

Meaning-construction in everyday bilingualism. On the language attitudes of Hungarian-speaking youth in Romania

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In our presentation we will examine the diversity of linguistic attitudes of Hungarian speakers in Romania. Although there are several definitions for this concept from psychology and linguistics, linguistic attitudes are generally understood as the value judgments and attitudes that individuals form on the basis of their language socialization, language use and learning experience, in relation to languages, language varieties and language expressions. In our present research, we wanted to find out the speakers' value judgments about the phenomenon of using Romanian and/or English loanwords in their everyday Hungarian communication. In our research paradigm we adopted a case-oriented, inductive, data-focused research towards which we applied a mixed approach: the data was collected through a questionnaire, then the focus group discussion highlighted the criteria respondents used in their value judgment, as well as their opinions about loanwords adopted from the two languages. The conversations also indirectly shed light on the way in which a minority community relates to the languages active in its linguistic environment.

Keywords: loanwords, value judgment, language use, contact phenomenon, linguistic repertoire.

1. The context of meaning-construction in everyday bilingualism

The focus of this paper is a linguistic community in which different bilingual arrangements (ambilingualism, asymmetric bilingual forms) are present simultaneously, and thus, minoritized languages can be observed in different linguistic constellations. The study focuses on the Hungarian minority in Romania, which – according to the last census in 2011 – represents around 6.5% of the total population, and the research presented here focuses on the language use patterns of young people socializing in the socio-cultural environment of the “minority in majority”. The aim of the paper is to map the linguistic value judgments of this small community living in the above-mentioned linguistic environment, in relation to the role of the non-native language vs. mother tongue context in the construction of meaning.

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2. Theoretical background

Personal identities are socially constructed (Thornborrow 2004, 160), they are determined by how pupils communicate and interact with others (manifested in accent, style, dialects, etc.) and how they define themselves based on linguistics and gnoseological experiences. In that context, the key term of linguistic behavior and linguistic identity is how the individual linguistic repertoire is activated (managed) in the construction of meaning, i.e. how speakers choose a particular linguistic code, variety, etc. The focus of this paper is on the notion of a linguistic repertoire activated in the construction of meaning, a concept that summarizes different languages, language varieties, language registers, codes, styles, accents. According to IGI Global³, linguistic repertoire can be defined as “the total range of lexical and structural resources that an individual has available for communication in different situations”.

According to the definition provided by Crystal, the term refers to „the range of languages or varieties of a language available for use by a speaker” (Crystal 2008, 439). On the other hand, Ladányi and Hrenek define the linguistic repertoire as “the set of language resources available to language users in social interactions, providing a linguistic resource for the members of a given community” (2019, 112). In Heltai’s (2016) view, this concept includes “various linguistic, semiotic sources and the associated evaluations and meanings that evolve as a function of social relations and context” (2016, 1).

The place of language in everyday life, as mentioned by Hymes (1996, cited in Blommaert 2010, 120) can be understood “as more than a matter of sounds, spellings, grammatical categories and constructions. It would be properly understood as involving varieties and modalities, styles and genres, ways of using a language as a resource”.

“The choice of language is based on a good knowledge of the internal relations, of the system of rules operating in a given society (or even in a segment, stratum or group), which is, in fact, part of «everyday knowledge»” (Sorbán 2009, 126). In this sense, a given language use decision is not determined by internal linguistic factors, but also by socio-cultural, socio-demographic factors outside the language. These give a specific value to the use of a word and are also driven by a specific motivational background. The research data presented in the next subsection will examine sociolinguistic value judgements about the way people speak.

³ <https://www.igi-global.com/dictionary/bridging-the-gap/43089> Last accessed: 10th October 2022.

3. The research questions

In the theoretical framework described above, languages are not considered statically as separate entities, but holistically. So, in our quest we were not interested in the specificity of the attitude towards a language, but in how the respondents we were studying evaluated the total repertoire available to their knowledge. In our research, we were interested in what kind of linguistic repertoire the community under investigation had, according to their self-perception, and what value judgments and relational systems they associated with these. During data collection, we followed a metalinguistic interpretation of the language use and linguistic repertoires of the young people socializing in the community under study, linked to attitudinal (emotional) and contact phenomena. Thus, the first question seeks an answer to the role of different languages in the everyday language use of the young people in the sample. At the same time, we are also interested in the linguistic locality value judgments that the respondents make about the embedding of guest language elements. Here, we should not only think about the grammatical correctness, but also about the sociolinguistic aspect of the phenomenon, i.e. the vocabulary and meta-linguistic attitudes of the respondents, the way in which linguistic and extra-linguistic factors together determine the values of linguistic behavior. This phenomenon, referred to hereafter as sociolinguistic value judgments, captures the evaluation of the local functioning of contact phenomena.

This aspect is also interesting because the research topic uses the holistic notion of multilingualism (bilingualism) and traces its micro-level functioning in a formal and informal educational system of influence that represents a monolingual, linguistic hierarchy approach. The research objectives assumed a specific research methodological approach.

4. Research methodology

Throughout the research we applied a case-oriented qualitative content analysis methodology. The case-oriented nature of the research was primarily justified by the small sample size of the student community (N=65) and secondarily by the linguistic socialization specificity of the situation under study. In the data collection, we were interested in how a locally monolingual, translocally bilingual, globally English-bound community socializing in a certain socio-cultural background operates on the basis of language relations and values. Our aim was thereby to obtain an internal (intrinsic) picture of the linguistic repertoire.

Of the respondents, 70.8% (46) were aged 19-22, while the rest were older (22-46 year-olds), of whom 78.5% were female and 21.5% male. They were mostly socialized in rural (53.8%) or small-town (29.2%) environments, and studied in Hungarian-language institutions from first grade (age 6) to 12th grade (age 18-19), which means that all subjects are taught in Hungarian, except for the official language of the country (Romanian language and literature) and two foreign languages (usually English and German). At the time of data collection, the respondents included first-year students of a teacher training program associated with a different bachelor's degree at a Hungarian-language university in Romania. The survey was conducted in February and March 2022. As it is case-oriented research, the study did not follow the principle of representativeness, but rather a more in-depth mapping of the situation, a more value-oriented description.

5. Outline of the research paradigm

In order to understand linguistic behavior, the research was based on a mixed¹ data collection design (Angouri 2019; Dörnyei 2007), as in the first stage an online questionnaire was completed, while in the second stage the respondents who provided data participated in a thematic focus group discussion. By using the second method, essentially embedded in the quantitative (qualitative) framework, it was possible to proceed with the qualitative (qualitative) data collection. By complementing each other, the two methods enabled both the recording of general data and a dynamic, participatory understanding of linguistic relations. Such use of research techniques provides a condition for data triangulation.

Subsequently, the first phase of the research was dominated by deductive, theory-driven categorization, while the second phase was devoted to inductive, data-driven generalization. In the latter phase, the data processing started with the transcription of the audio corpus, followed by the qualitative analysis of the resulting corpus. The (manual) data processing was followed by the coding of the linguistic corpus, with the definition of main codes and subcodes in the category building, thus creating the code hierarchy of the corpus under study. The content categories were defined according to the most frequently occurring variables, following the two levels of analysis, the text level and the concept level. The workflow included the following main steps: analysis of the texts, writing memos, mapping and modeling of keywords and their frequencies. In order to avoid data loss and ensure reliability, we used both intra- and inter-coding (Sántha 2022), and the recoding process was used to produce the final category (code) mesh. The

resulting conclusions are presented below, with illustrative corpus segments highlighted for illustrative purposes.

6. Language use in everyday life

In our sample, we can describe three levels of language use. The first level, the immediate environment, is mother tongue-centered, in our case Hungarian-dominant (family, friends), while in the wider environment it becomes bilingual (Hungarian, Romanian) (shopping, online, news, e-mail), and in computer communication it becomes English-dominant (computer games, phone setting). Most of our respondents speak exclusively Hungarian with their family members and friends, while in shops, different institutions or when handling administrative tasks, they might have to use Romanian as well. Obviously, Internet and gadget-related areas are dominated by English. Figure 1 below represents how different languages are used in different contexts.

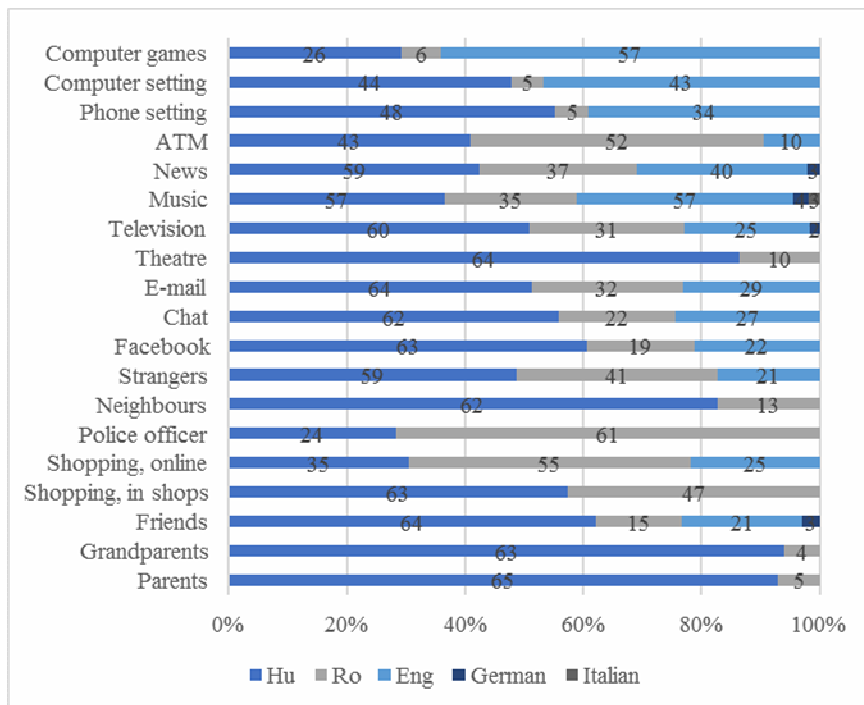


Figure 1. Language use in everyday life (Questionnaire data, N=65, February 2022)

As regarding the respondents' knowledge of Romanian and English as non-native languages, based on the data collected through the questionnaire, the following statements can be made:

- (i). Most respondents are afraid to use Romanian in their everyday communication, which strongly correlates to their lower level Romanian skills, (see the percentage of those who affirm that they can't make themselves understood).
- (ii). Most respondents state that they speak English quite well, however some of them are afraid to speak English and a considerable number of them would rather write it, then speak it.

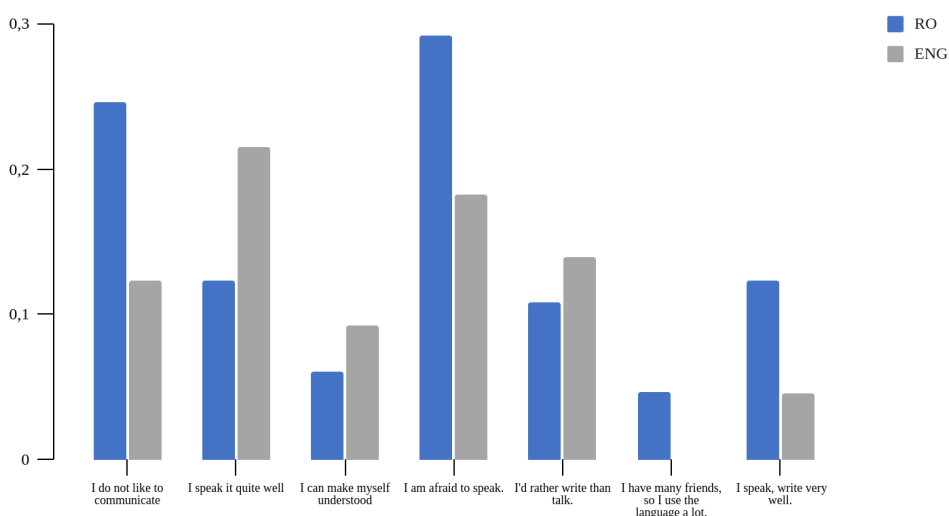


Figure 2. How respondents rate their language skills (Questionnaire data, N=65, February 2022)

The data confirm that in these languages the majority of the respondents report mainly receptive rather than productive efficiency, and that there is a lot of anxiety surrounding non-native expressions. Receptive efficiency refers to the fact that certain linguistic phenomena is perceived, however not produced, not independently used by the speakers in different linguistic contexts.

With the external data, we tried to understand the intellectual and emotional value judgments and attitudes associated with languages. This was done through a warm-up exercise in the focus group discussion, where we asked students to choose visual symbols which represent the languages they knew and used, and draw them on a piece of paper, then explain them in a nutshell. During

the discussion, they were asked to describe the experiences behind the chosen symbols, thus generating discourses reflecting on the language (multimodal texts) that were evoked by their own visualized experiences.

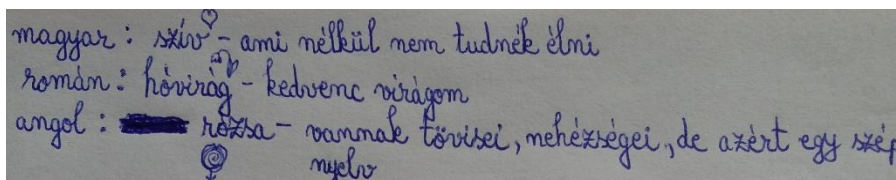


Image 1. Example of multimodal text

The starting point of the method we used is an adapted version of the visualization technique used with young Moldavian Csángó people, as presented in Laihonen's (2018) study. Unlike the above-mentioned research, since we worked with young people, we offered the possibility of free symbol choice. Obviously, the associations make more sense in the context of the explanations provided in the focus group discussions. Here is an example of such explanation.

“I drew a heart for the Hungarian language, because I am Hungarian after all and this language is closer to me. It is obviously my mother tongue. For Romanian, I drew a hand, because in order to achieve anything in this country, I need Romanian. At least at a conversational level. An ear for English, because that's what I listen to most: music and film. A mouth for German, as I've spoken it the most in the last 6 years, rather than Hungarian. In school and also in one of these volunteer jobs.” (B_2022_02_11)

The symbols retrieved were listed according to their frequency. It is worth pointing out that the spread of images evoked in the context of different languages is diversified, with both dynamic (pigeon, bird, backpack) and static aspects (heart, book, hand), while in the case of the sample studied, the native language attachment is visualized through the more frequent use of symbols: the heart and the tulip⁴.

⁴ The heart and the tulip are two very frequent motifs in Hungarian folklore, especially in the visual domains of folk arts.



Figure 3. Symbols associated to Hungarian



Figure 4. Symbols associated to Romanian

In figure 3 below you find symbols most often associated to Hungarian, the respondent's mother tongue, while figure 4 provides the ones linked to Romanian, the official language of the country. Figure 5 displays symbols connected to English, while figure 6 provides the symbols associated to other foreign languages the respondents mentioned (German, French, Spanish, Turkish and Japanese). The data has been organized according to the most frequent symbols associated to the different languages. The numbers next to the different symbols represent their frequency. The higher they are on the pyramids, the more common they are with respondents.

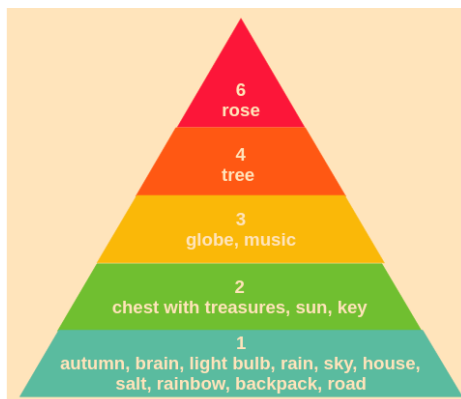


Figure 5. Symbols associated to English

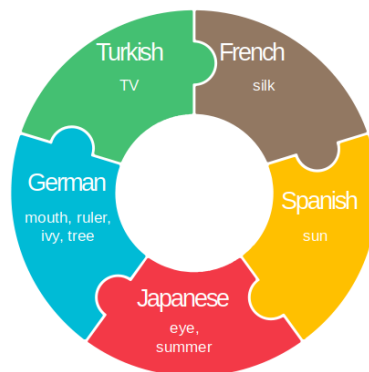


Figure 6. Symbols associated to other languages

Despite its length, we thought it important to highlight the following multimodal text and its explanation, not only to illustrate the narrative of the drawing, but also because it is a pragmatic way of illustrating the complementary nature of the linguistic repertoire, summarizing the interviewee's experience of language use.

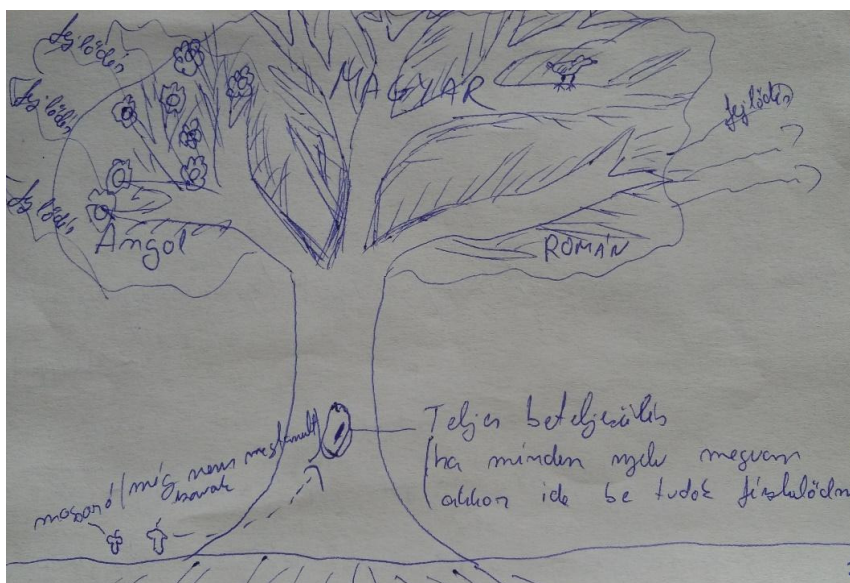


Image 2. Another example of multimodal text

The ground symbolizes the security of knowing the three languages, where the fluctuating levels of the language learning process appear alongside the central role of the mother tongue, and then the symbol of the cavity highlights the sense of security of language knowledge.

When providing an explanation for the different elements included in the multimodal text, our respondent said the following:

“I drew a tree with soil and a cavity on it. It has three branches. I start with the soil. I drew a soil because I think that if I can speak these three languages well, I can build my whole life on the fact that I speak English, Hungarian and Romanian well. Which is not yet true. I drew three branches. The largest branch, the one in the middle, is Hungarian, with many, many, many small branches. The branches can represent mistakes or correct structures... The slightly bigger branch or slightly smaller branch, but not the smallest, is English and I've drawn flowers on it and little arrows upwards, wavy arrows. The wavy arrows mean that I'm really trying to do it in such a way so that I can improve in that language at the moment. It's wavy because I don't always have time, and

then I miss it, and then it grows like this... And the smallest branch is Romanian, because I speak it the least. But I have also drawn arrows here, which also represent progress. And the cavity, again, has a role like the soil. It's total fulfillment. If I speak these three languages not as a native, but pretty well, then I can move in here and I can't... they can't... I wanted to express that if I have these languages, if I have learned them, then I can't lose them.” (A_2022_02_11)

In the above approach, we find an introspective approach to language resources, nevertheless, the parallel monolingual view of language that the interviewee encountered in school education.

7. Contact phenomena and value judgments

In the above summary visualization, the respondent notes that there are also branches that point to failures (mistakes). It is in this context of meaning that the question arises as to how contact phenomena are perceived and what value judgments are made about them in the case of the community we are studying.

The participants in the study were given a list of 20 sentences containing Romanian and English guest-language items and they were asked to give their opinion on (a) the correctness of the statements (i.e., whether they consider the statement to be correct or incorrect) and (b) their attitude towards the given phrases. In the latter case, we distinguished three levels of internalization (proximity): perception level (I have heard it), production level b1 (I use it – which also implies acceptance), and production rejection b2 (I reject this way of speaking).

The given sentences were selected from sentences heard and recorded (i.e., from spoken language items) in the linguistic environment. We use the term “guest language elements” (borrowed from Lanstyák 2006 and Tódor 2019) to denote the presence of loanwords and phrases, phrasemes and words borrowed from other languages in the selected sentences. On the one hand, the respondents' meta-linguistic value judgments include a response indicating linguistic correctness, which is outlined by the 'foreignness' or 'homeliness' or tolerance of lexical segments appearing in the statements. The following table summarizes the sentences used, indicating the guest language elements.

| Statement/stimulus (with Romanian contact elements) | Description | Statement/stimulus (with English contact elements) | Description |
|---|---|--|---|
| 1. Ma két <i>buletint</i> adtak csak ki a hivatalban. 'Today only two identity cards were issued by the office.' | <i>Buletin</i> is a loanword/ cuvânt adaptat of Romanian origin. Meaning: identity card | 11. Estéknként összeültünk, s csak <i>sztorizgattunk</i> . 'We would get together in the evenings and just tell stories.' | <i>Sztoriz(gat)ni</i> is a loanword from English (story). It has acquired Hungarian verbal inflections. Meaning: to tell a story |
| 2. Elég <i>deszcurkörec</i> embernek tűnik. 'He seems like a pretty ingenious man.' | <i>Deszcurkörec</i> is a word adopted from Romanian (<i>descurcăreț</i>). Meaning: ingenious | 12. Micsoda <i>lúzer</i> ! Nem csoda, hogy nem jutott semmire! 'What a loser! No wonder he got nowhere!' | <i>Lúzer</i> is a word taken over from English (loser). |
| 3. Amikor befejezem a <i>sztátokat</i> és a <i>biláncot</i> , már késő lesz a javítgatás. 'By the time I finish the statements and balances, it will be too late to correct them.' | The words <i>sztátok</i> és <i>biláncok</i> are adapted from Romanian (<i>stat, bilanț</i>) Meaning: statement, balance (technical jargon) | 13. Hét végén lesz valami jó kis buli. Elmegyünk? Kicsi <i>denszing</i> jó lenne... 'There will be a nice little party at the weekend. Shall we go? A little dancing would be nice...' | <i>Denszing</i> is a word created from the English word dancing. |
| 4. Cedează-t kellett volna adjak! 'I should have given (someone) priority.' | The word <i>cedează</i> is adapted from Romanian. Meaning: priority | 14. Mára <i>offolok</i> , nagyon elfáradtam. 'I am off for today, I am very tired.' | <i>Offolok</i> is a word taken over from English (to be off). It has acquired Hungarian verbal inflections. |
| 5. Furcsán fejezi ki magát, <i>fele apă, fele víz</i> . 'He speaks strangely, partly Romanian, partly Hungarian.' | The expression „fele apă, fele víz” is a bilingual saying. Meaning: one does not express oneself in one language | 15. Hú, ez nagyon tetszik! Ez egészen <i>kúl</i> ! 'Wow, I love this! It's really cool!' | <i>Kúl</i> is a loanword from English (cool). |
| 6. Nem fizettem ki az <i>asigurare</i> -t, így aztán jött is a büntetés. 'I did not pay the insurance, so I got a fine.' | The word <i>asigurare</i> is adapted from Romanian. Meaning: insurance | 16. Még nincs eldöntve, hogy részt veszek-e vagy nem. Egyelőre olyan <i>fifti-fifti</i> ... 'It is not yet decided whether I will take part or not. So far it's kind of fifty-fifty...' | <i>Fifti-fifti</i> is an expression taken over from English (fifty-fifty). Meaning: undecided, half |

| Statement/stimulus (with Romanian contact elements) | Description | Statement/stimulus (with English contact elements) | Description |
|--|---|--|---|
| 7. Már kétszer mentem vissza a <i>somer</i> osztályra. 'I have been back to the unemployment department twice.' | <i>Somer</i> is a loanword of Romanian origin. Meaning: unemployed | 17. Csak úgy <i>random</i> választottak, nem sokat gondolkodtak rajta. 'They just chose at random, without giving it too much thought.' | <i>Random</i> is a word taken over from English. Its pronunciation has been adapted to Hungarian. |
| 8. A <i>vitribé</i> rakta minden <i>diplomáját</i> . 'He put all his diplomas in the glass cupboard.' | <i>Vitribé</i> and <i>diploma</i> are loanwords of Romanian origin. Meaning: glass cupboard, diploma | 18. <i>By the way</i> ... hová is szeretnél menni? 'By the way... where would you like to go?' | <i>By the way</i> is an expression taken over from English. The original pronunciation is maintained. |
| 9. Két új <i>kalorifert</i> vásároltunk a tegnapi. 'We purchased two new radiators yesterday.' | <i>Kalorifer</i> is a loanword of Romanian origin. Meaning: radiator | 19. Nagyon <i>fesőn</i> ezen a képen! 'She/He is very fashionable in this picture!' | <i>Fesőn</i> is a word taken over from English (fashion). Meaning: fashionable |
| 10. Én beszéltem a <i>komándáttal</i> , de úgy sem kaptam engedélyt. 'I have spoken to the commander, but I still didn't get permission.' | <i>Komandant</i> is a term taken from Romanian. Meaning: commander | 20. Én ezt most <i>szkippelem</i> , mert nem bírom tovább! 'I'll skip this one, because I can't take it anymore!' | <i>Szkippelem</i> is a loanword from English (to skip sth). It has acquired Hungarian verbal inflections. |

Table 1. Statements for value judgment task

Based on the data collected through the questionnaires, we have compared the frequency ratings for the contact phenomena described above with respect to Romanian and English guest elements in Hungarian context sentences. Figure 7 below illustrates the obtained results.

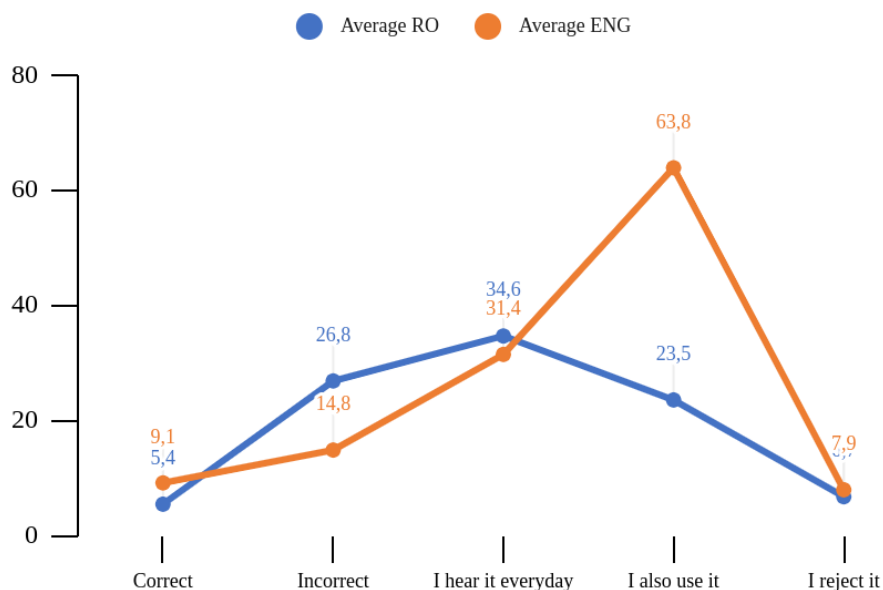


Figure 7. Frequency ratings for the contact phenomena (Questionnaire data, N=65, February 2022)

Comparing the values referring to Romanian and English guest elements, we might easily observe that results are more or less similar when it comes to rejecting them in Hungarian context sentences (7.9% vs. 6.9%). This can be explained through the idea of linguistic maintenance, that is respondents tend to maintain the homogeneity of the language by rejecting any element which might seem unnatural.

Another point in which values linked to Romanian and English guest elements are very similar concerns the fact that, even if they might find it unnatural, they still perceive certain contact phenomena in their surroundings. In other words, they are receptive to certain linguistic phenomena, however they do not produce it in their own discourses.

Commenting on the differences between the values associated to Romanian and English guest elements in Hungarian context sentences, we can remark that when it comes to using them, respondents have quite different attitudes towards these. While around two third of the respondents (63.8%) thinks that using English guest elements in Hungarian sentences is quite alright, only around one quarter (23.5%) of them think the same about Romanian guest elements.

Based on the evaluation of the above contact phenomena, it can be stated that the subjects of the sample we studied perceive the incorporation of English guest language elements into everyday language use as much more natural, since presumably in this case, too, the tendency to connectivity referred to as hyperlingualism according to Kelly-Holmes (2019) is recognizable.

A more in-depth picture of the quantitative data emerges from the focus group discussion and is illustrated below. In response to the stimuli statements, our interlocutors pointed out the need for contextualization when evaluating statements. They distinguished between two types of situations, everyday and formal speech situations. In everyday speech situations, they are more permissive and accepting of the use of vendettas. One subject also notes that: “Well, I don’t know, I use a lot of Romanian words like that in everyday life. And every time... suddenly they come to my mind faster than the Hungarian ones.” This is also supported by the third component in Figure 7: these elements, which occur frequently in the host language, in the immediate context, become familiar and natural precisely because of their frequency.

Furthermore, it helps quick comprehension, as one participant stresses: “It’s not necessarily perfection and correctness, given that any foreign word introduced into Hungarian is incorrect, but as in everyday use, because others can understand it, we accept it for that reason alone.” In the listed sentences 1-10, apart from statement 5 (which is a fixed word structure), the use of Romanian words is generally considered incorrect, the most frequent feedback referring to exposure (“We hear/use it, but it’s not correct!”). Yet, there are also arguments of “laziness” and brevity (expressing something in a shorter way). At the same time, the other two dimensions of the contact phenomenon, oral and written communication, are circulated in the conversation.

Based on the above, it can be said that the subjects in our sample consciously follow Bell’s (1984) audience design in formulating their speech intentions, that is they change the way they talk depending on the situation.

For Romanian-language elements, especially expressions related to administration or phrases often used in Romanian are considered to be more natural language use situations. The responses show that the part of the language repertoire used in administrative contexts is more closely related to the use of Romanian; and that the use of Romanian expressions is sometimes considered more natural. Here we can detect a phenomenon of so-called “linguistic convergence” which claims that speakers tend to change their patterns of speech in order to fit more closely with those of their interlocutor’s.

English guest elements are most often used in the context of slang and oral communication; and they are mainly associated with a youthful way of speaking.

In sentences 11-20, the most frequently invoked concept is slang and oral communication, with elements of English as a foreign language being associated mainly with a youthful way of speaking: “S77: Well, it’s very much embedded, I think, in the language of young people.”

The oral and written exposure to these statements is multiplied by the influence of films and digital communication (Facebook, Messenger, etc.). The explanation for using the word ‘random’ is highly informative: “S99: As I write it in Hungarian, I don’t even notice that it’s from another language.” At the same time, the digital way of being, the ‘everydayization’ of digital lessons, the acceleration of communication are all mentioned. “S101: Well, it’s more often when we write on Messenger, because then it’s easier to write *btw.*”

At the same time, this style of speech also results in age-specific differentiation “well, young people are trying to be different... even from the rabbit. As soon as I hear the word «cool», I know it’s used by a 40-50-year-old, not by a young person today... And then we look at each other, like, yeah...” S_126 (That’s cool! /Fancy).

In the above case, we can recognize the phenomenon of linguistic divergence in which speakers – in order to emphasize the difference between themselves and the person or people they are talking – tend to use different structures as opposed to other groups. This phenomenon may be interpreted as in-group identity maker.

As can be seen from the above, the members of the small community we studied make their metalinguistic judgments depending on the nature and form of communication (see Figure 4). The more the formal and written nature of communication is emphasized, the stronger the role of language correctness, and the more everyday and mainly oral communication situations are involved, the more frequent the permissive processes are for interlanguage elements.

Based on the above, we can say that the members of the small community under study make their metalinguistic value judgments depending on the nature and form of communication, i.e. they follow the audience design model (see Figure 8).

Based on the responses, the key indicators of design are: verbal vs. written, everyday vs. formal speech situations. The more the formal and written nature of communication is emphasized, the stronger the role of language correctness and standard language use, and the more commonplace the primarily oral communication situation or digital communication, the more frequent the permissive processes are for interlanguage elements.



Figure 8. Indicators of value judgment

8. Conclusions

In this study, embedded in a mixed-methodological approach, we sought to answer the question of how a minority community, which is majoritarian in a given region, evaluates its own linguistic resources and language use patterns, along attitudinal and metalinguistic value judgments. We were interested in how the respondents define their repertoire, according to their self-perception, furthermore, what value judgments and relational systems they associated with these.

The empirical data confirmed that, in spite of having a holistic view on the perception of language resources, based on their experience with language use, respondents did not consider overlaps between languages to be correct and, when choosing the appropriate speaking style in formulating their speech intention, the sample we have analyzed followed the audience design. In some cases, Romanian or English guest language elements were considered suitable, in other situations they were labeled as unacceptable. The responses show that the sample is more 'permissive' in their use of everyday colloquial language, but much stricter in their value judgments of formal and written communication.

We can also conclude that respondents proved to be more critical towards the use of guest language elements of Romanian origin. However, Romanian-language elements, especially expressions related to administration, are considered to be more natural language use situations.

On the other hand, English guest language elements (even if respondents do not speak the language very well) are most often used in the context of slang and oral communication; and they are mainly associated with a youthful way of

speaking, which can be used both to stand out or differentiate from other age populations and to connect to the global communication culture (hyperlingualism). In both cases of language choice, the homeliness of the guest language elements is explained by the more convincing sense of meaning and the shorter and quicker way of conveying the message. Consequently, we are dealing with easy, economical and understandable creation-construction.

As the given examples have shown, the respondents provided examples of linguistic divergence, linguistic convergence, as well as linguistic maintenance. We consider that the data analyzed in this study illustrates that in the development of a conscious, aware linguistic behavior it is extremely important to take into account both internal (i.e. linguistic) and external, extra-linguistic (socio-cultural elements, in-group and out-group) factors.

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