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# **Motivations and Tendencies in Married Name Choice in Hungary**

## **Abstract**

The study presents a survey, carried out in 2017, concerning the motivations and tendencies of the choice of married names in Hungary. The informants were women between the age of twenty and forty who were married after the last regulation of married names passed in 2004. All the seven possible official name types are listed and studied: A) the three traditional name types (with the -né suffix); B) the two-surname versions based on compromise: hyphenated names with the two birth names; C) the two unusual or non-typical options: the first is the woman's birth name, the second the woman's given name combined with her husband's family name. The paper illustrates how identity factors can influence the choice of a certain name type. The traditional name types, the two-name versions based on compromise, and untypical married names all have a different effect, because they express the individuality and the marital status of the married woman in different ways. The study presents the various opinions and interpretations of the married informants about the motivations of their name choice. This socio-onomastic research proves that the most popular married names contain the woman's birth name in some form as an expression of their individuality while also reflecting their changed marital status.

### **Keywords**

identity, married names, motivations, modernity, tradition

## 1. Introduction

This paper presents the results of a study carried out in 2017 about current tendencies in married name choice, exploring the practice of what married names are chosen and the motivating factors of the expression of identity that underlie it. The study of people's intentions of expressing and forming their identity is important because those intentions are affected by social, cultural, and psychological factors (Zelliger, 2012, p. 42). Name choice takes place in the present but has long-term effects for the future. It can express one's changed social status, but it also has a significant message of self-expression: we declare our self-identification, sense of affiliation, and identity by the married name we choose for ourselves.

## 2. The legal background of married name choice in Hungary

The first official regulation of the possibilities of women's married name choice in this country took place in 1894 by an Act on State Registration of Births and Marriages. In terms of that law, a single name form was allowed for women upon getting married: if a woman called *Zrínyi Ilona* [family name plus given name, in that order] got married to a man called *Rákóczi Ferenc*, the wife's name could only become *Rákóczi Ferencné*<sup>1</sup> (Ugróczky, 1997, p. 12). In the decades that followed, the name forms that could be chosen multiplied (for a detailed historical overview, see Fericsik, 2012b). At present, a 2002 amendment of the law that took effect as of 1 January 2004 is in force and constitutes the legal background of the name choice of the spouses. The wife can choose from as many as seven different name forms. She can keep her original name: (1) *Zrínyi Ilona*, or can choose her husband's full name "with a suffix referring to marital

<sup>1</sup> Created as an allomorph from the noun *nő*, meaning that a person is somebody's wife (Fericsik, 2012, p. 58).

status” (this is the official term for the suffix *-né* ‘wife of’), with or without adding the name she had directly before the marriage, that is, she can choose either the form (2) *Rákóczi Ferencné* or the form (3) *Rákóczi Ferencné Zrínyi Ilona*. In addition, the wife can choose to adopt her husband’s family name with the suffix referring to her marital status, adding the name she had directly before marriage: (4) *Rákócziné Zrínyi Ilona*; or add her own given name to her husband’s family name: (5) *Rákóczi Ilona*. In terms of the most recent amendment of 2002, she can furthermore choose one of two coordinate (hyphenated) solutions that are becoming increasingly popular: (6) *Rákóczi-Zrínyi Ilona* or (7) *Zrínyi-Rákóczi Ilona*. After marriage, men can also choose one of four possibilities according to the same amendment: they can start to use either (1) *Zrínyi Ferenc*, or (2) *Rákóczi-Zrínyi Ferenc*, or (3) *Zrínyi-Rákóczi Ferenc*, but of course they can keep their original name, too: (4) *Rákóczi Ferenc*.

### 3. Research on married women’s name use in Hungarian

In the past two decades, the most comprehensive research on married women’s names was carried out by Fercsik (2002, 2008, 2012b, 2013). Several other scholars also studied such names at various locations and in various social groups. A comprehensive study presenting the history of research in the past decades and containing references to additional literature was published by Fercsik (2008), while a survey of the present-day research scene by Szilágyi-Kósa (2015, pp. 147–148) referred to more recent studies, too. Most recently, Baranyiné Kóczy (2021) did a questionnaire survey of the topic. Farkas (2001) studied officially requested changes of married women’s names in the second half of the twentieth century (pp. 352–386; see also Farkas, 2020, pp. 143–164) that reflected newly emerging needs due to the occurring social changes and the way the possibilities of name choice were widened by law as a result. The justifications of applications for official changes of names reveal the putative or real advantages and drawbacks of the various types of names, and the major trends of changes in what types are fashionable or otherwise. All those details make it possible to trace changes in “the interpretation of

female roles” that are also reflected in the responses of the participants of the present study.

As a result of her comprehensive explorations, Fercsik classified married names in use today as typical (T) less typical (LT) and untypical (UT) name forms (Fercsik, 2012a, 2013). In what follows, I will use the labels she introduced, with a slight modification (see below). What she calls “typical married names” are forms where the name unambiguously refers to marital status (Fercsik, 2012a, p. 314). These are (to use my own examples) the types *Rákóczi Ferencné*, *Rákóczi Ferencné Zrínyi Ilona*, and *Rákócziné Zrínyi Ilona*. The suffix *-né* occurs in all three types, hence all of them refer to marital status. However, with the first form above, the problem of how to address the bearer of the name may cause serious difficulties since this form does not include her given name, whereas in the other two forms, although they are somewhat longer, this piece of information is also included. Fercsik does not make a distinction between the two most typical forms (*Rákóczi Ferencné* and *Rákóczi Ferencné Zrínyi Ilona*), labelling both as T/1. I think it is better to refer to them as T/1a and T/1b, respectively, given that the two forms are by no means equivalent. The third form (*Rákócziné Zrínyi Ilona*) is labelled as T/2 by Fercsik. The forms that involve the suffix *-né* are undoubtedly the most traditional; in addition, T/2 is also compromise-seeking: it expresses marital status but preserves the original name of birth, too. Its popularity is due to the latter feature (see below).

Hyphenated family names are taken by Fercsik to be “less typical married names” (LT) where we can infer marital status from the name with high probability: the form *Rákóczi-Zrínyi Ilona* is labelled LT/1, and *Zrínyi-Rákóczi Ilona* is labelled LT/2 (Fercsik, 2012a, pp. 214–18). Their use can be misleading in that this name type does not exclusively refer to married women’s name use: it can involve family names that exhibit components joined to one another for some other reason. (I can mention a personal example here: my name of birth contains a hyphenated double family name – *Szabó-Törpényi* – and people keep asking me, logically but wrongly, how my husband is, even referring to him as “Mr Szabó”, as they think that the first element of my family name must come from my husband’s family name.)

The third group is that of “untypical married names” (UT) whose main feature is that we can only infer marital status from the name if we have preliminary information (Fercsik, 2013, p. 375). Typically, single family names are taken to belong here by Fercsik: she labels retained name of birth as UT/1

(*Zrínyi Ilona*), and the type involving the husband's family name without the suffix *-né* as UT/2 (*Rákóczi Ilona*).

Trends of married name choice in the nineties were summarised by Laczkó (2008), while the tendencies of the turn of millennium were presented the most comprehensively, keeping the above classification, by Fericsik again: summarising statistical data of five years, she has shown that the compromise name form (T/2) underwent a gradual increase in popularity (Fericsik, 2013, p. 376). In the present paper, I will likewise try to find out the motivational background of social demands behind the current trends.

#### 4. Motivations of married name use: issues of identity

Identity, or one's awareness of one's identity, has a very important role in the relationship between individuals and their communities, from the point of view of the individual's self-definition. However, we have to make a distinction between personal and social identity. The latter involves national, ethnic, religious, gender, etc., identities. These categories are internalised by the individual in the process of socialisation and are used later as "matters of course" in establishing their own social position and that of other people (Csepeli, 1997, p. 522). Name giving and name changing are affected by social, cultural, and psychological factors (Zelliger, 2012, p. 42), whereby a person's identity is formed, transformed and expressed in turn. Name choice takes place in the present but it affects the future. We declare our self-identification and express our sense of affiliation by the name we choose for ourselves.

Married names, too, have an important function in representing self-identity, whether traditional or compromise names (in the above sense) are chosen by the members of the couple, and also if they decide to keep their names of birth. This is also shown by the results of a questionnaire survey I conducted in January 2017. Sampling can by no means be taken to be representative; but recurring response motifs draw an unambiguous picture of the motivations of the main trends of name choice, with components acting against one another with respect to the individual name types. These frequency components, as

processed by content analysis, can be arranged along a scale from the intention to express togetherness, motivating the married name forms taken to be traditional, to the insistence on unique self-expression of the individual, with less typical name forms positioned in between. The background of the motifs of responses is very complex, multidimensional, and involves family traditions, social expectations, job market possibilities and psycho-sociological patterns of naming fashions, too.<sup>2</sup>

The most important criterion of selection of my 70-participant sample was that each subject had to have gotten married after 2004. Thus, I had occasion to study the motivation of each and every name type that is available today and to analyse current patterns of name choice. All participants had university degrees and lived in Budapest or in other large cities of Hungary, hence I was unable to study motivations of name choice in the case of people with lesser education and of people living in smaller settlements. For that reason, frequency of occurrence of the individual name types reflects trends and motivations of name choice by subjects between 20 and 40 years of age, living in large cities and holding university degrees. In addition to control data referring to the time and place of marriage, current place of residence, and level of education, the questionnaire included the following questions:

- (1) What was your name of birth and what married name did you choose?
  - (2) Why did you choose that married name? (Who or what reasons affected your choice?)
  - (3) Would you choose the same name today? Why/why not?
  - (4) If there had been other legal possibilities, would you have chosen a different name when you got married?
  - (5) What family name did/will your children get? (Whose family name did/will they receive?)
- +1. Did your husband change his name at the time of the marriage?

<sup>2</sup> In order to safeguard privacy, I have changed all family names occurring in participants' responses that I cite below to the example names I have been using so far (*Zrínyi, Rákóczi*).

**Table 1. The distribution of the 70 pieces of name data in the corpus by type**

Name types	Number of names	Percentage of names
T/1a: <i>Rákóczi Ferencné</i>	3	4.3
T/2b: <i>Rákóczi Ferencné Zrínyi Ilona</i>	0	0
T/2: <i>Rákócziné Zrínyi Ilona</i>	22	31.5
UT/1: <i>Zrínyi Ilona</i>	18	25.7
UT/2: <i>Rákóczi Ilona</i>	8	11.4
LT/1: <i>Rákóczi-Zrínyi Ilona</i>	19	27.1
LT/2: <i>Zrínyi-Rákóczi Ilona</i>	0	0

Source: own work.

Although the sampling is not representative, the proportions of the name types occurring in the corpus also show what Fercsik predicted earlier, in view of her study of the country-wide statistics of 2004–2009: the share of hyphenated names, thought to be less typical, has increased steeply in the past few years (in the six years of her study, their number rose tenfold, cf. Fercsik, 2013, p. 377). As I observed, in the group of intellectuals living in big cities, this number is prominent: the married women in my sample chose this name form in roughly every third case. The use of hyphenated married names could be applied for automatically by women who got married later than 1 January, 2004, without an official procedure of name change, unlike those who wanted to use their names in that form prior to that date to express their togetherness (Farkas, 2003, p. 136). While in 2004, taking into consideration married name choice of the total population, a mere 0.1% of the country-wide data was of this type, by 2009, this number had risen to 1.3%, showing the steep rise of its popularity, as compared to the number of marriages in a year (Fercsik, 2013, p. 377). It appears that Révész (2001)'s opinion that long-term tendencies showed that this form could not gain real popularity as the trend pointed toward a preference for shorter name forms (p. 70) is not justified. Her statement is correct in that some subjects see the length of the longer name forms inconvenient; but longer forms may express more and thus they are worth being chosen.



## 4.1. Types of names and identity

On the basis of their motivations, then, three types of name choice can be discerned: traditional, individual, and compromise-seeking. I have modified Fercsik (2012a)'s classification along the factors of motivation as follows.

### 4.1.1. Traditional name types

Along the scale hinted at above, T/1a is the most traditional type. In T/1b, the name of birth also appears, thus it can be taken to be more compromise-seeking; but the retention of *-né* makes it remain within the traditional category. (It should be noted that in the material I collected no woman bears a name of type T/1b.) The most compromising form is T/2, in the middle of the scale, as it were: tradition is being kept as the suffix *-né* does appear, but the name form is shorter; and marital status is clearly expressed but the name of birth is retained as a whole. However, a number of subjects disliked the *-né* form as their mother-in-law was also *Rákócziné*, and they would not like to bear the same name. Farkas (2020, p. 150) also found that, among the motivations of applications for change of married name, an important consideration is the avoidance of identical names (including avoidance of having the same name as one's mother-in-law).

### 4.1.2. Compromise types

In view of the above, from a motivational point of view, T/1b and T/2 are compromise-seeking types, and so are the less typical forms LT/1 and LT/2. In the latter two, the intention to innovate is stronger than that of tradition-preserving. Those who choose a hyphenated family name wish to indicate their altered marital status by changing their names but are averse to a solution involving the suffix *-né* for some reason. So, they create their new name, their married name, by juxtaposing the two family names (in many cases with an explicit declaration of their intention to express coequality). It is to be noted, however, that even though the aim is said to be to express equality, I have not come across a single case of a LT/2 type name; in all hyphenated names of the whole corpus, the husband's family name comes first, followed by the wife's

family name, linked to it by a hyphen. This is obviously a more logical solution in that it keeps the wife's name of birth as a whole and it is more similar to cases where the woman's new name contains the husband's full name or family name + *-né*, before her maiden name.

#### 4.1.3. Untypical married names at the two end points of expressing identity

This group comprises, on the one hand, subjects who – for diverse reasons – kept their names of birth as their married names (UT/1), not taking it to be necessary to express their married status by their name, but wishing to retain their former name to express their identity. On the other hand, this group also includes women who chose an untypical married name (UT/2) because they wanted to identify themselves with their husband (and his family) so much that they dropped their name of birth and adopted that of their new family (their husband's family name). Some participants objected to this form just because it did not reveal their married status at all; as one subject put it, “I did not want to be my husband's sister; I wanted to be his wife” (LT/1\_55).<sup>3</sup> (It is to be noted that, in some sense, the most traditional type T/1a is also an extreme solution, given that a name like *Rákóczi Ferencné* does not reveal anything about the wife's original family name or given name at all.)

In the following subsections I give a more detailed account of the motivational tendencies concerning each name type on the basis of typical components of responses (cf. Révész, 2001).

<sup>3</sup> In what follows, quotes from subjects' responses will be followed by their identifiers in parentheses. These identifiers will consist of the code of the name type concerned and the serial number of the subject. (For instance, LT/1\_55 means “less typical married name/1, that is, the type *Rákóczi-Zrínyi Ilona*, participant #55”.) In the quotes, linguistic items will be italicized, otherwise they will be quoted verbatim.

## 4.2. Name types and motivations

### 4.2.1. T/1a: Rákóczi Ferencné

On the basis of official statistics of the total population we can say that this may have been the most frequently chosen married name type in Hungary in the 2010s (Fercsik, 2013, p. 376). However, its popularity with young people or with remarrying couples is decreasing, fewer and fewer women choose it as their married names, and it can be predicted that it will become even less frequent as time goes by. Only three subjects in the corpus exhibit this name type. One of the greatest difficulties with this name type, as suggested by even those subjects who have chosen this type of married name, is that other people who see their names written are at a loss about how to address them. This problem was reported by several subjects:

Today, I would change my name so that my given name would be added to my husband's family name, as nobody would address me as *Ferencné*, but my own given name is not mentioned when I introduce myself. (...) At the time, I would not have chosen any different name, but today I would, due to my experiences in everyday life (T/1a\_1).

Another subject, who has chosen a compromise name type, tried to avoid the type T/1a just because of the addressing problem mentioned in the above response. Her mother's name belonged to that type, and she had experienced the addressing problem with respect to her mother:

The family name with the suffix *-né* feels obsolete to me, characteristic of the older generation, and reflecting a conservative way of thinking. It conceals the woman's real name, and on top of that, it is impractical because it makes addressing cumbersome. (Just for interest's sake: I have seen a case where my mother, whose name is *Rákóczi Ferencné*, was addressed in a letter as 'Dear *Ferencné*' – an emergency arrangement, but I think it is awful!) (LT/1\_57).

This difficulty, by the way, also shows up among the justifications of applications for married name change (Farkas, 2020, p. 151). Subjects bearing this name type have suggested in their responses that the difficulty can be overcome by introducing yet another variety in which only the wife's given name is added

to a T/1a name, producing a three-part, informative, not too long, practicable version like *Rákóczi Ferencné Ilona*. All of them use this form for introducing themselves. Two of them work in the medical services, and write their given names on their name tags, after their married names.

This practice follows, albeit unawares, a very old name use pattern that is described by Attila Szabó T. (1970) in discussing the origin, use, and incidence of women's married names as follows: "It was very widespread, especially in the 16–17th centuries, that married names were used in conjunction with the given name of the wife; thus: 1570: 'Zekely Mattheue Martha azzon', 1573: 'Katalin azony Takats Andrasne'. In the case of bondswomen: 'Kovács Jánosné Anna<sup>4</sup>'" (p. 50; transl. – A.U.S.T.).

We can ask why, despite all those difficulties and criticisms, the three subjects chose this name form. All three of them did so because they wished to express their full commitment and their belonging to their husband by choosing this name form. The next quote shows what kinds of stereotypes were at work. For instance, this type is (more) characteristic of older age groups, those who got married prior to 1974, and in certain "career positions" choosing this name form is inadvisable, "impermissible", socially unsupported, its bearer is not considered to be of sufficiently modern frame of mind, competitive enough, etc.:

I think it is the most beautiful that, if two people belong together eternally, their names are almost the same, and my name contains that of my husband. (...) Also, I like traditions: in our family, everybody used their married names like this. However, everybody but my husband tried to dissuade me saying that 'in today's world...', 'how will people address you', 'you'll have troubles with it', 'you'll have to take your name back...', 'you will lose yourself'. I think that I have a profession (apothecary) where I can use my name as I wish, and the classical married name does not have any drawback. Of course, if I were a marketing manager with a multi firm, I could not afford being called this as a young woman. I usually introduce myself as *Rákóczi Ferencné Ilona*, it is a three-part name just like any other form in which I could have chosen to call myself (T/1a\_2).

<sup>4</sup> The word *asszony* (written variants: *azzon*, *azony*) 'Mrs' could suggest that the woman in question was married.

#### 4.2.2. T/1b: Rákóczi Ferencné Zrínyi Ilona

There are no instances of this name type in the corpus. Among those choosing T/2, some subjects had thought about having T/1b but finally they did not choose it because they thought it was too long.

#### 4.2.3. T/2: Rákócziné Zrínyi Ilona

Subjects who chose this truly compromise-seeking form are all proud of their married status, and think it is important that their name should reflect this to outsiders. Traditional expression of their belonging together with their husband is also present in all relevant reply components. Many participants gave a reason why they had not chosen the hyphenated form. It turns out from their replies and from the whole corpus that these two married name forms (T/2 and LT/1) compete with one another among those who get married at present. Tradition versus innovation (“in a more modern manner, differently from our mothers”, like one participant has noted), as well as the expression of belonging together, a name “shared” with the husband, the children, the family – these are the factors that underlie the competition between these two forms, as can be seen from the following quotes:

In choosing my name, I wanted to symbolise my coherence with my husband. In my family, the use of *-né* can be considered traditional. But I wanted that someone who reads or hears my name should get to know my given name, too (T/2\_12).

I was considering the form *Rákóczi Ilona* to make it shorter, but then on introducing myself my new acquaintances would not know I am married, and that is important for me :) So I stuck with *Rákócziné* (T/2\_11).

Several subjects emphasised pattern following, the intention to retain name forms that are well-established in the family. The following speaker also refers to following family traditions: “I chose this married name because I wanted the way my name ‘looks and sounds’ to reveal that I live in marriage. On the one hand, I wanted to express that I belong to my husband, and on the other hand, I consider the state of being married an important step forward in life, and at the time of my marriage I was rather proud of it. I could have imagined

the hyphenated solution as possible, but (...) it sounded very strange to me. (I guess the name pattern one encounters in childhood or young adulthood is crucial in this respect.)” (T/2\_15).

The same subject goes on to say that perhaps she would not decide on the *-né* form today:

I’m not sure I would choose that. My ear gets slowly used to the form two family names plus given name, and it is not true that with women having such a name we don’t know if they are married or not. In most of the cases I think we can guess that they are married (T/2\_15).

Two subjects (T/2\_13; T/2\_17) said that they would have adopted their husband’s name without either *-né* or hyphen before their name of birth if that had been possible, and if there were such a possible name type, they would have requested that: *Rákóczi Zrínyi Ilona*. One of them explained:

I would have preferred my name to include that of my future children, but I did not want to give up my name entirely: it is mine. I would have liked to be simply someone with a three-element name, (...) it is even melodious that way, but I could not accept the hyphen, especially that it causes problems in very many digital systems, and I felt it to be muddled, so finally I chose the form with *-né*. But I still would prefer to have three names, without anything (T/2\_13).

#### 4.2.4. UT/1: Zrínyi Ilona

By studying historical name forms, it can be demonstrated that “it was quite general in olden times that the wife retained her maiden name after marriage, at most the addition of the word *asszony* ‘Mrs’ could suggest that the woman in question was married. (...) E.g., 1551: ‘Pogan Soffya azzon’. 1569: ‘Myhalfy Barbara asszony’” (hSzabó T., 1970, p. 50; transl. – A.U.S.T.).

Studying the country-wide statistical data of 1996–2003, Fericsik (2013) has shown that 4% of the women in that period did not change their names upon marriage. Of the women keeping their names of birth, most claimed that this decision was approved of by their husbands, that they agreed with it. These subjects, similarly to those opting for LT forms, thought that the *-né* form was

old-fashioned, or were against it for some other reason (e.g., they felt it befitted older women, it was a name form characteristic of their mothers' age group, they would not like to bear the same name as their mother-in-law, etc.), or they were proud of their own family name, their ancestors; occasionally they had rarer family names than their husbands and wanted to keep those names. In my own study, almost one third of the subjects retained their names of birth as their married names. One of the reasons may be that a large part of the sample included informants who had achieved certain professional successes before getting married (e.g., they published scholarly papers or books of poetry, started medical practice, etc.). As those successes were linked up with their names of birth, they would not change their names. The following quotes mention these reasons:

My husband would have taken it to be a dated gesture for me to adopt his name. Plus, by that time, two of my books were published under my maiden name, and the switchover would have caused confusion (UT/1\_28).

I had several reasons, but I can't arrange them in an order of importance. (A) I like my name (partly because it's rather simple, no accented letters in it, for example), and although I am not very famous, I have published some things under this name. (B) My name is less frequent than that of my husband. (...) (C) My mother kept her maiden name, too. (D) A hyphenated version would have sounded silly, and as for the suffix *-né*, I did not want it, because I would surely have been *Rákócziné* in that case, a name I would not have felt to be my own, and anyway, there is already one in the family :) (UT/1\_36).

Women who keep their names of birth (maiden names) after getting married do not formally change their names, but from the legal point of view the function of their names does change: they become married names (Farkas, 2003, p. 133). Several participants noted, half-jokingly, that they wanted to avoid administrative difficulties and excess paperwork, so they did not change their names, and when they complete official papers, they do not have to write their names of birth underneath their married names, given that the two are formally the same.

#### 4.2.5. UT/2: Rákóczi Ilona

Those who chose this name type did so primarily in order for their family name to be identical with that of their husband and children; that is, their aim was to construct a “shared name of the family”, as the following quote explains:

I wanted to adopt my husband’s name by all means. Now we are a family, and this is what the shared family name represents. This is an important caesura in life. Simplicity was also important (this is why I did not choose a form in *-né* or a three-part name), and also that it should be understood in a foreign-language context (UT/2\_46).

Subjects who disliked this name form had two major objections: 1. She would like her name to suggest that she was the wife (rather than the sister or daughter) of her husband (LT/1\_55); 2. This name form sounds foreign, and follows the pattern of names used in other countries. It is worth pointing out with respect to the second objection that popular (spoken) usage adopted the form *Rákóczi Ilona* a lot earlier; for instance, if the husband was widely known in the community, the wife coming from far away was identified in this manner (cf. also Ördög, 1975, pp. 69–72; Farkas, 2003, pp. 134–135). One of the subjects noted that in Transylvania married women regularly use this name form (cf. B. Gergely, 1977; B. Gergely, 1995, pp. 186–191), and added that she chose her married name as a matter of family pattern tracking. We have to add, though, that the name form expected by the Romanian state administration is not meant to follow the informal use of Hungarian names; rather, it reflects the French pattern that is indeed quite different from the Hungarian system of names (Szabó T., 1970, p. 51).

#### 4.2.6. LT/1: Rákóczi-Zrínyi Ilona

The expression of togetherness, the equality of the partners, and the wish to keep their former self or identity are among the reasons that subjects who have chosen this name form bring up. In addition to their intention to express affinity, they feel that this form is more modern or up-to-date, while they also think that it preserves some of the elegance of old hyphenated family names. This may also account for its popularity and fashionableness. The time that



elapsed since and the popularity of this name type supports Farkas (2003)'s view:

The appearance of this name type in this country may have been partly due to foreign models, but perhaps we should not disregard the prestige value that double family names have in the Hungarian society, owing to various reasons. However, this type of married name also appears to be a possibility for expressing both the affinity and the equality of the members of the married couple and to be more informative, hence more practical, than some other married name types. All these factors may have accounted for the increasing demand for it. (p. 139, transl. – A.U.S.T.).

The following quotes from my informants also emphasise the intention to express togetherness and equality:

(...) if I only keep his name, it sounds as if I was his sister, and I did not want to give up my identity, so to speak, so I was left with the hyphenated solution, that symbolises togetherness and equality, in my view (LT/1\_55).

I preferred my own family name, but I wanted to symbolise our affinity in this way, too. I thought the *-né* form was outmoded (LT/1\_53).

One of the subjects argued against nearly all possible name forms to show why she eventually chose the hyphenated solution. But she added she was not sure she would choose that form today:

I don't like the form *Rákócziné*. It is old-sounding and trite. The form *Rákóczi Ferencné* is total loss of identity. I definitely wanted to express change of status and identity, that was why I adopted my husband's name. And although I don't really like my own family name, I still decided to keep it then. Maybe I would choose the form *Rákóczi Ilona* today (LT/1\_51).

#### 4.2.7. LT/2: Zrínyi-Rákóczi Ilona

Given that the informants, in most of the cases, had keeping their names of birth in one piece as one of their priorities, no instance of the type LT/2 occurred in the sample. There was one subject who said she would have preferred to put her husband's name after the hyphen, but it would not have sounded as nice so she dropped the idea.

### 5. Summary and conclusions

As we have seen, two major driving forces of the current discourse, going against one another, are the full or partial adoption of the name of the husband, standing for the intention of identifying oneself with the new family, the husband and the children, versus keeping one's name of birth, in order to express one's individuality. Married names have an important function of the expression of identity, as witnessed by the results of the questionnaire survey I conducted in January 2017. Motivational tendencies attached to the individual name types were presented in terms of the typical reply components. The background of the motives is extremely complex and multidimensional: it involves family traditions, social expectations, job market possibilities and psycho-sociological patterns of naming fashions, too. The responses and the whole corpus reveal that among people getting married today two compromise name forms (*Rákócziné Zrínyi Ilona* and *Rákóczi-Zrínyi Ilona*) compete with one another, while a number of arguments can be found to support no change of names upon marriage, with both parties keeping their own names. The research results can be best represented by a scale of intentions ranging from individual self-representation to affinity of the partners: both end points of that scale are occupied by untypical names, as neither total change of family name (*Rákóczi Ilona*) nor keeping the name of birth (*Zrínyi Ilona*) can be seen as traditional forms of married women's names. Traditional forms (*Rákóczi Ferencné*, *Rákóczi Ferencné Zrínyi Ilona*), on the other hand, are chosen by fewer and fewer people, whereas compromise-seeking name types located at the middle of the scale, among them the less typical hyphenated

names, are becoming increasingly popular, as they appear to be more up-to-date than traditional married names involving the suffix *-né*. Such hyphenated names recall the elegance of certain old Hungarian family names and also reflect a practice of married name use widespread in other countries of Europe (Raátz, 2004, pp. 66–73), thus they also have a modern ring. Although they do not unambiguously signal the bearer’s being a married woman, they still express both the affinity of the partners and their equal status.

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