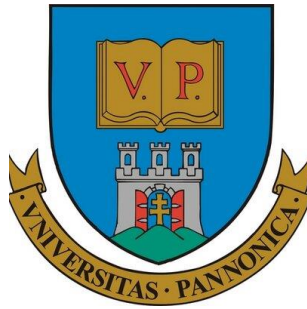


University of Pannnonia
Faculty of Humanities
Multilingualism Doctoral School



**LANGUAGE, POWER, ASSIMILATION, AND
MINORITIES
IN MULTILINGUAL SPACE**
**(Based on the analysis of Transcarpathian Hungarian
novels)**

Doctoral (PhD) Dissertation Booklet

Written by
Gabriella Mádi

Supervised by
Prof. Dr. István Csernicsekó

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Introduction

The thesis titled "Language Power Assimilation and Minorities in Multilingual Space: Based on the Analysis of Transcarpathian Hungarian Novels" explores the intricate dynamics of language power and assimilation within a multilingual context, specifically focusing on the Hungarian minority in Transcarpathia. This region, historically marked by a complex interplay of ethnicities and languages, serves as a rich case study for examining how multilingualism influences cultural and national identity.

The primary objective of the research is to analyze how historical and political changes in Transcarpathia are reflected in the Hungarian literature of the region. The study investigates the portrayal of multilingualism, language contact phenomena, and the sociolinguistic realities within selected Transcarpathian Hungarian novels. By adopting a multidisciplinary approach that combines literary analysis with sociolinguistic methods, the thesis aims to offer a nuanced understanding of how language power dynamics are represented in minority literature.

This research is significant as it contributes to the broader field of sociolinguistics and minority studies by offering insights into the lived experiences of multilingual communities. It underscores the resilience and adaptability of the Transcarpathian Hungarian community as reflected in their literature, providing a deeper understanding of the interplay between language, identity, and power in a multilingual setting.

Theoretical Framework and Literature Review

The theoretical framework draws primarily on existing literature concerning multilingualism, language power dynamics, and minority literature. Multilingualism is not a modern phenomenon but has existed for centuries, often overshadowed by the rise of monolingual nation-states in the 19th and 20th centuries. In the context of minority literature, multilingualism presents unique challenges and opportunities for expressing identity and navigating power relations.

One of the key theoretical underpinnings of the research is the concept of literary multilingualism. Scholars such as David Gramling discuss the interaction between monolingual and multilingual paradigms in literary aesthetics, focusing on how literary texts reflect and challenge notions of monolingualism and multilingualism (Gramling, 2016). Additionally, Rogers Brubaker's Triadic Nexus theory frames the relationship between national minorities, nationalizing states, and external homelands, providing a useful lens for

understanding the complex political and cultural dynamics at play in Transcarpathia (Brubaker, 1996).

The literature review also delves into the history of Hungarian minority literature in Transcarpathia, tracing its development through various political regimes. István Csernicsekó and László Csordás are particularly important in this regard, offering insights into how local Hungarian literature has evolved under different political conditions (Csernicsekó, 2005; 2010; 2013; Csordás, 2020). These historical analyses are crucial for understanding how the literature of this region has responded to changes in language policies and sociopolitical pressures.

Moreover, the work of Jasone Cenoz and others, such as Aronin, Fishman, Singleton, and Ó Laoire, provides a broader context for the study by discussing the global importance of multilingualism and its implications for identity and culture (Cenoz, 2013; Aronin et al., 2013). Their research supports the idea that multilingualism is an inherent and essential aspect of human society, deeply intertwined with cultural and national identity.

Historical Background

The historical background of the thesis provides essential context for understanding the dynamics of multilingualism and minority identity in Transcarpathia. This region, located at the crossroads of Central and Eastern Europe, has experienced a turbulent history characterized by frequent changes in political governance and shifting national borders. These historical shifts have had profound impacts on the linguistic landscape and cultural identity of its inhabitants, particularly the Hungarian minority.

Transcarpathia has been part of various states, including the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Czechoslovakia, the Soviet Union, and, more recently, Ukraine. Each of these political regimes imposed its language policies, which in turn affected the status and use of the Hungarian language in the region. For instance, during the Austro-Hungarian period, Hungarian was a dominant language, but this changed dramatically after World War I when the region became part of Czechoslovakia. The new Czechoslovak authorities implemented policies that favoured the use of Czech and Slovak, marginalizing Hungarian speakers (Csernicsekó, 2013).

The Soviet period further complicated the linguistic situation in Transcarpathia. The imposition of Russian as the *lingua franca* and the promotion of Ukrainian in public life led to a decline in the use of Hungarian, especially in official domains. Despite these pressures, the

Hungarian minority in Transcarpathia managed to maintain its language and cultural identity, albeit in a reduced and often marginalized form (Fedinec & Csernicskó, 2020).

The dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991 brought about a new chapter for Transcarpathia as it became part of an independent Ukraine. The transition to Ukrainian independence introduced new challenges for the Hungarian minority, particularly in terms of language use and education. Ukrainian became the sole official state language, which led to tensions regarding the use of Hungarian in public life and education. While Ukrainian authorities have implemented policies aimed at promoting the Ukrainian language, these have sometimes been perceived as restrictive by the Hungarian minority, leading to concerns over the preservation of their linguistic and cultural identity (Csernicskó & Fedinec, 2019).

Throughout these periods, the local Hungarian population experienced significant challenges, from forced migrations to shifts in cultural policies. For instance, after World War II, Transcarpathia was annexed by the Soviet Union, leading to a period of intense Russification, where the Russian language was promoted at the expense of local languages, including Hungarian (Molnár D., 2018). Despite these challenges, Hungarian literature in Transcarpathia continued to develop, albeit often in a subdued and covert form due to censorship and political repression.

The historical overview in the thesis highlights how the Hungarian minority has navigated these challenges, using literature as a means of preserving and expressing their cultural and linguistic identity. The region's complex history of political domination and shifting borders has created a unique context in which multilingualism plays a central role in the daily lives of its inhabitants.

Research Methodology

The research methodology is a critical component of the thesis, outlining the approach that was used to investigate the representation of language power dynamics and minority identity in Transcarpathian Hungarian novels. The methodology combines literary analysis with sociolinguistic techniques, allowing for a multidisciplinary exploration of the selected texts.

The study focuses on a selection of Transcarpathian Hungarian novels from different historical periods, including the Czechoslovak era, the Soviet period, and contemporary Ukraine. These texts were chosen for their relevance to the themes of multilingualism and minority identity, as well as their literary significance within the Hungarian cultural tradition.

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) was employed as one of the primary methods to examine how language power dynamics are portrayed in these novels. CDA is particularly suited to this study because it allows for an in-depth analysis of how language is used to construct and negotiate identity within a context of power imbalances. This method enables the researcher to uncover the subtle ways in which language reflects and reinforces social hierarchies in a multilingual setting.

Close Reading is another key methodological tool used in the research. This technique involves a detailed, line-by-line examination of the texts, focusing on linguistic features such as code-switching, the use of loanwords, and other markers of multilingualism. By analyzing these elements, the author aimed to reveal how the complexities of multilingualism are represented in the literature of the region.

The combination of CDA and close reading allows us to explore both the macro-level themes of power and identity and the micro-level linguistic features that contribute to the portrayal of these themes.

Historical analysis plays a crucial role in the research, as it provides the necessary context for understanding the development of multilingualism and minority identity in Transcarpathia. The historical method is used to trace the region's political and social changes over time, particularly how different regimes, from the Austro-Hungarian Empire to independent Ukraine, have influenced the linguistic landscape. This historical perspective allows us to situate the novels within their specific socio-political contexts, offering insights into how historical events have shaped the language use and identity of the Hungarian minority.

Dialectology is another important aspect of the methodology, particularly in analyzing the linguistic characteristics of the Hungarian language as spoken in Transcarpathia. This method involves studying the regional dialects, including the impact of Slavic languages on Hungarian, such as the incorporation of loanwords and the occurrence of code-switching. By examining these dialectal features, the research explores how the Hungarian language has evolved in a multilingual environment, and how these linguistic changes are reflected in the literary works.

The data for the research comes from a selection of Transcarpathian Hungarian novels, which were carefully chosen to represent different periods and political contexts. These novels serve as a corpus for analyzing the linguistic and sociocultural phenomena discussed in the thesis. The novels are analyzed for instances of language contact, such as the use of loanwords, code-switching, and the representation of multilingual environments. The data

collection process also involves gathering historical and linguistic background information to support the analysis.

The combination of these methods—literary analysis, sociolinguistics, historical analysis, and dialectology—provides a comprehensive approach to understanding the interplay between language, power, and identity in Transcarpathian Hungarian literature. This interdisciplinary methodology allows us to bridge the gap between literary studies and sociolinguistics, offering a nuanced perspective on the representation of multilingualism and minority issues in the region.

Data Analysis and Results

The data analysis section presents a detailed examination of the selected Transcarpathian Hungarian novels, focusing on how these texts reflect the multilingual environment and the dynamics of language power and identity. The novels analyzed span different historical periods, allowing for a comparative analysis of how multilingualism and minority identity have been portrayed over time.

The analysis identifies several key linguistic features that are prevalent in these novels, including code-switching, the use of loanwords, and the incorporation of Slavic linguistic elements into Hungarian. These features are indicative of the complex linguistic landscape in Transcarpathia, where Hungarian speakers have had to navigate a multilingual environment influenced by various dominant languages, including Czechoslovak, Russian, and Ukrainian.

One of the central findings of the analysis is how authors use multilingualism as a narrative and stylistic device. For example, in Mihály Tamás's (n.d.) novel "Két part közt fut a víz," the use of multiple languages reflects the protagonist's internal struggle with identity and belonging in a rapidly changing political environment. Similarly, Vilmos Kovács's (1965) "Holnap is élünk" showcases the pervasive influence of Soviet-era Russian on the Hungarian language, illustrating the tensions between assimilation and cultural preservation.

The research also highlights how these novels use language to resist or adapt to the pressures of assimilation. In some cases, authors employ multilingualism to assert the resilience of Hungarian identity in the face of external pressures. In other instances, the blending of languages within a single text symbolizes the hybrid identities that emerge in a multicultural and multilingual space.

The data analysis reveals that the portrayal of multilingualism in these novels is not merely a reflection of linguistic reality but also a deliberate narrative strategy. By incorporating

multiple languages into their texts, authors can convey the complexities of life in Transcarpathia, where language is both a tool of power and a marker of identity.

Discussion

The discussion section of the thesis delves into the broader implications of the findings, situating them within the context of sociolinguistic and literary studies. It was explored how the representation of multilingualism in Transcarpathian Hungarian novels contributes to our understanding of the relationship between language, power, and identity in a minority context.

One of the key contributions of the current research is the demonstration of how literary texts can serve as a valuable corpus for sociolinguistic analysis. The analyzed novels offer a rich source of data on language contact phenomena, such as code-switching and borrowing, which are often difficult to capture through other means. By analyzing these texts, it was possible to provide insights into the lived experiences of multilingual communities that go beyond what can be observed in everyday speech.

The importance of considering the sociopolitical context in which these novels were written is also crucial. The historical backdrop of each novel plays a crucial role in shaping the language dynamics portrayed in the text. For instance, the Soviet era's emphasis on Russian as a unifying language is reflected in the increased presence of Russian in Hungarian literary texts from this period. Similarly, the post-Soviet era's focus on Ukrainian national identity has influenced how contemporary authors engage with Ukrainian in their works.

Another important aspect of the discussion is the exploration of the role of literature in preserving and negotiating cultural identity in a multilingual environment. The results of the research point towards the fact that Transcarpathian Hungarian novels not only document the linguistic realities of their time but also actively contribute to the shaping of cultural identity. Through their portrayal of multilingualism, these novels offer a space for the articulation of minority voices and the expression of resistance to cultural assimilation.

Conclusion

The conclusion of the thesis synthesizes the key findings of the research and reflects on their broader implications for the study of multilingualism, minority identity, and literature in multilingual regions like Transcarpathia. The study has provided valuable insights into how Transcarpathian Hungarian novels serve as both reflections and constructions of the complex linguistic and cultural realities in the region.

One of the most significant findings of the research is the intricate ways in which language power dynamics are represented in Transcarpathian Hungarian literature. The novels analyzed in the study highlight how language serves as a crucial tool for both asserting and negotiating identity in a multilingual context. The use of code-switching, the integration of loanwords, and the portrayal of multilingual environments within these texts illustrate the deep connections between language, culture, and power.

The research reveals that these literary works are not merely passive reflections of linguistic realities but are active participants in the cultural and political discourse surrounding language use and minority identity. The authors of these novels use multilingualism as a narrative strategy to engage with issues of cultural survival, assimilation, and resistance. For instance, by embedding Slavic loanwords or switching between Hungarian and Ukrainian, the authors reflect the lived experience of multilingualism while also challenging the dominance of the state languages.

Another important conclusion is that the historical and political context of Transcarpathia has a profound influence on the literature produced in the region. The novels from different periods—whether during the Czechoslovak era, the Soviet regime, or contemporary Ukraine—demonstrate how shifts in political power and language policy have shaped the Hungarian minority's linguistic and cultural identity. The literature of each period responds to these changes, whether by preserving traditional linguistic forms, adapting to new linguistic realities, or resisting linguistic assimilation.

The study contributes to both sociolinguistics and literary studies by demonstrating the value of literary texts as sources of sociolinguistic data. The detailed analysis of language contact phenomena in these novels offers insights that are difficult to capture through other methods, such as surveys or interviews. By examining how language is used in literature, the current research highlights the creative ways in which multilingual speakers navigate their linguistic environment and construct their identities.

Furthermore, the findings underscore the importance of considering the cultural and historical context in the study of multilingualism and minority languages. The case of Transcarpathia illustrates that language is not just a means of communication but also a marker of identity and a site of power struggles. As such, literary texts from multilingual regions provide a rich source of data for understanding the broader sociopolitical dynamics of language use.

While the research provides a comprehensive analysis of Transcarpathian Hungarian novels, there are limitations that must be acknowledged. The scope of the study is confined to

a selection of literary texts, which, while representative, cannot encompass the full diversity of the region's literary output. Additionally, the focus on novels limits the exploration of other literary forms, such as poetry or drama, which may also offer valuable insights into the multilingual experience.

Another limitation is the focus on a specific region and language group, which, while providing depth, means that the findings may not be directly applicable to other multilingual contexts. However, the methodology and theoretical framework employed in this study could be adapted for studies in other regions, potentially leading to comparative insights.

The research opens up several horizons for future exploration. One potential direction is a comparative study of multilingualism in minority literatures across different regions, such as comparing the experiences of Hungarian minorities in Slovakia or Romania with those in Transcarpathia. Such a study could offer broader insights into how different political and cultural contexts shape the linguistic and literary practices of minority groups.

Another promising direction is to expand the corpus of texts analyzed to include other genres or more contemporary works. This could provide a more comprehensive understanding of how multilingualism continues to evolve in the literature of Transcarpathia, particularly in response to recent political developments in Ukraine.

Additionally, further research could explore the reception of these literary works both within and outside the Hungarian-speaking community. Investigating how these novels are perceived by different audiences could shed light on the broader cultural and political significance of multilingual literature.

In conclusion, the current thesis has made a significant contribution to the understanding of how multilingualism and language power dynamics are represented in minority literature. By focusing on Transcarpathian Hungarian novels, the investigation has highlighted the complex interplay between language, identity, and power in a region marked by a history of political upheaval and linguistic diversity. The current research not only enriches the field of sociolinguistics but also offers valuable insights for literary scholars and those interested in the cultural dynamics of multilingual communities.

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