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MULTILINGUALISM IN THE ROMANIAN BANAT: ELITE AND EVERYDAY LANGUAGE IDEOLOGIES

INTRODUCTION

The Romanian Banat is a mosaic of different cultures, of which Romanian, German and Hungarian have been dominant¹. The most remarkable characteristic of the inhabitants of the Banat is their long tradition in the use and knowledge of many languages. Nevertheless, multilingualism in the Banat has been little studied. For example, there is no mention of the Banat in the standard academic works on multilingualism (see e.g. Romaine 1995; Edwards 1994; but see Goebl et al. 1996). As a part of our joint Finnish-Hungarian project, this article is an exploratory attempt to begin to fill this gap.

To gain a preliminary picture of the Banat's history of lively multiculturalism and multilingualism, we may begin by taking a look at the market in Lipova (in Hungarian and German: Lippa). It is remembered by our informants as a place where at least Hungarian, German and Romanian were spoken daily. According to one informant, born in 1922, the market consisted of the following stalls and nationalities:

¹ According to the 1992 Romanian census (as presented in Neumann 1996, 18) the population of the Romanian Banat consists of the following:

1)	Romanians		1,096,768	(80%)
2)	Hungarians		124,703	(9%)
3)	Germans		37,812	(3%)
4)	Roma		31,650	(2%)
5)	Serbs		22,982	(2%)
6)	Ukrainians		10,036	(1%)
7)	Slovaks		9,215	(1%)
8)	Bulgarians	•	7,594	
9)	Croats		3,665	
10)	Czechs		3,532	
11)	Jews		1,848	
12)	Others		5,323	
		Total:	1,352,803	•

fur shop	butcher	barber	bakery	butcher	small inn	miller	liquor store	larger inn
Romanian	German	German	Hungarian	Romanian	Romanian	Jewish	Jewish	Hungarian

The connections between the different ethnic groups and languages have not been restricted to marketplaces. Many of our informants had attended school in more than one language, have parents with different ethnic backgrounds and are themselves married to such people. For instance, two of our informants had the following backgrounds:

- Elderly Hungarian woman, born in 1932

 Her parents were Hungarians, she went to a German school. She married a Romanian and at home mostly speaks Romanian.
- Elderly Hungarian woman, born in 1922
 Her parents were Hungarians. She attended school in German (classes 1–2) and in Romanian (3–4). She married a Hungarian.

Both informants speak Hungarian, German and Romanian (for further examples of linguistic biographies in the Banat, see Barna & Lönnqvist 2000, 134–135). One place we observed these languages side by side is the Catholic church. For instance, in Neudorf (a hamlet next to Lipova) we attended a trilingual mass (on the use of different languages in the Catholic church, see Barna & Lönnqvist 2000, 126–128).

During our fieldtrips to the northern Romanian Banat we conducted over 100 interviews. In these interviews, as well as in casual conversations with local people, multilingualism is often referred to as a symbol of tolerance. However, in the research literature permanent contact between different languages is often perceived as competition between them and as a cause of conflict between those communities (see Wardaugh 1987 for examples of the competition between French and English). Similarly, the few previous studies on the linguistic situation in the Banat consist of descriptions of language spread, decline and dominance from the point of view of one language (see e.g. Toma 1998 for German). In brief, there is a contradiction between the representations of multilingualism by the local informants and the literature sources.

Following Woolard (1998, 3; see also Gal 1993), the aforementioned two representations of multilingualism in the Romanian Banat may be called *language ideologies*. Language ideologies are explicit or implicit representations "that construe the intersection of language and human beings in a social world" (ibid.). In this study, I present an inventory of the basic descriptions of multilingualism and the three historically dominant languages in the northern Romanian Banat: Hungarian, Romanian and German. I use two kinds of data. First, with the help of secondary sources, I present an overview of some elite conceptions (Hungarian – German – Romanian) of the linguistic history of the Banat. Secondly, I examine extracts from

the interview data that contain talk about language(s) as evidence for everyday language ideologies.

In this manner it is possible to effect a comparison of elite and folk, and national and local language ideologies. In my article I focus on the linguistic dimensions and pay less attention to other perspectives (religious, political, ethnographic etc.). By so doing I hope to avoid overlaps with the other articles in this volume.

PART I: ELITE REPRESENTATIONS OF THE ROMANIAN BANAT

In the study of multilingualism it is a widely accepted view that one should start by tracing the historical processes which have created the linguistic and social diversity under investigation (e.g. Edwards 1994, 10; Gal 1979, 23). Furthermore, the researcher is often warned (e.g. Gal 1979, 1993), that the existence of widely different views on the history of multilingual communities can make such a description easily biased or at least partial². Also in the case of the Romanian Banat, presumably no balanced historical account exists (Halmesvirta, in this volume). That is, the few descriptions on the Banat focus on a single ethnic group. However, this can simultaneously be converted into an asset when it comes to the examination of linguistic ideologies. As Gal (1993, 342ff.) has demonstrated, the available information about minorities can be seen as a reflection of the dominant ideologies towards them.

Typically, censuses (the way they are organised, the questions and methods used) in multilingual countries have been examined as evidence of dominant ideologies towards minorities (Gal 1993; Varga 1998). Because of its periphery status and territorial changes, national censuses have a less transparent role in the case of the Banat. Thus, instead of censuses I will briefly review the existing historical descriptions of this area. That is, I shall first present some basic factual information and then review some of the evaluations that have been made of this period, focusing on the role of language in these evaluations. The selected writings represent three elite perspectives: German, Hungarian and Romanian. They can be viewed as elite views, or as professional accounts, since all of the writings have been composed as academic texts by academic authors.

The history of the Banat after the Turkish occupation (ending ca. 1717) can be divided into three main periods according to the group in power:

- 1) German (1717–1778)
- 2) Hungarian (1778-1918)
- 3) Romanian (1918-).

² Nevertheless, some researchers (e.g. Mclure & Mclure 1988) still choose one dominant view of history and present it as the "brief history" of the multi-ethnic region in question.

1) German hegemony (1717–1778)

After the Turkish wars the Banat, largely depopulated, ended up in the hands of the Habsburg Monarchy. The Austrian Empire decided to establish a crown administration (compared to feudalism) and systematically colonise the area. According to Clarkson (1997), Vienna had the following aims in colonising the Banat:

- 1) to fortify the land against invasion
- 2) to create agricultural land
- 3) to further the Roman Catholic religion in Eastern Europe.

Other German sources (e.g. Petersen et al. 1933, 220; Toma 1998, 47) explain this forceful colonisation with the dominant 18th century economical theory, mercantilism. In any case, Hungary, and East in general, was the main direction of German expansion. Furthermore, the German administration succeeded in making the Banat one of the most prosperous agricultural regions in Central Europe. From their point of view the colonisation and government of the Banat was "one of the finest examples of Austrian-German cultural work in South-East Europe" (translated from Petersen et al. 1933, 219; see also the article by Hannonen for local German family memories of this period).

The Banat had never been totally depopulated, after the Turkish occupation Romanians formed the majority of population. Furthermore, also many other peoples besides Germans migrated to the Banat after the defeat of the Ottoman Empire³. The pro-Romanian and pro-Hungarian scholars are reluctant to see the German expansion in a positive light. In the view of a Romanian geographer, Cretan (1997, 135), the aim of colonisation was to Germanise and Catholicise the Banat. That is, it had negative aspects for the "native population" (Romanians), since one of its goals was "to settle Germans in rich Romanian villages".

Hungarian sources (e.g. Kósa 1977), in turn, stress that the Banat was not returned to the Hungarian nobility. In addition, Hungarians were intentionally excluded in the colonisation process from this part of territorially "historical Hungary". Although the Banat became one of the most multi-ethnic regions of Europe, Hungarians were among the last settlers to arrive in the area (ibid.).

Linguistically, the period of German administration was in all probability liberal and pragmatic. Generally, German teachers were included among the groups of German colonists. Under the administration of the Catholic Church (typically the priest was also the schoolmaster), they provided basic education, and the language

³ According to Petersen et al. (1933, 214) the population of the Banat consisted of the following groups in 1770:

1)	Romanians	180,000	(57%)
2)	Serbs	80,000	(25%)
3)	Germans	43,000	(14%)
4)	Others	14.000	(4%)

Total: approx. 317,000

of instruction was German (Petersen et al. 1933, 256–257). Other groups had the possibility of education in their mother tongue if this was provided by the local church (e.g. the Orthodox Church for Romanians). However, German was most certainly the language of social prestige, and certain other groups of colonists became assimilated to the German group. For instance, Italian, French and Spanish groups were already counted as "Germans" in the 1770 statistics. In any case, the occasional Turkish attacks and the plague kept the number of inhabitants down, and because of the need for new colonists, no stabilisation of German linguistic hegemony was possible. Among others, those employed by the German farmers were mostly speakers of other languages (Petersen et al. 1933, 217). Furthermore, trade in general required the command of many languages (ibid, 249). In brief, as Petersen et al. somewhat reluctantly conclude (1933, 231, translated from German), "most villages became an ethnically (volklich) mixed population, so that no large closed linguistic territories could emerge". Finally, neither Romanian nor Hungarian sources document violations of language rights during this period.

2) Hungarian hegemony (1778–1918)

In 1778, with some exceptions, the Banat was administratively returned to Hungarian hands. Parts of the territory were returned or sold to feudal lords who took over the resettlement process. Some parts preserved the privileges declared by various Austrian emperors, and peasants in general were not forced into serfdom in the Banat. The proportion of Hungarian settlers to the Banat grew, although German and other settlers⁴ continued to flow into the area, too. (Kósa 1977; Toma 1998, 51.)

The late 18th and the 19th century were a period of National Romanticism in Europe. These ideas spread to Hungary and were reflected in its policy towards other nationalities within its borders, especially by the end of this period. According to various sources (see Hoensch 1988, 28–36, 73–76; Romsics 1998, 87–88; Toma 1998, 51), it was the Austrian attempts to establish German as the language of administration in 1780–1790 that initially motivated the appropriation of this ideology in Hungary. In Hoensch's interpretation (1988, 30), the nationalist ideology developed into the view that "complete linguistic assimilation would also lead to total political integration, i.e. allegiance to the Hungarian nation".

In the Banat the main victim of the Magyarisation process were the Germans, or

⁴ According to the estimates by Petersen et al. (1933, 214), the population of the Banat in 1840 consisted of the following groups:

1)	Romanians		566,000	(52%)
2)	Germans		208,000	(19%)
3)	Serbs		202,000	(19%)
4)	Hungarians		60,000	(6%)
5)	Slovaks		11,000	(1%)
6)	Others		36,000	(3%)
		Total:	1,083,000	

at least the violation of their linguistic rights has received the most attention in our present sources. According to Toma (1998, 51) the following measures were taken to reform the population of the Banat, especially the German element, during the waves of Magyarisation:

- after 1782 only Hungarian speaking teachers were appointed
- in 1790 Hungarian was declared as the official language of administration (besides Latin)
- after 1790 the Catholic Church printed its books in Hungarian and used Hungarian as the language of instruction
- in 1831 Hungarian became the only language of instruction in state schools
- in 1879 Hungarian became an obligatory subject in every school.

Toma (1998, 52) notes also that the different congregations sheltered other languages than German (e.g. the Orthodox Church provided schools in the Romanian language). In her view it was a great disappointment to the Germans that the Catholic Church took part in the Magyarisation process. From the Romanian perspective (Cretan 1997, 134), Hungarians colonised old Romanian villages, although Cretan does not report any linguistic violations.

The censuses carried out in the late 19th century indicate a declining trend in the German population in favour of the Hungarian element in the Banat⁵. This can partly be seen as an indicator of the prestige of the Hungarian language (in contrast to German) during this period. Finally, in the aftermath of the First World War (1918) a drastic change in the situation took place when most of the Banat became part of the Kingdom of Romania.

3) Romanian hegemony (1918–)

The peace treaty of Trianon (1920) ratified the division of the Banat (1918) between three countries: Serbia (approx. 33 % of the territory), Romania (approx. 66 %) and Hungary (approx. 1 %). The history of the Romanian part can be roughly

⁵ According to Petersen et al (1933, 214) the population of the Banat in 1900 and 1910 consisted of the following groups (notice especially the changes in the numbers of Hungarians and Germans):

	•	<u>in 1900</u>		<u>in 1910</u>	
1)	Romanians	584,000	(38%)	592,000	(37%)
2)	Germans	410,000	(27%)	388,000	(25%)
3)	Serbs	270,000	(18%)	284,000	(18%)
4)	Hungarians	194,000	(13%)	242,000	(15%)
5)	Slovaks	22,000	(1%)	22,000	(1%)
6)	Croats	5,000		5,000	
·7)	Ruthenians	1,000		2,000	
8)	Others	43,000		47,000	
	Total:	1,529,000		1.582,000	

divided into four main periods: the inter-war period (1918–1940), the Second World War and its aftermath (1940–1947), the Communist era (1947–1989) and the restoration of democracy (1989–). Here I will briefly review the first period, since the other periods are discussed elsewhere in this volume.

The new rulers, the Romanians, had already long been the majority in this region. In the interwar period, according to Romsics (1998, 218), the Romanians took the ideological path of striving towards the establishment of a homogeneous nation-state. Nevertheless, the Romanians represented the ethnic Germans as cosufferers from Magyarisation. Among others, German schools were re-established during this period. Furthermore, the Catholic Church began to use more German (Toma 1998, 53). Also many German associations were established during the inter-war period. The Hungarian historian, Romsics (1998, 222–223, translated from Hungarian) depicts Germans in the inter-war period (1918–1940) as follows: "They had all the rights, they even had territorial autonomies. This changed only in the 30s, when some of them – with the support of Nazi Germany – begun to behave as if they had their own state." In brief, the inter-war period brought cultural, political and economic prosperity to the German population.

The main rival for Romania in general was Hungary. In the Banat the former Hungarian elite minority was now under threat. For instance, Diószegi (1990, 21ff.) documents the following violations of their rights:

- anybody with a Romanian ancestor could be forced to attend schools in Romanian (1925)
- only Romanian was allowed in kindergartens and in adult education (1925)
- only Romanian was admissable in court (1931)
- Romanian was declared the official language of administration; the use of Hungarian by local governing bodies was banned (1936).

These legislative measures were of course discriminatory towards all minorities. However, during the Hungarian period, similar acts had been perpetrated. That is, some of the minorities had had no rights during their previous history either. Furthermore, as Edwards (1994, 106) stresses, the rise to power of a formerly weaker language gives most pain to those who were once dominant themselves. Accordingly, the Romanian era (since 1918) has been described extremely negatively by Hungarian scholars, and still today few periods are seen as positive (see the article by Halmesvirta for recent developments).

The history of the German settlements is one of dramatic decline after the interwar period. Germans were punished after the war in accordance with the principle of "collective guilt". Most of them were deported to forced labour camps and their cultural rights became widely curtailed during the Communist era. Finally, in many successive waves most of the ethnic Germans left Romania (see the article by Hannonen for details).

Discussion

It is commonly assumed in Europe that language borders form the territory of nations, which constitute natural groupings of people. For instance, in the media this ideology serves as a basic frame for reporting and interpreting the news in the multilingual parts of Europe and on other continents (see Blommaert & Verschueren 1998). That is, monolingualism is considered the norm and multilingualism is seen as a potential source of conflict. In the reports on the Banat this view is realised through isolating a single ethnic group and its language for description. Such a description typically includes a positive and nostalgic element for the period of the "golden age", or age of hegemony. Other periods of time are depicted in a negative light. Furthermore, describing the history of the Banat often includes the monitoring and documentation of violations by the other groups.

Violations by one's own group are less documented, and their mention is often categorised as propaganda. By contrast, the policies of the own golden age are viewed as tolerant. Among others Petersen (1933, 231) claims that (translated from German) "the officers leading colonisation made no attempts to Germanise the Banat". For the last period (1918–) Cretan (1997, 133) concludes that: "the Romanians have not assimilated minorities". Finally, for the Hungarian period, Paládi-Kovács (1994, 33–34) stresses that in 19th century Hungary the assimilation of minorities to the Hungarian ethnic group was natural and spontaneous (caused by industrialisation etc.).

Language plays a fundamental role in descriptions of history reviewed above. The spread, cultural success and share of power by an ethnic group all seem to culminate in the question of language. The language of administration, education, church and so on, have been central arenas for the application of language ideologies. Finally, the brief review of historical representations of the Banat supports Smith's (1991, 160–165) idea that nationalism is an extremely tempting resource for the elite, which is represented here by a selection of academic scholars. In brief, also for the modern intellectual, the nation is the most obvious source of mission, power and identity. From this point of view, the Banat is presented as a collection of competing nations and languages. Next, this elite view is compared with everyday folk views in the Romanian Banat today.

PART II: EVERYDAY LANGUAGE IDEOLOGIES AMONG THE HUNGARIAN SPEAKERS IN THE ROMANIAN BANAT

In the previous section I reviewed elite views on multilingualism. Next, for the purposes of comparison, I will provide an inventory of folk views about the speaking of many languages. The evidence is drawn from 10 unstructured interviews conducted with Hungarian speakers in the northern Romanian Banat between 1998

and 2000. (More information about the interviews is given below.) Hungarian speakers were selected for this purpose, since the German inhabitants were studied by other researchers in our team (see the articles by Lönnqvist and Hannonen). Furthermore, currently Hungarians are the largest minority group in the Banat.

The tape-recorded interviews took place in Hungarian in the following towns and villages: Arad, Lipova (H, G: Lippa), Timişoara (H: Temesvár, G: Temeschwar), Fântânele (H: Angyalkút, G: Engelsbrunn), Neudorf⁶ (H: Temesújfalu), and Fibiş (H: Temesfüves, G: Fibisch). The interviewees were aged between 19 and 80, comprising 7 men and 3 women: 19 (M), 20 (W), 34 (M), 35 (M), 52 (W), 54 (W), 65 (M), 73 (M), 74 (M), 80 (M). Their level of education ranged from illiterate to college student. The informants worked as farmers, gardeners, drivers and factory workers.

This collection of informants was reached with the help of the local Catholic Church. As a by-product of finding German informants we simultaneously asked if there were any Hungarians in the village (district). In this way we were able to contact the local people. Other methods applied to reach the minorities in the Banat have been contacting their political organs⁷ (applied by Toma 1998) or the local intelligentsia (applied by Gereben 1999). These different "snowballs" as well as the different identities of the research groups (local researchers, researchers from the "homeland", researchers from abroad, different professional identities etc.) undoubtedly influence the data and results. From our point of view, the outsider stance enabled us to see the area better from a multicultural perspective. Furthermore, our personal distance from the topic (before our first trip to the area we had practically no information on the Banat) forced us to take local views seriously, without any transparent preconceptions (cf. Lönnqvist 2000, 145–147).

From the viewpoint of the interviewees our work consisted of the following8:

- (1) HW52 (P499) HW introduces the researcher PL to her parents
- 01 HW: öö ilyen öö kutatást végeznek itt a népeknél a magyarokat és a németeket keresik föl

⁶ Banat placenames are likely to confuse the reader. Most places have Romanian (official, used in signs etc.) as well as Hungarian and German (inofficial, historical) names. However, some German names, e.g. Neudorf and Charlottenburg, have persisted as official names. The situation is further complicated by the everyday use of different place names. For instance, local Hungarians do not know or use all the Hungarian placenames. The use of placenames in the Banat is a potential area for a separate study.

⁷ Romániai Magyar Demokratikus Szövetség for Hungarians and Demokratisches Forum der Deutschen in Rumänien for Germans

⁸ The transcription symbols and codings used are as follows:

First line: HW = Hungarian woman, HM = Hungarian man. The numbers indicate age. The year of interviewing and the cassette number are in brackets.

Transcript: PL (Petteri Laihonen), PH (Pasi Hannonen) and LCs (László Csősz) are interviewers.

Symbols: (,) = micropause; (.) = longer pause; @ = change of voice; well- = repair; ? = question intonation; (--) = unclear.

- 02 PL: Igen
- 03 HW: Hogy-hogy volt régebben és ilyesmiket
- 01 HW: They are carrying out research with people they are looking for Hungarians and Germans in the
- 02 region
- 03 PL: Yes
- 04 HW: How was it in the old days and so on

In other words, we told the informants that we were gathering life-stories. In my interviews, I said in addition that I was interested in the use of many languages in the Banat. The interviewees were very co-operative. In the villages it was sometimes difficult to leave a home because of the overwhelming hospitality. In towns, however, people had minor reservations (e.g. whether they should say certain things into the tape-recorder). Nevertheless, we experienced no signs of hostility from the many homes we visited.

In the interviews I began with general questions (informants' age etc.) followed by questions about languages. In general I tried to avoid posing many direct, provocative questions and conduct the interview in a conversation-like manner. Furthermore, no attempt was made to carry out survey-like interviews, rather those issues that appeared important to the informants were explored further. However, when the conversation lapsed I put forward some of the typically used questions about language use (see e.g. the appendices in Gal 1979 and Csernicskó 1997).

Folk views about languages have traditionally been studied as attitudes. Attitudes in turn have been studied by means of quantitative methods and often as something that exist below the conscious level. Where interviews have been used, it has been necessary to simplify and code questions and answers in order to measure attitudes and compare results (see Romaine 1995, 288ff). This method is not applied here.

In this study, following the concept of language ideologies, an attempt is made to review transparent everyday folk representations of living in a multilingual society. Representations that construct language ideologies are here understood as any kind of evaluative or reporting talk about languages ('language about language'). Even though no codification or quantification of data has been carried out, an attempt has been made to choose typical examples for examination. Further, possible counter examples to these evaluations are also examined.

The actual accounts are presented and examined as they appeared during the interviews. In this examination of transcripts I focus mainly on the content of linguistic evaluations and reports. Attention is also paid to their interactional context. For instance, a language evaluation may be given as an answer (after a question) and it may involve comparison with other languages. By citing the evaluations as they have occurred during the interviews my goal is to enable the reader to critically review my interpretations of the data.

The 10 interviews examined here were conducted with people identified as "Hungarians". This identification was given by other people in the neighbourhood

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and the interviewees also shared this identification. In this way we can say that they share an ethnic identification. Below I will examine their representations of multilingualism and the languages spoken most widely by them: Hungarian, Romanian and German.

Hungarian

Before examining evaluations of the Hungarian language, some background information about Hungarians in the contemporary Banat may prove useful. Hungarians in the Banat currently represent about 10% of the population⁹. In this respect the Hungarians of the Banat differ from Hungarians in Romania in general. That is, most Hungarians in Romania live in regions where they represent the majority (see Kontra 1998, 401). In the Banat Hungarians live mostly in towns (Arad etc.), where Hungarian schools can also be found. In the formerly "German" villages some Hungarians were farm labourers for the German farmers.

Hungarian as mother tongue

All the informants claimed Hungarian as their *mother tongue* in some interpretation of the term (self-identification, first learned language, competence, frequency of use etc, see Skutnabb-Kangas 1988, 34–37). The accounts of the Hungarian language as their mother tongue were produced in several contexts. For instance, after the question "Which language do you know best?":

- (2) HW54 (P299) The conversation has been about her family, which includes many Germans.
- 01 PL: És melyik nyelven tud jobban
- 02 HW: Hát magyarul tudok a legjobban az az anyanyelvem abba vagyok beütemezve
- 03 és bedeklarálva (.) Mert németül csak itt tanultam (.) nem hivatalosan csak itt is
- 04 hallottam, ott is hallottam és akkor itt tanultam meg
- 01 PL: And which language do you know better
- 02 HW: Well I know Hungarian best it is my mother tongue and that's what is in me and that's what I
- 03 have declared. Because German I have just learnt, not officially, I heard it here and there and
- 04 so I learnt it

⁹ According to the 1992 census as presented in Neumann 1996; see footnote 1. Here the "Banat" means the counties of Arad, Timiş and Caraş-Severin. In the census claiming Hungarian (or German etc. minority) "nationality" does not always correlate with "mother tongue" identification. For example, in Timiş county 62,866 inhabitants claimed Hungarian nationality, whereas 61,088 marked Hungarian as their mother tongue. That is, the "nationality" identification might persist longer than the "mother tongue" identification. (For a review of Romanian censuses, see Varga 1998.)

In this example Hungarian is given as the mother tongue from three perspectives: as the language of competence, biological origin and identity. It is also contrasted with German, which has been just learnt "here and there". A similar comparison with Romanian is also frequent:

- (3) HW20 (P399). The discussion has been about where HW uses Romanian and Hungarian
- 01 PL: És melyik nyelv megy könnyebben neked?
- 02 HW: Magyar hát természetesen a magyar tehát én- teljes anyanyelvem a magyar és ezen tudok
- 03 legjobban kifejezni mindent (.) a román is tehát elég anyanyelvi szinten de azért mégis egy kicsit
- 04 idegenebb a román egy kicsit (.) olyan kicsi koromtól tanultam tudom (,) de annyira nem tudom jól
- 05 kifejezni magamat
- 01 PL: And which language is easier for you?
- 02 HW: Hungarian, well naturally Hungarian because my complete mother tongue is Hungarian and with it
- 03 I can express everything best, Romanian also well I know Romanian in mother tongue level but it is still
- 04 somewhat foreign to me, I know I have learnt it from early childhood, but I cannot express myself so well

Here the informant elaborates on the difference between the two languages. Hungarian is the language that is clearly closest to her (self-identification, see Skutnabb-Kangas 1988, 34–37) and that she can express herself best in (competence), even though she has acquired Romanian almost as well and from her early childhood.

As in the previous examples, by far the most recurrent and shared characterisation of Hungarian as the mother tongue is through self-identification. That is, competence and frequency of use are in some cases associated with Romanian. An important part of this self-identification is that Hungarian is used at home:

(4) HM73 (P399)

- 01 PL: Milyen nyelveket szokott itthon használni
- 02 HM: Itthon magyarul beszélünk hátha magyarok vagyunk- hátha valaki magyar vagy német (,) ha
- 03 német vagyok akkor németül beszélek nem? Nem románul vagy magyarul vagy szerbül vagy mit tudom
- 04 én (.) Amilyen vagyok én- (.) vagyok hogy mondjam úgy beszélek nem?
- 01 PL: What languages do you use at home
- 02 HM: At home we speak Hungarian because if we are Hungarians because if somebody is

- 03 Hungarian or German, if I'm German then I speak German don't I? Not Romanian or Hungarian or
- 04 Serbian or whatever. What I am well so I speak no?

In this manner ethnic identity is given as the basis for "language spoken at home". In other examples this categorisation is not so strict:

- (5) HM74 (P199)
- 01 PL: Milyen nyelveket szokott a mindennapokban használni
- 02 HM: Minden nap hát nálam nálam (.) a magyar nyelv (.) én ha lehet az izékkel is magyarul beszélek a
- 03 mennyemmel is az unokáimmal is de azok már mostan hogy német iskolába járnak (,) @német iskolába
- 04 ki van mit gondol maga hogy ki van német iskolába?@
- 05 LCs: [Románok
- 06 PH: Román]
- 07 HM: Románok (.) a németek elmentek ezek a nagy kutyák ezek a gazdag emberek mind odaadják a
- 08 német iskolába
- 01 PL: What languages do you use in everyday life
- 02 HM: Well at home I use Hungarian, if possible I speak Hungarian with my daughter-inlaw and my
- 03 grandchildren too but they go to a German school nowadays. What do you think who goes to
- 04 German schools?
- 05 LCs: Romanians
- 06 PH: Roman-
- 07 HM: Romanians (.) the Germans went away and those big dogs those rich people all of them put their
- 08 children into German schools

Here, Hungarian is spoken at home when possible. However, according to this informant, Romanian is spoken more and more with his grandchildren. In this manner, Hungarian is often presented as the preferred language or as the language of emotional belonging. For instance, watching Hungarian and Romanian television was differentiated in this way by the following informant:

- (6) HW54 (P299) The differences between the Romanian and Hungarian media have been discussed.
- 01 PL: És melyik tv-t szokta nézni a románt vagy a magyart
- 02 HW: Mind a kettőt mert nekünk kell tudni hogy körülöttünk mi a szféra hogy hogy megy körülöttünk de
- 03 hogy ha jól akarjuk érezni magunkat akkor (.)

- 01 PL: And which television do you watch Romanian or Hungarian
- 02 HW: Both, since we must know what is the sphere- what happens around us but if we want to feel good
- 03 then.

In sum, Hungarian is identified as the *mother tongue* of the speaker and is connected with family, home, and good feeling. In these descriptions it is often compared with Romanian (or German) which is mostly evaluated neutrally. Competence and frequent use are less shared, sometimes contested, characterisations of Hungarian as the mother tongue.

Don't speak Hungarian!

In a recent article Kontra (1999) has analysed several cases of statements to the effect "don't speak Hungarian in public!". His work is based on a large survey conducted among the Hungarian minorities. In my interviews as well I used the provocative question: "Have you ever been told not to speak Hungarian?"

- (7) HM19 (P100) answer to "Have you ever been told not to speak Hungarian?"
- 01 HM: Hát voltunk egyszer voltunk Aradon és mentünk (az egészen) McDonaldshoz enni HÁ voltak
- 02 románok- vannak ilyen rosszabb románok és nincs jóakaratuk és vannak hogy a románok a
- 03 magyarokkal nem értekeznek és akkor hogy hallják @eee ez magyar akkor nanee ottan a magyar hogy
- 04 beszél hogy mi rólunk beszél@ és mi közben hogy nem beszélünk rólunk csak vannak rosszak (.) de
- 05 itten Lippán például nincsenek (.) vannak a cigányok azok de nem mondanak azok semmit
- 01 HM: Well once we were in Arad and we went to McDonald's to eat. You see there were there
- 02 Romanians- there are such bad Romanians and they don't have goodwill and some Romanians do not
- 03 talk to Hungarians and when they hear @eee that is Hungarian you see that Hungarian speaking about
- 04 us@ and we do not speak about them, yes there are such bad ones. But for example here in Lippa there
- 05 are none. There are Gypsies but they say nothing

As in this example, most of the interviewees claimed that such occasions are untypical of the Banat. However, many of them had similar stories to those cited in Kontra's article. In other words, they reflect the assertion that one should speak in the language of the majority in public. The general evaluation of this assertion is negative in my interviews. As here, the people saying such things are described as "bad Romanians". Similarly in the following:

- (8) HW54 (P299) answer to "Have you ever been told not to speak Hungarian?"
- 01 HW: akár egy- például egy autóbuszban én beszéltem az én édesanyámmal ezelőtt húsz évvel az
- 02 autóbuszban és ránk szólt egy férfi hogy
- 03 PL: Nem szabad
- 04 HW: Hogy ne beszéljünk mert- csak az ország nyelvén- mert ő nem érti (,) erre én azt feleltem neki
- 05 magyarul hogy tanuljon meg maga is
- 01 HW: For instance once on the bus I spoke with my mother some twenty years ago on the bus one man
- 02 told us that
- 03 PL: You shouldn't
- 04 HW: We should not speak because- only in the language of the country- since he does not understand, I
- 05 answered him in Hungarian that you should learn it too

In this case the assertion "you should speak Romanian in Romania" is directly countered in the informant's story. In another case such people are referred to as "stupid people". That is, the Hungarian speakers interviewed do not share this view.

Finally, there were a few other cases where the use of Hungarian was reported as restricted. For instance:

- (9) HM35 (P200) The discussion has been about using Hungarian in the bar where HM works.
- 01 PL: És itt a kocsmában soha nem játszanak magyar zenét
- 02 HM: Mondtam hogy melyik a helyezet
- 03 PL: Igen
- 04 HM: Törökül (.) cigányul ha énekelnek azt meghallgatják (.) mondom jobban meg vannak becsülve a
- 05 cigányok mint a mondjuk így a más nemzet
- 01 PL: And here in the bar no Hungarian music is played?
- 02 HM: I told you how it is
- 03 PL: Yes
- 04 HM: Songs in Turkish or the Gypsy language that's what they listen to. I tell you the Gypsies are better
- 05 respected than say another nation

Here Hungarian is compared with the Gypsy language, which is spoken by the least respected minority in the region. In sum, some linguistic conflicts, open and covert are reported by the informants, at least when provocative questions are asked. However, it is often stressed that they are not typical of the Banat. Some in-

formants stated that such conflicts characterise other parts of Romania, especially Transylvania.

Competence in Hungarian

All of the interviewees are bi- or multilingual speakers. In the bilingual community, there are different speech norms due to the additional resources the possibility of code-switching brings (see e.g. Auer 1995). Furthermore, contact between different languages (e.g. Hungarian, Romanian and German) is easily traceable in the variants spoken in the Banat. Below I will examine some of the typical evaluations of their own variant of Hungarian:

(10) HW52 (P499)

- 01 PL: Milyen jól tudja a három nyelvet
- 02 HW: Hát az a helyzet hogy három nyelvet és mind a három- például mind a magyar mind a román
- 03 nyelvet (összeszokjuk)- nem tisztán beszéljük se magyar nyelvet se a román nyelvet az a helyzet
- 04 PL: És-
- O5 HW: Összevegyítjük így beszélnek itt a románok is félig magyar félig románul és akkor korcsosodik
- 06 összevegyül
- 01 PL: How well do you know these three languages
- 02 HW: Well it is so that all of these three languages- for instance both Hungarian and Romanian we (use
- 03 to-) we do not speak pure Hungarian nor Romanian that's how it is
- 04 PL: And
- 05 HW: We mix them that's also how Romanians speak here half Hungarian half Romanian and then [the
- 06 language] gets corrupt, mixed

This view is quite typical in the literature, too. That is, traditional folk, or scholarly (see e.g. Toma 1998, 86) evaluations of linguistic competence are based on monolingual norms (cf. Romaine 1995, 288–289). The Hungarian speakers in the Banat widely share this view and consider their languages as deviant or mixed, corrupted by contact words and code-switching.

Furthermore, in the next excerpt the Hungarian spoken in the Banat is described as vulgar, uneducated:

- (11) HM65 (P299) The discussion has been about the future of Hungarian in the Banat.
- 01 HM: Nem beszélnek olyan szépen olyan urasan de mint parasztosan ahogy tud a nép (.) például ahogy
- 02 én is amikor mentem Magyarországra ott sok- sok másképp beszélgetnek urasabb módra (,) itten na-

- 03 lehet hogy itt is a városokban urasan beszélnek de a faluban másképp
- 01 HM: We don't speak so nicely as the lords do but in the peasant manner as the common people do, for
- 02 example when I went to Hungary there a lot- they speak a lot differently in a more lordly manner, here
- 03 na- maybe also here in the towns they speak in lordly manner but in the village it's different

The evaluation of languages is often explained in terms of the attitude taken towards its speakers. In this manner, villagers are evaluated as uneducated people speaking in a vulgar manner. Furthermore, a geographical differentiation is made here: people in Hungary speak a more sophisticated variety of Hungarian.

In general, Hungary is presented in a somewhat critical light by some Hungarians in the Banat, for example:

- (12) HW52 (P499) HW is telling about relatives that have moved to Hungary
- 01 HW: El van nagyon keseredve mert nem nagyon veszik számba a magyarok lenézik
- 02 PL: Értem
- 03 HW: Azt mondják hogy oláhmagyarok és ez is az igazság (.) mert mi is amikor mentünk így magyarba
- 04 vagy valami hát rokonokhoz mentünk és azoknak ha jöttek látogatók egyből azt mondták nekünk
- 05 oláhmagyarok
- 06 PL: Értem
- 07 HW: Úgyhogy nem úgy voltunk számba véve hogy mint a magyarok ottan
- 08 PL: Értem
- 09 HW: És mondtam hogy több tisztességet kapunk itt a románoktól mint ott a magyaroktól
- 10 PL: Értem
- 11 HW: Ez az igazság sajnos ez van
- 01 HW: We are very disappointed because Hungarians do not care about us they look down on us
- 02 PL: I see
- 03 HW: They tell us that we are "Oláh Magyars" and that is the truth, because when we went to Hungary
- 04 to see our relatives and some people came to visit and they told us instantly that we are Oláh Magyars
- 05 PL: I see
- 06 HW: So we were not taken as Hungarians there
- 07 PL: I see
- 08 HW: And I told them that we get more respect from the Romanians than Hungarians
- 09 PL: I see
- 10 HW: That is the sad truth

^{10 &}quot;Oláh Magyars", is a term used to mock Hungarians living in Romania ("Romanian-Hungarians").

In this account, Hungarians living in Romania are often called "Romanians" in Hungary. That is, citizenship, instead of language, is a way of categorising "nationality" in everyday life in Hungary, too. This is in direct contrast with the widely propagated Hungarian political view of a "cultural nation". Among others, Romsics (1998, 10; see also Kontra 1999) has recently stated that "in the Hungarian language" the words nation (nemzet) and nationality (nemzetiség) are used as ethnic labels, rather than as political categories. As the above example and quantitative surveys (see Hunyady 1997) show, this interpretation is not shared by all speakers of Hungarian. This gap between the political use of language and everyday practice represents a possible source of annoyance for the object of the categorisation. This phenomenon is not rare, since, for instance Ingrians are treated as Finns in Russia, but when they come to Finland they may be called Russians (see Toivonen et al. 1995, 186–187).

The future of Hungarian

The informants' opinions on the future of the Hungarian language in the Banat contain both pessimistic and optimistic views. Small differences emerged according to the size of the settlement. Some of the interviewees stated that Hungarian would probably always be spoken by the Hungarian families in the villages. In the towns evaluations were somewhat more pessimistic. Some considered that one Romanian family member is enough for a family to become linguistically "Romanian". Unlike German, Hungarian has no particular prestige in the region. However, for people involved in commerce Hungarian appeared important (see the article by Halmesvirta). In any case, the informants present certain choices as important for the survival, spread or decline of Hungarian in the region. A recurrent theme both in towns and villages is education. Owing to considerations of space I will briefly examine two contrary explanations of what counts in putting children into school.

- (13) HW52 (P499) HW's grandchild is about to begin school next year. The family would like the child to attend a German school
- 01 PL: Akkor hogy ha feloszlik a német iskola akkor milyen iskolába járatják a gyereket
- 02 HW: Román iskolába ugye itten a mi megyénkbe javarésze a román rengeteg a magyar is nem
- 03 probléma de az a helyezet hogy csak román nyelvre vagyunk- akármilyen hivatalba megy vagy akárhova
- 04 attól függ hogy hogy fog tanulni
- 05 PL: Igen
- 06 HW: Ha tanul is és valami jobb iskolába bír menni akárhová csak a románt (.) kell hogy használja
- 07 PL: Igen
- 08 HW: Megtanulni meg megtanítom magyarul írni olvasni amennyi kell neki mégis tudjon aztat is
- 09 PL: Igen
- 10 HW: de- de csak a román mer Romániába élünk az az igazság

- 01 PL: And if the German school is closed down then where will you put your child
- 02 HW: Into a Romanian school you see in our county most people are Romanian there are plenty of
- 03 Hungarians too so it is not a problem but the thing is so that we must- all the officials she goes to or
- 04 where ever it depends on where she will study
- 05 PL: Yes
- 06 HW: If she studies well and gets into a good school then she will need Romanian whereever she goes
- 07 PL: Yes
- 08 HW: I will teach her to read and write Hungarian as much as she needs she should know that too
- 09 PL: Yes
- 10 HW: But still Romanian because we live in Romania that's how it is

In this example Hungarian is presented as a rather useless language. German is in general described as an international language with high prestige and economic value. Furthermore, Romanian is the language of the state and education. From this perspective going to a Hungarian school is not considered worth the sacrifice. According to this informant, Hungarian should not be totally forgotten either, even though its instrumental value is evaluated as rather trivial.

Next, consider a justification to putting children into Hungarian schools:

- (14) HM34 (P599) HM has just talked about his child starting school
- 01 PL: Milyen iskolába fog menni a gyerek
- 02 HM: Csak magyar
- 03 PL: És hol van itt magyar iskola a faluban
- 04 HM: A faluban- ha lesz elég tanuló akkor lesz itt ha nem akkor bevisszük a városba (.) magyar és német
- 05 románt úgy is megtanulja nem?
- 06 PL: Miért fontos hogy a magyarra járjon
- 07 HM: A magyarra
- 08 PL: Igen
- 09 HM: az az anyanyelv
- 10 PL: Igen
- 11 HM: ha ezt elveszti akkor nem tudja hogy mi a fajuk
- 12 PL: Igen
- 13 HM: Akkor azt mondja (amilyen nyelven tanult olyan ember) nem (.) az anyanyelv és aztán jön egy
- fontos nyelv mert ezt a román nyelvet úgyis megtanulja (,) szükségletből olyan muszáj (.) mint én vagy
- 15 mások ...
- 01 PL: What kind of a school will the child go to
- 02 HM: Only Hungarian
- 03 PL: And where is the Hungarian school here in the village

- 04 HM: In the village- if there are enough pupils then it will be here if not then we will take him to
- 05 town. Hungarian and German, he will learn Romanian anyway no?
- 06 PL: Why is it important that he should go to a Hungarian school
- 07 HM: That is his mother tongue
- 08 PL: Yes
- 09 HM: If he loses it he won't know what his race is
- 10 PL: Yes
- 11 HM: And they say that (which language you learn that's what you are as a person) no? His mother tongue
- 12 and then an important language because Romanian he will learn anyhow, he needs it it is a must. Just
- 13 like me or others...

The Hungarian linguistic identity of a family can be very strong. In such cases going to a Hungarian school is described as crucial in terms of the child's linguistic identity. Learning Romanian is considered easy and inevitable, the child will learn Romanian just as his parents have. In this account the need for a Hungarian school is presented as a biological, natural need (e.g. *if he loses it he won't know what his race is*).

In the final example in this section, the emphasis on linguistic identity is similarly evident in another form:

- (15) HM74 (P199) HM has been telling about his son marrying a Romanian who did not know any Hungarian
- 01 HM:... Én azt mondottam ha a magyar fiú jó (,) akkor a magyar nyelv is legyen jó (.) és meg is tanult (.)
- 02 Beszél lehet mondani majdnem perfektül
- 01 HM: ...And I said that if a Hungarian boy is good, then the Hungarian language should be good too. And
- 02 she learnt that indeed. You could say that she speaks it almost perfectly

The informant provided this view as an antidote to the general belief (present in many interviews) that one monolingual Romanian can assimilate the whole family. Furthermore, it serves as an example how language ideologies may transparently influence the spread, survival and decline of a language.

In brief, on the one hand, Hungarian is considered instrumentally of little value. On the other hand, in some cases knowledge of Hungarian is represented as an important component of the identity of the speaker or his family. In any case, all interviewees saw passing Hungarian on to their children as positive. In the light of the everyday language ideologies expressed here, Hungarian is destined to continue to decline, should no change in its instrumental value take place.

To summarise:

- Hungarian is evaluated with positive, identificatory (e.g. my mother tongue) and emotional statements (e.g. I feel good when I speak Hungarian).
- Examples of attempts to hinder the use of Hungarian in everyday situations are known, but claimed to be rare. Being told not to speak Hungarian is evaluated very negatively.
- The speakers of Hungarian evaluate their own variant as "bad" Hungarian.
- No instrumental value is ascribed to Hungarian. Nevertheless, sense of identity
 motivates some people to promoting the survival and spread of Hungarian in
 their family.

Romanian

Romanian is the only official language in Romania. According to Neumann (1996, 4) it is the only language for legal proceedings, university matriculation exams, vocational education and the teaching of history. In the Banat speakers of Romanian have been the largest ethnic group in all the published censuses since the Turkish occupation. In the 1992 census Romanians made up approximately 80% of the population. In the Banat, almost all signs, street names and public notices are in Romanian (signs around religious sites are the biggest exceptions). Most of the talk we heard on the streets of the Banat was in Romanian, and in fact all our informants claimed knowledge of Romanian.

Romanian as the official language of the state

Romanian is characterised overwhelmingly as the language of the state. It is given as the official language, which everybody needs to know in order to be a fully competent citizen.

(16) HW54 (P299)

- 01 PL: Milyen nyelveken beszél
- 02 HW: Hát a magyaron kívül a románt mert az az ország nyelve az kötelező és azt kell mindenkinek tudni és
- 03 akkor németül és ennyi
- 04 PL: Hol tanult románul vagy németül vagy hogyan
- 05 HW: Hát románul az iskolába óvodába iskolába és aztán németül meg már a családon belül tanultam (.)
- 06 az édesanyám csak magyarul beszélt velünk és románul mert azt kelletett beszélni
- 01 PL: What languages do you speak
- 02 HW: Well besides Hungarian Romanian because that is the language of the state and it is obligatory and

- everybody must know it and then German and that is all
- 04 PL: Where did you learn Romanian or German or how
- HW: Well Romanian at school and kindergarten and German already in the family.My mother spoke
- only Hungarian with us and Romanian because we were obliged to speak it

Romanian is described as the language that one is obliged to learn, "since it is the official language in Romania". However, no negative interpretations of the need to learn Romanian were given. That is, it is often described as natural that one should know Romanian:

- (17) HM74 (P199) The discussion has been on the linguistic competence of the German population
- 01 LCs: De románul tudnak?
- 02 HM: Csak a hülye ember nem tanulja meg a nyelvet abba az országba amelyikbe jött (.) Igazam van? az
- 03 hülye kell legyen az nem normális aki itt él és nem tanulja meg a nyelvet
- 01 LCs: But they know Romanian?
- 02 HM: Only a fool would not learn the language of the country. Isn't is so? That must be a fool it is not
- 03 normal to live here and not to learn the language

In this manner, learning the official language is described as "normal" and natural. Only "a fool" would not learn it. In brief, nobody mentioned the need to be a monolingual, nor did they represent learning Romanian in a negative light.

The term 'official language' received many different folk interpretations during the interviews. Beyond the aforementioned "everybody must learn/speak it", it is the language "that must be spoken with public officials":

(18) HM34 (P599)

- 01 PL: És van olyan hogy valahol kötelező a román nyelv
- 02 HM: Néptanácsnál románul kell mer- szóval elvárják- nem szabad ott beszélni magyarul vagy mit tudom
- 03 én micsoda csak románul
- 04 PL: És ők tudnak magyarul?
- 05 HM: Nem (.) nem is akarnak ezek
- 01 PL: And are there situations where you have to use Romanian
- 02 HM: At the public office because- you see there there they require- there you cannot speak Hungarian or
- 03 anything else only Romanian
- 04 PL: And do they know Hungarian?
- 05 HM: No. those people aren't even willing to learn

Here the local public authorities are presented as promoters and guardians of the Romanian language. The "official language" term is however sometimes extended to more private encounters as well:

- (19) HW20 (P399)
- 01 PL: ... Az utcán milyen nyelven szoktál megszólítani valakit
- 02 HW: Románul románul mert itten az ország nyelve az alapkövetelmény hogy mindenki tudja és akkor...
- 01 PL:... Which language do you use when you speak to a stranger on the street
- 02 HW: Romanian Romanian because here that is the language of the state it is a basic requirement that
- 03 everybody should know it and...

In this interpretation Romanian is the basic language of communication in Romania; thus it is presented as the safest choice between strangers.

Romanian as the lingua franca in the Banat

As the "official language" Romanian is considered as the most neutral choice, as a *lingua franca* in the Banat. Accordingly, Romanian is used also for inter-minority communication:

- (20) HW52 (P499) HW describes the linguistic repertoire of the Germans in the village; she has just explained how in the old days all Germans knew Hungarian
- 01 HW: A fiatalabbak is tudták de már az én gyerekeimnek a generációja azok már nem tudták
- 02 PL: Értem
- 03 HW: Nem tudtak magyarul (.) románul meg németül tudtak
- 04 PL: De mégiscsak németül beszéltek egymással a magyarok meg a németek akkoriban?
- 05 HW: Így mink- a mi generációnk (,) már az én gyerekeim nem tudnak németül hanem románul beszéltek a
- 06 német gyerekekkel- itten sokkal (- -) sok német gyerek volt dehát mind kimentek Németországba
- 01 HW: Also children knew [Hungarian] but already my children's generation did not know it
- 02 PL: I see
- 03 HW: They didn't know Hungarian they knew Romanian and German
- 04 PL: But did Hungarians and Germans still speak German with each other?
- 05 HW: We did- our generation did, already my children didn't know German rather they spoke Romanian
- 06 with German children- there were a lot more German children but they all went to Germany

In this example the informant describes how the practice of speaking Hungarian and German between the minorities has been abandoned as contacts have dwindled. It is however often stressed, that in the past (e.g. in the interwar period) more "second" languages were used:

- (21) HM73 (P399) HM describes the linguistic repertoire of the Germans in the village
- 01 HM: ... Nagyon sokan tudtak magyarul
- 02 PL: Értem
- 03 HM: mer ee a magyarok szegények voltak és akkor öö mentek hozzájuk dolgozni
- 04 PL: Értem
- 05 HM: Na és akkor ők ugye a magyar emberrel nem @beszélt már románul@
- 06 PL: Igen
- 07 HM: hanem magyarul
- 08 PL: Igen
- 09 HM: Vagy ha az ember ha magyar ha tudott németül akkor németül
- 10 PL: Értem
- 11 HM: Az így vout
- 01 HM: ...Many of them spoke Hungarian
- 02 PL: I see
- 03 HM: Because Hungarians were poor and so they worked for them
- 04 PL: I see
- 05 HM: And you know with a Hungarian you @wouldn't speak Romanian@
- 06 PL: Yes
- 07 HM: But Hungarian
- 08 HM: Or if the person the Hungarian knew German then German
- 09 PL: I see
- 10 HM: That's how it was

According to this description, in the old days, contacts between the Hungarians and Germans were so frequent that the use of Romanian as a lingua franca would have been considered impolite. It was an established norm that people should learn each other's language. Similarly, Mclure & Mclure (1988, note 5) report how elsewhere in Romania Germans would use Hungarian in Hungarian stores, since "speaking Romanian to a Hungarian in commercial interchange is often the way to ensure poor service".

Romanian is also reported as the common language in mixed families, which are frequent among the Hungarian minority in the Banat. During family gatherings Romanian is gaining more and more space:

- (22) HW52 (P499)
- 01 DM: Hát mi magyarul beszélünk a szüleimmel mindig de amikor a menyem bent van akkor románul
- 02 kellesz beszélni mert ő román (.) és nem tud magyarul

- 01 HW: Well we always speak Hungarian with my parents but when my daughter-in-law is here then we have
- 02 to speak Romanian because she is Romanian. And she doesn't know Hungarian

(23) HM65 (P299)

- 01 HM: Hát például nálunk is amikor itt van a vejünk a lányomnak a férje akkor kell románul beszéljünk
- hogy értsen ő is mindent(.) Úgy a lányommal legtöbbet magyarul beszélünk ha hazajön ő és hát a
- 03 gyerekekkel megint románul az unokákkal
- 01 HM: Well for instance in our home when my son-in-law is here we have to speak Romanian so that he can
- 02 understand everything. So with my daughter we mostly speak Hungarian if she comes home and well with
- 03 children again Romanian with the grandchildren

These typical accounts show how monolingual Romanian family members are not expected to learn Hungarian, whereas Hungarians are expected to speak Romanian when such a person is present¹¹. Not speaking Romanian in such a situation is considered impolite. This gives rise to a slight paradox, since Romanians who do not learn Hungarian are sometimes evaluated very negatively:

(24) HW54 (P299)

- 01 PL: A románok németek mennyire tudnak magyarul?
- 02 HW: Hát aki akar román az megtanul de vannak olyanok hogy mondják hogy @én nem akarok
- 03 megtanulni@
- 04 PL: Min múlik hogy-
- 05 HW: Az akaraton vannak ezek a fajgyűlölők (.) nemzetgyűlölők hogy @ nem akarok én erős vagyok és
- 06 nem akarok más nyelvet tanulni csak az én ország nyelvemet@ (.) vannak akik akarnak és szeretnek (,) én
- 07 azt mondom hogy akarhány ember annyi vagy annyi nyelvet amennyit tudsz annyi ember vagy
- 01 PL: How well do Romanians and Germans know Hungarian?
- 02 HW: Well if a Romanian wants to learn he can learn but there are people who say that @I don't want
- 03 to learn@
- 04 PL: What makes somebody-
- 05 HW: Their will there are such racists. Nationalists that @ I don't want to I am strong and I don't want to

¹¹ This is clearly a more frequent view than the one analysed in example 15.

- 06 learn other languages only the language of my country@. there are people that want to and like it, I say
- 07 that the more languages you speak the more you are worth

In this excerpt HW prescribes as a norm that the majority, Romanians, should also learn other languages. Those people not willing to learn a language are categorised as "racists" or "nationalists". Further, speaking many languages is evaluated in positive terms. Bearing in mind how Hungarians often report encountering monolingual Romanians, this appears surprising. What about their monolingual Romanian family members; are they not "nationalists" or "racists" then? Perhaps this paradox shows how ideals about learning languages in general diverge from reports of everyday practices. That is, multilingualism is a traditional norm in the Banat, which I will discuss later, but in practice Hungarians are often ready to adjust their behaviour to the needs of monolinguals.

As it was already noticed (see example 6) Romanian is the language of "what is going on around us". That is, acquiring information, finding employment, education etc. is associated with Romanian. As in example (6), it was often stated that Romanian newspapers and television are followed because they mediate the important news that has everyday relevance. The instrumental value of Romanian in the Banat is stated rather explicitly in the following:

(22) HW54 (P299)

- 01 PL: Van-e hátránya abból ha valaki nem tud románul?
- 02 HW: Hát ha nem tudtam volna románul akkor sokból kimaradtam volna (.) mert a magyar az anyanyelvem
- 63 és aki nem tud románul vagy nem tud megtanulni annak bizony hátrányai vannak de itt mi meg tudtunk
- 04 állni a munkahelyen a helyünket és az életben mert mindenhez hozzá tudunk szólni
- 01 PL: Is it a disadvantage if somebody doesn't know Romanian?
- 02 HW: Well if I had not known Romanian I would have been left out of many things. Because Hungarian is
- 03 my mother tongue and someone who does not know Romanian or cannot learn it is indeed at
- 04 disadvantage but we were able to take our places in work and life because we can have our voice heard

This is a clear statement of how one can not do without the knowledge of Romanian in contemporary the Banat, it is needed in all walks of life.

To summarise:

- Learning Romanian is presented as a natural obligation.
- Using Romanian in official situations is described as compulsory.

- Romanian is given as the general language of communication.
- Monolingual Romanians are evaluated negatively; however in the case of family members learning Hungarian is seldom emphasised.

German

In the past, Germans presented the second largest group in the Banat after Romanians coming before Serbs and Hungarians etc. In 1900 their ratio was 27% (approximately 410,000 persons) of inhabitants of the "old" Banat, whereas in the 1992 census their presence hardly amounted to 3% of the population of the Romanian Banat (37,812 persons). The German minority has the right to move to Germany and many have used this possibility. Those who have stayed in the Banat are also supported by the German and Austrian states. Among other things, an old peoples home of high standard has been built in Timişoara for the needs of the German population.

German as a high prestige language

The image of the Germans as an ethnic group is overtly positive among Hungarians (see the article by Hannonen). Furthermore, knowledge of German, as an "international language", is considered important. Examples 13 and 14 already indicated some typical dimensions of German as a language of high prestige. Here I will only briefly sketch one clear indicator, that is, the popularity German schools have among all ethnic groups:

- (22) HW52 (P499) The discussion has been about which school HW's grandchild should attend.
- 01 HW: Még nem határoztunk el mert az unokám megy első osztályba és mi szerettünk volna hogy négy
- 02 osztályt járjon német iskolába hogy tanulja a német nyelvet
- 03 PL: Hol van-
- 04 HW: Itt is a faluba negyedik osztályig nem tudom most van-e német óvoda volt nem sokat bírtak tanulni a
- 05 német óvodában mert mindig együtt voltak a románokkal és akkor persze amit tanultak (--) románul
- 06 játszottak (- -) (.) Hát én nagyon szerettem volna hogy német iskolába ment volna hogy tanulja meg a
- 07 német nyelvet mert én tudom hogy- mert nem tudja az sohase hogy hova dobja el a sors ha nem is beszéli
- 08 azt a nyelvet egészen jól vagy könyvileg vagy ahogy van irodalom szerint mégis csak meg bírja az ember
- 09 értekezni
- 01 HW: We have not made up our minds yet because my grandchild is going to attend the first grade and we

- 02 would have liked her to go to a German school for four years so that she would learn the German language
- 03 PL: Where is-
- 04 HW: Here in the village for four years I do not know whether there is a German kindergarten now. There
- 05 used to be they did not learn much in the German kindergarten because they were together with the
- 06 Romanians and then of course what they learnt (--) they played in Romanian (--) (.) Well I would like it
- 07 very much if she went to a German school that she learnt German because I know thatbecause you can
- 08 never tell where destiny will send you and even if she doesn't speak that language that well or as in books
- 09 or like it is in the literature you can still make yourself understood

Learning German is represented as important and German schools (and kindergartens) are described as the primary way to guarantee such knowledge for the child. This view seems to be very general, since Neumann (1996, 5) estimates that 80% of the pupils of German primary and secondary schools do not have German parents¹². From this perspective the instrumental value of German was evaluated even higher. Among others, Germany and Austria, rather than Hungary, were given as destinations for emigration or possible employment.

German as a language with no future

Even though German is a high prestige language thanks to its instrumental and nostalgic value, the number of its first language speakers is dwindling. This is apparent in the reports on how little German is spoken in everyday life:

- (23) HW52 (P499) HW is describing her competence in German
- 01 HW: Habár sokat felejtettünk mi is mert ugye már rég kimentek a németek nincs kivel beszélni és aztán
- 02 meg a tv-ben amit- a lányomnál van ez a parabolika
- 03 PL: Igen
- 04 HW: És akkor német adásokat fogjuk és onnan még eszünkbe jut amit elfelejtettünk de már sokat
- 05 felejtettünk azért
- 06 PL: És régebben hogy volt a templomban milyen nyelven tartották a misét

¹² Toma (1998, 72ff) also discusses the status of German schools. From her perspective (1998, 73) the current situation presents a problem for the German pupils, since their contact with speakers of other languages at school "adds up to a kind of a degradation of the German language". This view can be compared with example (6), where a Hungarian grandfather complains how his children mostly have Romanian schoolmates in their German school. The extraordinary status of German schools in the Banat presents a clear task for a more detailed sociolinguistic analysis.

- 07 HW: Német
- 08 PL: csak német?
- 09 HW: csak német nyelven
- 10 PL: És mikor kezdték magyarul is tartani a misét
- 11 HW: Nem tudom megmondani az évet de mindenesetre 89 utántól mert akkor már kimentek a németek a
- 12 faluból elmentek Németországba és akkor ugye már több nemzetiség volt (.) olyan papot hoztak aki tudott
- 13 több nyelvet
- 01 HW: We have forgotten a lot since you know the Germans went away a long time ago and there is nobody
- 02 to speak with and still on televion what- my daughter has this satellite
- 03 PL: Yes
- 04 HW: And then we watch German programs and we can recall something that we have forgotten but still
- 05 we have forgotten a lot
- 06 PL: And in the old days how was it in the church and in which language did they say the mass
- 07 HW: German
- 08 PL: Only German?
- 09 HW: Only German
- 10 PL: And when did they begin to use Hungarian as well
- 11 HW: I cannot tell the year but in any case after 89 because then the Germans had moved from the village
- 12 to Germany and then you know there were more nationalities. They brought a priest that knew more
- 13 languages

That is, speaking German has become very rare in the formerly German villages. The contacts with German are restricted to occasional visits, television and church. In this way the younger generation of Hungarians is no longer multilingual (Hungarian – Romanian – German), but rather bilingual (Hungarian – Romanian). Accordingly, older people report that they have forgotten German, younger Hungarians have altogether very little, if anything to say about German contacts. In their reports, German is compared with English or French. Finally, in the reports of the older generation the decrease in the German population is connected to the decrease in their competence in German. Here, it is important to recall, that even older Hungarians, formerly mastering German, reported speaking Romanian with their few German contacts (see example 20).

I will not continue the discussion about views towards German, since the informants did not ascribe much relevance to German in the everyday life of Hungarians in the Banat, besides the question of education. Furthermore, the Germans are the most widely studied minority. Among others, Toma (1998) has recently described the sociolinguistic situation of Germans in the Banat. Within the confines of my limited data, the situation may be summarised as follows:

- German is described as a high prestige language in the Banat because of its international value and the high prestige of the German ethnic group in the area.
 This is also reflected in the popularity of German schools among speakers of other languages.
- The use of German in everyday life is vanishing. The informants see no future for the German language in the Banat.

Multilingualism

Multilingualism and multiculturalism have characterised the Banat atleast since time immemorial. The current size of at least the bilingual population is been estimated as 20% (Neumann 1996, 3). This is the same as the proportion of mother tongue speakers of languages other than Romanian, and if correct, it indicates a high number of monolingual Romanians. A partial explanation is that monolingual Romanians have moved into the homes left empty by the emigrating Germans (for statistics, see Varga 1998).

Multilingualism as a positive phenomenon

An important aspect of the local identity of the Banat has been multilingualism and the tolerance towards speakers of other languages. According to Neumann (1996, 3), this is the common heritage of every inhabitant. The informants' descriptions of multilingualism clearly support this. The following excerpt provides a representative description of the local linguistic repertoire:

- (24) HW54 (P299) The discussion has been about HW's neighbours, which are Hungarians, Germans and Romanian
- 01 HW: Nincsen probléma itt a szomszédokkal beszéljük a nyelvüket (...)
- 02 PL: Igen
- 03 HW: Szóval ebbe a bánáti részbe itten kell tudjál legalább három nyelven
- 01 HW: There are no problems with the neighbours here we speak their languages (...)
- 02 PL: Yes
- 03 HW: You see here in the Banat you should know at least three languages

In his essay Neumann (1996, 3) puts forward the idea that in the Banat people have the need to learn the languages of the neighbouring communities. However, in the informants' reports of language use the communities themselves are described as multilingual. This is supported by the fact that most of the interviewees have had German neighbours and all have Romanian ones.

Undoubtedly there have been areas where individual multilingualism has been especially important. Such as commerce:

(25) HM74 (P199)

- 01 HM: Hát édes fiam (,) itten az az ember aki egy kicsit iparkodott(,) az tudja mind a három nyelvet...
- 01 HM: Well dear chap, people that have been a bit involved in commerce, they know all three languages

Furthermore, in some families multilingualism and multiethnicity have been more relevant than in others:

(26) HM74 (P199)

- 01 HM: Az anyósom- tudja hogy Schwiegermutter
- 02 PL: Igen igen
- 03 HM: Az anyósom német volt (,) az apósom román volt (.) Az anyósom nem tudott románul az aposóm
- 04 nem tudott németül s magyarul beszéltek
- 05 X: he he he
- 06 HM: Ez nem érdekes?
- 07 X: he he
- 08 HM: ez itt nálunk ez itt van össze vannak keverve mint a lekvár
- 01 HM: My mother-in-law you know Schwiegermutter
- 02 PL: Yes yes
- 03 HM: My mother-in-law was German, my father-in-law was Romanian. My mother-in-law didn't know
- 04 Romanian my father-in-law didn't know German and they spoke Hungarian
- 05 X: he he he
- 06 HM: Isn't that interesting
- 07 X:he he
- 08 HM: so that's how it is here we are mixed like jam

This story, told in a humorous way, is a vivid depiction of the linguistic and ethnic construction of some of the interviewees' families. It also shows a typical self-identification among the local Hungarians: they often present themselves as "mixed" people. However, this "mixedness" is presented in a positive light.

Negative evaluation of monolingualism

Multilingualism and tolerance clearly emerge as positive values among the Hungarians in the Banat. A part of "our" identity is often a consideration of "them". In the case of the interviewees "they" are monolingual Romanians who have an openly negative valuation of multilingualism. Beyond the notion that they live an irresponsible life (they steal, drink alcohol, do not keep order in their homes etc., see also the article by Hannonen) they are presented as "nationalists" or "racists" since they cannot tolerate other cultures or languages (see examples 7, 8, 24). Neverthe-

less, it is also frequently stated that Romanians with a local origin (i.e. people that have their roots in the Banat) do not belong to this group:

- (27) HM34 (P599) The discussion has been about conflicts between ethnic groups; HM has just described how some Romanians call minority members "rootless"
- 01 PL: Itt a többi nemzetiség mennyire-(,) kik azok akik legjobban tudnak és kik akik leginkább nem tanulták
- 02 HM: Már mint a bennszülöttek a román bennszülettség azok (,) sejtenek (,) értenek jól (.) Akik nem
- 03 akarnak- akik jöttek lent Olteniából Moldovából
- 04 PL: Iger
- 05 HM: És ezek is mondják meg az embernek hogy hazátlan nem a benn- az idevalósi román
- 01 PL: Here the other nationalities-, who are those that know languages best and who are those that have not
- 02 learnt languages?
- 03 HM: People born here the local Romanians they, know something, understand well. Those that do
- 04 not want to- are those that came from Oltenia or Moldova
- 05 PL: Yes
- 06 HM: And they tell you that you are rootless not the local- the Banat Romanians

In this manner, the newcomers to the Banat are often differentiated from the older inhabitants. Beyond them politicians and teachers are sometimes referred to as intolerant troublemakers, and it is stressed that on the local level there are no conflicts between the different ethnic groups.

As these example show, multilingualism is a significant feature of the life experience of the Hungarians in the Banat. The situation may be summarised as follows:

- Linguistic diversity and multilingual linguistic repertoire are presented as natural and positive.
- Monolingualism is often described as a deliberate unwillingness to learn the language of other people.

CONCLUSIONS

The investigation of folk views of language was carried out to illuminate everyday, local language ideologies. The representations that emerged are mostly familiar from the research literature. Among others, a language variety spoken by a minority group (e.g. Hungarian in the Banat) is typically described as a corrupted form of that language by its speakers (see Romaine 1995, 288–290). Furthermore, the folk

descriptions that define official (i.e. Romanian) and minority languages (i.e. Hungarian) are to some extent similar to those presented in Kontra's (1999) recent article. That is, among the Hungarians in the Banat as elsewhere there are folk theories about how one should resort to the language of the majority (ie. Romanian) as the unmarked, natural choice of communication. Finally, the high prestige of German and the high enrolment of non-Germans in German schools is typical in Hungary as well (Gal 1993, 354–355).

The language ideologies that emerged in the present study among the Hungarian speakers in the Banat are in line with Lönnqvist's observations about language and identity among the German speakers in the area. According to him (Lönnqvist & Barna 2000, 132), even though the Banat Germans have a clear sense of belonging to a linguistic group, the more distinctive parts of their identity are religion and the local community. In my investigation, the overwhelmingly negative evaluation by the Hungarian speakers in the region of people that promote "only my language" clearly supports this argument.

In comparison with the elite views, reviewed in Part I, the local informants describe multilingualism positively and they also represent learning more than one language as a natural phenomenon. The elite represents the Banat as an "arena for languages in competition". However, in the responses of local Hungarian inhabitants the Banat is in the first place a region of linguistic tolerance. Furthermore, as the interviews show, the northern Banat is not presented as an area of linguistic enclaves or totally separate communities; rather its multilingualism is described as social as well as individual.

According to Romaine (1995, 317), reports of language use and actual behaviour should be kept apart. That is, people might claim one thing but do something different. This was apparent already in some reports of behaviour. Recall for example, how monolingual Romanians were described negatively, but not if they entered the family. In this sense multilingualism might be a value or a language ideology in the Banat, but not so much a 21st century practice. Nevertheless, folk theories about language may sometimes be decisive in concrete situations. For instance, choosing the language of education for a child in the Banat presents just such a situation.

Changes in language ideologies over time are a fact. The tides of history have clearly affected judgements of the different languages in the Banat. For instance, towards the end of the 19th century Hungarian had high instrumental value and Romanian was considered rather a useless language. Today, the situation is the other way round. Future changes in language evaluations might be the result of less radical changes. For example, a status similar to the "Volksdeutsch" for the Hungarians which the Banat Germans have in relation to the German state, would most certainly change evaluations of the Hungarian language (see Bodó 2000 for a discussion of different statuses).

This project was just a beginning in the task of studying multilingualism in the Banat. Other perspectives could also be pursued. Among these, an analysis of code-switching and its connections with language ideologies in the Banat should be a fruitful theme. Furthermore, only three of the many languages in the Banat

were considered here. A more comprehensive investigation might include speakers of Serbian, Bulgarian, Slovakian, Gypsy languages etc. Finally, an analysis of language ideologies among the different groups of Romanians (newcomers, old inhabitants) in the Banat might also yield interesting results.

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