Construction of ideologies in school metalanguage. A study of other-repair in Hungarian

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Definitions of metalanguage (Van Leeuwen 2004): (1) representation-oriented definitions (representation of cognitive representations; tool of telementing inner beliefs); (2) communication-oriented definitions: *"From an interactional point of view, talk about language is a part of conversational action, such as answering, defending, blaming, accusing and apologizing"* (Laihonen 2008: 669). – Metalanguage is a discourse which is (1) (self-)reflective (Lucy 1993) and (2) socially constructed (Laihonen 2008; for the role of voicework in social construction, see Aro 2009). Metalanguage is the context where language ideologies emerge.

Ideology: description or explanation of social practices with a legitimizing or illegitimizing function (Potter–Edwards 2003). So-called rules are ideologies (cf. Kripke 1982; Miller 2006). Ideologies is (1) tool for a continuous co-construction and re-construction of a culture, e. g. prestige hierarchy, activities, genres, so-called common values etc. (Yu 2008); (2) tool for science, education (cf. curricula in grammar) and socialization (Edwards 1993; Lee 2007; Szabó–Mátyus 2012); (3) in Hungary: tool for the maintenance of a standard language culture (Milroy 2001) – including "sustainable linguicism" (Kontra 2006).

Why is other-repair important? Repair: a practice with a simple systematics (Schegloff–Jefferson–Sacks 1977). Other-repair and self-repair are used in linguistic socialization: exposure to repair → fluency in (1) (re)constructing expert–novice, standard–non-standard oppositions (Jacoby–Gonzales 1991; Kurhila 2001; Egbert 2004; Laihonen 2008; Vickers 2010); (2) collaboration with communication partners (Schegloff–Jefferson–Sacks 1977). – Evaluation of speakers via the evaluation of language (for the Hungarian: Kontra 2006)

Fieldwork in 2009. (For a general overview of results, see Szabó 2012.) 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.

Excerpts

[1] Elementary school, year 7
Teacher: Who supported Petőfi?
Student: Vörösmarty.
Teacher: Vörösmarty *(with an emphasis)* Mihály. Yes.

[2] Elementary school, year 7
Student: *(Speaks about the plot of a poem written by János Arany.)*
Then he snickered at them.
Teacher: Let's formulate it more gently. Not *snickered at,* but *(awaits)*
Student: Ridiculed.
Teacher: *Ridiculed.* It can be seen how much nicer and more expressive this word is.

[3] Vocational high school, year 11
Teacher: *(reads the poem 'My bride' written by Endre Ady, and then:)*
I remember, I have read it to you. Then I asked you whether you know the word *céda* ('whore'). Many of you were shocked, and answered that of course, naturally s/he knew that, it's a synonym of *kurva* ('bitch').
Student Nr. 5: It sucks.
Teacher: What sucks?
Student Nr. 5: Nothing.
Teacher: Just say that.
Student Nr. 5: *(remains silent)*

[4] Vocational high school, year 11 (352: female, 353: male)
352: Well, we write and pronounce it in a diff-different way.
353: We pronounce and write it in a different way.
352: I told the same thing.
353: But in a different way.
[...]
353: I don't provoke, really.
352: Doesn't matter, I can bear it.

[5] Grammar school, year 11 – male student
051: I'm especially irritated at [...] *eszek* ('I eat' REG). I yell immediately: *eszem!* ARCH
[...]
051: Sometimes, people are really dull. I mean, *eszek* disturbs a minority. There are really very dull people.
Interviewer: And then er er

051: I mean, as for me, here at home today, 90 percent of the society is very dull. *(4 mp)*
Interviewer: So then, according to these, we can form an opinion not just on the base of how s/he speaks, but also on how s/he's thinking about these issues. Or er
051: Yes.

Further plans
– **Developmental issues: Szabó–Mátyus 2012**
– Students' ideologies (1) on learning Hungarian grammar; (2) on the variants of spoken and written Hungarian
– Teachers' ideologies (1) on teaching Hungarian grammar; (2) on detecting various problems and special needs of the students in a classroom context
– Language ideologies in Hungarian schools: a comparative study in (1) Hungary, (2) Slovakia and (3) Romania
– Developing a more detailed CA desrciption of ideology construction
– Observation of voicework in depth

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