

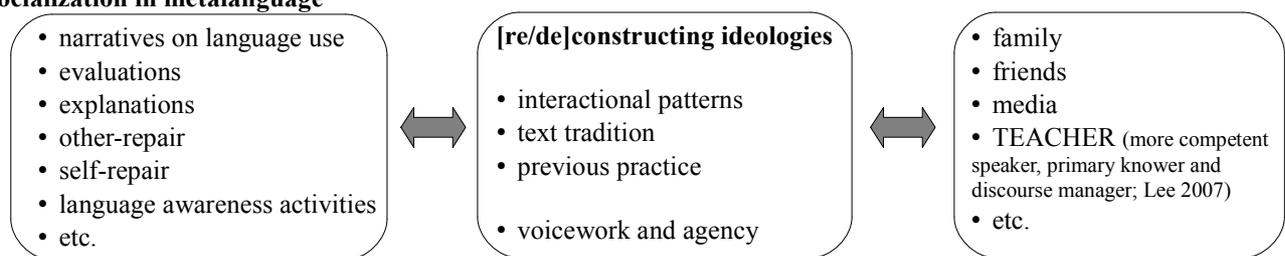
“Insights into Applied Linguistics: languaging, agency and ecologies”
University of Jyväskylä, 4 June 2012

1. Hungarian language culture. Hungarian is a standard language culture (cf. Milroy 2001). Basic features: cult of a privileged dialect called standard; continuous standardization (dictionaries, prescriptivist handbooks etc.); prescriptivist elements in curricula of formal education (e. g. “correct the following sentences if necessary”, “collect examples of erroneous language use” etc.); activities for developing language awareness or consciousness (e. g. *Beszélni nehéz!* [‘Speaking is Difficult!’] circles); other- and self-repair.

2. Definitions of metalanguage. Van Leeuwen (2004): two groups of definitions: (1) representation-oriented definitions (as a specific register with a scientific nature; representation of cognitive representations; tool of telementing inner beliefs); (2) communication-oriented definitions like Laihonen’s (2008: 669): „From an interactional point of view, talk about language is a part of conversational action, such as answering, defending, blaming, accusing and apologizing”. Using this approach, we can define metalanguage as a socially constructed, (self-)reflective and dynamic discourse on language as a system or as a communication practice (cf. Laihonen 2008, 2009). Metalanguage is a part of a tradition of texts. Thus, we can analyse metalanguage with Conversation Analysis or Discourse Analysis methods. Evaluations and attitudes are important parts of metalanguage. Explanations can be identified as ideologies (cf. Laihonen 2008, 2009). Ideologies explain language use and legitimize or dispute communication practices. Metalanguage is not stable but dynamic: we can observe a continuous construction and deconstruction of ideologies, attitudes and narratives while conversation emerges. Discursive Social Psychology theory can explain these phenomena (cf. Potter–Edwards 2001, 2003).

3. Fieldwork in 2009. (For a general overview of results, see Szabó 2011.) Data was collected in 34 schools (11 in capital city Budapest, 19 in County Bács-Kiskun, Baranya, Békés, Csongrád, Fejér, Győr-Moson-Sopron, Pest, Somogy, Vas and Zala, and 4 in Serbia and Slovakia). Methods: (1) Questionnaires (N = 1195). Groups: students on Year 7 and 11. Questionnaires were analysed as mediums by which a discourse emerged between the researcher and the informant in the form of question-response sequences. That is why it can be used as a corpus of metalinguistic interactions. (2) Notes on classroom observation. Data: 61 school lessons on Year 7 and 11. Notes focused on the organization of a lesson and on the patterns of teacher-student communication, with a special regard to interactional routines for regimenting classroom discourse. The corpus consists of cca. 29,000 tokens, stored in XML format. (3) Semi-structured research interviews. (This method is marginal in Hungarian mother tongue educational studies). 74 interviews were made with 133 interviewees. Groups: students and their teacher of Hungarian grammar and literature at (a) elementary schools (Year 1–4, 7, aged 6–11, 13–14); (b) vocational high schools (year 11, aged 17–19) and (c) grammar schools (Year 1–4, 7, 11, aged 6–11, 13–14, 17–19). This corpus contains cca. 47.7 hours of speech. Its transcription consists of 346,500 tokens, stored in XML format.

4. Socialization in metalanguage



5. Voicework and agency

“In the analysis of interview data, agency could be used to reflect who the voices belong to: who does the talking, who is responsible for what is said, who has authority and expertise in the matter discussed?” (Aro 2009: 62). There are different practices, such as (1) quoting, (2) ventriloquating, and (3) assimilating. (For the role and importance of voicework, and for methods of analysis see Aro 2009; Dufva 2010; Edwards 1993; Karasavvidis et al. 2000; Pietikäinen–Dufva 2006.) A feature of classroom communication is socializing by manipulating voicework (cf. Wortham 1997: “Commodification of classroom discourse”).

6. Examples

(1) Elementary school, Year 4. (291: female, 292: male)

IR: How could it be er (2 secs) known that a sentence is, let's say, meaningful? Or or what what does show that that it is meaningless?

292: Because in the textbook it is always underlined what to learn and it needn't be learnt word by word, exactly the same, but *with our own words*, but

291: And then it used to happen that then one says another word by accident

292: Yes.

291: instead of the one that was

IR: Uh huh.

291: to be learnt.

(2) Elementary school, Year 3. (041: female, 041: male)

[We talk about informal speech and/or vulgarity in classroom.]

IR: [...] would it be v- er still needed to speak nicely if the teacher wouldn't punish for that?

042: B- it still should be done nicely.

041: It still should be done nicely.

042: Hey,

IR: And what do you think why?

042: well, *it's not allowed* to do such a thing!

041: So, because *we don't talk to an adult like this*, because *the elderly must be respected*.

(3) Elementary school, Year 7. (male)

IR: [...] let's say, if somebody says that *gyere má* [~ 'c'mon'] then then how er how do you tell him/her to say that in another way?

142: Well nothing, I just say that *if you would please moderate your sentece a bit* or I don't know, stuff like that.

IR: Uh huh.

142: So, it's the same others used to tell me, so it's not ea-not difficult to hand it over

(4) Grammar school, Year 11. (male)

051: So *me*_{ACCJ} re- really, *it's* very irritating. If *we speak* the same language, then let *we use* that correctly, *don't let* [changing tone: yep yep], how *cool I am* and then *I speak* in a slang such vulgarly, because really, now *it's hot* if *you're* such a dull bumper guy

7. Further plans. (1) Students' ideologies on learning Hungarian grammar and on the variety of spoken and written Hungarian. (2) Teachers' ideologies on teaching Hungarian grammar and on detecting various problems and special needs of the students in a classroom context. (3) Language ideologies in Hungarian schools: a comparative study (Hungary, Slovakia, Romania).

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Detailed information on the survey: http://sztp.hu/index_eng.htm

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