Language ideologies about English and Croatian on Facebook

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MASTER'S THESIS

Language ideologies about English and Croatian on Facebook

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Abstract

Today, technology and language are in a close relationship. This paper analyzes their connection through social media and language ideologies. More specifically, two Facebook groups focused on language ‘mistakes’ are investigated as a source of language ideologies. The aim of this paper is to analyze online posts and the related comments by using critical discourse analysis. The first part of the paper presents some theoretical concepts regarding ideology and language ideologies. The second part discusses the various language ideologies about English and Croatian found in the selected corpus. The ideologies include the standard language ideology, heteroglossia, the ideology of the native speaker, and the process of iconization in the posts and the comments. These ideologies may have a harmful effect on people who are directly or indirectly stigmatized by the propagation of exclusionary ideas. Since such language ideologies can make many people feel attacked, ashamed of their language knowledge or rejected by mainstream society, more effort needs to be invested to deconstruct them in discourse.

Keywords: ideology, language ideology, English, Croatian, Facebook

1. Introduction

One of the main reasons for this thesis is the relationship between language, society and technology. Since the research was carried out on social media, the term itself has to be explained. Social media refers to "Internet-based sites and services that promote social interaction between participants" (Page et al., 2014: 5). Every participant can publish their own content, which makes social media different from mass media, but the content on social media can still be delivered to a lot of people, just like content on mass media (*ibid*.)

There are different kinds of social media, but the research for this thesis was done only on Facebook, a social media service founded by students at Harvard University in 2004. Facebook is currently the largest social network in the world with half of a billion people using it every day (Hall, 2019). Considering all of this, Facebook is a great platform for this research, because people are posting and commenting on a daily basis, so there is most likely a lot of material for analysis.

The thesis starts by defining the terms ideology and language ideology. Furthermore, it provides the reader with explanations of those language ideologies which were found in the articles and books during the research, and this can be found in the chapter *Ideology and language ideologies*. It precedes the chapter *Methodology* in which a brief overview of the research is stated. This chapter is followed by *Results and discussion*, which analyses the language ideologies found in the Facebook posts and the comments below them. The thesis ends with *Conclusion*.

2. Ideology and language ideologies

Ideology is a wide term and it can be related to different aspects of everyone's life. It is not easy to define it in a few words, but according to Verschueren (2012: 7):

> Ideology is no longer an academic discipline, but rather an object of investigation. It is related to *ideas*, *beliefs*, and *opinions*, but this relationship is not a straightforward one. Ideas, beliefs, and opinions, as such, do not make ideology. Simplifying a bit, they are merely 'contents of thinking', whereas *ideology* is associated with *underlying patterns of meaning, frames of interpretation, world views*, or *forms of everyday thinking and explanation.*

One way of sharing your everyday thinking is via Facebook, by posting or commenting. People's verbalized thoughts can tell us about their world view and that is why the focus of the research is on the posts and comments. When the term *ideology* is mentioned, many people immediately think of politics, society or even economy, but rarely language. This is because, as Piller (2015: 2) says:

> Speakers' beliefs and feelings about language were for a long time treated as at best irrelevant and at worst misleading for any serious understanding of language and social interaction.

Eventually, the concept of *language ideologies* developed. The situation is now different and many people discuss and research into language ideologies, and provide different definitions. Here are some of them:

(1) "Language ideologies are thus best understood as beliefs, feelings, and conceptions about language that are socially shared and relate language and society in a dialectical fashion" (Piller, 2015: 4). The author continues by saying that: "the purpose of language ideologies is not really linguistic but social. Like anything social, language ideologies are interested, multiple, and contested" (ibid.). In other words, Piller stresses that language ideology is not just related to an individual, but it is also related to society and shared within it. In most cases, language ideologies are not just about language itself, and they can contain thoughts and beliefs about society and people.

(2) According to Phyak (2015) "language ideologies constitute a wide range of issues concerning sociopolitical meanings of language." They also include "an array of

commonsense ideas, attitudes, and beliefs about language, interests of individuals and groups and social inequalities emanating from linguistic hierarchies" (ibid. 2015) In other words, through people's thoughts about language, their other beliefs can be seen, such as beliefs about politics or society. Phyak (2015) also adds that because of today's technology and modern media, scholars have focused more on language ideologies (ibid.) They are interested in the notion of superdiversity which means that many variables can be seen in one place, such as ethnicity, politics, economics and of course language. This superdiversity has been influenced by the evolution of the Internet (ibid.). Phyak broadens Piller's definition of language ideology and also stresses the importance of technology, especially the Internet. Social media provides us with the ability of posting comments which can lead to discussions or conflicts about different things. All of this can be seen in one place, which creates diversity, and that is what caught the eye of the linguists who, with the help of the Internet, started to pay more attention to language ideologies.

(3) "Language ideologies connect linguistic form and use with the very notion of the person and the social group, as they integrate language users and their politico-economic positions and interests" (Doerr, 2009: 18). In other words, Doerr too states that language ideologies do not have a linguistic purpose, but through them other ideologies can be seen, especially those connected with politics or economics.

Monoglossia and heteroglossia

Even though Croatia is a country which has one standard language, there are three different major dialects, and they are used by people from different parts of the country. Since one part of the research deals with language ideologies about Croatian, it is assumed that monoglossia and/or heteroglossia will appear. The belief of the monoglossic ideology is that "languages should be kept strictly separate" (Wardhaugh and Fuller, 2015: 90). This idea is in contrast with heteroglossia, which is defined by Bakhtin as "the diversity of speech genres that are rooted in social life" (cited in Hogan, 2011: 254). Simply put, the belief of monoglossia is that, even though there are many varieties of a language, people should only choose and use one variety. On the other hand, heteroglossia, in a way, celebrates varieties within a language and encourages us to use them all. Considering that language ideologies are typically connected to society, these beliefs can also mean that, according to monoglossia, we should all have one common view on economics, politics and the world or, according to heteroglossia, each person should have a right to their own view.

One-nation-one-language ideology

The one-nation-one-language ideology "invokes the assumption that nationalism can be best fostered if all citizens speak a common standard language" (Phyak, 2015). However, according to Kordić (2010: 236) nations are created by politics and not by nature. Small groups can become one big nation, or a small group can divide from a bigger one and become a separate nation (ibid.). This ideology is therefore a strategy for promoting ideas about social organization by using language or ideas about language.

Native speaker concept

People who have just begun to learn a foreign language will naturally make mistakes. However, many people can make mistakes when using their own language, especially on social media. When people type, they often omit or add certain letters. It is sometimes a simple mistake of pressing the wrong button and not checking before posting, but some people will not see it like that. To them, incorrect usage of language is equal to not knowing the language, especially if the language they use is not their native language. Doerr (2009: 18) classifies this view as the native speaker ideology, which includes three subcomponents of beliefs (ibid.). The first is that there is "a close correspondence between holding the citizenship of a nation-state and being a native speaker of the national language of that nation-state" (ibid.). The second is that "language is a homogeneous and fixed system with a homogeneous speech community", and because of this belief, there is allegedly a clear distinction between a native speaker and a non-native speaker (ibid. 19). The third view holds that "being a native speaker automatically bestows one with a high level of competence in all domains of one's first language, implying that the native speaker has a complete and possibly innate competence in the language" (Doerr, 2009: 19).

It is hard to talk about "close correspondence" in the first belief when there are people who have the same citizenship but do not speak the same language. If a person has the citizenship of a certain country, it does not necessarily follow that that person is a native speaker of the official language in that country. Lyons refers to the second belief "as the fiction of homogeneity: the belief or assumption that all members of the same language-community speak exactly the same language" (Lyons, 1984: 24). Weinreich, Labov and Herzog (1968: 100) too state that this idea is "unrealistic and represents a backward step from structural theories capable of accommodating the facts of orderly heterogeneity". Language is always varied and is constantly changing, even the standard form of the language, so we

cannot say that everyone speaks the same type of language. There is no such thing as an ideal speaker, and others are not just his/her copies. Language cannot be just copied to another speaker but everyone masters and uses language in their own way and at their own pace. The third belief connects language to every other part of our lives, for example the ability to work or right to live in a community. The native speaker is given a high value, and not just any native speaker but the one who has a high level of formal education. In other words, this view renders invisible speakers with lower levels of formal education and lower proficiency in the standard dialect and its formal styles, which often leads to such speakers being regarded as not fully legitimate members of society, a belief which they too sometimes internalize.

Standard language ideology

This ideology is closely connected to the one-nation-one-language ideology. "The chief characteristic of a standard ideology is the belief that there is only one correct spoken form of the language, modelled on a single correct written form" (Milroy, 2002: 174) Milroy (ibid. 173) states that the term standard language ideology

> (…) characterizes a particular set of beliefs about language. Such beliefs are typically held by populations of economically developed nation states where processes of standardisation have operated over a considerable time to produce an abstract set of norms-lexical, grammatical and (in spoken language) phonological. The same beliefs also emerge, somewhat transformed by local histories and conditions, in these state's colonies and ex-colonies.

In other words, it takes a long period of time to create a standard form of language, which can then be transformed by different events. This can be seen on the example of Croatian, whose form has been influenced by different ruling countries and various types of language contact, and is today influenced by English, the global language.

Iconization

The language of the social media is almost always informal. Since many people believe that formal styles are better or the only proper language forms, they immediately link informal usage with low levels of intelligence and make negative assumptions about speakers using such forms. This phenomenon can be analyzed as a form of iconization and it involves

> [a] transformation of the sign relationship between linguistic features (or varieties) and the social images with which they are linked. Linguistic features that index social

> groups or activities appear to be iconic representations of them, as if a linguistic feature somehow depicted or displayed a social group's inherent nature or essence (Irvine and Gal, 2000: 37).

3. Methodology

In order to study language ideologies on Facebook I decided to focus on pages or groups about "errors" in English and other pages or groups about "errors" in Croatian. Research on language ideologies about English was carried out on the page *I judge you when you use poor grammar*, and research about language ideologies about Croatian was done on the group *JEZIČNI FAIL-Nepismenost naša svagdašnja*. However, one language ideology about English was found in the group which was assumed to contain only language ideologies about Croatian.

I went through as many posts on the page and in the group as possible, and looked at the comments to establish if there were any language ideologies. The page *I judge you when you use poor grammar* is liked by a little over 25,400 people, but it does not have many posts, and they were posted a few years ago. Also, there were a lot of pictures posted by other people, and not the page administrators themselves, but they were not very popular, which means they did not have any comments. These are the reasons why it was assumed there would not be many ideologies. On the other hand, the group *JEZIČNI FAIL-Nepismenost naša svagdašnja* posts a few times a day, so it has a lot of material. Some posts did not have any comments, which suggests that they were not very interesting and popular. However, some posts have around 90 comments, which is not a surprise considering this group has almost 24,000 members.

The investigation of the material yielded various language ideologies.

4. Results and discussion

4.1. Language ideologies about English

1) Example 1

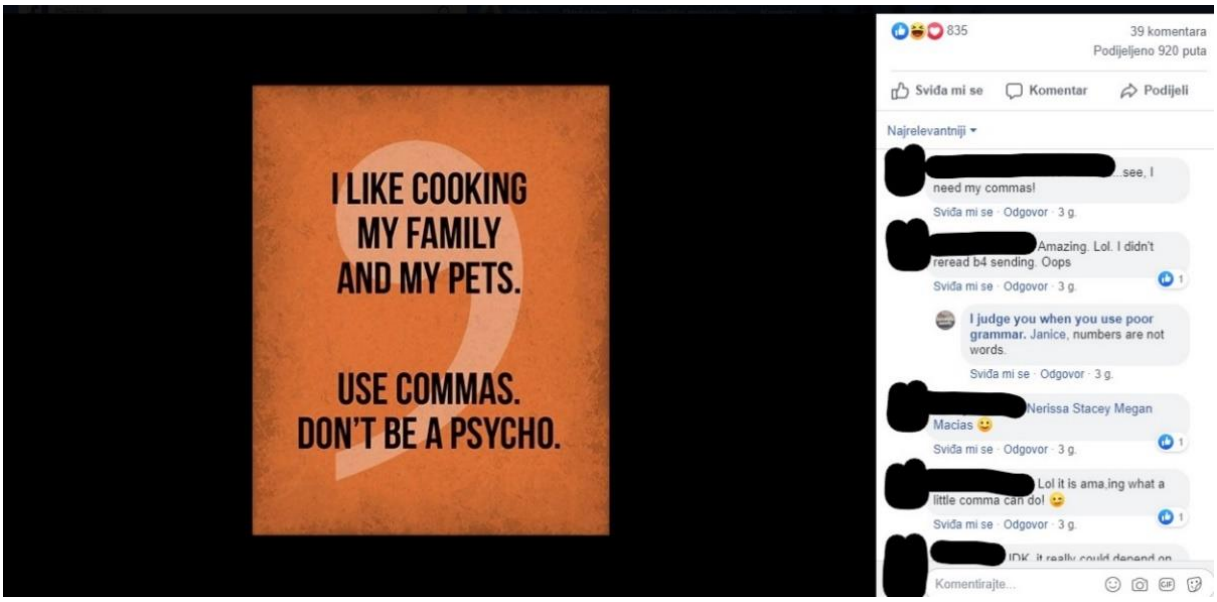


Picture 1- Posted on 25th February 2016

The posted image shows a twitter user correcting another twitter user, Bernie Sanders, who is a well-known US politician. He classified the words *greed*, *fraud*, *dishonesty* and *arrogance* as adjectives instead of nouns. The user who corrects the mistake does not give a direct opinion on it, but simply states the correct classification. However, he ends the post by using „#FeelTheBern“, which comes across as sarcastic and implies that a prominent politician should know more about the basic classification of words into lexical categories. He does not criticize Bernie Sanders' linguistic competence but his lacking metalinguistic knowledge. Below the image another Facebook user posts: “Seriously! Be tolerant of Americans they are second language speakers of English. That's why they simplified the language and use incorrect grammar!!“. This user sarcastically implies that Americans are non-native English speakers with an inadequate level of linguistic competence, a claim which the user pairs up with the metalinguistic mistake, thus merging the linguistic and the metalinguistic levels of language in mental representations. Not following the norms of standard (most probably British) English is a marker of a non-native speaker for this user and by stating this they add to the stigmatization of American English and Americans in general,

especially those who actually do use English as a second language. Moreover, this user also adds to the stigmatization of every country and its people where English is a second language or taught as a foreign language. The example shows a combination of the ideology of the standard language and the ideology of the native speaker..

2) Example 2



Picture 2- Posted on 24th February 2016

The posted picture promotes the idea of the ”correct“ usage of punctuation. According to the author of the post, “incorrect“ usage or omission of punctuation can lead to ambiguous meaning, which indicates that they consider orthography a very important part of language. Some of the group members react to the post by laughing because they think that it is entertaining that a small thing like a comma can have such a big influence on meaning. However, there is one reply to a comment that differs from the others. While one user comments on the post: „Amazing. Lol. I didn't reread b4 sending. Oops“, the Facebook page administrator replies: „numbers are not words“. Here one specific segment of standard language ideology is seen, ideology of numbers and letters. The administrator expresses the idea that numbers should be used in writing only when they are separate lexical elements referring to numerals, not instead of letters within words (or instead of their own homophones) despite the fact that informal language use and contracted forms like these are very common on social media and in digital communication in general.

Even though the administrator puts emphasis on punctuation and gives it high value as if there will be a chaos and complete misunderstanding if punctuation is wrong, speakers have the knowledge to understand what was stated, even with non-standard punctuation, but that ability is disregarded. The view in the caption seems potentially harmful because accusing someone of being a psycho because they did not write a comma is offensive and can easily hurt someone's feelings, as well as contribute to the stigmatization of non-standard varieties and their users. The other comments are neither negative or positive, with users looking on this mistake as something funny. The example shows the ideology of standard orthography and the process of iconization.

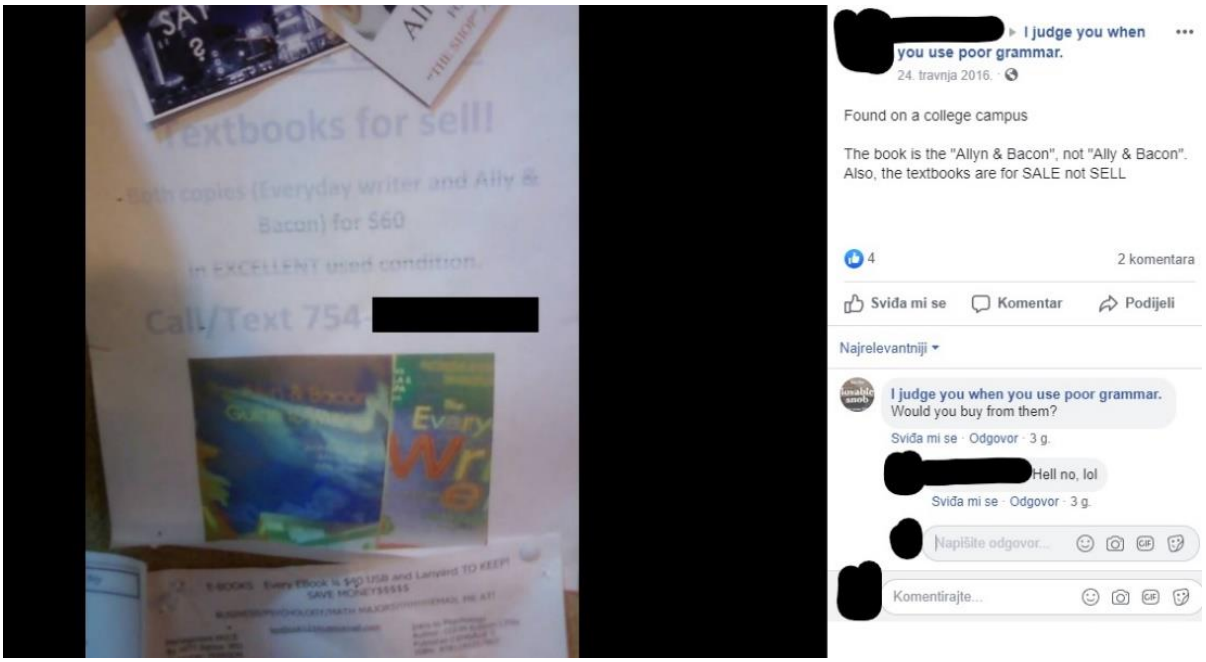
3) Example 3

The post image (the picture is below) shows an advertisement which states: “Cristmas Bows”, with a non-standard spelling of the first word, instead of “Christmas”. One of the comments states: „Many people who work in those kinds of jobs were not fortunate enough to be raised in a home containing books and one that emphasized education:(“. In line with the process of iconization, this Facebook user connects the language mistake and the place where it is found, and makes an assumption about someone's upbringing, home environment, and their level of formal education, which is presented as inferior, as shown by the use of the expression „not fortunate enough“ and the sad emoticon. The possibility that this spelling was merely accidental is disregarded. Many people can feel offended by this comment, and not just people who work in Hobby Lobby, the store shown in the picture. This is another example of iconization and the ideology of the standard language.



Picture 3 – Posted on 4th December 2012

4) Example 4



Picture 4 – Posted on 24th April 2016.

Not all pictures on this page were posted by the page itself. Some other people posted as well. One person posts a picture of an advertisement on which it can be seen that someone is selling textbooks. The person who posted this marked the mistakes saying it should be *sale* instead of *sell*, and that it should be *Allyn & Bacon*, and not *Ally & Bacon*. The admin of the page commented with a question: „Would you buy from them?“, and the person replied: „Hell no, lol“. One's non-standard (probably non-native) usage of the language influenced other

people's choice of buying something from that person. Additionally, the person who posted the picture added that the advert was found on a college campus, probably implying that college students should have a good command of standard/native English, which portrays the "mistake" as even bigger. It is expected that people who have a high level of education level, in any field, should also have a high level of proficiency in standard English and should not produce other types of English. Language is connected to other domains of life, and language knowledge is thought to be the basis for other types of knowledge. The person who posted this puts an emphasis on the fact that the advertisement was found on a college campus which implies that it should not have any mistakes since people on campus are highly educated people. However, this person disregards the fact that not only students and professors can be found in this environment , but perhaps also some other people who wish to sell some of their books. Furthermore, the advertisement is not written by hand, it was previously written electronically and printed, so the mistakes can be the result of autocorrect/autocomplete. The choice not to buy the books does not make much sense because the person who sells the books did not write them, so non-standard spelling has nothing to do with the books and their content. This example shows the process of iconization and the ideology of the standard language.

5) Example 5



Picture 5 – Posted on 29th September 2010

The posted image shows a short message which shows many features of what seems to be non-native English in terms of spelling, morphology, and syntax. The person who posted it

states: „I think my brain literally just exploded...“ implying that they are so shocked and there are so many mistakes that it is hard for them to focus and read the text below the post, through one of the comments, Doerr's second belief is seen and the stigmatization of non-native speakers who are treated differently, as inferior speakers with “sad” English, perhaps even excluded from society or the community but definitely easily recognized within a community of native speakers:

> „I tend to give people a break when English is not their first language; in this case it appears English is not their first language...Oh God I hope not. If it was then this would be REALLY sad!“.

What is also interesting about this example is the fact that another user challenges the author of the post by asking “Do you know what literally means?”, thus criticizing the author and prescriptively implying that the metaphorical use of the adverb *literally* should not be allowed, a view which can be analyzed as the ideology of literal meaning (Starčević, Kapović & Sarić 2019: 266). This example therefore shows two ideologies, the ideology of the native speaker and the ideology of literal meaning.

6) Example 6



Picture 6 – Posted on 25th September 2012

Someone needed help from a plumber, who left the message found in the post above. The picture shows a piece of paper with the note: “BE BACK AT 900 AM To FiX ToLeT

Plumer". Someone commented: "How is a plumber unable to spell toilet?", and another person replied: "How is a plumber unable to spell plumber?" These people show disbelief that a person cannot spell the word indicating their own profession. These comments are simple questions and not much criticism can be seen, however, there is another comment that mocks the post and intentionally uses non-standard spelling: "Plumers are grate at tolet fitsen.". This person's belief is not given directly but it is assumed that they believe that if you work in a certain field, your knowledge of the vocabulary used in that field should be quite good. This belief is not completely wrong, nevertheless, there are many reasons that could have caused the mistakes in the written note, and they should be taken into consideration. For example, the author of the note might be a non-native speaker. People from poorer countries constantly move to other countries where they will have better opportunities and potentially a better life. They might not necessarily be native speakers of the official language of their new country, but they may be good workers who do their job very well. Therefore, a plumber's ability to fix pipes should not be judged by their ability to spell the word *plumber* in standard English. An immigrant reading this comment might feel offended and not welcome in their new country, or community. Learning a new language is hard and if people are constantly criticizing learners' efforts, they discourage people from learning. People should always be able to learn new things, new languages and have as much support as they can. The example shows the ideology of standard orthography and potentially the ideology of the native speaker.

7) Example 7



Picture 7 – Posted on 4th June 2019

There are many words or phrases that might seem “incorrect” but when you read them closely, you can see that the non-standard element is there on purpose. The reason for that is mostly wordplay so that e.g. some products are promoted as different, original and sell faster. For example, the phrase *do not* can sometimes be seen written as *donut*. For some people, this is a mistake and others just see it as a new way of selling products, in this case, T-shirts. Someone posted a picture of a woman wearing a shirt with *I donut care* written on it. The person who posted was not sure what that the message was but one person commented that it must be a pun: *mislim da ovo nije fail pa makar, kontam da je dizajn majice igra riječi*. Another person commented with another image showing the same message with a picture of a donut instead of the word *donut*. The comments are not negative, which indicates that the commentators support language variation and the changes which were made. This means that the example can be viewed as promoting language creativity and the ideology of heteroglossia.

4.2. Language ideologies about Croatian

1) Example 1



Picture 8 – Posted on 1st June 2019

The posted image shows a question about cooking which contains several non-standard orthographic elements (*receipt* instead of *recept*, no diacritics, no comma between clauses, no space before a comma). The main issue, however, is the fact that the author of the question is not familiar with the term *vrhnje*, which they encountered in the genitive case (*vrhnja*). Based on the declension pattern of similar nouns, the author creates an analogical

nominative form, *vrhanj* (*tornja: toranj = vrhnja: vrhanj*), which is a neologism perceived by the commentators as a non-word. There are different reactions to this post and one Facebook user decided to sarcastically comment on the neologism by pretending it is an established element, synonymous with *vrganj*:: „Vrhanj... To je brat blizanac Vrganja. Logično je..... E, f, g, h.... Osim što uvijek stoje jedan uz drugoga, omiljeni hobi im je kuhanje.“ This speaker disregards the vast vocabulary that exists in Croatian considering that there are other words for ’vrhnje‘, such as *mileram*, or even *pavlaka*, especially in non-standard dialects, but also cognate languages such as Bosnian or Serbian. The commentator implies that this person has never seen or does not knows what *vrhnje* is, but the person who asked about it could be familiar with the concept/extralinguistic object, what it is, what is it used etc., yet simply uses another term for it.

Furthermore, another comment states: „kad netko napiše “receipt“ očito mu hrvatski nije materinji jezik“. The belief behind this comment is most likely the same as Doerr’s third belief. The person who made this comment made an assumption that the person who had made the mistake was not a native speaker, probably trying to defend the author of the question.

There is another comment that stands out: „Čuvaj nas bože od blesavih pitanja. Netko je i osnovnu završio po vezi?“ This user states that the question is stupid and implies that the author could not have finished elementary school without illegal help, which suggests that they are not intelligent and not a fully legitimate member of society. This perspective adds to the stigmatization of all people who do not know one particular term and also discourages people from asking for help when they need it. One of the purposes of social media is to find new information, which some people might start to avoid if they get criticized too often. Social media should be a place of comfort where people can exchange information and help each other, not discourage and criticize one another. This example shows the process of iconization and the ideology of the standard language.

2) Example 2



Picture 9 – Posted on 22nd May 2019

There are many reasons people use non-standard orthography and punctuation when they write. This can be because they are not familiar with the conventions of the written standard language, they wish to express a particular type of identity, or they simply do not care about them. However, some people think that if too many non-standard elements are used, then those speakers have a low level of intelligence. One such comment occurred on a post where someone asked for a recommendation of a city to visit in Spain adding that they know only two, Barcelona and Real. Someone sarcastically commented: „Real je lijep grad“, probably referring to the football club. Another person immediately defends that person stating that there is a city called Ciudad Real and that is what was probably referred to:

„Za vašu informaciju, kad se već rugate bezveze, a time samo pokazujete vlastitu neinformiranost, postoji Ciudad Real, vjerojatno je čovjek na to mislio, samo što nije rekao puni naziv grada. Grad se nalazi u regiji Castilla La Mancha, u kojoj je i Madrid, i Toledo.“

Another person replied to that comment: „ti si samo tila ispast pametna s tim komentarom; moš mislit koliko mu je to poznato, a ne pozna osnove deklinacije i stavljanje zareza...“. To paraphrase the comment, it says that since that person made a lot of mistakes, such as not using commas appropriately and does not know how to decline nouns, they cannot possibly know that there is a city called Ciudad Real. This person thus believes that if

someone uses non-standard writing, they do not know the basics of the language and therefore cannot know ”advanced” geographical information either. In other words, in this view someone’s linguistic competence in the standard language is merged with their extralinguistic knowledge of geography. The commentator believes that knowledge about language is the basis for knowledge in every other aspect of one’s life. This view cannot be defended because someone’s knowledge about standard (written) English, for example, is not necessarily a prerequisite for knowledge about e.g. English geography, history or culture. People have different levels of language knowledge, which is influenced not just by their level of education but also by their life experiences. Failing to take that information into account can easily lead to stigmatization and social exclusion. This view can be harmful to the people who use such written English (or other languages), especially if they already feel linguistically insecure. This example shows the process of iconization and the ideology of the standard language.

3) Example 3

This is one of the rare posts (the picture is below), found during the research that has many positive comments. The posted picture shows a outdoor board with the caption „SRAČNE“ on it. The person who posted this picture also wrote: „"SRAČNE", sretno na bednjanskom. I to je hrvatski jezik :-)“ implying that even though this element is not a form of Standard Croatian, it is still a variety of Croatian and therefore legitimate language. People react positively by giving some other examples of this or express their agreement with the original description. However, the first comment on the post is a little bit different. It does not seem completely negative at first, especially to those who do not know what or who *Srakari* is/are, but to some it might. The commentator states that they first thought that there was a mistake in spelling the name of the town of Sračinec, made by some of the local residents (*Šrakari*). The fact that the commentator does not expect to see non-standard elements on public signs and immediately connects a possible spelling mistake with certain people, speakers of non-standard Croatian, might lead to reinforcing negative stereotypes about them. This example shows the ideology of heteroglossia.



Picture 10 – Posted on 26th May 2019

4) Example 4

Some people believe that when a word from another language is used it should be adapted to the target language. The reasons can be different. Maybe so that it is easier for speakers to learn the word, or maybe because adaptation creates a new 'local' word, no longer considered a foreign element. It becomes a borrowing and eventually an established part of the language. Such an example can be seen in the post below. A person posted a picture of a blackboard in front of a restaurant in Austria which has meals written on it. The person commented on the words *rasnicji* (ražnjići/skewers), and *pleskavica* (pljeskavica/burger). One person commented on the post and said:

> "Meni ovo manje-više ok, jedino što bih stavio "Rasnitji", zvučalo bi približno...kad bi pisalo "raznjici", Nemac bi ga verovatno pročitao "racn-jiki" (zaglavio bi se između N i J). Što se tiče pljeskavice, možda bi bilo bolje da je stavio Plieskavitza :)"

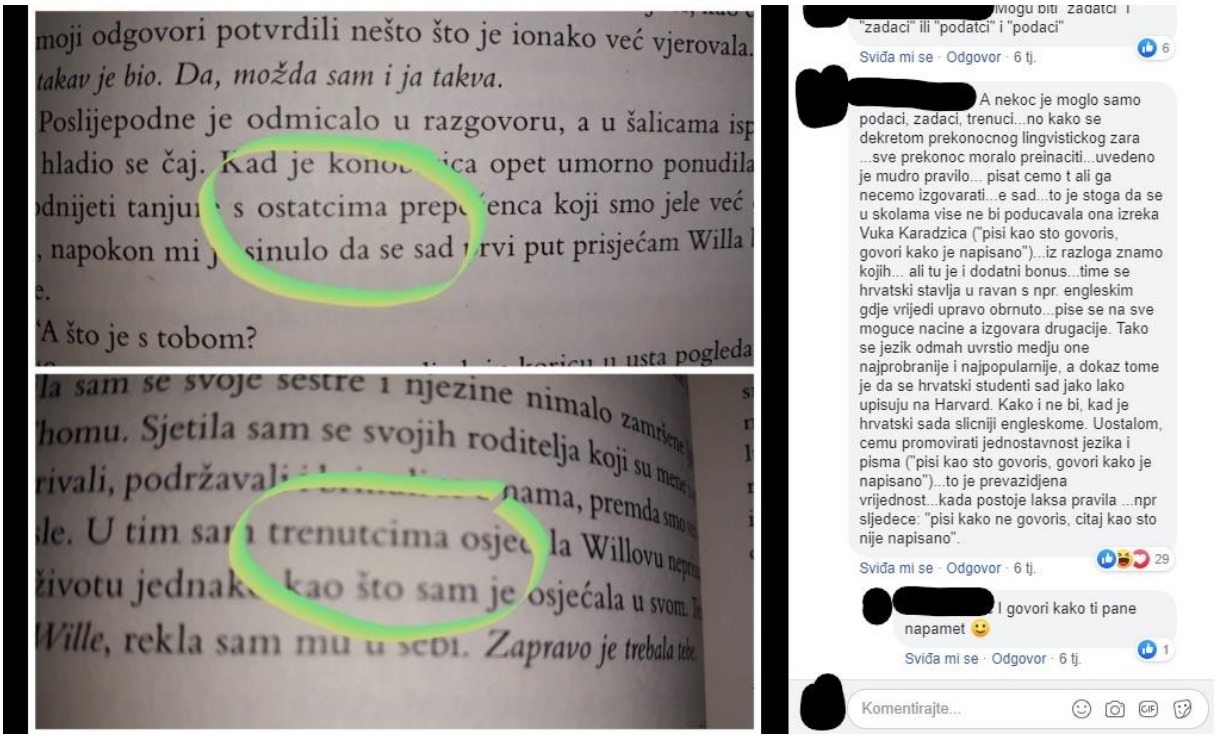
It is seen in this comment that this person thinks it would be best if the restaurant used *rasnitji* instead of *rasnicji* and *plieskavitza* instead of*pleskavica*. They think that German speakers have problems reading the word *ražnjići*, and that they would not read it properly. In their opinion it is best if the words are adjusted to the dominant language of the country they are used in, for easier understanding. New words and different varieties of the language are supported by this belief. On the one hand, this person supports constantly evolving language forms but on the other, one might perceive such views as negative towards the source language forms.



Picture 11 – Posted on 7th June 2019

However, there is another comment on the post which differs from the previous one. The commentator thinks that words that originally come from a foreign language should not change at all. In their opinion, the source language forms should always be used, written and spoken ones as well. Even examples were provided, such as *pizza*, *curry*, and *quiche*. This is the full comment: “Paaaa... Ne! Nazivi stranih jela pišu se izvorno i ljudi ih s vremenom nauče ispravno pročitati (pizza, curry, quiche... da ne nabrajam).” Their belief is that there should be one form of a language and there should not be any changes. These opposing views might be referred to as the ideology of the source language (Starčević, Kapović & Sarić 2019: 351) and the ideology of the target language.

5) Example 5



Picture 12 – Posted on 23rd May 2019

A Facebook user posted a picture to ask if someone can clarify if the words *ostatcima* and *trenutcima* are written correctly. The first comment says that the letter *t* in these words is optional, and that both forms of the words can be used. The commentator does not differentiate between them and portrays them as being equally correct. However, another comment points out that the words are written correctly, but adds that it has not always been that the case. The user explains the change by referring to the sociopolitical and sociolinguistic changes after the break-up of Yugoslavia.. With the creation of a new, independent Croatia came new changes in the language. The dominant ideology was to create forms which would be different from Serbian ones. However, if there is a change in the language, it does not follow that there will be a (positive) change in society. With this idea in mind, the commentator compares Croatian and English, which differ in terms of orthographic conventions. Roughly speaking, Croatian words are pronounced in the same way they are written, while in English the spoken form is very often different from the written equivalent. With the longer forms, *ostatcima* and *trenutcima*, where the letter *t* is in fact silent, Croatian becomes more similar to English. The commentator sarcastically states that because of this change it is now easier for Croatian students to enroll in Harvard University. This is the full comment:

> „A nekoc je moglo samo podaci, zadaci, trenuci...no kako se dekretom prekonocnog lingvistickog zara ...sve prekonoc moralo preinaciti...uvedeno je mudro pravilo... pisat

cemo t ali ga necemo izgovarati...e sad...to je stoga da se u skolama vise ne bi poducavala ona izreka Vuka Karadzica ("pisi kao sto govoris, govori kako je napisano")...iz razloga znamo kojih...ali tu je i dodatni bonus…time se hrvatski stavlja u ravan s npr. engleskim gdje vrijedi upravo obrnuto…pise se na sve moguce nacine a izgovara drugacije. Tako se jezik odmah uvrstio medju one najprobranije i najpopularnije, a dokaz tome je da se hrvatski student sad jako lako upisuju na Harvard. Kako i ne bi, kad je hrvatski sada slicniji engleskome. Uostalome, cemu promovirati jednostavnost jezika i pisma (“pisi kao sto govoris, govori kako je napisano“)…to je prevazidjena vrijednost…kada postoje laksa pravila npr. sljedece: “pisi kako ne govoris, citaj kao sto nije napisano”.”

We might conclude that this example shows the ideology of symmetry between spoken and written language (i.e. one phoneme should correspond to one grapheme).

6) Example 6



Picture 13 – Posted on 6th July 2019

In both standard and non-standard Croatian, interrogative sentences can start with *je li* or *da li* (Barić *et al*, 1997: 447). However, after years of exposure to prescriptivist views in schools and the media, average speakers often consider *da li* to be typical of Serbian, i.e. it is often believed to be a non-Croatian element and/or a marker of bad Croatian. In addition, speakers often write it by using the non-standard single-word form *dali*, instead of *da li*, due to the fact that the sequence is one phonological word. In order to ridicule the non-standard spelling, some speakers pretend that it actually refers to Salvador Dali, the famous painter. In

the posted image we can see a stand with the winners on it and the statement above: “Prošle godine Vettel je pobijedio u Britaniji dali to može ponoviti ove godine”. Although the message is clear, the commentators impose a forced interpretation according to which the post claims that Salvador Dali can win the race: “Dali najveći favorit za pobjedu u idućoj trci. Kladionice, čekajte me!” and “Sad kad znam da se i Dali natječe, možda pogledam… :D “. While the comments might seem amusing, but they have a lot of negative potential as the punch line of the post is the idea that non-standard spelling conveys the wrong message. This in turn portrays the speakers who use such forms as incompetent and illegitimate participants in public discourse. The commentators can easily consider themselves superior and feel comfortable criticizing other speakers’ language level. This example shows the idea that one form should correspond to one meaning and vice versa (*da li* = interrogative marker; *dali* = the surname Dali), which can be classified as the ideology of monosemonymy (Starčević, Kapović & Sarić 2019: 79).

5. Conclusion

In the *Introduction*, it is mentioned that Facebook is the largest social network in the world and that it is a great platform for research. This was proven right, because during the study many posts and comments were found and analyzed. The original intention was to divide the ideologies in them into categories, for example, *The ideology of the standard language - example 1, The ideology of the standard language – example 2,* etc. However, under many of the posts users did not just comment on the posted image, but they also discussed various topics by promoting overlapping ideas about language and the extralinguistic world, which made it difficult to provide a simple one-to-one classification of ideologies in the corpus. Therefore, no labels were used in listing the examples.

During the research, these ideologies were found: *the ideology of the standard language, the ideology of the native speaker, the ideology of standard orthography, the ideology of literal meaning, heteroglossia, the ideology of the source language, the ideology of the target language, the ideology of symmetry between spoken and written language, and the ideology of monosemonymy*, as well as *the process of iconization.* All these ideologies are important for a better understanding of the relationship between language, society, and technology. Language is not just a means of communication, it is part of a person's identity, part of culture and sometimes, as seen in the examples analyzed, it is used to judge and criticize people, their education, and their role in society, as well as exclude them from society. Ideologies can add to the stigmatization of various groups: working-class speakers, people with a low level of formal education, regional/non-standard dialect speakers, even entire nations. Of course, not all ideologies show a negative attitude towards language variation. Some ideologies, such as heteroglossia, celebrate language in all of its different realizations.

Sometimes, during the research, it was hard to understand what ideology hides behind the posted picture or comment and this has to do with the typical challenge regarding the critical discourse approach – our analysis is always a (more or less subjective) *interpretation* of the data we focus on. Perhaps some of the analyses given in this thesis are not the "absolute truth" because the comment was misunderstood due to a lack of context, information about the commentators and their worlds, etc. This poses a problem when researching people's opinions just through their comments on social media, and not speaking directly to them. In the future, another study or project with a similar topic could be carried out with respondents

from different backgrounds, different nationalities, and education levels being interviewed on a variety of topics. Their conversations would be observed, as well as their attitudes and behavior to other speakers. The study could involve an analysis of their social media profiles and posts.

To conclude, language ideologies as a research topic should be investigated and promoted because average speakers are not always aware of them, of how they are combined with identity, politics and social exclusion, and what they can do to the lives of marginalized, but also mainstream groups in society. If speakers can be made more aware of what hidden ideologies and attitudes their comments promote, they might be more careful when making them.

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