaching all subjects in a target language, providing students with an immersive environment. This approach encourages active language use and accelerates language acquisition (see Cummins, 2007).

Bilingual Education. Bilingual education programs use both the students' native language and the target language for instruction. This approach helps maintain and develop the students' proficiency in their first language while building skills in the target language (Andersson & Boyer, 1978). According to Skutnabb-Kangas and McCarty (2008), bilingual education can range from non-forms to strong forms with different outcomes and rates of success. Non-forms of multilingual education usually lead to monolingualism, and include mainstream monolingual programmes with foreign language teaching for dominant language speakers; monolingual dominant-language

medium programmes in which indigenous/minority children learn the mother tongue/heritage language as a subject, often outside regular school hours; submersion ("sink-or-swim") programmes; and segregation programmes. Weak forms aim for strong dominance in the majority language, and include early-exit and late-exit programmes (see Crawford, 1989). Strong forms include mother-tongue maintenance (language shelter) programmes; dual language and plural multilingual programmes. It has to be noted that only strong forms lead to high levels of multilingualism and lead to greater academic success for language minority. Another important point to make is that these programmes respect linguistic human rights (Skutnabb-Kangas & McCarty, 2008).

Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL). CLIL is an instructional approach where subjects are taught through the medium of a second or foreign language. This method allows students to learn both the subject matter and the target language simultaneously (see Dourda et al., 2014).

2.3 Hungarians in Transcarpathia

In the following subchapter, the broader contect of the study will be described. Hungarians are one of the smaller minorities of Ukraine, mainly located in the westernmost region of the country: Transcarpathia.

2.3.1 Brief History

Transcarpathia (Ukrainian: Закарпатська область) is located in the western part of Ukraine, bordering the Ukrainian counties of Lviv and Ivano-Frankivsk, from which it is separated by the Northeast Carpathian mountain ranges as a natural border. Transcarpathia is the second smallest county in Ukraine (only Chernivtsi county is smaller than it), its area is 12,800 km², which makes up 2.1% of Ukraine's area. Despite its small area, it also borders four countries, where Ukraine is in contact with Poland, Slovakia, Hungary and Romania (Ferenc & Kovály eds., 2020). The Transcarpathian Hungarians have a long history in the region, with roots dating back to the medieval Kingdom of Hungary. From the end of the 9th century to the beginning of the 20th century, the Hungarian language area was undivided and united in one state, in the middle of the Carpathian Basin. The 20th century brought significant changes in the history of the Hungarian language, after this unified language area was torn into several states after World War I. Since the treaty of Trianon, signed in 1920, the border has played a decisive role in the Hungarian language and national identity. Political borders inevitably influence the spoken and written language within the border and on the other side of it (Csernicskó et al., 2023). The population was significantly affected by the shifting borders and political turmoil of the 20th century. The Hungarian population in the region declined sharply after World War II, when the territory was annexed by the Soviet Union, and many Hungarians were forcibly deported to other parts of the Soviet Union (see Molnár D., 2022). After Ukraine gained independence in 1991, the Transcarpathian Hungarians received more cultural and linguistic rights, and their status gradually improved. In the first decades of the independent Ukraine, the Hungarian minority in Ukraine was represented in the Ukrainian parliament, and there still are Hungarian-language medium schools and cultural institutions in the region. However, there are some issues and tensions related to language rights and policies, particularly in areas where Hungarians form a majority of the population, and the situation of the minorities in the country is rapidly changing in the light of the recent armed conflicts (Csernicskó, 2016).

Most of the Hungarians living outside the borders of Hungary live in a state of lower or higher degree of bilingualism. Transcarpathia, as a geographical-administrative unit, was established in 1919 as a result of the peace treaties that ended World War I in the (first) Czechoslovak Republic under the name of Podkarpatska Rus: the Hungarian national minority in Transcarpathia was formed. In the following decades, after centuries of belonging to the Kingdom of Hungary as part of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, the region belonged to several states. The Hungarian national minority, which has been part of the several states mentioned below, has successfully preserved its language, identity and culture in the last century (Csernicskó et al., 2023).

2.3.2 Demography

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the first (and still the only) census in Ukraine, which became independent in 1991, was held in 2001[2]. Ukrainians make up the majority of the population, but there are also significant minorities. The main ethnic groups include Ukrainians (77,8%), Russians (the biggest minority 17,3%), Hungarians, Romanians, Slovaks, and Roma (Gypsies). The exact distribution of ethnic groups may vary across different parts of the region. The number of other minority communities did not reach 1%. In 2001, 156,566 people declared themselves to be of Hungarian nationality (0.3%) in the country, and the number of native Hungarian speakers was 161,618 (Molnár, 2015). 96.8% of Hungarians of Ukraine live in Transcarpathia. Transcarpathia is known for its ethnic diversity. In this region, after the Ukrainians (80.5%), Hungarians formed the largest community (12.1%). The number of Hungarian-speaking people was 158,729, the proportion was 12.7% in 2001. The majority of Hungarians in Transcarpathia (62%) still live in settlements where the Hungarians form an absolute majority (Molnár, 2016). The data of the 2001 census show that 52.8% of people from mixed Hungarian-Eastern Slavic marriages were registered as Hungarians and 47.2% as Ukrainians.

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[2] http://2001.ukrcensus.gov.ua/

Map 1. Local governments where the proportion of native speakers of a regional or minority language reaches the 10% mark (based on official data from the latest 2001 Ukrainian census)
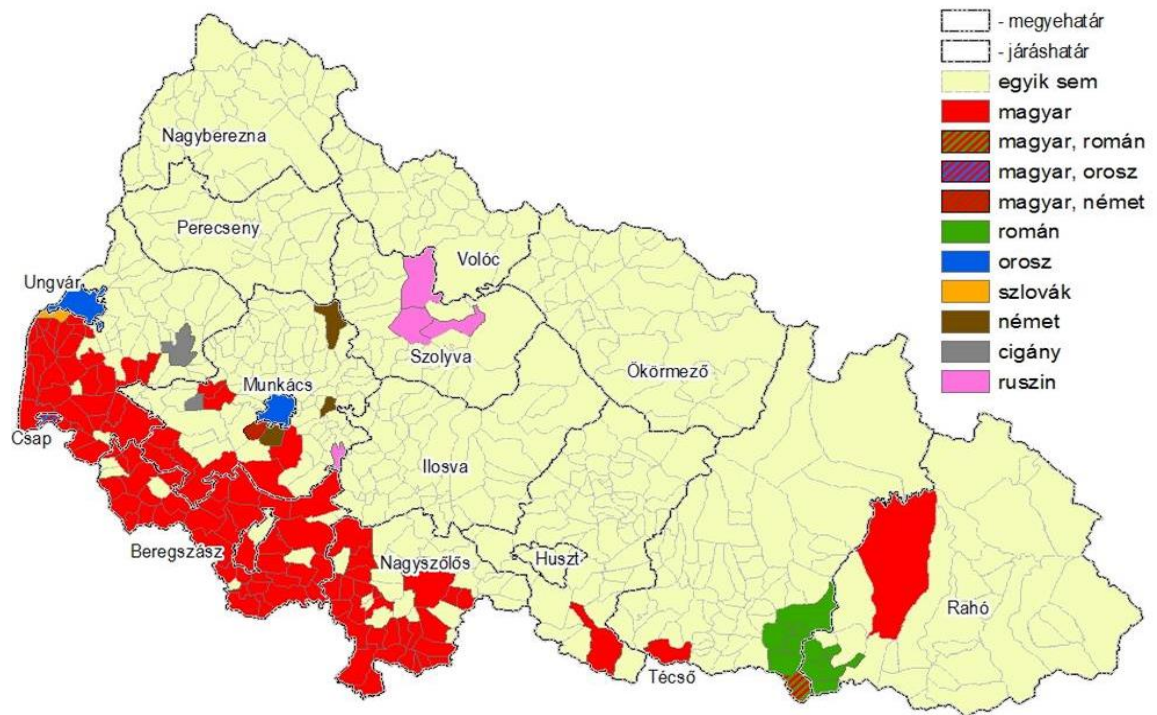
Source: Molnár D., 2005

2.3.3 The language skills of Transcarpathian Hungarians in the light of sociolinguistic surveys

Unfortunately, we do not have exact data on the language skills of the Transcarpathian Hungarians, but primarily through censuses, as well as sociological and sociolinguistic studies, certain state surveys and analyses, we can get an idea of the language skills of the region's population. The verbal repertoire of Transcarpathian Hungarians usually consists of multiple items. If we aim to model epitome of the most common set of languages that an ethnic Transcarpathian Hungarian acquires throughout their lifetime, the formula would look like the following:

- We can state that for those whose mother tongue is Hungarian, it will also be their first language, since it was the first language they learned in their lives.

- As the official language of the state, Ukrainian plays the role of a second language, because in addition to being compulsory in school, it is also the language most often encountered in their immediate environment. For some of the members of the older generations, Russian also plays a key component in their repertoire. It is due to the influence of the Soviet era in the country.
- As a result, English is already the third language for the target group, and it is mainly mentioned in the literature as a foreign language. The term target language is also often used, which refers to the language the speaker aims to master (Ellis, 1997).

According to the latest census data from 2001, Ukrainian is clearly the most widespread language in Transcarpathia: 82.57% of the population (more than one million people) speak it. However, 17.43% of Transcarpathians (more than two hundred thousand people) do not speak Ukrainian. Based on the data of the first and so far only census of independent Ukraine, it is clear that almost half of the Transcarpathian Hungarians do not speak a language other than their mother tongue (Csernicskó & Ferenc, 2014).

During a 1996 survey, the language skills of Hungarians living across the border in the Carpathian Basin were examined. Based on the survey data, it can be said that among Hungarians living in Ukraine, the level of knowledge of the state language is the lowest, far below the level measured in other countries. Regarding the knowledge of Russian, the data pointed in a somewhat more positive direction (Kontra, 1996). In the church and in the family, almost everyone speaks Hungarian, but when leaving their homes, fewer and fewer people use Hungarian. We can also observe that the farther we get from the private sphere and the closer we get to formal arenas, the higher the curve indicating the use of the state language rises, and the lower the curve indicating the Hungarian language (Beregszászi & Csernicskó, 2005). According to the data of a 2007 survey, Hungarians living in Ukraine still have the lowest knowledge of the state language compared to neighboring countries (Ferenc, 2012). In terms of foreign language skills, the data of a 2016 research show that Transcarpathian Hungarians lag behind the Ukrainian population of the region in their knowledge of English, German and Russian (Csernicskó & Hires-László, 2019).

2.3.4 Minority-medium Education

In a minority environment, the role of language in shaping identity increases. The issue of language education in the Hungarian-language medium schools of Transcarpathia is still of fundamental importance today. The deficiencies in the education of the state language lead many parents into making a difficult decision: should they choose a Hungarian-language medium school, where children can study in their mother tongue, or should they choose an institution teaching in the majority language in the hope of more effectively learning the state language?

As can be seen from the events of recent years, the attitude of the Ukrainian state towards education in majority and minority institutions is rapidly changing. Since the introduction of the External Independent Testing, which was made mandatory for all students wishing to enroll in higher education in 2008, the pitfalls of the education system have become even more obvious for minority students (Orosz & Pallay, 2021). Over the years, there have been significant differences between numbers of the language-literature lessons of Ukrainian and Hungarian-language medium schools: the former studied the Ukrainian language in a higher number of hours than the latter. This difference made entering higher education more difficult for many students of minority background in the last decade. For instance, Beregszászi and Csernicskó in their 2017 study revealed, that up until the 11th grade, students in Ukrainian-language medium schools had five hundred more Ukrainian language lessons than in Hungarian-language medium schools (Beregszászi & Csernicskó, 2017). As a result of the ministerial decree that entered into force in the 2015/2016 academic year, this difference in the number of hours increased further: in addition to the Ukrainian language, students of the majority institutions could study a foreign language in a higher number of hours (Csernicskó, 2015). The inadequate equipment of the schools, the shortage of teachers, the lack of textbooks and educational aids all make it difficult for the effectiveness of education in Hungarian-language schools in Transcarpathia (cf. Beregszászi & Csernicskó, 2005; Huszti, 2005).

However, education in the mother tongue is an extremely important factor in the language maintenance efforts of Hungarians in Transcarpathia. It is striking that among the minorities in Ukraine that have an access to mother tongue educational institutions (such as Hungarians and Romanians), the degree of linguistic assimilation is low. For those minorities who have no formal education at all in their mother tongue, but only the opportunity to learn their language as a subject at school, the language shift has practically

already taken place (Csernicskó et al., 2020). When the Kyiv government narrowed the scope and coverage of mother tongue education, it reduced the chances and opportunities of the minority group as a community to survive through the Law on Education (2017)[3], the State Language Law (2019)[4], and the Law on Secondary Education (2020)[5].

The recent years have brought new challenges for schools with minority languages of instruction. With the education law passed in 2017, Ukraine wants to strengthen the role of the state language at all levels of education and direct citizens to Ukrainian-language training. As a result of the new legislation, probably the most significant change in the mother tongue-medium education of Transcarpathian Hungarians will take place in 2023 onwards. From the 5th grade, certain subjects may no longer be taught in minority languages, and the percentages of the courses taught in the state language should be rising each year, reaching a 60 percent ratio. This change has already taken place in schools with Russian language of instruction in 2020 (Csernicskó & Tóth, 2021).

2.3.5 Churches

Churches and denominations play an important role in the life of the state. Together with the establishment of the independent Ukrainian state, the rebirth of religious communities in Transcarpathia began, after the collapse of the Soviet Union. After the turn of the Millennium, an increase in the number of denominations can be observed in Transcarpathia (Kicsera, 2010). The previous census in Ukraine does not include data on the religious and denominational composition of the population. However, we know from sociological surveys that the majority of the population of Ukraine is Eastern Christian (Orthodox), but the absolute majority of Hungarians are believers in Western Christian churches: most of the Hungarians in Transcarpathia are Reformed, but a significant proportion are Roman or Greek Catholic (Tátrai et al., 2018; Csernicskó et al., 2023).

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[3] https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/2145-19

[4] https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/2704-19

[5] https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/463-20#n984

2.3.6 Language rights, policies: a brief review

The particular characteristics of the geopolitical and geographical position of Ukraine, the variable political, historical, economic, cultural and social development of the regions of its territory inherited from the Soviet Union, the ethnic and linguistic composition of its population, and the fact that the representatives of the titular nations of all neighbouring states are among its citizens all turn the issues of language into matters of internal and foreign policy as well as of security policy in this country. (Csernicskó & Máté, 2017:14).

As stated by Bilaniuk (2010:109), almost everyone in Ukraine is bilingual, to varying degrees. A fundamental characteristic of the language situation in Ukraine is bilingualism of society (Shumlianskyi, 2010). In spite of this, due to negative historical experiences, bilingualism often gets stigmatized in Ukraine (Pavlenko, 2011).

The nature of bilingualism in Ukraine is primarily due to historical factors. The language situation in the country is often characterized by the opposition of *de facto* multilingualism and *de jure* monolingualism of the state (Csernicskó & Ferenc, 2016). In the course of the last century, the territory of the region has been divided by several states, each of which had its own language policy. Different languages in the region had state language and/or official status in these political eras. The following table illustrates the most important changes in the state affiliations of the region (Csernicskó, 2013).

Table 1. State affiliations of today's Transcarpathia

State affiliation	Period	Name of the region	The status of the region
Kingdom of Hungary in Austro-Hungarian Monarchy	1867–1918	Ung, Bereg, Ugocsa, Máramaros counties	It does not have a unified and independent administrative status.
Czechoslovak Republic	1919–1938	Podkarpatska Rus	It is an autonomous administrative unit.
Czechoslovak Republic	1938–1939	Podkarpatska Rus	Autonomous region.
Carpatho-Ukraine	14-16.03.1939		Independent state.
Kingdom of Hungary	1939–1944	Subcarpathian Province	A special administrative unit separated from the county system.

Transcarpathian Ukraine	26.09.1944–22.1.1946		An independent pseudo-state without any international recognition.
Ukrainian SSR in the Soviet Union	1946–1991	Zakarpattia Oblast	A county-level administrative unit in the Ukrainian SSR with no autonomy whatsoever.
Ukraine	From 1991	Zakarpattia Oblast	A county without any independence.

Source: Csernicskó (2013: 18)

Most of the people living in Transcarpathia (those who were born before the 1990s) have personally experienced at least one change of state and, at the same time, at least one state language change. The legal status of the languages used in today's Transcarpathia has changed several times over the last hundred years. None of the languages used in the region has had a constant status over the last century (Csernicskó, 2013).

State changes have rearranged the hierarchy between languages in all cases. Since 1920, the official language has changed 6 times, which in each case has brought compulsion to adapt for the people living in the region. If we take a closer look at the status of the Hungarian language and its changes, we can see that its language policy situation is not constant in independent Ukraine either (Csernicskó et al., 2023). The 2012 Language Law brought a positive change (see Szabómihály, 2017), but the state language law passed in 2019 reduced the status of the Hungarian language in Transcarpathia, compared to 1991. Over the last century, several state formations have made it possible for minority languages to be used as official languages at regional and / or local level (Csernicskó, 2013). The Ukrainian State Language Law of 2019 revoked the regional official language status of the Hungarian language, and this language now cannot be used as an official language in the workplaces of county, district or even local levels, even in settlements inhabited by nearly one hundred percent of Hungarians. In Ukraine, the language issue is highly politicized. This has been repeatedly pointed out by researchers and experts of international organizations (for a detailed analysis, see recent papers and brochures published by the Antal

Hodinka Linguistics Research Center [6][7][8][9]). The relationship between the language issue and security policy is also confirmed by the ongoing armed conflict in the country since autumn 2013, which has been elevated onto a new level in February 2022, when Russian forces attacked the country. Linguistic conflicts have been used as an excuse for the occupation of Crimea and for the outbreak of the armed conflict that continued to devastate several regions of Ukraine, with thousands of deaths (cf. Csernicskó, 2016). Pursuant to the Ukrainian constitution, the state language of the country is Ukrainian, and the country's language policy is primarily determined by its relationship with the Russian minority (Csernicskó, 2017). In the last days of the Soviet Union and after the fall of the empire, both among the Ukrainians and among the Romanians, Hungarians, Poles, etc. there was a growing interest in their own culture and language, and there appeared demands for extending the use of their own language as opposed to the previously privileged position of the Russian language. During this period and in the early years of Ukrainian sovereignty, the respective goals of the majority nation (the Ukrainians) and those of the minorities living in the country coincided.

However, while the situation of the Ukrainian majority and that of the minorities in the Soviet Union had been similar in many respects, after 1991 their parallel efforts to strengthen the position of their languages has come into conflict: the language policy of the Ukrainian state insists that the functions previously enjoyed by the Russian language be taken over by the Ukrainian language, whereas national minorities also want to use their mother tongues in as many spheres of language use as possible (Csernicskó et al., 2020). Since 2014, there have been many ongoing changes in the county's language policy, that has severely affected its minorities. The most important laws in force are the following:

1. Law of Ukraine "On Education" (2017)[10]

The law covers all levels of education, from preschool to higher education, and it establishes the principles of education, including the right to education, equality of access, the quality of education, and the development of a knowledge-based society. The law also

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[6] https://hodinkaintezet.uz.ua/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Strasbourg_2020-ENG.pdf
[7] https://hodinkaintezet.uz.ua/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/HANYK_brossura.pdf
[8] https://hodinkaintezet.uz.ua/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Implementation_of_Language_Rights_in_Ukraine.pdf
[9] https://hodinkaintezet.uz.ua/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Alternative_report.pdf
[10] Закон України «Про освіту», 2017. https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/2145-19

outlines the structure of the education system in Ukraine, which includes preschool, primary, basic secondary, upper secondary, and higher education. It establishes the standards for educational institutions, the requirements for curricula and teaching methods, and the procedures for the certification of teachers and educational institutions. The law emphasizes the importance of the Ukrainian language in the education system and establishes the requirement for the use of the Ukrainian language as the main language of instruction in all levels of education, except for the study of foreign languages and the languages of national minorities.

In accordance with the law, persons belonging to minorities can only receive full mother-tongue medium education at the kindergarten and elementary school levels, but even there only in addition to the state language, i.e. mixed, minority-state language education.

Such education is not carried out in an institution operating in the language of the given minority, but only in Ukrainian-language medium institutions (because according to point 1 of the law, all educational institutions are of Ukrainian language of instruction) in separate classes (groups). Institutions operating in a language other than Ukrainian cease to have the right to exist. The possibility of mother-tongue medium education (its legal basis) ceases both in vocational secondary and higher education. Here, if there is a need for it, the conditions are created for learning the language of the minority as a subject. At the same time, the legislator leaves a loophole for multilingual education, since one or a few subjects can be taught in two or more languages. But not in any languages: in this case only English and other official languages of the EU can be used (Csernicskó, 2021; Orosz, 2021).

2. Law of Ukraine "On Supporting the Functioning of the Ukrainian Language as the State Language" (2019)[11]

The law sets out the principles for the use of the Ukrainian language in public institutions, media, education, culture, and other areas of public life. It emphasizes the importance of the Ukrainian language for national identity, social cohesion, and the development of the country. The law establishes the requirement for the use of the Ukrainian language in official documents, public announcements, and other forms of communication in public institutions. It also mandates the use of the Ukrainian language in public events, including

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[11] Закон України «Про забезпечення функціонування української мови як державної», 2019. https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/2704-19

official ceremonies, meetings, and conferences. The law promotes the development and popularization of the Ukrainian language in the media by requiring that at least 75% of the total airtime of television and radio channels must be in the Ukrainian language. It also requires that all printed media, including newspapers, magazines, and books, be published in the Ukrainian language.

Furthermore, the law provides for the promotion and support of the Ukrainian language in education, culture, and science. It establishes the requirement for the Ukrainian language to be the language of instruction in all educational institutions in Ukraine, with exceptions for the study of foreign languages and the languages of national minorities.

In order to achieve this goal, it introduces a citizenship obligation previously unknown to the Ukrainian legal system, the mandatory knowledge of the Ukrainian language. It envisages civil liability for violators of the provisions of this Law, for the deliberate distortion of the Ukrainian language in official documents and texts, for violations of its spelling rules and language standards, as well as for limiting or obstructing its use. In many areas (for example: press, book publishing, internet interfaces, academic activities, sports activities, health care, etc.), it introduces rules, mostly requiring the exclusive use of the Ukrainian language, which were not previously subject to legal regulation (Csernicskó et al. 2020).

3. Law of Ukraine "On General Secondary Education" (2020)[12]

The law covers the principles of education, the structure of the education system, the rights and responsibilities of students, parents, and educational institutions, and the procedures for the certification of teachers and educational institutions.

The law emphasizes the importance of the Ukrainian language as the state language of Ukraine and establishes the requirement for the use of the Ukrainian language as the main language of instruction in all educational institutions

The law also provides for the development of a flexible and inclusive education system that meets the needs of all students, including those with disabilities, and promotes the integration of students from diverse backgrounds into mainstream education.

The law establishes the standards for educational institutions and the requirements for curricula, teaching methods, and assessment. It also provides for the development of

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[12] Закон України «Про повну загальну середню освіту», 2020. https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/463-20#n984

extracurricular activities, such as sports, cultural and artistic activities, and volunteer work, to promote the holistic development of students. Additionally, the law recognizes the importance of digital education and establishes the requirement for the use of modern educational technologies in teaching and learning (Csernicskó & Tóth, 2021).

4. Law of Ukraine „On Indigenous Peoples" (2021)[13]

According to this Law, the indigenous people of Ukraine is a native ethnic community that was established on the territory of Ukraine, has its own language and culture, has traditional social, cultural or representative bodies, considers itself the indigenous people of Ukraine, constitutes an ethnic minority among the population, and does not have its own state outside the borders of Ukraine (Article 1, paragraph 1).

The document not only sets the criteria for belonging to indigenous peoples outlined above, but also defines the area of Ukraine where such peoples could have formed, namely the Crimean peninsula: these are the Crimean Tatars, the Karaims and the Krimchaks. (Article 1, paragraph 2). So, the drafters not only decided who the indigenous people could be, but also who could not: those who have a national state (motherland), those who do not live on the Crimean peninsula, and those who are not Crimean Tatars, Karaims or Krimchaks (Csernicskó & Tóth-Orosz, 2021; Csernicskó, 2022).

Language policy in Ukraine remains a complex and controversial issue, reflecting the country's linguistic diversity and historical legacy. The ongoing debates about language policy reflect broader debates about identity, culture, and power in Ukrainian society (Brenzovics et al., 2020).

2.3.7 Recent events: the decentralization reform and its effects on Transcarpathia

The decentralization reform in Ukraine is a comprehensive program of administrative and territorial reform that aims to transfer more power and resources from the central government to local communities. The main objective of the reform is to strengthen local self-government, increase the efficiency and transparency of public services, and promote the economic development of regions. The reform includes several key elements, such as

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[13] Закон України «Про корінні народи України від 1 липня 2021 р. № 1616-IX https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/1616-20#Text

the amalgamation of smaller administrative units into larger ones, the transfer of authority and resources to local authorities, and the introduction of new mechanisms for citizen participation and public accountability. The reform has led to the creation of united territorial communities (UTCs), which are larger administrative units formed by the voluntary amalgamation of smaller municipalities.

In 2015, the Supreme Council of Ukraine adopted the Law "On voluntary amalgamation of territorial communities" (ЗУ2015[14]), which marked the beginning of the Ukrainian administrative or decentralization reform. As a result, local and rural self-governments were to be organized. On 17 July 2020, the Supreme Council voted the Decree on the Establishment and Termination of Districts (Постанова 2020), which concluded the legal regulations of the decentralization process: 490 districts of Ukraine have been abolished, and 136 new districts have been formed instead[15]. 6 districts of Transcarpathia, 6 districts (Uzhhorod, Mukachevo, Berehove, Khust, Tyachiv and Rakhiv district), while the former 337 local governments were organized into 64 micro-regions (Csernicskó et al. 2023).

The aim of the decentralization reform was to give more power to the local municipalities. There was a possible legal basis for the significant part of the Hungarian language area to be concentrated in a single administrative unit. The Hungarian community developed a proposal to establish a district with a Hungarian majority (район).

The division of the ethnic and linguistic area into several administrative units and the connection with the settlements mostly inhabited by Ukrainians hinder the advocacy activities of the Hungarian community. The change in the ethnic and linguistic composition of the administrative units will undoubtedly have an impact on the use of the Hungarian language as well, however, due to the novelty of the situation, long-term conclusions cannot be drawn in this regard (Molnár D, 2021).

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[14] ЗУ2015 – Закон України «Про добровільне об'єднання територіальних громад». https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/157- 19#Text

[15] See: decentralization.gov.ua

Chapter 3. Context of the Study

3.1 Zhnyatino: a bilingual village in Western Ukraine

3.1.1 Introduction

A multilingual community itself is comparable to an ever-changing ecosystem, with its specific features, its systems operating in two or more languages, which is equally affected by common events. In the following, I will attempt to show what those who visit Transcarpathia can experience. The subject of my analysis is a settlement where the presence and co-existence of multilingualism is a natural phenomenon.

This study is intended to be an important snapshot of the current situation of this particular community. We have to emphasize that due to the ongoing Russian invasion of Ukraine, the circumstances are changing rapidly, and drawing long-term conclusions is merely impossible.

3.1.2 A multilingual community in Transcarpathia

Baker and Prys Jones (1998) speak of a "language community" of people who use a particular language for some or all of their daily existence. The size of such communities can range from a few individuals to thousands, it can be a country, a larger city district, or a region.

Zhnyatino (*Izsnyéte* in Hungarian and *Жнятино* in Ukrainian) is a settlement with a mixed population, with 63.4% of Hungarian speakers and 36.16% of Ukrainian speakers at the time of the 2001 census. Moving towards the village of Horonda, the number of native Hungarian speakers decreases to a minimum, and Zhnyatino also forms a language border (Tóth & Csernicskó, 2014: 134–135).

Map 2: The Hungarian language area of Transcarpathia with the language border
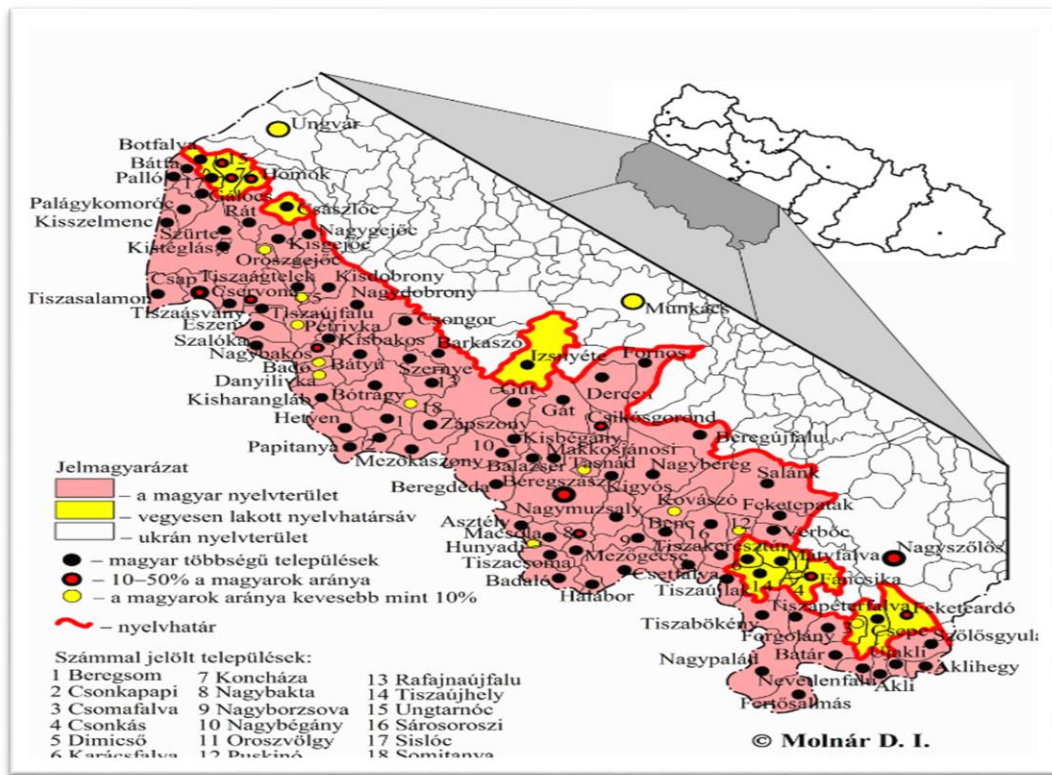
Source: Molnár D., 2005

A quasi-border divides the settlement into two parts: the part of the village, mostly inhabited by Hungarians, going from the direction of the village of Hat (Gát) to the center of the village is called the "Magyarvég" ("Hungarian end"), while the neighboring streets towards Horonda (Gorond) are called the "Oroszvég" ("Russian end") by residents (this part of the village is mostly inhabited by Ukrainians). The name "Russian end" most likely was inherited from the Soviet era, where the term "Russian" was used as an umbrella term by other minorities, for the speakers of Slavic languages of the settlement.

In Transcarpathia, the majority of Hungarians live in the Hungarian-speaking area. This area is made up of a relatively uniform unit of settlements with a Hungarian majority (there are only a few smaller villages and towns of mixed population), which stretches in the southwestern part of Transcarpathia parallel to the Ukrainian-Hungarian border, 15-20 kms wide. In some sections of the language border, it widens to form a strip of settlements with a mixed population, and in others it shrinks to a thin line (Molnár, 2016).

Even in the Hungarian period, the Hungarian settlement area of the Mukacheve district had contact with the town of Mukacheve itself only through skillfully drawn nationality maps. The Hungarian villages from Barkasove (Barkaszó) to Fornosh (Fornos) lie directly on the border of the Berehove district, with the exception of Rakoshino (Rákos), which is a language island with a Hungarian minority, with a population of two and a half thousand Hungarians. Zhnyatino, located on the language border, also has a mixed population. The Hungarians make up approximately 60% of the total population. (S. Benedek, 1994). According to the 2001 census, the population of the settlement is 2243 people, 1435 of which is Hungarian and 642 is Ukrainian. The settlement is also home to a rather small and segregated Roma community, the population of which has significantly shrunk and changed after the war. Before the decentralization, it belonged to the Mukachevo district, today it is the part of the Horondivska hromada (municipality), with two other settlements (Horonda and Strabichevo) with a population of ethnic Ukrainians about 90%. The Hungarian population makes up 10.6% of the overall number of people in the municilaplity (Molnár D., 2022). The municipality itself belongs to the newly formed Muhachevo district.

Language border as a notion is rather problematic. However, it is essential for understanding some of the phemomena mentioned later on. The related notion of dialect border which cannot be easiliy defined either, might suggest that such borders do not even exist as it seems rather obvious that two language areas cannot be separated by a simple line. It is the grouping of dialects according to one or a few selected criteria that carries the risk of arbitrariness. In a recent study, Vargha (2022) describes the problematic nature of drawing language borders. In her example, dialectometric research, which strives for a high degree of objectivity, also appeared as a critique of the classical method, which on the basis of a large amount of data, without prior selection, using mathematical procedures and a quantitative methodology, enables the comparison of dialects and grouping. Even objective classification can result in arbitrary dialect boundaries: groups of research points are also demarcated where the change is gradual, i.e. there is no sudden change in the dialect continuum. In other words: an objective way of defining the dialect boundary does not mean that the perceived border would necessarily correspond to a real dialect fault line.

When speaking of language borders, a transition area is more likely to form, where all of the languages used in the neighbouring areas might occur, and this is the result of the ongoing social changes, rather than a geographic variable (Willemyns, 2002). It can be

compared to two different types of pearls or grains poured onto one plate besides each other. Even if you don't mix them, it occurs that some of them blends into the other.

It is the society and the environment as a whole that creates language borders, through different experiences and viewpoints, which implies that borders imposed on communities do exist to begin with; however, it is the community itself which recognizes and sets its own borders, and which decides then to fit in with them (Iannàccaro & Dell'Aquila, 2001).

As it will be analyzed in the following chapters of the thesis, this quasi-border plays an important role in the everyday life of the locals, influencing different aspects of their lives.

3.2 Languages in the visual space

In Transcarpathia, it is not a rare phenomenon for vendors traveling in minibuses to advertise their goods through loudspeakers on the streets of villages. One can witness such cases in Zhnyatino as well. I would like to draw the attention to one particular incident.

What makes the phenomenon special was the execution of the ad: bedspreads and pillow sellers drew the attention of customers to themselves in Hungarian from the center of the village. But as the bus moved on, the wind brought other sounds: the advertisement first switched to bilingual, and in the ever-diminishing echoes, as it moved towards the "Russian end", only Ukrainian words could be heard. This case not only demonstrates the excellent local knowledge of the entrepreneurs: it is a perfect example of how several languages and nationalities coexist in the same settlement, and how geographically separated they can be.

The following subchapter is an introduction to the visual bilingualism that is present in the settlement.

3.2.1 Linguistic landscape analysis

Linguistic landscape (LL) analysis began to spread as a part of sociolinguistic research According to Nash (2016), LL is like an old wine freshly housed in new bottles. Linguistic landscape might be relatively new to landscape studies and may be a recently developed in linguistics, the details of LL have been, at least philosophically, addressed in earlier papers in linguistics. One of the first studies of the linguistic landscape was written by

Rosenbaum, Nadel, Cooper and Fishman (1977). There is a growing body of research on the linguistic landscape in the last 10 years. This research has been published in different journals including a special issue of the International Journal of Multilingualism (Gorter, 2006) and language signs have also been the focus of attention of the geosemiotics approach (Scollon & Scollon, 2003). The great breakthrough came from the paper of Landry and Bourhis (1997), when they demonstrated the symbolic significance of the appearance of different signs, and they make a clear distinction between the informative and the symbolic functions of language signs. This distinction was already pointed out by Spolsky and Cooper (1991). Goffman (1981) also drew attention to the symbolic significance of the inscriptions that appeared in the given space, who dealt with the social consequences of language use and its connections.

The essence of the linguistic landscape research method is to shed light on and explain exactly what underlying motivations, ideologies, and power struggles are behind the different forms of signs that are influenced by underlying factors. In the aspect of the linguistic landscape method, the use of language in public spaces is not arbitrary and random, the linguistic landscape views them as representations that are defined socially, humanly, politically, ideologically, economically, legally, by class and identity, and by multilingualism. Thanks to this, the linguistic landscape is embedded in the analysis and investigation of several social sciences (Gorter & Cenoz, 2008). The method essentially contains qualitative and quantitative elements, and their combined forms also occur.

Two important areas of linguistic landscape studies can be distinguished. Its first and essential field, in which it examines and evaluates the use of language in public space embedded in language policy processes. Linguistic landscape analyzes to evaluate the appearance of languages and their use in different positions, in addition to their symbolic significance, based on the possibilities provided by language rights (Hires-László et al., 2023). In this case, it becomes important whether the sign was initiated by a private person or published by an office or organization. Cook (2022) points out that regarding the differentiation, whether the signs were put up by government bodies or individuals, they have been categorized as 'public' versus 'private' (Landry & Bourhis, 1997), 'top-down' versus 'bottom up' (Ben-Rafael et al. 2006), and 'official' versus 'non-official' (Backhaus, 2006). Another important area of linguistic landscape analysis is where it is used to evaluate typical patterns in society.

In the recent decades, there has been a growing body of research on the LL of Transcarpathian settlements, as the representation of languages in the visual space is a

clear indication of the ongoing processes in the region and it has been a useful tool to demonstrate changes in language policy, social and cultural phenomena, and the appearance of ideologies (see: Csernicskó 2015, 2016a, 2016b, 2017b, 2019, Csernicskó et al., 2022, Hires-László 2015, 2018a, 2018b, 2019, Hires-László et al., 2022, Karmacsi 2014, 2016, 2017, 2018a, 2018b, Laihonen & Csernicskó 2017, 2019, Tóth 2014a, 2014b, 2017, 2018, Tóth-Orosz 2019, 2020).

3.2.2 The Linguistic Landscape of Zhnyatino

By examining the linguistic landscape of public spaces, Gorter (2006) emphasized that the use of language by residents speaking different languages can create a specific (symbolic) condition for increasing the confidence of the given language. Ben-Rafael (2009) further interpreted the symbolic significance of inscriptions – the significance of the message depends on whether it was made public by official or private persons. As it was discussed in the previous chapter, recent years have brought radical changes in the language policy of the state, especially in those areas where the country's minorities are affected.

The previous language law that came into force in 2012 allowed the use of minority languages in the work of local governments where minority language speakers have reached 10 percent (see e.g. Csernicskó & Fedinec, 2016). The recent language law (On Supporting the Functioning of the Ukrainian Language as the State Language, 2019) only allows the use of the state language for the aforementioned purposes. For instance, Article 12. of the law defines the state language as the *only* working language of the government authorities:

Working language in the operation of government authorities, authorities of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, local self-government authorities, State- and communityowned enterprises, institutions and organisations

> The working language in the operation of government authorities, authorities of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, local self-government authorities, State- and community-owned enterprises, institutions and organisations, including the language of conferences, events, meetings and the day-to-day communication language, shall be the State language. The working language in the operation of foreign diplomatic institutions of Ukraine and other state missions abroad shall be the State language[16].

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[16]https://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/default.aspx?pdffile=CDL-REF(2019)036-e

Article 41. of the aforementioned law, on the "Use of the State language in geographical names and names of toponymic sites" states that all the signs and inscriptions shall use the state language. This brings the existence of bilingual signs in the region to an end, even though it dates back to several decades in the history of the territory. The name plates of state authorities, municipal bodies, state and municipal enterprises and institutions shall be in the state language. In addition to Ukrainian, these may also appear in English (see Csernicskó 2013; Csernicskó et al., 2023).

1. Geographical names, as well as names of public gardens, boulevards, streets, lanes, descents, passages, avenues, squares, plazas, embankments, bridges and toponymic sites shall be made in the State language.

2. Names of toponymic sites shall not be translated into other languages and shall be conveyed in official documents, mass media, cartographic, reference, encyclopaedic, educational and other publications in the letters of a relevant alphabet according to pronunciation thereof in the State language.

3. When used in Ukraine, names of geographic sites and toponymic sites located within other states, as well as those of geographic sites and toponymic sites that are not under sovereignty or jurisdiction of any state, shall be conveyed in the State language in transcription from the original language, subject to the specifics of Ukrainian phonetics and spelling. Where the name of such geographic site or toponymic site has a Ukrainian origin, such name may be used instead of or along with its foreignlanguage version. Names of Ukrainian origin shall be given preference in official documents.

4. Within Ukraine, inscriptions on road signs, signboards and other directional signs of geographic and toponymic site names shall be conveyed in the State language. In addition to names in the State language, directional signs of geographic and toponymic site names may contain versions thereof in Latin alphabet. Inscriptions in Latin letters should be made smaller and located on the right-hand side or at the bottom.[17]

When arriving at a settlement, the first thing one notices is usually the local name plate. For a minority, it is important that in addition to the state language language, the name of their village should also appear in their native language. According Tóth-Orosz's (2019) description, three types of nameplates can be observed in Transcarpathian settlements:

1. nameplates requested by the councils of the settlements and posted by official bodies;
2. nameplates installed by a political/cultural organization;
3. nameplates installed by the municipality of the settlement.

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[17]https://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/default.aspx?pdffile=CDL-REF(2019)036-e

There are even several forms in one village a settlement name plate may also occur. In the pictures below, we can see three versions of the greeting name plate of the settlement, one of which is the official one, which is monolingual, Ukrainian.

Picture 1. Nameplate posted by the official bodies

A common feature of the settlement name plates posted by political/cultural bodies is that both the Ukrainian and Hungarian names of the settlement can be read, and the village's coat of arms is also visible. On most signs of this type, texts in Ukrainian and Hungarian greet those arriving in the village, usually the text in Ukrainian is first, followed by the greeting in Hungarian below (see Csernicskó, 2013; Karmacsi, 2014; Tóth-Orosz, 2019).

Picture 2: Nameplate posted by political/cultural organizations

A citizen's militia has been operating in Zhnyatino since 2015. The association has Hungarian and Ukrainian-speaking members as well. Their task is to maintain order in the village, they assist at events within the village and beyond. The following picture shows the autumn-winter uniform of the citizen's militia, with bilingual inscriptions on it. In the picture above, on the right, visitors are informed about the presence of this organization is the settlement, both in Hungarian and Ukrainian.

Picture 3: The autumn-winter uniform of the citizen's militia with bilingual inscription

Zhnyatino is a settlement with independent administrative status and has public administrative institutions: village hall, educational and health institutions, post office, library, cultural center, etc. State and municipal name plates in Ukraine display the colors of the Ukrainian national flag: most often, a yellow inscription is displayed on a blue background. Ukrainian is the only language that appears on these signs, in accordance with the recent legislation.

Street nameplates are monolingual in the whole territory of the village. It is true for all of the cases where the name plates are posted by the local government, but there are a few examples of nameplates that were posted by locals independently, as an addition to the number of the building. Most of them are in Ukrainian, but one can also find bilingual ones, however, the occurrence of those is rare.

Picture 5: Examples of different street name plates in Zhnyatino
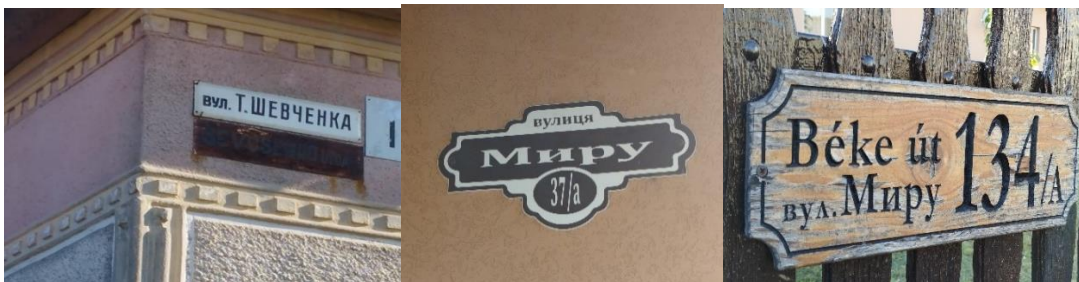
There are two educational institutions in the village: a primary school with Ukrainian language of instruction and an elementary school with Hungarian language of instruction. The legislation currently in force in Ukraine states that the name of the institution cannot indicate the minority language of instruction, and in 2021, the names of the educational institutions were also changed. The schools of the village have been renamed as follows: from Zhnyatino Elementary School No1 and Zhnyatino Elementary School No2 with

Hungarian Language of Instruction to Zhnyatino Gymnasium No1, and Zhnyatino Gymnasium No2.

Kindergarten education currently takes place in two groups: one with Ukrainian language of instruction, and the other with Hungarian. The ethnic composition of these groups is rather interesting. Due to the recent interest in learning Hungarian by the local Ukrainians (and Ukrainians from the neighboring villages), many parents decided to enroll their children in the group with Hungarian language of instruction, so that their children could be able to acquire both Ukrainian and Hungarian at the same time at a very young age. Many of the parents from Hungarian families followed the same logic in reverse, enrolling the youngest members of the family in the Ukrainian group. Due to the increased demand, the Hungarian group was operating at its full capacity for years, and even those Hungarian families, who preferred their children to attend the group had to choose the Ukrainian one, due to the lack of space. This created a rather unique situation: in the Hungarian group, children who are Hungarian speakers are outnumbered by Ukrainian children. Therefore, most of the time, they speak in Ukrainian amongst themselves. In the Ukrainian group, there are both Ukrainian and Hungarian speakers, but the lessons are held in Ukrainian. This situation has created two (linguistically) Ukrainian-dominant groups in the kindergarten.

The village has two churches: the Reformed church stands in the center of the village, the other church in the village is used by the Greek Catholic and Orthodox denominations interchangeably. Masses in the latter two are held in Ukrainian. The Reformed services are in Hungarian. In rare cases, two languages appear at the same time: these occasions are weddings. According to the Reformed pastor of the village, in mixed marriages, the oath can be taken in two languages at the couple's request. The churches were built on two ethnically separated areas where, in addition to ethnic segregation, denominational affiliation is also decisive. The cemeteries of the two communities are located one after the other on the left and right side of the road at the outskirts of the village. The two cemeteries (which technically constitute as one) that are currently used by the members of different denominations show a high degree of linguistic segregation. If we take a look at the epitaphs of the graves, they clearly show that there are no bilingual forms written, and the families show a clear preference for monolingualism in such situations.

The village has a third cemetery that used to be used by the Jewish community, that is currently not present in the settlement. It has been preserved in good condition thanks to its maintainers from foreign Jewish churches. In some settlements, inscriptions, buildings,

and monuments can still be found that are connected to a language, culture, or people that are no longer present in the given area, but these signs do not disappear even after a long period of time. These so-called "Ghost signs" (Stage, 1989) can be utilized as touristic attractions of a certain area, as they tell a lot about the history of a settlement. In other cases, they might be ignored, dissonant, or forgotten parts of the linguistic landscape (cf. Pavlenko, 2023).

Picture 6: Ukrainian-Hungarian bilingual advertisement a local entrepreneur at the gate of the cemetery used by members of the Reformed church

The staff of the local government office consists of four members, three Hungarian and one Ukrainian native speaker, but all of them speak both languages at a high level. All documents in the office are written in Ukrainian, the official language of the state, in accordance with the recent legislation in the country.

The meetings of the village council are held in Ukrainian, but important announcements that appear in the visual space are given in the state language and Hungarian. These top-down signs are placed all over the settlement in the state language, as well as the building of the local self-government office, and at those territories where Hungarian speakers live, and in the center of the village, bilingual (Ukrainian-Hungarian) announcements are used.

Picture 7: Bilingual announcement of the village council posted at the entrance of a shop in the center of the settlement
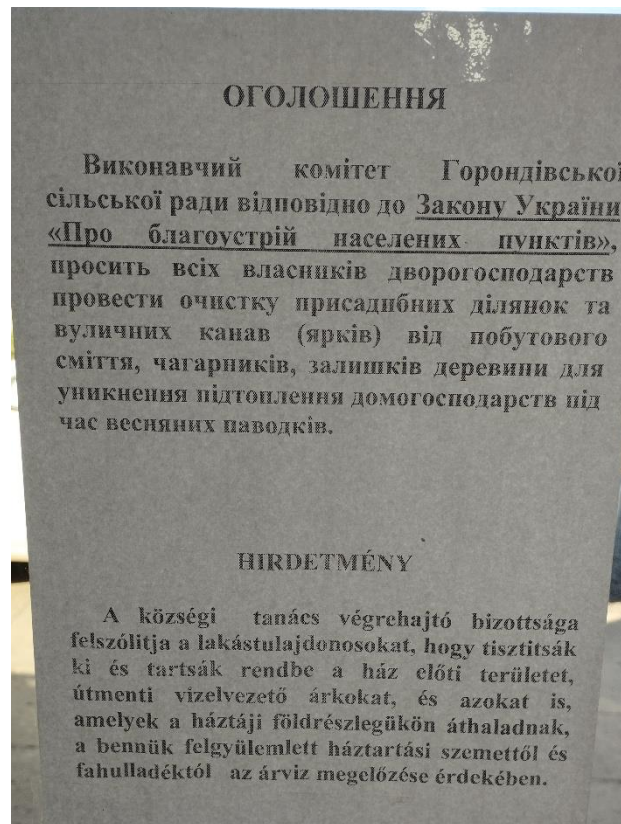
The multilingualism of a shop or business depends not only on the inscriptions. The signs in its interiors, the list of its offerings, its website, and its business card all belong to the use of written language, but in addition to these, a very important factor in multilingualism is the language skills of the staff. Multilingual inscriptions on the labels of locally produced goods are also part of the economic sector (Hires-László et al., 2022). The State Language Law adopted in 2019, among other areas, also regulates this area of language use: it makes it mandatory to display notices in the state language, Ukrainian must also appear in all inscriptions (Csernicskó et al., 2020).

Bilingualism of the linguistic landscape of the village is much more present in local businesses than in any other cases mentioned before. The entrepreneurs' aim is to attract as many customers as possible, and providing information on different goods and prices in several languages is a key component of this.

In the recent years, there have been seven stores in the settlement, with multilingual service, although, due to the crises caused by the recent events in the country, three of

them closed recently. There is also a hairdresser's salon available, which attracts customers from all over the settlement, and also from the neighbouring villages. Bilingual ads and signs appear frequently in all of these businesses. The village has two bars and a restaurant, and one can order drinks and meals in Ukrainian or Hungarian. In the pharmacy, the customer has the opportunity to receive service in both Ukrainian and Hungarian. The ATM placed in one of the shops is operating in three languages: Ukrainian, English and in Hungarian.

Picture 8: Multilingualism of local small businesses
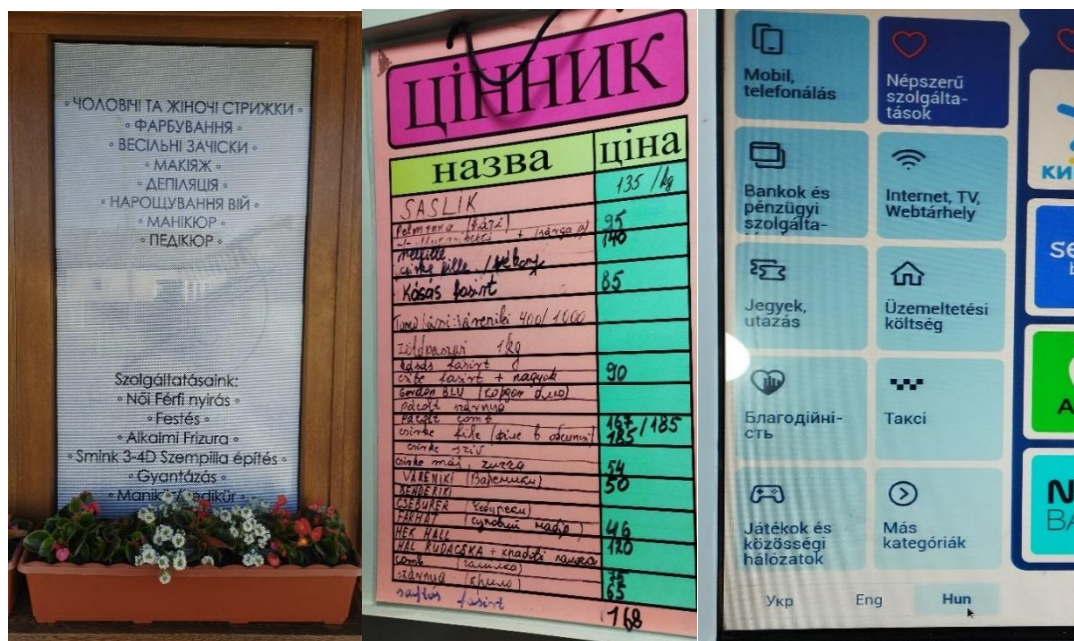
These general conclusions show that in private enterprises, multilingual signs appear in almost every single unit. The confidence of a minority can also be influenced by political forces: for the Hungarian minority, the recognition of the necessity of their mother tongue and the activities of local advocacy and civil organizations can all have an impact on these processes. As a consequence, we can see that there is a demand for linguistic equality in this area, which contributes to the increase of the prestige value of the minority language, because multilingualism and multilingual signs of a business activity can also increase the success of the business.

Chapter 4. The study

4.1 Introduction

De Bot (2015) draws the attention to the wide range of methods that are becoming more and more popular in applied linguistics research.

> The range of research methods that is used in different types of AL research has grown considerably in the last decades. Most of these methods were trends imported from other disciplines like sociology, anthropology, psychology and neuroscience. They range from grammaticality judgments to think aloud protocols and very detailed conversational analysis techniques, surveys and various neuro-imaging techniques. Multi-method approaches are becoming popular. (De Bot, 2015:64)

Markee (2012) on the other hand emphasizes, how overlooked qualitative methods can be. As an example, the author mentions TESOL Quarterly (2003), more specifically, its guidelines for quantitative and qualitative research, which contains a single entry for quantitative research, and three entries for case study research, conversation analysis, and (critical) ethnography. The author also suggests, that the three examples make up a rather conservative list among qualitative methodologies: there should also be room for a much wider range of methods, such as ethnomethodology, hermeneutics, diary studies, content analysis, and survey research, among other potential candidates, and last but not least: life stories.

In the following subchapter, the main theoretical considerations behind the chosen research methods of the study are introduced. The thesis is heavily centered around the life stories of the participants, aiming to show the individual aspects of language maintenance as members of a bilingual community, accompanied by other anthropological tools such as participant observation, linguistic landscape analysis (shown in the previous chapter) and language mapping.

4.2 Methodology

4.2.1 Etic versus emic perspectives

In anthropology and other social sciences, an "emic perspective" refers to an approach that emphasizes the understanding of a particular cultural group or phenomenon from the perspective of the people who are part of that group or who participate in that phenomenon. In short: an insider's perspective – what anthropologists call "the emic view". (Duranti, 1997)

The term "emic" comes from the linguistic concept of phonemic, which refers to the sounds that are meaningful within a particular language system (Pike, 1967). The idea is that just as different languages have different phonemic systems, different cultures have different ways of understanding and interpreting the world around them. The terms e*mic/etic* have continuously been reinterpreted in various fields of the humanities and social sciences, often to express different standpoints. An emic-etic distinction can vary from a purely within-culture study (emic) finding more universal patterns over cultures (etic) (Mostowlansky & Rota, 2020).

From an emic perspective, researchers seek to understand the meanings and values that are important to the people being studied. This may involve learning a language (see Todeva & Cenoz, 2009) customs, and beliefs of the culture in question, as well as engaging in ethnographic research methods such as participant observation and interviewing.

While both emic and etic perspectives have their strengths and limitations, an emic approach is particularly valuable for gaining a deeper understanding of cultural practices and worldviews from the perspective of those who live them.

4.2.2 The choice of qualitative research methods

Giving the definition of inductive reasoning, Babbie (2005:24) stated the following*:*

> Inductive reasoning moves from the particular to the general, from a set of specific observations to the discovery of a pattern that represents some degree of order among all the given events. Notice, incidentally, that your discovery doesn't necessarily tell you why the pattern exists—just that it does.

Deduction, on the other hand, moves from the general to the specific. Two very different approaches, but equally valid directions in science. Reasoning from observations is an essential part of inductive thinking: observation is the first step that continues with a search for patterns in the observed phenomena. Qualitative research is often oriented toward the inductive approach. We have to note that theoretically, qualitative research does not allow us to use statistical tools to find correlations that point toward patterns in need of explanation. Although there is a wide range of programs available that help us analyze qualitative data. On the other hand, the qualitative (inductive) analyst needs to have a deep understanding, an insight and ability for reflection to notice important patterns in a 'pile' of data (Babbie, 2020).

Merriam's (2002) interpretation of qualitative study aims to understand and discover phenomena, processes, perspectives, and worldviews of the people involved in the study. Unlike quantitative research, which is relatively unified in terms of its goals and procedures, qualitative research is comparatively heterogeneous in its aims and methodologies (Markee, 2012).

In their landmark book, sociologists Glaser and Strauss (1967/1999) laid the foundations of grounded theory, which is a qualitative research methodology that heavily relies on inductive reasoning. It is widely used in various disciplines, including sociology, psychology, and management to generate theories or concepts grounded in data. Hadley (2017) described how the methodology can be used in applied linguistics, as in recent decades there has been a growing interest amongst sociologists, psychologists, ethnographers, linguists, etc. to conduct research that goes against the 'established orthodoxy' in research.

The central idea behind grounded theory is to derive theories or explanations directly from empirical data, allowing concepts and theories to emerge from the data rather than being imposed upon it. It aims to understand social phenomena by systematically collecting and analyzing data, primarily through interviews, observations, and document analysis (Birks & Mills, 2015).

Grounded theory emphasizes the importance of constant comparison, theoretical sensitivity, and theoretical sampling to ensure that the emerging theory remains firmly connected to the data. It provides a systematic and rigorous approach to theory generation that can capture the complexity and nuances of social phenomena.

4.2.3 Ethnographic design

Ethnographic methodology is rooted in anthropology. Ethnographic research, or ethnography, is both a study of interactive strategies in human life and analytical descriptions of social scenes, individuals, and groups that recreate their shared feelings, beliefs, practices, artifacts, folk knowledge, and actions. In other words, it is both a process and product of describing and interpreting cultural behaviors. In *The Sage Dictionary of Social Research Methods* (Jupp, 2006), in the entry discussing ethnographic research, ethnography itself is defined as follows:

> It is a research method located in the practice of both sociologists and anthropologists, which should be regarded as the product of a cocktail of methodologies that share the assumption that personal engagement with the subject is the key to understanding a

particular culture or social setting. Participant observation is the most common component of this cocktail, but interviews, conversational and discourse analysis, documentary analysis, film and photography, life histories all have their place in the ethnographer's repertoire. Description resides at the core of ethnography, and however that description is constructed it is the intense meaning of social life from the everyday perspective of groups members that is sought. (Hobbs, 2006).

Watson-Gegeo (1988) identifies four principles of ethnographic research. According to the author, in ethnography:

a) behavior of groups of individuals is imbedded in culture;

b) microcontext is linked to the macrocontext;

c) the theoretical framework frames the situations and research questions that researchers ask themselves;

d) seeks to understand a situation in its own terms.

Ethnographic theory itself is a mixture of methodologies, in which personal engagement with the subject is the key to understanding a particular phenomenon or social setting. Its most common component is participant observation, but interviews, conversational and discourse analysis, documentary analysis, film and photography, life histories all have their place in this repertoire (Ejimabo, 2015).

4.2.4 Life stories and linguistic autobiographies

Life stories refer to personal narratives that individuals tell about their experiences, beliefs, and values over the course of their lives. Anthropologists use life stories to gain insights into the cultural and social contexts that shape individuals' lives, as well as to better understand how people make sense of and respond to social change. Life stories can also reveal the ways in which individuals negotiate and navigate different issues in their lives.

Todeva and Cenoz (2009) used personal narratives in the form of linguistic autobiographies to describe the journeys of speakers of multiple languages. Anthropologists often use ethnographic research methods, such as participant observation and in-depth interviews, to collect life stories. Linde's central argument is that, in telling these stories, which are fragments of individuals' life stories, the individuals are socially obligated to construct both coherent selves and coherent stories about career choices (Linde, 1993). Another example is a 2000 study by Luttrell, where we can also read about the design process of an in-depth analysis of different women's life trajectories.

4.2.5 Pilot study. Ethical considerations

The pilot study was a smaller-scale, preliminary investigation conducted before the main study. It served as a trial run to test the initial research design, data collection methods, and analysis techniques. The primary purpose of the pilot was to discover the necessary adjustments and improve the quality of the main study. As such in-depth, anthropological studies have not been done before in the Transcarpathian context, it played an important role in discovering the methodologies and theoretical frameworks that appear to be the most useful in this particular scenario (and in this particular period of time). The pilot study consisted of five shorter interviews and took place in the summer of 2021. The process was helpful for making important discoveries on the methodology that seemed the most adequate for the study. While conducting the critical analysis of the pilot study, it became clear that the first interviews were more structured and felt too guided by the interviewer. Conducting the pilot study was also a learning process, during which the researcher learned what to ask and how to ask certain questions in order to gain as many pieces of useful information as possible while interrupting the flow of the conversation as little as possible. It was also crucial for learning the ability to discover, what should be considered as relevant information, as life stories might be long and contain personal elements that are not relevant for the study.

At the beginning of each interview, each participant was warned about complete anonymity and data protection. Any data that has been shared in the thesis was only after their consent.

4.2.6 The interviews

During the first phase of the pilot study, some unexpected difficulties were encountered, mostly stemming from the fact that in recent years the author of this thesis became an insider in the life of the community. On the one hand, this influenced what information the informants were comfortable with sharing. My experience was positive most of the time and exceeded previous expectations: the informants were more comfortable with sharing their opinions, as I had expected, even when it came to difficult topics. However, the main data collection method of the research, the interview itself, raised several difficulties. On the one hand, the observer's paradox cannot be eliminated. For most of the informants this was a new experience. They were also asked questions they had not met before. To cover up their insecurities, sometimes certain self-protecting mechanisms

(cf. Goffman, 1967; Pachné Heltai, 2014) followed, for example they gave schematic answers, or answers they thought I might expect from them. Another disadvantage of the interview as a method is that there is necessarily a subordination between the interviewer and the informant relationship. While completing the pilot study, it became clear that in many cases, due to my previous knowledge of the informants' personal lives, some of the information was easily labeled as evident for the interviewees. The consequence of this sometimes is that what I considered important was not mentioned, and the conversation between the two parties became too controlled and was flooded by clarifying questions in order to avoid omitting necessary pieces of information. The interviewer, by interjecting and controlling the content, can convey a value judgment, break the flow of the conversation, unintentionally confusing the respondent. In order to avoid this happening in the main study, the interviewer was joined by a colleague in each interview, whom they had not met previously. The interviews were still conducted by the author, but their presence encouraged the informants to mention important details about their lives, that the interviewer might have been aware of, and otherwise would have been easily omitted or considered as obvious facts.

Most of the interviews took place in the winter of 2021 and the autumn–winter period of 2022, as the fieldwork had to be interrupted due to the uncertainties caused by the outbreak of the Russian invasion of the country in February 2022. The duration of the interviews ranges from half to almost one and a half hours. However, it has to be noted, that some participants felt more comfortable after the voice recorder was switched off, so in those cases where they felt like sharing more, this information was included in the field notes that were taken after the interviews.

4.2.7 Expert interviews

An expert interview is a structured conversation or discussion conducted with an individual who possesses specialized knowledge, expertise, and experience in a particular field or subject. The purpose of an expert interview is to gain insights, gather information, and seek expert opinions on specific topics or issues. The goal of an expert interview is to tap into the knowledge and expertise of the interviewee to gain a deeper understanding of the subject matter and benefit from their insights, analysis, and recommendations. It is an excellent way to access specialized information, learn from experts, and gain valuable perspectives in a particular field.

For this particular study, five experts were asked to give a deeper insight into the features, traditions that are specific to this community. These experts were chosen due to their additional knowledge of the residents of the settlements. Due to their profession, they have regular contact with the people of the village, in these cases, especially with the Hungarian members of the community. The experts who participated in the interviews were the following: the head of the local self-government ('starosta'), the administrator of the self-government (who worked as the notary of the village before the decentralization reform), the pastor of the Reformed church, a Hungarian member of the municipal council, and a primary school teacher (with over 20 years of experience amongst children of the settlement).

4.3 Research design

Taking the initial steps of the research analysis, a grounded theory approach was applied. The thematic analysis began after the first interview was transcribed into text format, and continued in parallel with the preparation and transcription of further interviews. The enormity of the analytic task was made easier and more transparent with a data analysis software. Recurring phenomena were first manually coded by the author, and after selective coding, these phenomena were categorized and organized using the ATLAS.ti23 qualitative data analysis software (Friese, 2019), which was found to be a useful tool for supporting the process through coding, memos, links, networks. The program is often used in grounded approach studies (Rambaree, 2013).

During the interviews, 653 minutes of audio footage was recorded. After setting up the coding system, manual coding took place. The transcription of the interviews was done in an 'intelligent verbatim' style (Mergenthaler & Stinson, 1992), to keep the focus on the content for the analysis and to make the translation of the quotes easier (as the language of the interviews was Hungarian).

During the manual and selective coding, the examined text units were first extracted into an Excel document. During the first read of the transcribed documents, I looked for an overall theme, the gist of the life story. That was included in my field notes as well. During the reading, I also looked for recurring phenomena and themes in the texts, which are based on the interview questions (deductively), or appeared independently of them (inductively) in the interviews. During the second read, I focused more on the language narratives of the life stories. This gave the opportunity to add more codes to the existing

ones. The third reading included the actual coding process. 1289 quotes were provided with a code (occasionally multiple codes were applied to a single quote). The next step was co-occurrence analysis (hyperlinking) and sentiment analysis, using the the network tool of the program. When analyzing the occurrence or co-occurrence of different phenomena, the network tool also proved to be useful for visualization. The flowcharts created were used in the subchapters of Chapter 5 for visual demonstration. Besides the co-occurring codes and their connections, groundedness (how many quotations are linked to a certain code) and density (number of intercode connections) were also featured in the charts.

Table 2: The main themes (codes) occurring during the interviews categorized into subtopics

Main themes	Subtopics	→
Identity	ethnicity	interethnic relations
	nationality	
	biculturalism	
	mixed identity	
	local identity	local
		migrant
Language Policy	family language policy	
	language of the environment	
	language of instruction	
	language law	decentralization
		education law
		state language law
	education	
Categories of different languages	mother tongue - L1	
	L2	Ukraian
		Russian
		mixed
	L3 (Foreign)	English
		German
Status and role of a language	language revitalization	
	environment L1, L2, FL	
	dialect	
		news
		hobbies
		learning
		social media
	language border	

Languages in practice	socio-pragmatic knowledge	
	monolingualism	
	co-occurrence	
	loan word	
	code	swiching
		mixing
	accent	
Multilingual speaker	M-factor	maintanance effort
		acquisition effort
		language attrition
		distavce b/w languages
	anxiety	
	motivation	integrative
		instrumental
	language competence	language proficiency
	perceived as positive	social benefit
		metalinguistic awareness
		prestige
	perceived as negative	stigmatization
		discrimination
		semilingualism

4.3.1 Questions for the life story interview

In the following subsection, the main guidelines for the life stories will be shared. It is important to mention that the set of questions that were (or had to be) asked varied from participant to participant, and additional questions were only applied when the participants lost the thread of their thoughts, or in those cases when relevant topics were unintentionally omitted from the conversation and the researcher found it to be important to ask.

Personal data, family, education

1. When, where were they born (settlement)

2. They identify themselves as ... (nationality)

3. What language do they speak at home in the family, in what household (multigenerational, etc.)

4. What language did their mother, father spoke to them, what languages were used in everyday life?

5. What role did the grandparents play (multi-generational household / how much time did they spend together)?

6. Whether it was important to learn other languages or it came by itself, naturally (if so, why?).

7. Did they go to kindergarten, what was language of instruction?

8. Communities of children in the place of residence (were there children speaking other languages?)

9. Primary and secondary school, was there a change, what languages did they learn, why?

10. Did they attend any extracurricular activities in what language did the teacher/supervisor speak to them?

11. University (why, where, were there any atrocities due to deficiencies in language skills, were there any advantages, disadvantages)

12. Was there a big shift between high school and university due to the different language mediums (anxiety, tension)?

13. What is their degree, their current job, what kind of jobs they had before, switching between professions (commuters, working abroad, etc.)?

14. Were they influenced by the regime changes of the early 90s (SU-UA)?

15. How much did they encounter the Ukrainian language in the Soviet era?

16. Marriage, spouse, where did they meet, where do they live, why (important in a mixed environment)?

17. Having children (how many children, how old).

18. In what language(s) do they speak to each other/ their children?

19. What school the child was enrolled in, whether there was a change (switching schools), why, and what was the decisive argument?

20. What school did the spouse go to? what was the language of instruction?

21. System of friends, acquaintances (what languages are used when speaking to them)
Religion, culture, media

22. Where were they baptized, and what religion (closer family members, wider family, children)? Do they attend church services?

23. Do other members of the family go to church? Do their children attend religious education?

24. Do they celebrate church holidays? Which ones?

25. Do they use social media platforms?

26. What is the language of the operating system they are using (phone, computer)?

27. In which languages do they consume different types of media, read/watch daily news?

28. Favourite TV series, films, books (childhood vs. adulthood)?

Official businesses, administration, profession, work

29. Going to the doctor's (how do they choose a doctor, is there a preference related to language or only the reputation, experience).

30. If they shop at an online portal, or browse the Internet, what language they choose?

32. Do they buy local products, do they look for Ukrainian or Hungarian inscriptions on them?

33. What is their current job?

34. If they take a note at work, in what language do they do that?

35. Does the Ukrainian language dominate in the professional language, if it comes up in an ordinary conversation about their profession, do they switch to Ukrainian?

Instructed language learning

36. Have they ever attended any kind of language course?

37. Do they use any kind of app, or program for language learning? do they have any related books at home, do they use them regularly, how often?

38. What are the languages most used in writing? What language can they type in, which one do they use faster?

39. Do they have a desire to learn another language (if not, why not?)?

40. Were they able to use the languages they had learned before at school?

41. Did they feel a lack of language skills when they had to use it in real life?

42. If they had to place an advertisement online, in what language would they do that?

43. If they see bilingual signage, which one do they read first, in which they look for the errors first?

Bilingual community

44. How do they view the dividedness of the ethnicities that share the same settlement?

45. Who (people and authorities) do they think does the most to maintain minority languages in your settlement? How?

46. What can you yourself do to maintain your languages? What effort do you make consciously?

4.3.2 Purposive sampling (critical case sampling)

In choosing a sampling method for informant selection, the question the researcher is interested in answering is of utmost importance. The question will decide the objectives on which the methodology will be based. The first consideration is whether to study the entire population and if not, how to sample the population efficiently. How many people will be involved? What level of organization would be sampled: individual or community? Asking for help from the community would be useful at this point (Tongco, 2007).

Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling technique that involves selecting participants based on a specific purpose or criterion. In other words, purposive sampling involves selecting individuals who are deemed most suitable or relevant for a particular research study. The sample is selected on the basis of knowledge of a population and the purpose of the study, e.g. when studying a small subset of a larger population (Babbie 2005, 2020).

Purposive sampling can be particularly useful in situations where the researcher needs to select participants who have specific characteristics or experiences relevant to the research question. However, it is important to note that the results of a purposive sample may not be generalizable to the wider population, as the sample is not a representative one.

4.3.3 The participants

In this survey, the main goal of the sampling was to create categories of the people living in the community, that embody 'archetypes' of people by having lived in a certain political era or having had certain types of life experiences that a person in this settlement would usually have.

Experts got a specific set of questions, in a more close-ended, classic interview format, the former were more like life stories. The following table contains the categories that were developed and followed when choosing the participants.

Table 3: The categories developed for choosing the participants

Category	Subcategory	Number of participants
Age	20-30	3
	34-45	6
	46-60	6
	60+	3
Gender	Male	8
	Female	10
Place of birth	Local	15
	Migrant	3
Education	Secondary	4
	Vocational training	8
	University degree	6
Job	Works or have worked abroad	7
	Only worked locally	11
Born in different historical eras	Soviet Union	10
	Independent Ukraine	8
Experts	Official in the local self-government	5
	Administrator in the local self-government	
	Pastor of the settlement	
	Member of the Municipal Council	
	Teacher	

In the following table, the profiles that were created with the help of the interviewees is presented. Eighteen participants were chosen for the in-depth life story interviews. The participants of the pilot study have not been included, as the data collecting process was reconsidered in the meantime and the results were only presented at conferences to gain more useful feedback that could be utilized in the main study.

Table 4: Profiles of the participants

No.	Year of birth	Gender	Mother tongue	Occupation	Highest level of education	Languages spoken
1	1999	F	HUN	cashier	Vocational training	HUN, UKR, ENG, RUS
2	1951	F	HUN	pensioner	Vocational training	HUN, UKR, RUS
3	1991	F	HUN	trauma nurse	Vocational training	HUN, UKR, ENG, RUS
4	1982	F	HUN	enterpreneur	Secondary	HUN, UKR, ENG, RUS
5	1958	F	HUN	pensioner	Secondary	HUN, RUS, UKR, ENG
6	1989	F	HUN &UKR	administrator of the local self-government	University (MA) degree	HUN, UKR, ENG, RUS
7	1972	F	HUN	primary school teacher	University (MA) degree	HUN, UKR, RUS, ENG
8	1990	F	HUN	NICU nurse	Vocational training	HUN, UKR, ENG, RUS
9	1995	F	HUN	hairdresser	Vocational training	HUN, UKR, ENG
10	1993	F	HUN	consultant at a local advocacy organization	University (MA) degree	HUN, UKR, RUS, ENG
11	1979	M	HUN	mason	Secondary	HUN, UKR, ENG, RUS, SK
12	1991	M	HUN & UKR	enterpreneur	Vocational training	HUN, UKR, ENG, RUS, GER
13	1990	M	HUN	pastor	University (MA) degree	HUN, UKR, ENG
14	1963	M	HUN	pensioner	Vocational training	HUN, UKR, RUS
15	1968	M	HUN	official in the local self-government	University (BA) degree	HUN, RUS, UKR, ENG
16	1950	M	HUN	pensioner	Vocational training	HUN, RUS, UKR
17	1984	M	HUN	mason	Secondary school	HUN, UKR, RUS, ENG
18	1991	M	HUN	ecologist	University (BA) degree	HUN, UKR, ENG

Chapter 5. Results

5.1 Social factors of language maintenance

Chapter 5 of the thesis has been broken down into two parts. In the first part of the Chapter, the most important social factors that influenced the participants were collected, analyzed, and supplemented with the most relevant, informative or interesting quotes.

5.1.1 Mother tongue, identity, and ethnicity

Ethnicity and identity are complex and multifaceted concepts that encompass various aspects of a person's individuality and sense of belonging. Ethnicity refers to a social group or category of people who share common cultural, historical, linguistic, or ancestral characteristics, that bring individuals together as a distinct group with self-identity. Group-defining characteristics may also include religion and social organization. However, language is not a defining characteristic of ethnicity for all people, it has been accorded priority by many, and minorities are not the only ones who possess ethnic identities (Skutnabb-Kangas & McCarty, 2008).

Ethnicity plays a significant role in shaping an individual's identity, as it often influences cultural practices, traditions, language, and social norms that are passed down through generations. It can provide a sense of belonging and community, allowing individuals to connect with others who share similar backgrounds and experiences. Ethnic identity can also impact an individual's self-perception, self-esteem, and how they navigate the world around them.

In the Transcarpathian context, mother tongue and identity are closely linked in the vast majority of cases. In addition, the Hungarian language plays a fundamental role in the expression of regional and local identity (Csernicskó, 2008), and a crucial element of ethnic identity (Ferenc, 2017; on the question of ethnicity in Transcarpathian urban settings, see Hires-László, 2021).

People's identities are shaped by a myriad of factors, including but not limited to their ethnicity. Factors such as nationality, religion, education, socioeconomic status, occupation, and family background.

5.1.2 Interethnic relations

The participants' overall view on the relationship between Hungarian and Ukrainian residents of the settlement was positive. Being a relatively small community, it is often said, that in Zhnyatino, everyone is someone's relative, may it be a closer or a more distant one. Although, while hearing the phrase "interethnic relationship", the first thing that comes to our mind is a romantic partnership. Over the past decades, there have been plenty of mixed marriages and families in the settlement, but this is not the only factor that has played a role in bringing the two ethnicities closer to understanding and accepting each other. These also apply to any other type of interpersonal relationship: friends, classmates, flatmates, co-workers, neighbors, etc. These relationships have become increasingly common in today's interconnected and multicultural societies, and in this particular instance, being geographically so close to each other makes the interactions between the two ethnicities inevitable. Interethnic relationships can provide individuals with opportunities to learn about and appreciate different cultures, traditions, and perspectives. They can foster understanding, empathy, and tolerance towards each other. Such relationships can also challenge stereotypes and promote diversity and inclusivity.

A recurring theme was the overall need to approach interethnic relationships with open-mindedness, respect, and a willingness to learn from one another. Cultivating an environment of mutual acceptance and embracing shared values and goals can contribute to the success and strength of interethnic relations. When members of a community stigmatize speakers who do not have "perfect" language skills, they may lose confidence in using the language and this may discourage practical language use later on (Bilaniuk, 2005). In the following examples, positive and negative experiences of interethnic relationships will be shown, focusing on their linguistic aspects:

a) positive examples (acceptance, encouragement)

06_F_1982 on being asked not to speak Hungarian in public: No, I have never had such an experience. I hear from others that they were approached at the pharmacy, or they were approached at the store, or at the market, thank God I didn't come across such a thing. [18]

14_M_1984 on the relationship with his Ukrainian co-workers: Well, it was difficult, it was very difficult, but I didn't feel any discrimination here, like being told "you are

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[18] The quotes were translated from Hungarian by the author.

Hungarian or you don't know Ukrainian at all". They sometimes made jokes, that I shouldn't say something the way I said it […] But they taught me how to say it say it that way.

 b) negative examples (judgmental behavior, discrimination, stigmatization)
A local entrepreneur on her heated exchange with a man from another village:
06_F_1982: There was only one such occasion, not long ago. When the war started, an older man, I think he was clearly drunk, came in and then started to yell at us why we speak Hungarian […]

05_F_1992: […] for Ukrainians, if someone doesn't know Ukrainian, it's a bit of a pain in the neck, especially if someone doesn't even try to speak. And they treat them in such a condescending way, saying " вона не розуміє" ["he or she doesn't understand that"].

It is worth noting that the acceptance and prevalence of interethnic relationships vary across cultures and societies and the opinion on another ethnicity was slightly different, when it comes to Ukrainians of other settlements, pointing to their different upbringing, temperament, cultural embedding. When it comes to conflicts between the members of two ethnic groups of the settlements, in most cases, they are rooted in personal confrontations, not as issues of ethnicities.

03_F_1951: And it wasn't like they were fighting or hating each other. Maybe when the Hungarian boy wanted to see that girl home, and so did the Ukrainian... So what did the girl do? The two boys handled it between themselves. And the girl… Ran away and left them. Let them fight.

Some of the respondents prefer to look at the bright side of it. For some, even the lack of language skills can have a positive aspect. Humor can be a way for people to bond, lighten tensions, or address sensitive topics. The nature of ethnic humor can vary widely across cultures and is influenced by factors such as history, social dynamics, and prevailing attitudes toward different ethnic groups. Ethnic humor is connected to the histories and the dynamics of societies (Davies, 1990). One of the wittiest responses came

from a local entrepreneur, after being asked if he would mind having a Ukrainian daughter-in-law:

Q: And if you had a Ukrainian daughter-in-law, wouldn't it be a problem?
A: No problem, it's not a problem for us. At least my wife's language skills[19] would not cause a problem this time. There would be less mother-in-law arguments than usual (laughing).

Positive interethnic relationships have the potential to enrich individuals' lives by expanding their horizons, fostering cultural exchange, and challenging societal norms. They can contribute to a more inclusive and interconnected community where diversity is celebrated and valued.

5.1.3 Does bilingualism equal biculturalism?

Biculturalism refers to the coexistence or integration of two distinct cultures within a society or an individual's identity. It typically occurs when people from different cultural backgrounds come into contact and interact with one another, leading to the blending or sharing of cultural practices, beliefs, and values (Grosjean, 2008).

Bicultural individuals or communities often navigate between two cultural identities, adopting elements from both cultures and finding ways to reconcile the differences. This process can manifest in various ways, at a personal (psychological or cultural) and also a cognitive level (language processing, skills). Bilingualism and biculturalism do not necessarily coexist Grosjean (2013). There has been a myth that bicultural bilinguals can adapt their personalities to the changing linguistic environment, but Grosjean (1982) gives a simple explanation for this presupposed phenomenon: bicultural bilinguals have the ability to adapt to the changes in the context and shift their behavior to a more culturally appropriate one.

The co-occurrence of bilingualism and biculturalism could be found in the interviews but only to a certain extent. The respondents tend to navigate towards one culture and its traditions, but we can find elements that occur from the other as well, as they are deeply immersed in each other. The co-existence of two cultures in a single settlement makes interactions between the two inevitable, but in most cases, the two cultures do not merge.

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[19] The wife mentioned in the excerpt does not speak the state language.

Elements occurring from both cultures occur most often when it comes to celebrations and religious practices. These usually can be traced back to the love and respect for a specific family member, relative or friend, and we can witness these more in families with a mixed ethnic or linguistic background. For instance, religious denomination and ethnicity are interconnected in most cases: Hungarians of the village are most likely to be Reformed (a small percent of the Hungarian population follows smaller churches such as Jehova's Witnesses and Presbyterian), and the Ukrainians are usually Orthodox or Greek Catholic. However, if there is someone in a family who is a member of the other church, the most important holidays are celebrated twice[20], and both traditions, may be Eastern or Western Christian, are embraced.

08_M_1963 on the celebrations in the village: […] there was an event for the families, where the children would also appear [on the stage]: the Ukrainian part presented itself at this event in the same way as the Hungarian part.

There are instances where wedding ceremonies are held bilingually, Hungarian and Ukrainian.

Q: And when you held these ceremonies, in what language did you conduct them?
12_F_1982: There were also Hungarian speakers, and there were Ukrainians, and there were mixed ones.
Q: Really? Can you tell me a little bit about it? This is interesting.
12_F_1982: There was a situation where there was... I had a couple where the bride was Ukrainian and the groom was Hungarian. And they couldn't decide how it should be then. Because if I speak Ukrainian, the groom doesn't understand everything from the ceremony, if I speak Hungarian, the bride doesn't. We solved it in such a way that we said the oath first in Ukrainian, then in Hungarian. And when it comes to a poem or quote, there were times when I recited it in Ukrainian, then I recited it in Hungarian. So somehow we worked it out in a way that was comfortable for both parties… So that both of them understand what they are there for, that is, at the ceremony.

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[20] The difference between the dates comes from fact, that Orthodox Christians follow the Julian calendar, while western Christians observe celebrations according to the Gregorian.

Similar experience from the pastor of the Hungarian church:

> 07_M_1990: There were no examples for baptism. But it was for a wedding. Mixed marriage, where one of the parties was Ukrainian and spoke Ukrainian and spoke no Hungarian. And there were also examples of Ukrainian children coming to our events which were held in Hungarian. And not just one child, but several. So they participated in it. There are also the funerals. Usually, when we stand next to a family and this sad thing happens to them, I do the service in Hungarian, but if there is a farewell speech and if there is something written in Ukrainian, then of course it is I read it like that.

5.1.4 Historical, political factors

Figure 1: Relations between codes on historical and political factors
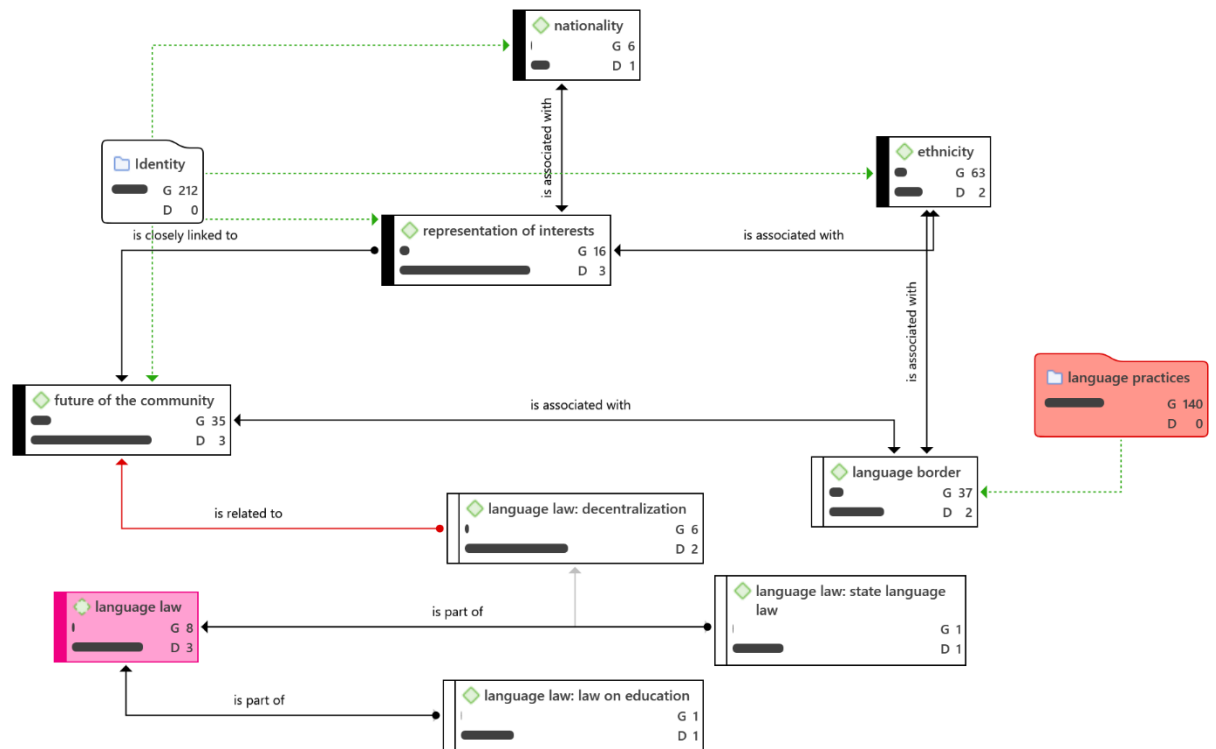
5.1.4.1 Changes in the state language

The older generations in Transcarpathia have experienced several changes in the state language over the past decades (cf. Csernicskó 2013, 2016; Csernicskó et al., 2020). This has affected many people in the country in various ways. When one language loses its role and prestige it takes time and effort to gain proficiency in another. This is especially

hard, when someone is in the middle of their studies, and there is a sudden change in the language of instruction.

13_F_1972: Yes, so there were Hungarian children there, and it was interesting that we also learned Russian there. And then, when I was admitted to the Munkachevo Pedagogical College. There, however, we already studied in Ukrainian. I learned the Ukrainian language there.

5.1.4.2 Military service

Military service significantly contributed to our informants' ability to learn the state language better. In addition, of course, it is also clear from the results of the research that the period of service and the essentially exclusive use of the state language during this time had a serious effect on the language use of the persons concerned, and especially on their vocabulary related to military life. This is because it contains many state language elements that are not known in common language (see Gazdag, 2021).

11_M_1950: Later on in my life, German was nowhere to be found, but I had to use Russian because at the time I was a soldier and I had to speak Russian there too, I was a Soviet soldier.

08_M_1963: We were taught Russian and English at that time, but what I could learn perfectly was Ukrainian and Russian. I was able to learn Russian because I spent two years in the military during the Soviet era and the situation there forced me to learn the language.

10_M_1968: After I finished vocational school, I was sent to Siberia for two years as a soldier, so I spent my two years in Siberia, for my military service. […] In Russian, we spoke without an accent, this was drilled into us in the military. It was already very difficult for us to switch to Ukrainian, but slowly, slowly it happened, but even now there are some difficulties here and there.

5.1.5 Social factors that affect the multilingual system

5.1.5.1 Family language policy

Figure 2: Relations between codes on FLP and the family domain
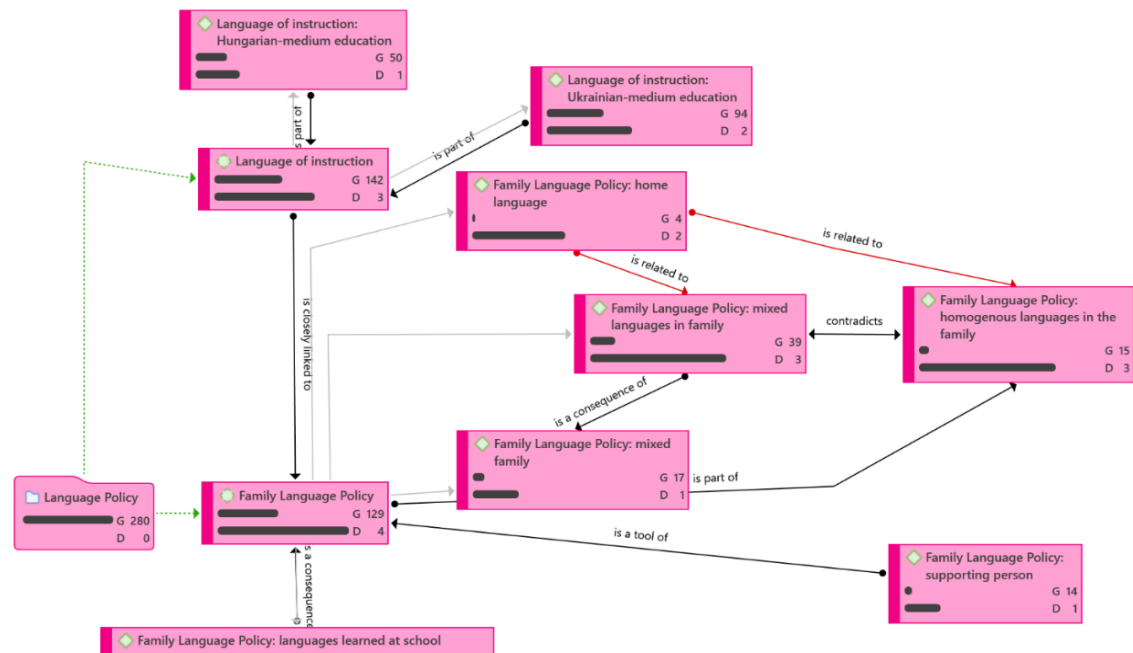
1. The most linguistically skilled family member

An interesting motif that occurred from time to time is establishing so-called 'support systems' within the families: when someone in the family who lacks sufficient knowledge of the state language to navigate a certain situation, e.g. has to visit the doctor, has to go to government customer service, bank, etc. they usually ask for a supporting person to accompany them. This is the member of the family who speaks the state language at the highest level, or the most confident speaker of Hungarian when the situation requires it. In most of the cases I encountered, this was one person in the family and was usually the one who ran all the errands that required the knowledge of a certain language.

> 02_M_1979: […] but she is more skilled in Ukrainian. I'm not really. If I have to do something, she'd rather come with me. I prefer Hungarian, and Slovak is what I know better. I'm not saying that I get lost, I can understand everything, it's just that sometimes I can't put the words together, unlike in Slovak, because it's more difficult.

16_F_1995: If he is at home, he takes such phone calls [in Ukrainian], for example from the bank. When our second child was born, they kept calling, they wanted me to answer, and then I picked the phone up and told the operator to wait a little, I said my husband is nearby.

17_M_1991: […] but on the other hand, I have to go to the doctor's with her, which can be embarrassing for both of us because sometimes I feel like it's not my business to accompany her to certain doctors…

2. TV programs, films, Internet: Who decides what to watch?

In some households, this choice is unequivocal, as there is an obvious preference for the language of the media content the family consumes on a daily basis. However, in those families where multiple languages are used, there has to be an agreement between the members. In the example below, watching the news in both languages is clearly a priority. Making such arrangements gets easier by the fact that Transcarpathian Hungarians usually use the Central European Time, while Ukrainians use the Kyiv Time. In addition, when they follow the news, or TV programs, the timelines usually do not overlap, so both parties can enjoy their preferences (on the different timezones used in Transcarpathia see Csernicskó & Fedinec, 2019).

01_F_1999: At Grandma's, we have agreed that the Ukrainian news is from seven to eight, the Hungarian news from nine to ten, then the Ukrainian news again...

3. When a new family member arrives…

When a new family member arrives, a choice has to be made, which hospital and doctor to choose (this is true for any case where the healthcare system is involved). Usually, two important factors are kept in mind: the professional reputation of the certain doctor or hospital, and the languages they speak (or understand). Due to recent crises in the country (the pandemic and the ongoing war), more families are opting for local hospitals over going abroad (mainly to Hungary), as could be seen in the years before. This leads to the obvious need to use the state language.

16_F_1995: For example, at the hospital, where you have to go when it's just you with the child and my husband isn't there because my husband speaks Ukrainian at a native

level and I don't, then I gather all my knowledge and do my best. […] My second was born here in Mukachevo. I was nervous about the language, but I found a doctor who knows Hungarian, I was also nervous about being inside because you won't always have a doctor who knows Hungarian, but we got over it.

4. How do parents, and grandparents pursue LM with their children?

- They select a family member to communicate with the child in a certain language (or talk to them in two or more languages interchangeably).

12_F_1989: […] There are days when we speak Ukrainian, or if necessary, I sit down with them and I can explain, but a mother who does not understand Ukrainian cannot explain to her child what that means. With my children, I see that those kids who do not study Ukrainian at home with their parents are eminent students, but Ukrainian is more difficult for them, it is like a foreign language.

- By watching cartoons with them in the target language.
- Encouraging them to make friends with their peers who speak the target language.
- They hire a private tutor.

12_F_1989: My older daughter went to a private teacher a lot, maybe for 2-3 summers, to keep up the Ukrainian language. I noticed that it is easier for her to learn Ukrainian than for other children. If she doesn't understand something, I'll explain it to her at home. I'll read it, and if nothing else, I'll explain it in Hungarian if she doesn't understand.

- They choose a kindergarten or school with the specific language of instruction.

Language of instruction and school environment is a recurring theme in the interviews and will be discussed in separate subsections.

5.1.5.2 School environment

One of the most important decisions parents have to make in the initial years of their children's life is to which school should they choose. It can determine crucial factors and endow them with different sets of skills depending on the choice of institution.

If we look at the broader picture, in the Transcarpathian context, the choice of language of instruction has been a topic of interest to many researchers over the years. In her doctoral dissertation, Nánási-Molnár (2015) dealt with the choice of language of instruction at the kindergarten level Transcarpathian parents have to make. Her research reveals that Transcarpathian parents understand and feel the importance of maintaining their mother tongue in addition to the symbolic value it carries. This means that the interviewed parents of Hungarian nationality and/or mother tongue advocate the preservation of Hungarianness. At the same time, all interviewees tried to make their decisions from the point of view of planning and securing the future of their children. The choice of the language of education in kindergarten is influenced by the mother tongue of the parents and the language of elementary or secondary school, as well as the current political situation in Ukraine. The results revealed that with the exception of Ukrainian or Russian native speakers and Ukrainian or Russian school graduates, mixed-language and mixed school-language couples prefer a Ukrainian-language kindergarten or preschool group for their child, compared to parents with Hungarian mother tongue and Hungarian primary education.

On the primary and elementary level, in a 2015 study, Szávayné Séra came to the conclusion that there are symbolic and practical factors that influence the choice of the language of instruction among Transcarpathian Hungarian families. The symbolic motivations for choosing a school are mastering the state language, more success due to the given language, the importance of success in the mother tongue, the importance of Hungarian identity, hidden compensation on the part of the parent. Based on the data, the practical reasons for choosing a school: are the location of the school, the standard of education, following the example of family and friends, decisions based on the personality of the teachers, the school's equipment and opportunities. These factors play a crucial role in choosing a school.

When it comes to the choice of an educational institution, different viewpoints are kept in mind. Some of the parents find it important for their children to attend a Hungarian-medium school in order to preserve their Hungarian identity, or simply find it the easier academic path for their children. Others consider acquiring the state language as important as comprehensive knowledge and believe that this can be fulfilled the best at a school with Ukrainian language of instruction.

5.1.5.3 Mother tongue medium education

For Transcarpathian Hungarians, language is closely tied to one's identity, and mother tongue medium education can play a significant role in shaping and affirming that. It allows students to develop a positive self-image by providing a space where their language, culture, and traditions are respected and celebrated. It can also enhance their self-esteem and motivation to learn, as they see their own identity reflected in the educational context.

Moreover, mother tongue medium education can contribute to improved learning outcomes. Research suggests that students who receive education in their mother tongue perform better academically compared to those who are taught in a language they are less proficient in. They are more likely to stay in school, have higher literacy rates, and develop advanced cognitive skills. Csernicskó and Göncz (2009) highlight the importance of the communicative and cognitive competence of a language learner. They argue that those children who are enrolled in a Ukrainian-medium school without any previous knowledge of the language might lose on their academic performance later, due to having to put so much effort into learning to communicate in the language and not being able to understand even the gist of the material taught at the lessons (this is called the submersion program, Skutnabb-Kangas & Dunbar, 2010). However, it's important to note that mother tongue medium education does not mean exclusion or neglect of other languages. In multilingual societies, there can be a balance between promoting the mother tongue and providing opportunities for learning additional languages.

13_F_1972: Both of my sons graduated from Hungarian schools, but both of my sons know properly... Both of them have a higher education, writing and reading in Ukrainian, even at an advanced level, because they had to take a Ukrainian language exam. […] Those who really want it can learn the language.

5.1.5.4 L2 medium education (anxiety, struggles, success stories)

Students, whose mother tongue is Hungarian may face serious challenges when enrolled in a school with a Ukrainian language of instruction. Some of the participants have witnessed those in their environment, while others have experienced it themselves.

A teacher on the struggles of teaching Hungarian children who switched schools (Ukrainian language of instruction to Hungarian):

13_F_1972: They closed the Ukrainian elementary school, there are only classes 1-4. Most students came here. And you notice it right away… I teach Health Science, and he told me to explain something in Ukrainian because he doesn't understand. I said: "And how can you not understand? " He had never heard such a word before. Well, he doesn't understand what I'm saying in Hungarian.

Later on, she continues explaining, how difficult it can be for Hungarian children in the Ukrainian-medium school:

13_F_1972: I asked him, what did you study there? Well, he said, they just read. And why didn't the teacher explain these to you? […] In the Ukrainian school, the Hungarian children were sat in the back. When we went to attend demonstration classes there, we saw that the Hungarian children were never asked. I feel sorry for this child, right? Now, what kind of thing is that they never speak at the lessons. […] no sense of success at all. […] He's already used to just sitting the whole time, not being asked.

Ukrainian-medium education can be challenging for Hungarian speakers.

05_F_1991: I studied my profession, nursing, in Ukrainian. But we also were speaking Hungarian among ourselves, we only heard Ukrainian when the teachers spoke in Ukrainian. So we didn't practice much there, but when I started working with Ukrainians, I said to my mother, "Mom, why did you send me to Hungarian school, why didn't you send me to Ukrainian, because I don't know this Ukrainian language".

04_M_1991: It was difficult. I copied later what I could not finish on time. I asked for my classmates' notes to take home. There were girls who gave those to me and I copied them at home. I usually took notes until I got confused, and then I was only able to catch every 3rd word. That didn't make much sense.

06_F_1982: I would like to add that while I was going to the Ukrainian school here, I always cried to my mom that I didn't understand a thing, I just couldn't understand Ukrainian, what they were talking about. And that's when I realized, I guess I was in the fifth grade, when I had to do some homework in Mathematics, and our neighbor,

she was a teacher at the Hungarian school, I went over to her and asked for her help. And when she explained it to me in Hungarian, I realized that wow, it's not that difficult. And from that moment, I was crying to my mother to let me go to the Hungarian school. So, when I finished Ukrainian school here, I went to Dercen Secondary School[21].

17_M_1991: After all, I learned to read and write in Ukrainian there and, well, I learned the basic things, but something was missing: friends. And that's why I switched schools.

As could be seen in the examples above, some found Ukrainian-medium education difficult and struggled throughout the whole process. Some of the respondents, however, found an understanding and supporting environment that helped them overcome these difficulties.

Q: And how did you get along with your Ukrainian classmates?
01_F_1999: We got along well, they never explained to us, they never said that "ти мадяри"[22][you are Hungarian] or something like that, we got along well. In fact, there were still a few who asked for example: how do you say „good morning" or "thank you" [in Hungarian]. So we got along pretty well with our classmates. It was not a problem that we speak Hungarian and they speak Ukrainian. We also tried to speak Ukrainian, of course, we said a few things incorrectly, but they understood, so it was all good.

5.1.5.5 After the decentralization

The decentralization reform involved a restructuring of the administrative and territorial divisions in Ukraine. Smaller administrative units were merged into larger ones, aiming to create a more efficient and accountable local government structure (see Chapter 2).

At first, the people of Zhnyatino were skeptical about the decision to join the municipality of Horonda as it is a territorial unit with a Ukrainian majority. However,

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[21] A secondary school in a neighbouring village with Hungarian language of instruction.
[22] The word „мадяр" is often used as a derogatory term towards Hungarians, in this particular context, the interviewee refers to the judgement Hungarians can receive from the majority society for not speaking the state language properly (see Hires-László, 2020).

according to the workers of the local self-government office, the situation has been handled well so far, by both parties.

08_M_1963: The truth is that when this decentralization happened 2.5 years ago, it was like making a fried egg or pancakes for the first time, we never thought how it would turn out. But when we managed to fry that pancake or that egg and see that it was delicious, we looked back on it with such relief. […]

13_F_1972: Even now, I see that even though Zhnyatino joined Horonda... I see that they are accepting us.

5.1.5.6 Social benefit and economic factors

Many of the participants have gained a considerable amount of language skills through their profession. Some professions require more interaction with Ukrainians, and for those who run businesses or work in a public office, the knowledge of the state language is essential.

06_F_1982 on running a local shop: […] people from "Oroszvég" come in, and obviously those speak Ukrainian. And a Hungarian comes in… You know how people are, someone is patient, someone is not, and then they obviously interrupt me, and sometimes I serve them in Hungarian, and then they ask something in Ukrainian, so I obviously answer in Ukrainian, and sometimes I get so confused, even how much change I should give…So for example I'll say it in Ukrainian to a Hungarian person.

17_M_1991 on his job at the State Ecological Inspection: Yes, you have to speak Ukrainian there, but for example, there are many colleagues at the Ukrainian customs who are Hungarian. […] I'm always called to translate for the Hungarians between the two borders, because we also consult with the Hungarian side on weekends about what's new, if there are new regulations that we don't know about, then I even go and translate for the border guards. Even the customs officials ask for it, and then they are happy that I speak Hungarian too […] a little bit of charity work (laughing).

16_F_1995 on working as a hairdresser: There are a lot of Ukrainian clients as well, and I'm really not ashamed to say what I know, and sometimes they correct me, but

we understand each other. […] I can't speak Ukrainian that much, but I try to communicate with them the best I can.

5.1.5.7 Seasonal commuting, migration

Seasonal commuting has been an ongoing phenomenon for residents of Zhnyatino for the last few decades. Even before the economic difficulties of the early 90s, or the more recent crises due to the Russian-Ukrainian conflict, Zhnyatino was one of those Transcarpathian settlements where working abroad and commuting between one's homeland and a foreign country was not an unusual phenomenon. During the Soviet era and in the first years of independent Ukraine, people of the village usually chose a seasonal job (mainly related to agriculture) in one of the republics of the SU (the most popular destinations were Lithuania and Latvia) or the capital itself, Moscow. Hence the term "moszkvázás" which refers to working in the Russian capital.

03_F_1951: I've been to Russia six times as well, hoeing carrots. I was also a cook, cooking for twenty people. […] That job was disastrous. We started at six o'clock and we were pouring sweat, there was no such thing as taking out my handkerchief and wiping myself [referring to the intense workload]. […] It was worse than hoeing.

08_M_1963: I went to the Baltics for 1 year when I was demobilized, then I worked in Latvia for 2 years. 2 years? Yes. Well, there were also Latvians, but most of them were Russian-speaking, Russian was the common language in Latvia.

Since the early 2000s, the direction has shifted from the east to the western territories of Europe. Migration to Central and Western European countries has also been a significant demographic trend in recent decades. There are several factors that have contributed to this migration pattern of Transcarpahians:

Economic factors: Western European countries offered higher wages, better job prospects, and more developed economies, attracting migrants seeking better economic prospects.

Freedom of movement: The enlargement of the European Union (EU) in 2004 and subsequent expansions granted citizens of Eastern European countries the right to free movement within the EU. This facilitated migration as individuals from Eastern European

countries could legally seek employment and settle in Western European countries without significant restrictions (Hires-László, 2020 a,b).

Political stability: Political and social challenges still persist in Ukraine, and limited social opportunities have prompted some individuals to seek better life conditions in one of the EU countries (see Molnár & Molnár, 2018).

Education: Migration to Western Europe is also influenced by educational and professional opportunities.

Family and social networks: Family reunification and social networks play a significant role in migration. Once a few individuals from a particular community establish themselves in a Western European country, they may attract family members, friends, or acquaintances to join them, creating networks that facilitate the migration process (Ferenc & Kovály eds., 2020:16).

As the saying goes, one swallow does not make a summer. However, hundreds of them certainly do. The rapid demographic changes that are ongoing at the moment, due to the Russian invasion are a concerning factor for those who have chosen to stay. However, long-term conclusions cannot be drawn, the participants unanimously stated, that the future of the Hungarian community relies on two factors: top-down decisions that enable them to use their language at different platforms, and the willingness of the community to keep on preserving their language, culture, and identity, with the help of the local advocacy organizations and churches. However, at the moment, more and more families choose to seek a safer, more reliable life abroad.

10_M_1968: The problem here is with the war, because those families, especially young men, who went abroad to work, can't even come home because of it. Those who can't see their families for a year or six months should be reunited with their wives. So what do they do? They buy houses and apartments there. Then their wife goes there if they have a little one, they take the child with them, and they look for a job. People are trying to go abroad and find a living. I think there are 27-28 families like this from Zhnyatino.

14_M_1984: The youngsters have already left. There is no youth, which means that there will not be many of us left. I say that whoever stays will be stronger, they will use Hungarian. I don't think we'll be so completely washed out.

Q: And what can those who think they are staying here do? What can we do to preserve what remains?

14_M_1984: Well, to speak Hungarian, that's the most we can do. We should use it for as long as possible, in as many places as possible.

An interesting discovery that I was able to make during the years I have spent in the settlement, which was also confirmed during fieldwork, was the fact that people of Zhnyatino continue to navigate towards each other, even abroad. There is a little town in southwestern Germany that has been a new home for former residents of the village for a little over a decade. This trend began out of practical reasons: family members, and acquaintances who first moved there and found new opportunities helped each other out in the unknown, and later on, when more people sought for better quality of life abroad, they reached out to those who already had an established life there. This small community consists of a few dozen people, who frequently see each other, especially during holidays. They attend church events in the Hungarian church of Heidelberg, which is a couple of kilometers away from the town. The locals jokingly call it "Kis Izsnyéte" ("Small Zhnyatino").

5.2 Individual factors of language maintenance

In the second part of the Chapter, the individual, non-social factors of language maintenance will be introduced. For the presentation and the analysis of the relevant data, Herdina and Jessner's Dynamic Model of Multilingualism will be used as the main theoretical framework.

5.2.1 The linguistic repertoires of the interviewees

The survey has shown that the linguistic repertoire of the interviewees typically includes the following elements (not necessarily in this particular order):

a) a native language and local related dialect, variety, which is in this case also a minority language in the country

b) the state language, which (in most cases) acts as the second language of the speaker

c) a local dialect of the aforementioned language

d) a language that used to function as a *lingua franca* in the previous state formation and is widely spoken to date (especially among older generations)

e) foreign language(s) learned at school

f) langues(s) learned due to personal reasons (occupation, migration, personal interests, etc.)

These repertoires consist of different components for every respondent, and there are various descriptions of similar elements.

5.2.2 Thoughts on mother tongue (L1)

For most of the participants, defining their mother tongue or L1 turned out to be an easy task. Skutnabb-Kangas defined certain criteria to explain what languages can play the role of the mother tongue in a person's life, whether it's the language that one learned first, the language that is closely linked to someone's identity of the language that one is most proficient in.

However, this was not always the case. Those who were born and raised in mixed families or had extensive contact with more than one language found the definition ambiguous and more complicated, having multiple mother tongues or not being able to identify them (on the different possible definitions of 'mother tongue', see Kontra, 2021).

05_F_1991: I have claimed this for quite some time, that I am a Ukrainian-Hungarian, a Transcarpathian Hungarian, a Hungarian living in Ukraine. That my mother tongue is Hungarian, but I don't want to completely neglect or ignore Ukrainian either.

Another definition of mother tongue from a participant:

06_F_1982: Well, honestly speaking, I don't have two mother tongues, because my native language is Hungarian after all. Well, I don't even know how to put this into words, honestly... However, I mostly studied in Ukrainian, and Ukrainian is so close to me […] For me, Ukrainian is closer to my heart than, for example, English.

Table 5: Short definitions of mother tongue (Source: Skutnabb-Kangas 1984:18)

Criterion	Definition
ORIGIN	the language one learned first
IDENTIFICATION a. internal b. external	a. the language one identifies with b. the language one is identified as a native speaker of by others
COMPETENCE	the language one knows best
FUNCTION	the language one uses most

5.2.3 Views on regional varieties

There are ten main dialect regions in the Hungarian language, Transcarpathia is part of the Northeastern region (Deme & Imre eds., 1968-1977). We can encounter the use of dialects anywhere and at any time. Not only in a minority environment but also in Hungary (Kiss, 2017).

According to Csernicskó, due to everyday use, loanwords are the result of habit. These are words that people living in a bilingual language community use every day at work, shopping, and communicating with their neighbors. The speaker knows the standard Hungarian equivalent of these, but since they are rarely used in real, everyday conversations, they have been transferred to the passive vocabulary (Csernicskó, 1996). The representatives of the nationalities living in the area have been in daily contact for centuries, and are still in contact today, that is, bilingualism is considered a natural phenomenon. A significant part of the study of Hungarian-Ukrainian and Ukrainian-

Hungarian linguistic relations is the study of the Hungarianisms native to the Transcarpathian Ukrainian dialects. The Slavic linguistic influence on the Transcarpathian Hungarian dialects also affects all levels of language use (Gazdag, 2013).

Figure 3: Most common borrowings of Slavic origin used in the interviews

Throughout the interviews, participants consciously pointed out differences between local dialects of Hungarian, especially in those cases, when the respondents moved into the settlement later on in their life, it enabled them to identify how the Zhnyatino local dialect differs from theirs. All in all, local dialects of Hungarian are mutually intelligible for all speakers, despite the lexical or phonetic differences (cf. Bartha, 1998).

07_M_1990: The language of my native village is different from the average and standard expected things. But obviously, this is just a matter of landscape. In Hungary, I didn't notice such a big difference when I went there from Transcarpathia, maybe there were one or two words that were ours, what we might call "Pozakarpatsky" here, but otherwise there was no problem, so there was no interruption neither for me nor for anyone else, that we use the language there in the same way as it is appropriate.

In a 2017 study, Csernicskó mentions the peculiarities of the Transcarpathian Ukrainian dialect. The author cites the Lonely Planet website, which promotes tourist routes, and describes Transcarpathia as "a melting pot of Hungarian, Slovak, Ukrainian and Roma cultures and has a fascinating social mix. It's also the home of Ukraine's best

red wines and most impenetrable dialects (locals claim to speak Transcarpathian)"[23]. These "impenetrable" dialects, which many call "po-zakarpatsky" (which refers to speaking in "Transcarpathian language"), according to the official Ukrainian academic position, are local, regional dialects of the Ukrainian language. Others, on the other hand, believe that these are regional variants of the Ruthenian language separate from Ukrainian. Without taking a position on this non-linguistic issue, it can be stated as a fact that these specific language varieties, significantly different from the Ukrainian codified standard language (literary and colloquial language), have become a tourism brand of Transcarpathia and an economically convertible resource (Csernicskó, 2017).

There were some interesting opinions on the local dialects of the Ukrainian language. The following quotes prove, how (mentally) separated are Ukrainian dialects from the standard in the verbal repertoire for some of the participants. Some of them even called it a separate language and this is how they viewed them in the interviews as well.

04_M_1991: Yes, we spoke to the students outside in Ukrainian, that is, we thought we were speaking Ukrainian because we understood each other. Well, when the teacher explained something in "normal"[24] Ukrainian. There were words, even the Ukrainians didn't understand them…

08_M_1963: Well, this Transcarpathian Ukrainian is very much a language of its own, after all, many nationalities lived here, Czechs, Hungarians, Ukrainians, and Russian mixed up, so this is a Transcarpathian language that is difficult to learn, only the people here understand it.

12_F_1989: I think we definitely talk "in Transcarpathian" even in the office, even more so at home, just starting from the fact that when the refugees came to us, from Kyiv, Kharkiv, other regions, and we talked to them, and I noticed that they looked at me as if they don't understand that what said. I tried to "Ukrainianize" my speech, I spoke to these people very mindfully, because they did not understand every word that we said to them in Transcarpathian.

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[23] www.lonelyplanet.com

[24] The participant refers to the standard language here.

5.2.4 Dynamic processes and language systems

According to DMM, multilingualism is a dynamic and complex process that involves the interaction of various factors that interact with each other in complex ways, and they can either promote or hinder the development and maintenance of multilingualism.

The DMM proposes multilingual growth or development that involves a general language effort (GLE) that represents the total cognitive and linguistic resources available to an individual for language processing and production as well as perceived needs and motivations. GLE encompasses all the languages, dialects, and language varieties that a person has acquired and can use for communication. GLE relates to the amount of effort individuals are willing to expend in order to learn a language (Language Acquisition Effort, LAE) and to the amount of effort they invest in the maintenance of their languages (Language Maintenance Effort, LME) (Herdina & Jessner, 2002; Hofer, 2021).

The rationale behind the choice of this model as the theoretical framework for the analysis of individual aspects of multilingualism and language maintenance is that it lets us explore the internal and external variables as part of the system. When studying the development and maintenance of multiple language systems, several different linguistic, cognitive, environmental, social, historical factors should be acknowledged and kept in mind.

5.2.4.1 Examples of conscious maintenance effort

Language courses, language learning apps. However, there were not many examples of instructed language learning outside of the school domain, some of the participants mentioned attending courses throughout their life.

> 17_M_1991: I was on a language course at the college in Berehove, I guess in 2015. I don't remember exactly. It was a 6-month language course. […] And that was when I started working. […] I didn't know many technical terms in Ukrainian and I wanted to learn them too, because if I'm in a [Ukrainian] community and I don't understand a few words, it's a bit of a shame.

Utilizing media for language maintenance. Using media for language learning and maintenance can be an effective and engaging approach to develop and maintain language skills. Here are some ways the participants utilized media for language maintenance:

- *Watching TV shows, and movies.* One would expect that watching content in the target language exposes learners to authentic language use, vocabulary, and cultural nuances, and makes it an excellent tool for language learning. However, most of the participants chose to use their L1 for such purposes. The explanation is simple: they mostly consume content for recreational purposes and find watching films in a language that they are not comfortable with tiring and energy-consuming.

16_F_1995: The day before yesterday I watched a movie, for the first time since I gave birth, my little girl is 7 months old, it was really good, I recharged myself because I had a very hard day that day, I think we both had a hard day, so I only watched an hour of it, because she refused to sleep longer, but I recharged myself… So of course, I watched a Hungarian film, not a Ukrainian one.

- *Listening to podcasts and radio programs.*

04_M_1991: Radio, but only in Ukrainian.
Q: Only Ukrainian?
04_M_1991: Just for the music. I love Ukrainian music.
Q: Zakarpattia FM[25]?
04_M_1991: Yes or Svit FM. I listen to these. For example, I also like Pulzus[26], but I don't listen to it because everything is repeated twice and it bothers me. Both in Ukrainian and Hungarian. I've already heard it in Hungarian, I don't bother listening to the same in Ukrainian.

- *Using language learning apps and platforms*: Many language learning apps and platforms provide access to audio and video content specifically tailored for language learners. These resources often include interactive exercises, quizzes, and explanations to enhance understanding and practice.
- *Social media and language exchange platforms:* Engaging with native speakers or other learners.

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[25] A regional radio station (Ukrainian).
[26] A Hungarian-Ukrainian bilingual radio station in Transcarpathia.

06_F_1982: In Hungarian, because I chat with my friends and family in Hungarian, but on the other hand, if I'm doing bookkeeping, or I've done bookkeeping in the store, or I need to write something down, I can immediately switch to Ukrainian.

05_F_1991 on her son learning English from friends online: He is talking, I can hear that there are about five of them and they are talking (in English). I don't know what it is, what kind of application. But anyway, I already made him delete it because some of them spoke bad words, so now he doesn't have the app. There were times when I even recorded him on video because if I hadn't heard him, I wouldn't have believed that he spoke English.

5.2.4.2 Exposure to languages: a crucial factor of language maintenance

Language exposure refers to the act of being in contact with a language, hearing and seeing it being used in various contexts. It plays a crucial role in language acquisition and development, of a second or foreign language. In Herdina and Jessner's words (Herdina & Jessner 2002:99), language maintenance effort consists of:

(1) language use factor, that is, activation of parts of the linguistic system for communicative purposes resulting in a renewal of parts of the subsystem, and of

(2) linguistic hypotheses verification or corroboration factor, that is the renewal of parts of the speaker's (explicit knowledge of a) linguistic subsystem by means of verification of hypotheses concerning the language system.

The authors also find it important to note that the processes of language learning and gradual language loss take place in a concrete sociolinguistic and economic environment, which forces the individual to comply with the principle of economy of effort (or least effort). Spending time in a community of speakers is a crucial factor for maintaining language systems, as we could also see in previous instances.

Some examples of conscious exposure to a language after spending time away from the language environment.

12_F_1989: Well, when I went to work, I had to read a lot in the first place, I mean knowing the laws is important, and then it helped a little to increase my vocabulary in Ukrainian.

15_F_1990 on going back to work after her pregnancies: Usually, when it's getting close to having to go to work, I usually call one or two [Ukrainian] friends or colleagues. It doesn't hurt to practice though.

10_M_1968 on his time spent in the military: There was no problem with [forgetting] the Hungarian language because I wrote 10-15 letters a week to my family, friends, girlfriend, etc. I wrote the letter every week in Hungarian. […] But it wasn't a problem for me, as they once said, there was such a joke that a man went and then served in Russia, and when he came home, he didn't want to speak Hungarian until he stepped on the rake. When he hit himself on the head, he said something nasty, and his father said: "Well, son, at least now you remember how to speak Hungarian! "

5.2.4.3 Language attrition and loss: common examples

According to Hyltenstam and Stroud (1996): "The notion of language maintenance is meaningful only in relation to its sister concept of language loss". The most common case of "forgetting" languages was mentioned when it came to school learned foreign languages (English and German in some cases). It is usually taken for granted that a foreign language will be forgotten once it is no longer used or studied, regardless of whether it is a school/university-acquired language or a language learned abroad. Empirical findings, however, have so far failed to validate this assumption of the inevitability of language attrition. Some studies suggest individual variation in the susceptibility to foreign language attrition, although it is not yet clear what factors cause or contribute to linguistic resilience (Schmid & Mehotcheva, 2012). The authors assessed the most important findings on the process of the attrition of foreign languages:

- productive skills are lost more easily than receptive
- time alone is not the main factor of attrition
- attrition is not linear
- initial proficiency might be a predictor.

However, self-evaluation is not the most reliable way of examining language attrition, the subjective feeling of loss in itself may be considered an early sign of attrition (Jessner et al., 2020).

In most of the cases, the participants' initial proficiency in school-learned foreign languages was relatively low, most lacking productive (communicative) skills in those

languages. Some of the participants talk about being discouraged by the negative experiences of learning languages at school.

> 18_F_1993: Because when I went to school, I had a teacher who demanded that knowledge, but when I was in my last year of college, we had a teacher who didn't expect anything, so I just did not want to study it anymore.

The other factor is the overall lack of language input and exposure. Most of the participants never had the opportunity or even the need to use the foreign languages that they studied at school.

> 11_M_1950: Later on in my life, German was nowhere to be needed, but I had to use Russian because at the time I was a soldier and I had to speak Russian there too, I was a Soviet soldier.

> 10_M_1968: I liked the English language, the teacher also said at the time that I was good at English, but you know how it goes, boys will be boys, right? So the teacher always told me that "you could, you just don't want to learn". Then the time passed. […] Don't know if I would need it, but anyway I really regret that I didn't learn it.

5.3 Linguistic diversity of Zhnyatino: a visual representation

5.3.1 Introduction

The aim of the thesis was to demonstrate how multilingualism can look like for people who are also members of a multilingual community. The analysis was carried out at two levels: community and individual, with a stronger emphasis on the latter. To complete the missing puzzle and to supplement my conclusions, I would like to finish presenting the results of the thesis with a visual characterization of the languages spoken in Zhnyatino.

The use of different mapping techniques is not new to the linguistic toolbox. Language maps, mental maps, perception maps have been used in the recent decades for different purposes. For instance, studies in anthropology have used mental maps to gain information on the spatial representation of different sites through people's perception; perception maps were used in dialectology and folk linguistics to map the distribution of different dialects to demonstrate language variation or change. Different language maps serve different purposes in linguistic studies.

The following part of the visual demonstration of the multilingualism of Zhnyatino was inspired by a 2021 survey[27] that aimed to demonstrate the colorful language map of New York City (see Perlin et al., 2021). The aim of the researchers was to gain visibility to smaller and minority languages spoken in the city because census data focuses on the most commonly spoken languages. The researchers also found it important to measure the speakerhood of certain languages. Census data do not give us a clear picture of the distribution and appearance of the languages, smaller or minority languages and certain dialects are often ignored or omitted completely. In language documentation there has been a tradition of focusing on rural and village settings, usually focused on larger languages. However, recently, numerous researchers have explored the multilingualism, 'superdiversity' and linguistic landscapes of different settlements.

5.3.2 Mapping techniques used in linguistics and interdisciplinary studies

Few areas of academic interest have been born in such an interdisciplinary environment as mental mapping. From the 1960s onwards, the examination and the consciousness about space appeared around the same time in the field of geography, psychology,

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[27] Available online at http://languagemap.nyc

linguistics and social sciences, primarily in the field of cultural anthropology, mutually influencing each other (Letenyei, 2004). Within cultural anthropology - the academic classification of which is also fragmented - mental mapping, or the way of using mental maps, can be understood as a method. Anthropology successfully uses methods that result in qualitative data and information. (Dobák, 2020)

These maps can show the most basic characteristics of a location, conditions, and connections included. Conditions are the characteristics that define a place and connections allow an understanding of how this place is connected to others (Castellar & Juliasz, 2018).

The extent of the mental spaces is mostly uncertain: it is typical that they are one at a time the interviewees can only name the characteristic places and main points of a neighborhood or part of a city, but their boundaries are blurred, they merge with the next mental space or a "white spot" unknown to the interviewee. In some cases, however, the border is clear and unmistakable: such clear boundaries are called fault lines (Letenyei, 2004).

Tversky (1993) established three main groups of mental mapping, in addition to cognitive maps, cognitive collages, and spatial mental models. According to Letenyei (2004: 164), the most common data collection techniques of mental mapping are:

- purely quantitative data collection;

- purely qualitative, non-drawing data collection and processing;

– data recordings based on free map drawing;

- standardized map drawing;

– data acquisitions starting from ready-made (spatial) images.

Perceptual mapping is a tool that is often used in folk linguistics, which is the study of folk beliefs about language and studies various aspects of language, including regional variation through which we can achieve a deeper understanding of how people believe that language varies and why (see Williams et al., 1996; Montgomery & Stoeckle, 2013).

According to Preston (1993: 252):

> Without knowledge of the value-ridden classifications of language and language status and function by the folk, without knowledge of where the folk believe differences exist, without knowledge of where they are capable of hearing major and minor differences, and, most importantly, without knowledge of how the folk bring their beliefs about language to bear on their solutions to linguistic problems, the study of language attitudes risks being:
> 1) a venture into the investigation of academic distinctions which distort the folk reality or tell only a partial truth or, worse,

2) a misadventure into the study of theatrically exaggerated speech caricatures.

An analysis of the metalanguage of nonlinguists allows us, for example, to draw parallels between a folk structure of language on the one hand, and structures outlined by a professional linguist on the other. It also provides insight into what fields of knowledge other than linguistics the informants consider relevant when talking about language (Vardøy, 2021). Hoenigswald (1966) claimed that we should be interested not only in what goes on (language), but also in how speakers see it.

Thus, the inclusion of folk beliefs in linguistic studies can offer important insights into the realities of language variation and change. The work of perceptual dialectology offers the ability to make larger connections between how language is actually produced and how nonlinguists perceive it. It also attends to the level of impact linguistic beliefs have on an individual's performance of language (i.e., is the speaker likely to avoid certain linguistic behaviors because of the social stigma they perceive to be connected with such behaviors?). Additionally, the knowledge gained in studies of linguistic perceptions can inform policies developed by educators and politicians, so as to make such policies account for the attitudes of the speakers to whom the policies apply (Cramer, 2016).

5.3.3 A language map of Zhnyatino

A language map is a visual representation of the distribution of different languages spoken in a particular area. It can help us understand the linguistic diversity of a territory and how different languages are distributed geographically. A language map can be created using different techniques, such as GIS (geographic information system) mapping, data visualization tools, or hand-drawn illustrations.

The main goals of creating the map were the following:
- to visibly demonstrate the languages spoken at different households of the settlement;
- to visualize the quasi language border and the separation of the two parts of the village ("Magyarvég"and "Oroszvég");
- to show where the two languages separate from each other (if they do);

Picture 8: Zhnyatino from a bird's eye view according to Google Maps

The map itself was created with the help QGIS software. For the bird's eye view photos, Google Maps was used, as taking photos with a drone is currently prohibited in the country due to the state of war.

A semi-structured map is a type of map that combines both structured and unstructured elements. It is a graphical representation that provides a framework or a set of guidelines while allowing customization. Semi-structured maps offer a more adaptable and dynamic approach.

In a semi-structured map, certain components or sections are defined and organized, providing a structured framework. However, within each component, there is room for additional information.

The creation of the language map was one of the main goals of the expert interviews. The most important viewpoint in choosing the experts was a deep and thorough knowledge of the population of the settlement. As I have been living there for 7 years, I gained a considerable amount of knowledge of the people I usually meet or work with, as well as my neighborhood. But the experts I chose were able to identify most of the families, and the languages spoken at a certain household without a doubt. 659 buildings were drawn on the map, including residential buildings and buildings for orientation (schools, churches, etc.).

**Map 3:** A semi-structured language map of Zhnyatino
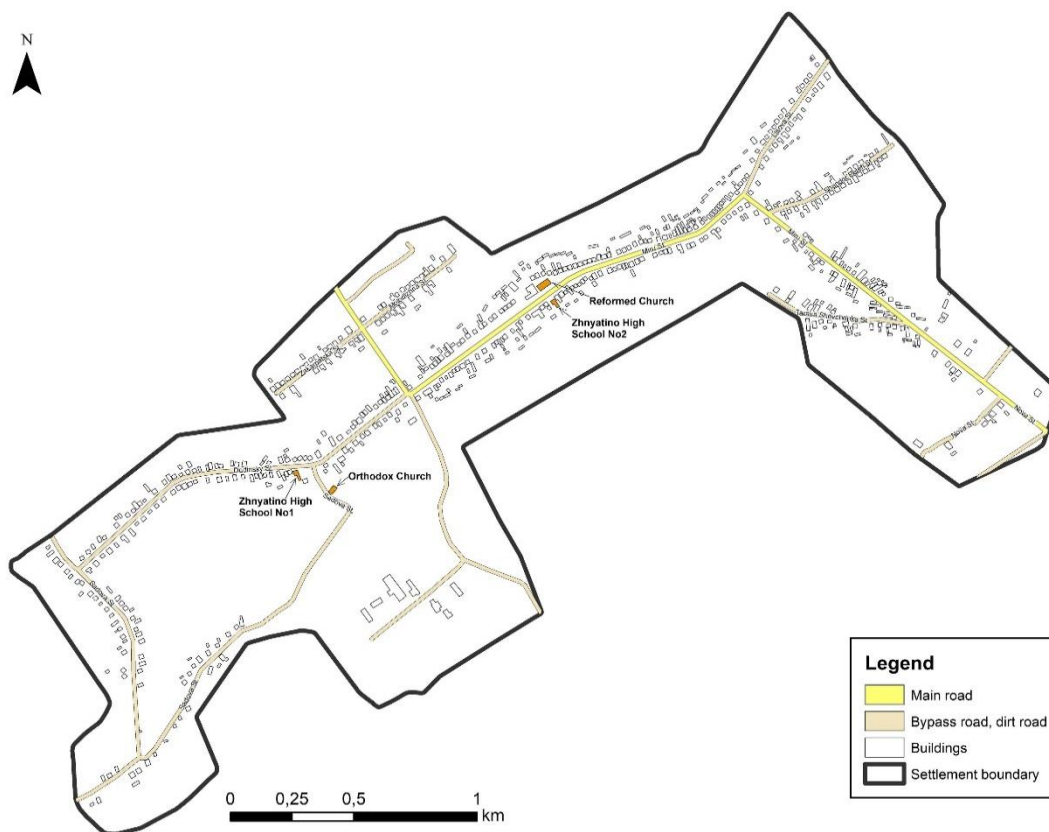
In order to create the map, I asked each expert to color the semi-structured map according to a previously set color-code. Green meant households where Hungarian is spoken exclusively. Yellow meant Ukrainian spoken in a household, and blue meant a mixed family where both languages are used. The interviewees were also asked to identify where "Magyarvég" ends and "Oroszvég" begins with a thick red line. The drawings were digitized and a concluding map was made out of the five maps. The color coding was changed when the digital maps were drawn for visual purposes: higher contrast, and better visibility (for examples of the original, hand-drawn maps, see Appendix 2).

The respondents gave relatively similar answers with small differences, the task was to decide, how to arrange them on the final map. Some of the markings were not obvious, and some of the respondents omitted buildings that they could not identify. Many of those buildings are empty at the moment or soon to be sold. For these purposes, two new code categories were introduced: no data or not a residential building, and contradictory data.

The map that was created should not be taken as an exact database, but as a visual representation of the languages spoken in the village. It could also be called a map of

home languages, as the main focus was on mapping the languages spoken in different households of the settlement.

Map 4: The language map of Zhnyatino
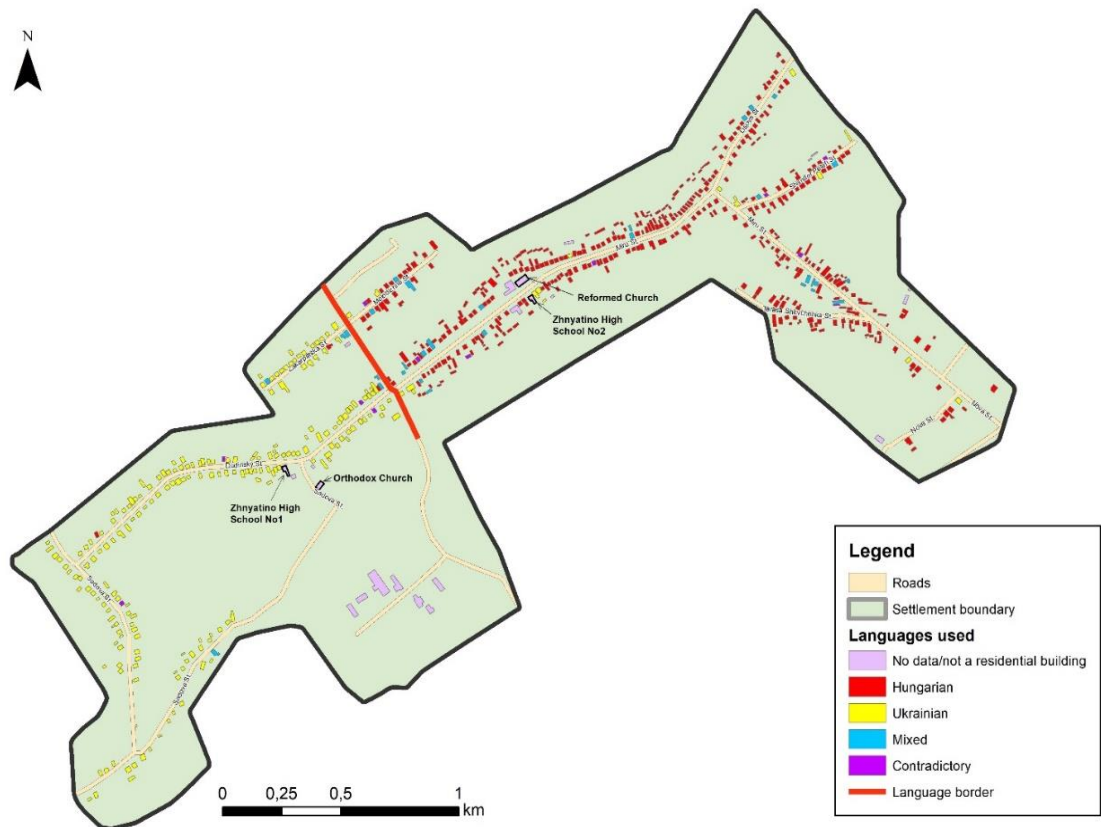
The map clearly shows how the two areas separate from each other, not only ethnically (hence the names "Magyarvég" and "Oroszvég"), but linguistically. The Hungarian part of the settlement is the more linguistically diverse one. We can see several households where Ukrainian is spoken besides Hungarian. The number of Ukrainian-speaking households is relatively low. Even fewer Hungarian-speaking households can be found in the mainly Ukrainian-speaking area of the village, and the number of mixed-language households is also low. The map shows that "Oroszvég" is the more linguistically homogenous part of Zhnyatino. Most of the Hungarians chose to live or move there for practical reasons: their family inherited the house or they could buy one there for a more reasonable price than the ones that were for sale closer to the center of the village. The diversity of "Magyarvég" mainly comes from mixed marriages: not only from younger families but the several multigenerational households, where the older generations speak

Ukrainian and the younger members of the family were raised bilingually or acquired the Ukrainian language later in their life due to their environment or thanks to the effort of the parents or grandparents.

Chapter 6. Discussion and Conclusion

6.1 Sustaining multilingualism

The theoretical starting point of the thesis was that although individual and societal multilingualism can occur without one another, they are deeply embedded in each other (Fishman, 1967; Romaine, 2012). The role of the individual in a community of speakers is indisputable. Different factors, such as top-down decisions in language policy, historical events and changes, economic challenges constantly affect the individual's choices when it comes to language use. Whether a community is able to preserve its language and identity largely depends on the decisions of its individuals. In Zhnyatino, we are able to witness the result of a long-term coexistence and support of multiple languages on a societal level. Hungarians of the community, despite being a relative majority in the settlement, are an ethnic minority in the country. As I have referred to in the previous chapters of the thesis, due to the political crises of the last eight years and the ongoing Russian aggression, minorities in Ukraine have been facing serious challenges recently. Researchers and advocacy organizations have argued several times, that multilingualism is a value despite being a challenge when it comes to language planning or policies (see Csernicskó & Máté, 2017).

My initial questions in the beginning were the following:

How do the different historical, political, social, and economic changes on the macro level reflect on the language use of a small community?

Despite all the odds, how were different members of this community able to preserve their bilingual state?

Looking at different life stories, what does individual multilingualism look like in a bilingual community?

One of the common experiences I came across while conducting the research was that in the past decades in Transcarpathia, nothing seemed to be permanent. This was faithfully reflected in the life stories of the participants, because no two life paths were the same, not only due to the general truth that everyone represents a special, unique individual but also, due to the different life experiences, which were greatly influenced by historical, political and economic changes. What does language maintenance look like on an individual level? In the previous Chapter, I aimed to pick out the stories that are excellent examples of how many different methods are used by different people, and we

don't necessarily have to think only of the knowledge gained in the classroom. However, there is hardly any proven recipe for preserving the languages we own, not only on an individual level but also on a community level. Researchers from time to time, after making their own conclusions and observations, aim to understand the whys of language maintenance and language shift.

One of the examples I would like to highlight in this analysis is Borbély's (2014) longitudinal study of language shift amongst the Hungarians and Romanians of Kétegyháza (Hungary), which employed a "sustainable bilingualism model" that refers to the long-term maintenance of the bilingual situation of a community of speakers. While developing the model, the author had previously studied several bilingual communities throughout Hungary. In her model, the codes Lx and Ly were applied to different pairs of languages and their varieties, which are denoted as a + b (based on the coding system previously used by Hamers & Blanc, 1989).
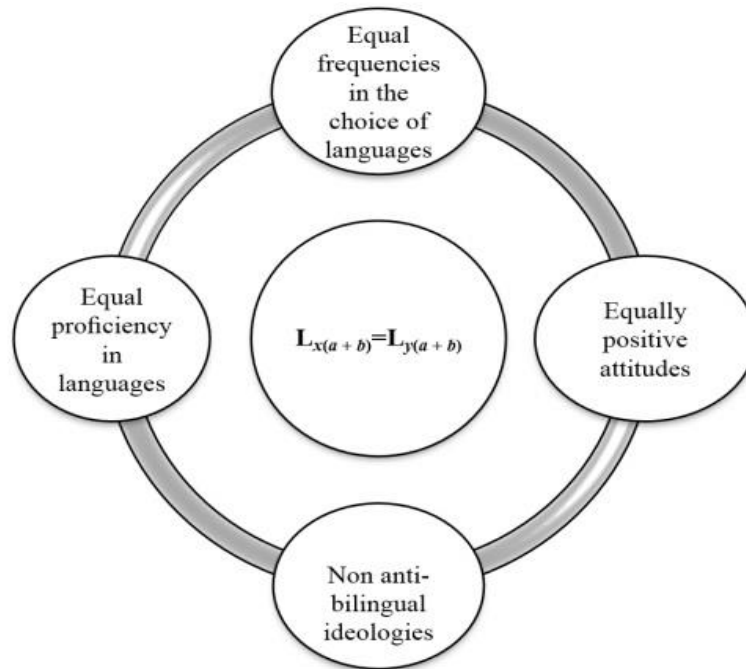
In the author's own words:

> Sustainable bilingualism is the type of bilingualism which demonstrates that it is not simply a long-term stationary phenomenon involving two languages, but rather a diverse, continuously and dynamically changing process in which Language A or Language B prevails and which can occur only under specific circumstances before the completion of the language shift both at an individual and a community level. (Borbély, 2016:29).

Borbély's SBM applies only to *linguistic aspects*, social and community aspects are not included. The linguistic aspects of the model are the following:

1. The frequency of the use of languages and their local varieties is sustainable among generations and in different situations of language use and language choice.

2. The proficiency of languages is in correlation with the sustainable and frequent use of languages (and their varieties).

3. The attitudes are positive towards these languages.

4. Ideologies protect the use, fluency and attitudes bilingualism.

Figure 4: Borbély's SBM model

$$L_{x(a+b)} = L_{y(a+b)}$$

(Figure contains: "Equal frequencies in the choice of languages", "Equal proficiency in languages", "Equally positive attitudes", "Non anti-bilingual ideologies")

Source: Borbély, 2014

"Intense pressure from a dominant group most often leads to bilingualism among subordinate groups who speak other languages, and this asymmetrical bilingualism very often results, sooner or later, in language shift." (Thompson, 2001:9).

As my study has mainly focused on the social, community, and individual aspects of multilingualism, with a special emphasis on their impact on the multilingual speaker, taking this previously constructed model as an example, specific aspects have to be applied. To conclude the several examples of the elements that promoted or considered to promote language maintenance for the speakers I have interviewed, that have been aligned in the previous chapters, I reorganized and merged them into larger topics.

These are the main themes that emerged from the life stories of the participants.

6.1.1 Linguistic and ethnic diversity

When a community recognizes and values the diversity of languages, both minority and majority, within a community or region, they acknowledge that languages are an integral part of a community's cultural heritage and identity. In addition, positive interethnic relationships and understanding each other's culture, habits, and last but not least,

language, enables the speakers to gain a knowledge that goes deeper than what could be ever thought in the classroom. Taking examples from the life stories of the participants, a pattern that seemed to emerge is that the diversity of this community lies in a co-existence of languages and ethnicities without mixing or blending in with each other. Hybridity, which is natural in e. g. some urban contact settings cannot be necessarily applied to this small, rural setting.

Engaging with one's community, maintaining relationships inside and outside the family, and being in constant contact with speakers of different languages may facilitate the sustainability of multilingualism.

6.1.2 Education

Education plays a crucial role in sustaining multilingualism. It should involve providing quality education in multiple languages, ensuring that individuals have access to education in their mother tongue while acquiring proficiency in the dominant or official language(s). We were able to witness different strategies that the participants used to correct the flaws of the minority education system. Implementing minority language medium education can present challenges. Adequate resources, including qualified teachers, appropriate curriculum materials, and supportive policies, are essential for its successful implementation. Language planning and community involvement are crucial to ensure sustainable support and commitment from all stakeholders. Additionally, balancing the need for minority language education with proficiency in the dominant language(s) is important to facilitate communication and opportunities beyond the immediate community. The deficiencies in the education of the state language present many parents with a difficult decision: should they choose a Hungarian-language school, where the child can study in their mother tongue, or should they choose an institution teaching in the majority language in the hope of more effectively learning the state language?

Transcarpathian academics have conducted various studies on the quality of language-education in the Hungarian-medium schools of the region (see Csernicskó 2015, Beregszászi & Csernicskó 2017, Huszti 2017, Máté 2017, Huszti 2020). However, we have to note that it is getting progressively harder to imply the results of these surveys in the constant crises that the country has to face, and the recent changes in the language policy of the state.

According to public opinion, young people in Transcarpathia do not speak Ukrainian well, but they do speak English. Surveys conducted by Transcarpathian researchers at the end of the 2000s already pointed out that this statement does not necessarily reflect reality (cf. Huszti et al., 2009). A large-scale research took place in 2006 organized by the researchers of Ferenc Rákóczi II Transcarpathian Hungarian College of Higher Education (Bárányné Komári et al., 2007). In the first phase of the longitudinal study, the researchers aimed to present the quality of English and Ukrainian teaching in Hungarian schools. According to previous experience, students in Hungarian schools generally achieved better results in a foreign language than in Ukrainian, despite the fact that Ukrainian is the language of their environment. This paradoxical situation raises many questions that need to be answered. Do they really have better language skills in English compared to Ukrainian? What are the main differences between Ukrainian and English education in minority Hungarian schools? What could cause these differences?

In the first round, seventy-six Hungarian children aged eight, i.e. third graders, from Berehove completed the language proficiency test compiled by the researchers. They examined the National Foreign Language Curriculum and the Ukrainian curriculum prepared for Hungarian schools (Bárányné Komári et al., 2010). They found that in all four language skills, better results were obtained from Ukrainian than from English. The only exception is speaking. At this stage of language learning, the children studying in the third grades of Hungarian-language medium schools in Berehove mastered the state language better than English.

The results of a 2017 research conducted by the author (for a detailed review see Máté, 2017) prove that students struggle with practical knowledge when it comes to languages. School grades do not reflect real knowledge, as the difference between test scores and grades is significant. If students get good grades too easily, it can lead to them losing their motivation, and their will to fight for a better grade, and moreover, they get a false or at least incomplete picture of their own knowledge. Based on self-evaluation, the students had a more positive opinion of their knowledge of English and a more negative opinion of their knowledge of Ukrainian. The reality reflected just the opposite: better results were obtained from the Ukrainian language in terms of reading comprehension, language use, and total scores (the results obtained from the English language were higher in the written task, but the difference was not significant). However, these results can hardly be linked to a better quality of Ukrainian language education. If we add up the number of lessons taken by the students over the course of 11 years, it is clear that they attend much more

classes in Ukrainian than in other foreign languages. Moreover, in addition to the existing language classes, they also have Ukrainian literature, in which they also come into contact with the language, while in English this becomes possible only within the framework of the English classrooms. It is essential to mention that the Ukrainian language surrounds them, when they get on the bus, when they visit the doctor, or even in the form of signs and advertisements.

Transcarpathian researchers are closely monitoring the outcomes of the education system, and as we have seen from the examples above, the situation is far from ideal. Parents who are discouraged by their children's lack of skills in the state language often choose alternative solutions, such as changing the language of instruction (Beregszászi & Séra, 2010; Szávayné Séra, 2015; Beregszászi & Csernicskó, 2017). We were able to witness success stories, through attending Ukrainian-medium education (whether it was only an addition to a pre-existing set of language skills gained from the surrounding environment or examples of endurance against all the odds for students who lacked those skills) speakers were able to achieve great success in their life and career later on. However, what works for one family does not necessarily work for another. Several studies that have been also referred to in the previous chapters of the thesis have proved that when the submersion technique is applied to a minority speaker who has no previous experience with the language could lead to serious struggles with academic performance, not to mention the hardships, anxiety that may accompany the process.

The situation of the Transcarpathian minority education nowadays is also endangered by the worsening economic situation and the latest language policy efforts, which intend to greatly limit the use of the languages of the minorities. Unfortunately, education is no exception to this (cf. Csernicskó & Máté, 2017).

6.1.3 Language Policies

In a state that is navigating towards the monolingual norm, implementing inclusive language policies that promote linguistic diversity is an essential component of sustainable multilingualism. Political decision-making can directly affect the speakers of minority languages, as their language rights (or as Skutnabb-Kangas (2012) calls them *linguistic human rights*) highly depend on them.

The maintenance of minority languages can be defined by four factors that are closely related to each other, but are also determined by the relations between the majority-minority society (see Csernicskó ed., 2010):

– Speakers who maintain the language (demographic factor).

– Situations and scenes, where language is not only symbolic but can also be used for practical purposes, to satisfy real communication needs (utility factor).

– The intention of the speakers: if they want to keep using the language and pass it on to the next generations (symbolic value).

– Rights that ensure the possibility of using the language (language policy).

If speakers are deprived of their rights to use their language on different platforms, bilingualism will not be sustainable in the long run.

6.1.4 Economic Development

Multilingualism can have positive impacts on economic development. It can enhance cultural tourism, facilitate international trade and communication, and contribute to global collaborations. In the case of Zhnyatino, we were able to witness how local entrepreneurs aim to attract customers all over the settlement by applying bilingualism in their advertisements. Economic factors can also impact multilingualism. Recent crises led to a wave of migration that has never been seen before in the community, and it has left its mark on the demographic composition of the settlement, which affects the future of the community. The worsening economic situation creates a contradictory situation for the speakers of the community. On the one hand, working abroad gives the individual the opportunity to learn and master foreign languages. On the other hand, that knowledge cannot be utilized in the community, if the speakers are forced to stay abroad or relocate permanently, due to the financial disadvantages their return may presume.

6.1.5 Technology and Digital Resources

Advances in technology have made it easier to support multilingualism. Digital resources, such as language learning apps, online translation tools, and language platforms, can facilitate language maintenance, learning, and communication across different linguistic communities.

6.1.6 Community Engagement

Sustaining a multilingual state requires active engagement and participation from all members of a community. Organizing religious and cultural events, and fostering intercultural dialogue can create an environment that celebrates and values linguistic diversity.

By promoting sustainable multilingualism, the community can foster social cohesion, cultural understanding, and inclusive development while preserving the richness and diversity of its languages. Its importance has an increased value for minority speakers, whose language is in a vulnerable, endangered state to begin with. The sustainability of multilingualism in Zhnyatino heavily relies upon the speakers' willingness to learn each other's languages to a greater or lesser extent.

Zhnyatino as a settlement carries a paradox within itself. After spending several years there, doing months of fieldwork and data collection from a researcher's perspective, and having spoken to hundreds of its people as a resident of the village, the impression one gets is that despite having a border that divides the settlement (may it be a language border or a so-called barrier between the two ethnicities) they belong to one community after all. Hungarians of the village often report that for them going into "Oroszvég" feels like visiting a foreign land. However, this dividedness immediately decreases, when both Ukrainians and Hungarians go to the same store, same post office, clinic or hairdresser, or sometimes, same church.

All in all: Zhnyatino has a border that not only separates but unites people.

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Appendices

## Appendix 1. Additional elements of the linguistic landscape of Zhnyatino

Picture 9: Two monolingual (Hungarian and Ukrainian) signs in the same store in the center of the village

Picture 10: Local products on the shelves of a store in the center of the village, with bilingual inscriptions
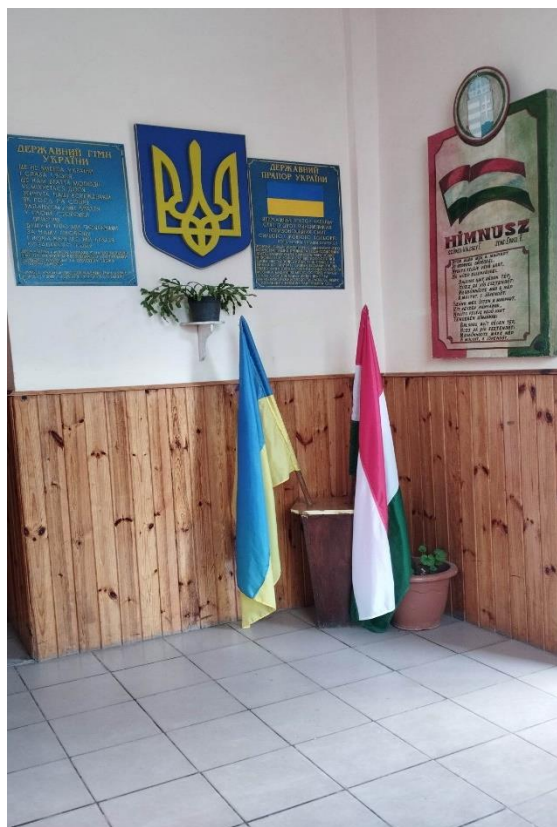
Picture 11: Bilingual signs posted by local enterprenaurs warning the customers to wear a mask when entering the shop during the first months of the pandemic
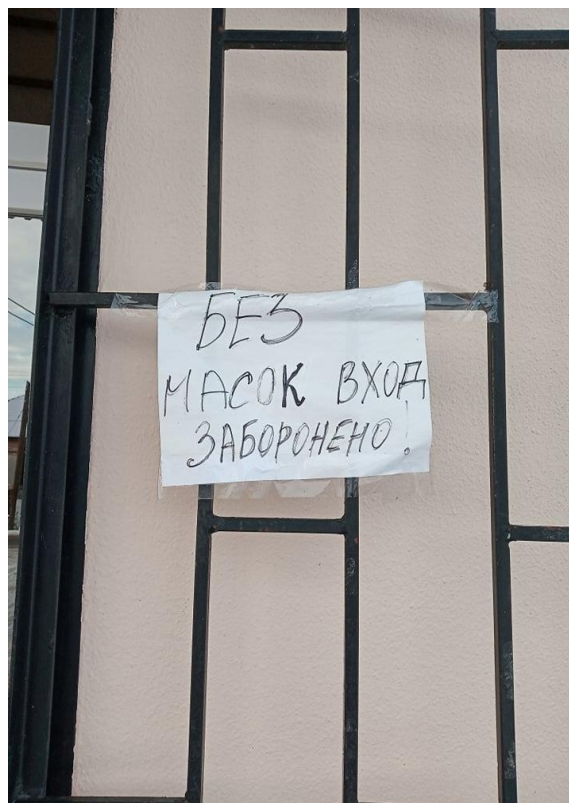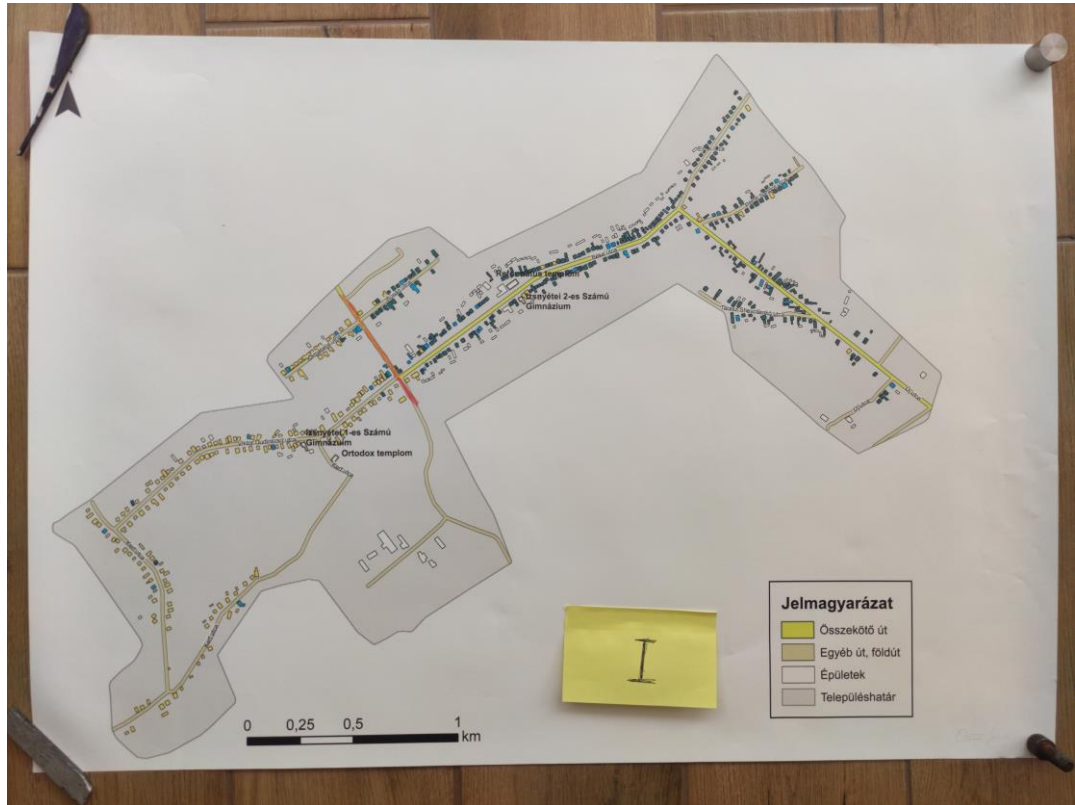
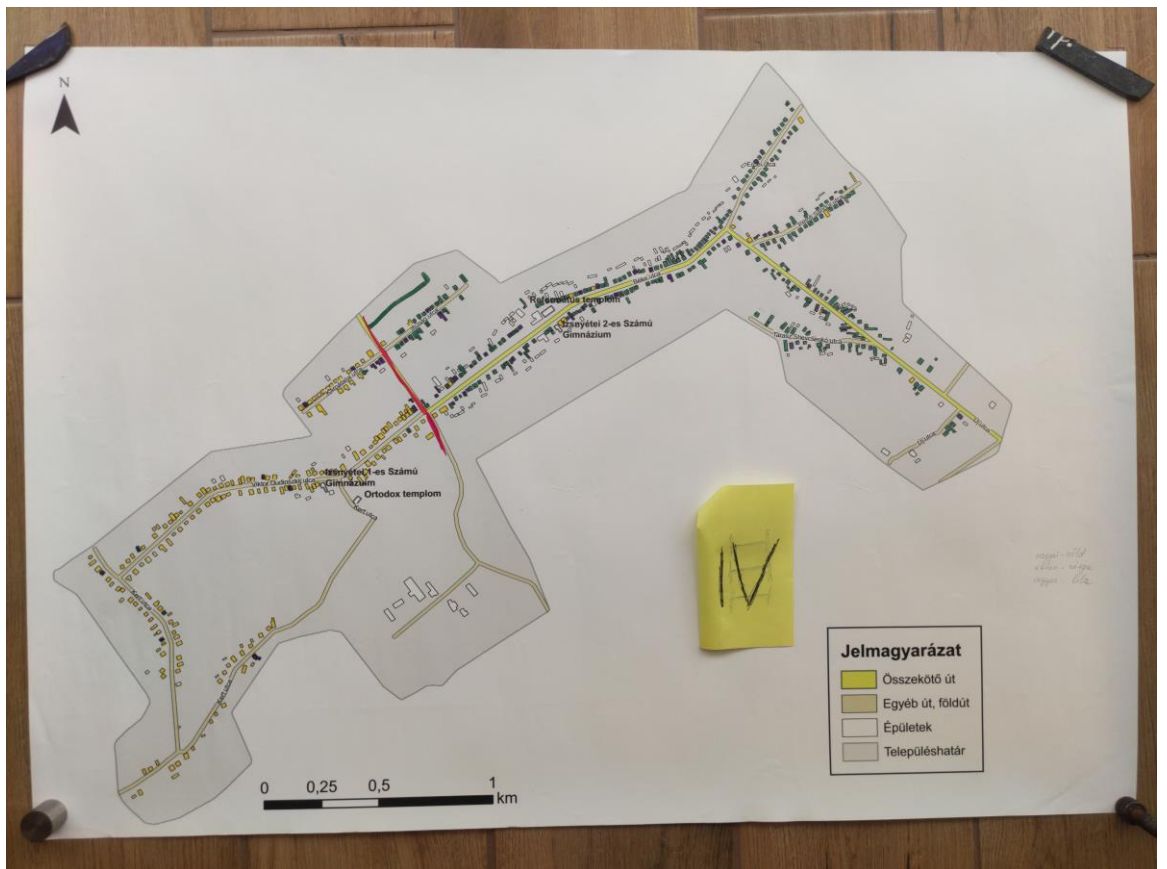**Picture** 12: Monolingual (Ukrainian) signs that point to the nearest shelter in case of an air raid alert

Picture 13: Ukrainian and Hungarian national symbols at the Zhnyatino Gymnasium No1

Appendix 2. Original versions of the maps drawn by the experts
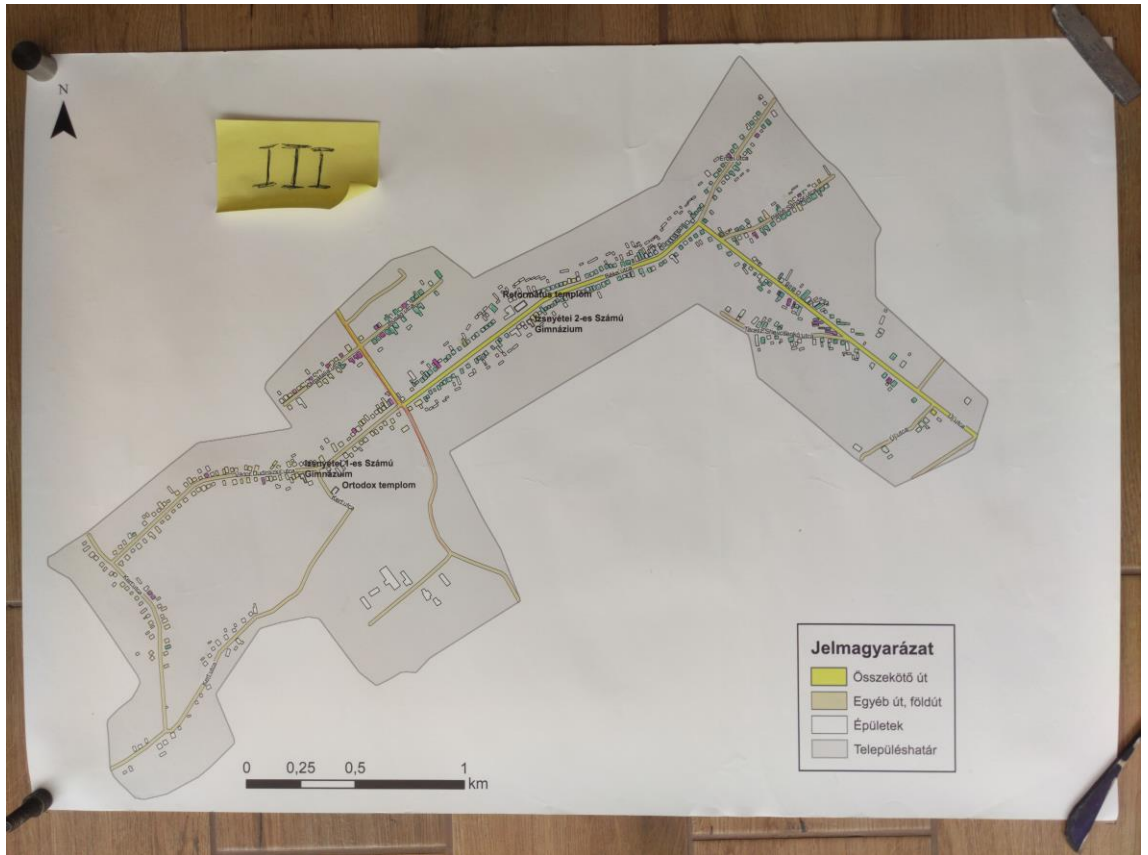
Appendix 3. The digitized versions of the maps made by the experts

Jelmagyarázat

	Úthálózat
	Településhatár

Nyelvhasználat

	Nincs adat/Nem lakóépület
	Magyar
	Ukrán
	Vegyes
	Nyelvhatár

Jelmagyarázat

	Úthálózat
	Településhatár

Nyelvhasználat

	Nincs adat/Nem lakóépület
	Magyar
	Ukrán
	Vegyes
	Nyelvhatár

N

Református templom

Izsnyétei 2-es Számú
Gimnázium

Ortodox templom

Izsnyétei 1-es Számú
Gimnázuim

Taras Shevcsenko utca

Új utca

Új utca

Baku utca

Viktor Dudinszkij utca

Kert utca

Kert utca

Kert utca

Jelmagyarázat	
	Úthálózat
	Településhatár
Nyelvhasználat	
	Nincs adat/Nem lakóépület
	Magyar
	Ukrán
	Vegyes
	Nyelvhatár

0   0,25   0,5   1
                          km