

**ON GERMAN AS A POST-MINORITY LANGUAGE
IN WEST ROMANIAN LANGUAGE ISLANDS.
LINGUISTIC AND LITERARY SYNERGETIC RESEARCH METHODS**

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The present habilitation thesis is structured in seven chapters.

1.

The first chapter (p. 1 - 3) offers an explanation for the broad structure of the thesis, that covers SOCIOLINGUISTICS, SLA and EDUCATIONAL LINGUISTICS, DIALECTOLOGY and «PHONETOLOGY» (i.e. Phonetics and Phonology), as well as GERMAN CULTURE, LITERATURE AND CIVILISATION IN ROMANIA, LITERARY THEORY, the HISTORY OF GERMAN STUDIES IN ROMANIA and TRANSLATION SCIENCE.

The claim of competence in this very broad variety of subdisciplines, either originating from German Studies or interdisciplinarity, is justified by my main object of study, i.e. the (socio)linguistic and literary mechanisms that keep the West Romanian language islands going. The chapter also connects a short overview on German habilitation customs to the peculiarity of the thesis, using it as a rationale for the extension of the *venia* I claim from its Sociolinguistic core to the areas of Regional Literatures, Translation Studies, SLA and Educational Linguistics.

The purpose of the thesis is to prove that the efficient employment of the minority immersion, submersion and autarchy programmes is the optimal method to produce a complete and integrative linguistic, cultural and literary description of the German West-Romanian language islands.

2.

The second chapter (p. 6 - 44) describes my scientific, professional and academic achievements in the subdisciplines mentioned above. They consist in coining new linguistic and literary terms and in employing them in order to elaborate new linguistic and literary theories of the language islands. The chapter also presents a brief selection of the critical reception of my linguistic and literary studies in some of the most prominent publications on German Studies.

The subchapter on Sociolinguistics, SLA and Educational Linguistics focuses on the results of my field work at the Adam Müller Guttenbrunn High School in Arad. It gives

a detailed insight on the sociolinguistic methods I employed in coining and further developing the concept of *High Proficiency Second Language Acquisition* (HPSLA). The same subchapter depicts the highly dynamic and individual character of HPSLA, providing an insight on the active and the passive language choices and contacts of the pupils in this school. Therefore HPSLA is the umbrella-concept for the linguistic socialisation of an L1-speaker during his interlingual accommodation in the environment of the L2. It comprises his meta-stable, sociolinguistically describable accommodation, when he is exposed to an L2 for a longer period of his life.

The HPSLA of an individual speaker is described not only in language acquisition specific terms, but also sociolinguistically, through his person-centred and group-centred networks in his micro-social multilingual environment.

The subchapter on Dialectology deals with the further developments in the theory of languages islands I have published in my studies on the German language island around the West Romanian town of Satu Mare.

The third and final linguistic subchapter of the thesis deals with the term «Phonetology» (BAILEY / MAROLDT, 1988) which I employ in order to bridge the gap between phonetics and phonology. This chapter also discusses the results of my research on the history of ideas in Phonetics and Phonology in the Anglo-Saxon and German world. It concludes with an analysis of the bilingual-synoptic Romanian-German structure of my two books on «Phonetology».

The second part of this second chapter is mainly dedicated to my studies on German Culture, Literature and Civilisation in Romania. It starts with a school typology of German minority schools in the area, pointing out that these can be classified from the viewpoint of the language policy they promote in immersive, submersive and autarchic schools.

However, there were two culturally and linguistically distinct groups of German speaking settlers who populated the Banat area in the 19th century: Germany-oriented rural colonists originated mainly in Mosel-Franconia and Bavaria (mostly farmers) and Austria-oriented gentrified middle-class urban colonists (particularly administrative and military staff, craftsmen and traders) from all regions of the Habsburg Empire. The Germany-oriented rural settlers defined themselves via their *Colonisation Myth*, whilst the Austria-oriented urban population gradually developed an *Urban Garrison-Identity*.

Living segregated and in separated communities, these two classes of German speaking colonists did hardly engage in contact until the middle of the nineteenth century. At that moment this rather peculiar initial constellation of two distinct social groups of one linguistic minority, both perceived by the other ethnic groups of the region as a unity due to their common language, was altered by the raise of Budapest as a third reference point after the Austrian-Hungarian Ausgleich in 1867.

This led to the emergence of three programmatic socio-cultural and political directions within the German speaking minority of the Banat area.

The first one was the *Submersion programme*, a Hungarian-friendly, Budapest-oriented, political and cultural movement, giving up main German linguistic and cultural minority features in favour of a full integration in the new Hungarian state. Later on, after 1918, the submersion programme also partially applied for similar, Romanian-friendly, Bucharest-oriented positions within the German minority.

The second programme arising after 1867 is the Vienna-oriented pro-Austrian *Immersion programme*, a direct continuation of the *Urban Garrison-Identity*, which positioned itself as a moderate current, claiming an integrative common Habsburg identity pattern for all the ethnic groups in the Banat area and preserving the core elements of Austrian identity. Finally the third one, emerging mostly as a response to the pressure of the Hungarian and later of the Romanian dominance, is the highly conservative Berlin-oriented *autarchy programme*, claiming a German-only identity for the minority and preserving the *Colonisation Myth*.

The very same *Submersion*, *Immersion* and *Autarchy* programmes are to be found both in the typology of the German minority schools in the Banat area, and in the linguistic attitudes of their speakers, having a direct impact on their HSPLA-status. Hence the use of these programmatic patterns can be extended both to linguistic and to literary aspects of German minority life.

However, these programmatic considerations are still insufficient to explain the cultural and literary developments in the area during the 20th century.

Therefore I employed the terms “minor literature” vs. “major literature” (DELEUZE / GUATTARI, 1976: 24). The term has though a longer history, as Franz Kafka, the most outstanding exponent of the German Prague literature himself, used it earlier in his diary too (KAFKA, 1990: 326).

Further on I evidenced that the three criteria established by DELEUZE / GUATTARI in their case study on Kafka for the German minority literature in Prague can be

successfully applied to any other minority literature in Central and South-Eastern Europe. However, a detailed and functional extension and development of this evidence has not been provided yet.

The first approach, frequently used in the nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth century, is that from *inside to inside*, i.e. as a history written by an insider for insiders, as an “indoor” scholarly work with no other purpose than to strengthen the identity of the minority itself (e.g. WERESCH, 1975). Literary histories *from inside to outside* (e.g. KLEIN: ²1979) could take as well the risk of losing their objectivity, hence nowadays the one and only scientific history of such a minority literature would be the one offered by neutral scholars and observers from outside of the minority (e.g. KRAUSE, 1998), a history *from outside to outside*, a model of successful practice also in the “major literatures” (e.g. JOHNSTON, 1972).

The second chapter concludes with a short view on the term *Crop-Literature* the author has coined in the analysis of Helmut Seethaler’s work, a Viennese poet and actionist developing a new literary genre.

3.

The third chapter (p. 45 - 47) briefly presents the institutional (ÖAAD, Croatian Ministry of Science), as well as the *ad personam* grants (DAAD, ÖFG, Franz Werfel, Alexander von Humboldt) I have won.

4.

The fourth chapter (p. 48 - 59) details the 56 international conferences I attended (35 abroad and 21 in Romania), listing the topics of my talks and the scholarly institutional contexts in which they were given.

5.

The fifth chapter (p. 60 - 72) details the actions I have taken in promoting young researchers. The first subchapter details the 32 conferences, symposia, summer and winter schools I have organised in Bucharest, Timișoara and Sibiu and which have been attended by 380 Austrian and 680 Romanian students, as well as by more than 20 staff members of the German Department of the University of Vienna. The second subchapter lists 24 of the most outstanding papers presented by my Viennese students attending these conferences and which I have successfully directed into publishing.

6.

The sixth chapter (p. 73 - 78) elaborates on my future career plans. The most important amongst them are the organisation of the 1st International Conference on Applied German Studies in 2017 and the organisation of the 1st European Conference on Educational Linguistics in 2018. The latter event will address not only to scholars of German, but also to all other Philologists, as well as to Educationalists. During the Conference on Applied German Studies in 2017 I intend to launch the concept of *post-minority language*, while during the Conference on Educational Linguistics in 2018 I intend to present a fully developed theory on this concept. My long term objective is to elaborate on a complete linguistic, cultural and literary history of the German language island in the Banat area. However, the greatest challenge is to put forth a full development of linguistic and literary synergetic research methods, as stated in the introductory chapter of this thesis.

7.

The seventh and final chapter of my thesis (p. 79 - 88) contains in its first part my critical bibliography, listing a selection of 47 scientific titles quoting my work. The second part of this last chapter includes the references to the text of the thesis.

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