

- Eurasian Center (REEEC), University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign; Champaign, IL: 103-108.
- Nedovic-Budic, Z. (2001) "Adjustments of planning practice to the new Eastern and Central European context" *Journal of the American Planning Association*. 67: 38-72.
- Reiner, T. and Wilson, R. (1979) "Planning and decision-making in the soviet city: rent, land, and urban form" *The Socialist City*. John Wiley and Sons; New York, NY: 49-71.
- Riley, R. (1997) "Central area activities in a post-communist city: Lodz, Poland" *Urban Studies*. 3: 453-470.
- Sailer-Fliege, U. (1999) "Characteristics of post-socialist urban transformation in East Central Europe" *GeoJournal*. 49: 7-16.
- Smith, D. (1996) "The Socialist City" *Cities After Socialism: Urban and Regional Conflict in Post-Socialist Cities*. Blackwell Publishers Inc.; Cambridge, MA: 70-99.
- Sykora, L. (1999) "Changes in the internal spatial structure of post-communist Prague" *GeoJournal* 49: 79-89.
- Szelenyi, I. (1996) "Cities under socialism and after" *Cities After Socialism: Urban and Regional Conflict in Post-Socialist Societies*. Blackwell Publishers Inc; Cambridge, MA: 286-317.
- Tiner, T. (1995) "Traffic policy and urban sustainability in Budapest" *Moravian Geographical Reports*. 3: 30- 43.
- Tosics, I. (2004) "Determinants and consequences of the spatial restructuring in post-socialist cities" *Winds of Societal Change Remaking Post-communist Cities*. Russian, East European, and Eurasian Center (REEEC), University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign; Champaign, IL: 65-80.
- Wiesner, R. (1999). "Urban developments in East Germany – specific features of urban transformation processes." *GeoJournal*. 49: 43-51.

A review of the inaugural year of the Hungarian-Chinese bilingual elementary school

Linda Huang-McCullough

.....

*E-Business Consultant
At-Large
huang_linder@hotmail.com*

*ELTE UNESCO Minority Studies Program
Institute of Sociology
1117 Budapest, Pf. 394 Hungary
<http://unesco.tatk.elte.hu/>
Adviser: Antal Örkeny*

.....

Abstract

Significant migration from the People's Republic of China to Hungary began in the 1990s. Looking for entrepreneurial opportunities, these transnational Chinese have found significant success in operating restaurants and retail stores selling primarily clothes, shoes, and housewares. Following economic success, the growth of Chinese and mixed heritage families has become more visible in the past few years. Recognition of the permanence of Chinese immigrants in Hungary has culminated in the opening of the Hungarian and Chinese bilingual primary school in Budapest's XVth district in 2004, funded by both Chinese and Hungarian governments. This first year of the school started with many challenges with behavior, discipline, adjusting the curriculum, and culture shock. For the most part, the year has been successful, as demonstrated by the advancement in Chinese language by native Chinese speaking children and the bilingual progression of the student body in general. This school has also served as a site for field research on child development of cultural identity (an examination of the Chinese term "lao wai") and a study of cultural differences in self-concept.

1. Introduction

1.1 Case Study: a Chinese University Student in Hungary

I came to Hungary 2 years ago in 2003 to study at university. I was born in Shanghai and my parents are originally from Shanghai. They came to Hungary in 1995, together with my little brother. He is 13. My parents came to start a business. They have imports and exports. They bring stuff from China. Retailers come directly to them or they go to shops. They have an office in the eighth district. My parents know enough Hungarian to do a little business. Most of their friends are Chinese. In China, actually, I didn't live with them. I lived with my grandmother because they were working so much. My parents and my brother came to Hungary and I stayed with grandmother to go to school. They used to visit me in China. My parents asked me to come to Hungary. There was a lot of paperwork. In China at the time, they give you a passport only if you are going somewhere and you have to show that you are invited and show many other paperwork. Then, to get a visa, there is even more paper. I study linguistics because I like the subject, that's all. I studied English in China, something like 8 years. I have all different friends. I speak to my friends in English, Chinese if they are Chinese. My brother goes to a normal Hungarian school. He is in the seventh grade. His Chinese is not very good. He cannot write well. I do not take Hungarian lessons. I teach myself. I can, I study linguistics. When I am done with university, I will try to apply to school in the States. I don't know if my parents

will move back. Who knows. I don't even know what I will do definitely.

- *M Chen*¹, age 22, Budapest, 2005

2. Chinese Hungarians

2.1. Pre 1989

Chinese have been in Europe for over 100 years, mostly in Western Europe in England, Germany, Spain, France, and Italy. Prior to 1989, Hungary had a small Chinese population. There were 15 native Chinese speakers reported in the 1930 Census. From 1900 – 1989, 400 Chinese applied for long-term stays in Hungary. They were mostly guest workers at a truck plant in Győr in 1997 and an assortment of students and researchers. Significant growth of the Chinese population in Hungary began in the 1990s.

2.2 Hungary Fever 2 – *The Pull to Hungary*

In the 1990s there was a surge in international migration from the People's Republic of China (PRC) to countries that historically hosted Chinese immigrants (hosting immigrants from other Chinese sending areas such as Hong Kong, Taiwan ROC, and Malaysia) such as Canada, Australia and the United States. Countries that had no history of Chinese immigration started to see an increase in Chinese newcomers as well. The largest growth in Chinese immigration occurred in Russia (Nyíri 1999: 30). In 1989 and through the 1990s, many Chinese saw the

¹ Pseudonym used to maintain anonymity.

² "Hungary Fever" (Xiongyali re) was coined by Li Zhongqiang. See Nyíri 1999: 30.

regime changes in Eastern Europe as an opportunity to move West and break into Europe.

Thousands migrated from Mainland China to Hungary after 1988, when the communist government in Hungary instituted visa-free travel for Chinese nationals. At that time, it was extremely difficult and expensive for Chinese to obtain a Chinese passport. They were issued passports only if they could produce documentation, credentials, and letters to prove that they had a legitimate invitation to go abroad, they could finance their trip abroad, and that they had the intention to return to China. Visas were an added nuisance and expense that had deterred many prospective migrants and potentially an even harder process than that of the passport. But with the visa waived, it motivated some individuals to seek the passport and, ultimately, mobility. The visa waiver was short lived. They were reinstated in 1992 but during that time, many Chinese took advantage of this small window of opportunity.

In addition to visa-free travel, Hungary had some unique features that made it attractive. Hungary had a reputation for having better living standards than its East European neighbors as well as a relatively free economy. Chinese returning to China also reported that Hungary was safe, with a good climate, but most important of all opportunities to make money.

The Chinese presence in Hungary peaked in 1991. Pál Nyíri estimates that the population was 30,000-40,000 (1999: 32). Rising interests in immigration to Hungary also meant rising attempts at illegal entries and rising business for

illegal traffickers. From 1990 – 1998 Hungarian border guards apprehended 1866 individuals attempting illegal entries or exits. (Nyíri 1999: 38)

2.3 Hungary Fever – *the push from China*

"People migrate in the search for more and better economic opportunities (or more specifically, a more favorable ratio of economic opportunities to the number of people competing for them) on the one hand and of greater anonymity and individual freedom from social control on the other" (Nyíri 1999: 29). Factors in China were pushing entrepreneurial individuals out of the borders of China. In 1989 Chinese residents abroad did not have to pay taxes in China. Also in 1989, the Tiananmen Square protests that ended on June 4 caused a small political-based migration. More significantly, the incident also caused the government to tighten economic controls that breached the public's confidence in China's development. There was an air of uncertainty around the future growth of China's young private sector and a recession from 1989 – 1991 negatively impacted managers as well as the work force (Nyíri 2003: 242). In addition, foreign economic trade sanctions on China were also obstructing the potential for economic growth. These economic factors in combination with an overall lack of trust in the government motivated people to seek their fortunes elsewhere. (Nyíri 1999: 29)

2.4 Chinese-Hungarians in the 21st Century

There is no dominant sending area that Chinese immigrants in Hungary originate from though Fujian and Zhejiang provinces in the south of China, bordering the South China Sea, have the most representation. These entrepreneurs have found their niche in operating Chinese fast food restaurants, retail stores specializing in cheap clothes and shoes, and housewares stores. In October 2004, The Budapest Business Journal reported the following:

From January 2003 to June 2003, Hungarians purchased Chinese clothing in the value of Ft 4 billion, during the first six months of this year, they lashed out Ft 21 million at Chinese stores. The local clothing retail stores have managed to increase their revenues by 12% during H1 of this year to reach Ft 149 billion.

There is also considerable success for Chinese wholesalers, known as

shuttle traders, who move goods from China across eastern Europe from their Hungarian business hub. The Chinese retailers in Hungary can offer consumers items priced significantly lower than Western Europe based retailers thus creating a very loyal customer base of value-minded Hungarian shoppers. Hungarians have benefited from the birth of Chinese-owned businesses as consumers and as employees. Many Chinese businesses employ at least one Hungarian and if the Hungarian speaks (minimal) Chinese and Hungarian, they can earn more money than they would for a Hungarian employer.

Based on the estimates of Chinese organization leaders in Hungary, the Chinese population of Hungary is currently 10,000 – 15,000 (.1% - .15% of Hungary's total population)³. Most

³ Researchers state that there are no reliable data on the number of Chinese in any eastern European country. Discrepancies are often misconstrued as consequence of illegal migration but the main

District Number	District Population – Total	District Population – Chinese	Percentage of Chinese in District	District Number	District Population – Total	District Population – Chinese	Percentage of Chinese in District
1	25262	8	0.03%	13	109228	215	0.20%
2	90020	42	0.05%	14	115880	155	0.13%
3	127297	97	0.08%	15	84013	68	0.08%
4	101100	86	0.09%	16	69987	66	0.09%
5	26609	30	0.11%	17	79186	17	0.02%
6	42275	50	0.12%	18	95257	50	0.05%
7	60795	85	0.14%	19	62660	49	0.08%
8	78048	443	0.57%	20	64089	34	0.05%
9	59487	66	0.11%	21	79646	24	0.03%
10	76999	504	0.65%	22	51259	10	0.02%
11	132949	144	0.11%	23	20531	1	<0.00%
12	58956	45	0.08%	Totals	1711533	2289	0.13%

ETHNIC CHINESE POPULATION BY BUDAPEST CITY DISTRICTS

of Hungary's Chinese live in or near Budapest:

Other groups can also be found in areas strategic to trading goods across local borders: Nyíregyháza near the Ukraine and Romania and Szeged near Yugoslavia and Romania.

In the beginning, mostly single men migrated from China to Hungary. Or, these business-savvy men would leave their wives and children in China, work in Hungary, send money back to China, and visit their families occasionally. As businesses grew and men (and sometimes women) began to settle down in Hungary, families became the next logical development. In the 2001 Census⁴, the Native Chinese speaking population in Hungary was about 42% female and 48% male. Combined with an increase in the presence of Chinese speaking children in Hungary, these statistics suggest that there might be more families in Hungary than in the last 15 years.

reason is poor data from agencies such as police and border guards. Also, transient nature of some migrants may cause fluctuations in population statistics. (Nyíri 2003: 248).

⁴ There is an obvious discrepancy between the census numbers and what is reported by the Chinese organizations. The lowness of the census report is a study itself that is out of the scope of this paper.

As time passed, mixed Chinese Hungarian couples became more common. This was a natural development given that a lot of the immigrants were in Hungary on their own. When couples started to have children, these bi-racial families were challenged with raising their children with balanced exposure to Chinese and Hungarian culture and language. The presence of Chinese children and half-Chinese children in Hungary (the growth of Chinese families) was a sign that the Chinese population in Hungary was settling down. As of June 2004, there were 450 registered Chinese primary school children in Budapest though it has been estimated that there are more school aged Chinese children in and around the city. Children not attending school or attending private school are not counted in the official statistics⁵. In order to give these children a fair shot at being both Hungarian and Chinese, their special educational and developmental needs had to be addressed.

⁵ Some parents left children in China and would want to bring their child to Hungary and enroll them in a bilingual school if it existed. These families are also considered an impetus for this school.

Age	Census 1930		Census 1990		Census 2001	
0-14	0	0%	0	0%	352	14.6%
15-39	5	33.3%	198	97.1%	1413	58.5%
40-59	7	46.7%	6	2.9%	610	25.3%
60 plus	3	20%	0	0%	39	1.6%
Total Chinese	15	100%	204	100%	2414	100%
Total National	8,685,109	.0002%	10,374,823	.002%	10,198,315	.02%

Source: KSH - Kozponti Sztatistikai Hivatal, Central Statistics Office⁵

POPULATION BY NATIVE CHINESE SPEAKERS AND MAIN AGE GROUPS

3. The Hungarian-Chinese Bilingual Elementary School (Magyar-Kínai Két Tanítási Nyelvű Általános Iskola)

3.1 Getting Started

Chinese Hungarian relations have developed rapidly in recent years. Economic trade continues to grow while tourism and educational exchanges to and from both countries are on the rise. Movement between Hungary and China has become significant enough for airlines to offer non-stop flights between the two countries. Increasing contact between the two countries has created a demand for individuals fluent in both Chinese and Hungarian as well as familiar with both cultures. This need was one of the main reasons for the establishment of the Chinese-Hungarian Bilingual School which opened on September 2, 2004.

2004 marked the 55th year of diplomatic relations between Hungary and China. In June 2004, Chinese President Hu Jintao and Hungarian President Ferenc Mádl signed an agreement to “cooperative partnership” which is the highest level of cooperation in Chinese diplomacy. In this visit to Hungary, Hu Jintao and Ferenc Mádl also signed an agreement to establish a public bilingual school in Hungary. The school had been the brainchild of Peter Medgyessy who in 2003, when he was Hungarian Prime Minister, proposed the establishment of a Chinese-Hungarian Bilingual School during a visit to China.

His vision was to expose children to Chinese culture during school hours so that they may develop an appreciation for and a personal connection to their cultural heritage. This need to make a cultural connection had also been expressed by the Chinese community. In talking with Chinese vendors at the Józsefvárosi piac⁶ (the large Chinese marketplace in Budapest) all people surveyed that had primary school aged children in Hungary said that their children had conversational Chinese skills but could neither read nor write. Some of these parents have enrolled their children in weekend Chinese school but all unanimously responded that they want to do more for their children’s Chinese education.

Hungarian education law states that primary school aged children residing in Hungary of Non-Hungarian citizens, meaning legal short-term and long-term residents including refugees, immigrants, and those seeking humanitarian aid are required by law to attend school. They are legally entitled to attend public school and this school is just one of the schools they may choose. Children at this school previously attended other public Hungarian primary schools, óvoda (Hungarian nursery school/kindergarten), or came from China and this year is their first school year in Hungary.

From its inception, the school administration has also planned on

⁶ Observational data and interviews have been collected at Józsefvárosi piac and at kínai áruház (Chinese stores) throughout central Budapest. This feedback has been collected from a random sampling of 10 different families.

enrolling non-Chinese children, namely Hungarian children, so that they too have an opportunity to learn Chinese language and culture. Surprisingly a significant amount of Hungarian families were interested in enrolling in this school. Evelyn, a Hungarian student in this year’s fourth grade class, says that her parents enrolled her in the school because they thought the English program would be better than her previous school. Another Hungarian student, Adam in the second grade, says that his parents want him to learn Chinese because in the future Chinese will be almost as widely spoken as English. During the summer of 2004 the Ministry of Education was overwhelmed with the number of Hungarian applicants. For this initial pilot year, the administration decided to enroll children of parents who were employed within the Chinese community, for example working at the Chinese embassy or for a Chinese business. The school opened with 96 students, 80 Chinese children and 16 Hungarian or half Chinese children⁷. The school has been enrolling new students throughout the school year. As of March 2005, there is also an Arabic family of two children and a Mongolian child in the student body. The school has also lost some students that have moved to China or have transferred to traditional primary schools. The net impact is that the total student population has not changed. As of March 2005, there were 97 students.

This school is a landmark step in the

⁷ I use the term “half-Chinese” because there are children that are Chinese-Russian and Chinese-Ukrainian.

acceptance and integration of Chinese people in Hungary. The European Values Study, a poll in 32 European countries conducted by Tilberg University in the Netherlands, found that about 60% of Hungarians surveyed said they did not want immigrants or foreign workers as neighbors. By opening this state funded school, the government recognizes the permanence of this immigrant population as well as encourages more Chinese investors and their families to come to Hungary.

The school is a jointly funded project of the Hungarian and Chinese governments. By the opening of the school, the Hungarian Ministry of Education has invested more than 90 million forint (470,000 USD) in the school’s basic infrastructure and equipment. The authorities of the 15th District donated the building to the Education Ministry on a 50-year free lease. The facilities in the 30 year old building⁸ were entirely renovated with 28 classrooms complete with new furniture as well as refurbished sports facilities and cafeteria.

The Chinese Ministry of Education and the China national office for teaching Chinese as a foreign language (NOCFL) have provided educational materials and equipment for the school. They have recruited, trained, and sent 2 Chinese teachers⁹, around 6,000 text books

⁸ The school occupies only half of the building. The school shares a building with the Arabic-Hungarian school thus creating a very international atmosphere.

⁹ The six other Chinese teachers were already living in Budapest at the start of the school year.

(reading, writing, and mathematics), assorted supplemental teaching materials, computers, printers, projectors, TVs, DVD players, and Chinese folk music instruments. This is the first time the Chinese government has ever been directly involved in funding a school overseas. Up until the opening of this school, there already existed private weekend Chinese schools, but this is the first public bilingual Chinese school in Hungary.

Support for the school has also come from the private sector. In July of 2004, the Hungarian Ministry of Education held a public meeting to present the plans of the school to the community and to increase community involvement with the development of the school. Local Chinese business people in Hungary in attendance donated 4 million forint (20,900 USD) to the school.

3.2. Curriculum

Currently the school is grades 1 – 4 with plans on expanding the grade levels, potentially all the way through gimnázium high school. There are already plans for a fifth grade class for the 2005 – 2006 school year. There are three first grade classes and one class each of grades 3 – 4. Diversity is encouraged by having children of all ethnicities mixed within their main classroom. For example, the three first grade classes are not divided into one class of Hungarian children, one class of Chinese-Hungarian children, and one class of Chinese children.

Standard Hungarian curriculum (reading, writing, mathematics, etc) is

offered in the morning while Chinese language, Chinese culture and history, and electives (music, art, technika, etc) in the afternoon. The curriculum is flexible so that the varying languages levels of each individual student can be addressed as best as possible. All students (90% of the Chinese students were born in Hungary and speak Hungarian fluently) have Hungarian reading and writing (per standard Hungarian national curriculum). Children that do not speak Hungarian, i.e. children that arrived in Hungary within the last year, are offered additional Hungarian lessons taught by teachers trained to teach Hungarian as a foreign language. Similarly, Chinese classes are taught according to individual ability with non-Chinese speakers in the most elementary levels. All students are currently studying Chinese. Chinese is taught with textbooks provided by the Chinese Ministry of Education and are sent from China. Mathematics is offered in Chinese if the student is fluent enough to understand in Chinese, Hungarian if not. All students are taking English even though English is an optional class. All this diversity in the curriculum aims to meet the goals of this school as outlined by the Ministry of Education:

*Pedagogical principles of the Magyar-Kínai Két Tanítási Nyelvű Általános Iskola*¹⁰

The school should have a multicultural approach to education.

¹⁰ See Oktatási Minisztérium site for exact Hungarian wording: <<http://www.om.hu/main.php?folderID=216&articleID=1514&ctag=articledlist&iid=1#>>.

The education of Chinese students (and other nationalities) should be alongside Hungarian children.

Chinese language should be used in school as organically as a mother tongue, not just as a language that is taught. (In lower grades, there is the potential for Chinese and Hungarian native speaking teachers to teach simultaneously.)

Chinese language should be spoken during extracurricular activities and not just during academic classes. In this framework, language lessons are reinforced.

Chinese language should be optional for Hungarian students.

The program should be flexible so that it will be possible to introduce other languages into the curriculum.

After Hungarian and Chinese, the third language taught is English.

The requirements of the teaching plan should not alter from the requirements of Hungarian public education law.

The educational program should fit the EU guidelines for immigrant students.

3.3 Year 1 in Review

The administration (head principal and two vice principals) and teachers unanimously agree that the greatest challenge at the beginning of the school year was with behavior and discipline. At the opening ceremonies of the school, in front of Ministry of Education officials, Chinese dignitaries, and several representatives of the media, students were unable to walk in line, sit still, or remain quiet. Teachers speculated that because most children came from long-hour working double income families, parents

did not have the opportunity to discipline their children or teach proper behavior. For many children, this school was their first school experience in Hungary and these students had to adjust to a new school culture. Confusion and language barrier manifested themselves in fighting, running, loud outbursts, and reluctance to complete school work. Teachers have worked to instill a basic level of decorum and order by being firm in the classroom and using routines and schedules so that students can understand what behavior is expected of them, when. It is now seven months into this initial school year and the principals and teachers report that basic discipline is no longer an issue.

The second major challenge for teachers was accommodating for the various learning levels of students based on their language abilities. In one class room there can be up to six varying combination levels of Chinese and Hungarian abilities represented. Even though students are broken out to additional language courses if needed, core curriculum is taught as a whole class, in Hungarian, and thus teachers have had to break classrooms into sections and conduct multiple lessons at once. Teachers report that they feel that this approach has been successful because with the exception of a few students, students are reading at their age-appropriate Hungarian reading level.

Chinese teachers also report success in their language courses. The students that started the school year with simple conversational skills have progressed the most, primarily in speaking, then reading, then writing. These students have learned

about 100 characters. Students already fluent in Chinese have maintained their age appropriate Chinese reading level. Non-Chinese speaking students have progressed the least. They are capable of reading pinyin pronunciation but have not learned a significant amount of vocabulary. This slowness in progression is likely due to the fact that Chinese teachers and Hungarian speaking students do not have a common language to teach and learn in.

Students appear very enthusiastic about both cultures. Many children very naturally and quickly switch between speaking Hungarian and Chinese. For example, in a second grade physical education class, students were running relay races. When a Hungarian speaking child was running, they cheered "Hajra!". When a Chinese speaking child was running, they cheered, "Jia yo!"¹¹. Bilingual children over the age of six¹² very excitedly volunteer to translate for teachers and for students. Third and fourth grade students have a keen ability to reword their phrases when they are talking to a non-native speaker of their language and this conversation partner does not understand what is being said. In this case, these children are learning lessons in patience as well as developing complex communication skills.

The issue of parenting skills has been a constant concern for some teachers. In the beginning of the school year, mostly

in the first grade and some of the second grade, it was obvious in the first few days that some children, from China, did not know several basic hygiene practices. Some children did not know how to properly use a toilet or toilet paper, flush a toilet, blow their noses, or brush their teeth. They also did not know when to wash their hands or faces (before meals, after using the restroom, after recess, etc). Teachers were not certain if there was an issue of serious neglect, bad parenting because parents were preoccupied with work, or a cultural difference because some children may have come from underdeveloped or rural areas. Regardless of cause, these hygiene issues were quickly and easily addressed and have become routine for these students.

Across all four grades, there are some students that consistently have behavior and discipline problems and fail to complete homework. Again, teachers speculate that many working parents have not invested time and interest in their children's education. These teachers are concerned that without support at home, these children may fall into remedial levels as they progress to higher grade levels.

In the last week of January 2005, the school had a very high incidence of chicken pox, head lice, and stomach flu. Children were coming to school sick, sometimes covered in chicken pox or projectile vomiting, when they should have been home recovering. Again, teachers were concerned that parents were not making child welfare a priority. Parents were contacted to send the children home and it was found that parents often did

¹¹ When the runner is bilingual, children cheer in Hungarian.

¹² Children under 6 have not yet developed cognitive abilities to translate.

not understand the severity of their illnesses. In some cases, parents seemed to ignore how sick their child was so that they would not have to take time out from the work day. For some Chinese parents that were concerned about sick children, they did not know how to access a doctor, especially one that would speak Chinese, and they also did not know what medications to buy. Frequently, teachers had to buy medications for their students. Teachers often have had to play the role of a parent or a social-worker.

The most significant obstacle for the faculty has been the language disparity. Of the 20 teacher faculty, only two teachers speak both Hungarian and Chinese and one of these two teachers is a part-time instructor. The main impacts of this discrepancy are:

Chinese teachers have difficulty adjusting to Hungarian learning style and school culture. It is difficult for them to know what the expectations are of them.

Hungarian teachers do not understand teaching styles of Chinese teachers and vice versa, creating a large division in the faculty professionally and on an interpersonal level.

Between the Chinese and Hungarian faculty, teachers cannot directly discuss a student's total learning progression.

3.4 Planning for the Future

The enrollment goal for the 2005 – 2006 school year is to have 60 – 70 new students to fill three new first grade classes as well as welcome new students to the second through fifth grades, as space

permits. Peter Vigh, head principal, has headed an aggressive publicity campaign to increase interest, in both the Chinese and Hungarian communities, in this school. In a 12 week period, the school has been featured in seven television segments, seven newspaper and magazine articles, and two radio interviews. The aim is to represent the Chinese community in a positive light and for the public to see the value in multicultural learning. The administration hopes to have 20 – 30 new Hungarian students for the next school year. More teachers will be hired to accommodate the growing student body. Two Chinese teachers and five or six Hungarian teachers will be hired, hopefully some will be bilingual (though based on the teacher search for this school year, the prospects of finding teachers that speak Chinese and Hungarian or English appear low).

Though the first year has been considered successful, more outreach and education needs to be done within both Chinese and Hungarian communities to further mutual understanding between the two cultures. Chinese people in Hungary, and unfortunately Chinese children too, are occasionally subject to racial discrimination. Teachers of this school often bring students to a nearby playground where students from a neighboring mainstream primary school play as well. It has been observed that when students from the two schools are playing simultaneously, the students from each school do not play with each other. Hungarian teachers from the bilingual school report that they have

overheard negative racial comments from teachers as well as teachers not correcting inappropriate behavior. In one instance, a child from the mainstream school pointed at the swings and said to her teacher, "I can't play there because the Chinese are playing there." The teachers nodded in agreement and directed the student to play elsewhere.

Teachers and administrators also hope that the second year will have more involvement from the parents. The more about Hungary that parents understand, the smoother transition and integration children can have in their social development.

4. Research on Cultural Identity and Self-concept

There are currently two studies being conducted at the school. The first is an observation and interview based analysis of children between the ages of 6 – 12 and their reactions to the researcher's multicultural identity: Chinese-American. Children of this age lack the cognitive ability to formulate complex opinions about culture. Their definition of culture is genetic rather learned or a combination of the two. However, Chinese children at this school will call a child who is born in Hungary of Chinese parents "Chinese" but will not define the researcher, who was born in the United States of Chinese parents, as Chinese. This issue has been documented in 14 unique episodes thus

far in this school year.¹³ These exchanges usually start with a student asking, "What kind of person are you?" or asking the researcher if she is a "lao wai" or "wai guo ren", Chinese terms for a person from anywhere other than China. Here are two examples of typical exchanges of this nature.

DIALOGUE 1:

Researcher and 8 year old female, 2nd grade student from Zeijiang, China.

Student:

Teacher, what kind of person are you?

Researcher:

My parents are Chinese and I was born in America. So you tell me, what kind of person am I?

Student: You are American of course.

Researcher:

What about Piroska in the fourth grade? Her parents are Chinese and she was born in Hungary. What kind of person is she?

Student: She is Chinese and she lives here.

Researcher:

Why am I American?

Student: Because that's where you come from.

DIALOGUE 2:

Researcher and 6 year old boy, 1st grade student from Shanghai, China.

Student: Are you "lao wai"?

Researcher:

I am Chinese.

Student: Why do you speak English?

Researcher:

Because I grew up in America.

¹³ There have been more than 14 occurrences but I did not start documenting until after it happened a few times.

Student: Then you are not Chinese, you are American.

Researcher:

Are you Chinese?

Student: Yes.

Researcher:

Do you live in Hungary?

Student: Yes.

Researcher:

Are you Hungarian?

Student: No.

Researcher:

You and I are very alike. I am Chinese but I grew up in America, just like you are Chinese but you live in Hungary.

Student: (silently looks puzzled).

Through asking leading questions, the goal of this study is to formulate a better understanding of a child's definition of culture and cultural identity.

The second study is an examination of cultural differences in self-concept. Self-concept is the picture people have of themselves. School-age children are faced with complicated emotional and social development as they begin to emancipate themselves from their parents (who, from birth, are their primary social network) and enter a social world of peers and new authority figures: school. As they interact with others and process their experiences, children develop a picture of themselves. Children are not born with a self-concept. It begins with infancy when children differentiate themselves from the outside world. Then, the self-concept is based on external factors such as physical characteristics, possessions, and activities. From eight years of age and

on, self-concept shifts from physical traits to personality traits, social concepts, and feelings. (Kaplan 1986: 445) "Self-concept develops from an external frame of reference to a more internal frame of reference" (Kaplan 1986: 447).

Dr. Qi Wang of Cornell University has an extensive body of work examining cultural self-constructs in Chinese children and European-American children. She states that the development of the self in traditional Western understanding is an individual's development towards becoming an autonomous identity and an individual being distinguishable from its physical and social contexts. Conversely, Chinese culture is formed around interdependence among people, especially family relations. (Wang 2004: 3) She has found that European American children more frequently describe themselves in terms of personal attributes and beliefs. American children tend to give more positive self-evaluations and describe inner traits such as emotions and thoughts. Chinese children tend to define themselves within social categories and relationships and refer to themselves in a neutral tone. They also describe situational-bound characteristics and overt behaviors. (Wang 2004: 12)

Dr. Wang's technique for interviewing children is being administered at the school in order to examine if immigrant Chinese children and mixed-heritage children exhibit Eastern or Western characteristics of defining themselves. Relationships between the self, language(s) spoken, birthplace, and length of residency in Hungary are being considered as well

as basic demographic information (age, gender, family size, etc). The same interview will also be administered to a control group of Hungarian children. An investigation of Chinese children in mainstream Hungarian school and their definition of self would also be enlightening.

5. Conclusion

Multicultural education has become essential in creating diverse societies that are fair, understanding, and peaceful. In Hungary, the opening of the Hungarian-Chinese bilingual school has been a monumental step in bringing systematic legitimacy and recognition to the permanence of a small but significant population in Hungary. Hopefully, Hungary will continue to financially back programs, such as this, that promote diversity of thought throughout society.

Bibliography

A.S. "Kínai áruelosztó központ a magyar főváros." *Népszabadság*, 17 March 2004.

"Budapest Chinese-Hungarian Bilingual School opens." *China national office for teaching Chinese as a foreign language (NOCFEL)*, 8 September 8 2004. Retrieved 17 February 2005. <<http://english.hanban.edu.cn/market/HanBanE/411940.htm>>.

"Chinese charging clothing retail sector." *Budapest Business Journal*, 25 October 2004. Retrieved 14 March 2005. <http://www.bbj.hu/?module=displaystory&story_id=243831&format=html>.

"Chinese president due on Thursday." *Budapest Business*

Journal 8, June 2004. Retrieved 14 March 2005. <http://www.bbj.hu/?module=displaystory&story_id=240666&format=html>.

Escritt, Thomas. "Sino-Hungarian." *The Budapest Sun*, 9 September 2004, edition: Volume XII, Issue 37.

Chen, M. Personal interview. 15 March 2005.

Kaplan, Paul S. *A Child's Odyssey: Child and Adolescent Development*. St. Paul, Minnesota: West Publishing Company, 1986.

Magyar-Kínai Két Tannyasi Nyelvű Általános Iskola homepage. Retrieved 8 March 2005. <<http://www.magyar-kinai.sulinet.hu/hun/>>.

Németh H. Erzsébet. "Kínai iskola nyílt Újpalotán: Távol-keleti centrum formálódik a XV. Kerületben." *Népszabadság*, 3 September 2004, page 10.

Nyíri, Pál. "Chinese Migration to Eastern Europe." *International Migration* 41 (2003): 239 – 265.

---. *New Chinese Migrants in Europe: The case of the Chinese Community in Hungary*. Aldershot, England: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 1999.

"Összefoglaló a magyar-kínai multikulturális két tanítási nyelvű iskola létrehozásáról." *Oktatási Minisztérium*, March 2004. Retrieved 17 February 2005. <<http://www.om.hu/main.php?folderID=216&articleID=1514&ctag=articlelist&iid=1>>.

Pieke, Frank N., Pál Nyíri, Mette ThunØ, and Antonella Ceccagno. *Transnational Chinese: Fujianese Migrants in Europe*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004.

"Symposium on Establishment of The Chinese-Hungarian Bilingual School Held in Hungary." *China national office for teaching Chinese as a foreign language (NOCFEL)*, 20 July 2004. Retrieved 17 February 2005. <<http://english.hanban.edu.cn/market/HanBanE/411926.htm>>

Wang, Qi. "The Emergence of Cultural Self-Constructs: Autobiographical Memory and Self-Description in European American and Chinese Children." *Developmental Psychology* 40 (2004): 3 – 15.

Yee, Sonya. "Business-Savvy Hungarians Try to Make Chinese Feel at Home." *LA Times* 29 September 2004.

Hungarian Folk Music And Jazz: Exploring New Concepts For Contemporary Improvised Music

Matthew Douglas

Graduate Student
At-Large
mgd209@nyu.edu

College of Liszt Ferenc Music Academy
Jazz Department
H-1052 Budapest, Semmelweis u. 12
www.isztacademy.hu
Adviser : Borbély Mihály

This year my Fulbright research project has been based around one primary concept: to fuse together elements of Hungarian folk music with my interpretation of contemporary jazz. As a saxophone player, I was immediately drawn to Hungarian music based around the furulya and other wind instruments. My first goal was to learn how to play the furulya, kaval, and tilinko, along with a small repertoire for each instrument. While studying these instruments, I was noticing melodic and structural similarities within the repertoire. Using some of these common characteristics, I have been composing music for a more modern jazz ensemble, specifically for acoustic bass, drums, guitar, and myself on saxophones and various Hungarian wooden flutes. This paper will discuss the motivations behind such a fusion of styles and the compositional techniques used in fusing Hungarian folk music with jazz, along with the academic and aesthetic limitations that were exposed in the process.