
The Characteristics of Hungarian Women's Names in Slovakia¹

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Abstract: *The use of personal names by minority Hungarians, both men and women, varies not only according to the circumstances of the country where they live but also from community to community and even from individual to individual. This study focuses on different forms of first (given) names and family names (surnames) characteristic of female ethnic Hungarians living in Slovakia, including the usage of the Slovak feminine suffix -ová with Hungarian surnames of women. The paper also discusses the topic of relevant legislation – laws and regulations – concerning the use of personal names of members of national minorities which, to a great extent and especially for women, can influence the choice of the form of their given name and surname.*

Key words: usage of personal names, regulations of given names and family names usage among national minorities, various forms of Hungarian women's names in Slovakia.

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In multilingual societies languages affect each other globally. It is natural that in countries where one or more minority languages coexist with one official majority language, the former is/are more likely to be affected by the influence of the dominant language than the other way around (Máté 1988: 680, Misad 2009: 71). Using minority languages in Slovakia has always been a legal issue. The relationship between the authorities and the Hungarian minority (as well as the other minorities) can be clearly traced at historical turning points and in background factors of various political periods.² This is also true of the use of personal names by people belonging to minority communities, which is controlled by various laws and regulations.

The regulation of the use of personal names in (Czecho)Slovakia from 1918 to the present

After the dissolution of Austria–Hungary, exactly on the day of the formation of the 1st Czechoslovak Republic – probably in order to guarantee a smooth transition of power – Law No. 11 of October 28, 1918, was passed, according to Article 2 of which, in the territory of the new state, "all previous laws and decrees of the territory and of the empire remain in force" (Gyönyör 1992). This is noteworthy because this regulation preserved the legal regulations concerning registers introduced in Hungary in 1895, whose most important principle touching on the life of minorities was that the given names of newborn minority children had to be entered into the registers of birth in the language of the state, i.e. Hungarian. According to the regulations, in

regions inhabited by minorities, it was possible to enter, in parallel, the given name in the form in which it was used in the minority language but only in parentheses – which clearly indicates that the minority language form of the given name did not constitute part of its bearer's official name at that time in Hungary. The slow pace of the establishment of the new Czechoslovak administration is revealed in the fact that in the formerly Hungarian territories of the country registers were kept in Hungarian for another three years (Gyönyör 1992, Vörös 2003: 629).

In 1938, some of the formerly Hungarian territories of Czechoslovakia were reunited with Hungary. Here the Czechoslovak register practices were discontinued: people of Hungarian ethnicity had their given name and surname written in Hungarian in registers regardless of what form their names had been spelled in Czechoslovak registers earlier (Vörös 2004: 56).

In 1939, following the disintegration of Czechoslovakia, the rights of the Hungarian minority who remained in the territory of the Slovak Republic were regulated by Paragraph 95 of the Slovak constitution, according to which "The members of the nationality group mentioned in the constitution can be respected to the extent that the same rights can be exercised by the Slovak minority in the mother country of the nationality group" (Kamenec 1994: 39; my translation). No change was instituted in the registering of names during the short history of the Slovak Republic: registers were kept based on the principle of legal continuity, following the practice of the Czechoslovak era (Vörös 2004: 57).

In the chapter assessing the status quo of the declaration known as the Kosice Government Program issued following World War II, leading Czechoslovak politicians accused the approximately 3 million members of the German minority living in Bohemia and Moravia and the 600 thousand members of the Hungarian minority living in Southern Slovakia of contributing, with their subversive activity during World War II, to the disintegration of the Czechoslovak state. A great part of the Hungarian minority, proclaimed collectively guilty, were stripped of their citizenship and their right to own property, Hungarian schools were closed, and of Hungarian language was limited to minimal use (Vadkerty 1993: 8–9). In official registers, the disenfranchisement was manifested in consistently translating Hungarian given names into Slovak and spelling Hungarian surnames with Slovak diacritics (Vörös 2004: 59).

According to Law No. 245, passed after the Communist takeover of 1948, Hungarians living in the territory of Slovakia were reinstated in their Czechoslovak citizenship provided they took an oath of allegiance (Szabó Mihály 2002: 21). The practice of keeping registers in the years of disenfranchisement was also modified, but Law No. 268 of 1949 regarding registers brought an unfavorable turn for Hungarians: the law required that registers be kept in Czech or Slovak, and that females' names be appended, in the same way as they would be among the majority population, with the *-ová* suffix regardless of the ethnicity of their bearers (Gyönyör 1987: 64).

Provision No. 22 of 1977 regarding the implementation of the above mentioned law made it possible, most likely in order to redress grievances suffered since 1949, for minority persons born before October 1, 1959, to modify their names according to the rules of their mother tongue if those had been registered forcibly in Slovak or Czech forms. (The 1959 birth year was motivated by the fact that it was then that Provision No. 182 of 1959 was issued by the federal ministry of the interior allowing in Article 2 of Paragraph 32 the registering of names in the forms complying with the mother tongue rules of their bearers.) The *-ová* suffix, however, remained a compulsory part of minority women's names (Gyönyör 1987: 65).

In 1979 the federal ministry of the interior issued a list of names to assist register keeping. Appendix 2 of the list contained 85 Hungarian given names that could be officially registered (Vörös 2004: 61).

The profound political and social changes of 1989 in Czechoslovakia greatly affected, among other things, the name choices of Hungarian minorities: parents started choosing first names for their children from an ever increasing pool of names. The *-ová* suffix, however, still remained a compulsory element of Hungarian minority women's names. The process liberalizing the previous strictness of regulations regarding minorities proved to be, however, short lived: one of the first laws passed after the change of regime was specifically aimed at regulating the use of minority languages in the country. Law No. 428 of 1990 regarding language became famous for being a limiting and discriminative piece of legislation (even though it did not touch issues of registers), whose quintessence recurred in later laws regulating minority language use as well.

On January 1, 1993, the independent Slovak Republic was formed. The Slovak National Council passed, in the same year, Law No. 300 regarding names and surnames, regulating, among other things, the use of minority names. According to Article 1 of Paragraph 2 of this law, persons of non-Slovak nationality born in the Slovak Republic can be given up to three "names possibly in a foreign language". Article 4 of Paragraph 4, however, states that in Slovak the surnames of women have to be appended with the necessary Slovak suffix, while in languages other than Slovak such names can be used without this suffix (<http://www.minv.sk>). This latter regulation is, however, phrased in an opaque way, and, as numerous examples attest, the surnames of women of non-Slovak nationality are nevertheless still written with the *-ová* suffix in Slovak language texts.

Since this law on names did not comply with the obligations that Slovakia undertook to meet by signing the European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages on its admission into the European Council, the problematic parts of the law were modified (under international pressure) in another law (cf. Lanstyák 2000: 97). Paragraph 16 of Law No. 154 of 1994 on regulating registers states that the surnames of women of non-Slovak nationality should be registered without the *-ová* suffix in the following cases: (1) if the parents of the female child request this when registering her surname, (2) if the marrying female partner requests this at the time of the registering of the marriage, or (3) if the woman in question requests this when changing her surname in any other case.³ The same law allows all persons of non-Slovak nationality whose names are registered in a Slovak form to request the re-registering of their names in the form complying with the rules of their mother tongue (and such re-registering is free of charge) (<http://www.geni.sk>).

Characteristics of Slovakia Hungarian women's name usage

The name usage of Hungarian women (and men) living in Slovakia shows considerable variability. The most visible manifestation of this variability is that the same individual uses different names in different (formal vs. informal) situations (Vörös 2003: 137), e.g. *Kis Ilona*, *Kisné, Ilona Kis*, *Helena/Elena Kisová*, or *Helena/Elena Kišová*. (The Hungarian first name *Ilona* has two Slovak equivalents, *Helena* and *Elena*. The difference between the forms *Kisová* vs. *Kišová* is that, in the former, the *-ová* suffix is attached to the surname written according to Hungarian orthography, whereas in the latter, Slovak orthography).

The name form *Kis Ilona*⁴ is used by both single and married Hungarian women primarily in informal communicative situations: they use this form to introduce themselves to new Hungarian acquaintances or colleagues, and this is the name people in their immediate community (i.e. relatives, friends, acquaintances, and colleagues) know them by. The Hungarian women living in predominantly Hungarian speaking communities use this form of their name in spoken communication in formal contexts as well (i.e. in dealing with authorities, at the post

office, or at the doctor etc.). This name form can also be used in a written form in certain contexts, especially when the officially registered name form is not pre-printed, e.g. in attendance registers or minutes of meetings.

The form *Kisné*, which is a woman's husband's surname taken up by the woman at marriage appended with the Hungarian derivational suffix *-né* referring to their married status, is also used in informal and/or private speech situations, primarily by elderly women (in their 60s and 70s today). This form is rarely used in writing, and when it is, it is mostly in situations different from the standard (e.g. in private correspondence, or in signing non-official documents). This name form is not used at all by most young or middle-aged Hungarian women in Slovakia, not even in informal situations, usually due to the following reasons: (1) none of the laws regulating the name usage of minorities living in (Czecho)Slovakia have ever even mentioned the possible use of this suffixed name form used by married women in Hungary, (2) Hungarian women living in (Czecho)Slovakia have been conforming to name usage habits of majority women, and (3) young and middle-aged Hungarian women in Slovakia consider married women's name forms in *-né* to be out-of-date and archaic.⁵

The form *Ilona Kis* (Hungarian first name followed by surname) is a form used primarily in writing, its use dating back to Law No. 154 of 1994. As has already been mentioned above, this law allowed both the use of minority first names in their original form and the registering of females' surnames without the *-ová* suffix. However, in official documents (such as identity cards, passports, sale contracts etc.) personal names can be used only in the Indo-European (i.e., in the present context, the Slovak) ordering (given name first, surname second).

The name form *Ilona Kis* is used in spoken contexts by Hungarian women in Slovakia only very rarely: when introducing themselves in contexts of predominantly Slovak language use (such as at their place of residence or work) and only if this is the name form used in their official documents.⁶

The name variant *Helena/Elena Kisová* (first name translated into Slovak followed by Slovakized surname) is the most frequent registered name form of Hungarian married women in Slovakia: the first element of the personal name, given in the Indo-European order, is the Slovak equivalent of the Hungarian first name *Ilona* – according to Slovak frequency indications, the form *Helena* is more common than *Elena*. The surname contains the Slovak suffix *-ová* attached to the Hungarian family name, indicating a female bearer but not her marital status.⁷ The name form *Helena/Elena Kisová* follows majority women's name forms and has become the most frequently registered form among Hungarian women in Slovakia following the passing of the 1994 law on names. This is explained, on the one hand, by negative consequences of not using the *-ová* suffix: such practice unequivocally signals a Hungarian bearer and often triggers discrimination in employment (Kiss 1994: 62, Lanstyák 2000: 137, Vörös 2004: 310–311). On the other hand, present regulations concerning the name usage of minorities are contradictory on several points: for instance, regardless of how a woman's name is officially registered, it has to be used complete with the *-ová* suffix in a Slovak language text (Lanstyák 2000: 97).

While most minority speakers consider this name usage habit of Slovakia Hungarian women natural, the opinions of onomastics experts are divided: some regard the use of the name form containing the *-ová* suffix to be a signal of identity change in the bearer (cf. O. Vörös 2003: 137), while others believe that such usage by Slovakia Hungarian women is caused by

intimidation and despite a firm Hungarian identity (cf. F. Vörös 2004: 309).¹

The name form *Helena/Elena Kišová* (first name translated into Slovak followed by surname of Slovak form and spelling) is characteristic of women born between 1922 and 1949, and of women whose names were registered in their Slovak transliterations (and who have not requested that their names be re-registered in their Hungarian forms, as is allowed under the new regulations). In the time period in question many Hungarian surnames were significantly altered due to the Slovakizing tendencies aimed at regulating minority name usage. In contemporary registers, the number of surnames of Hungarian origin spelled with Slovak orthography increased drastically: in addition to the most common change, <s>→<š>, the changes <sz>→<s>, <cs>→<č>, <zs>→<ž>, <ny>→<ň> were also common (Vörös 2004: 311).

Name usage habits of married Hungarian women in Hungary vs. Slovakia

Traditionally, in European societies women usually change their names in marriage: they take up their husband's surname. In Hungary, ever since the registering of births, marriages and deaths became the task of the state in the late 19th century, the range of possible alternative name forms for married women has been ever growing. Whereas the 1894 regulations (effective of 1895) allowed only the form *Szabó Jánosné* (with husband's surname followed by husband's first name plus the *-né* suffix),⁸ the 1952 Family Act added two other options: the name forms *Szabó Jánosné Kis Ilona* and *Kis Ilona* (cf. Farkas 2003, 133). Under the former option, the wife takes the husband's full name, to which the *-né* suffix is added, and this is followed by her own name. Under the latter option, she keeps her own birth name. The 1974 modification of the Act further widened the range of options: the forms *Szabóné Kiss Ilona* and *Szabó Ilona* also became legally possible. In Hungary the former of these has been the most popular in the years since its introduction, whereas the form combining the husband's surname with the wife's given name is considered to be foreign and, therefore, to be avoided (Farkas 2003: 135, Raátz 2007: 174). Hungary's Family Act effective of January 1, 2004, offers the following official options for women's name use after marriage: (a) the wife's full birth name, (b) the husband's full birth name with the *-né* suffix attached to the given name followed by the wife's full birth name, (c) the husband's surname plus the *-né* suffix followed by the wife's full birth name, and (d) the husband's surname followed by the wife's given name (Farkas 2003: 136, www.mkogy.hu).

Today's name usage of Hungarian women living in Slovakia is different from that of Hungarian women living in Hungary in two important ways: (1) similarly to Slovak women, Slovakian Hungaria his last name, and (2) the officially registered form of their name contains the *-ová* suffix attached to their surname, regardless of their marital status. So if Kis Ilona marries Szabó János, informally, she will be known as *Szabó Ilona*, formally usually as *Helena/Elena Szabóová* and rarely as *Ilona Szabó*.

If we compare married woman's name usage in Hungary vs. in Slovakia, we can see that although it is regulated in both countries, the name options are more rigid in Hungary. At the same time, the number of legally possible options is higher in Hungary. Since the passing of the latest Family Act in Hungary, name usage has become liberalized, with more and more women choosing the option of using their given name to the husband's surname (*Szabó Ilona*) – although some experts attribute this to a wish to conform to name usage in the countries of the European

¹ The term Slovakia (rather than Slovakian) Hungarian women is throughout this article to denote that the definition of „nation“ for Hungarians in the Carpathian Basin is cultural and not political and hence the rejection of many minority Hungarians that they are „Slovakian“ even if they hold Slovakian citizenship.

Union rather than to a change in Hungarian women's social needs (Takács and Várnai 2002: 182, Raátz 2007: 169). Married Slovak Hungarian women use the latter form in informal spoken situations. Those who exercise their right provided by the 1994 Law on Registers can use their married name in the form *Ilona Szabó*. According to the information in register entries, however, most Slovakia Hungarian women bear the Slovak-like name form, *Helena/Elena Szabóová*, following the name choice habits of Slovak majority women.

The results of a name usage survey among Slovakia Hungarian women

In September 2010 I carried out a questionnaire survey among 71 Hungarian women from Slovakia about their name choice and name usage habits. The following social factors were considered during the survey: the respondents' (1) marital status (48% of the respondents were single, 52% married), (2) age (respondents represented all age groups between 20 and 70 fairly proportionately), (3) level of education (25% were university students, 25% were university educated, 30% finished grammar school, and 20% finished vocational high school).

The first question asked for the name of the respondent as registered officially. Only two respondents (1.42%) gave a name form like *Ilona Kis* (a Hungarian language given name followed by the father's surname, in the Slovak/Indo-European order) or *Ilona Szabó* (a Hungarian language given name followed by the husband's surname, in the Indo-European order): one of them had requested, on the basis of the 1994 Law on Registers, that her name, which had originally been registered in a Slovak form, be Hungarianized, whereas the other respondent's parents requested, with reference to the existing regulations, that their daughter's name be registered without the *-ová* suffix when she was born. The remaining respondents' (98.58%) registered names were of the form *Helena/Elena Kisová*, in case of single women, and *Helena/Elena Szabóová*, in case of married women, regardless of their age or level of education.

The respondents gave different responses to the question why they have not requested that their names be registered in the "minority language form", i.e. with the Hungarian equivalent of the given name and the surname without the *-ová* suffix. Some of these responses are as follows:

(1)

Szlovák többségű településen élek, s egy szlovák többségű városban, Nyitrán tanulok. Ha magyaros formában használnám a nevemet, állandóan magyarázkodnom kellene. Bemutatkozáskor így is sokan megkérdezik, milyen név az a Viola, mert még sosem hallották, pedig a szlovák naptárban is szerepel, de úgy látszik, ők nem nagyon használják.

"I live in a place that has a Slovak majority, and I study in such a town, too, in Nitra. If I were using my name in the Hungarian form, I would have to be giving explanations about it all the time. Many people ask me what kind of name *Viola* is anyway, when I introduce myself, because they have never heard it before, even though it's there in the Slovak calendar, too, but it looks like they don't use it much." (22-year-old university student)

(2)

Eszembe se jutott, hogy megtehetném, pedig hallottam erről a törvényről, még az újságban is olvastam róla. De engem nem zavar, ha a szlovákok szlovákos formában használják a nevemet, a magyarok meg magyarosan. Szlovákiában élek, ahol egyszer magyarul, máskor szlovákul beszélek, talán ezért nem furcsa, hogy van magyar meg szlovák nevem is.

"It never occurred to me to do this even though I have heard about this law, I remember reading about it in the paper. But it doesn't bother me when Slovaks use my name in the Slovak form and Hungarians in the Hungarian form. I live in Slovakia where I sometimes speak Hungarian, other times Slovak, so it's not strange for me at all that I have both a Hungarian and a Slovak name."
(36-year-old beautician)

(3)

Kisebbségi helyzetben mindig alkalmazkodni kell valamihez, így a nyelvhasználathoz is. Megszoktam már, hogy a hivatalokban vagy szlovákokkal beszélve szlovákosan használom a nevemet. A munkahelyemen, a boltban, a buszon, a faluban pedig mindenki a magyar nevemen szólít.

"In a minority situation one always has to adapt, so in language use as well. I am used to using my name in the Slovak way in administrative offices and when speaking to Slovaks. At my workplace, in shops, on the bus, and in my village everyone calls me by my Hungarian name."
(42-year-old preschool teacher)

(4)

Régóta gondolkodom rajta, de megrémiszt az ezzel járó huzavona. A lányom két évvel ezelőtt kérelmezte a neve magyaros bejegyzését, azóta megfordult már minden biztosítóban, bankban, nyilvántartóban, különböző szolgáltatóknál, hogy bejelentse a névváltoztatást. Rengeteg idejébe került, ráadásul még mindig előfordul, hogy a hivatal a korábbi, szlovákos névén szólítja meg, pl. legutóbb a parlamenti választások előtt.

"I have been thinking about this for a long time, but the hassle that it entails has scared me off. My daughter requested two years ago that her name be re-registered in the Hungarian way, and she has had to have every insurance company, bank, registry, and various service providers change her name in their records. It's taken a lot of her time, and it still happens that an administrative office uses her previous, Slovak-like name, like for instance at the time of the latest parliamentary elections."
(48-year-old teacher)

(5)

A lányom nemrég változtatta magyarra a nevét, mindenhol fizetnie kellett az új iratokért. Én már nyugdíjas vagyok, jó ez így, ahogy van. Magyar városban élek, mióta nem dolgozom, senki sem használja szlovákul a nevemet.

"My daughter changed her name to the Hungarian way recently, and she has had to pay for all the new cards everywhere. I am retired, and my name is fine as it is. I live in a Hungarian majority town, and ever since I stopped working nobody has called me by my Slovak name."
(67-year-old retired office clerk)

The next question of the survey inquired whether respondents looked at their names as symbols of their national identity. I listed several notions that can be considered a symbol of national affiliation and asked respondents to rate these on a 5-point scale as important (=4) or unimportant (=0) markers of national affiliation (Csepeli et al. 2002: 24). Table 1 summarizes the results, which clearly demonstrate that a name of the Hungarian form is not considered by any of the age groups as an important marker of identity.

	Respondents			
	<i>19–29-year-olds</i>	<i>30–39-year-olds</i>	<i>40–55-year-olds</i>	<i>56–70-year-olds</i>
shared language	3.90	3.35	3.71	3.28
shared culture	3.80	2.88	3.20	3.33
Hungarian origin	3.50	2.95	3.09	3.28
place of birth	1.50	2.20	2.47	2.70
Hungarian national anthem	1.32	1.97	2.10	2.43
Hungarian citizenship	1.30	1.93	2.03	2.66
Hungarian flag	0.76	1.20	1.50	2.32
name of the Hungarian form	0.98	1.17	1.24	2.03

Table 1. Markers of Hungarian national identity

The respondents expressed interesting opinions about the use of a name type very popular (according to national statistics as well) in Hungary, namely, *Szabóné Kis Ilona* (that is, the husband's surname with the *-né* suffix followed by the wife's full birth name). The respondents were asked whether they would, on marrying, have this form of their name registered if this were a possible option. All but one of the respondents (99.24%) rejected this, and the opinions expressed by the respondents show that this name form seems unacceptable to Slovakian Hungarian women:

(6)

Számomra ez a névforma a régi korokat idézi, még a mindennapi nyelvhasználatban is elképzelhetetlennek tartom, hogy valakinek a valakijeként emlegessenek, nemhogy hivatalosan! Semmiképpen sem élnék ezzel a lehetőséggel.

"For me, this name form is reminiscent of olden times, and I consider it unimaginable that I would want myself to be referred to as somebody's somebody even in everyday language use, let alone officially! I would never choose this option." (31-year-old engineer)

(7)

Sosem viselnék ilyen nevet. Úgy gondolom, már azzal is tettem egy gesztust a férjem felé, hogy felvettem a családi nevét, igaz, nem annyira érte, mint a gyerekeinkért csináltam, ha egy család vagyunk, legyen közös a nevünk is.

"I would never want such a name. I think I already exercised a gesture towards my husband by taking his surname, although I did this more for our children than for him – if we are one family, we should have the same surname." (40-year-old shop assistant)

(8)

Akkor sem használnám ezt a névformát, ha tehetném. Szerintem csak azok választják ezt a nevet, akik hangsúlyozni szeretnék, hogy már férjnél vannak.

"I would not use this name form even if I had the choice. I think only women who want to emphasize that they have already gotten married use it." (42-year-old financial consultant)

(9)

Nekem nem tetszik, szinte sugallja a férfiak felsőbbrendűségét. Annak ellenére, hogy már harminc éve férjnél vagyok, még soha senkinek nem mutatkoztam be úgy, hogy Xné vagyok.

"I don't like it because it pretty much implies the superior status of men. Despite the fact that I have been married for over thirty years, I have never introduced myself by saying that I am Mrs. X." (54-year-old teacher)

(10)

Egyértelműen elutasítom, ez a névforma számomra azt jelenti, hogy egy nő nem tud önmaga lenni, csak valakinek a valakije. Ja, és kíváncsi lennék rá, fordított helyzetben melyik férfi venné fel a felesége családnevét.

"I reject it completely, this name form indicates to me that a woman cannot be herself, only somebody's somebody. Oh, and I'm really curious how many men would take their wife's last name in a reverse kind of situation." (60-year-old office clerk)

(11)

Ha a férjem kérné, azt hiszem, igen. A szomszédasszonyokat is úgy szoktuk emlegetni, hogy Bekéné, Horváthné.

"I think if my husband asked me to, I would. We talk about the female neighbors like this, too, like Bekéné, Horváthné." (66-year-old hairdresser)

The respondents gave a unanimously negative answer to my question whether they thought that the name form *Szabó Ilona* (the husband's surname and the wife's given name) became popular among Slovakia Hungarian women due to the Slovak model:

(12)

A többségi nyelv mindig hatással van a kisebbségi nyelvekre, valószínűleg a névhasználat terén is ez a helyzet. Mégsem érzem szlovákosnak ezt a névtípust, elég, ha körülnézünk az EU országaiban, általában ott is felveszik a nők a férjük családnevét, még hozzá mindenféle toldalék nélkül.

"The majority language always affects the minority languages, and that's probably the case with name usage as well. But I don't regard this name form to be Slovak-like, it's enough to look around the EU member states to see that women take their husbands' names there as well, without any kind of suffixes." (20-year-old university student)

(13)

Nem érzem szlovákosnak. Évek óta Ausztriában dolgozom, ott is a férjük vezetéknévét viselik az asszonyok, ha csak meg nem tartották a sajátjukat.

"I do not regard it Slovak-like. I have been working in Austria for years, and women take their husbands' names there as well, unless they keep their own." (29-year-old nurse)

(14)

Szerintem inkább az európai hagyományokat tükrözi ez a névtípus (bár fordított a sorrend), praktikusnak tartom. Különben is hogy lehet lefordítani a Kovács Jánosné-t mondjuk franciára?
 "I think this name type reflects European traditions really, although the ordering is reversed, and I consider it practical. And how would you translate *Kovács Jánosné* into French, for instance?"
 (47-year-old translator)

(15)

Ez még sosem jutott eszembe. Szerintem Magyarországon sem csak a -né-vel ellátott formát használják az asszonyok. Miért lenne szlovákos?
 "I have never thought about this. I don't think women in Hungary use only the name form that has the *-né* suffix in it. Why would it be Slovak-like?" (61-year-old homemaker)

The last question of the survey inquired whether the respondents considered the use of dual surnames (by connecting the husband's surname to the wife's), a practice allowed both in Hungary and Slovakia, acceptable. None of the respondents rejected this name form, which was hailed mostly by university students and university educated women.

(16)

Nagyon jónak tartom, én is így tervezem, ha egyszer férjhez megyek. Épp itt az ideje, hogy az egyenjogúság ezen a téren is érvényesüljön.
 "I consider it great, I plan to use my name exactly like this if I ever get married. It's high time for gender equality to be manifested in this, too." (23-year-old university student)

(17)

Szerintem a fiatalok között egyre népszerűbb ez a névváltozat, van egy ismerős házaspár, akik ezt a megoldást választották. Nekem is tetszik.
 "I think this name form is getting more and more popular among young people, I know a young couple who opted for this choice. I like it, too." (32-year-old waitress)

(18)

Amikor elváltam, visszavettem a lánykori nevemet. Amikor másodszor is férjhez mentem, felvettem mellé a második férjem vezetéknévét. A gyerekeink is ezt a kettős vezetéknévet viselik. Nálunk bevált.
 "When I divorced, I took back my birth name. When I remarried, I added my husband's name to my own. Our children also have this double last name. It works for us." (47-year-old translator)

(19)

Semmi baj vele, csak túl hosszú.
 "There is nothing wrong with it, it's just a little too long." (54-year-old dormitory teacher)

(20)

Jó megoldásnak tartom, de valószínűleg csak a fiatalok körében fog elterjedni. Bár arra kíváncsi lennék, hány férfi venné fel a felesége nevét a sajátja mellé.
 "I consider it a good solution, but it will probably spread only among young people. Although I

would be curious to see how many men would add their wives' last names to their own." (70-year-old retired teacher)

Summary

In a minority situation, a special issue of language use is name usage, with the use of personal names being of special importance. Politics makes this an especially sensitive question, by interfering in the internal linguistic and language use matters of the minorities (Kiss 1994: 63–64). In the present paper I have investigated the characteristics of name usage by Slovakia Hungarian women. In the first part of the paper I have surveyed the laws and regulations prescribing minority name usage and discussed the range of options available to single and married Hungarian women living in Slovakia, with special attention devoted to the use of the –*ová* suffix. In the second part of the paper I discussed the results of a survey aimed at mapping up the opinions of minority Hungarian women living Slovakia regarding certain name forms as well as their own name usage habits and those of Hungarian women living in Hungary.

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