

**Interventions made on behalf of the National Council
of the Hungarian Ethnic Minority (Subotica, Serbia)**

Anikó Jerasz (Panel 1)

During the past years the knowledge of the majority Serbian language of certain homogenous Hungarian communities in Serbia has been the object of common criticism. This has gone as far as recommending the implementation of bilingual models of education for our communities, so that they may better learn the state language. The National Council of the Hungarian Ethnic Minority in Serbia has been both aware of the problems of Serbian learning for our students and in strong opposition of any idea of bilingual education of our students. We strongly believe that our community can only preserve their minority culture and identity through a full native language education. This is only sustainable with an appropriate method of teaching the state language to our students.

Our students in homogenous Hungarian communities have always had a problem with learning Serbian but have easily mastered foreign languages such as English and German. Identifying the problem was the biggest step. The problem was the method of teaching Serbian, which presumed a high level of previous knowledge learned on the streets, not available to students of these homogenous communities. Breaking the internal barrier of allowing the teaching of the state language with the methods of a foreign language is a huge step forward which we believe will be able to solve our language problems.