LITERARY BIOGRAPHIES WITHOUT A FIXED LINGUISTIC ABODE

Elina Mikkilä
Independent scholar
elina.mikkila@yahoo.com

Abstract: The article portrays an emerging generation of authors who have acquired a foreign language (in this case German) as a means of their literary expression. Firstly, endeavors of literary scholars to describe the currently booming 'migration literature' in its historical development are introduced. I then go on to propose a typology of non-monolingual literary writing based on such authors' language biographies. By considering the underlying (socio)linguistic contexts, this approach mirrors my personal experience as a Finnish researcher-author writing in an acquired language, German. It draws attention to the role that a language – i.e. the very instrument of authors' expression – takes in the ongoing process of non-monolingual literary identity formation. By linking the poetological reflections of the long-established, naturally bilingual 'migration authors' with my (autobiographical) observations on the gradually emerging discourse of 'culturally bilingual writers', the second part of the paper addresses the following issues: the repercussions of normative language learning on the literary writing process; the effects of writing in an acquired language on the literary practice; the impressions of non-belonging and disorientation triggered by the sensation of (socio)linguistic inferiority; the ever-changing construction of meaning in a rhizomatic/hybrid creation process and the emergence of a unique voice out of the multitude of possible combinations; the creative and empowering potential of minority discourses in a world on the move, in which non-monolingual writing is seen as one of the most significant contributions to contemporary literature.

Keywords: cultural bi- and multilingualism, (elite) bilingualism, inter- and transcultural identities, L2, language learning, literary practice, migration literature, non-monolingual writing, poetics

BABBLE, BABBEL, BABEL

Some years ago, I held a series of workshops in diverse international and interdisciplinary settings, experimenting with linguistic multiplicity.[1] For this purpose, an excerpt from my autofictional prose narrative with the title *Mütter Land*[2] was translated into the participants' mother tongues by an online

translator. Since the original piece was written in dense literary German, the digital translating process rendered highly unpredictable interlingual outcomes.

A nonsense coinage recurring in these translations allows me to performatively *show*[3] the non-monolingual meaning-making process. The word at the origin of the neologism in question – 'heimkomme' – means 'I come home'. Out of this German first-person singular, the Internet translator created in several target languages the peculiar word '(I/i)mkomme'.[4]

Since the word was generated in a split second, the academic term *Ad-hoc-Bildung* popped up in my head. This term soon appeared to me as a twofold *sign* for L2 acquisition.[5] Firstly, it combines Latin – which, for each one of us, represents a foreign language – in order to form a compound belonging to German linguistic jargon. Secondly, its English equivalent, 'nonce word', evokes *on the spot* an association with the word 'nonsense'. The latter, in its turn, establishes a parallel to the semantic cacophony resulting from the digital translation process. Absurdly enough, this kind of sensitivity for the materiality of language from a multilingual vantage point links non-monolingual writing with the postmodern experimental literary tradition.[6]

The specific nonce word started to disclose itself to me in a multilingual deciphering process. According to my general observations, the online translator proposes an English word in the case of a more complicated expression, for which it lacks an equivalent in the target language. In the beginning of 'Imkomme' I now identified the English verb phrase 'I'm', which – 'by the law of the strongest' – had intruded the smaller language translations. This was a coincidence of semantic pertinence, given that the autofictional excerpt displays the interior monologue of a naturally bilingual protagonist. In the automatic translation process the German prefix 'heim-' (home) had been substituted by the English self-declaration 'I'm'. Interpreted in terms of the symbolic order, coming home suddenly equaled to finding oneself through (a new) language. This reminded me that the realm of language(s) is the place that migration authors themselves often view as their 'home' (cf., e.g., Dinev 2004). As by a fortunate coincidence (brought into being in a translingual third space), the excerpt's first-person narrator of Ukrainian origin practices German spelling while climbing a fence separating her from her new friends in a still foreign living environment.

Speaking of spelling: on the phonetic level it occurred to me that the German 'h' is silent in the Romance languages (French, Italian, Spanish). Coupled with the fact that in German 'ei' is pronounced /aɪ/, the English /aɪm/ coincided with the pronunciation of 'heim-', when viewed from the *perspective* of phonetic 'code switching' within a single word. A late cue for a multilingual subject that makes eve(n/r) more sense with each new language?

Illustrating the confusing complexity of the multilingual and multicultural identity formation process, the deciphering of the non(sen)/s/ word required time and patience until creative answers emerged out of my pool of internalized polysemous knowledge. The computer-aided translations – which, due to the language-specific multilayered meanings in the original excerpt, would have stimulated most professional translators' creative ambition – were uniquely *challenging* to comprehend.

Such dynamic polysystems with constant interpenetrations, osmoses, symbioses and hybridizations (Wandruszka 1979: 314–315) restage Derrida's concept of différ*a*nce. In such an ongoing semiosis one is, time and time again, cast back to the beginning, which – given the accumulating associations – manifests itself from a slightly different perspective. Very much like the paradoxical childhood memories of the bilingual protagonist in her monologue.

Should a feeling of familiar disorientation catch the (scientific) reader, my introductory remarks will paradoxically have functioned according to the logic of coherent/noncoherent (*stimmig / nichtstimmig*), defined by Niklas Luhmann (1995: 366) as the binary code for art in his system theory. Comparable irritations in my paper may appear strange at first: even if these deliberate moments of intersystemic contamination go with the topic, they run contrary to our expectations. Whenever they succeed in questioning our blind reading habits, my chosen form of mise-en-scène will have explained itself. Such cross-genre experiments aim to intensify the readers' role in the co-creation of a text characterized by growing complication, similar to the ever-changing meaning construction in the process of plurilingual semiosis. Remaining an indefinite work in progress at the crossroads of literary studies and creative writing, I intend to amalgamate form with content, (re)searching as a literature-based scholar to match *how* something is expressed with *what* is being said. This seems particularly appropriate in a paper, which – by a related coincidence – deals with the question of finding an idiolectal home within a subject writing beyond fixed linguistic abodes.

LITERARY HOME ON THE MOVE

A beloved child has many names, as a popular Finnish saying puts it. This seems to hold true for 'migration literature', which – as a genre currently booming in the German-speaking world – has attracted a whole array of terms:

> *"Foreigners' literature"; "guest [worker]"*[7], *"immigrant", "emigration",*
> *"migrant" or "migration literature"; "minority literature"; "intercultural",*

> *"multicultural", "German guest literature"; "literature without a fixed*
> *abode"; "literature of foreign lands"; "German literature seen from the*
> *outside"; "literature on the topic of migration" or "not only German*
> *[literature]".* (Drossou & Kara 2009: 4)

Manifest in this reception is the semantic shift from expressions revealing social bias – e.g. 'Gastarbeiter (or guest worker) literature' – to more politically correct, partially complicated compounds such as 'literature by German-language authors of non-German mother tongue'.

In this vein of decreasing markedness, the term 'literature without fixed abode' (*Literatur ohne festen Wohnsitz*[8]) seems appropriate for describing our increasingly nomadic lifestyles. The built-in pun with the double meaning 'literature on the move' and 'literature of the homeless' reminds me of Zygmunt Bauman's 'tourists' and 'vagabonds', i.e. those who travel the world in search of ever new highs and those who are obliged to migrate. This dichotomy is dissolved by Sandra Gugić through the oxymoron 'precarious jet-set' (Hausenblas 2015), which she, an Austrian writer with Serbian roots, uses to describe her commuting between Vienna and Berlin, thereby addressing the paradoxical movement between the different poles within one's bilingual self.

But before getting too far off the (beaten) track, let us return to the above literary terms. They can be considered to offer migration authors a sense of belonging outside the majority norm. The writers themselves – seemingly skeptical of every pigeonhole that ignores the existential rootlessness or the abundance of alternatives associated with their path of life – feel, however, wrongly compartmentalized. Be it the out-of-the-box way of thinking that comes with non-monolingual world understanding or the memories associated with stigmatized identities, the authors in question often refuse to be reduced to (writing about) their origins.[9] Are they acting in protest against inspired scholars who come up with ever new terms wanting to *capture* a genre on the move? Or are discriminated minorities prone to counterproductive seclusion, in (self-)denial of their own individual experiences of otherness?

LANGUAGE-BIOGRAPHICAL TYPOLOGY

When I discovered the newly published research on German-language migration literature a decade ago, I had just spent a year at the Swiss Literature Institute, where many of today's renowned authors writing in German learned their craft. The experience had challenged my German-speaking identity (of Austrian provenance) to a point where I began to ask myself: which of my language changes – the one from my native Finnish to acquired German or the one

from academic to literary writing within the latter – had been more challenging? I devoured the studies like a novel with which one identifies. At the end of one of the volumes I discovered, presented as a future research objective, the desire to investigate the quantitative and qualitative contribution of editors to the German language of migration authors (Bürger-Koftis 2008b: 245). Against the backdrop of the linguistic challenges associated with non-monolingual literary writing, regularly voiced by the research subjects (even in the anthology in question), this aspiration – which I as a literary scholar would simply have ignored as unrealistic – appeared to be thoroughly insensitive.

My intuition, rising from my double peer perspective, was to propose a typology of today's German-language literature emerging from distinct non-monolingual contexts, based on the linguistic biographies of bilingual or non-native authors (Mikkilä 2018: 4–8). By the term 'language biography' I understand the type of bi- (or multi)lingual socialization that writers currently referred to as 'migration authors' have been subject to.[10] Thus, the typology applies sociolinguistic concepts of bilingualism to describe the distinct subgroups of an emerging literary genre. Whereas this classification initially relies on my knowledge of the German-language literature scene, I want to propose it for discussion in a wider linguistic context:

1) The most prominent group is likely to be that of **naturally bilingual authors** who grew up with two languages from childhood (or early youth). The most probable means of literary expression of these writers is the language in which they were both educated and socialized – i.e. the language of the surrounding majority society rather than the language of origin of their parent(s).

2) Another group of **naturally bilingual authors** is that **of linguistic minorities** with a mother tongue different from the country's main language: under adequate educational and sociocultural conditions such a community provides writers with native-like language skills as well as a peripheral observer position favorable for literary expression.

3) **Diglossic authors** are excluded in an understanding of non-monolingual writing that currently defines alterity in terms of the authors' foreign language background. Apart from the arbitrary character of the distinction 'language vs. dialect', writing in a dialectal variety of the standard language shares attributes of the two previous groups: this is a type of early bilingual socialization and the chosen means of expression represents a minority perspective.[11]

4) **Foreign-language authors** also tend to fall off the radar of national philologies which rather co-opt 'linguistically immigrated' writers in the context of 'migration literature'.[12] While these migrants continue to write in their

native tongue, their minority lifeworld within the local linguistic majority is per se non-monolingual. The highly different migration backgrounds of these authors vary from forced exile to voluntary expatriate life.

5) **'Culturally bilingual' authors** have themselves developed skills permitting literary writing in an acquired language. Apart from a few exceptions, this group is only gradually emerging as a new generation of 'migration literature'.

Continuing in the vein of the literary terms associated with migration literature cited above, the proposed typology intends itself as emancipatory and empowering. By taking into consideration the variety of vulnerable positions, it allows to form identificatory bonds among the representatives within a particularly inclusive concept of non-monolingual writing. This identificatory 'do-it-yourself' aspect echoes such sociological and postcolonial concepts as 'patchwork', 'nomadic', and 'hybrid identity'. Given that the self-definitions of minorities become ever more specific, labels play an identity-establishing function in our society as a whole. While the framework of the language-biographical groups lays down the linguistic conditions for each type of non-monolingual authorship, their variably permeable boundaries permit a certain degree of movement (instead of trapping the authors in their past).[13] After all, both the term 'migration literature' and all its follow-up names imply that the genre, itself, is on the move.

WE CULTURALLY BILINGUAL AUTHORS

In our globalized society there is a growing chance that one's literary language gets chosen on the basis of a subtle interplay of external circumstances, social conditions, sociological value judgements, biographical coincidences, and the reactions of the authors to these generally complex, in many ways overdetermined, situations (Kremnitz 2015 [2004]: 246).

It just might, therefore, be high time to replace the noun 'migrant' in the term 'migration literature' by the word 'tourist' (Franczak et al. 2018). This suggestion by the Hungarian-German writer, sound and visual poet Kinga Tóth, alludes to the fundamental difference between the long-established naturally bilingual authors and the subgroup of emerging non-native writers in the above typology: the latter have acquired the target language later in life, on their own initiative.

Since the acquisition of language skills enabling literary writing usually takes several years, early bilingualism has long prevailed among migration authors (e.g. Spoerri 2008: 199). In the German-language context these writers

are, owing to evident historical reasons, for the most part second-generation immigrants of Turkish or East European[14] origin. Only after the turn of the millennium young authors who left their country after the fall of the Iron Curtain have started to emerge (Ackermann 2008: 19).

In the meanwhile, the voluntary movement of people is accelerating and diversifying – be it for professional reasons (such as company mergers, employment at NGOs, etc.) or on private grounds, for example pensioners settling down in the south, mixed marriages, student exchange, domiciles of choice (cf. Blioumi 2006: 19). This lays the foundation for another type of migration literature by individuals who seem to fit the definition of 'elite bilinguals':

> … *people for whom becoming bilingual usually constitutes a free choice … This applies to all the middle- and upper-class children and young people who travel, live a few years abroad, receive scholarships to study in other countries, children of academics, diplomats, employees at different international organizations, businessmen, etc. … This kind of elite bilingualism … has been viewed as something positive, as a kind of supplementary enrichment on an individual level.* (Skutnabb-Kangas 1981: 78, 79; Engl. by E.M.)

Despite the fact of not having had this type of bilingual upbringing in my youth, I caught myself identifying with Skutnabb-Kangas's definition. Like-minded individuals can be predicted to emerge (as a result of, for instance, the European mobility programs giving rise to a growing number of academic nomads). However, the term 'cultural bilingualism' – i.e. the definition closest to the Finnish-Swedish linguist's notion of 'elite bilingualism' (Skutnabb-Kangas 1981: 97, 99; cf. also Okkonen 2005: 18) – seems to describe this type of ever-growing (linguistic) mobility more adequately, since one can hardly speak of an elite feeling against the backdrop of deficient language skills.[15]

When Catalin Dorian Florescu, a Swiss author of Rumanian origin, states that migration authors deliver good German-language literature in a language that is better than that of some native colleagues, he speaks from the point of view of early bilingual socialization – and, even in this case, together with ample reflections on his linguistic uncertainties. This leads Bürger-Koftis (2008a: 10) to see in Florescu's statement both the traces of previously experienced discrimination and the self-confidence of a new European generation. Like in Gugić's oxymoron above, both are simultaneously true – according to a bilingual logic, in which 'A' is 'A' but can be 'non-A' at the same time (Saad 1997/98). Apart from interlingual homonyms and homophones, this proposition seems to apply to the paradoxical feeling of (under)privileged bilingualism – both on a personal and social level.

The trend of 'culturally bilingual' writing is – literally – (only) starting to *find its expression* within German-language migration literature. In the second decade of the twenty-first century, such authors enjoyed a rather impressive start, as the main German-language literature contest for new literary talents, the Ingeborg-Bachmann-Preis, was won by five women with a migrant background. Four of these authors – Olga Martynova, Katja Petrowskaja, Sharon Dodua Otoo, and Tanja Maljartschuk – acquired their German skills as a result of a later, self-initiated immigration.

While the above shows that changing one's literary language is possible, it is an unlikely, highly demanding transformation process. Given the close relationship between language(s), language learning, emotions, and identity (Hu 2003: 13), both linguistic and psychological factors play a decisive role in this development (cf., e.g., Amati Mehler & Argentieri & Canestri 2003 [1990]). The fact that the above Bachmannpreis laureates were between 35 and 50 years old when they won this award for *up-and-coming* writers is indicative of the challenges associated with acquiring a new literary language later in life.

The average age of the cited winners being 43 years, there is a tendency towards the non-native writers getting younger. On the one hand, this development can be seen in relation to the worldwide increase in migration flows and its influence on our mental mobility. Lately, literary writing beyond the linguistic 'purity requirement' has been met with growing public interest and acceptance (Straňáková 2010: 388; cf. also Deutsch als Muttersprache 2018). A more linguistically and culturally mixed population shows more tolerance towards unconventional language use (such as strong accents and incorrect command of grammar, as in the case of the above-mentioned laureates).

On the other hand, the fact that ever younger writers with late, self-initiated bilingual socialization emerge, shows the significance of role models. It is striking to see that three out of the four Bachmann prizewinners come – like it is the case for most of the naturally bilingual writers in the German-speaking world – from Eastern Europe. Is this because of a particular horizon of expectation within the German-language literary reception? Or is there a desire to erase a first language associated with social bias (whereas authors not subjected to such value judgements would continue to write in their mother tongue, even in the foreign-language environment)?

Moving in a new direction: what type of poetological changes do I observe from the long-established 'migration literature' to the gradually emerging discourse of 'culturally bilingual writers' from my peer perspective? I will discuss the key aspects of this shift with the aid of figuratively associated computer-translated quotations from the prose scene used in the aforementioned workshops (the German original of which can be found at the end of this paper). With the

subsequent questions resulting from this analytic-aesthetic juxtaposition, I hope to tease the reader's imagination: 1) Obeying or subversive imagery – how does the age at which the father tongue intervenes with language learning affect one's literary rhetoric? 2) What is this nonsense of writing in an acquired language doing to the literary style? 3) Does writing from a *perspective* of (socio)linguistic inferiority imply an observer position on the lonely side of the fence? 4) Can following a rhizomatic writing path finally lead writers of our globalized society (to a unique kind of) home? 5) Non-monolingual minority writers, unite – to shape the wor(l)d on the move with your adopted tongue(?)!

EMOTIONLESS 'FATHER TONGUE' VS. 'OTHERLINGUAL' AUDACITY

> *… to whom I would get Snow White Balls*
> *if the cold had not been faster than*
> *he had already seen the brilliant red caravan…*[16]

Historic(al) examples of authors, who have become bilingual later in life, remain *rare exceptions* (in the double sense of the expression): quantitatively only a few, there are prominent 'exceptions to the rule'.

Probably the most significant representative of the 'old(-school) guard' of non-native authors, Samuel Beckett, tried to erase every trace of his mother tongue, striving for absolute perfection in French. A difficult maternal relationship has been suggested to be at the root of this attempt, overcome in Beckett's late auto-translations, in which the author found a form of playfulness in his mother tongue, absent in his French writing (Casement 1982: 35, 42). This psychoanalytical analysis is all the more interesting, as it is rather the 'father tongue' (in the Lacanian sense of *père* symbolizing *loi*) that is at the origin of such a development – as suggested by the particularities of language learning.

During the process of adapting our first language(s), the development of implicit linguistic knowledge derived from verbal output is followed by that of deliberately acquired explicit (metalinguistic) knowledge (Zanetti & Tonelli & Piras 2010: 176, 177). When acquiring further languages later in life, we traditionally start with their normative use (vocabulary and grammar). It is only with a growing command that we learn to employ them intuitively. This difference is of great importance in the context of non-native literary writing because it complicates the expression of emotional connotations.

> *You say "I love you" and feel nothing. You say "I hate you" and feel nothing.*
> *You only feel when you translate it inside. In the language of childhood.*

> *In the language in which Father cursed and the first girl demanded of me.* (Florescu 2001: 33, Engl. by Google Translate)

Florescu's musings show that our first language carries a particular importance for our psychological development and the way in which we capture and structure our lifeworld (Kremnitz 2015 [2004]: 28). The lack of emotional intuition in the language that an author has acquired as his/her means of expression exerts a particularly penalizing effect on the literary communication process, since these nuances are central to the poetic function of language.

Moving from the exegetical interpretation to a positivistic perspective, Beckett's French writing suggests that a greater emotional distance in an acquired language allows to deal with painful memories – as even the words that had left so many scars cease to hurt in the new language (Young 2007: 235). Shifting one's point of view allows to consider writing in an acquired language as an asset (mental flexibility generally being of advantage in language learning).

From this new vantage point, the late acquisition of a language appears to auto-attenuate the inhibiting effect of normative language learning on the literary writing process. Given that societal regulations of the 'father tongue' are not internalized in the acquired language from early on, the absence of such culturally mediated obstacles (Okkonen 2005: 29–30) invites the non-native writer to approach the foreign language with provocative audacity (Winkler 2008: 115).

LINGUISTIC STUMBLING BLOCKS AS EXPERIMENTAL CATALYSTS

> *I climb the chain-saw fence around my nigelnagelne kindergarten*
> *and practice the foreign language while placing my feet*
> *in the ma ma, meshes from the metal wire wire of the Za Za, us us…*[17]

My experience suggests that formal learning fosters normatively correct language use, which may interfere with the spontaneous-emotional creation process (for definition, cf. Dietrich 2004: 1019–1020). Although this seems perfectly logical in view of the specificities of language learning discussed above, the actual outcomes are far more personal. Yoko Tawada, an early representative of culturally bilingual writing, finds that her thoughts cling so tightly to the words in the native tongue that neither the former nor the latter can fly freely (Tawada 1994).

The perspective of the Japanese-German author is refreshing, given that the first impulse is (still) to think that words must be well grounded before they

can take off. Since literary practice requires a differentiated command of the writing language, this is most likely to be the case in our native language(s), in which we have the finest idiomatic nuances and associated emotional connotations at our disposal. Consequently, culturally bilingual authors address a subjectively felt, existential sensation of linguistic inferiority (cf., e.g., Dimitré Dinev interviewed by Christa Stippinger (2000: 43)). As performatively shown by the automatic translations of some of the quotations in this paper, they are likely to experience great difficulty or even inability to express fine distinctions in the target language, as language-specific subtleties get lost in the intercultural translation process.

The consequences of the linguistic limitations of one's idiolect (= distinct personal language) on the literary practice are characterized by a double bind of practical difficulty and translingual uniqueness. Despite (or even thanks to) the associated linguistic insufficiencies and hesitations, the self-imposed restriction of writing in an acquired language may work as an innovation catalyst. In the sense that non-native authors subject themselves to creating within a restricted set of expressions, this form of literary writing can be considered to renew the experimental constraints practiced by the French avant-garde group OULIPO in the 1960s–1970s. The recent change in *perspective*, i.e. our acceptance of – and growing fascination for – 'otherlingual' expressions, serves as an extrinsic encouragement to view non-native writing as a creative asset.

Well before these kinds of contaminations caught on, the culturally bilingual poet Dragica Rajčić practiced a subversive orthography that defies other-directedness by refusing to conform to the point of indistinguishability (Spoerri 2008: 207). Or is the Croatian-born Swiss 'guest author' simply courageous enough to spell her 'steppmouther tongue' (Engl. by E.M.) the way she perceives it, like a child discovering certain words for the first time?[18] The anti-authoritarian slips of her imperfect diction challenge all those who view otherness as clearly attributable (ibid.: 207–208).

The defamiliarizing *character* of the poetic function of language combined with that of the non-native linguistic background transgresses conventional rules in a double gesture, allowing to transform inadequacy into inventive richness. This competence might in part explain why migration authors are more and more appreciated for their imperfect, idiosyncratic language use.

The strong inner critic or super-ego, as demonstrated by Beckett's example, becomes substituted by an external paternalistic perspective, thus reducing the migration author to a product of successful cultural transfer in the age of multiculturalism (Braunsperger 2003). Today's non-monolingual writers are considered to enrich their own language – by re-examining it with the undisguised view of the linguistic emigrant (ibid.), by broadening its vocabulary

and idioms (Ilija Trojanow[19] as cited in Hübner 2008: 93), and by introducing new perspectives, motives, and themes (Kucher 2008: 189). The underlying dichotomous thought pattern is governed by one's own interest: what does the foreign writer bring us?

POETOLOGICAL HOMES OF (NON-)BELONGING

… when Mama goes away, I will hang on the fence and wish me on the other side – just as my goldfish Miša stole out of Uncle Griša's gigantic revelation…[20]

Island life sharpens the view. Or: island existence improves one's vision? (Rakusa 2006: 227, Engl. by Google Translate and by E.M., respectively) Mirrored by the experience of linguistic destabilization, migration literature has proven to be particularly apt in describing feelings of disorientation and deracination. While the polyglot Swiss book prize winner of Hungarian origin, Ilma Rakusa, seems to have *arrived*, the Austrian-Slovenian Bachmannpreis laureate Maja Haderlap is still searching: once you have slipped from one language to the other, you also slip yourself and do not know if this journey will ever lead you to a safe place (Haderlap 2011: 36, Engl. by Google Translate). In the case of the aforementioned Florescu, his linguistic markedness or involuntary non-assimilation motivates the rewriting of himself; the problem is that one does not want to attract attention, every attention being a sign of non-belonging (Florescu 2001: 33, Engl. by E.M.). These are just three variations on the theme of not understanding or being understood during bicultural translation processes – as seen from the linguistically privileged position of naturally bilingual authors.[21] Why does this lifeworld sometimes feel underprivileged?

Emilia Smechowski's (2017) autobiographical essay-novel *Wir Strebermigranten* (We Overachiever Migrants) depicts her Polish family's attempts to assimilate in the sociolinguistic context of the post-Cold War Germany. The attitudes of the majority population towards Polish are characterized by linguicism, i.e. contempt for this language and the people speaking it. Even though Smechowski regrets the loss of her mother tongue, she yields to the imposed 'father tongue' (thus uniting both parents' new idiom). The low sociocultural prestige of her first language leads to an exemplary integration process, at the cost of her Polish skills.

The described phenomenon of first language attrition can, to some extent, also concern authors writing in a foreign-language environment (be it in L1 or in the respective L2). In Smechowski's case, it involves a movement from lost natural to self-acquired cultural bilingualism by an individual rediscovering

of her *mother* tongue later in life, together with her baby child. Her example illustrates the empowering character of the proposed language-biographical typology, reminding us that the crises of migrant experience come with a chance for linguistic creativity.

Metaphors in the semantic fields of nonconformity and isolation typically associated with migration literature grow obsolete in a society of increased global mobility with its multilayered manifestations of diversity and alterity. Equally overdue is the necessity to transcend hegemonic power relations present in the still prevailing appropriation, overcoming or cancellation of the 'foreigner' (cf. Leskovec 2009: 31). How about a Möbius strip that seamlessly unites the non-native writer's rich *perspective* with personally experienced incongruence?

The topos of being an outsider, together with the associated feelings of exclusion, is just another variation on the observer position that literary writers more generally describe as their home terrain. The position on the periphery, which the stranger shares with the emigrant, allows for a relativizing view that in(c/v)ites to encompass the limits of the acknowledged discourse (cf. Mitgutsch 1997: 25). Given that 'aesthetic alterity' – characterized by ambiguity and indeterminacy (Leskovec 2009: 104) – is a feature of the multi-coded poetic function of language, is the idiom of bilingual and non-native writers *eventually* ideally suited for literary expression?

UNIQUE VOICES ARISING AT HYBRID INTERSECTIONS

> *… I do not go to my* playschool *as usual in the afternoon,*
> *but rather take the chance to find my way back home…*[22]

The multi- or translingual analysis of the neologism 'Imkomme' at the beginning of this paper *shows* (rather than describes) the large associative fields originating in the hybrid space where different languages meet. Deciphering such interlinguistic interferences alludes to the recipients' changing role when confronted with a literary genre, in which "'write' the other languages, 'writes' e.g. the first language often with"[23] (Schweiger 2010: 36, from German by Google Translate).

Describing such moments as "Stolpersteine" (Engl. stumbling blocks), which perturb our perception, throws us off the track, and forces us to pause (Leskovec 2009: 246), illustrates the intercultural meaning-making process on a metalevel: the word 'Stolperstein' evokes, in addition to its common denotation 'obstacle', the additional connotation of commemorative metal plates that have been mounted into numerous streets in Germany and Austria, in front of the homes

of the people deported during World War II. Co-evoked are – (only) for those familiar with the double meaning – all the associated stories demonstrating our performative cultural interactions, cultural gaps, and hybrid formations, individual and collective multiple identities (cf. Csáky 2011: 140).

In our globalized world the creators of such hybrid literary landscapes may be seen as the pioneers of a future characterized by multi-ethnicity and multiculturalism (Hadzibeganovic[24] 2005: 8). Assuming that an author's literary individuation involves a translation process of arbitrarily combined language pairs, a nearly infinite number of language-biographical positions will emerge among future generations of non-monolingual writers. The rhizomatic aesthetics already present in today's migration literature – with its different levels of languages and/or cultural references interconnected in a variety of ways without clearly identifiable or separable sources, nor a recognizable hierarchy (Vlasta 2010a: 340) – *rambles* from the inner- to an intertextual third space. An incomprehensible literary potential resembling Raymond Queneau's poetry volume *Cent Mille Milliards de poèmes* (1961), in which the fourteen lines of the ten sonnets, cut apart, generate 100,000,000,000,000 poems.

Just as our transcultural fantasies begin to fly (too high), even the inhuman translator-genius struggles to make sense of "the 'germs of a new world literature' that constituted the stranger, or rather the new home and aesthetically designed"[25] (Hadzibeganovic 2005: 8; Engl. by Google Translate). Read symbolically (this time with a wink at non-native writers instead of Lacan), this virtual coincidence implies that the hegemony of national literatures is nowhere near to be shattered. The sense of belonging of those whose identity defies linguistic and cultural boundaries; on the contrary, it gets pieced together 'aus freien (Bruch)Stücken', i.e., 'out of bits and pieces' (or 'out of broken pieces').

The polyphony of narratives in another experimental volume by the above-mentioned language artist (Queneau 1947) illustrates with its – more moderate – just under a hundred variations of the same story the piecing together of a non-monolingual lifeworld out of individual intercultural combinations. By analogy with Paul Ricœur's '*mêmeté*' (sameness) and '*ipséité*' (individual selfhood), the short narratives can be viewed as a metaphor for an identity formation process, during which non-monolingual writers maintain a core sense of self whilst viewing themselves through different lenses and transferring these nuanced viewpoints to various ways of expression.

The emergence of a unique, authentic voice out of the multitude of possible stories and means of expression is what constitutes an author's idiolect. This maturation process takes place in a dialectical interaction between identificatory and emancipatory forces. In the case of non-monolingual literary writing, it is intensified by the particularly complex (and therefore naturally prolonged)

formation of a culturally bi- (or multi)lingual self. Thanks to the greater distance – both to the acquired language itself and in terms of the life path covered while learning it – poetological reflection about one's own writing not seldom guides the literary quest of authors who have left their original linguistic territory.[26]

EMPOWERING NON-MONOLINGUAL MINORITY DISCOURSES

> *… I want to scream, it was not meant!, But no sound comes out*
> *until someone pours hot water over my mouth…*[27]

Minority discourses offer both critical and 'seismological' meanings that have the creative and empowering potential to deconstruct and challenge dominant positions. Their present relevance can be explained by the growing complexity of our lifeworld – a world reminiscent of the multiple coding inherent in literary language, in which the binary logic of traditional intercultural hermeneutics is no longer tenable (Leskovec 2009: 4, cf. also Hübner 2008: 88). A literature marked by the hybridity of intercultural and interlinguistic connotations exposes the anachronistic character of a logic that fails to take into account the increasing heterogenization of our societies. The kind of reasoning that argues in the form of national or paternalistic dichotomies, merging pluralistic views by neutralizing the stranger and sidestepping disturbing manifestations of the other.

Are we talking at cross-purposes? Possibly. After all, our increasingly pluralistic society is in a liminal phase, characterized by a struggle to overcome all too comforting dichotomous thinking patterns. The great challenge consists of us as observers being amidst something that is only coming into being, so that we can only catch an inadequate appreciation of the ever-changing situation at a given time (cf. Varto 2009: 37; Ette 2016).

In an ongoing creative process of identity formation, self-transformations become one's second nature, as our identities grow increasingly complex, decentered and transitory (cf. Straub 2015: 167, 181). Given the polyphonic aesthetic concept characteristic of migration literature (Vlasta 2010b: 435), the hybrid artistic identities and cross-genre means of expression of ever more writers[28] can hardly be assessed properly from a mono-scientific or hierarchical viewpoint.

In the same pluralistic vein, bilingual writers are likely to possess skills in more than just two languages, each new one profiting from the existing comparative linguistic knowledge. Acquiring multiple languages helps to gain a pronounced, both liberating and self-reflexive understanding of a language in its materiality: multilingualism fosters both metalinguistic awareness and the development of metacognitive strategies (Jessner 2003: 30), enhances lin-

guistic sensitivity (Zierau 2010: 434), and promotes complex thinking, mental flexibility and creativity (Zanetti & Tonelli & Piras 2010: 180).

Are non-monolingual authors, therefore, predestined to expand the boundaries of our thinking? Manifestations of the irritating, incongruent, non-fitting and contaminating mark a starting point for shifts in meaning (Dannenbeck 2002: 291, paraphrased by Scherke 2011: 90). The signature features of translingual rhetoric – ambivalence, double meaning, and polysemy – point to a key resource in our multilingual society: ambiguity tolerance. My own experience suggests that repeated linguistic, cultural, and discursive changes in perspective lead to the emergence of a metaperspective, which allows to register so-called speaking details that the directly involved seem to ignore.

In our world on the move the migrant is suggested to become a leading figure (Löffler 2014: 11). In view of the currently rather *exclusive* circle of migration authors, the inherent '*distinction*' – in a revised Bourdieusian sense – seems to provide these writers with future-oriented (inter)cultural capital. Literature emerging from non-monolingual contexts might, indeed, be on the way to claim its position as the most interesting and significant contribution to contemporary literature (Bürger-Koftis 2008b: 239; Hielscher 2006: 199, Amodeo & Hörner & Kiemle 2009: 7). Given the creative potential simmering in multilingualism, there is a myriad of new meanings to be discovered in literary writing that comes into being beyond the monolingual context.

CONCLUSION

The currently booming migration literature is a genre on the move. Analytic discourses surrounding this literary expression do well in adopting a similar kind of flexibility. Starting with an inclusive typology of non-monolingual literary writing, I have portrayed a generation of 'culturally bilingual' authors who have acquired a second language later in life. Against the backdrop of my own experience as a researcher-author writing in a foreign language, I have discussed a number of factors shaping such a gradually emerging literary discourse: contradictory manifestations of the 'father tongue', the importance of emotional connotations, linguistic complications (leading to stylistic experimentation), otherness as a determining factor of one's (socio)linguistic reality, rhizomatic-associative semiosis, the emergence of distinct multicultural idiolects as well as the emancipatory power rising from polysemous *margins*. In line with the hybrid intersections characteristic of the globalized world in the twenty-first century, non-monolingual literary writing adds its unique supplementary layers to the multiple coding of the poetic function of language.

NOTES

¹ The workshops and international multidisciplinary conferences in question: *Exercises in Language* at "Please Specify!" International Conference of the Society for Artistic Research (SAR), UNIARTS Helsinki, April 28–29, 2017; *Babble, Babbel, Babel – Migratory Self-Narratives. A Collaborative Workshop on Autofictional Migration Literature* at "Life Writing, Europe and New Media" Biannual Conference of the International Auto/Biography Association Europe, King's College, London, June 6–9, 2017; *Randbemerkungen … or Empowering Self-Narratives?* at the "2nd Non-Monogamies and Contemporary Intimacies Conference", Sigmund Freud Private University, Vienna, August 31 – September 2, 2017, as well as the German-language version *Migratorische Selbst-Narrative. Interaktiver Workshop zur autofiktionalen Migrationsliteratur* at the Department of Comparative Literature of the University of Vienna on May 4, 2018.

² Original text excerpt from *Mütter Land*:

Ich klettere am Maschendrahtzaun rund um meinen nigelnagelneuen Kindergarten und übe die fremde Sprache beim Platzieren meiner Füße in die M-a Ma, s-c-h-e-n schen, Maschen aus dem metallenen D-r-a-h-t Draht des Z-a Za, u-n-s uns … als Mama sich von mir entfernt, bleibe ich am Zaun hängen und wünsche mich auf die andere Seite – ähnlich wie mein Goldfisch Miša sich aus Onkel Grišas Riesenreuse hinausgestohlen hat, unbemerkt zu seinen Freunden entwischt ist –, genauso möchte ich durch den Zaun schlüpfen, heimlich zu den Erstklässlern, drüben in der *International School*, wie im Flug zu ihm, von dem ich Schneewittchenbäckchen bekäme, wenn die Kälte nicht schneller gewesen wäre, als er, den ich bereits vor dem glänzend roten Wunderwagen warten sehe, der woanders hingehört, oder aber ich ebenfalls dabei sein sollte, mit Gisi! oder Franzi! oder mit beiden: wir drei auf einem Sitz! allerdings erst später, denn Mama hat gesagt, der Doppeldeckerausflug finde erst am Nachmittag statt, und sie weiß immer, wann der Ausflug stattfindet, also wette ich, dass es zwei davon gibt, und soll der Nachbar mir von der anderen Seite noch so seine Zunge herausstrecken! ich kann auch das besser, denn *meine* Zunge bleibt am eisigen Metall kleben, ich will schreien, 'so war's nicht gemeint!', aber es kommt kein Ton raus, bis jemand heißes Wasser über mein Mundwerk gießt, ich brülle mir die Seele aus dem Leib, aber der Bus ist weg, als wäre er nur ein Traum gewesen, fort ist er, "*gone*" bedauert Mrs. Willoby am Gitter, und sie weiß hundertprozentig Bescheid, denn sie hat ihn verschwinden sehen, Mama hatte sich doch getäuscht, also gehe ich am Nachmittag nicht wie gewohnt in meine *playschool*, sondern nehme mir stattdessen vor, selbst den Rückweg nach Hause zu finden, den ich *on Mondays and Tuesdays and Fridays and Thursdays* zusammen mit meiner *nanny* gehe, und als ich heimkomme, sehe ich *mamočka!* und *papočka!* am Küchentisch sitzen, obwohl sie zu dieser Zeit nie zu Hause sind, und ich zu dieser Zeit nie heimkomme, und ich lehne die *Milky*schnitte ab, die ich sonst nicht ablehnen würde und wundere mich über den Ausflug, den ich nicht machen werde und den Kaffee, den sie erst später trinken sollten, doch sie lächeln mir zu, und Mama meint, es sei alles halb so schlimm, sie hätten sich bloß geirrt, nächste Woche würden wir in einen echten Flieger kommen, "Alle drei?", "Nein, nur wir Mädels!", "Und Papa…?"

³ 'Show, don't tell!' has been a leading creative writing slogan for quite some time (handbooks referring to either Henry James or Ernest Hemingway).

⁴ The neologism popped up in all the languages of my first workshops, i.e. Dutch, English, Esperanto, Finnish, French, Italian, Norwegian, and Spanish. Later on, Google Translate ceased to propose the coinage 'imkomme'.

[5] 'L2' denotes one's second – i.e. non-native or first 'foreign' – language. 'L1', used later in this paper, refers to one's first language (= native or mother tongue).

[6] Many well-known postmodern experimental writers have a bi- or multilingual background – be it the foreign origins of their parents, their own expatriate experience or translation activities (Mikkilä 2000: 28–30); for the language biographies of the two prominent representatives of the absurd theater, Eugène Ionesco and Samuel Beckett, cf. Kremnitz 2015 [2004]: 179–180 and 226–229, respectively.

[7] One of the first terms for 'migration literature' – *Gastarbeiterliteratur* (guest worker literature) – is missing in the original list. Given the simultaneous repetition of the euphemistic expression 'guest literature', I have corrected the mistake that, I assume, came into being by accident.

[8] The term was first coined by Ottmar Ette, Professor of Romance Studies, as a bilingual expression with the parallel form *littérature sans domicile fixe*. It was initially used in plural, referring to diverse, also historical types of writing beyond the concept of national literatures (cf. Ette 2005).

[9] A heated public debate on the topic was initiated by a Berlin author of Czechoslovakian origin, Maxim Biller (2014), urging migration writers – notably the successful Bosnian-German novelist Saša Stanišić – to write about migration-related themes (adding more depth and social relevance to contemporary German-language literature). Stanišić is, for his part, an interesting case with regard to my language-biographical typology, since he immigrated to Germany at the age of 14 with his parents. Considering that the latter emigrated further to the USA six years later, he shares attributes of both naturally and culturally bilingual authors. As to the former group, cf. also endnote 21.

[10] The proposed typology goes back to an intuitive impulse originating from my peer perspective. Besides my related writing experience and observations of the literary scene, it relies on the readily available, poetological material as well as interviews dealing with migration authors' language biographies. Later I discovered a homonymous linguistic branch of research (with somewhat different objectives and, therefore, methods). It would be interesting to see language-biographical linguists engage with the different types of non-monolingual authors and, from their vantage point, in the discussion of my proposed typology.

[11] In the international context, two independent observations come into mind. In Finland dialectal poetry has enjoyed growing popularity. In the German-speaking world, on the other hand, there seems to be a one-way street from dialects and regiolects to standard German, when it comes to the prestige of synonymous expressions. In his experimental novel, Austrian crime writer Wolf Haas (2006) plays not only with the regional differences but the connotations they evoke. (As by a topic-relevant rhizomatic 'coincidence', Haas wrote his doctoral thesis about concrete poetry, whilst the master's thesis of the aforementioned Saša Stanišić dealt with Wolf Haas.)

[12] Two examples that adopt the opposite viewpoint are a Finnish master's thesis about authors writing in a foreign-language environment (Okkonen 2005) as well as the work of the collective *Stadtsprachen* dedicated to promoting, publishing, and doing research on foreign-language authors in Berlin. Kremnitz (2015 [2004]) discusses the linguistic biographies of (mostly distinguished) non-monolingual authors from a rather comparative point of view, cf. especially 5.5. 'Personal' Choice of Language, pp. 218–235.

[13] Even the absolute, long-prevailing supremacy of early bilingual socialization is starting to be questioned. (cf., e.g., Lee 2005).

[14] The term 'East(ern) Europe(an)' is used in this paper in a political rather than a geographical sense.

[15] Personally, I associate the term 'elite bilingual' with the kind of natural bilingual upbringing Skutnabb-Kangas herself received. Owing to historical reasons, the representatives of the Finnish-Swedish minority are – 'by a fortunate coincidence' – referred to in common parlance as the 'better people' in my country of origin. As implied in this paper, the main bilingual communities in the German-speaking world are in a far less privileged position (captured by Skutnabb-Kangas's term 'linguicism') – with repercussions on the respective language skills.

[16] Original text: "... zu ihm, von dem ich Schneewittchenbäckchen bekäme, wenn die Kälte nicht schneller gewesen wäre, als er, den ich bereits vor dem glänzend roten Wunderwagen warten sehe..." (Engl. by Google Translate, September 1, 2017).

[17] Original text: "Ich klettere am Maschendrahtzaun rund um meinen nigelnagelneuen Kindergarten und übe die fremde Sprache beim Platzieren meiner Füße in die M-a Ma, s-c-h-e-n schen, Maschen aus dem metallenen D-r-a-h-t Draht des Z-a Za, u-n-s uns..." (Engl. by Google Translate, September 1, 2017).

[18] Indeed, this was the poetological stance of the poet herself (personal communication, Swiss Literature Institute 2010).

[19] Hübner quotes from Trojanow's unpublished poetics lecture manuscript which carries the title *W:Ort. Und hätte ich nur eine Sprache. Eine Liebeserklärung*.

[20] Original text: "... als Mama sich von mir entfernt, bleibe ich am Zaun hängen und wünsche mich auf die andere Seite – ähnlich wie mein Goldfisch Miša sich aus Onkel Grišas Riesenreuse hinausgestohlen hat..." (Engl. by Google Translate, September 1, 2017).

[21] Having fled to Switzerland with his parents at the age of 15, Florescu – like the abovementioned Stanišić – was at the very end of the so-called critical period, which has been argued (for and against) to determine the upper limit for acquiring native-like language skills. In addition to this biolinguistic explanation, I presume that the experience gained in a school-age peer group plays a beneficial role in one's bilingual development.

[22] Original text: "... also gehe ich am Nachmittag nicht wie gewohnt in meine *playschool*, sondern nehme mir stattdessen vor, selbst den Rückweg nach Hause zu finden..." (Engl. by Google Translate, September 1, 2017).

[23] Original text: ",schreiben' die anderen Sprachen, ,schreibt' z.B. die Erstsprache häufig mit " (Engl. by Google Translate, October 9, 2019).

[24] The precise spelling of the author's surname is 'Hadžibeganović'. The diacritical signs are also omitted in Bürger-Koftis 2008b.

[25] Original text: ""Keime neuer Weltliteratur„ ... die die Fremde, oder besser die neue Heimat konstituiert und ästhetisch gestaltet". (Engl. by Google Translate, October 9, 2019).

[26] The most prominent example of this in the German-speaking world is likely to be the Dresden Chamisso poetics lectureships, held by non-monolingual writers in 2000–2011.

[27] Original text: "… ich will schreien, 'so war's nicht gemeint!', aber es kommt kein Ton raus, bis jemand heißes Wasser über mein abrupt verstummtes Mundwerk gießt, ich brülle mir die Seele aus dem Leib…" (Engl. by Google Translate, April 24, 2017).

[28] Two examples of this trend mentioned in this paper are the multiple artistic identity of the *writer, sound and visual poet* Kinga Tóth, and the *essay-novel* of Emilia Smechowski.

REFERENCES

Ackermann, Irmgard 2008. Die Osterweiterung in der deutschsprachigen "Migrantenliteratur" vor und nach der Wende. In: Michaela Bürger-Koftis (ed.) *Eine Sprache – viele Horizonte…: Die Osterweiterung der deutschsprachigen Literatur. Porträts einer neuen europäischen Generation.* Vienna: Praesens, pp. 13–22.

Amati Mehler, Jacqueline & Argentieri, Simona & Canestri, Jorge 2003 [1990]. *La Babele dell'inconscio: Lingua madre e lingue straniere nella dimensione psicoanalitica.* Milan: Raffaello Cortina Editore.

Amodeo, Immacolata & Hörner, Heidrun & Kiemle, Christiane 2009. Einleitung. In: Immacolata Amodeo & Heidrun Hörner & Christiane Kiemle (eds.) *Literatur ohne Grenzen: Interkulturelle Gegenwartsliteratur in Deutschland – Porträts und Positionen.* Sulzbach – Taunus: Ulrike Helmer, pp. 7–11.

Biller, Maxim 2014. Letzte Ausfahrt Uckermark. *Die Zeit*, No. 9, 20 February. Available at http://www.zeit.de/2014/09/deutsche-gegenwartsliteratur-maxim-biller/komplettansicht, last accessed on 10 June 2020.

Blioumi, Aglaia 2006. *Transkulturelle Metamorphosen: Deutschsprachige Migrationsliteratur im Ausland am Beispiel Griechenland. Monographie – Anthologie.* Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann.

Braunsperger, Gudrun 2003. Engel aus Stein mit Handy. *Die Presse*, November 14. https://www.diepresse.com/238889/Engel-aus-Stein-mit-Handy?from=rss, last accessed on 9 October 2019; no more available.

Bürger-Koftis, Michaela 2008a. Eine Sprache – viele Horizonte… Ein Beitrag zur Literaturgeographie. In: Michaela Bürger-Koftis (ed.) *Eine Sprache – viele Horizonte…: Die Osterweiterung der deutschsprachigen Literatur. Porträts einer neuen europäischen Generation.* Vienna: Praesens, pp. 7–12.

Bürger-Koftis, Michaela 2008b. NACHWORT und AUSBLICK: "Die Sprache entwickelt sich, und WIR VERÄNDERN SIE MIT" (Alma Hadzibeganovic). Anregungen zur Untersuchung der Sprache bei Autorinnen und Autoren der "Migrantenliteratur". In: Michaela Bürger-Koftis (ed.) *Eine Sprache – viele Horizonte…: Die Osterweiterung der deutschsprachigen Literatur. Porträts einer neuen europäischen Generation.* Vienna: Praesens, pp. 239–246.

Casement, Patrick J. 1982. Samuel Beckett's Relationship to His Mother-Tongue. *International Review of Psycho-Analysis*, Vol. 9, No. 1, pp. 35–44.

Csáky, Moritz 2011. Migration – Kultur: Urbane Milieus in der Moderne. In: Gertraud Marinelli-König & Alexander Preisinger (eds.) *Zwischenräume der Migration. Über die Entgrenzung von Kulturen und Identitäten*. Bielefeld: transcript, pp. 115–140. DOI: 10.14361/transcript.9783839419335.115.

Dannenbeck, Clemens 2002. *Selbst- und Fremdzuschreibungen als Aspekte kultureller Identitätsarbeit: Ein Beitrag zur Dekonstruktion kultureller Identität*. Opladen: Leske + Budrich.

Deutsch als Muttersprache 2018 = Deutsch als Muttersprache kein Muss für Sieg. *Bachmannpreis.orf.at*, 9 July. Available at https://bachmannpreis.orf.at/stories/2923517, last accessed on 10 June 2020.

Dietrich, Arne 2004. The Cognitive Neuroscience of Creativity. *Psychonomic Bulletin & Review*, Vol. 11, No. 6, pp. 1011–1026. http://dx.doi.org/10.3758/BF03196731.

Dinev, Dimitré 2004. In der Fremde schreiben. *Der Standard*, 24 January. Available at https://www.derstandard.at/story/1547215/in-der-fremde-schreiben, last accessed on 10 June 2020.

Drossou, Olga & Kara, Sibel 2009. Vorwort. In: Olga Drossou & Sibel Kara (eds.) *Migrationsliteratur: Eine neue deutsche Literatur? Dossier*. Berlin: Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung, p. 4. Available at https://heimatkunde.boell.de/sites/default/files/dossier_migrationsliteratur.pdf, last accessed on 10 June 2020.

Ette, Ottmar 2005. *ZwischenWeltenSchreiben: Literaturen ohne festen Wohnsitz*. Berlin: Kulturverlag Kadmos.

Ette, Ottmar 2016. WeltErleben / WeiterLeben: Zu Georg Forster, Alexander von Humboldt und Adelbert von Chamisso. Abschlussvortrag. *Internationale Chamissokonferenz. Weltreisen: Aufzeichnen, aufheben, weitergeben – Forster, Humboldt, Chamisso*. Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin: Preußischer Kulturbesitz, 25–27 February. Unpublished.

Florescu, Catalin Dorian 2001. Im Nabel der Welt. In: Reto Sorg & Andreas Paschedag (eds.) *Swiss Made: Junge Literatur aus der deutschsprachigen Schweiz*. Berlin: Klaus Wagenbach Verlag, pp. 29–36.

Franczak, Radka & Kaprálová, Dora & Tóth, Kinga & Verhoef, Marijana 2018. Berlin liegt im Osten? Neue Literatur aus Berlin. *Ostpol Berlin. PARATAXE Symposium: Literarisches Colloquium Berlin*, November 23. Available at http://www.dichterlesen.net/veranstaltungen/ostpol-berlin-parataxe-symposium-panel-iii-2348, last accessed on 26 April 2020.

Haas, Wolf 2006. *Das Wetter vor 15 Jahren*. Hamburg: Hoffmann und Campe.

Haderlap, Maja 2011. Meine Sprachen. *Volltext*, Vol. 2, pp. 35–36.

Hausenblas, Michael 2015. Das beste Stück ... nachgefragt bei Sandra Gugic. *Der Standard*, 13 April. Available at http://derstandard.at/2000013960532/Das-beste-Stueck-nachgefragt-beiSandra-Gugic, last accessed on 11 June 2020.

Hadzibeganovic, Alma 2005. Ist die Sprache Heimat? (Vorwort). In: Christa Stippinger (ed.) *wortstürmer: das buch zum literaturpreis "schreiben zwischen den kulturen"*. Vienna: edition exil, pp. 7–9.

Hielscher, Martin 2006. Andere Stimmen – andere Räume. Die Funktion der Migranten-literatur in deutschen Verlagen und Dimitré Dinevs Roman "Engelszungen". In: Heinz Ludwig Arnold (ed.) *Text+Kritik: Literatur und Migration. Sonderband*. Munich: text+kritik, pp. 196–208.

Hu, Adelheid 2003. Mehrsprachigkeit, Identitäts- und Kulturtheorie: Tendenzen der Konvergenz. In: Inez De Florio-Hansen & Adelheid Hu (eds.) *Plurilingualität und Identität. Zur Selbst- und Fremdwahrnehmung mehrsprachiger Menschen.* Tübingen: Stauffenburg, pp. 1–23.

Hübner, Klaus 2008. Fließen Kulturen ineinander? Über Ilija Trojanow. In: Michaela Bürger-Koftis (ed.) *Eine Sprache – viele Horizonte…: Die Osterweiterung der deutschsprachigen Literatur. Porträts einer neuen europäischen Generation.* Vienna: Praesens, pp. 83–95.

Jessner, Ulrike 2003. Das multilinguale Selbst. Perspektiven der Veränderung. In: Inez De Florio-Hansen & Adelheid Hu (eds.) *Plurilingualität und Identität. Zur Selbst- und Fremdwahrnehmung mehrsprachiger Menschen.* Tübingen: Stauffenburg, pp. 25–37.

Kremnitz, Georg 2015 [2004]. *Mehrsprachigkeit in der Literatur. Ein kommunikationssoziologischer Überblick*. 2nd, expanded edition. Vienna: Praesens.

Kucher, Primus-Heinz 2008. Vladimir Vertlib – Schreiben im "kulturellen Zwischenbereich". In: Michaela Bürger-Koftis (ed.) *Eine Sprache – viele Horizonte…: Die Osterweiterung der deutschsprachigen Literatur. Porträts einer neuen europäischen Generation.* Vienna: Praesens, pp. 177–190.

Lee, Joseph J. 2005. The Native Speaker: An Achievable Model? *Asian EFL Journal*, Vol. 7, No. 2, pp. 152–163. Available at https://asian-efl-journal.com/June_05_jl.pdf, last accessed on 11 June 2020.

Leskovec, Andrea 2009. *Fremdheit und Literatur. Alternativer hermeneutischer Ansatz für eine interkulturell ausgerichtete Literaturwissenschaft*. Kommunikation und Kulturen / Cultures and Communication, Vol. 8. Berlin: LIT Verlag.

Löffler, Sigrid 2014. *Die neue Weltliteratur und ihre großen Erzähler*. Munich: C.H. Beck.

Luhmann, Niklas 1995. *Die Kunst der Gesellschaft.* Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp.

Mikkilä, Elina 2000. *Neue Formen der Poesie im Internet: Versuch einer Typologie*. Diss. (MA Thesis). University of Vienna.

Mikkilä, Elina 2018. Jenseits eindeutiger Gruppenzugehörigkeiten. *stadtsprachen magazin*, Vol. 8. Available at https://stadtsprachen.de/text/jenseits-eindeutiger-gruppenzugehoerigkeiten, last accessed on 11 June 2020.

Mitgutsch, Anna 1997. Versuch über das Fremdsein. *Die Rampe: Hefte für Literatur*, Vol. 2, pp. 7–26.

Okkonen, Noora 2005. *Kirjoitan, jag skriver, pisze: Kirjailija vieraassa kieliympäristössä*. [I Write: Authors in a Foreign-Language Environment.] Diss. (MA Thesis). University of Jyväskylä, Finland. Available at http://urn.fi/URN:NBN:fi:jyu-200624, last accessed on 11 June 2020.

Queneau, Raymond 1947. *Exercices de style*. Paris: Gallimard (Blanche).

Queneau, Raymond 1961. *Cent Mille Milliards de poèmes*. Paris: Gallimard.

Rakusa, Ilma 2006. *Zur Sprache gehen: Dresdner Chamisso-Poetikvorlesungen 2005. Mit einem Nachwort von Walter Schmitz sowie einer Bibliographie*. WortWechsel, Vol. 5. Dresden: Thelem.

Saad, Gabriel 1997/98. *L'Ecriture et inconscient*. Unpublished seminar material. Sorbonne Nouvelle Paris 3.

Scherke, Katharina 2011. Transnationalität als Herausforderung für die soziologische Migrationsforschung. In: Gertraud Marinelli-König & Alexander Preisinger (eds.) *Zwischenräume der Migration: Über die Entgrenzung von Kulturen und Identitäten*. Bielefeld: transcript, pp. 79–90.

Schweiger, Hannes 2010. Polyglotte Lebensläufe. Die Transnationalisierung der Biographik. In: Michaela Bürger-Koftis & Hannes Schweiger & Sandra Vlasta (eds.) *Polyphonie – Mehrsprachigkeit und literarische Kreativität*. Vienna: Praesens, pp. 23–38.

Skutnabb-Kangas, Tove 1981. *Tvåspråkighet*. [Bilingualism.] Lund: Liber Läromedel.

Smechowski, Emilia 2017. *Wir Strebermigranten*. Berlin: Hanser Berlin.

Spoerri, Bettina 2008. Mobile Grenzen, neue Sprachräume. Das Phänomen der Osterweiterung in der deutschsprachigen Literatur der Schweiz. In: Michaela Bürger-Koftis (ed.) *Eine Sprache – viele Horizonte…: Die Osterweiterung der deutschsprachigen Literatur. Porträts einer neuen europäischen Generation*. Vienna: Praesens, pp. 199–211.

Stippinger, Christa 2000. "Wenn ich deutsch schreibe, ist es, als ob ich einen Eiszapfen in der Hand halte." Dimitré Dinev im Gespräch mit der Herausgeberin. In: Christa Stippinger (ed.) *fremdLand. das buch zum literaturpreis "schreiben zwischen den kulturen" 2000*. Vienna: edition exil, pp. 29–43.

Straňáková, Monika 2010. Literatur als fremde Sprache – fremde Sprache(n) in der Literatur. Anmerkungen zum mehrsprachigen Schreiben von Irena Brežná und Ilma Rakusa. In: Michaela Bürger-Koftis & Hannes Schweiger & Sandra Vlasta (eds.) *Polyphonie – Mehrsprachigkeit und literarische Kreativität*. Vienna: Praesens, pp. 388–403.

Straub, Jürgen 2015. Lost and Found in Translation: Kulturelle Zumutungen und transitorische Identität in der migratorischen Existenz. Eva Hoffmans autobiographisch-interkulturelle Erzählung in der Perspektive einer narrativen Psychologie. In: Ortrud Gutjahr (ed.) *Interkulturalität: Konstruktionen des Anderen*. Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, pp. 163–194.

Tawada, Yoko 1994. Von der Muttersprache zur Sprachmutter. *NZZ Folio*, October. Available at https://folio.nzz.ch/1994/oktober/von-der-muttersprache-zur-sprachmutter, last accessed on 11 June 2020.

Varto, Juha 2009. *Basics of Artistic Research: Ontological, Epistemological and Historical Justifications*. Jyväskylä: Gummerus.

Vlasta, Sandra 2010a. Literarische Mehrsprachigkeit im Vergleich: Formen und Möglichkeiten komparatistischer Blicke auf mehrsprachige AutorInnen und Texte. In: Michaela Bürger-Koftis & Hannes Schweiger & Sandra Vlasta (eds.) *Polyphonie – Mehrsprachigkeit und literarische Kreativität*. Vienna: Praesens, pp. 337–348.

Vlasta, Sandra 2010b. Über- und Ausblick. In: Michaela Bürger-Koftis & Hannes Schweiger & Sandra Vlasta (eds.) *Polyphonie – Mehrsprachigkeit und literarische Kreativität*. Vienna: Praesens, pp. 435–442.

Wandruszka, Mario 1979. *Die Mehrsprachigkeit des Menschen*. Munich & Zurich: R. Piper & Co.

Winkler, Dagmar 2008. Marica Bodrožić schreibt an die "Herzmitte der gelben aller Farben". In: Michaela Bürger-Koftis (ed.) *Eine Sprache – viele Horizonte…: Die Osterweiterung der deutschsprachigen Literatur. Porträts einer neuen europäischen Generation.* Vienna: Praesens, pp. 107–119.

Young, Sohn 2007. Leimkind. In: Christa Stippinger (ed.) *best of 10. anthologie. 10 jahre exil-literaturpreise "schreiben zwischen den kulturen" 1997–2006.* Vienna: edition exil, pp. 223–235.

Zanetti, Dario & Tonelli, Livia & Piras, Maria Rita 2010. Neurolinguistik und Mehrsprachigkeit. In: Michaela Bürger-Koftis & Hannes Schweiger & Sandra Vlasta (eds.) *Polyphonie – Mehrsprachigkeit und literarische Kreativität.* Vienna: Praesens, pp. 165–180.

Zierau, Cornelia 2010. "Als ob sie mit Fremdsprache sprechenden Menschen an einem Tisch säße" – Mehrsprachigkeit und Sprachreflexion bei Emine Sevgi Özdamar und Yoko Tawada. In: Michaela Bürger-Koftis & Hannes Schweiger & Sandra Vlasta (eds.) *Polyphonie – Mehrsprachigkeit und literarische Kreativität.* Vienna: Praesens, pp. 412–434.

Elina Mikkilä (PhD) is a free literature-based researcher in Berlin. She studied comparative literature and Romance studies, as well as Slavic and Scandinavian / English studies in Vienna, Paris, and Saint Petersburg. Mikkilä completed the first German-language PhD in literary arts with a metapoetological thesis at the University of Applied Arts Vienna. She is a former research fellow at the Swiss Literature Institute and at the Free University Berlin. Her research interests cover literature of translingual authors and minority identities.

elina.mikkila@yahoo.com