

1-1-1999

## Crosslinguistic influence in the speech of Hungarian-English bilinguals

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# **Crosslinguistic Influence in the Speech of Hungarian-English Bilinguals**

Thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements  
for the Master of Education degree  
in the School of Education  
Edith Cowan University

by

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August, 1999

## **Abstract**

The study is written in an attempt to report on factors that affect language transfer between Hungarian and English and on the extent L1 and L2 lexical elements are integrated into the speech in either language. An attempt is made to classify the functions of the integrated lexical elements. Furthermore, it is hypothesised that transfer could be interpreted as a production strategy.

Data collection included a questionnaire and audio recording of interviews and observations of eleven bilingual participants involved in problem solving tasks.

## Declaration

I certify that this thesis does not, to the best of my knowledge and belief

- (i) incorporate without acknowledgement any material previously submitted for a higher degree or diploma in any institution of higher education,
- (ii) contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text, or
- (iii) contain any defamatory material.

Signature

Date..... 29/10/99 .....

## **Acknowledgements**

I wish to extend my sincere gratitude to my supervisor Dr Graham McKay for his invaluable advice, guidance, support, tireless encouragement, time, and patience throughout this study

To the people involved in the study whose cooperation, friendliness and interest made the data collection an enjoyable experience.

To my mother, Irma Kollmann, who has provided support and positive encouragement during the entire progress of this study.

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# **Chapter I**

## **Introduction**

### **Background**

All languages are similar in that they are coherent, internally sensible and reasonable to those who use them. Differences between languages can be both profound and systematic, and are open to misunderstandings or misinterpretations.

Most individuals act and behave the way they do in response to the social and cultural surroundings in which they find themselves or place themselves.

Speakers from a non-English speaking background are at a crossroads of prior experiences, personal interpretations and their immediate environment.

Boundaries of group, ethnic, class or linguistic traditions considered appropriate for speakers to have or display, can have a constraining or liberating effect on their actual behaviour.

Language acquisition is a very complex process. Learners go through stages of proficiency along their interlanguage continuum and they may rely on the conventions of their first or other languages (that they are more or less acquainted with) for ease of comprehension or as they attempt to express and convey messages.

In the 1960s, many studies focused on the errors that learners or speakers produce and such contrastive studies attempted to predict and explain the type of errors particular first language learners/speakers would be likely to make in the target language. However, language transfer proved to be only one of several sources of errors, and many generalisations in this area were not necessarily language specific. Rather, such errors could be attributed to universal processes in language acquisition (as in Odlin, 1989) and interlanguage development. Therefore, studies into this aspect of language transfer are to be looked at as investigating processes rather than products in language development. Thus, according to Kellerman (1987) and Ellis (1994, p 301), transfer could be defined as "those **processes** that lead to the incorporation of elements from one language to another." Therefore, the challenge lies in the selection of elements that are present in the interlanguage that may be due to the influence of the native language.

The purpose of this study is to find some factors that affect language transfer between Hungarian and English. Transfer is most obvious in speakers of English as a second language at the phonetic/phonological level, especially for those who commence learning ESL post adolescence. Markers of "foreignness" are evident in the pronunciation or the production of sounds of most, if not all, of those second language speakers (cf. Moulton, 1962). However, this study does not

attempt to analyse crosslinguistic influences at this, phonetic/phonological, level. At morphological and syntactic level, crosslinguistic analyses could reveal if any peculiarities of features of the first language are carried over to the second language. Some of these features are predictable and these are generally similar across languages. Others may be specific for certain languages and thus reflect aspects of the structure of the speaker's first language which may not necessarily be obvious without careful consideration. Such features could be evident across a wide range of the population that shares a common language and therefore generalisations could be made as to their occurrence. There are also features which are unique, in the sense that they belong to the speaker alone and cannot be generalised. These features could nevertheless be attributed to language transfer; thus they could be termed "idiolectal transfer".

Transfer is also possible at the level of lexis and semantics, especially in the use of international words or words that are semantically similar but which have some grammatical restrictions in one language but not in the other, and more markedly, in the use of idioms, proverbs and the like, where direct translation is frequently unsuccessfully attempted and misused (Odlin, 1989, pp. 71-84). Transfer in the forms of discourse that correspond to the sociolinguistic norms of the first language could also become evident, especially in cases where such norms are different in the target language (cf. Clyne, 1991; especially pages 189-190 with reference to forms of address).

Linguistic distance between two languages may make a crosslinguistic study such as this easier, since the differences between the languages may be more profound (languages belonging to different families of languages). In this study, a comparison is made between the Hungarian (Finno-Ugric) and English (Indo-European) languages. Factors affecting transfer between the languages are analysed and categorised. Specifically, the study does not only consider the second language but it also focuses on the native language. An attempt is made to categorise the features of the second language (English) in first language (Hungarian) production, and vice versa. Code-switches and borrowings that are integrated into the native language and the second language are also classified and their usage described.

## **Research Questions**

The study was guided by the following research questions

1. Does the amount of transfer vary according to the factors such as age, educational background, length of residence or the amount of English studied?
2. Which lexical elements are carried over from L1 to L2 and which L2 lexical elements are integrated into L1? Is it possible to categorise such elements?
3. To what extent is lexical transfer employed as a communication strategy by the Hungarian-English bilinguals in their English and Hungarian language production?



### **Definition of terms**

Since the terms referred to in this study have been used interchangeably by several different scholars throughout the years, it is considered necessary to provide explanations of their meanings

Firstly, the term ***Transfer***. Weinreich (1974) refers to the concept of transfer as interference and states that interference means "those instances of deviation from the norms of either language which occur in the speech of bilinguals as a result of their familiarity with more than one language", ie. as a result of language contact. According to Gass (1979), transfer is the imposition of previously learned patterns onto a new learning situation. Both forms and functions of elements of the native language are superimposed on the patterns of the second language.

Odlin (1989, p 26) distinguishes between **negative** and **positive transfer**. He considers negative transfer to be those influences of the previously acquired language(s) which have a constraining effect on the target language development, whereas he views positive transfer as having a facilitative role, especially with regard to the similarities between languages under consideration.

Ellis (1994, p. 301) observes transfer from the point of view of language acquisition and therefore uses the term "**influence** in the learner's language

acquisition process", meaning that the learner's existing linguistic knowledge influences the course of the second language development. Odlin (1989) further states that transfer is influence resulting from the similarities and differences between the target language and any other language that has been previously acquired.

Clyne (1991) talks about **transference**, which he defines as the result of the process of bringing over any items or features from one language to another. Transference can be examined at the lexical, semantic, syntactic, morphological, phonological, prosodic, graphemic and pragmatic levels of the languages.

Secondly, explanation is also necessary for the terms code-switching, code-mixing, code-alternation and borrowing. **Code-switching**, in broad terms, involves the alternate use of two or more languages either within a sentence or between sentences. Boeschoten (1997) offers a summary of different terms and their implications and states that: a) code-switching can and should be used to include single word switches within utterances, b) **code-mixing** is intrasentential and is considered to be longer than a single word, and c) **code-alternation** is guided by the speaker's preference for one language over another in a given context, therefore context dependent.

**Borrowings** are referred to in cultural contexts where they are used for the simple purpose of "filling the lexical gaps". Borrowings are further interchangeably used in other studies with the term "loanwords".

**Loan translation** is a borrowing by which a specialised meaning of a word or phrase in one language is transferred to another language by a literal translation of each of the individual elements. Such literal translation is also referred to as calque.

Finally, the term **attrition** needs to be explained. Attrition is defined as gradual loss or weakening of language which can be attributed to a number of factors such as the size of the ethnolinguistic group, class, education and prior knowledge of the L2, religious denomination, linguistic similarity of the language to the L2 and the political situation of the home country (Clyne, 1991). In this context, attrition is synonymous with the lack of language maintenance owing to these same factors. The question that arises from this is whether a speaker could be considered linguistically and communicatively competent in a second language, and if so, at what point. Speakers of a language who have become more competent in their second language might never have reached full competence in their first (first learned) language. For such speakers their second language is becoming or has already become their 'first' (or main) language.

Nakuma provides another view of attrition as the gradual weakening of the second language over time. However, this is a disputable area, especially with limited reliable evidence available that elements that are claimed to have suffered a gradual loss in a particular speaker had fully been acquired.

## **Chapter II**

### **Review of Literature and Theoretical Framework**

#### **Contrastive Analysis**

The notion of language transfer has not been immune to controversy. Contrastive observations about languages motivated the idea that some problems L2 learners encountered were directly relatable to the differences between the languages under consideration. It was widely accepted that native language affected second language acquisition. These assumptions were based on the behaviouristic framework that viewed language acquisition as habit formation. It was commonly believed that learners had to overcome their habit of using the native language in order to show any progress in the second language (cf. James, 1980).

The similarities and differences between the forms and patterns of languages were studied in order to outline the potential areas of interference. Weinreich (1974, p. 1) reported on an investigation on the amount of interference and concluded that : "the greater the difference between ... the forms and patterns in each language, the greater is the learning problem and the potential area of interference". Further analyses of languages based on the measure of the

proportion of common vocabulary led to a possible classification of similar and dissimilar (so called, "distant") languages

In the seventies, numerous contrastive analyses were conducted not only with the intention of providing a systematic comparison between languages, but also in an attempt to explain and predict problems learners of a L2 might encounter, especially those which are due to their L1 influence. This gave rise to error analysis. Subjects who shared a common language were found to share common errors in their L2 production (cf. Dezső, 1980). It was also noticed that speakers of different languages shared similar errors which made researchers assume that those errors might be attributable to general features of the second language (cf. Gass, 1979). Moreover, research showed not only similarities of some errors made by learners of many different language backgrounds, but also similarities of some errors in both first and second language acquisition. Therefore, these errors were considered indicators of developmental processes in both first and second language acquisition, and accordingly were termed developmental errors (Kohn, 1986).

### **Language Distance and Language Proficiency**

More recent studies have focused on the idea of language distance. Corder (1981) argues that transfer is less evident between distant languages and states that it is the similarity of the two languages (L1 and L2) that allows learners to discover mother tongue-like features in the second language and thus transfer is viewed as a facilitative feature of second language acquisition. Laufer and Eliasson's (1993) study examines the use of phrasal verbs in L2 English among L1 Swedish and Hebrew speakers and suggests that the greater the distance between the L1 and L2, the less likely it is that learners use particular structures or lexical items that are not available in their L1. The findings indicate that learners of L2 resort to those structures and lexical items that are readily transferable from their L1. Kellerman (1981) considers transfer to be a feature of the initial acquisition process; therefore, with increased proficiency transfer becomes less evident. Moreover, the importance of transfer declines over time, once learners widen their range of linguistic possibilities (Richards, 1982), or as the learners' grammar changes from their L1 grammar to Universal Grammar (Schwartz & Sprouse, 1996).

Transfer has also been referred to as a possible production strategy. As such, transfer becomes a form of code-switching, where gaps in the lexical repertoire are filled with items belonging to the other language. Poulishse and Bougaerts

(1994) report on switches observed in the speech of Dutch learners of English at different levels of proficiency. Instances of intentional and unintentional switches were analysed and it was found that the frequency of occurrence of the language switches depended on the proficiency level of the speakers.

### **Code-switching**

Secondly, studies of code-switching in general will be considered. According to Boeschoten (1997), satisfactory definition of the concept is difficult because the wide range of terms used by authors to refer to very similar phenomena. As outlined in the Definitions of Terms section, code-switching is the term generally employed to cover language mixing phenomena.

Clyne (1991) uses code-switching and lexical transfer interchangeably, although he ties lexical transfer to contextual factors and code-switching to sociolinguistic or situational variables such as role relationship, domain, venue or the channel of communication. Koll-Stobbe (1994), on the other hand, sees code-switching as an indication of imperfect knowledge of the lexical or idiomatic system in question, and views its function as a compensatory strategy in contact situations. She further believes that in bilingual communities the mode of such mixed discourse is an accepted, socially unmarked convention.

Code-switching is usually connected to the speakers' need to fulfil their communicative intentions, and as such, to fill lexical gaps (Torres, 1992), or to



serve referential or directive functions (Bader & Mahadin, 1996) Clyne (1997) views lexical transfer and code switching as a support or "bridge between English and another language" (p 98). Therefore, code-switching can be regarded as a skilled discourse strategy in a bi- or multilingual setting (only). Moreover, such discourse strategies should allow for the alleviation of the effects of negative transfer (Odlin, 1989), which takes the form of under or overproduction.

Language choice and code-switching behaviour in the discourse of bilingual families has been considered by Pan (1995). According to his study, which considered bilingual families and analysed language choice in relation to age, children complied with the code-switches of older speakers in the L1 to L2 direction, whereas adults matched code choice in either direction. Therefore, in bilingual families code-switches increase in the L2 direction thus making the maintenance of the minority home language difficult. Furthermore, Bolonyai (1998) examines the L1 (Hungarian) and L2 (English) language changes and code switches in a bilingual child's language development in an L2 environment, in addition to the child's preference for the use of either language. The findings of this study correspond to the findings of Pan's study (1995), in a reported increase in code switches in the L2 direction.

## **Language Attrition**

Related to the issue of code switching is the concept of attrition. Clyne (1991, p. 115) observed that some older bilinguals frequently revert to their L1. Although such speakers still code-switch from English into L1 they gradually lose their L2 skills. Such an observation rests on very thin ground especially in view of the limited evidence available to confirm that loss of language skills is indeed taking place. Nakuma's (1997) study raises such issues. In contrast, according to Bratt Paulston's (1995) study, language attrition is usually tied to the lack of L1 maintenance and to social factors such as the group's or individual's incentive to use the language of and thus belong to the dominant group.

## **Chapter III**

### **The Study**

#### **Participants**

Eleven people participated in the study. Three men and eight women were volunteers, from among members of the Hungarian Cultural Society, popularly referred to as either the "Hungarian Club" or the "Hungarian Home". These people have had lengthy association with the Hungarian Cultural Society and they regularly attend cultural and social functions organised by them. In addition, two of the participants have been involved in the organisation and teaching of Hungarian language classes for children of second or third generation migrants, which are conducted on Saturdays. One participant, also an active member of the Club, has been in charge of a literary and debating circle which is run bi-monthly.

The participants were all native speakers of Hungarian; however, five of them came from Hungary and six from the northern Yugoslavian province of Vojvodina - Vajdaság.

## **Method**

The participants were involved in 32 conversations lasting a total of eight hours. They were organised into dyads (researcher - participant and participant - participant) and they were given four topics. Two topics needed to be conducted in Hungarian and two in English. The subjects were given the choice of which language to use first and they chose Hungarian and English in roughly equal proportions, thus cancelling out the effect of language order on the results. The topics included: a) description of their experiences and/or observations of people's free or leisure time activities in Perth; b) their recollections of a typical Christmas celebration in their home countries; c) a hypothetical resolution of a dispute between neighbours regarding the neighbour's barking dog; and d) hypothetical resolution of a dispute between themselves and electricity providers regarding a request to cut down / trim back a tree on their property. Topics a) and c) were discussed in Hungarian, topics b) and d) in English; moreover, a) and b) were researcher - participant dyads, in which the researcher asked additional questions, as needed, in order to allow participants to elaborate or extend their conversation. For the participant - participant dyad, the researcher distanced herself from the conversation and let the participants discuss / verbalise freely their problem resolution strategies.

The following table provides a summary of the topic and type of interaction :

	<b>Hungarian</b>	<b>English</b>
<b>Participant - researcher</b>	a) Leisure time activities in Perth	b) Christmas in home country
<b>Participant - Participant</b>	c) Hypothetical dispute over neighbour's dog	d) Hypothetical dispute with electricity supplier

**Table 1:** Language, participant and topic of interaction

On completion of the conversations, the participants were asked to fill in a questionnaire (see Appendix 1). The questions were related to the participants' usage of both languages, their age, educational background, occupation, length of residence and length of English studies.

The majority of these conversations took place in the researcher's home, the rest in the homes of participants.

The conversations were recorded on a tape recorder, and were consequently transcribed. The text was then analysed and code switches were marked. Following this, parts of sentences which were carriers of such words or morphemes that could be considered direct translations which either render the communicative content of the sentence in such a way that it becomes only comprehensible to a bilingual, or becomes a non- idiomatic, yet comprehensible part of a sentence, were also marked.

The total number of all such marked words was counted and recorded together with the total number of words of every individual speaker. Percentages of the total number of marked words were calculated in the two languages the speakers employed in their conversations.

The following tables give a summary of the data.

	<i>Age</i>	<i>Age at arriv</i>	<i>Length of res.</i>	<i>Length of sch</i>	<i>Eng in Aus</i>	<i>Eng in H country</i>
1	70	20	50	15	2	0
2	47	5	42	15	0	0
3	42	37	5	14	1	1
4	56	45	11	14	2	1
5	58	13	45	11	0	0
6	56	19	37	8	0	0
7	44	30	14	14	1	2
8	66	20	46	6	0	0
9	56	21	35	8	1	1
10	54	19	35	8	1	1
11	58	24	34	12	1	0

**Table 2:** Participants' characteristics

[Participants' age, age at arrival in Australia (Age at arriv), length of residence in Australia (Length of res), length of schooling (Length of sch), English studied in Australia (Eng in A - in years), English studied in the home country (Eng in H country - in years)]

	<i>Hungarian 1</i>	<i>Hungarian 2</i>	<i>Tot Hungarian</i>	<i>English 1</i>	<i>English 2</i>	<i>Tot English</i>
1	4.8	3.8	8.6	1.9	1.8	3.7
2	10	6	16	2.6	0.6	3.2
3	2.6	2.6	5.2	3.2	4.1	7.3
4	3	2.2	3.2	5.4	3.3	8.7
5	8.3	7	15.3	0.1	0.7	0.8
6	8.6	2.7	11.3	1.75	1.4	3.15
7	7	4	11	3.5	1.25	4.75
8	7	7.2	14.2	2.5	3.25	5.75
9	9.25	6	15.25	3	1.25	4.25
10	9	6.5	15.5	1.5	1.5	3
11	11	3	14	2	1	3

**Table 3:** Transfer data

[English transfers in Hungarian in the participant - researcher dyad (Hungarian 1), English transfers in Hungarian in the participant - participant dyad (Hungarian 2), total English transfers in Hungarian (Tot Hungarian), Hungarian transfers in English in the participant - researcher dyad (English 1), Hungarian transfers in English in the participant - participant dyad (English 2), and total Hungarian transfers in English (Tot English)]

## **Chapter IV**

### **Factors involved in Transfer**

All participants employed transfers and code switches in their conversations and these seemed to represent an unremarkable choice. Code switches and transfers were present in the conversation both when the language of interaction was Hungarian and when it was English. However, larger numbers of code switches were found in the Hungarian corpus; specifically, three times as many code switches and transfers were observed in the Hungarian corpus than in the English corpus. This corresponds to findings involving bilinguals living in settings in which the first language of the individuals is not the official language of the country. Both Pan (1995) and Bolonyai (1998) reported on finding that code switches increase in the L2 direction.

It was further observed that nearly twice as many transfers occurred in the participant - researcher dyad than in the participant - participant dyad when the conversation was conducted in both Hungarian and English. In the participant - researcher dyad the topic of the conversation was concrete, it called for the reflection on their current immediate home or community environment in addition to their reflection of life in their native home countries. In the participant - participant dyad the topic of conversation was hypothetical, in

which the participants were not asked to reflect on events that had happened, rather, they were asked to use their imagination and elaborate the ways they would solve imagined disputes. Therefore, the number of transfers might be attributed to:

a) the topic of the conversation rather than the participants' choice as an unremarkable feature of their speech in a bilingual context. The topics were more conducive of the use of one language than the other (the language which was asked to be the language of interaction); or

b) the interlocutor in the conversation. The presence of the researcher could have been a factor affecting the language choice.

The conversations were further analysed and the raw numbers of all code switches, borrowings, transfers and loan translations were tabulated. **Code switches** involved the alternate use of English and Hungarian when the language of interaction was either language. Code switches, furthermore, included single or multiple word switches and were recorded in both cases as one switch. **Borrowings** included the use of international words which were, in the case when the language of interaction was Hungarian, inserted into the participants' utterances and were no longer than a single word. **Transfers** were analysed separately in the two languages. Firstly, English transfers in Hungarian involved



the use of words which were uttered with English patterns of pronunciation (i.e. phonological transfers). Secondly, Hungarian transfers included what Odlin (1989) referred to as negative transfers which included those influences of the participants' first language (Hungarian) which had a constraining effect on their English. Finally, **loan translations** were recorded every time participants resorted to the literal translation of words or phrases from one language into the other which rendered their utterances either non idiomatic yet comprehensible or in some cases comprehensible only with additional explanation.

As can be seen from table 4, English code switches in Hungarian were recorded in greatest numbers (total 111), which amounted to 32.5% of all transfers and code switches. In descending order English loan translations in Hungarian were recorded a total of 79 times (23.1%), which were followed by 77 Hungarian code switches in English (22.5%), 33 Hungarian transfers in English (9.6%), 20 English borrowings in Hungarian (5.8%), 15 English transfers in Hungarian (4.39%) and 6 Hungarian loan translations in English (1.75%). Hungarian words were not borrowed in English.

	<i>Hun Loan trans</i>	<i>Eng Loan trans</i>	<i>Hun trans</i>	<i>Eng transfer</i>	<i>Hun Bor</i>	<i>Hun CS</i>	<i>Eng CS</i>
1	10	0	0	5	6	31	16
2	30	0	2	1	3	7	14
3	2	2	0	1	5	11	6
4	1	2	1	9	0	3	9
5	10	0	0	0	1	16	8
6	2	0	6	0	3	6	2
7	0	0	0	2	0	6	5
8	9	1	2	8	1	8	4
9	6	0	0	3	0	9	4
10	2	0	4	1	0	8	5
11	7	1	0	3	1	6	4
Total	79	6	15	33	20	111	77

**Table 4:** Raw number of type of transfers

[English loan translations incorporated into Hungarian (Hun Loan trans), Hungarian loan translation in English (Eng Loan trans), English transfer in Hungarian (Hun trans), Hungarian transfer in English (Eng transfer), English borrowing in Hungarian (Hun Bor), English code switches in Hungarian (Hun CS) and Hungarian code switches in English (Eng CS)]

It should also be noted that the small number of participants made it impossible to draw statistically significant conclusions.

## Age

The participants were between the ages of 42 and 70, with the average age of 50. It was hypothesised that the number of code switches or transfers would either increase or decrease with the age of the participants. However, there was no observable tendency in either direction. The highest percentage of English transfers in Hungarian in an individual conversation (11%) was recorded with a

58 year old participant and the lowest (2.2%) with a 56 year old, moreover, the highest percentage (3.2%) of Hungarian transfers in English in an individual conversation was recorded with a 42 year old, and the lowest (0.1%) with a 58 year old participant

A further investigation, possibly with a greater number of participants also including younger participants or a wider age range, might shed light on a possible relationship between age and transfer.

Total Hungarian transfers and code switches recorded in both the participants' English conversations ('Hun in Eng') and total English transfers and code switches in both their Hungarian conversations ('Eng in Hun') were correlated with the participants' age in the following chart:

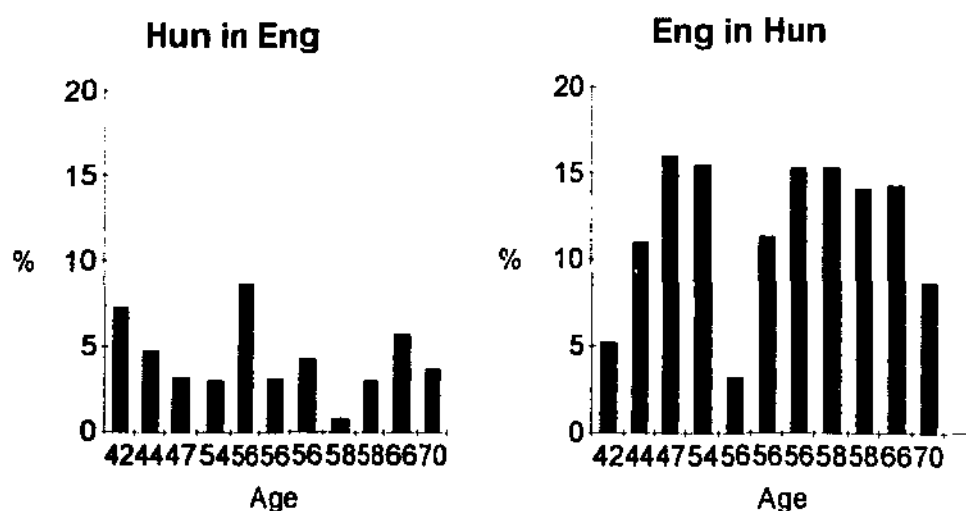


Chart 1: Rate of transfers (%) by age of speakers

An interesting, markedly different relationship exists in these charts with one individual, a 56 year old participant. In both languages the same individual recorded the highest and the lowest percentages of transfers in Hungarian and English languages respectively. Without this individual, the percentage of transfers shows a slight falling and rising tendency in the English transfers in Hungarian, and a rising and falling tendency in the Hungarian transfers in English.

An additional investigation was conducted in order to find out if there were any correlations between the age of participants and different transfer types. This investigation did not reveal any emerging patterns. Appendix 2 gives an overview of charts related to the attempts at correlating age with code switches, loan translations, transfers and borrowings.

### **Length of residence in Australia**

The participants have resided in Australia for between five and fifty years. The average length of residence is thirty-two years. One participant recorded that he stayed in an English speaking country prior to his arrival in Australia for a period of one year.

It was expected that the Hungarian language of participants who have had longer association with English and the English speaking environment would be marked with more transfers and code switches in that direction. Furthermore, it was also expected that these same participants' English would contain fewer Hungarian transfers.

It appears that, in line with expectations, with the exception of some participants the number of Hungarian transfers in the English conversations decreased roughly with the length of residence, and conversely, the number of English transfers in the Hungarian conversations increased to some extent.

The following chart illustrates the number of transfers in relation to the participants' length of residence:

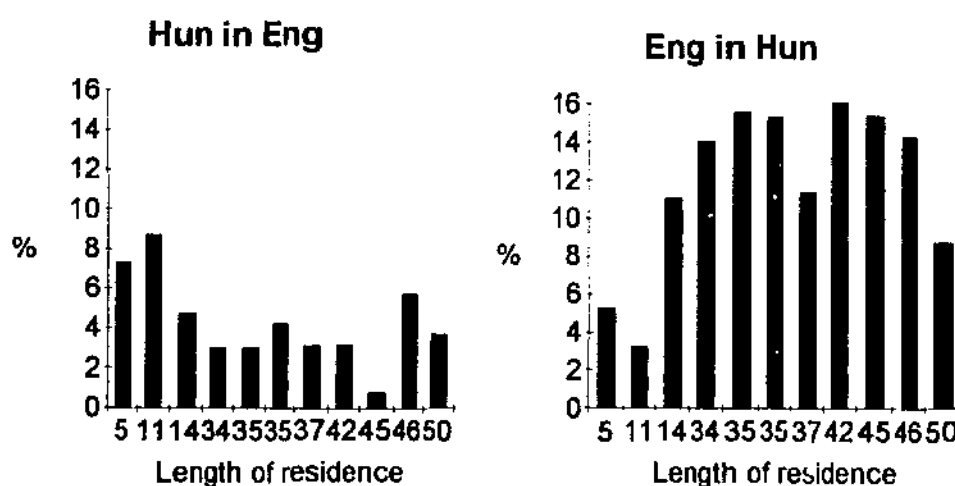


Chart 2: Rate of transfers (%) by length of residence in Australia

In addition, no correlation patterns could be observed in relation to the participants' length of residence and the different transfer types.

### **Age at arrival in Australia**

One participant arrived in Australia as a five year old child and has resided in Australia ever since. Another participant came to Australia when he was thirteen. These participants had either completed part or all of their education in Australian schools. The rest of the participants arrived in Australia either in their twenties (six participants) or later, in their thirties or forties (three participants).

It appears that there may be a negative correlation between the participants' age at arrival and the total numbers of transfers in Hungarian. The younger the participants' age at arrival, the more transfers are marked in Hungarian. The older their age, the less transfers are recorded in their Hungarian speech. The reverse is true for the participants' English. There appears to be a positive correlation between the amount of transfer and the age at arrival. The younger the participants' age at arrival the fewer the occurrences of transfer in their English. The older they are, the greater the occurrences of transfer in English.

The following charts represent the number of transfers in the participants' conversations in relation to their age on arrival in Australia.

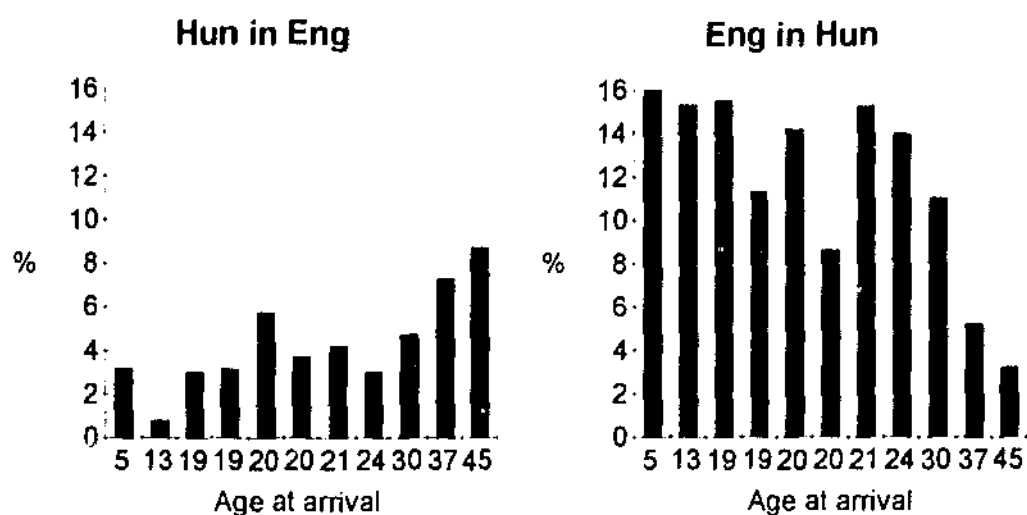


Chart 3: Rate of transfers (%) by age of speakers at arrival in Australia

The same pattern was not observed between the different transfer types and the participants' age at arrival in Australia.

### Length of schooling

The participants attended school for between six and fifteen years with the average of eleven years. There appears to be no pattern indicating a relationship between transfer in general or between different transfer types and length of schooling.

### **Length of English study in the home country and / or in Australia**

Of the eleven participants only two studied English for three years, four studied for two years, one for a year and two did not formally study English at all. Two participants, the five and thirteen year old arrivals, however, either started or continued their education in Australia without attending any special English classes.

In spite of the limited exposure to formal English instruction, the participants were in reasonable command of English. They did not consider the tasks difficult or demanding. All but one participant filled in the questionnaire in English with reasonable accuracy.

There appears to be no pattern indicating a relationship between transfer, code switches, loan translations or borrowings and length of English studies.

### **Usage of English and Hungarian**

All participants recorded that they used Hungarian as the language of interaction in the family home since all of them lived in endogamous partnerships in which the partners were both ethnic Hungarians. They all considered it extremely important to maintain the language and six of the eleven participants stated that



all members of their immediate family members were fluent speakers of Hungarian. Their children, however, entered exogamous unions and consequently the grandchildren could not communicate in Hungarian but could only understand simple messages. Therefore, the language of family interaction in the presence of entire extended families, including the third generation, was usually a mixture of both languages, the dominant being Hungarian only in those families in which endogamous relationships exist across generations. In addition, they all reported on finding the Hungarian Cultural Society meetings a venue for the maintenance of their extended social and cultural values.

They reported on using English on a daily basis outside the home, at their place of work, with their Australian friends and acquaintances, and during any kind of interaction with the wider community. The participants who were older than fifty-five and no longer in the workforce reported having limited opportunities to use English since most of their interactions were within the sphere of the family. They, however, reported interacting with their grandchildren using a mixed discourse, in which the participants' language of interaction was mainly Hungarian as long as they could follow the conversation and the grandchildren's mainly English with occasional Hungarian.

## Chapter V

### Types of Transfer

#### Hungarian Code switches

Forty-two percent of all Hungarian code switches in the English corpus involved nouns which were used in connection with Christmas festivities, especially belonging to the category of food. A third of all code switched nouns were followed by:

- a) an English translation, which usually has a less specific meaning (*csirkepaprikás*, which refers to not any kind of chicken casserole but a specific Hungarian type of chicken casserole was followed by 'chicken casserole'; *töltött paprika* - 'stuffed capsicum'; *szaloncukor* - 'lolly').
- b) an explanation of the meaning in English, resembling a conversation between a bilingual and a monolingual (*Jézuska hozta* - Jesus brought it or the angels brought it; *fenyőfa* - pine tree; *heigli* - walnut or poppy seed roll) or
- c) an apology in which the speaker expressed his/her inability to recall the parallel structure or word in English ("I don't know how to say this in English"; "I don't know what do you say in English?"; "...that sort of thing but I can't remember what you say...")

The code switches, especially those belonging to groups a) and b) above may be interpreted as ones serving a symbolic function, signalling the speakers' ethnic Hungarian identity.

An alternative explanation could be that the speakers may have been trying to clarify the broader message that they were conveying by switching from one language to the other, possibly because the available English translation would not be specific enough. Therefore for words that would require lengthy explanation of the specific meaning, there were no, or only limited offers. For example for the word *szaloncukor* which would require an explanation such as: 'a fondant like candy wrapped in red, green or gold frilled, shiny paper used as a Christmas tree decoration which is usually taken off the tree and eaten during the Christmas festivities or sometimes thrown away once the tree decorations are removed', only the words 'lolly' or 'sweets' were included following the use of the Hungarian term.

Twenty-five percent of all code switches involved the interjection *hát* meaning 'well' to preface or occasionally to resume their remarks or to express agreement or consent especially in conjunction with the equivalent 'well yes' - *hát igen*.

*Igen* ('yes') was also used alone and formed ten percent of all code switches. These were used not only to indicate affirmation but also to replace adverbs such as 'moreover', 'also' or 'in addition' at the boundaries of utterances. Furthermore,

six percent of all code switches involved the non-Hungarian interjection *ja* in the same context as one would use 'yes' or *igen*. This could be interpreted as transfer by analogy with 'yeah', although it could also be considered a transfer from German 'ja' - 'yes'

Used at the beginning or within utterances to represent or vocalise hesitations was the word *izé*, the equivalent of 'er' or 'what should I call it?'

It's so beautiful and on the top of ... *izé* ... rooftops, you got beautiful Christmas trees.

Possibly serving the function of an intensifier, in some instances the translation equivalent of certain words was used immediately following the English word. For example in the following sentence the word *mindenütt*, meaning 'everywhere', is used as an intensifier:

... so many Christmas trees in the cities, wherever you go, *mindenütt*, that ...

### **English Code switches**

There were 30% more English code switches in Hungarian than Hungarian code switches in English. Firstly, the names of institutions, such as the 'State Housing Commission', 'council', 'Electricity Commission', were used possibly in order to assist speakers in assuring specific identification since these names, although

equivalent terms exist in Hungarian, connect or associate the speakers with the their immediate Australian environment. It might be based on an attitude that such mixed discourse is appropriate, or even more appropriate than monolingual speech, when addressing a person of the same ethnic background.

These nouns were mainly inserted into the utterances, using them as examples, and very few were fully integrated, attracting inflections.

The rest of the code switches were fully integrated into the Hungarian context, they were used with Hungarian suffixes, and no attempts were made on the part of the subjects to provide translation equivalents.

Examples of nouns integrated in this manner: *nightclubbokba*, *pubokba*, *pubba*, *art gallerybe*, *shopping centarokba*, *mallokba*, *barbecuekra*, *barbecuekat*, *holidayra*, *unitban*, *poolba*, *ambulancet*, *policenak*, *partykra*. Verbs were also formed: *partyznak*, *comprehendolok*.

One possible interpretation of the lexis drawn from the speakers' second language is that the corresponding terms in the first language are much less available to the speakers.

Seven of the eleven participants, when asked about free time activities, used the word *diszkóra* in this context:

<i>Néha</i>	<i>elmenni</i>	<i>diszkóra</i>	<i>vagy</i>	<i>nightclubba</i>
Sometimes	go (+they)	disco (+for - prep. of purpose)	or	nightclub(+to)

[They sometimes go to a disco or a nightclub.]

to refer to a disco as one of the popular places of entertainment of the younger generation or of teenagers. 'Disco' - with a slightly different spelling has been borrowed from English and is used in Hungarian with virtually the same pronunciation. The usual suffix indicating place is *-ban* or *-ba* (in a place or toward a place i.e. position or direction, respectively) as it is in the example: nightclub***ba***. The suffix *-ra* is used to indicate either purpose or position indicating *on top of*. *Diszkóra* as it was used by the participants could be interpreted as the activity- *tánc* (as it is in English: 'to disco') *táncra* meaning 'for a dance'. In this case the place in which dancing takes place is equated with one of the functions that such a place provides, that is, dance.

Interjections, such as 'well' and 'actually' were used as initiators extensively with all speakers when the language of interaction was Hungarian. 'Yeah' and 'ja' were used not only as response adverbs or signals of affirmative replies but also within individual utterances as intensifiers or emphasisers, as they are used in informal conversations:



*...a gyerekek már végül megunták, akkor.*  
 ...the children already finally bored (they be, past tense) then

*beleszóltak, hogy 'Shut up!'*  
 intervene (past tense) that : 'Shut up!'

[...finally the children became bored with it and intervened (and shouted): 'Shut up!]

### **Appeal for help**

Four subjects code switched in both directions in order to appeal for help when they were unsure of the right word or phrase:

*Nem tudom, hogy hogy is mondják?*  
 not know (I) how is said (it)  
 [I don't know, how is it said]

*Hogy mondják, hogy...?*  
 how say (they) that  
 [How do they say that...?]

*Minek is mondják...?*  
 what say (they) ...  
 [What do they say...?]

*What is it in Hungarian?*  
*How do you say it?*

These were preceded by a pause.



## Form of address

The form of address was called into question by only one participant, a recent arrival (who has only been in Australia for five years), upon the move from English conversation to Hungarian. The other participants were older and therefore probably assumed that their seniority warranted their non reciprocal use of the familiar form of address, or they would not have welcomed the reciprocal familiar form and thus never initiated the introduction of the familiar form, and thus consistently used the formal form themselves. None of them raised the question of what was appropriate. .

*Had kérdezzem meg már, hogy ragaszkodsz-e (you (T) insist) ahhoz, hogy magázodjunk, mert nekem sokkal könnyebb (easier) hogyha veled (with you (T))beszélek ha tegeződünk mert én azt hiszem idősebb (older) vagyok és ugye mégis, ez hát szóval nekem nagyon furcsa mert ugye én azt hiszem Magyarországon se magázodtál (you (T) used the formal form of address) volna a te korod belivel soha csak hogyha nem valami nagyon idegen (stranger) lett volna: ja akkor beszéljünk.*

Rather than an English translation, I shall provide a summary. The person wants to ask whether or not it would be acceptable if the conversation continued using the familiar form of address, saying that it would be **easier** for her, since she was **older** and not a '**stranger**'. The suffixes that are bolded indicate the familiar form (you (T)), although the person is still in the process of trying to negotiate the usage.

A large number of participants (81%) included familiar forms of address in their narratives when they referred to events that, although hypothetical, related to direct forms of address. In such contexts, the formal address is usually employed in conversation, therefore such instances of "familiarisation" could be considered a form of transfer from English. These became evident in the suffixes and pronouns that were introduced with the second person singular (you (T)) instead of either the third person singular or plural (V).

*Megkérdezném, mi baja a kutyádnak (T), miért nem nézed (T) ezt már meg , vagy csinálj(T) vele valamit. (familiar)*

[I would ask what was wrong with **your (T) dog**, why would not **you (T) look** at it. or (**you (T) did** something with it.]

instead of

*Megkérdezném, mi baja a kutyájának (V), miért nem nézi (V) ezt már meg , vagy csináljon (V) vele valamit. (formal)*

[I would ask what was wrong with **your (V) dog**, why would not **you (V) look** at it. or (**you (V) did** something with it.)

where the bolded parts of words indicate the different familiar and formal forms of address.

## **Loan Translations**

### **English**

Loan translations occur when speakers incorporate elements of English which originate in their native language knowledge. This becomes evident in words that have a different semantic range in the two languages. An example of this range is the word *kapcsolat* in Hungarian. Depending on the context, it can be translated with the words 'connection', 'contact', 'relationship', 'companionship', or 'attachment'. The way this word surfaced in a participant's narrative also illustrates the problem:

...my parents didn't have very good. ahm. **contact**. they argued a lot. ahm. **relationship**,  
yeah, relationship.....

It is possible that the subject recalled the word 'contact' first, realised that it was not appropriate and was able to recall the word 'relationship' which she found more suitable.

Another example is the word 'waited'. It could be translated with the word *várt*, the Hungarian equivalent which is marked for the past tense (-t). In the sentence : 'He waited for the bus.', the word 'waited' can be successfully translated with the word *várt* : *(Ő) várt a buszra.*

However, the way the word 'waited' was included in a participant's oral narrative indicates that another meaning of the word *várt* should have been taken into consideration. *Várt* has the additional meaning of 'awaited', 'expected', 'desired' or 'anticipated', thus the sentence

...so, it was a nice very **waited** event, the Christmas night...

would have been more successful with any of the above words.

A further example involves the use of the words 'sweet', 'sweets' and 'sweetness' in the sentence:

...they prepared the special **sweetness** to the Christmas tree...

'-ness', a noun forming suffix meaning abstract quality, is equivalent in Hungarian with *-ság* or *-ség*. *Édes*, an adjective meaning sweet, needs to carry the noun suffix *-ség* (*édesség*) , in this case not indicating an abstract but a concrete noun, if it is to refer to any products that taste sweet. In addition, the same word *édesség* could be used to mean 'sweetness', 'suavity' or 'charm'. It is possible that the participant knew that such a word as 'sweetness' exists in English, was not

aware of its more restricted range of meaning and since it seemed to be derived through a similar morphological manipulation as the Hungarian, tried it out in the context, without realising that in English the word 'sweet' without a suffix is used to form a concrete noun.

Single words or collocations were not the only types of loan translations. There were examples in which whole sentences followed the Hungarian word order. Although in Hungarian there is no strict rule on word order, there are still typical patterns of usage, thus the sentence:

... it is necessary to know the people each other, ...

could be a translation of the Hungarian

*fontos, hogy ismerjék az emberek egymást*

(necessary, that to know people each other).

Interestingly the speaker could have directly translated an equally acceptable Hungarian word order to give a more acceptable English word order:

*fontos, hogy az emberek ismerjék egymást*

(necessary, that people know each other).

The difference between these Hungarian versions is a matter of emphasis on 'knowing' in the former and 'people' in the latter.

In Hungarian there is no distinction in pronouns according to gender, therefore the third person singular pronoun is *ő* for all genders. This may explain the use of 'it' in the following example: My brother, it was a nasty person, ...

## Loan Translations

### Hungarian

The participants resorted to direct translations of English phrases that rendered their utterances comprehensible only to bilinguals. A monolingual Hungarian speaker would find such utterances puzzling, since such a person would only understand the individual words and not the entire utterance.

For example:

<i>Nem</i>	<i>mentünk</i>	<i>el</i>	<i>oda</i>	<i>mert</i>	<i>piacon</i>	<i>a házunk</i>
No	go (past tense + we) to	there	because	market (+on)	house (+our)	
<i>és</i>	<i>így otthon</i>	<i>maradtunk.</i>				
and	so home	stay (past tense + we)				

[We didn't go there because we have our house on the market, so we stayed at home. ]

In Hungarian it is usual to refer to 'a house being on the market' as 'it is being sold' or 'it is being offered for sale', just as it is in English. *Piacon*, 'on the market' refers to the market place, or the farmer's market. For a monolingual

Hungarian the sentence therefore would be highly unusual since it would mean that the house was taken and placed on a stall at a marketplace as if it were a model or toy. Alternatively, it could possibly mean that the house in question is close to or near a market place.

An example of an attempt to translate an English word into Hungarian is the word 'nightclub' - *éjszakai mulató*. It was translated as *éjjeli klub* or *éjszakai klub*, where the possible equivalents for 'night' (*éjjel*, *éjszaka*) were used. However, the word 'club' attracted only phonological change, since it was uttered with the Hungarian pronunciation.

The following passage is full of English idiomatic expressions translated word for word:

... nálunk van *uszodánk* (public swimming pool) és akkor nyáron *tudnak úszni* (can swim - are able to swim) is, *yeah*, vagy a sok, vagy rengeteg *választás* (choice) van nekik, az *enyém* (mine) sokat *atletikáznak* (do athletics) vagy szoktak jobban, most csak a fiam *csinálja* (does). De sok ilyesmi van, van ilyen *társasjátékok* (board games) nagyon nagy *választás* (choice) van, *yeah* csak az van hogy akkor a szülőknek kell *előre hátra* (forwards and backwards) vinni őket, de a sport az jó nekik, hogy valami sportot *csináljanak* (do). Well, a fiam az *atletikázik* és otthon sokat *csinálja* (does) azt a ...

could be translated as

...we have a swimming pool and so in summer they can also swim, yeah, or there is a lot, or they have a lot of choices, my (children) do athletics or they used to, now only my son does it. But there are a lot of these kinds of things, kinds of team sports, there are so many choices, yeah, but then there is the problem that the parents have to take them back and forth, but sport is good for them, it's good if they do sports. Well, my son does athletics, and he does it at home as well,....

*Nálunk van uszodánk* (there is our swimming pool)- requires special consideration. Firstly, the speaker was guided by the English opening of a sentence meaning 'there is ... at our place', *nálunk van*. Secondly, in Hungarian an opening like 'there is' is restricted and it could not be followed by a possessive (*uszodánk* - 'our pool'). Finally, *uszoda* a 'public swimming pool' is not a suitable word for the context of having a swimming pool in the backyard, in this context, the word *úszómedence* is more appropriate since it does not carry the distinction between the pool being public or private. A more acceptable phrase would be *nekünk van* ('we have') *úszómedencénk* (we have our swimming pool), in which possession is present with the noun, rather than the indication of the location of the noun (pool).

*Tudnak úszni* is literally 'they can swim', which in Hungarian refers only to the ability to swim (as in 'I can swim' as opposed to 'He can't.') and not to the opportunity for the same action. The Hungarian verb *úszhatnak* would be a more suitable alternative since it only indicates the presence of the opportunity.

*Választás*, for example, is a possible word in this context meaning 'choice'; however, the word *választék* should be used. This indicates that the speaker may have confused the different usage of these two words. *Sok a választás*, as it was used in the context appears to be translated directly from English as in 'there



are many choices', *sok*, meaning 'many', and *választás* (a noun), meaning 'choice'. *Nagy a választék*, would be a more idiomatic expression as well as *több dologból választhat*. In these, the difference is indicated between 'choice', 'choose' or 'choice of'.

The possessive *enyém* (mine) is used in the singular form but should either be used in the plural (*enyéim*), since it is used together with the plural noun 'children' or it should be used as *az én gyerekeim*, where *az én* is the invariant attributive possessive. English, however does not have separate singular and plural forms of 'mine'. Furthermore, *enyéim*, in sentences without nouns in which the possessive functions as a noun, has an additional meaning, that is 'my family', 'my children', or even 'my people'.

Playing or doing sports is usually translated with *játszik* (plays), *sportol* (does sports), *foglalkozik a sporttal* (is involved in sports). Therefore, *az enyém sokat atletikáznak ...*, *most csak a fiam csinálja* should be *az én gyerekeim sokat foglalkoznak atlétikával*. Another possible rendering of 'to go in for sports' would be *sportot űz*, or more specifically *atletizál* (verb).

Sports that are played in groups, team sports, would never be associated with the word *társasjáték*, since its meaning is board games. Board games are played in groups (*társas*) and that seems to have been the word that caused the confusion.

The speaker also referred to the problem that the parents face when they have to drive the children to sporting venues. A possible explanation of the choice of words *előre hátra* (literally 'forwards backwards') is the phrase 'back and forth' which loosely could be translated as *ide oda*. The speaker, however, used the equivalent phrase in Hungarian of backwards and forwards, which sounds rather humorous without intending to be so.

In the following examples the unintended humour is also apparent.

<i>a legidősebb</i>	<i>lányom</i>	<i>nagyon</i>	<i>szeret</i>	<i>vásárolni</i>	<i>és</i>	<i>mindig</i>
my eldest	daughter	very much	likes	shopping	and	always

<i>körbenéznak;</i>	<i>persze</i>	<i>a ruhákat</i>	<i>meg</i>	<i>ilyeneket</i>
look around (and look at);	of course	clothes	and	the like

[My eldest daughter likes shopping very much and she always looks around; of course she looks at clothes and the like]

People look around or shop around, and they do not necessarily move inside a circle. As it is used in this sentence, the word 'around' is equated with the word 'round'. Therefore, in the example above, *körbenéznak* conjures an image of a

person looking as far as an imaginary circle would allow, somehow being rotated within that circle. This image is certainly not what the speaker intended. *Körülméznék* would be a more suitable expression in this context.

The word *szeret* - 'love' or 'like' was also used in contexts creating unintentional humour. In English it is possible to say '**I like my neighbour**' meaning 'I have a good relationship with my neighbour', or 'I like him/her as a person' without indicating a possible love relationship that might exist between neighbours. In Hungarian, however, the word *szeret* can be used with people or things (concrete or abstract), but when it refers to people, it indicates a fondness or affection beyond friendship, as the word 'love' would indicate. In the following example the speaker is apparently unaware of the additional information that is present in the utterance:

<i>...hogyha</i>	<i>szeretem</i>	<i>a szomszédomat</i>	<i>akkor</i>	<i>megmondom</i>	<i>neki, ...</i>
...if	love (+ I)	neighbour (+poss + acc)	then	tell (+ I)	to
					him/her

[If I liked/loved my neighbour I would tell him/her]

A confusion between the similarity of Hungarian and English words was evident in the next example:

<i>Ők</i>	<i>formáltak</i>	<i>a magyar</i>	<i>otthon.</i>
They	shaped / moulded (past + third person plural)	the Hungarian	home
			(+ accusative)

[They established / formed the Hungarian home]

The person was obviously guided by the similarity of the words *formál* and 'form' in Hungarian and English respectively. In Hungarian, however, the word *formál* means 'to shape' or 'to mould' which is less appropriate in this context. In order to express the intended meaning: 'to set up', 'establish' or 'form', the words *alakít* or *szervez* should probably have been used.

Nominalisation of Hungarian verbs was also observed (as noted above), especially those accompanying 'doing' or 'making'. For example: 'to make a social call' was translated word for word as *látogatást csinál* (visit + accusative, does), instead of the single verb *látogat* (visit). A further example: 'He did three years at the university' was also translated word for word as, *ő* (he/she) *csinálta* (did) *három* (three) *évig* (years) *az egyetemet* (university + accusative). In this example the usual word would be 'he studied at the university', *tanult az egyetemen*, in which case the word *egyetem* (university) would not attract the accusative case, rather the suffix indicating place (as in English).

Almost all participants referred to people or themselves using Hungarian as the language of interaction as *beszéli a magyart* (he/ she speaks Hungarian +

accusative). In Hungarian the accusative case is not used in this context, but instead, the suffix marking the adverb of manner. Hence, the question is not 'what language one speaks' but 'how does the person speak'. The accusative case is another example of loan translation from English.

Another loan translation involved the use of reflexive pronouns. Hungarian has a system of reflexive pronouns which, as in English, replace a co-referential noun phrase within the same finite verb clause. In addition, in Hungarian, the use of the accusative ending is obligatory in such reflexive function (*magamat* - 'myself', *magadat* - 'yourself', *magát* - 'him/herself', *magukat* - 'themselves'). The pronouns without the accusative ending (*-at*) could be translated as *magam* - 'by myself', *magad* - 'by yourself', *maga* - 'by him/herself', *maguk* - 'by themselves'. An additional word *egyedül* - 'alone' is also possible to use especially, as in English, if 'by yourself' is intended to mean alone, as in an example: *egyedül csinálta meg a házi feladatot* - 'he/she did the homework alone'. Thus in the following example there is a miscommunication with the use of the reflexive pronoun:

<i>de</i>	<i>mikor</i>	<i>már</i>	<i>nagyobbak</i>	<i>és</i>	<i>lehet</i>	<i>otthon</i>	<i>hagyni</i>	<i>öket</i>
but	when	already	older	and	can	at home	leave	them
<b><i>magukkal...</i></b>								
with themselves...								

[...but when they are older and they can be left at home by themselves...]

*Magukkal*, 'with themselves' could possibly indicate the speaker's inability to recall the appropriate suffix, knowing that there should be one (as in English 'by' is used), without realising the extended meaning that surfaced.

A further example of loan translation is the following sentence:

<i>hogy</i>	<i>képzeli el</i>	<i>egy</i>	<i>nemzet</i>	<i>az imádott</i>	<i>gyerekeit</i>	<i>ilyen</i>
how	imagine	one	nation	beloved	children	such
<i>korülmények</i>	<i>között</i>	<i>felhozni</i>				
circumstances	among	bring up				

[how can a nation bring up its children under such conditions / circumstances]

*Felhozni* should be *felnevelni* in this sentence. To bring somebody up to a place, to bring something forward, to drive somebody up to a place, to bring an issue up or to mention an issue are possible meanings of the verb *felhozni*. *Fel* means 'up' and *hoz* 'bring', put together 'to bring up'. However, for 'to bring up', meaning 'to educate', 'to rear', 'nurture' or 'raise', the verb *felnevelni* would be the usual term.

A failure to distinguish between two meanings of the word 'law', either meaning 'legal system', or 'statute / act' resulted in the following example:

*a lánya törvényt tanul...*

in which the meaning of the word *törvény* is 'statute' or 'act', rather than 'law' as it was probably intended since the sentence means 'his/her daughter studies law'.

## Loan Translations

### Humorous reason - idiolect

Lexical transfer can become the basis of bilingual humour. An interesting example in connection with a word related to family relationships surfaced in the conversation in the context of disputes with neighbours. A participant recalled a time when they lived next door to their brother and sister-in-law and referred to them as: *ló-testvér*. This was an intended pun in which *testvér* means 'sibling', and *ló* means 'horse':

*A: a szomszédját az nagyon mérgesítette*  
[(his) neighbour (acc) was angered by it/

*B: Az nem a szomszédja volt, az volt neki a ló-testvére*  
[he was not (only) his neighbour, he was his brother-in-law]

*A (laughter) yeah, az igaz*  
[yeah, that's right]

The pun is intended on the homophone law - *ló*.

## Transfer

Phonological transfer of English was employed mainly with words associated with the latest technological devices such as computers or CDs. These words entered the Hungarian corpus with the English pronunciation.

<i>a gyerekek</i>	<i>sok</i>	<i>tévét</i>	<i>néznek,</i>	<i>ahm, játszanak</i>	<i>CD-t</i>	<i>meg</i>
the children	lot of	TV (+acc)	watch (+they)	ahm. play	CD (+acc)	and
<i>rádiót</i>	<i>hallgatnak,</i>	<i>nagyon,</i>	<i>persze</i>	<i>a komputer</i>	<i>az a másik</i>	
radio (+acc).	listen	a lot	of course	the computer	is	another
<i>dolog</i>	<i>manapság,</i>	<i>ahm, ...</i>				
thing	nowadays.	ahm, ...				

[The children watch TV a lot, ahm. play CDs and listen to the radio a lot, of course the computer is another thing nowadays. ahm....]

## Borrowing

English words inserted into Hungarian included the words 'weekend' - *vikend*, 'teenager' - *tinédzser*, 'studio' - *stúdió*, 'manager' - *menedzser*, 'festival' - *fesztivál*, 'hobby' - *hobbi*, 'picnic' - *piknik*, 'gallery' - *galéria* and 'video' - *videó*. These words were either used with the English pronunciation, in which case they also exemplify the category of phonological transfers, or they were used in contexts



that are acceptable in English only and sound confusing or non idiomatic in Hungarian.

A further example of borrowing is a neologism in Hungarian in connection with drugs or drug usage, namely words such as *dragolnak* (they use/take drugs), *dragfogyasztás* (drug usage), *draggal* (with drugs), or *dragproblémák* (problems with drugs). Although the word *drag* (drug) has entered the Hungarian language, not all compounds or all inflections of the word are in common usage: *dragolnak* is such an example, where the original form of the same concept, that is *kábítószerrel szednek* (they take drugs) would be more usual.

## **Chapter VI**

### **Conclusion**

#### **Factors**

The study was written in an attempt to find if the amount of transfer varied according to factors such as age, educational background, length of residence or the amount of English studied.

Firstly, the examination of the Hungarian and English corpus revealed more English transfers and code switches in Hungarian than Hungarian transfers or code switches in English. This corresponds to studies which report on an increase in the L2 direction. Pan (1995), Bolonyai (1998) Boeschoten (1997) and Clyne (1991) all report on an increase of transfers, or code switches in the L2 direction, especially in cases of immigrant subjects. Moreover, Rindler Schjerve (1997) reports on one third more code switches into L2 than into L1. Rindler Schjerve's study, however, focuses on the non immigrant context of participants.

Secondly, sociolinguistic variables such as interlocutor, interaction type, role relationship or topic of interaction were considered and it was observed that the amount of transfer varied possibly according to both the topic of conversation

and the interlocutor/s. Clyne (1991) reports on the possible sociolinguistic variables, the examination of which depends on the design of the study.

Thirdly, the age of the participants was correlated with the amount of transfer in their interaction. As the age range of the participants was limited, there were limited opportunities to have a full examination of correlation. Nevertheless, it was observed that the amount of Hungarian in English decreased with the age of participants between the ages of forty to sixty and then increased slightly. The reverse was observed with the amount of English in Hungarian, where there was an increase with the age of participants within the forty to sixty age group, which was followed by a slight decrease. Clyne (1991) reports on older migrants frequently reverting to their L1. This could possibly give an explanation for the decrease of English in the Hungarian production of older speakers.

Length of residence in Australia was the next factor that was considered. In line with expectations, there were decreased percentages of Hungarian in English and increased percentages of English in Hungarian with the length of residence.

Clyne (1991) found that the period of residence is not a lone factor that affects a shift to English in communication; in other words, length of residence should be interrelated with other factors. Myers-Scotton (1997) views code switching as a main medium of ingroup communication which indicates the speakers' positive

associations with both languages. Furthermore, Myers-Scotton maintains that code switches are not to be associated with the speakers' length of residence in a country but rather code switches are indicative of how speakers view themselves in "relation to the socio-political values attached to the linguistic varieties used" (p. 100).

Age at arrival in Australia was the next factor that was studied. Speakers' age is usually the focus of language acquisition studies rather than studies of language behaviour. This study found that the younger the participants' age at arrival the more transfers there are in their communication if they use their L1, and the younger their age at arrival the fewer transfers there are in their communication in L2.

There was no correlation between length of schooling and the amount of transfer in the speakers' conversations. Length of schooling could further be viewed in relation to occupations. To quote Myers-Scotton (1997): "immigrants, whether they are computer scientists or carpet merchants, use unmarked code switching as a main medium of ingroup communication,...[since] code switching is perhaps the most frequent vehicle of ingroup talk" (p. 100).

Similarly, the length of English learnt in either the participants' home country or in Australia did not indicate a relationship with the amount of transfer. This, however, was not a case of a lack of such a relationship, but it was the minimal

amount of English learnt in formal settings. There was no range to indicate any discrepancy or tendency in either direction. It is hypothesised that such a relationship does exist and a further investigation with a wider range of participants' English instruction might reveal these.

### **Categories of lexical elements involved in transfers**

#### **Code switches**

To conclude, firstly, in both the Hungarian and the English corpus, elements from both open and closed class items were involved in code switches, contrary to Azuma's (1997) argument that only those words that can meaningfully stand alone, such as open class items, can be involved. In both the Hungarian and English corpus, there was a large number of code switched nouns. Some of these were followed by a translation in the other language, some were not. Proper names and names of institutions formed a smaller part of the category of nouns; these however were included possibly so that they eliminate any possibilities of misunderstandings as these provide opportunities for greater identification.

Secondly, verbs were also involved in code switches but none of them were followed by translation equivalents. In addition, verbs underwent grammatical integration, especially in cases when they were integrated into Hungarian (i.e. they were carriers of suffixes involving case or person).

Thirdly, interjections and discourse markers were also integrated into the speakers' narratives. Surprisingly both 'well' and its Hungarian equivalent *hát* were integrated in both Hungarian and English respectively. It was a similar case with the use of 'yes', 'yeah', *ja*, and *igen*, since these were also incorporated in the speakers' Hungarian and English.

Fourthly, an interesting feature was the use of code switches as repetitions, or possibly as intensifiers. This involved a word uttered initially in the language of the discourse and then a translation equivalent following in the other language. It could possibly also be viewed as a discourse marker.

Finally, whole sentences were code switched possibly as an illustration or for the purpose of creating a dramatic effect. There were instances in which code switches were not an integral part of the speaker's conversation, rather they were introduced to signal their appeal for help.

## **Loan translations**

The area of polysemy was beautifully illustrated in a number of examples involving loan translations. The discrepancy between the syntactic or semantic range of individual words in the two languages presented a challenge to some of the speakers. The question is a) whether or not speakers are aware of the differences in their communicative outcomes, b) whether these are done on the conscious level signalling the speakers' membership in the particular community or c) whether they are a manifestation of poor language skills. These questions have unfortunately remained unanswered and possibly a further investigation could shed light on these issues. I believe, that a) or b) are more valid indications of loan translations on this level than c) (as used to be believed to be the case in studies conducted in the 1950s and 1960s).

A closely related issue is the use of collocations, especially if they involve loan translations. There were examples of collocations which were restricted for use in one language only and therefore did not follow the idiomatic use of the other language. Nominalisation of verbs was also evident in the speakers' Hungarian that was carried over from English structures.

Pronouns were also involved in loan translations, which became evident in the dissimilarity of the rules of their use. Since in the two languages similar sets of pronouns do exist, they nevertheless are not overlapping especially in the areas of gender or possession marked for singularity or plurality.

The question of word order also surfaced, especially in cases when the word order rules of one language are stricter than the other.

Words were also formed that may be contextually inappropriate yet be existing in the languages they were intended to be used. Bialystok (1983) refers to such issues as either 'foreignising' or as 'transliteration', and further states that these could be interpreted as strategies "incorporating elements of the target language which originate in the native language knowledge" (p. 106). This, however, was not the only case found in this study. It was observed that such creation of words was more likely the feature of the participants' first language (Hungarian), rather than their second, which definitely does not originate in their native language knowledge but in their knowledge of the second language (English).



## **Transfer**

Most of the examples of lexical items that entered the speakers' speedy utterances belong to the category of phonological transfer. The participants' pronunciation was the carrier of either English or Hungarian patterns. Since this study did not focus on the phonological level of transfer, this otherwise fascinating area needs further investigation.

## **Communication strategies**

The question remains whether or not code switchings, loan translations, transfers or borrowings should be viewed as production strategies. It could be perceived that speakers' communicative ability and communicative strategies interplay in their communication. As Faerch and Kasper (1983) suggested, L2 speakers communicate by means of a reduced system, "focussing on stable rules and items which have become automatized", in order to avoid making errors or to increase their fluency (p.38). Such strategies could also hypothetically be related to the speakers' language attrition. Thus, Weinreich (1974, p. 57) argued that words that are used frequently "come easily to mind", and are therefore more stable in a speaker's vocabulary. Conversely, infrequent words of a speaker's vocabulary

are less stable and could be "subject to oblivion". A bilingual, however, has the other language as "an available source of lexical innovations". Corder (1983) maintains that "all language users adopt strategies to convey their meaning - we perceive these strategies when the speaker is not a native language speaker".

More recent studies view transfers and code switches as realisations that mixed discourse might be more appropriate than monolingual speech, especially if the interlocutor shares the same languages. Jacobson (1997) stresses the speakers' intention "to establish an identity based upon an identification with the speaker's roots" (p 71). This definitely was the case in this study, especially with subjects who have had a lengthy association with Australia, and, in their narratives, it could be assumed that their code switches were a manifestation of their pride and of their knowledge of certain specific issues and the lexis associated with them. It could not be viewed as a compensatory strategy, but rather as an expression of their intellectual pride of being speakers of both languages.

On the other hand, some of the loan translations may have been employed deliberately for the purpose of creating the basis of bilingual humour (as was seen above in some examples), code switches might be utilised for greater explicitness and thus for speech economy. Moreover, code-switches can play an integral part in the creation of a dramatic effect or could ultimately be utilised in appeals for help.

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## Appendix 1

### QUESTIONNAIRE

Please take a few minutes to complete this questionnaire. Indicate with a ☒ if a line applies to you or provide additional information where space is available.

**1. How long have you been in Australia?**

- a. less than five years \_\_\_\_\_
- b. five to ten years \_\_\_\_\_
- c. ten to fifteen years \_\_\_\_\_
- d. over twenty years \_\_\_\_\_

**2. How long did you study English in Australia?**

- a. less than one year \_\_\_\_\_
- b. between one and two years \_\_\_\_\_
- c. other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**3. How long did you study English in your home country?**

- a. less than one year \_\_\_\_\_
- b. between one and two years \_\_\_\_\_
- c. other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**4. How long did you go to school for?**

\_\_\_\_\_

**5. What is your current occupation?**

\_\_\_\_\_

**6. About your age. Are you:**

- a. between 20 and 30 years of age .....
- b. between 31 and 40 years of age .....
- c. between 41 and 50 years of age .....
- d. between 51 and 60 years of age .....
- e. 61 or older ..... or
- f. how old are you .....

**7. When and where do you usually speak Hungarian?**

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**8. When and where do you usually speak English?**

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Appendix 2

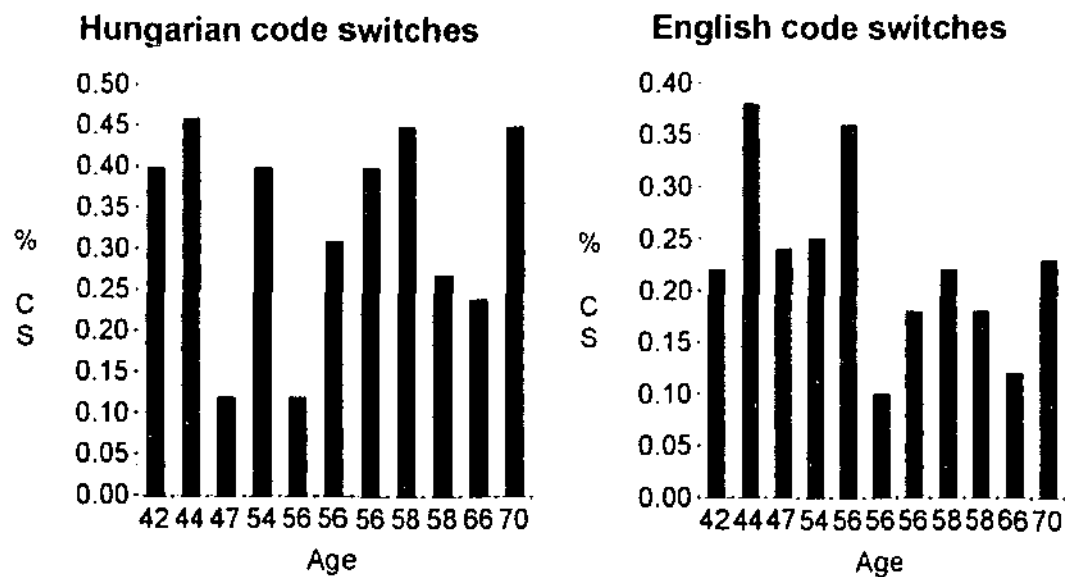


Table 5: Rate of code switches (%) by age

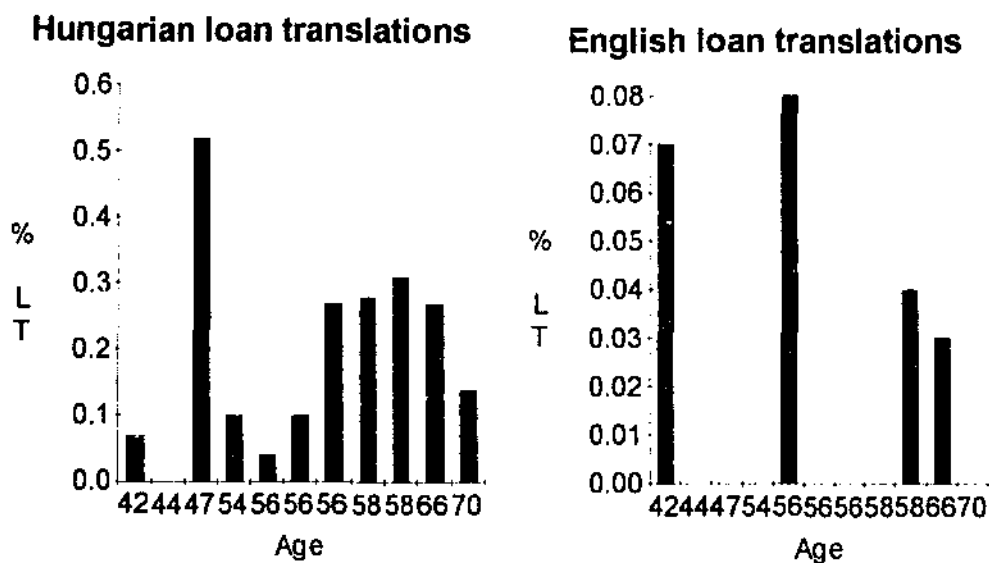
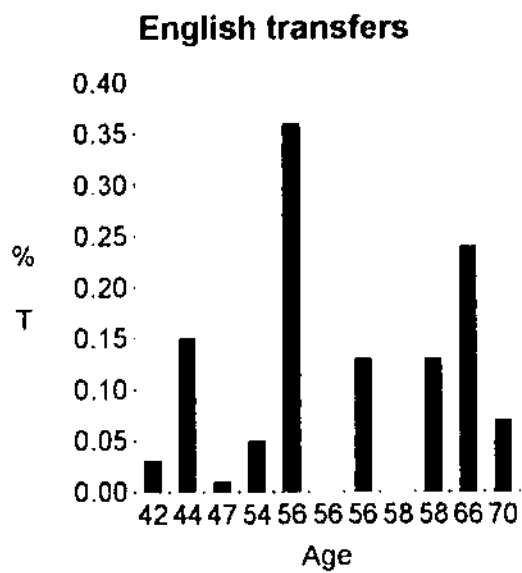
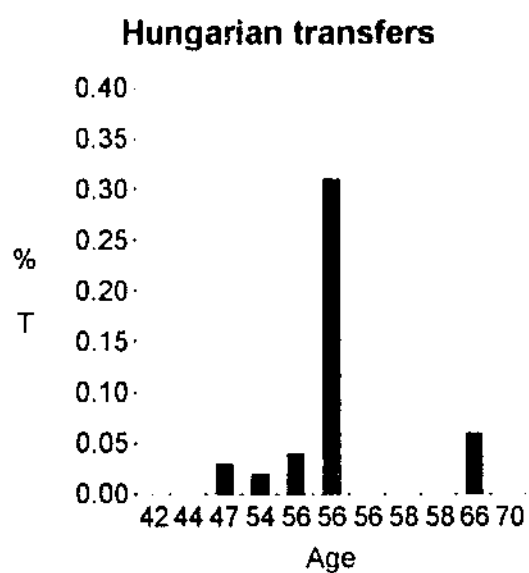
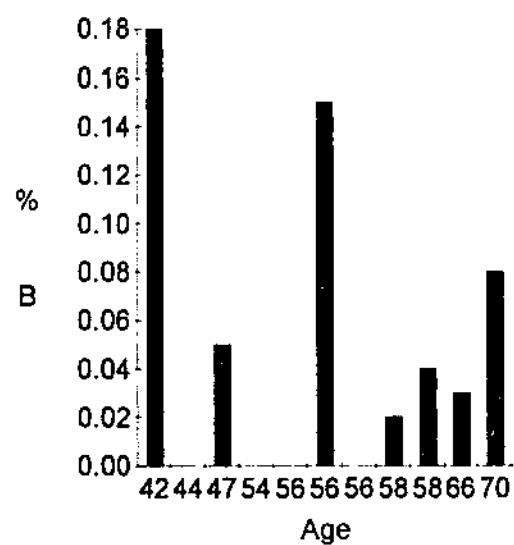


Table 6: Rate of loan translations (%) by age



**Table 7: Rate of transfers (%) by age**



**Table 8: Rate of borrowings (%) by age**