

Answers to Review on PhD thesis

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to Dr. Larissa Aronin for accepting the invitation to review my thesis. I am truly appreciative of the valuable observations, comments, and suggestions provided regarding my study. The feedback received will greatly aid in making necessary corrections and improvements in the future. It was a pleasure to read a positive evaluation of the theoretical and methodological underpinnings of my work. Thank you for taking the time to review my thesis and provide such valuable feedback.

Form

Thank you for highlighting the areas of improvement in my dissertation. I will definitely take them into consideration as I continue to develop and refine my research.

Content

I am deeply grateful for the meticulous work that you have done in reviewing my thesis. Your contributions have played a significant role in shaping the final version of my thesis, and I cannot thank you enough for your time and effort. Your feedback has been insightful and has helped me to identify areas that need further development.

Answers to the questions

1. *You mainly speak about Russian-paired bilinguals and about L1 and L2. Are your participants truly bilingual or are they multilingual? Please explain and add to your own comment about English as an additional language (p.78)*

The data collected from the questionnaires indicate that the participants can be considered bilinguals, with some exceptions. Some individuals have additional knowledge of other foreign languages, primarily German or English, which they were taught in school, but have never had the opportunity to use in practice. There are also participants who are in the process of learning/re-learning the language as the one in the following example:

Я сейчас учусь английский, моя ... мои мозги все настроены на английский в основном. Так что, может быть, поэтому я часто смешиваю. До этого, давно, когда я начала учить венгерский у меня английский как то стерся, поэтому заново надо было.... Ну конечно, базовые такие ... знания. А вот сейчас хочу уровень повыше, все таки и для работы нужно.

“I’m learning English now, my ... my brains are all set to English mostly. So maybe that’s why I mix often. Before that, long ago, when I started to learn Hungarian my English was somehow erased, so I again had to.... Well, of course, basic ... knowledge. But now I want a higher level, I still need it for work.”

This presents an interesting opportunity for research on language attrition, as it allows for the examination of multiple languages and the factors that may contribute to loss of proficiency and/or fluency. However, this was not done in this dissertation, which is the limitation of the study. In a follow-up study this should be addressed and all the information gathered about the participants’ Russian and Hungarian, should also be collected about the other languages they speak/understand (e.g. frequency of use in different situations and with different people, their proficiency, etc.). This could give us a clearer picture of the special language constellation of each individual and could highlight the extent to which the use of different languages can help in counteracting the effects of attrition

(Jessner et al, 2021) (i. e. more English use can help to mitigate attrition in Russian as both are Indo-European languages).

2. *During the study you revealed other important things that were not taken into consideration initially. Thus us commendable and a sign of a true researcher. Would you, then, expand your research question “To what extent do the Russian and Hungarian languages and cultures contribute to the identity formation of Russians in Hungary” to include other possible facets of identity, or would you take into consideration only two languages and two cultures? Whether you answer ‘yes’ or ‘no’, please explain your choice.*

It is possible to expand the research question to include other possible facets of identity. The research question I provided is specifically focused on the role of Russian and Hungarian languages and cultures in the identity formation of Russians in Hungary. However, identity is a complex construct that can be influenced by a variety of factors, including but not limited to:

- language and culture
- gender
- religion
- age
- social class
- education level
- occupation
- migration background
- national identity
- sexual orientation
- etc.

It is important to consider that all these factors could play a role in shaping the identity of the Russian individuals living in Hungary, and it is possible to expand the research question to include other possible aspects of identity. For example, the research question could be expanded to: "How do Russian and Hungarian languages and cultures, migration background, and national identity contribute to the identity formation of Russians in Hungary?"

Expanding the research question in this way would allow for a more comprehensive examination of the factors that shape the identity of Russians in Hungary and provide a more nuanced understanding of the identity formation process. However, it is also important to keep in mind that this also means that the research will become more complex and demanding in terms of data collection and analysis.

It is also important to mention that the inclusion of more factors will also imply to take into consideration the possible interactions among the different facets of identity. For example, an individual's national identity may interact with their language proficiency in shaping their sense of self. Another important factor in accordance with the answer to the previous question would be to include other languages spoken by the individual when exploring the identity formation process. English is a global language and as such it is present in our lives to different extents. It would be an interesting question to explore the extent to which it contributes to the participants' identity formation.

In conclusion, it is possible to expand the research question to include other aspects of identity, but it is important to consider the complexity and scope of the research, as well as the possible interactions among the different features of identity.