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Mapping Minority Multilingualism: Perspectives from Central and South-Eastern European Borderlands – Introduction to the Thematic Issue

The essays in this thematic issue explore an important but often overlooked legacy of European multilingualism and the various power asymmetries and ideological values that characterize it, namely the multilingual practices of ethno-linguistic groups on Europe's south-eastern periphery. Although the European Union has in the past twenty years adopted legislation that explicitly celebrates and supports multilingualism, linguistic diversity and minority language rights, its language policy has received criticism for tending to rely on and embolden national standardizing language regimes (Gal 2006; Leech 2017; Mandić and Belić 2018). Indeed, the European focus on the protection of language diversity and language rights appears to reaffirm a static model of language in that it relies upon "the idea of a European polity based on the cooperation of distinct nation states" and upon related codified languages which can be traced back to ideologies of Romantic authenticity and Enlightenment universality (Leech 2017: 34–35; Gal 2011). Scholars of the EU's language and multilingualism policy found that the official discourses oscillate between highlighting traditional cultural values like diversity and the right to education in the speakers' first language on the one hand, and promoting economic values and ideologies on the other hand (Krzyżanowski and Wodak 2011; Romaine 2013). Accordingly, the "ideal" European citizen is portrayed as a multilingual person whose linguistic repertoire comprises of at least one language intended "for business" (instrumental/universal value) and one language as mother tongue, used "for pleasure" (authenticity) (Gal 2011: 49). As such, EU language policy does not facilitate newly emerging in-between or

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translingual modes and directions of communication. Moreover, it does not recognize multilingual individuals whose linguistic repertoire does not match the imagined polarising axis of authenticity and instrumentality. At the same time, scholars have pointed to the relevance of the Habsburg legacy for some of the issues that EU language policy is struggling with, not necessarily as a model to be emulated but in terms of past practices, experiences and legislative efforts with lessons for the present (Schjerve-Rindler 2003; Schjerve-Rindler and Vetter 2007; Korshunova and Marácz 2012; Gal 2011, 2015). By placing our emphasis on this imperial legacy in contemporary South-Eastern and Central Europe,[1] we argue that it crucially influenced the demographic composition, language policy, ideologies and practices of the region. Moreover, at the time of the Habsburg Monarchy, the basis of a modern institutional and class order, education, public sphere, mass media networks and extensive (written) literary production in vernacular languages was established. In our opinion, the consequent state regimes – composite nation-states, communist states, other nation-states, and so on – need to be examined in terms of the continuities and discontinuities they established with the discursive order, values, and ideologies of the Habsburg imperial legacy, given that their policies were created through a continuous tacit and explicit dialogue with it. Briefly, the change of power relations in these (post-)imperial contact zones throughout history left a material, cultural and psychological legacy that must be taken into account when language use and ideology is discussed.

As Michael Silverstein has argued, the linguistic situation characteristic of the periphery of empires (and what happens at the interstices between empires) could be seen as prefiguring many of the characteristics of superdiversity in today's metropolises (Silverstein 2015; for superdiversity, see Blommaert 2010); likewise, Blommaert (2015) pointed out that the phenomena typical of superdiversity are not necessarily new, but require a new approach. In this respect, the shedding of light on histories of language contact, receptive multilingualism and plurilinguality (Schjerve-Rindler and Vetter 2007) in Central and South-Eastern Europe, which we observe mainly through the lens of the Habsburg legacy, while paying attention to communities which also experienced Ottoman rule, becomes all the more relevant. We argue that looking more closely into past and present processes on Europe's periphery can among other things help to understand some of the current challenges faced by its superdiverse metropoles today.

In Central and South-Eastern Europe, multilingual and multi-ethnic societies were a historical reality for centuries due to the region's ethnic and linguistic com-

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1 For an extended discussion of the concept of imperial legacy from a historiographic perspective, see Todorova 2005.

position. Often these contact zones were a direct consequence of imperial politics, that is, of the state-supported migration, colonization, and the (re)population of border areas devastated by war between the Habsburg and Ottoman empires (on imperial borderlands, see Bartov and Weitz 2013), as well as of the language and educational policy of the Habsburg Monarchy (Van der Plank 2012; Marácz 2012). The history of the region is characterized by a wide diversity of formal multilingual practices that were institutionally grounded and regulated by law, e.g. specific forms of multilingual education such as the utraquist schools in the Austrian half of the monarchy (Burger 1995), the use of multiple languages in the military (Scheer 2014), as well as informal practices, that is, historically grown grassroots practices such as child exchange (*Kindertausch/gyerekcsere*) in both imperial Austria (Judson 2006: 3; Zahra 2008: 1–3, 37–38) and Hungary (Gal 2011, 2015; Krel and Mandić 2016). In this respect, multilingualism was a consequence of living in contact zones, and for many inhabitants it was part and parcel of carrying out everyday affairs, a linguistic habitus which Schjerve-Rindler and Vetter (2007) call "lived multilingualism." Susan Gal's (2011, 2015) research on language ideologies in the 19th century Habsburg Monarchy, particularly in the Hungarian Kingdom, showed that, in addition to the ideology that eventually became dominant – monoglot nationalism – there also existed a current she called polyglot nationalism. Monoglot nationalism, both in its Herderian variant (which perceives national language as an index of speakers' authentic self) and in the variant that became characteristic for post-revolutionary France (which imposes one standard language as a tool to achieve social cohesion, thus enabling speakers to participate in the public sphere as universalized, abstract equals) rejected multilingualism, believing that learning a second language would endanger the first cognitively and threaten loyalty to the national cause (Gal 2011: 33). The ideology of monolingual nationalism prevailed and still influences to a great degree current European practices and language ideologies. Polyglot nationalism, on the other hand, denied the presumed link between "mother tongue" and national identity. Considering that a speaker's competence in multiple local languages does not jeopardise authenticity and that, moreover, citizens' multilingual habitus does not exclude a sense of national belonging, polyglot nationalists rejected the basic tenets of monolingual nationalism (Gal 2011: 31–32). As Gal reminds us, both "visions of language were equally 'nationalist.' Yet they imagined differently the relations between human linguistic abilities, languages, nations, and politics." (2011: 32). Crucially, the multilingualism of the 19th century was quite different as an ideology and practice than the multilingualism of the current era (Gal 2011: 32). Speakers ascribed both authenticity and instrumentality to their lived multilingualism. This thematic issue aims to explore what is left of those practices, ideological values, and experiences today. How have they evolved since the dissolution of the Habsburg Monarchy?

We investigate multilingualism as imperial legacy and as current legislative and living practice in the northern parts of South-Eastern Europe – for our analytical purposes loosely defined as the "(post-)Habsburg space" – in its diachronic and synchronic dimension, with particular emphasis on language communities in contact zones such as the Burgenland, the Austrian-Slovene region, Dalmatia, Vojvodina, the Banat, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and in Hungary proper. We hence focus on relations between different language and ethnic communities from the late 19th century until today, approaching them from a sociolinguistic and literary angle. For the 19th century saw the process of modern nation-building, accompanied by new power constellations that after the peace Treaty at Versailles became gradually institutionalized as "majority/minority" relations in Central and South-Eastern Europe. We use the term "minority," well aware of its long discursive history and often very problematic use, meanwhile bearing in mind its origins in Enlightenment modernity and in 19th-century Romanticism and nationalism (Gal 2017: 226–227; Lane et al. 2017: 8). Indeed, the scholarly understanding and legal definition of "minority" has evolved greatly over time (cf. Gal 2017: 224–226; Lane et al. 2017: 7–10), resulting in three partly overlapping definitions in current use. Initially, scholars and policymakers emphasized the numerical dimension, defining a minority as a linguistic or ethnic group of citizens significantly smaller in numbers compared to the majority population(s) of the (nation-)state in which they live; this was particularly true in post-Versailles Europe (cf. Capotorti 1979). Over time, scholars came to argue for the need for "extending the concept [of minority] to a variety of non-dominant groups" (Pentassuglia 2002: 69), highlighting the minoritized position of a group in a state. Finally, minority can refer to a "language community" speaking one of the minority or regional languages as recognized by international treaties (Lane et al. 2017).[2] It is in this third and last sense that most of our contributions use the concept of minority.

However, shedding light on historically attested and current multilingual practices in Central and South-Eastern Europe does not mean turning a blind eye to the tensions caused by and contradictions inherent to any language policy (of the Habsburg Empire, of its successor states, or, for that matter, of the EU), as well as the difficulties that policy might create for individual speakers. One of the key issues in this respect is the long-term impact of standard language ideology. In European societies, a language is traditionally believed to be the "possession" of a specific ethnolinguistic group. Processes of language standardization and institutionalization serve to unite diverse ethno-linguistic groups under the umbrella of

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2 For the notion of "language community" versus "speech community," see Silverstein 1996: 285; Irvine 2006.

the standard language, thus, in turn, reinforcing the power of a privileged group. The ideology of language nationalism and standardization can be traced back to the Enlightenment and Romanticism, particularly to the Herderian ideas "eine Sprache – ein Volk – ein Staat" (one language – one nation – one state). Whereas Enlightenment thinkers perceived national language as an index of universality (thus highlighting language's instrumental value), for the Romantics, language was an index of a people's authenticity (thus emphasizing language's symbolic value); linguistic standardization invoked both principles (see Gal 2011). The standardization of the chosen national variety led to language homogenization, on the one hand, and marginalization and suppression of non-dominant and regional varieties, on the other (Milroy 2001; Bourdieu 1977). Standard language ideology still prevails in popular and elite discourses all over Europe (Blommaert and Verschueren 1992; Blommaert 1999); moreover, Gal argues that all relevant European linguistic practices still "conform to standardizing and Herderian assumptions: the policy is created for named languages with unified, codified norms of correctness embodied in literature and grammars" (2006: 167). Sociolinguists Lane, Costa and De Korne (2017) have recently drawn attention to the double connection between standardizing languages and minority language use "on the global periphery," but their survey does not include any examples from Central or South-Eastern Europe. As in the rest of Europe, the long-term developments of monoglot nationalism and standard language ideology and the asymmetric relations that accompany them have also been very powerful in Central and South-Eastern Europe, affecting both elite and popular understandings of language and language use, often against the grain of existing plurilingual practices on the ground.

Originating from a panel at the annual conference of the Association for Border Studies in Budapest in 2017, the articles in this thematic issue address formal and informal, lived practices; elite and grassroots perspectives; diachronic processes and investigations into language communities today as well as analyses of literary texts. The methods used range from historical sociolinguistics to quantitative methods and mathematical models combined with historical analysis, not to mention the close reading and contextual analysis of literary texts. Our thematic issue is unique in that it brings together two disciplinary perspectives on multilingualism in the region that are not often combined: sociolinguistics and literary studies. By bringing two paradigms under the same umbrella, we aim to examine language policy, use and ideology, as well as literary imagery in all its complexity and to point to hidden dynamics as well as underexplored or forgotten examples of language use, ideological beliefs and poetic imagery. Our contributions either deal with Slavic (minority) languages and literatures in contact, or with (minority) languages that are in contact with Slavic varieties and literatures,

such as Hungarian, German/Swabian, Ladino/Judeo-Spanish, and Romanian. Bringing together experiences from everyday multilingual practices and literary multilingualism through the lens of imperial legacies, the contributions in this issue offer a critical perspective on language ideology both in contemporary nation-states and in the supranational European Union.

In line with the theoretical and empirical issues we have discussed above, the articles in this thematic issue address the following questions: How have minority languages been standardized in Central and South-Eastern Europe, and how have these processes developed over a longer period, navigating the tensions between local multilingualism, the "larger" related standard language varieties in the region and local varieties (Tyran)? How have historical and socio-economic processes, sometimes hand in glove with language policies, led to (or prevented) the language shift and assimilation of minority groups (Tyran, Vučina-Simović, Kühnel and Prochazka), and how have speakers themselves perceived these processes of gradual language shift or even language attrition and language loss (Tyran, Vučina Simović)? How have formal and informal bordering practices between linguistic communities (Kühnel and Prochazka, Vučina Simović) evolved over time and what methods can help to track and explain changes in minority language use where fluctuating usage patterns contradict highly political and politicized tools such as the census (Kühnel and Prochazka)?

Given the rich historical experience of lived multilingualism in the region, not only in cities but also in rural areas in specific contact zones, it comes as no surprise that multilingualism plays a constitutive role in literary works. Both the way in which authors use language as a medium and the way in which literary texts (invite the reader to) reflect upon the use of linguistic diversity can provide us with interesting insights into long-standing forms of multilingualism. In addition, as a medium of cultural memory, literary works represent and recollect aspects of past multilingual practices. We contend that the study of literary multilingualism can both draw on and complement sociolinguistic and historical approaches to multilingualism (for a similar argument, see Dembeck 2014). Certainly, sociolinguistics, at least in its quantitatively oriented forms, and literary studies have different objects of study, interests and goals and therefore also use different approaches: whereas quantitative sociolinguistics (and formal linguistics) work with a larger corpus so as to derive general rules, philological/literary studies are as a discipline interested in the micro-analysis of single texts in their particularity, continuously looking for the meaning that is created by specific language use in an individual literary text (Dembeck 2014: 28, 34). Nevertheless, both literary studies and sociolinguistics have each in their own way been struggling with the long-term processes and effects of language standardization and language nationalism. For example, an issue that occupies literary scholars, one

that is closely related to the question of standard language ideology as asked by sociolinguistics, is the question of the emergence in the era of Romantic nationalism of the "monolingual paradigm", as we have already mentioned, and the related idea that authors can – and should – write only in their "mother tongue" (Yildiz 2012). To be sure, the increasing dominance of the monolingual paradigm does not mean that its hegemony was absolute: our contributions as well as other studies of 19th-century literary multilingualism (Anokhina, Dembeck and Weissmann 2019) show that linguistic diversity continues to figure prominently in literary works both during and after the era of Romantic nationalism. Linguistic standardization and codification processes are thus of interest to literary studies as a long-term aspect of the drawing of borders, i.e. as the political and cultural creation of languages as "countable," clearly delineable, mutually transposable units (Sakai 2009). But literary studies, and "multilingual philology" (Dembeck 2014, 2017a) in particular, are also interested in examining linguistic diversity (as emerging from linguistic standardization and homogenization processes) in and surrounding the literary text from different analytical perspectives: "examining the correlation between [what counts as] different [standard] languages and the diversity of spoken language, examining the different degrees of visibility of standardization, as well as code-shifting and code-mixing" (Dembeck 2014: 34, our translation). Crucially, literary studies are interested in relating the language diversity in a text both to its poetic function in the text as well as to broader cultural, social and political issues. Even though literary multilingualism has received increasing scholarly attention over the past two decades (Kellmann 2000, 2003; Lennon 2010; Yildiz 2012; Dembeck and Mein 2014; Gramling 2016; Dembeck 2017b; Dembeck and Parr 2017), Central and South-Eastern European literature is still under-studied. Our literary contributions (Czerwiński, Laihonen, Vervaet) aim to remedy this, at least in part, thereby raising the following questions, among others: What kind of "manifest" and "latent" (Radaelli 2011) forms of linguistic diversity can be detected in literary texts, from code-switching and code-mixing (see Gardner-Chloros and Weston 2015) to playing with different scripts? How does their treatment of language relate to the historical and cultural specificity of post-Habsburg borderlands? How do literary works (re)imagine and remember multiethnic and multilingual (post-)Habsburg borderlands? How do they articulate these memories of past multilingualism, and to what effect? And, finally, how should the figure of the minority writer and minority multilingualism in Central and South-Eastern Europe be understood? In this thematic issue, we do not claim to offer a comprehensive overview of all relevant aspects of sociolinguistic and literary multilingualism in Central and South-Eastern Europe, but rather to cover a variety of methodological approaches, empirical and regional materials and theoretically based analyses,

which, as we believe, could be inspiring for rethinking current language ideologies and multilingual practices.

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