

**Egyetemi doktori (PhD) értekezés tézisei**

**Life Position and Educational Mobility of Minority  
Students in the Border Territories**

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**DEBRECENI EGYETEM**  
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## **Intoduction**

Our study was made in the context of the European globalization, which has an effect on higher education, too. The globalization of the higher education is manifested in the Bologna process that serves the integration and permeability of education and the increase of students' mobility. Above all Hungarian students from abroad come to Hungary. Thus, they are the informants of our study.

Our research was written in European context and globalization aiming at minority higher education in one special territory, named Transylvania. Our method was qualitative interview. All in all we made 46 interviews. We have asked 21 people at the University of Partium, 11 people at the University of Babeş-Bolyai and 14 people at the University of Debrecen. We analysed these students by childhood history, school carrier, relationship, identity, value and future plans. Among the interviewee the common joint is that every one of them was born into a minority and they are connected to the Partium region through their birthplace or higher educational institute. Two counties of this region belong to Hungary, one belongs to Ukrain and four belong to Romania. In the future,

this region, connecting three countries, could ease the professional, communicational, cultural and economical flow between countries, by the strengthening of the regional politics of the European Union.

The basic problem centres on the decision-making situations that are closely attached to the destiny of minorities. By a cross-sectional study we would like to get a broad picture of the decision of the higher educational students in connection with their studies and their own future. We would like to reveal the facts of counter attractions in this special field from the students, living in the bumper zone of world trends and minority being. The interviewees experience the effect of forces that could come from the opposite way and could influence the migration, in a different way. Thus, they explain their decisions adjusting them to their own destiny. In the empirical study, through the content-analyze of the students' interviews, we try to find the answer to the motivation of choosing the higher education and its personality- and destiny-forming effect and the motives of the educational-based migration, and from all of these the characteristics of acting types.

### ***The Results of our Study***

Students who take part in higher education use keywords that are connected to their devotion to the birthplace, 29 people mentioned these. In choosing a university the most determinative explanation was the possibility of using their mother tongue among the questioned. This was followed by materials and local attachment. When choosing a university in the case of three possible options 44 people mentioned the importance of language, 40 the field of study, 19 the territorial location of the institution, 14 the prestige of the university, 13 the financial reason, 7 mentioned friends' choice and only one success as a viewpoint. Figure 20 shows the order of the important references broken down into percentage.

The Partium Christian University is chosen firstly by those who consider financial viewpoints as well. Parallel to this the university espouses underprivileged students, thus it contributes to create a second chance. Most of the students who were questioned come from unprivileged families. It appears among the reasons of choosing a university, because all of them mention the financial viewpoints. The following interview extracts illustrate the life situations of the students:

On one hand, those interviewees take part in the higher education of their home country are less interested in *study trips abroad*. It is because people standing on a high level of the social integration have already been through experiences that because of resettlement caused loss in relationships and others, they have been through the long process of making new attachments, the obstacles of law administration, the integration into a society, in financial and other territories, so through the whole process of making a new home. These people, who have found a home again, do not want to relive the loss and benefit again that came with the environmental change. On the other hand, those living in a domestic environment are more capable of doing study trips abroad. For them the aim country is essentially Hungary. The elementary aim of the interviewees' Hungarian study trips was visiting libraries and writing thesis. The students pointed out the high standard of the Hungarian training and complement of stores. Those students, who, because of financial difficulties and their local attachment, chose from the circle of Hungarian trainings in Romania, can take part in Hungarian trainings through scholarship programmes.

## *Identity*

Parallel with the results of the *2001 and 2011 Mozaik studies*, our own interviewees defined their self-identity primarily along locality, too. While analyzing the oral narratives we classified one interviewee into one category. Thirty respondents claimed themselves Transylvanian or székely. The rest of the choice of answers received less than enough mentions. The Hungarian self-identification received nine notations, thus it was the second most frequent reference. The identity as a citizen stands on the third place; this was mentioned by five people. The list is finished by the minority identity that was referred to by only two. It turns out from the results that among the subjects of our asked sample only a few experience their identity as a form of oppression. Identity as a citizenship characterizes mostly bilinguals, those who were born in mixed marriages or those personality types which greatly accept other hugely varied cultures. Those who answered proudly talk about their self-identity; they don't make excuses or defend their affiliation.

According to the narratives' references, closer relationships and more loyal communities take shape in their birthplaces. They assign the distance-keeping of Hungarians to their abroad origin, the formal appearance of which they see in

results of the double-citizenship referendum. Those interviewees studying at domestic universities mean that original Hungarians living in Hungary keep them Romanian, but Romanians think they are Hungarian. This generates a double isolation that is manifested in their strong local identity and community affiliation. Thus they are separated from Hungarians originally from Hungary and Romanians and they live their everyday lives in their own microcommunities. The reflections in connection with the native Hungarians are characterized by a form of wistful distance-keeping. The questioned think that native Hungarians don't carry along a certain degree of interest towards them. This is based on the double-citizenship referendum (5<sup>th</sup> December) by them. They look at it as an event that caused a sort of damage on the identity of an ethnic group.

It is worth to stress, that none of them uses the 'partium' marking. Their identity and its strength thus lie on a double foundation that is supported by their behavior and account. This is manifested in their everyday life so, that they mostly like to spend their free time together, they select their places of entertainment based on the possibilities using Hungarian language; moreover, they chose their friends only from a circle using Hungarian language. This is in agreement

with the results of Mozaik studies, according to which the Hungarian youth coming from abroad not only esteem themselves Hungarian, but they have a “Hungarianness” that is well-defined by a body (Szabó *et al.* 2002). Through the narratives it can also be revealed that the scarce stratum that add their Romanian citizenship to their Hungarian nationality, occur mostly among those who come from a mixed marriage, or who study on the language of the majority.

We would like to detect how one minority university influences identity. We can make the conclusion that minority university helps to develop social and national identity. They are a good territory to organise minority groups and to reproduce minority white collar workers. With a view to the fostering of the identity the usage of the mother tongue plays an important role with respect to both the education and the reading of publications. This is why minority universities have an important role in the whole life of minority groups: they organise mother tongue community.

At the University of BB where students rent a flat together, they make their community there. At the University of D we cannot find a good working community among Hungarian students.



## *Values*

Most of the interviewees put family forward against career and tradition against globalization that broadcasts values from the West. In the family-career value pair the majority, except one person, put family forward against career. They set themselves aside from western values and globalization that follows it. They are family-centered. It appears in the attachment to the nuclear family that is one the explanations of the affection for future plans and mother country. In the tradition-globalization value pair the questioned interviewees are definitely for the cultivation of traditions, for example in the form of folkdance and singing folk-songs. They look on the western scale of values and way of life as the instrument that once and for all annihilate traditions.

One of the building rocks of the affiliation is the insistence on conventions, habits, all in all tradition. Together with strong national and social identity-consciousness this attitude protects against the melting pot of nations. This could be the assimilation into the members of the majority nation or the pulling of the mother country or countries abroad, or globalization that has a unifying tendency along values and culture and that they identify with negative things. At the same

time this attitude helps them to preserve their identity and defend them from melting. This is manifested in a more powerful identity-consciousness, which even marks its members off from the western values because marking something off means one of the sources of the community's protection.

In the case of the interviewees taking part in the higher education abroad we could see that the formal expressions of *religion* are more important than in the life of those interviewees who settled down in Hungary. Although, for them believing in God is more important than the formal expressions of religion. The group of those arriving to the university actually makes a transition, because with their opinion they give their voice to the fact that on their motherland they attended more often, but during their university years in Hungary they attend a church more rarely. All in all, only three interviewees kept their religiosity even in the aim country. In the case of the rest we can see that the Hungarian medium weakens the everyday life adaptation of the formal expressions of religiousness, that is the most dominant in the case of those interviewees who settled down in Hungary, because they hold themselves religious, but they rarely practice this in their everyday life.

### ***Future Plans***

The interviewees studying in Hungary mentions losing their relationships, the cultural differences even in speaking or dressing among the difficulties in connection with their integration. They mention the problematic administrative issues, the parents' looking for work and its procedures, the obstacles of the integration into the environment of school and society. They all say that the initial time, the initial changing was more difficult, but with the weakening of the emigrant country's attachments and the strengthening of the host country's attachments it later became easier. The fundamental explanation to the social integration is the relationship between men and women, another important explanation is time. The fundamental place of their future plans is Hungary.

Students learning in domestic circumstances plan their future chiefly at their birthplace. They have strong local identity and attachment to their homeland. The interviewees are mostly attached to their mother-country because of their family members, relatives left at home and because of the geographical surroundings. Most of them would move abroad only, if they didn't find a job on their present living place for a long time. In this case the aim country of their migration would be Hungary. Also, they would like to travel abroad for one or

two years to collect experiences. The strong attachment to the mother-country is seemed in the future plans. The absolute majority of the interviewees wouldn't be cut away from the medium that they live in. This attachment is motivated by the living relationship with their relatives and friends, and the attachment to the geographical place and cultural media.

### ***After-following***

The results of the after-following show that from this point of view the most determinative is the scene of the higher educational institution. Almost 30% of the questioned found a job and settled down in the country where they had got their degrees. This variant displays its effect most strongly on the group of students learning in Debrecen. Among them only two didn't integrate into the hostile country's mother-tongue milieu and moved to a third aim country. Noone went back to the emissive milieu. Because of this, for Hungarians living abroad Hungary means firstly an aim and not just a transit country. In most of the cases the students of Partium Christian University chose Oradea (*12 people*).

The Oradea students chose only in a small number and in an equal dispersion other Transylvanian cities, Hungary or going back to their evident birthplace. In this question those

student groups shows the highest dispersion which stick the most together and which has the strongest net of relationships. Approximately one-third of them stayed at the scene of the university, another one-third of them moved to Hungary or to Satu Mare after graduation.



Doktori Iskola: Humán Tudományok Doktori Iskola

## A PhD értekezés alapjául szolgáló közlemények

Magyar nyelvű könyvrészlet(ek) (3)

1. **Takács T.:** Kisebbségi státusú hallgatók önmeghatározása és tanulmányi mobilitása a határtériségben.  
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Idegen nyelvű konferencia közlemény(ek) (1)

21. **Takács, T.:** Life Position and Educational Mobility of Minority Students in the Border Territories.  
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Nyíregyházi Főiskola, NyíregyházaNyíregyháza, *Accepted by publisher* 2015.

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