



Research Article

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Language Revitalization, Modernity, and the *Csángó* Mode of Speaking

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Abstract: This study points out that language revitalization is closely connected to the discourse of language endangerment that objectifies languages considering them countable, regarding them separable from both the speaker and their use while speaking. It argues that this “modernist” approach of language defines the nature and, implicitly, the results of language revitalization actions. Using the example of the Moldavian *Csángó* Hungarian Educational Programme in North-East Romania, the article shows that while this language teaching movement unfolded within the framework of modernity, it came into conflict with the local ideologies surrounding language and speaking. Although the latter were not created by the discourses of the nation state, they are not independent notions as late modern changes had a significant impact on them. The authors analyse language ideologies prior to modernity and the way they have changed as a result of more recent developments, particularly in the context of the standardization of the Moldavian *Csángó* mode of speaking.

Keywords: language endangerment, standardization, *Csángó* Hungarian of North-East Romania, language ideologies, nation-state

1 Introduction

The modern European states were developed along economic interests, which resulted in the formation of centralized markets (Hobsbawm 1990); centralization also triggered the unification and standardization of language and culture. The process was made legitimate by the rationalism of the Enlightenment, which created the ‘anonymous’ language as the condition of liberal democracy, namely the idea of a language gaining its authority through being “a voice from nowhere” (Woolard 2009): this language would be the tool needed to form democratic life with the rationalism of public discourses (Habermas 1989). However, as pointed out by several perspectives in a critique of this model, anonymous, i.e. standardized or otherwise “invented” (Makoni, Pennycook 2007) languages created new social inequalities (Silverstein 1996; Bauman, Briggs 2003; Gal 2006; Woolard 2016). This effect is becoming particularly significant on the so-called peripheries that are interpreted, that is, discursively constructed in relation to the centres of the nation-state (Pietikäinen, Kelly-Holmes 2013).

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From the perspective of the ideal language that stigmatizes linguistic and cultural diversity, the emancipatory movements of minority communities and languages, along with the decolonizing movements pose a permanent problem that could not have been eliminated by the nation state. Nevertheless, as Heller (2013: 21) points out, what these ‘peripheral’ minority movements have in common is that within their framework, “the logic of the nation-state is simply reproduced, creating new standards and new variabilities, new legitimate languages and new stigmatized varieties”. However, the reproductive processes of minority and decolonizing movements are not completely identical with the pattern of the nation state. Not only because the “logic” of linguistic and cultural unification faces new challenges among the globalizing economic developments of late modernity (this is also the case of the nation state), but primarily because the effect of the homogenisation programme of the nation state is enforced in a different manner on the periphery. This effect is moulded by processes of localization which Blommaert summarized as ‘peripheral normativity’, where “different but related norms are produced” compared to the norms of the ‘centre’ (Blommaert 2010: 80). But the peripheries are created by the dynamic of the discourses deriving from the ‘centre’, which may attempt the reinterpretation of the periphery as a result of globalization, usually as loci of authenticity (cf. the articles in Pietikäinen, Kelly-Holmes 2013). Thus, the current aspirations of minority language policy cannot be understood without the empirical examination of the way centralizing and periphery dynamism functions.

This study is an attempt to report the efficiency of the homogenization programme of the nation state, the way this programme evolves or even becomes unsuccessful in the areas that are unlike the centres of power, that have become minority areas. Maintaining “premodern” ideologies and practices by the minority speakers can be a sign of the relative failure of the programme, although these do not remain unchanged due to the effects of modernity, meaning that they do not precede modernity. When using the terms related to modernity, our starting point is Neustupný’s work (2006), who differentiates between four historical types of language management, that is, the metalinguistic behaviours within every type: Premodern, Early Modern, Modern, and Postmodern. These are typically present in certain time-periods, but the modernity-related processes and the ones preceding modernity can often be observed at the same time and in the same place, thus creating a non-simultaneity in the timeframe of approaching modernity that have also been identified in the “peripheral” Moldavian communities we examine (cf. Lajos 2015).

Neustupný has created his typology mainly based on the degree and mode of industrialization; we, however, consider a process much more contained in time and starting at a later point in history as the aspect separating the different types: the creation and changes of the nation state. Accordingly, in the premodern period the creation of the nation-state is not yet in progress, as opposed to the other three stages of modernity: two of these, early modernity and modernity are discussed here together, and we contrast them both with the premodern period and with what we call late modernity. This is mainly supported by the fact that in the minority communities living in the Moldavian region of Romania, integration into the processes of modernity started at a later point in time compared to other regions. Thus, in Moldavia, Romanian and Hungarian are in fact examples for when a “pre-packed Modern language that has developed elsewhere” is adopted (Neustupný 2006: 2213). In (early) modernity the ideology of nationalism defines the close tie between language and nation, which results in the dilemma of loyalty towards the Romanian or the Hungarian nation among the Hungarian minority groups. However, managing this dilemma is made even more difficult by the fact that the link between their own “language” and the language of the modern nation is not unambiguous for the speakers, as the premodern approach of the former still exists. This is also supported by the fact that the impact of late modernity is also present in the Moldavian communities, where – as an effect of globalization (mostly emigration and the increasing mediation of communication) – the instrumental view of language has become prevalent. This also connects to the language ideologies of the premodern period, in which the emotional relations to language are not a defining element of group formation.

Our description includes the way the reproduction of the modernization programme “logic” – following the analogical semiotic processes of what Irvine and Gal (2000) called ‘fractal recursivity’ – is realized in the context of minority languages and cultures. This analysis also tries to explore how language planning and language policy is formed in the context of the mechanisms which reinterpret, oppose and, at times,

reinforce the unification of late modern economy within the nation state. Our interpretation of these aspects also shows that the simultaneous influence of pre-national, nation-state and post-national processes could have consequences difficult to predict in certain marginalized linguistic contexts, such as the Hungarian language revitalization in Moldavia. At the same time, exploring these mechanisms may allow minority language movements to evaluate the possibilities and limitations of their own activity.

Language revitalization is the general label for the efforts which derive a significant part of their legitimacy from the discourses of “language endangerment” (Duchêne, Heller 2007). Scholars of language revitalization have developed particular views on language, its speakers and the changes that affect them. This is achieved by documenting processes affecting language, speakers and language change that have been generated in modernity; participants in these discourses usually consider such processes as having a negative impact on language maintenance. Accordingly, they create an interpretation of the changes regarding languages, speakers, and the stability of the sociolinguistic situation – often referred to with the metaphor of “ethnolinguistic vitality” in the literature –, describing the level of “danger” in the context of these categories. Scholars of language revitalization report the significant decrease of the number of languages on the one hand, and estimate that the decrease of language diversity will result in the loss of about 50% of spoken languages by the end of the century (Nettle, Romaine 2000). On the other hand, this also implies that the number of the speakers of certain languages is reduced, which ends with the death of the speaker often mediatized as “the last” in the discourse of a certain language – that is the extinction of the language (cf. Evans 2001). Thirdly, these two interdependent processes result from the weakening of the vitality of certain languages, including the reduction of functions routinely used by the speakers of the language. Several methods have been developed to measure the level of language endangerment, such as the ‘Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale’ (Fishman 1991) or, more recently, the ‘Language Endangerment Index’ (Lee, Van Way 2016). Grenoble (2016) emphasizes, in the critique of quantitative measurement tools, that they reduce the complex dynamic of society to numbers or series of numbers. According to her, instead of evaluating language endangerment, it would be appropriate for linguists, policymakers and educators to prioritize attitudes focusing on language vitality and sustainability (Grenoble 2016: 293).

Apart from Grenoble’s critique on measuring language endangerment, the foundations of discourses on endangerment have also been debated (Hill 2002; Duchêne, Heller 2007; Heller 2010; Pietikäinen 2015). As one of the main functions of discourses on endangerment is the justification of language revitalization, the doubts regarding the former also affect the foundation of the movement of saving languages. From a similar starting point as the one in the previous Heller-quote, critiques of the discourse on endangerment argue that the changes in the number of languages and speakers and the measuring of the processes responsible for these are discussed along the same normative linguistic approach that has emerged and become a practice within the nation state framework of modernity and in which the strictly separated, autonomous languages contribute to marking, maintaining and reproducing the borders of the nation and the state by the identity of the speakers and their decisions – supported institutionally, for example by the school –, which are connected to this identity (Duchêne, Heller 2007; Heller 2010; Pietikäinen et al. 2016). For instance, the biological metaphors that interpret linguistic processes in terms of “vitality” or “death” (Cameron 2007; Jaffe 2007) appear in the discourses on nation as well, which in many cases – for example, the situation of the “godparent” movement discussed in more detail below – present the nation as a family community (Lakoff 1996/2002; Hayden 2003). Our article discusses the paradox that the revitalization movement wishes to influence the linguistic processes conceived as a result of modernity within the conceptual framework of modernity itself. This framework, however, inevitably constitutes the limitations of language planning.

In our article we point out that the revitalization of the Hungarian language in Moldavia is closely related to the discourse on language endangerment, which objectifies language, considering it countable and seeing it separable from both the speaker and from its use in speaking (cf. Makoni, Pennycook 2007; Urla 2012). We argue that this “modernist” approach of language determines the nature as well as the result of the steps of language revitalization. Moldavian Hungarian language revitalization is particularly interesting from the perspective of language planning because, while it is achieved within the framework of modernity, it interferes with the local, “premodern” ideologies about language and speaking. Although the latter are

not created by the nation state discourses, they are not independent from them, while the changes linked to (late) modernity have a significant impact on them. To address these often conflicting effects, speakers have developed metalinguistic discourses by which they place speaking about their everyday linguistic practices outside the discursive order of the languages of modernity, Hungarian and Romanian. This is what we call the *Csángó* mode of speaking. The actors of language revitalization, however, are trying to integrate this mode of speaking into the standardization processes generated by modernity by transforming speaking into a language that can be saved or, at least, documented.

In order to understand the historical context of the tensions that accompany the movement, the study first presents the sociolinguistic situation of the Moldavian Hungarian/*Csángó*/Romanian language complex, which is different from the Hungarian language spoken on the former territory of Hungary. After introducing the methodology used in our research, we outline the broader context of the Moldavian Hungarian language teaching programme in conjunction with language planning – mainly with the central area of language modernization, namely standardization. In the fourth section, we analyse the way Moldavian speakers interpret their own linguistic situation and, finally, we examine the way the teaching programme relates to the peculiarities concerning the Moldavian speakers' beliefs and understandings regarding language. In this, we pay special attention to the revaluation of language linked to the economic changes of late modernity.

2 The situation of the Hungarian language in Moldavia

When participants of Hungarian discourses outside of Moldavia talk about Moldavian *Csángó* Hungarians, they usually refer to the nearly 50,000 (Tánczos 2012) speakers living in Moldavia, the Eastern region of Romania, predominantly Bacău County, who use language resources categorized as Hungarian. The history of Moldavian '*Csángó* Hungarian' communities differs from the history of other Hungarian-speaking communities – those from Hungary and the minorities living on the territory of the former Hungary (before the peace treaties that ended World War I), in Transylvania (Western Romania), Slovakia, Serbia, and so on – as they were affected differently by the processes related to modernity (Tánczos 2012; Pozsony 2006; Heltai 2014). These processes organize life around a power (public) centre (Deumert 2010), as the Moldavian '*Csángó* Hungarian' community never lived on the territory of the Hungarian state. The speakers in Moldavia live in communities whose lifestyle was essentially rural until the Eastern European regime changes of 1989 and 1990. The villages were isolated socially, economically and in terms of infrastructure. In these communities, the Roman Catholic religion still has a significant differentiating force, which separates these groups from the Romanian majority following the Orthodox religion. The quality of education is poor, as it improved only slightly or not at all in the past decades, with a few examples of social mobility or of people breaking away from the rural lifestyle. Because of the different religious, linguistic and cultural embeddedness of the Romanian government's efforts, despite all their endeavours, it had more difficulty and less success in reaching the members of the communities in question than the population in the surrounding areas (Péntek 2008). Because of the above, several researchers use the 'pre-modern' category when describing the lifestyle of these communities (Pozsony 2006; Tánczos 2012). This essentially rural lifestyle and the isolation it involves have been overridden by two processes in the last 25 years. The first one is the modernization of both state infrastructure and education, of social mobility due to Romania's economic development; the other is the gradual expansion of emigration to Western Europe. While the former processes lead towards integration into the modern Romanian nation state, the latter are transnational by nature.

Moldavia is the field for conflicts between "pre-modern" locality, the modern nation-state and the late-modern world, and as such the impacts upon the speakers are significantly different from the way the Hungarian world outside Moldavia relates to modernity. These differences, however, do not become explicit in the Hungarian discourses outside Moldavia, which concern the identity of Moldavian speakers who use Hungarian language resources. In these discourses the Moldavian speakers are represented as members of the Hungarian nation, therefore the often mentioned "disadvantages" they have to face, such as Romanian language education and Romanian language religious worship, become the emblematic examples of the

oppression faced by communities belonging to the Hungarian nation. As Hungarian-language schooling only existed for a couple of years after World War II, this prevented the spread of the Hungarian standard, resulting in the fact that Hungarian participants in non-local discourses about Moldavia perceive the Moldavian culture and language as archaic. The disappearance of this presumably archaic, true, old and, as such, authentic Hungarian language called the *Csángó* language is a real threat because of language shift. Along the logic of discourses of language endangerment, this results in the deprivation of the identities/existence of Hungarian-speaking communities interpreted as being part of the nation.

The activists who want to help ‘save’, i.e. revitalize the Moldavian Hungarian language so that its users “stay” Hungarian and become members of the (modern) nation, have been involved in these efforts that can be interpreted as answers to the challenges of language shift, which appears as a threat. These activists do not differentiate between the Hungarian and the Moldavian “Hungarian” identities, because a situation in which language and national identity are not linked is incomprehensible for a speaker who lives outside Moldavia, who is also a subject of the unification processes of modernity, and who perceives language as essential and dominant when defining the nation itself. It becomes thus necessary for the language revitalization programme to also mean exporting the language ideologies of the Hungarian nation-state: the communities are introduced to the modern Hungarian language, which has undergone language reform and constitutes the nation.

By inevitably interpreting language revitalization in the way described above, these circumstances have resulted in the start and consolidation of the Moldavian *Csángó* Hungarian Educational Programme in Moldavia over the last one and a half decades. The programme, initiated by Attila Hegyeli, a Hungarian ethnographer from Transylvania, started in 2000 as extra-curricular activities in a few villages and was mainly supported by the Hungarian state. Today it is organized in 25 locations or “sites of education”, with approximately 1,900 children; it is carried out partly outside institutional education, partly as part of the school curriculum, where the children can attend 2-3 classes a week, which are provided by law for minority groups as “mother tongue” classes. An important objective of the programme from the very beginning was that of creating “*Csángó* intellectuals” who will be able to take over the task of education in the long term. This goal has not been reached, that is, most of the teachers are from Transylvania and only a few have a local background. This is attributable to the significant wave of westward migration among educated young people, furthermore, only a fraction of the students participates in the Hungarian secondary school programme. The teachers who work in schools are paid by the Romanian state but they receive support from the programme as well, together with the teachers involved in the after-school activities. A part of these resources come from the Hungarian state while the other part from the godparents who are civilians providing financial support for one or more children included in the programme.

3 Material and Methods

The data presented herein are analysed in the research context of language ideologies. According to Gal, language ideologies are “those cultural presuppositions and metalinguistic notions that name, frame and evaluate linguistic practices, linking them to the political, moral and aesthetic positions of the speakers, and to the institutions that support those positions and practices” (Gal 2006: 163). We examine these ideologies by analysing the metalinguistic utterances that appear in the interviews conducted by us. This way we approach the relationship between discourses and ideologies, quoting Heller, by regarding discourses as “obviously linked to the notion of ideology, in so far as ideologies are understood as means of structuring and orienting domains of activity, and therefore inform discursive production and content” (Heller 2001: 120). The observation of the discourses resulting from an interview situation allows the researcher to focus on the connections during which the researcher’s and the interviewee’s language ideologies are displayed, are explained, interfere with each other and are formed by negotiations in such interactions.

Our data come from multiple sources; from 2001 onwards we have regularly carried out fieldwork in Moldavia as part of several research projects, from 2014 shifting our focus to language revitalization. As part of our multi-sited ethnographic research, we observed Moldavian children’s Hungarian classes in and out of

schools (we attended a total number of 50 classes), we accompanied the students to different competitions and presentations, we visited secondary school students in the Transylvanian student hostel reserved for those who continue their studies in Hungarian. In addition, we participated at one of the teachers' commencement gatherings lasting several days, as well as at several annual meetings organized in Hungary for the supporters of the programme, the godparents. We have been following the supporters' regular monthly gatherings since 2014. In addition to observing, we have also conducted interviews with the actors belonging to different groups of language revitalization (the figures refer to the number of interviews as the number of interviewees is much bigger due to the frequently used group interviews): children who learn Hungarian in Moldavia and their parents (N = 10), high school students from Moldavia who learn Hungarian in a Transylvanian town mostly inhabited by Hungarians (N = 12), students who used to learn Hungarian (N = 3), their teachers (N = 15) and godparents (N = 15). The material of the recordings and interviews carried out at the various public meetings adds up to about 70 hours. Before performing any analyses, it should be noted that the recurrent topic and, consequently, the decisive context of the interviews, was the attempt to differentiate the language use of the local speakers from that of the Hungarian researchers from Hungary or Transylvania.

4 Language modernization, standardization and language revitalization

The dominant model of minority language revitalization is language modernization of the nation-state, primarily standardization (Lane 2015). Modernity makes use of the pre-assumption that the object we call language can be abstracted from the continuous practice of speaking (Agha 2007). Standardization does not only imply inventing the modern standard language, but also the change which occurs in the way speakers think about language during the process. In the modern era, people living in standard language cultures, as described by Milroy (2001), compare their own utterances determined by the conventional pattern of everyday discourses to the ideal of the standard. When they think about the language, they focus on this ideal and not on how they usually speak. This objectified language can be written down and is accessible by its features included in dictionaries and grammars. The ideal of the standard is an important element of modern life. It is something to which school education is inextricably linked but also the knowledge learned in foreign language classes by the speakers of other languages, to which the overwhelming majority of printed language materials are adjusted and which is envisaged to provide access to a modern European national culture. We imagine all of these modern languages as something available as a unit (Blommaert, Rampton 2016: 24–25), something that can be possessed (García 2014: 149) and, as such, they exist, without a specific utterance, by themselves (Pennycook 2010: 9). The language ideal of the standard separates the language and the speaker in the conception of modern European people.

In the 18-19th centuries, the development of the standards of “great” European languages was achieved through ‘scripts’ of a social activity later named language planning (Deumert 2010). These scripts such as the ones describing – in Haugen’s (1972) terms – the selection, codification, implementation and elaboration of the standard language, are followed by the practice of language revitalization. The determining aspects of standardization, which provide the model of language revitalization, will be:

- Compared to the so-called dominant language it is often without doubt what – which language – needs revitalizing, but not even the selection of a language is free from the modernist ideology of specified languages. It is assumed that the object called ‘language’ can be abstracted from the continuous practice of speaking (Agha 2007). This implies that language in its objectified form can be described, that is, codified, it is accessible by its features included in dictionaries and grammars and, most importantly, from the perspective of the educational process and it can be learnt. This step is often the precondition for any further task in language revitalization; but even if the language is used regularly, the intent to document will appear through products that present language as an object – textbooks, dictionaries, chrestomathies such as volumes of folklore or written narratives, highly standardized performances for tourist visitors in the minority language, and others.
- the implementation and functional extension, i.e. elaboration of the use of language is a decisive

factor, which has as a primary means its introduction in school education, or if it is not considered suitable for such purposes, creating the linguistic, communicative and language ideological conditions to do so. This is also true in the language revitalization programmes, even if the literature emphasizes the importance of intergenerational family communication as opposed to the formal domains being of great significance from the perspective of linguistic unification and standardization (Fishman 1991; 2001 etc.).

- the condition of a successful intervention is the creation or transformation of the writing system and the spreading of the new literacy (especially its introduction in schools). This plays a dominant role in language revitalization as a determining domain of language planning and language policy (Lane 2015); for instance, a handbook on saving languages dedicates a separate chapter to the issue of literacy (Grenoble, Whaley 2006). In this respect, the impact of standardization can also be mentioned, since the language planning focusing on literacy is hardly compatible with the informal, familiar and, therefore, predominantly spoken modality of communication, which is decisive for the success of intergenerational language transmission.

The effects of these mutually determining aspects of modernity are well-known: the research on literacy and the relationships between school and the objectified modern language pointed out that these interactions greatly regulate modern human behaviour, as discussed by the recent sociolinguistic applications of the Foucauldian concept of governmentality (Urla 2012; Rampton 2016). In addition, less attention was paid to how the ideology of standard language invented by modernity – aided by literacy and institutional education – comes into contact with conflicting language ideologies, and to how the emerging ideological conflicts are dealt with by ‘peripheral normativity’, that is, by producing norms of the ‘periphery’ related to the norms of the ‘centres’ of modernity. In the following chapter we examine the interaction of these two ideologies analysing the local meta-discourses on ‘language’, and then we will discuss how language revitalization appears based on the above aspects in this space loaded with ideological tensions.

5 On the way speakers of the Hungarian/Csángó/Romanian complex in Moldavia approach language

The speakers of Hungarian in Moldavia have a different take on language than other speakers of Hungarian. The factor that determines this difference is the previously mentioned aspect according to which the standardization of Hungarian did not have a significant impact in Moldavia while, due to the marginalized cultural and linguistic situation of these communities, the modernization of Romanian has only recently started to influence local modes of thinking about the language. It should be noted that this statement on differences is likely true in comparison with other speakers of the Romanian language as well; however, as our study focuses on the revitalization of the Hungarian language, we only discuss the contrasts with other speakers of Hungarian.

This difference does not mean that the speakers from Moldavia are not familiar with the standardizing discourses of modernity, but their relations to these discourses are more complex and as such, cannot be interpreted as the reproductions of Romanian or Hungarian language ideologies. We bring two types of examples from the interviews. Our first example refers to the use of glottonyms, that is, the names of languages, for the Hungarian language. Taking into account the situational determination of the use of glottonyms, it can be observed that in the context created by our interviews, speakers contrast *pure* or *true Hungarian* (*tiszta, igaz magyar*), representing the ideal variety of the language as determined by its names as well, with the *mixed Csángó speaking* (*vigyített, csángós beszéd*). The term *pure* or *true Hungarian* used in Moldavia is the name of the ideal, objectified entity that is independent of the speaker, and that she does not identify as her modes of speaking:

(1) A = János Imre Heltai, B = 40 year old woman, C = 60 year old father of the woman – Lészped/Lespezi¹

A hogy van ez, hogy- hogy azt mondja C, hogy tiszta magyarul Magyarföldön beszélnek.

B ## az, mivel mink nem beszélgetünk tiszta magyarul, ugye.

C [nem, nem], mi csángósul

B [##] csángós

C csángó

A what does it mean that, as C says, pure Hungarian is spoken in Hungary.

B ## it means that we do not speak pure Hungarian, do we?

C no no we speak the Csángó mode

B ## Csángó mode

C Csángó

Extract (1) illustrates the contrasting of *pure* Hungarian with *Csángó*. This can be interpreted as the discursive differentiation of standard Hungarian from a non-standard variety, part of which is the discussion carried out between the father and daughter regarding the glottonym. However, the variability of the use of the glottonym seen in the extract does not only result from the fact that a dialect is usually not a standardized and thus objectified language in the conception of the speakers, that has a widely used and well established name. This variation rather testifies that Moldavian speakers cannot place *Csángó* in the framework of modern national languages. A recurring element in their answers is that *Csángó* is half Hungarian, half Romanian (*fele magyar, fele oláh*), that it is a mongrel (*korcsitura*) with Romanian elements coming into it (*beléhúzódott az oláh*), Hungarian and not Hungarian at the same time. The source of this uncertainty about the glottonyms is exposed in our second example.

According to our interviews, referring to their own ways of speaking in terms of a local language as a distinct entity is not self-evident for the speakers. Extract (2) shows the way the question aiming to elicit a definition of the *Csángó* language fails.

(2) A = János Imre Heltai, B = 50 year old man – Somoska/Şomusca

A az milyen, az a csángó?

B hogy beszélgetünk mük. nem úgy, hogy magatok beszéltek. tük magyarok vagytok, mert-

A hát mi a differencia a magyar meg a csángó közt?

B mi? főként, ahogy beszélünk. nem beszélünk úgy, mint tik.

A what is Csángó like?

B the way we speak, not the way you speak. you are Hungarians, because-

A what is the difference between Hungarian and Csángó?

B the difference? mostly the way we speak. we don't speak the way you speak.

For speaker B “Csángó” is not a language but a mode of speaking. He uses this definition twice despite the interviewer’s attempt to oppose the Hungarian and Csángó ethnonyms by offering an interpretive framework of the hierarchical system of languages and dialects. As the Moldavians interpret it, Csángó or Csángó speaking is neither a language, nor a dialect, but a mode of speaking. In this community, where the effects of modernity are only partially experienced this (leading to an almost exclusively rural, peasant lifestyle until recently), an interpretation of speaking is prevalent that is not linked to the concept of different languages, interpretation that has not been affected by the concept of invented languages created in modernity. This approach to language is not linked to the concept of different languages, and does not see language as an object independent of the speaker but, rather, as the inalienable part of human beings, what humans, when speaking, “do” and not have.

¹ Transcription symbols can be found at the end of the main body of the article.

At the same time, it could be argued that in the answer given to “what is *Csángó* like” in (2) language and speaking are only synonymous, and the term language is not used by speaker B in this particular interaction. The issue is difficult to decide as the modern concept of named language is well-known to the local speakers and when the interviewer, referring to this concept, formulates the question about the differences between Hungarian and *Csángó*, the interviewee relies on this common knowledge in his response. However, when naming his “language” in contrast to Romanian or Hungarian, he repeatedly argues that this mode of speaking is different from the way Hungarian or Romanian speakers speak. This is also true when the interviewee uses the glottonym-type name of the local mode of speaking, as seen in the following extract:

(3) A = a researcher coming from the local community, who graduated from a Hungarian language university, B = 50 year old man – Kákova/Faraoani

- A Hogy tanultak meg beszélni a gyerekek, magyarul (.) vagy úgy, csángóul? Tehát a tiszta magyar vagy csángóul?
- B Én csángó vagyok. (.) Én magyar-magyar nem vagyok. Csángó. (.) Énn- (.) kicsike korától öö csángóil beszélünk, mai mult (.) puțin ##
- A És a gyerekek hogy beszének most?
- B Most énnn (.) oláhul mai mult, met nehezen öö értik meg [ööö csángót]
- A [De a magyar az-] úgy beszének, mint bácsi [TANÍTÓ NEVE], deci, vorbesc ca, maghiara curată, ca [bácsi [TANÍTÓ NEVE]] sau-
- B [Nuuu.] (.) Și așa, și așa. Puțin ee ungur, ungur-ungur. [Puțin.]
- A [És] melyiknek örül job[ban?]
- B [Met] öö látod, én beszélek csángó-csángó. S akkor én csángóil beszélek velük. Itt mennyi tanulnak ööö, maj kevest tanulnak itten, met mai mult cu dansuri, mai mult cu (.) muzică- [ti. foglalkoznak]
- A Mhm.
- B S otthonn, (.) mondom én, csángótil, dee nem tudnak visszafelelni. S akkor kell explikáljam ceangăieștil, uuh, m- (.) oláhul es, magyarul es.
- A Uhum.
- B Ss (.) ugy, e.
- A How do the children learn to speak, Hungarian (.) or *Csángó*? I mean pure Hungarian or *Csángó*?
- B I am *Csángó*. (.) I am not Hungarian-Hungarian, but *Csángó*. (.) I- (.) since I was little uhm we spoke *Csángó*, more (.) or less ##
- A And how do the children speak now?
- B Now I (.) more Oláh [i.e. Romanian], because they uhm understand more difficultly [uhm *Csángó*]
- A [But the Hungarian is] they speak like [TEACHER'S NAME], so do they speak pure Hungarian, like [TEACHER'S NAME] or-
- B [Nooo.] (.) Like this and like that. A little is Hungarian, Hungarian-Hungarian. [A little.]
- A [And] what makes you more [glad]?
- B [Because] uhm you see, I speak *Csángó*-*Csángó*. And then I speak *Csángó* with them. What they learn here uhm, they learn very little here, more dances, more (.) music- [i.e. they are occupied with]
- A Mhm.
- B -and at home, (.) I talk to them in *Csángó*, but they can't respond. And then I have to explain in *Csángó*, uhm, H- (.) in Oláh and in Hungarian as well.
- A Mhm.
- B And (.) like that, yes.

In this extract speaker B refers to his own mode of speaking with a glottonym in several instances: ‘we spoke *Csángó*’, ‘I speak *Csángó*-*Csángó*’, ‘I talk to them in *Csángó*’ and ‘I have to explain in *Csángó*’. But a closer reading of the original text points out that the use of the glottonym is unique from at least three

points of view. First, in his answer to the researcher's introductory question, speaker B – when having to choose between Csángó and pure Hungarian – uses the Csángó glottonym to refer to his own ethnicity: “I am Csángó”. Only after clarifying the choice between his and others' ethnicities, the latter group including the researcher who was educated among ‘Hungarian-Hungarians’ in Transylvania, does he answer the question referring to the language he chose in the primary language socialization of his children. The use of the Csángó glottonym therefore depends on the use of the Csángó ethnonym, meaning that the speaker implicitly constructs the modern relation between language and nation in the utterance itself. Secondly, in his answer speaker B refers to the language he and his children speak as Csángó but, in the next answer, he says that his children have difficulties in understanding Csángó. During the interview – after discussing the linguistic consequences of the Hungarian classes his children attend – speaker B “contradicts himself” again: he claims at the end of the extract that he speaks Csángó with his children, however, they do not understand what he says. That is why he has to explain – again, in Csángó. This “language” is now characterized by – as we have already mentioned – being both Romanian and Hungarian; whoever explains something in Csángó, he/she does it “in Oláh [i.e. Romanian] and in Hungarian as well”. The use of the glottonym in these cases points out that the extension of the term is not well defined: it might both refer to a named language and to a mode of speaking. Finally, the variations of the Csángó glottonym are also worth mentioning; in the extract it appears as *csángóil*, *csángó-csángó*, *csángóitil*, and *ceangăieștil*. This, similar to the glottonyms seen in (1) can signal that speaker B considers the local modes of speaking to be different from those named languages that constitute the reference points of talking about *Csángó* in this interview extract.

In sum, the basic units of this approach to language are not different (national) languages and their social or regional dialects, registers and so on but, rather, certain elements of speaking, the components of the utterances, the language resources. When the Moldavians speak Csángó, they do not differentiate between Hungarian and non-Hungarian. Csángó speaking allows the speakers to use language resources that other speakers – paraphrasing James Scott (1998), *seeing like a nation-state* – clearly attribute to the Romanian language. The speakers in the following interview excerpt describe the way they speak in their own village and in the neighbouring villages:

(4) A = Csanád Bodó, B = 80 year old woman, C = 60 year old woman – Bogdánfalva/Valea Seacă

- A kendtek tiszta magyarul beszélnek?
 B nem./
 C /nem, nem.
 A hát hogy?/
 B /há, mük olyanok vagyunk, ceangăi, (.) ugy mojdnak minköt. (1.5) ee mët há mik vigyitettek vagyunk [ez a-]
 C [há], lászã ö (.) tiszta majarul egy sem beszél ejsze igazán.
 B nem, ne.
 C corcitur, ott nállunk, mind mondjuk, Nagypatak beszél egy módul, Trunk beszél mász-, éppe Balcseszku ez, kám ugy beszél.
- A do you speak pure Hungarian?
 B no./
 C /no, no.
 A how come?/
 B /well, we are like ceangăi, (.) they call us that. (1.5) and because we are mixed [this-]
 C [well] let it go (.) no one speaks pure Hungarian here.
 B no, no.
 C mongrels, at our place, we all say Nagypatak speaks one way, Trunk in another, Balcseszku again, they talk like that.

Speaker B and C use several Romanian (origin) words in this utterance. There are language resources that cannot be clearly attributed to one language or another: not only *lászã* (cf. Romanian *lasã* ‘let it go’) or *kám* (cf. Romanian *cam* ‘something like’) can be considered characteristic of this mode of speaking even if we know about their Romanian origins (these are usually called loanwords in historical linguistics) but also the linguistic practice that is exemplified by the use of *ceangã* or *corciturì* (either as ethnonyms or as glottonyms, or in some cases as both, just like in the use of *corciturì* above), the practice of code switching as defined by contact linguistics. The fact that speaker C in two of the utterances used Romanian language resources twice, as opposed to speaker B, who only did this once, neither C nor B diverged from the community-wide habits of speaking. This mode of speaking is not conceived to emerge from the tensions between the Romanian and Hungarian language, in a dualistic way, but is seen as a unitary whole by the Moldavians. What the Moldavians call *csángó* or *korcsitura*, or sometimes – stressing denominational differentiation – *katolik* (‘Catholic’), is in fact the mode of speaking in line with the discursive practices of the community. There are certain interpretations about when they use linguistic elements belonging to Romanian and Hungarian, but they do not think about it in this duality. As a middle-aged woman put it, “there are utterances that seem like the ones we say when we speak Romanian” (Magyarfalu/Arini). In her opinion *Csángó* does not have “Romanian utterances” but (also) some that are similar to the ones they use when they speak Romanian.

“*Csángó*” is not an entity that resembles Hungarian, Romanian or any other language in the modern sense, understood as a specific set of language resources, but it is the mode of speaking characteristic of the community. This kind of thinking does not split speaking into languages; it does not separate the speaker from speaking and it does not conceive of language as the property of someone, but as a mode of action. The characteristics of this mode of speaking are determined by the norms formed in the nexus of the community. As these change in the course of time, the mode of speaking also changes. One hundred years ago Moldavian Hungarians must have understood something completely different regarding what a speaker in extract (2) determines as “the way we speak” from what they do today; it is possible that the discursive habits of the community used to imply fewer language resources connected to the Romanian language. Moreover, the name they used to call their own speaking might have also changed, as the *Csángó* glottonym – similar to the ethnonym – is an external name that has been used for only a few decades in the community (Péntek 2014). The core idea did not change: the *Csángós* do not think of their language as “something” but as “someway”. The change is identifiable in the pressure on the speakers to relate this mode of speaking to the hierarchy of named languages, in which the local mode of speaking needs to be placed in contrast with standardized Romanian and Hungarian. As a result, these practices can only be called “pre-modern” for want of better, as the prerequisite of their name is in relation to named modern languages, but the relation to languages does not fully define the ways of speaking about their own mode of speaking. Our examples above present the situational use of glottonyms and the differences between languages and modes of speaking and illustrate the normativity of local responses to modernization; in the following we will analyse the effects of Hungarian language revitalization in this reference system.

6 Language revitalization in Moldavia

The previously mentioned three main aspects of language standardization – objectifying language, the role of education and literacy – can also be applied to the Moldavian Hungarian language revitalization. These appear as follows. On the one hand, the Moldavian programme aims to teach a language identified as the Hungarian language. In this process, Moldavian Hungarian language revitalization follows the language approach created by the development of modern national languages, as it does not question the priority of the Hungarian language as subject taught to the Moldavian children over the everyday experiences of the Moldavian children’s language environment and the use of such experiences in language pedagogy. In addition, language teaching does not mean teaching a (foreign) language but that of the Hungarian language, which is taught in Moldavia within the context of its relation to the Hungarian nation just like in the case of other Hungarian-speaking communities (in Hungary and other Hungarian minorities). This

is equally obvious for the participants of the teaching programme – teachers, parents, children – and for those who do not take part in the programme; however, it is probably less evident that the seemingly essential relation between language and nation can be traced back to the premise which constructs the Hungarian language for the modern nation born simultaneously with it. Thus, the teaching of the Hungarian language in Moldavia becomes part of national identity politics without the participants being aware of this connection. In this respect, the conflict between participating in or refusing the programme by the local speakers – especially the parents, much less the children – can be interpreted as one in which attending the Hungarian classes is a sign of loyalty towards the Hungarian nation, while refusing to participate in the programme indicates loyalty towards the Romanian nation. Compared to this, the questions about how the Hungarian language as a medium of education – which according to the local interpretations is closely linked to belonging to the Hungarian nation – is constructed in the classes of the programme and how this is linked to the everyday speech surrounding children do not even arise.

The fact that the teaching of the Hungarian language in Moldavia appears to be self-evident is closely related to our second aspect: the role of the school. We have shown that in the beginning the teaching of the Hungarian language was not connected to institutional education, as there still are settlements with no Hungarian teaching in schools. The leaders of the programme, however, wanted for the local schools to take over as much of the teaching tasks as possible from the very beginning. This strategy is motivated by three main aspects. On the one hand, Hungarian language tuition schools are available not only in Hungary but also for Hungarian minorities living in Transylvania, Slovakia, Serbia, and other territories that used to belong to Hungary before World War I. The participants of the programme are certain that the main means of revitalization is eliminating the lack of schools where Hungarian language is also taught among Moldavians considered to be a Hungarian minority. On the other hand, the majority of the teachers who participate in the programme got their qualifications in Hungarian schools, meaning that they have established ideologies about the Hungarian language, which they acquired in Hungarian classes. Accordingly, one of the key objectives of teaching Hungarian is participating in language standardization, namely the propagation of the ideological complex James Milroy calls ‘standard language culture’ (Milroy 2001). Lastly, the normative support of teaching could be ensured if the Romanian state would finance Hungarian classes, as in the case of “mother tongue” education reserved for other minorities in Romania.

Objectifying language and institutional education both contribute to our third aspect, namely that the Hungarian teaching programme in Moldavia places great emphasis on literacy. This also has precedents: the main field of Hungarian language modernization that provides a model for the actors of the programme was written language use, particularly the influence of literary and scientific registers (on the Hungarian language reform in the 18-19th century see Laakso 2014). The impact of language modernization on orality appeared indirectly and this only began to change with the widespread introduction of schooling (this was roughly carried out by the end of the 19th century) by the teachers and professors who acted as model speakers. The highly respected speakers, the teachers of the Moldavian Hungarian language teaching programme – in addition to the language patterns provided by themselves – seek the development of Hungarian literacy in communities living in genuinely oral linguistic cultures. The perspective that considers written language to be primary is related to the two aspects mentioned above: on the one hand, through the way the language becomes comprehensible in the objectified world of written texts (this was our first aspect); on the other hand, through the way language that has earned its written form now becomes capable of achieving objectives of identity politics, such as the possibility of continuing studies in Hungarian (Transylvanian) schools as a tool of educating the “Csángó” intellectuals, or developing a wider (national) community through corresponding with the godparents (this was our second aspect). Literacy thus cannot only be derived from our previous approaches, but it also contributes to the creation of Hungarian teaching in Moldavia – as the education of (written) Hungarian language that follows objectives of identity politics – as it is in fact happening.

Thus, in the context of the Moldavian Hungarian revitalization programme the Hungarian language appears as a subject, which can be taught and learned, and through literacy practices it can be presented as the result of the programme and is also the tool of social mobility. The features of this language are not inconsistent with the language ideal that results from standardization. However, their correlation with the

ideologies regarding local practices of speaking generates tensions.

7 Summary

Our study presents how the Moldavian Hungarian language teaching programme can be interpreted within the relations of the consequences of linguistic modernization, of late modernity and the way local speakers see language. We have pointed out that modern European languages – including Hungarian and Romanian – appear in an objectified form, as an entity separate from the speaker in the discourses on language. Although the new linguistic developments of late modernity create a different context to the homogenizing and standardizing processes of the nation-state, within which the practice of objectifying the language is not questioned. Contrary to this, the Moldavian speakers' utterances about language reveal a different approach. This considers speaking instead of the existence of certain languages to be the core element in thinking about language.

The conflict between the two different perceptions of language causes tensions that are also experienced by the participants of the language revitalization programme. Language revitalization programmes are based on the language concept of modernity, while the speakers' language practices follow different patterns. The aim of the action programme applying the concept of language endangerment is to preserve and to revitalize these latter – in our case the ways of speaking called “the *Csángó* mode”. As a result, the practice of language revitalization aims to preserve something – in our case the Moldavian Hungarian language – while the conceptual aim of revitalization would be maintaining a particular mode of speaking. It is contradictory that the participants of the revitalization programme only use the tools of modernity for this purpose.

As seen in the example of Hungarian-teaching in Moldavia, the simultaneous functioning of pre-national, nation-state and post-national trends can have a series of consequences on the way people see languages and the mode they speak, as well as on how formal education and literacy have an impact on these, within the practice of language revitalization that the movements following patterns of nation-state homogenization and standardization are not prepared for, and the activity of which cannot be treated successfully within their modernist framework. A more thorough understanding of these mechanisms – based on empirical ethnographic research – is required in order to allow minority language movements to evaluate the possibilities and limitations, namely the sustainability of their own activity, more accurately.

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Transcription symbols

(.)	pause shorter than a minute
(1.5)	pause (seconds)
[]	overlapping voices
xxx-	self-interruption
xxx/ or /xxx	joining (speaker change without pause)
#	indecipherable syllable

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