Eszter Gábrity¹ (Estera Gabrić) Univerzitet u Novom Sadu Učiteljski fakultet na mađarskom nastavnom jeziku, Subotica studenkinja doktorskih studija ISSN 2217-7221 eISSN 2217-8546

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'BUT EVER SINCE SO TO SAY I HAVE TAKEN OVER THE PROPER WORDS ... SO TO SAY I HAVE NO PROBLEMS': LANGUAGE IDEOLOGIES OF VOJVODINA HUNGARIAN MIGRANTS AND COMMUTERS FROM SERBIA TO HUNGARY¹

ABSTRACT: In this paper², I examine and compare views, beliefs and ideas about two varieties of Hungarian in the framework of language ideologies. The purpose of the present paper is to illuminate the linguistic situation of the Hungarian migrants and commuters from Vojvodina through the examination of their language ideologies. The study focuses on the language ideologies of migrants and commuters who belong to the Hungarian minority community in Vojvodina and moved to Hungary or commute between Hungary and Serbia on a regular basis, thus they have frequent linguistic contacts and interactions on both sides of the border. The research analyzes ordinary people's views upon the relationship between their vernacular and the standard variety, their views related to the status of their vernacular as well as their bidialectal language use. I intend to reveal how members of the Hungarian minority community locate, interpret and rationalize (if so) sociolinguistic complexities of their everyday lives.

Keywords: language ideology, Hungarian migrants and commuters, Vojvodina, standard and dialect.

1. INTRODUCTION

The present study aims to explore the language ideologies concerning the varieties of Hungarian among Hungarian minority migrants and commuters who frequently travel back and forth from Vojvodina to Hungary. The Hungarian minority

¹ esztig@gmail.com

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migrants and commuters who lead their lives in two countries find themselves in a complex and often controversial linguistic context, in which their existing and newly experienced language ideologies naturally operate and influence the speakers' language use and ideas about it. The basic approach is to analyze the research subjects', i.e. migrants' and commuters' standpoints regarding their vernacular, the Contact Variety of Hungarian spoken in Vojvodina and the Standard Hungarian Variety used in Hungary. In this study, I examine and compare views, beliefs and ideas about the varieties the migrants and commuters command and use on a daily basis to reveal what language ideologies operate behind their language use in various contexts of their lives.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The investigation of language/linguistic ideologies has recently become a relevant research site among various scientific fields focusing on language and its speakers. The analysis of language ideologies aims to detect how speakers think of languages, what relations they perceive among them, which language/dialect/variety receives positive or negative evaluations and for what reasons. The understanding of ideologies related to language and language use reveals not only beliefs, ideas and evaluations about languages (and their speakers), but provides a wider insight into social relations within a particular community. The ways in which language ideologies are created and maintained are crucial to examine since they provide insight into the processes of power construction, maintenance and reproduction (Irvine and Gal 2000, Lanstyák 2009, Woolard and Schieffelin 1994). Inspite of the recent findings language ideology has not been sufficiently taken into consideration so far. Further goal should be to analyze our own language ideologies and make them explicit with the purpose of understanding linguistic differences and changes in more depth (Woolard and Schieffelin 1994).

Language ideologies defined by Gal:

'are the culturally specific notions which participants and observers bring to language, the ideas they have about what language is good for, what linguistic differences mean about the speakers who use them why there are linguistic differences at all. Both ordinary people and social scientists – linguistics, sociologists, anthropologists – hold language ideologies.' (Gal 2002: 197)

Ideologies including linguistic ones are not the result of straightforward reasoning and logical thinking, however, they have their own systematic logic. They are systems of opinions, arguments and ideas that are large-scale and consensus-based, they are part of the 'common sense' knowledge of the society. It is 'what everybody knows', thus nobody can disagree with them. Ideologies are never questioned, but taken for granted and are punishable if violated or questioned. They are historical and cultural products which are culture-specific, unnoticeably changing from time and place to another without questioning the reasons and causes of their change. Facts, phenomena or ideas that are inconsistent with the ideological scheme are unnoticed or are explained away (Irvine and Gal 2000, Laihonen 2009, Lanstyák 2011).

Language ideologies are rarely conscious or within awareness, they are rather a set of beliefs and assumptions through which we understand, naturalize and rationalize linguistic practices, phenomena and change that we assume evident and trivial as a result of the presence of language ideologies. They are systematically and deeply embedded into social, political and cultural institutions on every level, thus they appear to be a shared body of commonsense notions, self-evident facts that unnoticeably have a strong force shaping power. Ideologies related to language are 'any sets of beliefs about language articulated by the users as rationalization or justification of perceived language structure and use' (Silverstein 1979: 193). Such ideologies operate in the socio-cultural space, guide speakers' language use and the interpretation of language use. Language ideologies are macro-level systems that have a shaping force on the micro-level language use of speakers.

One crucial function of language ideologies is the identification and differentiation of social groups based on linguistic features, forms and practices. It is a key contributor to the shaping and imagining communities. Members of speech communities tend to believe that differences in language, language use or speaking represent as well as reflect differences between its speakers, i.e. the members of communities themselves (Irvine and Gal 2000). However, language ideologies serve the goal of differentiating boundaries of communities from one another as well as providing legitimate explanation for the existence of linguistic differences. Irvine and

Gal (2000) also believe that language ideologies have a major impact on linguistic differences, in other words, 'linguistic ideology drives linguistic change along different paths' (Woolard and Schieffelin 1994: 61). Any linguistic element can be construed as an instrument in negotiating group boundaries, i.e. linguistic features can be used to represent and correspond to social groups. First, the use of certain linguistic forms become to index certain social groups and social identities, then language ideologies come about to justify and validate the creation of difference and a link is formed between the sign (language/dialect/variety/linguistic variable) and the social image that the use of a particular sign projects. In other words, the specific linguistic features become to have a direct relationship with social images, either negative or positive, and direct attributions seem to be triggered when upon using an indexing linguistic form. As a result, 'ideologies about language locate linguistic phenomena as part of, and evidence for, what they believe to be systematic behavioral, aesthetic, affective and moral contracts among the social groups indexed' (Irvine and Gal 2000: 37). In sum, various linguistic features on any levels of language come to designate some set of social relation, identity, situation or even educational level, social status and values.

Language ideologies prove to fill in a complex role in linguistic minority situations, for the reason that the speech community not only faces differences within its language, but the language of the majority also influences the language practices of the minority group, especially if the majority language is of higher status and prestige. Nevertheless, interestingly, people have allegiance to ideologies even if they do not seem to be to their advantage. People tend to consent to the dominance of a ruling group as a result of the 'hegemony' presence. To be specific, it is ideology, i.e. the system of thoughts that indeed justify the power of a group over the others while it remains invisible and natural. For instance, minority communities are often influenced by the ideologies of the majority, ruling community that indeed strengthens the oppression over themselves, the minority group, however, still does not call in question the rightful existence of language ideologies and does not act in opposition with ideologies, but in line with them.

3. METHODOLOGY

As a means of research data collection semi-structured in-depth interviews

were chosen. This method allows the research to explore important, but unanticipated subjects and matters. However, one must bear in mind that the possibility of generalization is less. The data cannot be considered as representative for all Hungarian migrants and commuters from Vojvodina. Thus, the data is good for displaying the complexity of language ideologies among the Hungarian minority in Vojvodina.

The reason for choosing Hungarian migrants and commuters from Vojvodina as the subjects of the present research lies in their complex and fluid linguistic situation. As a result of their frequent cross-bordering and mobile lifestyle between Serbia and Hungary, migrants and commuters need to juggle with two languages (Hungarian and Serbian) as well as two varieties (Hungarian standard variety spoken in Hungary and Contact Variety of Hungarian spoken in Vojvodina). Such compound linguistic situations provide an opportunity to investigate language ideologies of various kinds. As a consequence of belonging to more than one speech community in two different countries, Hungarian migrants and commuters have differing practices of their use of the languages and/or varieties they interact with, which are naturally influenced and guided by varying language ideologies, however, one element of these ideologies is common in both countries. Regardless of the Hungarian minority migrants and commuters place of residence they are in minority position, i.e. their status stands in opposition with the majority of the society either as Hungarian speaking minority in Serbia or as (ex-)Serbian citizens in Hungary, which has a major influence on the language ideologies.

Data come from a collection of 13 interviews out of which 7 subjects (2 females and 5 males between the ages of 24 and 57) were pendulum migrants who commute between Hungary and Serbia on a regular basis, while 6 subjects (3 females and 3 males between the ages of 28 and 73) were permanent migrants who left Serbia in hope of finding better life conditions and steady jobs in Hungary and permanently live there today, however often return to Vojvodina to visit their friends and relatives. The interviews were semi-structured and aimed at eliciting data about the interviewees' life story. The narratives provided valuable information concerning the subjects' relations to various languages, including the relationship of their vernacular and the variety they encounter in Hungary.

4. DISCUSSION

4.1. Standard Language Ideology: Standard Variety of Hungarian spoken in Hungary vs. Contact Variety of Hungarian spoken in Vojvodina

Milroy (2001) argues that the ideology of the standard language presumes an inherently superior position for the standard variety of the language over other dialectal varieties and produces negative evaluations towards the dialectal varieties. As the meaning of the word 'standard' implies, the standard variety of a language serves as a measuring rod, as the ultimate form of the language that everybody should command and use. The standard/non-standard dichotomy is an ideology itself which relies on the acceptance of a specific variety of a language over the other varieties of the same language which becomes central in relation to the others and all the varieties come to be compared to the standard one. As a result of the standard language ideology the use of any varieties is not value-neutral, i.e. the use of the standard variety or any non-standard varieties conveys a message to the hearers as well as the speaker. The value of a particular linguistic variety derives from its ability to provide access to high positions in the workforce and social mobility. The command and use of the standard variety suggests the entailment of prestige, high level of education and high social status, while the use of non-standard varieties signals low level of education and low social status. Consequently, the use of the standard variety triggers positive social and economic evaluations towards its speakers as well as prestige.

One of the most crucial elements of the standard language ideology is correctness. The belief of the correct variety of a certain linguistic form over the other serves as a basis for distinguishing varieties from one another. The correctness of a form over the other functions as a common sense among the speakers, they are not questioned, just referred to as facts. The explanation of the 'correctness' of certain linguistic features in comparison to the others are post-rationalized. First, the linguistic variety becomes the standard or prestigious one, the rationalizations for its legitimate hierarchical position are later argued for. As ideologies generally, the exclusiveness of the standard variety as 'the correct language' operates as a common sense fact within the society, i.e. every language user who disregards the 'rules' of language and speaks the language 'incorrectly' can be punished, looked down upon and judged for not following the ultimate rules of correct language use. Therefore, speakers who use 'incorrect' language are often stigmatized and negatively evaluated for their language use. Speakers rarely associate language use with prejudice and discrimination towards various social groups, but assume that language and language use are beyond society and regardless of one's social position everyone should learn to speak correctly, only laziness, carelessness, negligence or low level of education can provide explanation for 'incorrect' language use (Lanstyák 2009, Milroy 2001, Milroy and Milroy 2002).

Speakers tend to admit that they do not command their language correctly, but make mistakes, therefore strive for guidance and correction from authorities that command and master the 'correct' language. Native speakers tend to believe that language is a perfectly uniform and stable entity, however, they themselves claim their use of an 'illegitimate' language in contrast with the legitimate standard one and express the rightful existence of the normative language, and as a result, fully participate in the maintenance of the standard language ideology. Loyalty towards the normative variety and the shameful evaluation of its deviations are common beliefs among language users that are maintained and reproduced in the exclusive system of education, labor market, media and other authoritative institutions (Gal 2006, Lanstyák 2009, Milroy 2001, Milroy and Milroy 2002,).

The first interview extract shows the first experiences of a currently 32-yearold biologist, Ana when she entered the institution of university as she decided to study in Hungary instead of Serbia. Coming from a rural area of Vojvodina, her language use differed a lot from the Standard Variety spoken in Hungary, which was immediately noticed by her peer-students as well as herself.

 Ana: They laughed at me, because I really spoke the language badly. So, I spoke the rural language of Debeljača.

Interviewer: What language?

Ana: Debeljača, they live there – Torontálvásárhely in Hungarian – my grandparents live there, so that is why I say the language of Debeljača, because I learnt to speak like that there. And instead of '*megyek*' (I go – standard variant) I say '*mék*' (I go – non-standard variant) and '*gyüsz*' (you come - non-standard variant) instead of '*gyere*' (come – standard variant), '*kű*' (stone – non-standard variant) instead of '*kő*' (stone – standard variant). I used to speak like this, and they always laughed

at me, but I liked it (her vernacular). I told them not to laugh, if it is incorrect, they should correct me. I dealt with this, because I didn't want to speak ugly and I read a lot in Hungarian... I just try to make up for it so as an adult as a Hungarian citizen I could speak Hungarian nicely.

Ana felt embarrassed and ashamed of her Hungarian language use when her colleagues pointed at her differing language use in a very negative and shameful way, namely, she has been laughed at for her way of speaking her mother tongue which is very hurtful. Instead of protecting herself, she admits her incorrect language use while unconsciously acknowledging and accepting the power of standard language ideology and asks for help from her peers who command the Hungarian Standard Variety spoken in Hungary. She puts effort into adjusting to the speech of those who mocked her, with the purpose of being accepted as a member of the Hungarian society who not only masters Hungarian Standard Variety, but also believes that every citizen of the country should also do so.

A 52-year-old factory worker, Judit also expresses differences between the varieties she encounters, her vernacular, which is the Hungarian Contact Variety of Vojvodina and the variety that her employers command, the Hungarian Standard Variety of Hungary.

(2) Interviewer: Have they made you feel that you speak differently from the Hungarians from Hungary?

Judit: Well, yes, but I think I have already mentioned that. But I can accommodate very quickly, and I immediately switch if I see I have uttered something, for example, we say '*örökíró*' (pen – used in Vojvodina), they say '*toll*' (pen – used in Hungary), or we say '*flomaszter*' (marker – used in Vojvodina), they say '*alkoholmentes filctoll*' (marker – used in Hungary). And when I have uttered '*flomaszter*' and I see on their faces that it is not clear what I have said then I quickly say '*filctoll*'. To make myself understood. What they say that I, of course, understand already. ... now that I work in Hungary I picked up these expressions, so they are essentially more Hungarian that those we use so I speak here so.

Interviewer: Did you make an effort to speak like Hungarians in Hungary speak?

Judit: Yes, I made an effort, but, well, in these differing words, only to

make it more understandable. I tried not to use this open e letter [sound]. As her narration shows, she adjusts her speech to the majority speakers who speak Standard Hungarian, who are her employers, the people of power in relation to her as well as whose (among other things) linguistic expectations she tries to live up to by adjusting to their standard language use and avoiding the use of a typically dialectal features of her vernacular. Although she claims her language use accomodates to the standard only in using the Hungarian versions of certain words used in Hungary, however, eventually she also mentions not pronouncing the 'e' sound as it is typically pronounced in Vojvodina.

In the following extract the 49-year-old historian, Attila expresses the difficulties of avoiding the use of dialectal features in the speech of Hungarians from Vojvodina.

(3) Interviewer: When you travel to Hungary and you are there (in Hungary), do you ever have communicational difficulties?

Attila: No, no I don't. Well, there are some interesting things, because we speak a certain dialect in Senta, well, the mid-close 'e' and this... this is extremely difficult to eliminate from our speech, but a lot of Hungarians from Vojvodina use it, the " δ " $[/\phi/]$ sound, not even mentioning using the " δ " $[/\phi/]$ sound, but anyway ... but this is not an obstacle, just they will think you are a peasant ...

The subject articulates the difficulty of avoiding the use of his vernacular's feature, as if that was a requirement and expectation to accomplish. According to his opinion, although such differing linguistic features of dialectal Hungarian spoken in Vojvodina does not cause communicational difficulties between speakers, but negative evaluations towards the speaker will be triggered when using certain typically dialectal linguistic features of his region's speech.

The following extract also shows the admittance of not commanding the 'proper' Hungarian language and making an effort to avoid the 'wrong words' by the 24-year-old unemployed Árpád.

(4) Interviewer: Have they made you feel that you speak differently from the Hungarians from Hungary?

Árpád: There are a few examples, yes. But ever since so to say I have taken over the proper words that should be used in certain areas, so to

say I have no problems.

The subject refers to the words and expressions that are taken over from Serbian language and introduced into the language use of Hungarians in Vojvodina. As a result of decades long language contact between the speakers of Serbian and Hungarian, such phenomena are inevitable, however, usually negatively looked upon. The interviewee also shares the idea of commanding improper words by using the ones that have been taken over from Serbian and not using the authentically Hungarian versions of certain linguistic elements. For the present subject, the correct and proper words and expressions are the ones that the Hungarians in Hungary use, i.e. the Standard Hungarian Variety spoken in Hungary, consequently he devalues and assumes the Hungarian Contact Variety used in Vojvodina is superior as a result of its mixed status.

4.2. The ideology of purism

Lanstyák (2009) argues that linguistic purism is one of the forms of language ideologies which follows the foundational ideas of prescriptivism, according to which language should be free from foreign elements and should preserve its original form. This ideology looks upon language change as a negative phenomenon that should be prevented. The concept of 'pure' language is an ideological construct itself since all languages have experienced some level of contact, therefore change, as well. However, linguistic purism is a way of policing boundaries of a language/ variety whose speakers assume or believe there is a threat over it. Consequently, the ideology of linguistic purism is common among speakers who perceive their position under oppression. Speakers belonging to a minority community may see themselves as losing the 'purity' of their language, therefore losing their authentic connection to their culture and ethnicity. The underlying ideology behind the fear of losing the purity of a language is the connection between nationality and language, to be specific, the equation of language and nation. According to the conventional, mainstream ideology of nationhood, a nation can claim its legitimate existence if the members of it share the same language. The very same ideology seem to rule the expectation of minorities, i.e. if they feel their language oppressed or suppressed, their nationhood is assumed to be at risk. The purist language loyalty serves the purpose of minority language maintenance.

'BUT EVER SINCE SO TO SAY I HAVE TAKEN OVER THE PROPER WORDS ... 203

The 26-year-old IT specialist, Endre expresses his fears for the originality of Hungarian in Serbia. His views upon the influence of Serbian language on Hungarian prove to be negative, with a fear of language loss.

(5) Interviewer: What do you think the future holds for the Hungarian language in Serbia?Endre: What is typical of the Hungarian language spoken in Vojvodina

that it takes over a lot from Serbian, I hope that this tendency will not go on and I hope that we will not forget Hungarian.

In the next extract, the 52-year-old factory worker, Judit warns upon the dangers of language mixture between Hungarian and Serbian. She believes the speakers should strive for the purity and original form of their mother tongue and should keep them separate within a conversation.

(6) Interviewer: Which you find nicer Hungarian spoken in Vojvodina or in Hungary?

Judit: Hungarian spoken in Vojvodina is nicer, but one has to watch out for not mixing too many foreign expressions into Hungarian. One has to pay attention, because Serbian or the foreign expressions filter into our speech, but we must not let that happen, in my opinion. If we speak Hungarian, then we shall speak Hungarian, if we speak Serbian, then Serbian... And I think this not correct, not nice.

4.3. Linguistic nationalism

The ideology of linguistic nationalism is in direct contact with the ideology of nationhood and its ownership of a separate language. For a nation or ethnicity to claim their rightful existence, its members are expected to have a separate language, distinguishable from other languages. According to the principles of linguistic nationalism, language is a sacred, holy entity, which is often considered to be above the nation, an entity that must not be changed, but continuously protected from foreigners and dangerous elements with the purpose of maintaining the unity and loyalty of the nationhood/ethnicity. Linguistic nationalism often includes the glorification and mystification of one's mother tongue over other languages, assuming it is capable of expressing certain thoughts and concepts more precisely and nicely than other languages could do so (Lanstyák 2009).

The following interview extract is an example of associating language with the superior and intellectual concepts and ideas. The 52-year-old factory worker, Judit besides expressing her concerns of Hungarian losing its purity, she also shares her thought about the perfection and high value of Hungarian.

(7) Interviewer: Is it worth for Hungarians from Vojvodina to keep their mother tongue?

Judit: It's worth and it's a must, it's obligatory, because it's our mother tongue and the Hungarian language is so beautiful, the Hungarian language is a huge treasure. So many beautiful things can be read in Hungarian, you can go to theatre performances. One must pay attention to Serbian language to acquire it with the purpose of having an easier life. ... I have a friend, for example, who is Hungarian, she went to Serbian school, she's older than me, she went to Serbian school and when we talk we speak in Hungarian, but we text each other, then we do it in Serbian, I also respond in Serbian, because she does not know how to write in Hungarian correctly. And I find it very sad.

The interviewee associates high standards with her mother tongue, assumes that the knowledge of Hungarian provides her with the opportunity to participate in special intellectual and cultural experiences that other languages might not ensure for her.

5. CONCLUSION

The present study examines the language ideologies of migrants and commuters who were born in Vojvodina as members of the Hungarian minority community and now lead their lives in Hungary or between two countries, i.e. Serbia and Hungary. The research deals with language ideologies related to the subjects' vernacular and the variety they use in Hungary to explore how the interviewees perceive the power relations of the varieties they use, how they relate to their vernacular, its current and future condition as well as their vernacular's role in Hungarian minority community in Vojvodina.

Data shed light on the normative operations of the linguistic situation of Hungarian minority migrants and commuters. The subjects' view the Standard Hungarian Variety as a model of language use and continuously compare their language use, including their vernacular to the Standard Hungarian Variety used in Hungary. When comparing the two varieties, the interviewees negatively evaluate their own vernacular and regard its status to be heading for deterioration. Although the subjects' give little value to their vernacular in comparison to the standard variety spoken in Hungary, they are concerned about the future and the purity of Hungarian spoken in Vojvodina and are afraid that its inner status will be negatively affected by the presence of foreign elements. Data also suggest that the interviewees show positive attitudes towards their mother tongue when the process of nation/ethnicitybuilding is in question, attach high and positive values towards their mother tongue.

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Eszter Gábrity (Estera Gabrić)

"ODKAD SAM PREUZELA PRAVILNE IZRAZE NEMAM PROBLEME": JEZIČKE IDEOLOGIJE VOJVOĐANSKIH MAĐARA PREKOGRANIČKIH MIGRANATA

Rezime

U ovoj studiji se proučavaju i upoređuju stavovi i ideje u vezi s dve mađarske jezičke varijante u okviru jezičke ideologije. Cilj istraživanja je da, preko analize jezičkih ideologija, rasvetli jezičko stanje kod migranata i prekograničnih (dnevnih) migranata Mađara iz Vojvodine. Studija se fokusira na jezičke ideologije mađarske manjine iz Vojvodine koja redovno ide preko granice ili se preselila u Mađarsku, čime dolazi u različite jezičke interakcije i kontakte sa obe strane granice. Istraživanje analizira stavove običnih ljudi vezane za njihovo mišljenje o vernakularu i standarnoj varijanti mađarskog jezika kao i o njihovom statusu. Cilj ove analize jeste razotkrivanje načina na koji pripadnici mađarske nacionalne manjine interpretiraju, pozicioniraju i racionaliziraju sociolingvističke celine u svakodnevnom životu.

Ključne reči: jezička ideologija, mađarski migranti iz Vojvodine, standard i dijalekat.