Erzsébet Barát / Patrick Studer / Jiří Nekvapil (eds)

Ideological Conceptualizations of Language

Discourses of Linguistic Diversity

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Jiří Nekvapil, Tamah Sherman and Petr Kaderka

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Part IV: Critique of 'ideology'

Contributors

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John Bassett Trumper, born in Cardiff, Wales, began his academic career reading languages at London UC, also studying at Padua. He is Full Professor of General and Historical Linguistics at the University of Calabria (Italy) since 1980. His main professional interests are Historical and Romance Linguistics, Romance Dialectology, Socio- and Ethnolinguistics. Many of his recent studies concern the role of language in identity creation, especially in multi-ethnic and poly-dialectal communities. He has an in-depth knowledge of Romance slangs and jargons: He is interested in the use of such special codes by minority groups in relation to identity, conflict, and integration.

Rik Vosters is a postdoctoral research fellow at Vrije Universiteit, Brussel where he works on the social history of languages in the Low Countries. His PhD dissertation focused on language variation, linguistic identities and language norms in the United Kingdom of the Netherlands (1815–1830). In 2012, he held the Breughel Chair of Flemish Studies at the University of Pennsylvania, and worked as a visiting assistant professor at the Université de Liège. Currently, he also teaches Dutch and general linguistics at the Erasmus University College in Brussels.

Acknowledgments

Approaching the study of language use and ideology: An introduction

Erzsébet Barát, Patrick Studer and Jiří Nekvapil

For several decades the interconnections between ideology and language have been at the heart of investigations into the social meaning of language. In linguistics, ideology has frequently been attached to the study of discourse, particularly to the politics of discourse, which is concerned with social actors' efforts to organize or manage the ways discourses come to life. The present volume broadly contributes to this line of investigation as it addresses the question of how language is conceptualized ideologically when it enters human interaction. The particular concern to the authors of this volume is linguistic diversity, that is, communicative contexts in which language is perceived in its plurality and hybridity. These contexts are particularly fertile for studying how social actors think about languages, how they evaluate them and jointly negotiate meanings.

Our volume has developed out of the editors' sustained interest in the relationship between language use and ideology. It is meant as a contribution to the growing interdisciplinary body of linguistic research into the social theory of meaning and change. The twelve authors of the ten contributions in the volume would all identify as social theorists of language in use of various scholarly traditions who investigate language as social practice that shapes and is shaped by the relationship between users and their cultural and social contexts. The particular interest that brings them together in the present volume is the exploration of the relationship between language use and ideology.

Our joint interest in the relationship between language use and ideology developed from a conference workshop entitled 'Ideology and Language Diversity', which was organized by Erzsébet Barát and Patrick Studer for the annual conference of *Societa Linguistica Europaea* (*SLE*), at Universidade de Lisboa, in 2009. This workshop was supported by the European research project *Languages in a Network of European Excellence* (LINEE) under the Sixth Framework Program (2006–2010). LINEE was concerned with the analysis of discourses on linguistic diversity and the ways in which they reflect or contribute to the development of a European knowledge-based society on regional, national, and supranational levels of analysis. Six chapters of this volume have been written by authors directly involved in the LINEE research project (Barát, Beswick, Dovalil, Flubacher, Nekvapil & Sherman, Studer). Draft versions of two additional chapters were presented at the workshop in Lisbon

by colleagues from Italy and Belgium conducting research in a similar area of study (Trumper & Maddalon, Vosters). The last two book chapters were specifically invited by the editors at a later stage to complete the volume (de Bres, Marková with Studer).

While we as editors share a general interest in ideology, we did not intend to invite contributions that represent and demonstrate a particular approach to ideology and ideological conceptualizations of language. We refused to act as academic gatekeepers, authorizing a single understanding of ideology or language ideology. We wanted to keep the range open and allow for the divergence of approaches. The editors themselves are also of different positions on the meaning of ideology and on its explanatory power for linguistic analysis. While different in their approaches to the relationship between language and ideology, the contributions share a common goal: they all explore, in different ways, the European Union's ideal of multilingualism and the genealogy of the various struggles over language-based rights and linguistic diversity within different societal and cultural contexts. In our understanding, a volume on ideological conceptualizations of language in the European Union is of particular relevance at the moment when the ideology of multiculturalism and linguistic diversity is in the centre of heated debates. In these debates, language use has figured as the stake in political struggles over entitlements to the distribution of assets and to recognition. Language is not merely the 'medium' of these debates 'about' rights and democratic institutions, but has been foregrounded as the very topic of the various social conflicts. The publication of the book is also meant to challenge the most worrying position in this debate that should equate multiculturalism and linguistic diversity with some alleged decay of social cohesion and stability. This intellectual commitment functions as the principle underpinning the critical empirical research presented in the volume.

At the same time we wanted to make sure that the volume functions as a discursive site for various epistemological stances on how language use and the perception of language use itself gain, directly or indirectly, significance. The (enabling) limitations of a given approach may best be demonstrated when juxtaposed in relation to other research paradigms exploring the same social event that should grant the unifying force for the present collection. In this regard, our major motivation was to acknowledge the multiple traditions in a relatively new field of research and contribute to a dialogue on how to approach ideological interpretations of language use. Our editorial principle is similar to Schieffelin et al. (1998: 9), one of the most influential collections on language ideologies in linguistic anthropology, who refuse to legitimize a single interpretation of the language-ideology relationship. However, since the early attempts of the 1990s, when the role of language ideology as the mediating link between social practices and institutions earned systematic scholarly attention mostly in the anthropology of language (Kroskrity et al. 1992), the focus

on ideological conceptualizations of language has spread across various disciplinary boundaries. This travelling of the topic across boundaries has resulted in a productive reformulation of the relationship between language, ideology and power. Language attitude research, critical studies of discourse, sociolinguistics, and cultural studies, to mention but a few, have also contributed in their own right to the topic (Gee 2008; Heller 2006; Makoni & Pennycook 2007; Shohamy 2006). The contributions in our volume are informed by this rich cross-fertilization in contemporary research on ideology. Their disciplinary boundary crossings should entail important re-articulations of the concept of ideology, making any authoritative grouping impossible.

The present volume focuses both on institutions and on individuals carrying ideologies forward into the discursive space, be it through policies, propaganda or individual perceptions and reflections. We understand this forward-carrying momentum, which gives language use a sense of ideological direction, as a fundamentally conceptual phenomenon. It is a mode of social knowledge formation that involves ideology both as process and product – an act of conceiving which necessitates the existence of some (ideological) *thing* that can be conceived. This understanding of 'conceptual' implies a constructivist approach to meaning-making but, at the same time, reflects a historical and cultural awareness of the potential ideological meaning that is already 'out there' in the discursive space. One theory from language policy and planning research that falls within the scope of this understanding is Language Management Theory, which includes 'ideology' as a concept in the institutional or organized management of linguistic practice (see Nekvapil 2011).

The claim of intuitive, yet principled and rational explanations of events, however, is not new. Alongside well-known ethnomethodological approaches, it has enjoyed a long and controversial debate in social psychology over the past fifty years (cf. Heider 1958; Schütz & Luckmann 1975; Kruglanski 1996; Kruglanski & Webster 1996). Social psychologists, notably Heider (1958), have developed the notion of the human mind as a naïve scientist striving for accurate and rational explanations of events. Conceptualizing processes, therefore, may follow common-sense principles, an argument which has been developed by social representation theorists for some time now (cf. Flick 1998; generally Moscovici & Duveen 2000; Moscovici 2007). Common-sense making, which is essentially based on rationalizing processes, entails the reduction of content and the simplification of reality, qualities one might easily connect to ideologies. Most importantly, however, it is accompanied by a deontic 'touch' – by the future implication of something that is believed to be true or false. When we speak of 'conceptualizing' or 'conceptualizations', therefore, we not only wish to acknowledge the impact of these theories on developing an understanding of how ideologies arise, we wish to acknowledge equally the structured and principled disposition of the human mind towards coherence and stability in a predictable world.

The ten contributions in the present volume explore discourses on linguistic diversity as ideological conceptions of language that reflect and shape positions of stakeholders in the construction of the geopolitical space of the European Union. The papers address the differential ideological meanings of linguistic diversity and their interconnections in different discursive and institutional contexts. The key concepts they all make use of and explore are ideology and discourse but from different perspectives, falling into two broader approaches. One approach seems to see the social actor's ideology in a more static way and defines it as a matter of beliefs and ideas. Ideology, according to this logic, is a system of meanings. The other understands the social actor's ideology within a dynamic framework. It sees ideology as an effect of negotiation that emerges from interaction with particular representations of the social and cultural reality cross-cut with diverse power relations. The former tends to denote mental constructs or scripts that can easily be seen as 'possessions' of particular individuals or social collectives. The latter, on the other hand, sees representations of the world, including that of language, as a fluid social construct caught in socially organized conventions. These views correlate with their concept of discourse. The first one sees discourse more as a matter of product, a particular representation, while the other understands discourse more as a matter of ongoing negotiation, dispersed across multiple fields of signification.

One major potential risk of the more static approach may be that its logic pushes to legitimize concerns about what is true and what is false (because it is ideological) and rooted literally in the experience of a given social position. The other approach, at the same time, may easily valorize contingency to its extreme and produce the meaning of contingency as if completely arbitrary, dislodging meaning from its social structures. Therefore we decided to keep the various approaches within the framework of the same volume as it may help the reader to go beyond the counterproductive 'representation' versus 'process' binary. The juxtaposition may advance a dialectic and intersectional logic. A dialectic relationship between discourse as representation or social construct and discourse as a social practice of signifying would acknowledge the mediated character of experiences as well as the question whether all relations of power are inherently rendered into patterns of domination. The resolution of product versus process may subvert the paradox of immanent being versus ephemeral active becoming, allowing for a contingent but not arbitrary system of values and social positionings of speakers as autonomous agents.

In spite of the juxtaposition of multifaceted papers, the volume is coherent especially in that the contributions are critical in their stance to the particular dimensions of ideology they explore. Some of them even share a critical stance to their own analysis, questioning their own assumptions (Barát, Dovalil, Flubacher, and Studer), sometimes even the analytical relevance of the concept of ideology itself (see Studer with Marková). In our opinion this (self-)reflexivity may actively promote

a dialogue on the various methods and traditions drawn on in the contributions. Furthermore, all contributors share the understanding that meaning is of social origin and that power plays a crucial role in the conceptualization of language and language varieties. When it comes to attributing more explicit political meanings to their findings, though, most of the authors are reluctant to go that far and assume a particular standpoint, leaving the work of inference to the reader.

The volume is divided into four parts on grounds of relative intellectual differences in approach, which also corresponds with some thematic similarity across the particular chapters included. The chapters are not necessarily included in a given part because they correspond to the actual theme, or level of multilingualism in the European Union implied by the title; rather, their placement allows us to foreground the analytical similarities in their challenges to the ideological investments of language in the European Union.

The first two contributions of this volume in Part I represent approaches which are based in sociolinguistics or the sociology of language. The authors view ideologies in their relationship with the formation of nations or 'national identities', particularly when it comes to the distinction of '(national/standard) language' and 'dialects'. Under this perspective, in their joint paper John B. Trumper and Marta Maddalon analyse the historical development of the linguistic situation in Italy and compare it with some features of the situation in Great Britain. Particularly, they focus on the role of ideologies in the development of the concept of language minority. In the second contribution, using Pierre Bourdieu's concept of legitimite language, Rik Vosters addresses similar problems; however, his analysis focuses on ideological aspects of language variation which took shape in a particular historical period of the development of the linguistic situation in the United Kingdom of the Netherlands (in the early nineteenth century).

Part II consists of three contributions that highlight language ideologies in the context of economic migration. Julia de Bres shifts attention to the phenomenon of cross-border migration in Luxemburg where migrants live in one nation and work in another. Based on the analysis of semi-structured interviews, De Bres explores language ideologies of cross-border migrants in the 'metalinguistic discourse' to reveal stakeholders' own interests and group identities. The second contribution, by Jiří Nekvapil and Tamah Sherman, focuses on the context of multinational companies in Central Europe. Applying Language Management Theory (Nekvapil & Sherman 2009) to a range of data, Nekvapil and Sherman analyse language ideologies surrounding the use of Czech, Vietnamese, German and English. They aim at exploring hitherto 'unidentified ideologies', which represents the approach that they share with the previous chapter by Julia de Bres. In the third contribution of this part, Jaine Beswick takes the example of the Portuguese-speaking community in St. Helier, a small town on the island of Jersey, to investigate the relationship between language

and ideology in the hospitality industry. Drawing on critical theories surrounding the concept of the knowledge economy (especially Bourdieu), Beswick analyses the various social actors' language attitudes, knowledge, values and experiences.

The four contributions in Part III explore ideological conceptualizations of language diversity and multilingualism on different levels and within diverse cultural contexts. The first two contributions present case studies that apply relevant theoretical approaches. Basing his analysis on Language Management Theory, Vít Dovalil looks at the management of linguistic diversity at the level of the European Union, while Mi-Cha Flubacher's contribution draws mostly on the work of Iwar Werlen (2004), Terry Eagleton (1994) and Kathryn A. Woolard (1998) to explore the policies of linguistic diversity on the national level in the German-speaking region of Switzerland. Dovalil's study concerns the principle of 'equal treatment' of the member states in the European Union with a particular focus on the realization of this alleged equality in the field of European language policy and planning, using a particular dispute taken to the European Court of Justice in Luxembourg. Mi-Cha Flubacher's contribution is concerned with Swiss public debates and legal texts to examine the ideological representation of diglossia in discourses of migrant integration policy. The analysis deconstructs the metaphor of 'language as the key to integration' in various federal and cantonal policy documents regulating the acquisition of the 'local language' by migrants. The other two chapters in Part III are more interested in developing particular theoretical concepts and categories of analysis for discourse studies. Patrick Studer's paper proposes a model of social representations theory for revealing ideological investments in discourses of both formal and informal language planning. His analysis deals with social contexts in which language becomes something that is seen to be in need of 'being managed' both conceptually and linguistically. The chapter emphasizes the relevance of Harré & Moghaddam's (2003) concept of performance style as an additional perspective in discourse studies. Studer looks at the mundane or everyday forms of political reasoning in spontaneous focus group discussions with university students from various areas of study. Erzsébet Barát's chapter performs a critical analysis of the ideological effects of the conflation of language and culture in the centre of the articulations of the 'one nation, one language' ideology of nationalism in the local context of a Hungarian multiethnic town. Her theoretical aim is to argue for the possibility and importance of a relative differentiation between ideological and non-ideological meaning productions by bringing together feminist scholarship (Thompson 2001) and critical discourse studies (Gee 1999; Fairclough 2003). She analyses two sets of interviews carried out with Polish migrants and US and UK speakers of English who arrived and settled down before and after the system change, respectively. The analysis also explores whether the political change has an effect on migrants' sense of self and the ways this discoursal articulation of the self is shaped by ideologies of gender.

Part IV comprises an extensive interview that Patrick Studer conducted with Ivana Marková. The chapter functions as a systematic and detailed discussion of the various approaches to studying discourse from a social psychological perspective. Studer's questions first invite Marková to revisit her standing on the epistemology of social representation and the role language plays in social representation. The invitation allows Marková to revisit the legacy of Serge Moscovici's works for her own intellectual development. In the centre of their dialogue are the concepts of trust, responsibility, the Self, and social recognition. On the other hand, the two researchers differentiate between Discursive Psychology and Social Representations Theory based on the epistemological assumptions of the two traditions. The comparison opens up a space to discuss the two major agendas of discourse analytic activities, namely social criticism and the thematization of social injustice. The constitutive differences and similarities are developed in terms of the potential values and/or limits of the concepts of ideology and power for analytical purposes. Marková, in agreement with Moscovici, argues against their use on the grounds of their Marxist, or 'leftist' disposition that in her understanding undermines the centrality of dialogicality.

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Part I:

Language minorities
in their socio-historical making

Local- global- glocal: Trends in the creation of linguistic prestige and ideology

John B. Trumper and Marta Maddalon[1]

Introduction

The ideas developed by human beings about the languages they speak become quite naturally ideology as a result of social, political and cultural pressures. Accordingly, we deal theoretically with the reconstruction of the history of concepts central to the ideology of language, and, consequently, with concrete examples of identity creation and 'belonging' via the methods usual in socio- and contact linguistics, as well as with the socio-linguistics of language contact and change. We are of course well aware that individuals may ignore or not be interested in matters historical, whether their own or not, or even in the reasons that produce particular situations, but we do not believe that this is true of communities. As claimed in most recent sociolinguistic studies, all useful and scientifically grounded analyses of linguistic behaviour should take into account such communitarian as well as individual perspectives. From this point of view, we propose studying attitudes to, and beliefs about, languages or varieties present in the repertoire. To this end, one needs to reconstruct the historical events that have produced particular situations, and to describe in a precise manner the role played by repertoire components, as well as to observe speakers' real behaviour in everyday communication. The study of the types of, and reasons for, the different relations between language, culture, history, politics and religion in the creation of particular identities, given the different specific weights of any or all of such elements in diverse situations, thus becomes central in any discussion of linguistic politics.

Another aspect we wish to tackle is that of how to define internal 'language minorities'. Modern sociolinguistics has to deal with a new importance assumed by minority languages, a seemingly inexistent problem before the Second World War, though touched on after the Balkan Wars (1912–13) and in President Wilson's theorizations after the First World War. As reported in Duchêne & Heller's (2007) reader and Duchêne (2008), an attempt was made after the First World War to institutionalize the concept of 'internal' minorities, first by the League of Nations, subsequently in the United Nations' discussions and documents, usually, however, in terms of the

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interests of nation-states and their homogenization processes and vision. The real underlying interest, as these authors show, was the control and conditioning of such minorities. With regard to possible definitions of 'minority languages', the distinction between them and official languages has, from the seventies on, become institutionalized within EEC legislation. Such legislation is perforce too general and oversimplifies because it has to be applied to a large number of highly distinct situations. The problem is then passed on to each member state and each interprets it in his own way.

The Birth of the 'Nation', 'National Language' and 'Dialect' Concepts

Concepts such as 'nation' and 'region', 'national standard', 'dialect', and 'regional varieties' (called 'accent' over the last years) need to be clarified, given some recent terminological and historical confusions. We first discuss the origin of the nation-state concept, whence 'national language' and standard speech. Up to the end of the Middle Ages Latin 'natio' is clearly polysemic, meaning: birth; race of animals, genetic grouping; ethnic groups; non-Jews and non-Christians; and a social order or class. After 1200 two meanings are added: merchant leagues; and University Faculty members or members of Student Corporations. The debate and decisions taken in the Church Councils of Pisa, 1409, of Konstanz, 1414–18, and of Basel, 1439, heralded in the modern concept of 'nation' and 'nation-state', which of course produced in its van the technical necessity of promulgating national languages and standards, thence the discussion of 'dialects' as different entities from new emerging standards. As Sestan (1952) pointed out, and as Chabod's last collected essays on similar themes underscored (in Sestan & Saitta 1961), the nation concept is highly ambiguous in all Italian writing from the fifteenth century up to 1861 Unification. Even Machiavelli often equates 'nazione' with 'provincia' rather than with 'stato' (the Prince's sovereignty and indivisible territory), thus it still refers to birth-place, common history and local language, a micro-society where it is difficult to talk of a politically national language with precise written and oral standards. Nothing of a higher level than the 'provincia' or a generic regionalism existed in earlier Italian thought. Obviously it took a long time in Europe to develop a complex idea such as the 'état-nation' (France's Third Republic, post-1870), the 'nation-state' (Britain in the First World War), or 'stato nazione' (Italy between 1960 and 1980). However, the first two cases have a clear idea of nation and national standard, which, as many French historians argue, inhibits any real reflection on, or appraisal of, diversity, thus creating a modern identity crisis. Similar considerations might well be made in the case of Britain. In the third case (Italy) even the nation concept is unclear and constitutes a weak polar category, inhibiting any in-depth reflection on standardization and standard language at the oral level.

Dialect vis-à-vis national language is not a concept Ronsard and Du Bellay introduce from classical sources into Europe in the period 1549–1565, but is a concept promulgated by Italian humanists, whether in Latin in Francesco Filelfo's famous letter to Lorenzo De' Medici (1473),[2] or *via* the original Greek by Aldo Manunzio (in his 1496 edition of Gregory of Corinth's *Perì Dialéktōn)*, later in vernacular in Nicolò Liburnio's Premise to his *Occorrenze Umane* (1540), there transcribed as *dialettò*. The Italian discussion was certainly prodromic with respect to the following debate on the definition and role of 'dialect' both in Italy and other countries. Two opposite definitions were polarized and propagated, sometimes in a confusing manner, in European debates on the history of ideas, influencing the ways in which various communities judged themselves and created their own ideological evaluative categories. The first makes dialect mixing the *sine quâ non* for the creation of standards,[3] the second supposes that the disintegration of an erstwhile 'perfect', markedly purist standard is the condition that creates dialects, which are thus broken-off, non-standard splinters of this original perfection.[4] Italians inherit this duality in the early 1400s. Such dualism, perhaps theoretical confusion, is what Italians transmitted to other Europeans in the fifteenth century, and still leads to modern debate on whether dialect is superordinated or subordinated to the language concept, this latter to be understood as a national, standardized language. On their part, the French and English were busy putting the Italians' theoretical positions into linguistic-political practice. Shortly before 1380 Charles V is ordering the translation into his Francien of Royal Chronicles, theological works, and Paris University *querelles*, some thirty years before Konstanz Conciliarism and the emergence of the new 'nation' concept (comments in Loomis 1932, 1939). Though Higden's Polychronicon in the late fourteenth century searches for a king's standard in Middle England, as did Trevisa's English translation of Higden towards the end of the century, we have to wait until Henry VII's reign, after Konstanz and Basel, for a standard to emerge slowly but steadily, a common standard which later Henry VIII will insist on.[5]

The Creation of Identity

As stated, the emergence of the nationhood concept implies a discussion of that of national identity. All agree that 'identity' is a complex phenomenon involving

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[2]   See also Poliziano's 1486 *Oratio in expositione Homeri*, where Latin *dialectus* is used.

[3]   In ancient and Hellenistic Greek: 'dialect' is NOT a subordinate category, but comes to form part of the theory of 'style'.

[4]   In Byzantine grammarians: 'dialects' are derived, non-standard and subordinate.

[5]   In other words, there is insistence on unity of law, administration, rite and language in his Preface to the translation of the Mass, published posthumously in the 1549 Prayer Book.

language, culture, common origins and history, as well as a system of common religious beliefs, and perhaps common feelings towards ethnic homogeneity. One of the aspects we wish to develop concerning this multiple definition is the point that each defining feature has a decidedly different weighting in, or may even be absent from, different situations, the effect of which is that each particular case study needs be treated on its own merits. This approach does not imply the *a priori* absence of any general model or the impossibility of generalizing.[6]

The debate on 'rediscovering' geographical dialect in Italy over recent years is an example of how misunderstandings may be generated if one does not take into account the historical background and the history of the language in a country such as Italy. The present day socio-linguistic situation is characterized by the large-scale presence of traditional geographical dialects, used with different modalities in differing areas.

The presence of historical minority groups with their respective languages and cultures was not generally known outside regions in which such groups lived or by other than specialists interested in such languages and cultures. This acknowledgement is much different from, say, that of the English of historical Celtic minorities. Italian legislation now distinguishes Albanians and Greeks, refers individually to Slav minorities (Slovene or Croat), but calls German speakers in the Alto Adige, Val d'Aosta, Veneto or Friuli, the 'Germanic minority' and not the 'German-speaking minority'.[7] Obviously no linguist was ever asked for his professional opinion. Furthermore, the distinction between 'minority' and 'official' languages is set in extremely vague terms, from the linguist's point of view, from the very beginning of the debate. It would seem obvious that the 'minority' concept covers a large number of aspects and this for many historical and linguistic reasons, and being so general it widens open spaces, sometimes to yawning gaps, to be filled in randomly by individual legislating states. The terminological question is a major issue, and more importantly adumbrates underlying political standpoints. The general impression seems to be that never as now has the pendulum swung in favour of non-linguistic

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[6] See on this score the broader discussion in Hroch (1985) (his combination of relations that are at the same time economic, territorial, political, religious, cultural, linguistic, etc. without apparent hierarchy) or in some of his essays in Hroch (2007) (especially *De l'ethnicité à la nation*, notwithstanding factual errors [IV. 77 on Wales: see Trumper & Maddalon 2002: 138–39 for clarification], as well as *The Social Interpretation of Linguistic Demands in European National Movements* [with reserves on medieval and nineteenth-century ideologized linguistic questions in Wales, Ireland and Greece]). We accept the thesis of indexical multifactoriality and the lack of internal hierarchy amongst factors, though we do not feel that the language question must or can be treated only in terms of a group's 'linguistic homogeneity or the closeness of the language boundary' (Hroch 1985: 166) so as to conclude that it is a less relevant constituent. *Ideologized* language use *has* to be taken into account!

[7] The original legislation contains the qualification 'la minoranza germanica' and not 'la minoranza tedesca', with an obvious historical-linguistic difference as well as different modern implications.

descriptions and opinions. Linguists are still debating whether distinctive descriptive criteria may be external and non-linguistic (Croft and others in the nineties) or whether they are internally linguistic (Nettle 1999; Weiss 2004; 2009 amongst others), or are a combination of both sets of criteria. Most non-linguists consider linguistic definitions just one of the possible approaches to the problem, certainly not the most relevant. In other words, linguists are rarely appealed to for their professional opinions, their views are not considered calculated proposals worked out within a scientific paradigm but mere opinions amongst many.

As far as the dialects are concerned, the Italian socio-linguistic situation might still be described in the terms used in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s, when subtypes of diglossia were discussed,[8] as was the simultaneous co-presence of varieties in the repertoire and similar topics. What has changed is the areal distribution of phenomena, the urban vs country binomium, age group differences, the North vs South dynamic. Patchwork patterns change, nevertheless remaining patchwork as in the seventies and eighties: no model is generalizable, each distinct model is sensitive to local patterns. Variability is 'geo-sensitive', to coin a term, without there being any national homogeneity. Furthermore, closely tying up dialect-identity with regions and opposing them to the national language and state is a non-sense. Nothing is less historically grounded than modern regional divisions, dating, as they do, from the beginning of the twentieth century, and based on post-Unification 'statistical regions'. We might synthetically claim that the geographical limits of Italian regions are historically as arbitrary as the linguistic sign itself. Can such arbitrariness become the means of self-preservation?

From the linguistically genetic point of view, Italian dialects are distinctly and separately generated from late Vulgar Latin, i.e. all 'dialect blocks' are on an historical par with the Tuscan central dialects which are the core of the national language, though demonstrating either West Romance (NI) or East Romance (SI) typologies, with varying evolutionary degrees vis-à-vis the type of Late Latin they derive from, some even more distinct from each other than different Ibero-Romance varieties. Some are structurally more archaic, others innovative, but this does not *per se* imply that they are not closely related in a genetic sense or that they are necessarily minority languages vis-à-vis Italian. Structural distance, typological differences and comprehension difficulties probably account for the status afforded Sardinian and Friulian as recognized minorities in the Italian legislature. At the political level there are dialects with historical *koinaí* and a stronger status than others; at the socio-lin-

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8   For definitions and discussion see Trumper (1977; 1984; 1993), Berruto (1987; 1989), Benincà (1996). The complexity involved in the ternary opposition language (national, high level) vs dialect X (high level > mid level) vs dialect Y (mid level > low level) is outlined in Italo-Romance in Trumper (1977) and Ibero-Romance in Montes Giraldo (1987) is competently dealt with and commented on in Muljačić (1997).

guistic level there are areal linguistic repertoires more complex and with a greater number of functions and codes, and more code-mixing than others. The so-called *Padania*, beloved of Lega adherents, has no common political, historical, cultural or linguistic unity. It may well have, instead, a modern unity of economic intent. Hroch (1985: 172) rightly insists that 'the most productive and the most market-oriented parts of the territory' are those most active in promoting ideologies about language and cultural differences, in promoting the separate 'nation' concept and practice. This is certainly the case of the Lega in Italy. However, that alone is not sufficient to create any complex 'linguistic identity' or any identity, however formulated: it is merely the expression of economic interests, just one of the indexes which can be used in definitions.

The only generalization we are able to make on the Italian situation is that in so-called macro-diglossic cases there is more room in the repertoire for the creation of intermediate levels between local dialect and Italian, say in the Veneto or Campania, than in micro-diglossic situations where polarization between varieties is shown without many possible intermediate levels, as in Calabria, levels which, if existent, are of difficult interpretation and perception by native speakers. In the Italian situation what might be called 'dialect levelling' only occurs where strong dialect *koinaí* have come to the fore over the centuries. Otherwise, regional situations are highly heterogeneous. Accent levelling within and across regions in Italy over the last fifty years analogous to English cases occurs with internal migratory movement towards the only two significant industrial cities, Milan and Turin. In all other cases every 'region' is witness to its own internal linguistic adjustments, sensitive to sex, age, education and socio-economic factors, in which negatively perceived variation is tendentially smoothed out or even blocked.

The progressive regression of geographical dialects as the means and stuff of traditional culture transmission is more than evident, thus the proposal to 'return' to dialect *via* local dialect tests for schoolteachers prior to assumption, lessons to be given in dialect, etc., implies either an inversion of historical trends or a markedly strong *prise de position* on local identity as opposed to a national one. This, of course, opens up a political and institutional problem. From the theoretical linguistic viewpoint, the most negative effect is that extralinguistic pressures provoke a redefining of linguistic categories. Criteria which are essentially linguistic, socio-linguistic, ethno-linguistic in origin, become overridden by ideology. A search for the myth of one's origins may be useful and legitimate at a community level, however, models for this search are in the Italian case randomly chosen and entirely acritical, as in the case of the Celtomania of the Italian Party called the Lega, which has no sense of the historical Celtic above and beyond Asterix and Brave Heart! What is evoked in such cases is called 'identity', even if seemingly ridiculous. Accepting the legitimacy of such claims to alterity without any critical definition of 'identity' in terms

of the features we have already specified, just because ideologically any claim based on minority culture vis-à-vis hegemonic culture must be accepted, means completely misunderstanding the case in point. Local here represents an ideological cover for underlying political questions of an essentially different nature. Return to the local in such cases means the defence of local interests that are economic and administrative; it also represents fear of the global, fear fomented by local politicians. The global, all that is external to one's micro-society, is considered potentially dangerous, socially disturbing, and destructive; it robs you of your identity, your work, of your money, your well-being, your language and culture. Politically the answer is a short-sighted form of devolution, though devolution is not a negative trend in itself. Culturally the answer given ought not to be the teaching of dialect in schools by local dialect-speaking teachers and the introduction of a dialect test applicable to teachers who are to be assumed, but leaving matters to their natural evolution, considering that in some 'regions' like the Veneto or Campania, dialect is still widely used in everyday communication. Questions of an 'identity' different from the national one are absent, except in fanatic fringe groups, notwithstanding community awareness of long and important local cultural tradition and history. It might also be remembered that an Italian cultural identity is the sum of many distinct cultural traditions more than, say, a common unique tradition, given late nineteenth-century political and administrative Unification, and we note the doubts expressed by modern historians like Graziano (2005; 2007) that Italy has ever had sufficient time or even generated strong enough centripetal forces to render it a real nation-state in the sense that Britain and France are. The absence of a modern nation-state with its centralized and centralizing structures and functions, as stressed by Graziano, is difficult for external observers to grasp, as is the total absence of mono-normativity at a linguistic level. Even twenty to thirty years ago the so-called language 'norm' was patrimony of only television announcers or 'speakers', now replaced by less or non normative journalists, and classical stage actors, a tiny national minority, as most acknowledge.

The revendication in modern day Italy of any so-called 'regional' identity is thus ill founded a) because of the fairly recent definition of the modern regions, as stated, so it has no historical backing,[9] and b) because there are no strict linguistic criteria on which such claims may be based – in fact the only grounds for such revendications are new-fangled and ill-timed ideological ones. The historical Venetian state once included parts of Lombardy up to the Adda River, Friuli, Venezia Giulia, Istria, coastal and insular Dalmatia and some Greek islands, having no correspondence with the modern Veneto region, while genetically neo-Venetian dialects are spoken in the lower Trentino region, in the western parts of Friuli, in Venezia Giulia and

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[9]   In other words Italian *regione* is only formally derived from Latin *regio*, without there being any semantic or administrative connection between the two historical terms.