

THE HUNGARIAN-CHINESE BILINGUAL SCHOOL: ITS CHARACTERISTICS & STUDENTS FLUCTUATION

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Abstract. This study reports on a Hungarian bilingual school which was established in 2004 in order to provide a common education for Hungarian and Chinese children as well as other pupils coming from different countries. The analysis first focuses on the general situation of migrant students in Hungarian public education. Then it introduces the educational policy that made the establishment of the school possible and the pedagogical background of the Hungarian-Chinese Bilingual Primary School. The study points out that this school has become a purely Chinese educational institution, though originally it was designed for pupils with different native languages. During the last few years, children have been continuously replaced therefore, only 12% of the starting grade stays on. Pupils fluctuation is typical, even though every child is allowed to study their mother tongue, the language of the host country, and English. The pupils' fluctuation can be characterized by two main features: the direction and the frequency of migration. These students have fragmented knowledge and it is difficult for them to finish their basic education. The research used the data based on the students' fluctuation, furthermore, interviews were made with the teachers and the headmaster. Data analysis terminated in 2008 and changes that occurred since that research period were interpreted with the help of a control investigation in 2013. The research results focusing on the period from 2004 to 2008 did not justify that the Hungarian-Chinese Bilingual Primary School was attractive for Hungarian children because of the possibility of learning the Chinese language, or for those Chinese families who stay in Hungary for a longer period of time make good use of the Hungarian language. The academic year 2008-2009 brought a change in this perspective: due to the increasing media-coverage, and the spreading experiences of Hungarian pupils and parents, more and more Hungarian families started to show their interest toward this multicultural institution. By 2013 it became obvious that in addition to the Chinese families, the school has found another target group, some Hungarian families, who by forcing the regular school-attendance of their children ensure the smooth operation of the institution. In its pedagogical programme, it strives for intercultural education, yet, for many reasons that need to be analyzed further; it is not sure whether it can keep Chinese, Hungarian, or students of other nationalities in the long run.

Keywords: (Hungarian-Chinese Bilingual Primary School; students' fluctuation; pedagogical characteristics of migration)

Problem background

Sociological theories describing international migration deal with the directions of movement, the patterns of migration, the composition and histories of migrants, and several other aspects (Maffei 2004; Saillard 2000). In the case of families taking part in migration, one of the most important questions is what kind of education the children may receive and what rights and opportunities will await them in the host country and in the school they might attend.

In 2001, the Child Immigration Project carried out an international comparative research project on child-migration, and further results of comparative research were published in the 2004 Eurydice report (EURYDICE 2004), and the OECD/OCDE report in 2006. From the latter ones, it can be concluded that there are large differences among countries regarding both the integration of migrant

students and their learning achievement. For example, while in Canada and Australia the results of migrant children do not lag behind those of local ones, in Germany and Denmark the differences are significant; they fall 1-2 years behind their same-age counterparts. (For example in Denmark, only about 1% of second-generation immigrants were top performers, against 7% for natives).

Similar remarks are made in the 2008 Green Paper on migration & mobility (European Commission 2008). According to this report there is clear and consistent evidence that many children of migrants have lower levels of educational attainment than their peers. It quotes the PIRLS survey on literacy showing migrant pupils scoring less well than their non-migrant peers by the end of primary school. Research results of an international comparative research project, called EDUMIGROM, show that coming from an ethnic minority background (or of an immigrant one) implies a good deal of vulnerability – even if paired with relatively favourable socio-economic conditions. Project data indicate that schools show little sensitivity toward the involved insecurities and difficulties: instead, teachers often read them as “easy excuses” for underperformance and a lack of true interest in the values that schools aim to convey, both by teaching and discipline.

So it is in the interests of the host countries to consolidate the situation and to seek and apply good practices. Nevertheless, there are different ideas of what good practices mean (Benes & Dyott, 2001; Labat, 2001; Permisán & Fernandez 2007), but education for cultural understanding, preserving the language and culture of the home country, and learning the language and culture of the host country are all given an emphatic role. In the following pages, the solutions applied in the Hungarian-Chinese Bilingual Primary School since its opening four years ago and the student mobility accompanying these efforts are to be presented based on data about migrant students in Hungary.

Migrant students in Hungary

In 1995, six years after the political and economic transition in Hungary, the state started to collect the first data on foreign students' learning in schools, which certainly indicates the emergence of a more open society than during the Soviet regime. As in other closed systems, there was no legal opportunity for citizens to migrate beyond the political bloc, nor for migrants to be received. Forced movement occurred when citizens of Hungary or other socialist countries left their home country under political or economic coercion, and persecution.

The last significant migration occurred in 1956, after the revolution ended, when within the period of a few months, more than 200,000 people left Hungary (Kürti, 1999). The borders were closed again in 1957, and emigration was reduced to a minimum. There were 3 to 5 thousand people leaving the country per year until 1988 and one to two thousand migrants arriving in Hungary. The country has encountered three significant migration waves since 1989: (1) In 1989 approximately 10,500 citizens of the German Democratic Republic (GDR) used Hungary as a transit country to enter the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG). This was the antecedent of the unification of Germany. (2) There was a continuous flow of fugitives from Romania between 1988-1989, and (3) the third wave began in August 1991 at the outbreak of the Yugoslav war. Between 1988 and 1992, altogether 212,320 people arrived in Hungary as migrants and refugees. The number of those asking for asylum was 118,467, 99.2% of which arrived from Yugoslavia, Romania, and the Soviet Union. Not taking into consideration those arriving from the former Yugoslavia, the majority of these people were of Hungarian ethnicity and mother tongue who arrived from the countries surrounding Hungary (Kollega Tarsoly, 1996-2000: 224).

Ten years later, the official number of asylum-seekers showed a radical decrease. While in 2002 there were nearly 6500 refugees in Hungary, in 2006, only 2117 people were registered. The number of non-European migrants had been decreasing, but the number of European people nearly doubled.

Table 1: Number of asylum-seekers arrived in Hungary. (Source: Office for Immigration and Nationality, http://www.bm-bah.hu/statisztikak_ENG_26.xls)

Year	Number of registered asylum-seekers	European	Non-European		
		persons	%	persons	%
2002	6 412	441	6,88	5971	93,12
2003	2 401	659	27,45	1742	75,55
2004	1 600	503	31,44	1097	68,56
2005	1 609	548	36,29	1025	63,71
2006	2 117	847	40,1	1 270	59,99

Since 2006 there has not been any major change in the number of foreign arrivals to Hungary, while the 2011 statistical data of the Office for Immigration and Nationality indicate that the total number of registered refugees in Hungary is nearly 20 % less than in the previous year.

Table 2. Number of asylum-seekers arrived in Hungary, 2010-2011. (Source: Office for Immigration and Nationality <http://www.bmbah.hu/statisztikak.php>)

	2010.	2011.	Change	Percent change
Total number of registered asylum seekers	2 104	1 693	-411	-19,53%
European	568	289	-279	-49,12%
Non European	1 536	1 404	-132	-8,59%
Number of European asylum seekers in percentage of all asylum seekers	27,00%	17,00%		-12,00%
Number of non European asylum seekers in percentage of all asylum seekers	73,00%	83,00%		10,00%

The geographical location and the economic potential of Hungary limit and define the features of migration into the country. In Hungary, which could be characterized as a transit-country in the past decade, according to the statistical data collected by the Ministry of Education, the number of migrant students continuously increased between 1995 and 2006; however, in comparison with other countries, it is still relatively low: approximately 12,000 people in the last few years. This does not reach 1% of the total number of school-aged children. Most migrant students are from neighboring countries; therefore, most of them are ethnic Hungarians with Hungarian being their mother tongue. This means that many Hungarian teachers do not meet migrant students at all, particularly not those with a different mother tongue (Vámos, 2008, Vámos, 2011/a, 2011/b).

The OECD Thematic Review on Migrant Education in Hungary highlights that the geographical distribution of students is uneven. About 50 % of all foreign pupils are enrolled in Budapest capital city. The proportion of foreign pupils in some schools operating in districts with a relatively higher density of immigrant population, reaches 5-8%. Also, in some schools operating in larger cities located near the Hungarian borders the percentage of non-Hungarian nationals is above the national average. Children with ethnic Hungarian background make up 45-87% of all foreign nationals. The total number of minors from non European countries except for those coming from China and Vietnam is negligible (several dozens of new arrivals per year). Minors falling in the last category mostly arrived from the Middle-East and Central-Asia and in their majority are asylum seekers, some are non-accompanied children. These minors are placed at one of the three refugee reception centres of the country.

Table 3. Foreign pupils/students in full-time education (Source: Statistical Yearbook of Education 2010/2011)

Academic year	Kindergartens	Primary schools	Vocational schools	Secondary schools	Tertiary education
2001/2002	1048	3561	685	4640	8556
2002/2003	1554	5002	747	5459	8605
2003/2004	1538	4761	911	5365	9371
2004/2005	1608	4577	882	5353	9946
2005/2006	1683	4515	717	5152	10974
2006/2007	1584	4496	741	4921	11618
2007/2008	1603	4399	633	4281	12212
2008/2009	1629	4224	448	4075	13681
2009/2010	1516	4200	462	3667	15035
2010/2011	1701	4288	487	3659	15889

The Hungarian school-structure is not complicated: migrant students can enroll in kindergartens (international standard: ISCED1), primary schools (ISCED1-2), and in grammar schools providing a general qualification (ISCED 3), and vocational schools providing basic professional training (ISCED 4). In Hungary, public education is divided into two semesters; the academic year starts on 1 September and finishes in June. It is interrupted by two major breaks: the winter (end of December, beginning of January) and the spring break (turn of March-April).

Bilingual education

Research on bilingual schools often begins with the definition of the term 'bilingual education' adopted in the research. This is because such an abundance of terminology exists that it is advisable to define the object of the research at the beginning to avoid eventual misinterpretations. The first step in giving a typology of bilingual education is dated to the 1970s (Fischman and Lovas, 1970), and focused on the objectives of the establishment of bilingual institutions. Nowadays, Baker's 1996 typology (Baker, 1996) is often referred to, in which forms of "low" and "high" efficiency are classified. Minority languages are rated in the first group (general characteristics: Submersion, Segregationist, Transitorinal, Mainstream, Separatist), whereas the majority language is classified in the second group (Immersion, Maintenance/Heritage Language, Two-way/Dual Language, Bilingual Education in Majority Languages). The term Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) is also used (Marsh and Langé, 1999, Eurydice, 2004, 2006:8).

Cummins's standard work *Bilingualism and Minority-Language Children* published in 1981 helps the understanding of the important role the mother tongue plays in learning efficiency. His Threshold Hypothesis explains the possible cognitive effects of early childhood bilingualism depending on the competence acquired in the two languages. In bilingualism, he made a distinction between Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) and Cognitive/Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) which refer to the quantitative and qualitative differences between the mastery of the two languages. BICS is used in less concrete situations that are less demanding in cognitive terms (for example, at the market or at the playground), and can be acquired soon. As for the CALP, it takes years to achieve this level of proficiency; nevertheless, this stability of language knowledge is required for learning efficiency. According to Skutnabb-Kangas (1988, 34-35.) minority education is typically approached from two different point of views: from the aspect 'deficiency', where the aim of education is teaching students the language of the majority as soon as possible; or from the aspect of 'growth', that is, minority groups are advantageous for the whole society, and bilingualism is valued. The author attributes the success of bilingual programmes to three factors, (1) organizational element, such as the constitution of the groups of students, teachers' mother tongue; (2) students' attitudes, their relation to motivation and cultures; (3) and language factors, such as the language used when learning the subjects (Skutnabb-Kangas, 1990). In the case of migrant students, these aspects assert themselves in the context of migration that has an effect on children's learning success. The most significant and

unique challenge faced by migrant students is mobility-induced educational discontinuity (Platt-Cranston-Gingras- Scott, 1991; Cranston-Gingras, 2003).

In Hungarian bilingual education, there exist programs for national minorities which can be labelled as the Maintenance/Heritage Language type, and there are some related to foreign language teaching (Bilingual Education in Majority Languages form). In 2008 two hundred bilingual institutions were counted (Vámos, 2008:13) in the whole Hungarian public education system (all levels included): 2-3% of the primary schools and 10-12% of the secondary schools have become bilingual institutions involving English, French, German, Italian, or Russian as target languages. The base-language of these bilingual schools is Hungarian.

A large number of migrants are studying in institutions established with international cooperation, which are meant to serve transnational migration. Tuition fees should be paid in these educational institutions that use English, French, German, or Spanish as the language of instruction or are bilingual with Hungarian in which the Hungarian language and culture are learned for a couple of hours per week. Therefore, some migrant students studying in the public education system do not feel the need to learn Hungarian as a second language, while others feel it is necessary, but cannot receive this service. Despite all the efforts and ambitions, there is lack of an appropriate curriculum, coursebook, or even teachers prepared for the special professional work. The migrant students' Hungarian language teaching is based – with complete immersion – on a spontaneous language learning process by leaving it to the teachers to decide the degree of support given to the student.

Moreover, a new bilingual school was established in 2004 on considerations of politics and economic policy. This is the only school in the Hungarian public educational system that ensures the free reception of migrant students with their mother tongue used as the language of instruction, the integration of their culture in the pedagogical programme, and the possibility of learning Hungarian as a second language and as the language of instruction as well, with the hope that the school will also be attractive for Hungarian citizens.

The founding and the programme of the Hungarian-Chinese Bilingual Primary School

Owing to the economic boom of China and the increase in the economic potential of the entire so-called Far-Eastern region, and, last but not least, due to the relations between this region and Hungary, a relatively high number of Chinese self-employed and employees, among them some with their families, arrived in Hungary. In September 2003, when the idea of the “Budapest Chinese School” emerged, 514 Chinese students were given a student ID in the capital city, where the Chinese population is concentrated. In 2003, during his visit to China, the Prime Minister of Hungary informed the Chinese delegates that taking the mutual interests of Hungary and China into consideration, and in cooperation with the Chinese party, The Hungarian State intended to establish a Hungarian-Chinese school and to manage its allocation as well. The establishment of the school was preceded by a survey which had been conducted among the Chinese in the Diaspora in order to explore the opportunities. The overwhelming majority (73.3%) of the 98 respondent families indicated that they would only be willing to take their children to the “new” Chinese school if Chinese, Hungarian, and other native students were to attend this school together, and if there were an opportunity to learn English. For them it is an advantage if the child can learn the mother tongue, the language of the country where he or she lives, and English, which is one of the most preferred languages in international relations and communication (Vámos, 2008).

Considering the Hungarian experience and the international trends, three alternative pedagogical conceptions were drafted to realize the aim of the school. The objective of all three was to allow for a flexible pedagogical programme that would be attractive for both Chinese and Hungarian students, would make it possible to integrate students from other countries, and would more or less be in accordance with the directives given in the 77/486/EGK Directives on the education of the children of migrant employees, issued by the Council of Europe on 25 July, 1977. The first conception was designed to strengthen the Chinese profile within the existing framework of public education, so that in a Hungarian language school English (as these two languages are of prime importance) and Chinese (as a subject) as well as Chinese culture could be learnt. The second one offered the same within the

framework of Hungarian-English bilingual education, and the third version was a Hungarian-Chinese bilingual school-conception. The Ministry of Education decided on the latter, which was followed by an agreement on the subsidies arriving from the People's Republic of China and an understanding that education and teaching would take place according to the Hungarian law and curricula. The news of the establishment of the school was given an enthusiastic reception among the Chinese community. As a result of several invitations published in the Hungarian and Chinese press, in April 2004 the parents of 146 children indicated their interest in the school, among them some Hungarians as well.

Examination of student fluctuation in the Hungarian-Chinese Bilingual Primary School

The Hungarian-Chinese Bilingual Primary School has been characterized by the high fluctuation of students since the first year of its functioning in comparison with other Hungarian schools. Some travel home to China unexpectedly, while others arrive in the middle or at the end of the academic year. It is unclear whether a student attending this institution regularly until a point in time during the year, leaves the Bilingual School and then goes to another Hungarian school or travels further to a third country.

Description of the objectives, hypotheses and methods of the research

The present research was carried out between 2005 and 2008 at the Eötvös Loránd University in Budapest, and data were updated in January, 2013. The objectives were the examination of the student fluctuation of the Hungarian-Chinese Bilingual Primary School, the revealing of correlations, and the investigation of whether the functioning of the school meets the requirements of the establishment. A hypothesis of this research was that because the Hungarian-Chinese Bilingual Primary School offers an effective educational environment, the initial fluctuation of students will stop and the learners' community will become steady. The results being shown now will focus on this phenomenon.

Class attendance records, document analysis, interviews, and statistical data analysis were the research methods. In 2005-2006, 14 appearances were made in classes with the aim of observing the special pedagogical treatment and the characteristics of the language of instruction. The document analysis was carried out in 2007 and 2008, when the Pedagogical Programme of the Hungarian-Chinese Bilingual Primary School was compared with that of the years 2004 and 2005 according to the principles, together with an examination of the conditions of establishment and the instructional/training structure. This data was supplemented/expanded by data gained from the processing of school documentation (i.e. attendance books, form masters' records). Eight interviews were made in 2008 with teachers working with students who left the country. In the same year the school's database of students' enrolment was examined with respect to the learners' birth place, nationality, date of registration to the school, date of leaving it, and the country where the student went to school before. Data processing was done using SPSS for Microsoft Windows, and covariances were determined with the help of the Chi2 test at a level of $p < 0.05$. In January, 2013 a semi-structured interview was conducted with the school principal and data on regular school attendance of students were examined.

The sample of the research

Sampling was random; it involved eight teachers (interviews), and 14 lessons (observations). Four Hungarian as a foreign language lessons, two Chinese language lessons, two English language lessons, four mathematics lessons, and two P.E. lessons were attended. The aim of sampling in this case was to visit as many different lessons as possible and meet teachers with different native languages in grades 1-4. The statistical sample was the 269 students enrolling in the school from the academic year 2004-2005 until 2007-2008 (official school database). According to the school database in the academic year 2012-2013 there are 264 enrolled pupils. It means that the number of enrolled children has doubled in five years' period.

Results

The pedagogical aims of the Hungarian-Chinese Bilingual Primary School from the aspects of bilingual education and the teaching of migrant students according to the school's pedagogical programme (2004) launched in the academic year of 2004-2005 are as follows:

- Learning Hungarian as a foreign language and Hungarian civilization, in order to be familiar with and accept the values of Hungary as a host country, and for the socio-economic integration of migrant students.
- Learning the native language and civilization of both Hungarian and Chinese students, in order to build and maintain identity and the ties to their homeland.
- Integrating education and teaching of Hungarian and Chinese students based on the values of multiculturalism and pedagogical pluralism.
- Applying the intercultural approach in teaching children from 'third countries' by appreciating of all students' native language and culture.
- Helping schools where there are migrant learners (www.magyar-kinai.sulinet.hu).

Since then the objectives have not changed; however, the principles of operation have undergone alternations owing to the everyday interactions with students and parents. The pedagogical principles of *Interculturalism*, *Integration*, *Adaptivity* and *Comprehensivity*, which were set for an as yet virtual school, were complemented with the principle of *Differentiation and individualised development* in the reviewed pedagogical programme at the end of the first academic year (2005). There was a need for this amendment as students of different origin, speaking Hungarian at different levels, and having diverse cultural backgrounds had to be dealt with individually, considering their special needs. *Interculturalism* is a declared principle in the pedagogical programme of the school. Accordingly, cultural and linguistic diversity are embedded in the programme as values, which serves for the equal treatment and acceptance without any preferences of all students. Although, besides Hungarian, Chinese was selected as the language of instruction, it is still emphasized that the school is not only open to, but also welcomes students of different native language, culture, and citizenship. The school allows for an educational framework where students can freely experience their identity and learn to understand and accept that of others. The most of the students belong to one of the following three ethnic groups: Chinese, Hungarian and Mongol. There are children of Chinese-Hungarian mixed marriages as well, and in a small number, students from various Asian countries appear.

According to the principle of *Integration*, migrant learners can familiarize themselves with the Hungarian language and culture, which helps their integration, while they get support in learning the Chinese culture. In the case of the school, the principles of *Adaptivity-Comprehensivity*, *Differentiation*, and *individualized development* mean that it adapts to the learning diversity and fluctuation that are characteristic of migration. Even so, children can only statistically be divided into Hungarian or Chinese native speakers. In fact, there are Chinese children born in Hungary who are looked after by Hungarian baby-sitters and only meet their family in the evenings and at weekends. Therefore, they can barely speak Chinese. Others enroll in the school days after their arrival, and they cannot speak Hungarian at all.

In the area of education, unique emotional problems emerge with the linguistically frustrated students experiencing migration trauma. There are children living (at) in socially disadvantaged homes; some are neglected as the parents are busy with making ends meet. Some families are completely engaged in business, others are torn apart between two countries, and many have uncertain prospects and do not know which country they will reside in eventually. Both Hungarian and migrant children are subject to several and different cultural effects, with all their contradictions. Resulting from this, the pedagogical consequence is that personalized treatment must be realized through individualization.

The language- and subject-structure of the Hungarian-Chinese Bilingual Primary School

According to the pedagogical programme (2005), in September 2004 twelve Hungarian and eight Chinese teachers with eighty-seven students occupied a building and work started. In the morning

hours students learned, and in the afternoon they took part in day care, tutoring, and studying circle activities. Based on the total number of students in January 2005, the ratio of Chinese students was 73%, Hungarians composed 24%, Russians made up 1%, and the ratio of Arab students was 2%. In 2008 the ratio of students having Chinese as their mother tongue was 74%, whereas Hungarian natives composed 21%, and the ratio of other mother tongues (Arab, Japanese, Cambodian, Korean, Mongolian, and Russian) was 5%. In 2005, 15% of students were born in China, 78% in Hungary, and 7% elsewhere; in 2008 the same data are 30%, 65% and 5% (Vámos 2008). These ratios have changed significantly since then: after 2008 the number of native Hungarian has started to increase dramatically. The academic year 2011-2012 can be regarded as a turning-point, as that year was the first when the number of Hungarian children overran Chinese. Last academic year there were 122 Hungarian children and 96 Chinese in the school. This tendency has continued this year as well, the proportion of native Hungarians is nearly the double of the Chinese. (However, these data are only for orientation as the actual language competence is defined by how much time the child spends among different language speakers, and where and for what functions he or she has to use certain languages.)

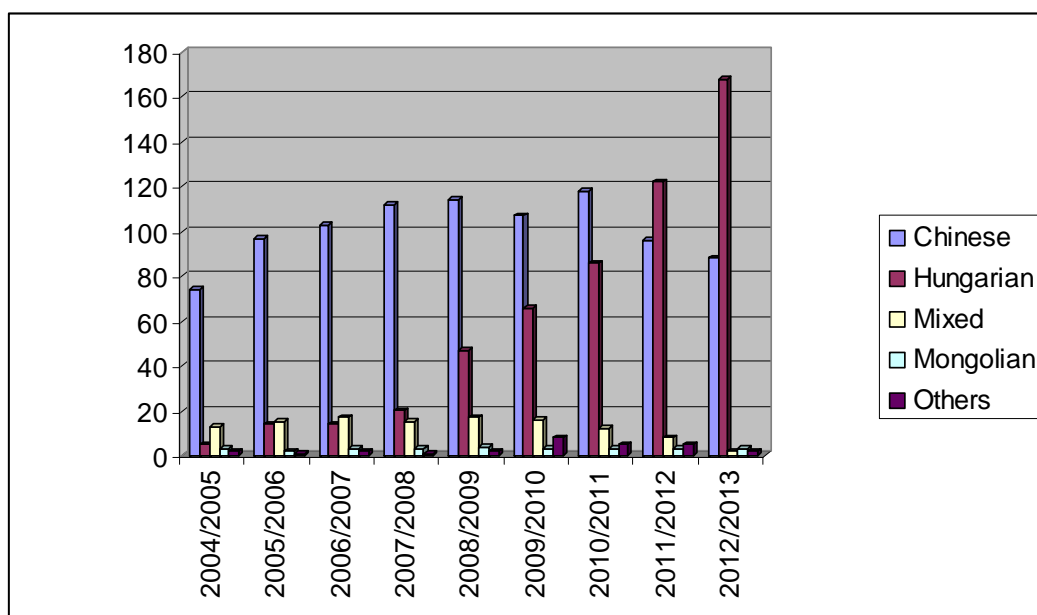


Chart 1. Number of students according to their ethnic background. (Source: School-database provided by the school-principal, 2013.)

The comparison and contrast of the pedagogical programmes for the years 2004 and 2005 shows that due to the diversity of native languages and competence-levels, the Hungarian-Chinese Bilingual Primary School has been facing a problem with language of instruction since its foundation. Being a bilingual school, both Hungarian and Chinese are subjects and are used in teaching as well. In both cases, native speakers must be provided with the opportunity of learning in their mother tongue and others with foreign languages. In accordance with the language- and subject-structure sometimes this happens in one subject in a way that students of different mother tongue learn in separate groups, or the same thing happens in one classroom as could be learned from the attended classes. It is common for Chinese to have an assistant-language status, when for example at a Maths lesson taught in Hungarian, Chinese students translate the task to each other. The pedagogical environment is made uniquely colourful if there are students from a 'third' country; for example, in some classes we can find Arab, Russian, and Mongolian children, as well. Taking these circumstances into consideration and the fact that the school had been defined as a Hungarian-Chinese bilingual one, the institution presumes that its goals can be achieved with the language-subject distribution presented in Table 1, besides keeping to the basic principles. At the drafting of the lesson-plans, the school also considered that in Hungary there had been no traditions of learning Chinese, there were no qualified teachers who could speak Chinese, and there were no learning materials and books, thus all these needed to be

provided by China. This condition makes it difficult to harmonize with the Hungarian core curriculum, and intercultural encounters occur not only among students, but among the teaching staff, as well. As it turned out from the interview with the headmaster, migration-pedagogical concerns and pressure from the Chinese parents and partners had to be catered for in the curriculum, in the latter case leading to an increase in Chinese lessons, hence increasing learning effectiveness and ensuring English teaching. The resulting compromise which aimed to keep parents and children was that the required extra lessons were moved to the afternoon, which is not regulated by the Hungarian educational law. All in all, Chinese language of instruction comprises 32-38% of the regulated number of lessons, especially History, Maths, Arts, Technology, Informatics, and Physical Education (P.E.). Among these there are lessons held only in Chinese, which are compulsory for each student (P.E. and Informatics), there is a subject taught in the mother tongue in separate groups (Maths), and there are subjects which are bilingual, and students learn them together (Complex Chinese arts and culture, Music, Visual culture, Technology and History). (See: Table 4.)

Table 4. The language- and subject-structure of the Hungarian-Chinese Bilingual Primary School

Subject	Grade							
	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.
	ISCED 1A				ISCED 2A			
Hungarian grammar and literature	8	8	7	7	5	5	4	4
Hungarian as a foreign language*	4		3					
<i>Chinese</i>	4	4	4	4	4	4	3,5	3,5
History					2	2	1,5	1,5
<i>History in Chinese</i>							0,5	0,5
English			2	3	3	3	3	3
Maths	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
<i>Maths in Chinese**</i>	1	1	0,5				0,5	0,5
Environmental studies	1	1	1	1,5	1,5	1,5		
Biology							1,5	1,5
Physics							1,5	1,5
Chemistry							1,5	1,5
Our Earth and environment							1,5	1,5
Music	1	1	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5
Drawing and visual culture	1	1	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5
<i>Chinese art and culture complex (music and visual culture in one)</i>	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Technology and lifestyle	1	1	1	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5
<i>Technology, informatics complex in Chinese</i>			0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5
<i>P.E. and sport in Chinese</i>	3	3	3	3	3	3	2,5	2,5
<i>Informatics</i>							0,5	0,5
<i>Form master's lesson</i>				1	0,5	0,5	***	***
<i>Teaching modules in Chinese</i>					0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5
Total lessons/week	24	24	24	26,5	26,5	26,5	29	29
Ratio of Chinese as the language-of-education	38%	38%	38%	32%	34%	34%	32%	32%

Afternoon number of lessons/week. These are not compulsory; students can attend based on individual preferences

Beyond the distribution of subjects according to language of instruction, the intercultural effect appears integrated in subjects as well. Complex *Chinese arts and culture* is not taught as a subject in other schools in Hungary. In this school Hungarian and Chinese children learn this subject together in

Chinese. *Knowledge of Hungary* is a similarly unique subject taught in Hungarian; however, it is optional. In the curriculum of Physical Education, eastern martial arts appear, and in History there is more taught from Chinese history than is usual in Hungarian schools.

The solution which divided Chinese language lessons between native students and learners of Chinese as a foreign language, or allowed for a separate Chinese group for learning Maths is a good solution for learning and developing the Chinese language, but is a loss from the point of view of learning together and the Chinese students' Hungarian language development. This is complemented by the fact that for Chinese students unable to speak Hungarian, the separate teaching of Hungarian as a foreign language had to be organized, and from 2007 a so called 'receiver class' as well. The consequence of this was the division of the classes into groups according to the students' native language in the majority of the lessons. Chinese students in the receiver class did not learn together with their Hungarian classmates at all. The spontaneous segregation of Chinese students unable to speak Hungarian and Hungarian students unable to speak Chinese has resulted in a low level of cooperation between the two groups, which is also a loss for the language and culture learning of both sides.

Characteristics of student fluctuation

1. The arrival of students at the school is more planned than their departure, but in the case of the latter, for the majority it is also connected to academic years. During the first four years, 76% of the students enrolled at the beginning of the academic year in September, 41% left the school in September, and 16% did so in the preceding summer period, which together means 57% for June-September. From the point of view of departure, another emphatic period is the winter break, which is at the turn of December-January in Hungary. This was when 18% of the school-leavers signed out. Few students, only 3% of those signing out, can be characterised by multiple enrolment and departure:

“One child of a first-grade and fourth-grade (ISCED 1A, last year) pair of siblings was taken to America in mid-year, and then was brought back and enrolled again after one and a half years. He was with us for half a year and then both children were taken away to Romania, where the family opened a business.” (Interview with teacher 1.)

Since 2008 this tendency has changed. By the increase of enrolled students the number of those who leave the school during an academic year has not increased. According to the school principal, the movement of students – arrival and departure – affects maximum 40 children, the position of the vast majority is stable.

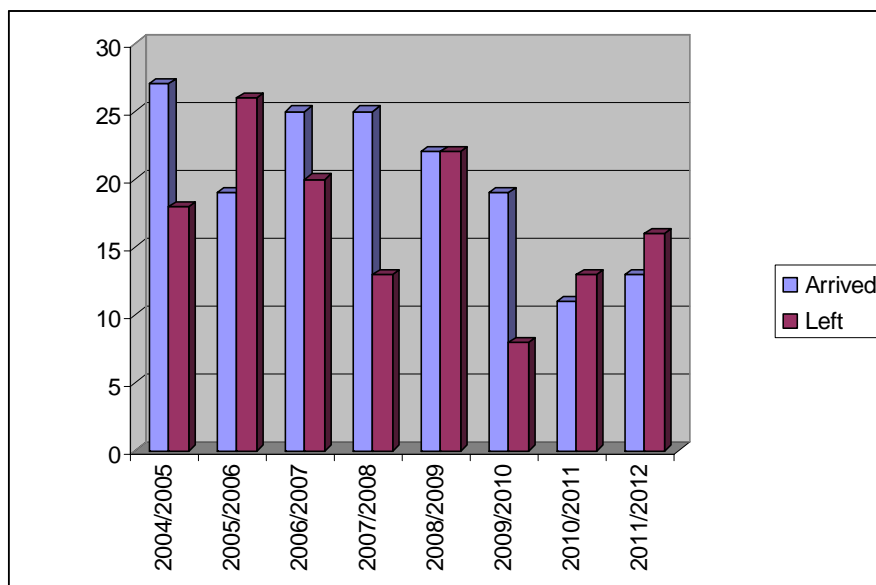


Chart 2. Fluctuation of students within the academic year. (Source: School-database provided by the school-principal, 2013.)

2. The migration rate was on average 50% in the first years. Half of all enrolled students (269 children) left the school, but the ratio of those learning here from the beginning (2004) is only 12%. According to the school principal the first students, who officially completed their primary education at this school, left the institution in 2009, and only a few had studied there since its foundation. The reasons for student mobility are diverse, as can be seen from the short case descriptions below.

“In Debrecen (a university city in Hungary – Á.V.) a Mongolian student learning at the university, who can actually speak good Hungarian, had a baby from a Mongolian father. Now she has had another one from a Hungarian father, and although the mother now studies in Budapest (the capital city – Á.V.), the Mongolian father is in Mongolia and the Hungarian one is in Debrecen. Since she finds it difficult to travel between the two Hungarian cities, she decided to move back to Debrecen with the older child while the second child is young. Of course the older child does not want to go, because finally he got used to our school.” (Interview with teacher 3.)

3. Although it is in the interest of the students that they have completed their studies at the time of signing out, that is, to have a certificate allowing them to move on, often this is not the case. Some of the families do not bring such certificates on arrival, and do not wait for its issuing at departure. In the current research, 32% of the students signed out before June, as a consequence of which they could only be enrolled in a lower grade in their new schools. The result of these kinds of student mobility is that the student will be over-aged in their new class, which may lead to emotional and behaviour disorders and the decline of learning performance. According to the data, 67% of the students who signed out from the school left Hungary: 57% returned to China and 9% travelled to another country. Forty-two per cent of the students who left the school in the first two months of the academic year returned to China, 5% to a third country, and 50% enrolled in another Hungarian school. The cumulating unfinished studies seem to be interdependent with international migration, while changing schools due to dissatisfaction is more likely to be a planned issue.

“A fifth-grade (ISCED 1B) student previously used to go to a Hungarian school, but did not get a certificate there, because he could not speak Hungarian well. He arrived to us two years ago, but due to the antecedents, we could only enrol him in third grade, although based on his age, he would have had to be a fifth-grader. At the end of the first year, we managed to squeeze a 3rd grade certificate out of him, so that he would not fail and could move on to the next year. In the summer of the very same year, he took an exam from the curriculum of the 4th grade, thus he could start the 2007-2008 academic year in the 5th class. Everyone was delighted.” (Interview with teacher 2.)

4. Owing to students' migration between countries, fragment-periods are frequent. For instance, 3.7% of those who signed out only spent a single day in the school and 12.7% stayed one month or less. Some considerably over-aged, high-school-age students who have lost several years, enrol in the school for a few days or weeks, presumably for the residence permit. The difference concerning the students' age staying in and leaving the school is significant on the $p=0.01$ level. Chart 3 displays the percentage of those leaving school by academic year. It can be observed that among younger students born in 2000-2001 and only having attended school for 1-2 years, the ratio of those staying is higher. They go to the class appropriate for their age. Among the older students, there are more who left the school ($p=0.000$). There is one exception in the charts; in the examined academic year a larger number of students born in 1992 arrived, who had to be placed in 6-7th grade based on their previous records, even though for their age they would not have to go to primary school and would have to attend 9-10th grades of secondary school.

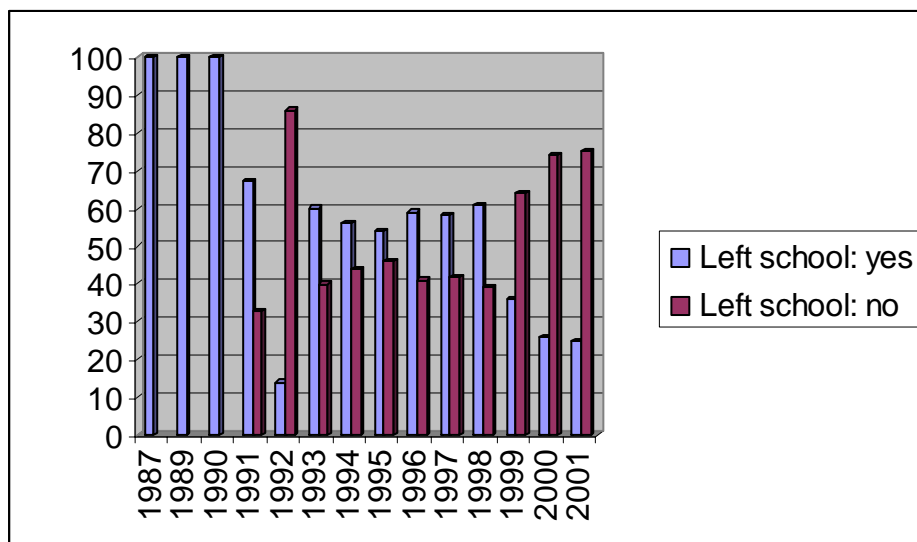


Chart 3. The ratio of students staying in and leaving the school by year of birth (%)

5. Behind the departure from school, there is a mother tongue factor, but it is more important where the student comes from. Non-Hungarian native speakers leave in a greater proportion (84.8%) than do Hungarian natives; however, the initial 20% ratio of Hungarian citizens has decreased by half since the foundation of the school.

“In one September a Hungarian family arrived with three school-age children. The father is fond of Chinese culture and he is convinced that Chinese language competence will be valuable in the future. The two older children do not want to learn here, but they were enrolled. They could not take it for long, and were taken back to a Hungarian school.” (Interview with teacher 4.)

6. When leaving the Hungarian-Chinese Bilingual Primary School, the public educational features of the chosen new school (e.g. in which country it is, its language of instruction, or its educational prestige) correlate with the characteristics of the previous school. In this sense, student fluctuation correlates partly with the migration of their family and partly with the educational expectations of the families towards public education, the quality of education at the school, and the teaching performance of the staff.

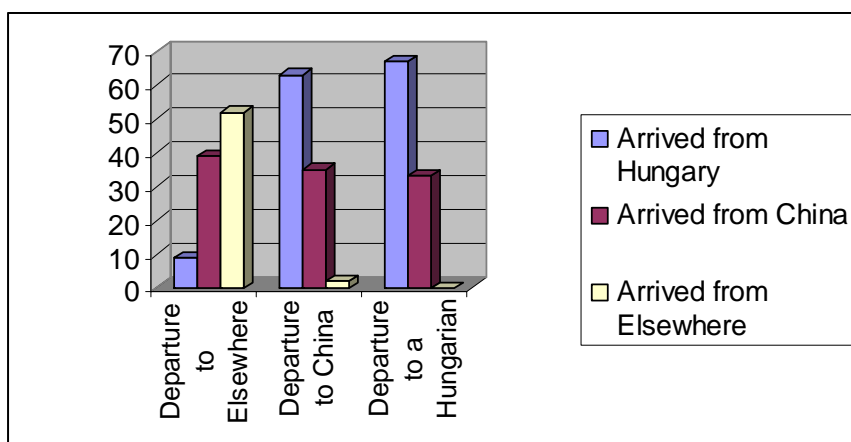


Chart 4. The relationship between students' place of origin and departure (2004-2009)

7. As shown in chart 4, the attraction of a Hungarian school in Hungary is greater for those whose children went to a Hungarian kindergarten, or learned in a Hungarian school: 52% of them return to the Hungarian language school system. Many aspects are considered by the families; some of them are not satisfied with the Hungarian language education of the school, others with the Chinese – according to the experiences of previous schooling – and hence choose a “stronger” school. As opposed to this, moving children from one country to another without any conception is not a planned process from the aspect of education.

“A fourth-grade boy from a neighboring country arrived in Hungary with his mother who worked as a prostitute. After a short time, the mother moved in with a Chinese man, who took the child to his name. For a period they lived together, but then the mother disappeared. She left the child at the father, yes, the Chinese ‘father’. The father could not deal with the child... he said he had to work and had no time. At the end of the year, he took the child and said that he would take him to China and put him in an orphanage.” (Interview with teacher 5.)

“According to a part of the parents this school is not strict enough. There is a need for more lessons, more homework, more strictness.” (Interview with teacher 6.)

8. In the case of language learning, migrant families search for its usefulness in an international context. It seems that Chinese people living in Hungary, Chinese migrants freshly arriving in Hungary, Hungarian citizens of Hungarian mother tongue, as well as people of other citizenship are not satisfied with the pedagogical programme of the Hungarian-Chinese Bilingual Primary School.

“Chinese parents tell me that there are few Chinese lessons. Other Chinese people would want more Hungarian lessons. As far as I think this is the reason why they take their children out of the school. They say that the children are speaking in Chinese at home, and their task at the school is to speak and study in Hungarian or in English. This is why they go to other schools. It is better if a school undertakes the teaching of one language, but they teach it well. Two students of mine left for the American school... Sure they had the money for it” (Interview with teacher 7.)

“A girl was taken out of the school because now it is a primary school, and the family wants to stay in Hungary and find a high school here. The girl will need to use the Hungarian language in learning; however, for those who leave the country, English is more preferable.” (Interview with teacher 8.)

Analysis of the Hypotheses

The objectives, educational principles, and educational structure set in the School’s pedagogical programme primarily favour the intercultural education of migrant employees’ children, preserving their own (Chinese) culture and encouraging integration into the host country. Stabilization of the learning community was not successful during the four years of operation. In the case of many children moving between schools was the same as changing countries, that is, defenselessness of educational processes to international migration trends also appear. After 2008 a continuous increase of the number of Hungarian children characterizes the school composition. This process and a regular attendance of the children belonging to the Chinese community of the capital give a stable basis for everyday operation.

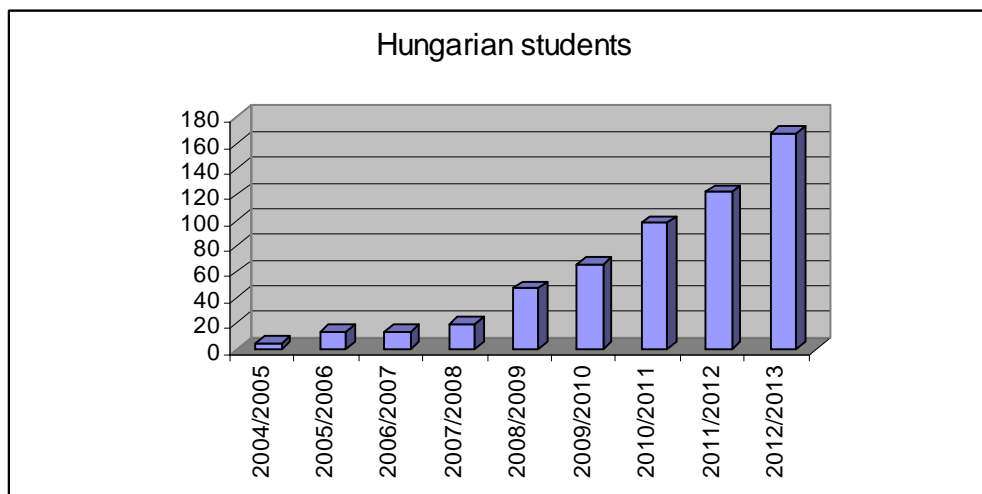


Chart 5. The increase of students of native Hungarian background. (Source: School-database provided by the school-principal, 2013.)

The types of student fluctuation and the languages of instruction of the school can relate in three ways: (1) A part of the Chinese students follow the international movement of the family. In their case, the Hungarian language of instruction of the Hungarian-Chinese Bilingual Primary School is useless; furthermore, they benefit more from the English language than from the Chinese. (2) Those students who shuttle between Hungary and China can benefit from bilingual education. (3) Those who want to continue their studies in higher education using Hungarian as the language of instruction leave the Hungarian-Chinese Bilingual Primary School to prepare for the Hungarian secondary education.

The pedagogical programme does not integrate efficient solutions for surmounting the disadvantages resulting from the students' fragmented knowledge, nor is it prepared to remediate the problems of possibly traumatized migrant children. Pedagogical practice depends on the individual effort of the educators; the quality shows huge differences, mainly in relation to experience and preparedness.

The research results focusing on the period from 2004 to 2008 did not justify the hypothesis that the Hungarian-Chinese Bilingual Primary School is attractive for children with Hungarian citizenship and mother tongue because of the possibility of learning the Chinese language, nor the one stating that those Chinese families who stay in Hungary for a longer period of time make good use of the Hungarian language. The academic year 2008-2009 brought a change in this perspective: by that time the media-coverage, the experience of Hungarian pupils and parents had spread and more and more Hungarian families started to show their interest toward this multicultural institution.

Conclusion

As a result of the research it can be concluded that student mobility has been typical from the first academic year onward in the Hungarian-Chinese Bilingual Primary School in the first half of its operation (2004-2008). Since grades 1-4 were populated at the same time, in the first year, the greatest student mobility could be experienced in the highest, 4th grade. This is where those students enrolled who, based on their age and previous studies, could have gone to grades 5, 6 or even higher. In the latter years as well, the highest grade was the "collector" of over-aged students. Among the students who slowly got to know one another at the beginning of the year, new students arrived and others left, so the number of students in each class increased and decreased. According to remarks in the interviews and observations made during class-visits, the gender, age, and mother-tongue compositions were continuously transforming. Group processes were continuously re-arranged and new interpersonal relationships evolved; the inside norm-system changed, and roles were transformed. Under such circumstances, keeping to the plan of education and teaching can be problematic. The pedagogical programme and teaching staff of the school have given various kinds of pedagogical support in order that students could deal with their own language and with that of the host country

alike. However, these did not influence the ambitions of those families who moved in the international field; simultaneously, the standpoint of those families who leave the school because they want their children to go to an exclusively Hungarian language school is also understandable. A certain dissatisfaction may play a role in this decision, at the root of which the high public educational expectations of Chinese families for more intensive education and student-load leading to higher students' performance can be determined.

The research showed that the level of Chinese language education of the school was not satisfactory for those who wished to continue their secondary school studies in China, just like the level of Hungarian language was not satisfactory for those who planned to continue in a Hungarian secondary school. Moreover, for those who would continue their lives in a third country, English language learning was the priority. These problems were exacerbated by the fact that the school is isolated in the Hungarian public educational system as well as by the segregation of Chinese students within the school itself. By 2013 it became obvious that in addition to the Chinese families, the school has found another target group, some Hungarian families, who by forcing the regular school-attendance of their children ensure the smooth operation of the institution.

The Hungarian-Chinese Bilingual Primary School established in Budapest meets the EU directives on the education of migrant students, since it teaches the language of the host country as a foreign language adjusted to the demands of Chinese and other migrant students. In its pedagogical programme, it strives for intercultural education, yet, for many reasons that need to be analyzed further; it is not sure whether it can keep Chinese, Hungarian, or students of other nationalities in the long run.

Different ways of promoting the integration of Chinese children into the Hungarian public education system should be investigated; for example, students should study in schools where Hungarian is the language of instruction and Chinese language and culture could be learnt as a subject.

Further research is required to extend the actual investigation, in order to find out the specialities and tasks of public education in a transit country. Furthermore, those students and their parents who leave the Hungarian-Chinese Bilingual Primary School should also be questioned about the reasons, motivation, requirements, and intentions related to education so as to get a deeper insight into the shaping of the students' learning efficiency.

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