Speaking Properly: Language Ideologies of Hungarian Interpreters from Transylvania

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Abstract. The paper presents the results of a research project that aimed to identify the explicit and implicit language ideologies of a group of Hungarian interpreters from Transylvania or of Transylvanian origin, now living and working in Romania and in Hungary. During the online focus group meetings, the participants reflected on their own professional and linguistic practices and experiences, talking about their stories of individual language socialization and providing detailed career narratives. The study seeks to identify the interpreters' explicit and implicit language ideologies in the context of their working languages, their attitudes towards these languages, towards the standard and the non-standard varieties, as well as their experiences connected to these languages in the light of the quality assurance expectations formulated regarding their activities as professional language service providers.

Keywords: standard language, language ideologies, language socialization, interpreting as a profession, participatory research

1. Introduction

The use of the standard as a codified language variety is assumed to be a basic requirement for translators and interpreters, i.e. professional speakers/language users (Kontra 2005) providing language services, since the written and spoken standard is not only associated with high-quality performance but is also a criterion of quality assurance in both translation and interpreting (see e.g. Collados Aís & García Becerra 2015). Language standard and standardization are at the same time "inherently ideological" (McLelland 2021): standard language ideology encompasses assumptions about language correctness, which can be even more articulated in the context of providing professional language services.

There have been several attempts to define standard language in both the international and Hungarian sociolinguistic literature. Lanstyák (2016) outlines three possible theoretical approaches: for some authors, the standard is interpreted as an ideal that represents the totality of a language (and through language, the nation itself); for others, it is an existing codified language variety of a speech community (Tolcsvai 2017: 222); and thirdly, it is understood as an ideological, discursively created construct.

In his paper on language standards, standardization, and standard ideologies in multilingual contexts, McLelland (2021) provides a detailed review of standardization studies. He defines three waves in this particular body of research and demonstrates that both the broadly structuralist approach of the first-wave and second-wave standardization studies are mostly monolingual in their focus, the latter providing "more nuanced analyses of the emergence of language norms and standards" as it draws on the findings of historical sociolinguistics (McLelland 2021). The third wave of standardization studies returns to its roots in anthropological linguistics, meaning that it explores "the transmission and perpetuation of ideology" regarding language standardization, seeking "to understand how language standardisation ideologies and processes are discursively constructed and enacted in multilingual contexts" (McLelland 2021).

Language ideologies can be explicit and implicit: the explicit ones are outlined in the speakers' metalinguistic and metapragmatic utterances, while the implicit ones can be identified in the speakers' linguistic practices (see e.g. Bodó 2016: 130–132). In Woolard's (2021) words "(l)anguage ideologies occur not only as mental constructs and in verbalizations but also in practices and dispositions and in material phenomena such as visual representations" (Woolard 2021: 2).

This paper presents the results of two online group discussions with professional Hungarian interpreters who were born in Transylvania and who either work there or have relocated to Hungary. One of the working languages of all the interpreters is Hungarian. The goal of this study is to analyse how the participants' language ideologies are constructed in a multilingual context, how they make use of and assess their language repertoire in the light of external expectations (those of the clients, of the profession, etc.) or the ones they themselves formulate towards their own (linguistic) performance as interpreters. We also discuss how their identities as multilingual speakers and linguistic mediators are shaped by the diversity of the languages and language varieties they have come in contact with and relate to in one way or another.

2. Interpreting as a profession – Authorization and training from a minority perspective

It is beyond the scope of this paper to give a thorough overview of interpreting as a profession in Romania, as there have been several studies on the topic. These mostly focus on the flaws in the authorization process of translators and interpreters to obtain an official professional status (e.g. Greere 2010), the lack of differentiation between and the frequent interchangeability of the translation and interpreting concepts both in legislation and in practice (Szasz & Olt 2016), as well as the training programmes higher education institutions provide (Fazakas & Sárosi-Márdirosz 2015).

These studies precede the latest changes in legislation: in 2016, Law No. 178/1997 on the authorization and payment of interpreters and translators was amended. Prior to that, applicants who were able to attest their language skills either by holding an undergraduate degree in a foreign language or a certificate showing that they had graduated from a high school where the language of instruction was one of the minority languages spoken in Romania were automatically issued an authorization by the Ministry of Justice based on an application file (Greere 2010; Fazakas & Sárosi-Márdirosz 2015). Others (e.g. graduates of non-language degrees) could obtain authorization by taking the translation test organized by the Ministry of Culture in the legal domain and present the certificate to the Ministry of Justice. The lax procedure resulted in a significantly high number of authorized or sworn translators and interpreters having received little or no formal training.

Since 2016, all applicants need to undergo the testing procedure administered by the Ministry of Culture in the legal domain. The test focuses solely on written translation; however, the authorization allows successful applicants to perform both translation and interpreting tasks without verifying the distinctive competences required (Greere 2010).

Before the translation and interpreting programme at Sapientia Hungarian University of Transylvania was established, there had been no training available in Hungarian as a working language at any higher education institutions in Romania, except for optional courses on translation theory and practice as part of the curriculum of the Hungarian language and literature BA programme at Babeş–Bolyai University in Cluj-Napoca.[1] This means that the majority of certified Hungarian translators or interpreters did not acquire professional skills and competences at the undergraduate or graduate level. Nevertheless, a group of mostly self-taught Hungarian interpreters was formed after the regime change, who learnt the skills and competences while working. This is true for most of the

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1   See e.g. http://hunlang.lett.ubbcluj.ro/data/tantervek/Maghiara-AB_FINAL.pdf (downloaded on 23. 09. 2022.)

participants in the present study, which is why in this particular case the concept of *professional interpreter* is understood as not necessarily having received professional training but making a living from interpreting, even if part-time.

3. Research design, methodology, and participants

The two online group discussions were held in October 2021. There were several reasons for choosing the online platform: on the one hand, the coronavirus lockdowns and stay-at-home orders were still partially in place, whereas on the other, although all of the participants knew each other and had already worked together on several occasions, the geographical distance between their places of residence would have prevented in-person discussions.[2]

The anthropologically informed qualitative sociolinguistic research project was designed implementing the participatory approach in the sense that the initiator is also part of the community of Hungarian interpreters from Transylvania, having worked with all of the participants and also sharing her experiences in regard to the topics discussed. In participatory sociolinguistics, "(t)he linguist has a multi-layered role as a co-producer and co-creator of knowledge, and a facilitator and participant of the research process" (Bodó et al. 2022). Participation and the co-creation of knowledge was easily achieved, as in this particular research project not only the initiator but also the other participants share linguistic (and sociolinguistic) knowledge and professional expertise that means that traditional hierarchies between the researcher and the researched did not have to be addressed. Moreover, although being part of the group of Hungarian interpreters who have been regularly invited to work at events that need interpreting from and into Hungarian for the past 10 years, the project initiator was the last of the participants to join, while most of the others have been collaborating professionally for more than 20-25 years. As such, her position during the discussions was constantly shifting from facilitator (being the one to formulate the questions and lead the discussion) to participant, sometimes even in a subordinate role due to her age and the least amount of professional experience as compared to the others. Being acquainted and having collaborated before resulted in an open and intimate atmosphere during the discussions: the participants were happy to see each other after a long period of social distancing, when in-person events could not be organized, and those who did work during the pandemic did it remotely.

Out of the 6 interpreters contacted by the project initiator, 5 agreed to participate. The discussions were held on the Google Meet platform and recorded after everyone had given their informed consent. The first recording is

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2   On the methodological implications of doing sociolinguistic and anthropological research online during the pandemic, see Fazakas & Barabás 2020.

58 minutes long, with a group of three participants, while the second is 1 hour and 27 minutes long, with four participants (including the project initiator in both cases). Methodologically, these can be classified as focus-group discussions as applied in social sciences: the questions and topics discussed draw upon the professional experiences and language ideologies of a particular demographic even if the size of the groups was quite small (cf. Vicsek 2006).

The first group included Participant 1 (P1), Participant 2 (P2), and the project initiator (PI). P1 was born and raised in Miercurea Ciuc, the county seat of Harghita County, a Hungarian-majority town. After finishing her elementary and secondary education in Hungarian, she studied Hungarian and English language and literature at the BA level at a Transylvanian university, received an MA degree in anthropological linguistics, and completed her PhD in translation studies. She also has a degree in political science. She is a certified translator with almost 20 years of experience in translation and interpreting and also works as an assistant professor, teaching at a Hungarian university in Transylvania, within the translation and interpreting programme. Her working languages are Hungarian, Romanian, and English.

P2 comes from a bilingual, in her words, "mixed" family: her father is Hungarian, and her mother is Romanian. She was born in a village in central Transylvania with a Hungarian majority. She received her BA degree in applied foreign languages and completed a PhD in sociolinguistics. She has been working as a certified translator and interpreter for more than 20 years. She teaches English at a technical university in Cluj-Napoca, Romania. Her working languages are Hungarian, Romanian, English, French, and she is also fluent in Italian.

The second group included Participant 3 (P3), Participant 4 (P4), Participant 5 (P5), and the PI. P3 was born in a city in central Transylvania, Reghin, with a longstanding history of societal multilingualism (Hungarian, Romanian, and Saxon). She studied English and Hungarian language and literature, and she has been working as a translator and interpreter from the early 1990s. She relocated to Hungary, where she also teaches English. Her working languages are Romanian, Hungarian, and English.

P4 was raised in Cluj-Napoca. He finished his high-school studies in Hungarian and received an engineering degree at the technical university in the 1960s, completing his studies in Romanian. After the regime change, he moved to Bucharest and worked at the Ministry of Culture, where he started interpreting at cultural events. He is retired but still works at high-profile events, making use of his extensive knowledge in various fields of study. His working languages include Romanian and Hungarian.

P5 was born and raised in Cluj-Napoca. Her father is a Swabian-Hungarian bilingual and her mother is Romanian. She finished her primary and secondary studies in German, and at 19 she moved to Hungary. She studied translation

and interpreting in Budapest, is a certified conference interpreter and has been practising the profession for more than 25 years. Her working languages include Romanian, Hungarian, English, and German.

The project initiator (PI) was born and raised in a county seat in Northern Transylvania (part of the Hungarian "internal diaspora"; cf. Bodó 2010) and completed her primary and secondary education in Hungarian. She studied English and Hungarian language and literature at the BA level and completed her PhD in sociolinguistics. She has been working as a certified translator since 2007 and has been practising interpreting for 10 years. She also works as an associate professor at a Hungarian university in Transylvania and teaches within the translation and interpreting programme. Her working languages include Hungarian, Romanian, and English.

The discussions were organized around several topics, which included stories of individual language socialization, detailed career narratives with a special focus on the experiences that resulted in choosing this particular profession, preferences in regard to the participants' working languages, stories of success and of failure, perceptions of quality (what it means to be a good interpreter) and reflections on expectations, both external, those of the clients and of other interpreters, and internal, formulated by the participants towards their own performance. In the analysis below, I group the examples along these topics, aiming to grasp the explicit and implicit language ideologies of the participants in specific thematic contexts.

4. Analysis

4.1. Language acquisition, language learning

One of the first issues addressed during the discussions was reflecting on the participants' stories of becoming speakers of several languages, and, ultimately, linguistic mediators. All of them were raised in environments where more than one language was spoken, and they see this as something that ultimately shaped their interests and career choices.

> Example 1
> P1: *Én Csíkszeredában születtem, itt is nőttem fel egészen érettségiig, tehát 18 éves koromig, főként tömbmagyar környezetben, de nagyon sok román barátom, ismerősöm volt, a román nyelv az mindig valamilyen szinten vonzott, jobban, mint mondjuk az angol, így a román irodalom, román nyelvtan, román olimpiászok, minden, az angol az úgy képbe jött, mert hát muszáj volt megtanulni, és akkor úgy 94-ben, tehát 9-edikes koromban,*

kerültem élő amerikai emberekkel kapcsolatba, mikor ilyen vendégtanárok voltak, és akkortól volt az, hogy már a kommunikáció is angolul, nemcsak nyelvtan, nem csak szókészlet, hanem beszélgettünk is.

I was born in Miercurea Ciuc, I grew up here until I graduated from high school, so until I was 18, mostly in a Hungarian-majority environment, but I had a lot of Romanian friends and acquaintances, and Romanian always attracted me to some extent, more than, let's say, English, so Romanian literature, Romanian grammar, Romanian school contests, everything; English came into the picture because I had to learn it, and then around '94, when I was in the 9th grade, I came into contact with real American people, when we had guest teachers, and from then on we were able to communicate in English, not only grammar, not only vocabulary, but we also talked.

Example 2
P2: *én eleve kétnyelvű vagyok, tehát (…) vegyes családból származom, (…) és azt kell tudni a vegyes családról, hogy édesapám magyar, viszont romántanár volt. […] amellett, hogy magyar–román, és hogy ezzel nő ezekkel nőttem fel, (…) franciául elég korán elkezdtem tanulni, talán, édesanyám franciatanárnő, és olyan 9-10 évesen már valamennyire tudogattam, 13-14 évesen már beszéltem franciául. Aztán angolul is picit párhuzamosan, az angolt később kezdtem, de fel tudja az ember tornászni magát annyira, amennyire szüksége van; ugyancsak középiskolában ismerkedtem össze az olasszal, és számomra nagyon izgalmas volt az olasz, mert nagyon-nagyon hasonlít a franciára.*

I was raised bilingual, so (...) I come from a mixed family (...) and what you should know about the mixed family is that my father is Hungarian, but he was a Romanian teacher. [...] besides Hungarian-Romanian, and growing up with that (...) I started learning French quite early, I believe, my mother was a French teacher, and I was already somewhat fluent in French at about 9 or 10 years old, and by 13 or 14 I was already speaking it. And then English somewhere at the same time, I started English later, but you can train yourself as much as you need to; I was also introduced to Italian in high school, and for me Italian was very exciting because it's very, very similar to French.

Example 3
P3: *tehát nekem is otthon így elég soknyelvűek, habár édesanyám is és édesapám is ők magyarok, úgymond, de hát a családban vannak szászok is, vannak románok is, tehát van ott mindenféle, a régi szép időkben három nyelven zajlott minden egy-egy nagyobb, egy-egy születésnap, vagy esküvő*

vagy bármi volt, annyi mondjuk, hogy a szászok azok tudtak románul, magyarul nem biztos, de románul szinte mindenki.

So, in my case, as well, they are quite multilingual at home, although my mother and my father are also Hungarian, so to speak, but in the family, there are also Saxons and Romanians, so there are all kinds of things, in the good old days everything was done in three languages, the big events, birthdays, weddings or whatever, let's say that the Saxons, they knew Romanian, not sure about Hungarian, but almost everyone knew Romanian.

Example 4
P5: *nekem az a történetem, hogy édesapám kétnyelvű, sváb–magyar, anyukám román, és volt egy gyermek, akihez el kellett juttatni három nyelvet, azt mondták, hogy apa beszél magyarul, anya értelemszerűen románul, megy német oviba s német iskolába.*

My story is that my father is bilingual, Swabian–Hungarian, my mother is Romanian, and there was this child who had to be taught three languages; they said that father will speak Hungarian, mother Romanian, of course, and she will go to the German kindergarten and the German school.

In the examples above, we can see that when talking about their personal stories of language socialization, the participants emphasize that several languages were present and spoken in their surrounding environments and that this had a significant effect on their language acquisition and learning processes. In some cases, the informal aspect, i.e. learning the language outside of school is even more accentuated than the formal, educational contexts.

4.2. Career narratives: First experiences

When asked about their first experiences, all of the participants reported a lack of awareness of what interpreting meant when they started practising the profession. P1 was invited to work at a conference together with P2: they had not met before, and P1 reflects on the fact that she did not know what she was supposed to do, as she did not have any experience in consecutive interpreting.

Example 5
P1: *én azelőtt tolmácsoltam törvényszéken, bíróságokon, illetve ilyen hivataloknál, rendőrség, közjegyző, ügyvéd, abban benne volt a blattolás, a suttogó szinkron, a rövid szakaszos, a hosszú szakaszos, mondjuk én jegyzetelni nem szerettem, én inkább a memóriámra hagyatkoztam,*

és megjegyeztem, nagyon, valahogy csak úgy ösztönösen, én ezt nem tanultam sehol, csak úgy éreztem, hogy így nekem kényelmesebb, de a konferenciatolmácsolás az a 2005-ös élmény volt májusban a Pedagógusok, azt hiszem, Szövetségének valami rendezvénye, amikor szegény (P2) nem tudta, hogy én még nem csináltam ilyet.

I had interpreted for courts, courts of law and other authorities, police, notary public, lawyer, and that involved sight translation, chuchotage, short consecutive, long consecutive, but I didn't like taking notes, I preferred to rely on my memory and memorize, sort of just instinctively, I hadn't been taught this anywhere, I just felt it was more comfortable for me, but conference interpreting was that experience in May 2005 at some event of the Teachers', I think, Association, when poor (P2) didn't know that I hadn't done it before.

Example 6
P2: *diákkoromban akadt egy-két alkalom, amikor tolmácsoltam. Nem tudtam, hogy éppen az mit jelent, de hogy egy delegációt ide-oda kísérgetni, vagy egy valakinek a a kiselőadását, nagyelőadását egy színpadon, kiálltam. Kiálltam.* […] *egyáltalán nem tudatosítottam, hogy én valójában mit csinálok* […] *És az úgy valójában jól ment.*

There were one or two occasions when I was a student when I interpreted. I didn't know what that meant, but whether it was escorting a delegation back and forth, or someone's small lecture or big lecture on a stage, I did it. I stood up. [...] I wasn't at all aware of what I was actually doing. [...] And it actually went well.

Example 7
P3: *94-ben Marosvásárhelyen egy nemzetközi színiiskola-fesztivál, ahova belecsöppentem, mint a légy a tejbe, szó szerint* […] *úgy csináltam én is, mint a székely bácsi, amikor megkérdezték, hogy tud-e zongorázni, akkor azt mondta, hogy biztos tud, még nem próbálta, de biztos tud.*

In '94, in Târgu Mureş, there was an international theatre school festival, where I found myself like a fly in a glass of milk, literally [...] I was like the old Szekler, who when asked if he could play the piano said that he could, he hadn't tried it yet, but he was sure he could.

Example 8
P5: *És így a kezdők bátorságával én belevágtam* […] *amikor vége lett a konferenciának, akkor T. gratulált, és azt mondta:*

– Te nagyon ügyes vagy! S akkor így bátorodtam fel, és léptem erre a pályára.

And so, with the courage of a beginner, I went for it [...] when the conference was over, T. congratulated me and said: "You are very good!" And that's how I gained courage and chose this path.

Example 9
P4: *természetesen véletlenül csöppentem bele, mérnök voltam, és sok év mérnökösködés után […] a rendszerváltás után felkerültem a Kulturális Minisztériumba, és ott került teljesen váratlanul egy helyzet, amikor a miniszternek egy kiállításmegnyitó beszédét valakinek le kellett fordítani, és akkor engem ráncigáltak elő, egészen más ügyben voltam ott […] és akkor kiderült, hogy megy, és akkor ettől felbátorodtam.*

Of course, I got into it by accident, I was an engineer, and after many years of engineering [...] after the regime change, I started working at the Ministry of Culture, and there was a situation that came up quite unexpectedly, when someone had to translate the minister's speech at the opening of an exhibition, and then I was pushed forward, I was there for a completely different matter [...] and then it turned out that I was good at it, and that gave me courage.

All of these examples illustrate the lack of professional awareness of the participants at the start of their careers, which can be linked to the issue of professional training discussed above. None of the participants had received any formal training in interpreting when they started working in the field (only P5 holds a post-graduate degree in conference interpreting) and had to acquire and develop the skills and competences along the way. Besides the haphazard nature of the participants coming into contact with the profession, there is another common denominator in these narratives: they all received positive feedback and experienced success right at the beginning, which boosted their confidence and gave them courage to pursue this particular career.

4.3. Speaking "properly". Languages, dialects, frustrations

One of the larger topics addressed during the discussions was the issue of preferred languages: the PI, reflecting on her own frustrations and challenges in connection to her working languages and the internalized expectations on using correct language and terminology, invited the other participants to share their own stories of success and of failure and how they thought these were connected to the different languages and varieties they work and come in contact with.

Due to the specificities of the Romanian and Hungarian language markets, all of the participants interpret not only into their L1s but also into some or all of their other working languages. They all stated that they do have preferred languages or directions, while they try to avoid others. When asked about the reasons, they formulated answers that were explicitly or implicitly ideological: some mentioned terminological deficiencies in one or more languages, others, on the other hand, reflected on fears of not speaking "properly".

P1, for example, mentions English as a language she avoids interpreting into because she feels that because of her "Szekler dialect" – as she did not learn proper English pronunciation – the younger generations, who, according to her, are much more fluent in English, would make fun of her. When the PI responds that there are speakers who think that they know English very well while they do not, she responds:

Example 10

P1: *igen, de én akkor itt már professzionális nyelvi közvetítő vagyok, nekem az a dolgom, hogy én itt, itt ne úgy beszéljek, mintha Indiából ideestem volna csak úgy, és most három szót akarnék mondani, és moder tongue* [magyar kiejtéssel] *lenne az egész történetből, tehát én ezt nem akarnám, és akkor azért inkább nem.*

Yes, but then I'm a professional linguistic mediator here, and it's my job here not to speak as if I'd just dropped in from India and wanted to say three words, and the whole story would be like moder tongue [pronounced in Hungarian accent], so I wouldn't want that, and I'd rather not.

This is an instance where the professional requirement to use proper or standard pronunciation is being formulated as the result of deep ideologizing work: "speaking properly" is not only an abstract criterion of quality assurance in interpreting but also one of P1's internalized expectations regarding her own language competences. This is corroborated by her linking her perceived inability to produce standard English pronunciation with her Szekler dialect, which is a non-standard variety of Hungarian. While she applies the same approach when reflecting on her Romanian language competences, this ideologizing work has a different outcome:

Example 11

P1: *Az, hogy románul másképpen beszélek, örülök, hogy tudok székely létemre, és meg merek szólalni, nem probléma ez.*

The fact that I speak Romanian differently, I am glad that I know it although I am a Szekler, and that I dare to speak it, it is not a problem.

In this case, being able to speak Romanian despite the fact that she was brought up in a mostly Hungarian monolingual town, in a region where most pupils struggle with learning the Romanian language (cf. Fazakas 2014, Rácz 2022), results in a sense of pride.

She also addresses the issue of her dialect being different from the Hungarian standard:

> Example 12
> P1: *próbálok standardizálni hivatalos, professzionális közegben, nem az utcán vagy a közértben, hanem ha mondjuk, mit tudom én, a Kisebbségkutatónál kellett egy megbeszélésen részt vegyek, akkor ott igyekeztem úgy beszélni, ahogy illik, úgymond. Férjem kacag is ezért, hogy miért kell megváltoztasd, mondom, ez olyan, amiért te Németországban németül beszélsz. Csak azért, hogy én érezzem úgy, hogy én itt most meg vagyok értve. Engem frusztrált. Aztán utána meg rájöttem, hogy nincsen ezzel semmi baj, és a megfelelő helyzetben tudom váltogatni a két nyelvváltozatot.*
>
> I try to standardize in formal, professional settings, not on the street or in the grocery store, but if I had to attend, let's say, a meeting at the Institute for Minority Studies, I tried to speak properly, so to say. My husband even laughs about it, why I change it, and I tell him, it's like when you speak German in Germany. Just so that I feel that I am understood here. It used to frustrate me. And then afterwards I realized that there was nothing wrong with that, and I could switch between the two varieties in the different situations.

In this example, P1 shares her former frustrations about feeling the need to switch to standard Hungarian in formal, professional settings in Hungary, which is another ideology-based action. Contrasting her strategies with her husband's attitude, she states that using standard Hungarian in such settings is similar to using the German language in Germany: by adapting, she makes sure that she is understood. In her interpretation, the ability to "switch" between the varieties of Hungarian is an asset and is comparable to switching to another language, even if speaking a Hungarian dialect in Hungary would not result in the lack of mutual intelligibility but rather convey the social meaning of not being from Hungary and thus potentially making the speaker of that non-standard variety the subject of remarks based on their language use.

There is another instance, when she addresses the difference between Hungarian as spoken in Hungary and Hungarian as spoken in Transylvania: she recalls having been corrected in a dorm in Hungary because she called the heater *kalorifer*, which is the non-standard word widely used in Transylvanian Hungarian (a borrowing from the Romanian language), and not *radiátor*, the word used in Hungary:

Example 13

P1: *Nekem ez a kedvenc példám, amikor lebőgtek ott a kollégiumban, hogy azt mondtam, hogy nem működik a kalorifer, és nem értették, hogy mi a helyzet, és akkor kibökték, hogy hát az radiátor, s akkor mondtam, hogy mind a kettő latin, az egyik ezt jelenti, ebből ered és így származott, a másik abból és azt jelenti, nem tudom, hogy a tietek miért jobb, mint a miénk akkor.*

This is my favourite example, when they snapped out at me in the dormitory, I told them that the *kalorifer* ('heater') didn't work, and they didn't understand what was going on, and then they said that it was a *radiátor* ('radiator'), and then I said that both of them were Latin, one means this, it comes from this, and it came from that, and the other means that, I don't know why yours is better than ours.

P1 reflects on one of the many occasions when she was singled out for speaking differently than the Hungarians from Hungary. According to her narrative, she managed to embarrass the ones who took issue with her choice of words, by using her extensive linguistic knowledge, in this case, the fact that both *kalorifer* and *radiátor* come from Latin and do not have a Hungarian etymon, and thus the variant that is interpreted as standard Hungarian is also as foreign as the word that is labelled as non-standard. Correcting someone's language use creates a power relation and a hierarchy between the interlocutors, and in this example P1 manages to flip the hierarchy and achieve situational superiority by using a well-grounded linguistic argument. This success is also expressed discursively, as she frames the encounter as embarrassing for the other party. The example showcases both explicit and implicit language ideologies that stem from standard language ideology: the speakers from Hungary understand their way of using the language as the standard, and as such, they feel superior to speakers of non-standard varieties. Also, based on standard language ideology, speakers of the standard have the right to correct other speakers, and, by doing so, to establish power relations that favour them during encounters. P1's response is in fact grounded in a similar ideology: variables of a pure Hungarian origin are superior to foreign elements. Just because a word is widespread in Hungary does not mean it is more valuable, as it is not in line with the requirements of linguistic purity.

P2 agrees by stressing that the Hungarian language spoken in Hungary also has many varieties, for example, people in Békés County speak differently from those living in Budapest, and that the varieties of English, specifically mentioning Scottish, Irish, and Australian, are all accepted. P3 also reflects on her and her colleagues' experiences in the topic:

Example 14
P3: *Tehát ha egyébként profi vagy, jól csinálod, meggyőző a hangod, akkor nem érdekli őket. Jaaa, az, hogy Sz. T.-nek azt mondták ezelőtt 20 évvel, vagy mikor, amikor az EU-s szakvizsgát, tolmácsvizsgát le akarta tenni, hogy lehet, hogy Erdélyben elég jó a magyar nyelve, de Magyarországon nem… na, ilyen van.*

So, if you're good, you do it well, you have a convincing voice, they don't care. Yeah, the fact that they said to Sz.T. 20 years ago, or when, when he wanted to take the exam for the EU, the interpreter exam, that his Hungarian might be good enough in Transylvania but not in Hungary... well, this happens, too.

The participants in both groups discussed the issue of using non-standard language varieties during interpreting: all of them agreed that from a professional point of view, this is not the most significant aspect. They believe that being fluent, working without any interruptions, being confident, competent, and proficient is much more important than using the standard pronunciations of their working languages. P2 states that speaking in a dialect and speaking incorrectly are two different things, and so are speaking correctly and speaking adequately. According to P1 and P3, using non-standard varieties on the "internal market", i.e. in Romania, is not a problem; it might, however, be when trying to get accreditation or working for international bodies, as seen in Example 14.

Although in most cases participants formulate a permissive attitude towards the use of the different language varieties, there are instances when they express quite the opposite. While being playful in both her use of language and her opinions on language variation, P3 expresses her frustrations with speakers who use stigmatized variables in Hungary, such as the incorrect conjugation of the *-ik* verbs:

Example 15
P3: *Én tudom, hogy én otthon taslit kaptam volna simán, de nem is értem volna el idáig, hogy ilyet kimondjak hangosan, hogy* iszok *meg* eszek *meg* alszok*. Itt viszont flottul használják, P5. [...] és akkor én, az erdélyi, elkezdem osztani az észt. Hát mondjad, anyu, ha jólesik. Elvégre mindenhol azt látjuk, hogy az akadémiára bevonul az utca.*

I know that I would have been slapped at home, but I wouldn't even have gotten as far as saying something like that out loud, like *eszek* and *iszok* and *alszok*. But here they use it without any problems, P5 [...] and then I, the Transylvanian, I start lecturing them. Well, honey, use it if you like it. After all, we see it everywhere that the street has invaded the academia.

In the example above, P3 contrasts the language practices she has been witnessing in Hungary with what she was taught as correct, proper Hungarian. The standard form of the mentioned *-ik* verbs in the first-person singular is *eszem* ('I eat'), *iszom* ('I drink'), and *alszom* ('I sleep') as opposed to the non-standard but widely used *eszek, iszok, alszok*. P3 positions herself as a Transylvanian speaker and implicitly recreates the hierarchies addressed above between the two language varieties. Although speakers from Transylvania are often corrected and confronted by speakers from Hungary because of the way they use the language (as seen in the accounts of the other participants), this is a case in which P3 strives to regain control. According to her, it is not true that speakers from Hungary speak more correctly than speakers from Transylvania, on the contrary: "the street", i.e. the uneducated people, has gained power, and academic rules are no longer followed. This short section exemplifies an elitist attitude and the clear emergence of the standard language ideology; it also shows how the ideologies of the same speaker shift, change, and even become conflicting in the same discussion. The example reveals how "(i)deologies are morally and politically loaded because implicitly or explicitly they represent not only how language is, but how it ought to be" (Woolard 2021).

Conclusions

As the project initiator is part of the group of Hungarian interpreters and as all of the participants had already collaborated professionally, many of the usual issues of conducting qualitative research did not have to be addressed. Partial participation was achieved as the traditional hierarchy between the "researcher" and the "researched" was not established and the role of the project initiator was flexible throughout the discussions. The analysis of the language ideologies of professional linguistic mediators is especially informative: having extensive linguistic and sociolinguistic knowledge and being in contact with a high number of languages and language varieties, the participants of the project refrained from explicitly reproducing widespread language ideologies and were much more critical and flexible in discussing standard and non-standard ways of speaking. They all agreed that the use of the spoken standard is not the most significant quality of a good interpreter. Nevertheless, during the discussions, conflicting ideologies emerged, which illustrates that ideologies are not singular and monolithic: they are discursively constructed and can shift depending on the topic or on the situation. Although being open and accommodating towards language variation, in their accounts of perceived or internalized expectations, the participants did adhere to the belief that the standard is a criterion of quality assurance in interpreting and that speaking properly is more important to them than they would like to admit.

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