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Code-Switching Habits and Attitudes among Transcarpathian-Hungarian University Students¹

Abstract

In my paper I discuss the code-switching habits of Hungarian university students from Transcarpathia studying in Hungary both in terms of their oral and online communication. My research examines the use of code-switching by participating university students in their own oral and online communication, the cases in which they switch between codes, and the types of attitudes associated with code-switching used in oral communication and online messages.

Keywords: bilingualism, code-switching, linguistic attitude, online communication, oral language use

1 Introduction

Studies of bilingualism conducted in Transcarpathia have found that code-switching among Hungarians in Transcarpathia is a conscious activity that in many cases enables more effective and smoother communication. At the same time, it has also been proven that for Hungarian-dominant bilingual speakers living in Transcarpathia code-switching also represents a tool for expressing their identity that they can also use to express their solidarity with one another and their belonging to the same group. In certain cases, however, it also happens that monolingual speakers express negative attitudes towards those bilingual speakers whose language use is characterized by code-switching. As a result, the bilingual speakers may become uncertain of the correctness of their own language use and thus in monolingual environments they try to avoid code-switching and they try to adapt their language use to that of monolingual speakers as much as possible. As a result, different attitudes may be associated with code-switching; some speakers may judge even the code-switching occurring in their own language use in a negative way, while others consider it a natural and normal phenomenon (Márku 2013: 167–168).

In my paper I study the code-switching habits and attitudes of Hungarian university students from Transcarpathia who have grown up in a bilingual environment, however, who have moved to Hungary to pursue studies in higher education, thus entering a new, monolingual Hungarian

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speaking community. Research about bilingualism in Transcarpathia has so far focused on the code-switching of Hungarians living in Transcarpathia. This study is novel in the sense that it examines code-switching habits and the associated attitudes from the perspective of entering a monolingual Hungarian setting from a bilingual environment.

2 Definition of Code-Switching

In the case of bilingual speaking communities two languages are used in daily communication. A community may be called bilingual if its members understand and in their daily communication actually use two or more languages. This, however, does not mean that all speakers of the bilingual community are familiar with the two or more languages of the community to the same extent, it is more frequent that certain members of a bilingual community only speak one or the other language (Borbély 2014: 36–38). Members of the bilingual communities are connected to one another and this also results in linguistic interaction.

One of the typical forms of interaction between languages is code-switching, which means the alternating use of two or more languages within one act of communication or discourse. Code-switching may involve a single word, expression, sentence or even several sentences (Grosjean 1982: 145, Bartha 1999: 120).

István Lanstyák defines code-switching the following way (2006: 107): “Code-switching is a type of bilingual communication in which speakers use two different languages within a single discourse, more precisely: they use elements belonging to two different languages, without the sequences belonging to different languages corresponding to each other in terms of their content. The discourse created as a result of such a way of communication is called bilingual discourse”.

In terms of the definition from Tej K. and William C. (2006: 337), code-switching refers to the use of various linguistic units (words, phrases, clauses and sentences) primarily from two participating grammatical systems across sentence boundaries within a speech event.

The studies related to code-switching began in the 1970’s. Surveys have shown that code-switching often occurs as a communicative strategy, and it is influenced by social rules (Blom–Gumperz 1972). In some studies, the technical term code-mixing was used for code-switching and borrowing inside sentences (Poplack 1988: 222). However, code-switching and code-mixing cannot be used in the same meaning, since in case of code-switching there is always a base and a guest language as well. The base language is also called matrix language (Myers-Scotton 1992). A base language is a language that has a dominant role in the bilingual discourse, while the term guest language (embedded language) refers to the language the elements of which occasionally or regularly appear in the base language (Lanstyák 2006: 109). For code-switching a high competence is needed in both languages, or on the contrary, speech can contain various language elements because the speakers cannot express themselves effectively in either of the languages (Backus 1996, Benathila & Davies 1995). According to some researchers, code-switching has its own grammar (Sankoff & Poplack 1981). Early studies examined where code-switching can occur inside sentences. Other researchers think that code-switching does not have its own grammar (Gumperz & Hernandez 1969). Although, based on the rules of syntactic structures there is sometimes an overlap between the languages, the mental lexicon of these stays separated.

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Code-switching does not only mean the alternating use of two languages but also the alternative use of different varieties of the same language, for example, different dialects or colloquial language and one of its dialects (Kiss 1995: 210).

Scholarly publications differentiate between contextual and situational code-switching. Contextual code-switching depends on the linguistic knowledge of the speaker, their familiarity with the two languages, and their attitudes related to the languages. Situational code-switching is influenced by the non-linguistic circumstances of the communicative situation, including, for example, changes in the speech situation, topic of speech, partner or partners (Kiss 1995: 210).

Code-switching may occur due to many reasons, including, for example, the need to signify identity, solidarity, elevate status, personalize a message, confidentiality, exclusion, addressing someone, completion, triggering/binding, recalling, intervening, rating of a message, repetition, translation, explanation, changes in the initial status of the conversation, language play (cf. Grosjean 1982, Csernicskó ed. 2010: 99–102, Márku 2013, Borbély 2014: 67).

3 Research on Code-Switching of Hungarians in Transcarpathia

Studies of the bilingualism of Hungarians in Transcarpathia started in the 1990s. The research project on Hungarian language in the Carpathian Basin at the end of the 20th century reported about the status of the Hungarian language in Transcarpathia, while it also provided a comparative study of differences between the use of Hungarian in Transcarpathia and in Hungary. As a result, it was revealed that respondents from Transcarpathia are characterized by the use of varieties deriving from the contact language (Csernicskó 1998: 216–220).

In Transcarpathia bilingualism was primarily studied from a functional perspective, starting out from the idea that a community may be deemed to be bilingual if its members regularly use two or more languages in their communication (Csernicskó ed. 2003: 30). Hungarians in Transcarpathia may choose from three languages and their varieties in their daily communication. In some cases, they use Hungarian, in others Ukrainian, while yet in other situations Russian, while at some occasions Hungarian and Ukrainian are used in a mixed way (Csernicskó 2004: 475). Considering the fact that certain members of the bilingual speaking community are not familiar with the two languages and its varieties to the same extent, it may happen that in certain speech situations there is a linguistic deficit that the language user makes up for by code-switching. This indicates that code-switching may be typical not only of those language users who are equally familiar with both languages but those people can also switch codes who are less competent in their second language (Márku 2013: 36).

Based on research on code-switching, in Transcarpathian Hungarian communities switching between languages may occur in daily communication due to a variety of reasons. Most frequently, code-switching occurring in the oral communication of Hungarians in Transcarpathia takes place due to recalling. Code-switching due to recalling means that the bilingual speaker recalls a communication or discourse in the language in which it was originally expressed and thus so to say tries to make the recalled text more authentic. It is similar to recalling when the respondent switches codes because the communication expressed in one language is interpreted or explained by him/her in the other language; this is called translation, repetition or explanation. Code-switching may also take place among Hungarians in Transcarpathia due to the indication of social status or position, for example, in cases when two Hungarian speakers from Transcarpathia have a discussion in daily communication in informal

situations in Hungarian, however, in formal situations, for example at an office where one of the speakers is a client and the other is a clerk, it may happen that they choose to use the majority language instead. It also happens that bilingual speakers in Transcarpathia switch codes because monolingual speakers also become involved in the conversation. In this case it may happen that the bilingual speakers exclude the monolingual speaker from the communication by means of code switching. At the same time, the opposite may also occur when the bilingual speakers who can communicate in both languages switch to the language of the monolingual speaker, out of solidarity. Moreover, it is also typical that Hungarians in Transcarpathia use code-switching as a form of linguistic play so as to make the communication funnier (Csernicskó ed. 2010: 100–101).

Code-switching has also been observed in the digital communication of Transcarpathian Hungarians. These studies have revealed that code-switching in online communication does not appear accidentally, and it is not the result of linguistic deficit; it is the product of conscious and creative communication, means of expression for the purposes of conveying humor, linguistic play, additional meaning or for that matter that of a Transcarpathian Hungarian identity, familiarity and a sense of belonging to the same group (Márku 2017: 144–149).

4 Linguistic Myths Connected to Code-Switching

Various linguistic myths may also be connected to code-switching that everyday speakers less competent in linguistics may also be familiar with. Linguistic myths are such public beliefs or stereotypical, non-expert opinions that do not or only partly correspond to objective facts; so called half-truths. They are usually not based on rational principles but on belief that have become an integral part of the given community's culture. A part of these myths are also maintained by the fact that they are not always false, they have element of truth in them that may be related to the daily experience of people, influencing the behavior and actions of people (Lanstyák 2014: 80–104).

According to one of the myths related to code-switching, the alternating use of two or more languages within the same discourse is an expression of linguistic arbitrariness from the part of the speaker and it results in unintelligible speech. Studies of bilingualism claim that this statement is false, as alternating between languages is a natural and usual phenomenon that is governed by well specified grammatical and pragmatic rules and it indicates the high-level linguistic skills of language users. According to the other myth related to code-switching, the mixture of two languages expresses the lack of appreciation for the given languages. Linguistic studies do not find this statement appropriate either as code-switching mostly occurs in the language use of such speakers who consider both languages as their own and they judge them positively. According to another myth related to code-switching, the mixture of two languages indicates that the speaker does not speak (any of) the languages well. However, code-switching may have numerous reasons as already noted above, for example, it may be due to the expression of solidarity, recalling, emphasis, etc. Code-switching due to linguistic deficit is only one of these reasons. Thus, code-switching does not clearly indicate the inadequate knowledge of the language by the speaker (Csernicskó ed. 2010: 42–49, Lanstyák 2014: 104–106).

5 Participants and Methodology

This research was conducted with the help of a questionnaire survey and interviewing. The questionnaire was answered by altogether 158 Hungarian students from Transcarpathia studying in Hungary, at the University of Debrecen. The majority of the respondents are residents of the Debreceni Márton Áron College for Advanced Studies of Eötvös Loránd University. Data collection took place on paper, by visiting respondents in person, and also at the courses offered by the College, after prior arrangements made with the instructors.

The questionnaire studied the plans of respondents in connection with finding employment and settlement, knowledge of different languages, habits of oral and online communication, as well as their attitudes related to contact effects and local language varieties both in terms of oral and online communication. In this paper I only present the results related to the research questions and hypotheses. The recording and processing of questionnaire data was done with Microsoft Excel.

Besides the questionnaire survey, I conducted interviews as well, also with the Hungarian students from Transcarpathia studying at the University of Debrecen. Altogether 67 interviews were made with respondents. The interviews were conducted with the aim of checking and complementing the data from the questionnaires. During the interviews the following topics were discussed: the relationship of respondents with people of Ukrainian ethnicity and Hungarians living in Hungary, leaving the motherland and motivations for studying in Hungary, personal experience with using their mother tongue and differences in language use, personal impression in connection with difficulties of language use, the perception of different language use characteristics. I worked with semi-structured interview questions, thus I could reveal the subjective experience of respondents and thus could add valuable information to the questionnaire survey. With the prior approval of respondents, audio recordings were made of the individual interviews. After the precise transcription of the audio recordings, the texts were analyzed with the help of the ATLAS.ti text analysis software. Abbreviations and signs used in the interview excerpts: I = interviewer (person doing the fieldwork), R = respondent.

6 Research Hypotheses

According to studies of the bilingualism of Hungarians in Transcarpathia (Csernicskó ed. 2010, Márku 2013, 2017), code-switching is characteristic of both the oral and online communication of Transcarpathian Hungarians. I hypothesize that code-switching occurring in oral and online communication is also characteristic of those young Hungarians in Transcarpathia who have left behind their mother country to continue their education in Hungary.

There are several linguistic myths about code-switching that assess alternating between languages as a negative phenomenon. I hypothesize that the Hungarian university students from Transcarpathia who answered my questions have no negative attitudes towards code-switching in oral and online communication.

According to studies of the online language use of Hungarians from Transcarpathia, code-switching in online communication is not due to any linguistic deficit but is used consciously by Internet users, for example, for the purposes of linguistic play or to express solidarity with one another or a sense of belonging to the same group (Márku 2017). I hypothesize that the respondents involved in the present research also select consciously from the languages they

are familiar with both in oral and online communication, and they can justify the reasons for their code-switching through specific examples.

7 Results

The first part of the questionnaire included questions concerning the future employment plans and settlement of respondents. I considered these to be important questions because the relationship with their motherland may also influence the linguistic attitudes of respondents. The respondents had to indicate their current place of residence, which had to be decided based on where they spend more time due to their educational mobility, i.e., the Ukraine or Hungary. 45% of the respondents chose the Ukraine, while 55% of them Hungary as their current place of residence, which means that a bit more than half of them stay in Hungary most part of the year. Moreover, also 55% of the respondents would prefer to settle down in Hungary and 74% would like to work there, too. This indicates that even some of those would prefer to work in Hungary who would otherwise like to live in the Ukraine. The interviews provided more insights into the questions related to staying at home or finding employment in Hungary. The interviewees had to explain why they decided to move to Hungary and start their university studies at the University of Debrecen. Altogether 123 responses were collected from 67 respondents. The answers of respondents could be categorized into 10 bigger groups:

1. Language as a factor influencing educational mobility. 52% of respondents study in Hungary because they do not speak Ukrainian well or at all, they have negative attitudes towards Ukrainian language and people whose mother tongue is Ukrainian, what is more, they are motivated by the opportunity of studying in their mother tongue.
2. Livelihood and employment. According to 42% of respondents it is difficult to find employment and make a living in the Ukraine and the salaries are low. They hope to have a better life in Hungary with more job opportunities and a higher salary.
3. Choosing a major as a factor influencing educational mobility. 35% of respondents decided to study in Hungary because there is a much wider range of programs available at Hungarian universities than in Transcarpathia.
4. Level of higher education as a factor influencing educational mobility. 31% of respondents believe that the quality of education in Hungary is better and they can gain better knowledge and qualifications than in Ukrainian higher education. Moreover, according to the respondents a Hungarian diploma is more acknowledged than a degree earned in the Ukraine.
5. Family and friends as a factor influencing educational mobility. 13% of respondents chose a Hungarian institution of higher education after being encouraged to do so by family members and friends.
6. Education-related costs as a factor influencing educational mobility. 6% of respondents decided to continue their education in Hungary because they considered university education in the Ukraine to be more costly.
7. The love of Hungary. 6% of the respondents would like to live and study specifically in Hungary and they would like to leave Transcarpathia.
8. A means of earning money while studying. 2% of the respondents are motivated by student work opportunities in Hungary as this way they also have the chance to gain experience and earn money already during their university years.

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9. Unsuccessful advanced school-leaving exam in the Ukraine. 2% of the respondents came to Hungary to study because due to their unsuccessful advanced school-leaving exam taken in the Ukraine they could not enter the Ukrainian higher education system.
10. Compulsory military service. 2% of the respondents decided to come to a Hungarian university because Hungarian men in Transcarpathia who have reached the military age are afraid of being conscripted into the Ukrainian army.

Based on the above answers, the key reason for educational mobility is the language, more precisely the lack of knowledge of Ukrainian that stops them from staying in the mother country. The majority of respondents do not speak Ukrainian well or at all, and they have negative attitudes towards Ukrainian language. These answers confirm the findings of the questionnaire that focused on the language skills of respondents.

Respondents had to rate their skills in Hungarian, Ukrainian and Russian in a self-reported manner (Figure 1). All respondents speak Hungarian at a native speaker's level. A larger part of respondents (41%) do not speak Ukrainian well, and 32% of respondents know only one-two words in Russian. 11% of respondents do not speak Ukrainian at all and 31% does not speak Russian at all.

The majority of interviewees, similarly to the respondents of the questionnaire, speak Ukrainian only to a lesser extent (51%), 20% does not speak Ukrainian at all, 17% can communicate with it, and 12% said that they spoke Ukrainian well.

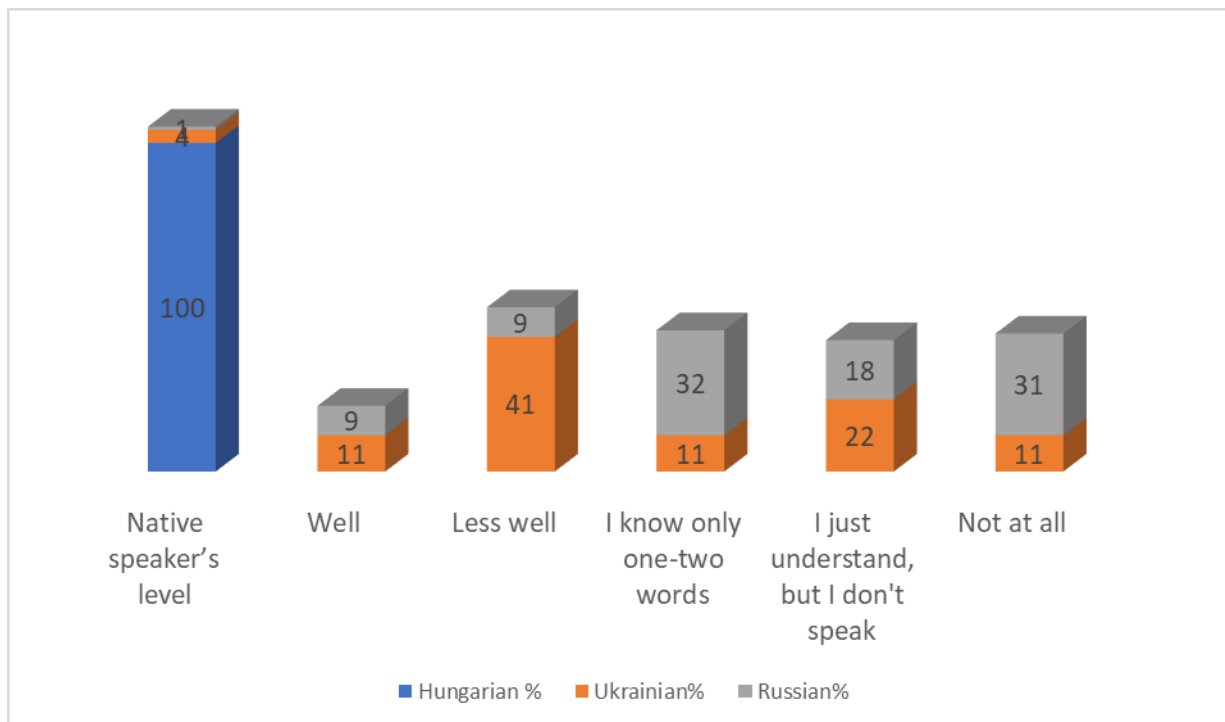


Figure 1. Language skills of respondents of the questionnaire

Despite the low awareness of Ukrainian, the majority of both the respondents of the questionnaire and the interviewees claim that code-switching occurs in their oral communication. 59% of the respondents of the questionnaire indicate that code switching characterizes their oral communication (Figure 2.).

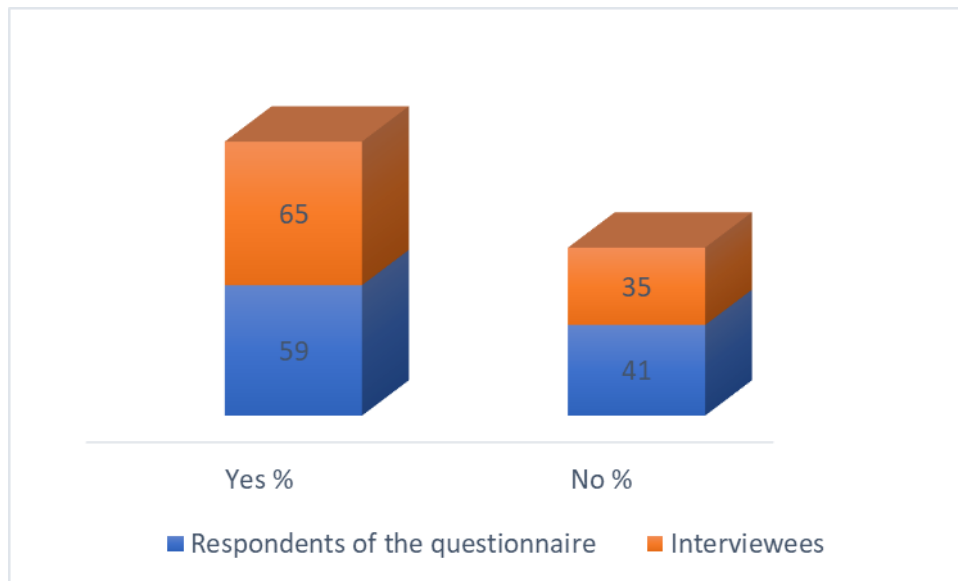


Figure 2. Do you sometimes use Russian or Ukrainian words when having discussions in Hungarian?

When studying the causes of code switching it was revealed that the respondents answering the questionnaire mostly switch codes to make a discussion funnier (Table 1).

Causes of code switching among respondents of the questionnaire	Proportion of answers %
I use Russian/Ukrainian words out of a sense of humor.	53
Often, I can recall a given word in Ukrainian/Russian only.	38
My friends whose mother tongue is Russian/Ukrainian do not understand certain words in Hungarian, so in these cases I switch to their language.	19
This is how I put emphasis on what I am saying.	16
This is how I practice Russian/Ukrainian.	13

Table 1. Causes of code switching among respondents of the questionnaire

The respondents of the questionnaire had to choose from the options listed in the table and pick the ones that they think are characteristic of them (multiple answers were possible). The interviewees, however, had to express the causes of code-switching on their own.

I asked the interviewees also if code switching occurred in their oral communication. The majority of respondents (65%) said yes and they even explained their answers. The justifications of code switching are listed in Table 2. I have grouped the most typical answers. The table introduces the causes of code-switching, the explanations given by the respondents and the percentage of participants who mentioned the particular cause. Most of the interviewees switch codes out of habit (25%) or a sense of humor (24%).

Causes of code switching	Explanation	Proportion of answers %
Habit	In a bilingual environment they are used to using and alternating between two languages.	25
Humor	It makes communication funny.	24
Filling	Some words come to their minds faster in Ukrainian. They cannot recall a word in Hungarian quickly.	21
Solidarity	When communicating with people whose mother tongue is Ukrainian they try to adapt to the language of the majority.	15
Linguistic deficiency	Does not know the Hungarian equivalent of a word.	4
Confidentiality	They switch to Ukrainian when swearing.	4
Adding effect	They came to like a given Ukrainian word. They consider certain words to be more expressive, better in Ukrainian.	3
Recalling	Certain expressions, jokes heard in Ukrainian cannot be translated into Hungarian, they make sense only in Ukrainian.	3
Multilingual family	Those living in a linguistically mixed family environment often switch codes when communicating with each other.	1
Loan word use	The use of Russian/Ukrainian loan words that have been integrated into the Transcarpathian Hungarian vocabulary is interpreted as code-switching.	1
Language practice	They wish to improve their Ukrainian language skills.	1

Table 2. Causes of code switching occurring in the oral communication of interviewees

The following interview excerpt shows that respondents often switch codes only out of a sense of humor or habit:

(1) I: Is it usual that you would also use Ukrainian words in a Hungarian discussion?

R: Yes.

I: Why?

R: We just use Ukrainian words for fun, just to make the situation funnier.

I: And what kind of words are these?

R: Obscene words. (2002, Kisdobrony, mechanical engineer).

(2) I: Does it happen that you would use Ukrainian words as well in a Hungarian discussion?

R: Yes

I: Why?

R: I am just used to it. I have been using three languages since I was a child, so I am used to it. There are words that I can recall faster in Ukrainian for example, so then I say it that way; many people do it here.

(2000, Beregszász, software engineer).

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In the course of studying attitudes related to code-switching I used two linguistic myths in the questionnaire. According to one of these, the use of two or more languages within the same act of communication results in unintelligible communication (Lanstyák 2014: 104). 94% of the respondents did not agree with this statement.

The other myth related to code-switching was the following: “The mixture of two languages indicates that the speaker does not know one or both languages well.” This myth was used in the questionnaire the following way: “What is your opinion of the following statement? »*As a Hungarian from Transcarpathia I use another language besides my mother tongue (for example, Ukrainian or Russian) because actually I do not speak any of these languages well.*« Do you agree with this statement or do you think that there may be other reasons (as well) for switching languages while having a discussion in Hungarian?” In the case of this question the respondents had the chance to also explain their answer. 94% of the respondents disagreed with the statement and the majority could even offer an explanation with the possible reasons for code switching among Hungarians in Transcarpathia (Table 3).

Causes of code-switching	Number of mentions
Habit	20
Filling	17
Solidarity	14
Humor	11
Effect of mixed linguistic environment	10
Elevating status	9
Loan word use	8
Language practice	7
Recalling	7
Exclusion	2
Adding effect	1

Table 3. Possible causes of code switching among Hungarians in Transcarpathia

Based on Table 3, it can be seen that most of the respondents think that Hungarians in Transcarpathia switch codes out of habit. At the same time, it is also typical that some words can be recalled faster in Ukrainian, moreover, they try to show solidarity with people whose mother tongue is Ukrainian by switching to their language when they are present. The effect of a mixed linguistic environment was also mentioned by respondents as a possible cause, along with the fact that in certain situations the use of Ukrainian is compulsory. Several people considered the use of Russian/Ukrainian loan words as a form of code-switching. It also happens that Hungarians in Transcarpathia switch to Ukrainian during a Hungarian discussion to practice the language. Code-switching is also typical in cases when they are trying to recall a certain statement in the original language as it only makes sense that way; and they also use code-switching if certain words are considered to be more expressive in Ukrainian. It may be another possible reason for code-switching based on the answers of respondents if two discussants want to exclude a third party from the communication by switching to a language that is not understood by the third participant.

The interviewees had to answer whether they agreed if they heard someone say that Transcarpathian Hungarians do not speak Hungarian “well” or “correctly” enough if they also

use Ukrainian words in a discussion taking place in Hungarian. 94% of the participants would not agree with this statement, while 6% of the respondents think that the statement is partly correct but there were no respondents who would have completely agreed with the statement. The following interview excerpts also exemplify this:

(3) I: If you heard some say that Transcarpathian Hungarians do not speak Hungarian as well or as correctly as Hungarians in Hungary because they also use Ukrainian words in a discussion taking place in Hungarian, would you agree?

R: I would not agree with this because although it is true that mom talks at home in Transcarpathian style but when, for example, she comes up to Hungary, she talks the same way as a Hungarian and she actually says when she comes to Hungary that she can speak so nicely, so I would disagree. (2001, Nagydobrony, physiotherapist).

(4) I: If you heard some say that Transcarpathian Hungarians do not speak Hungarian as well or as correctly as Hungarians in Hungary because they also use Ukrainian words in a discussion taking place in Hungarian, would you agree?

R: This person would be partly right because those who are very used to saying a word in Ukrainian all the time, for example, when saying goodbye they say: “*na dāváj*”, they may talk like this in Hungary as well, and they would think this person was stupid; but we can also speak nicely and at home this is absolutely normal, intelligible talk. (1997, Királyháza, ecologist).

Similarly, to oral language use, code-switching is also characteristic of the online communication of respondents. According to 56% of people answering the questionnaire and 61% of interviewees it happens that in the course of online communication they also use Ukrainian words when exchanging messages in Hungarian. Those answering the questionnaire had to choose from a series of options to indicate what their opinion was of code-switching in online communication (Table 4). The majority of respondents picked an answer according to which code-switching in online communication is a usual and frequent phenomenon among Transcarpathian Hungarians, which is also characteristic of them.

Please indicate what your opinion is when a Transcarpathian Hungarian also uses Russian/Ukrainian words in a Hungarian text!	Proportion of answers %
This is a usual and frequent phenomenon among those in Transcarpathia, I also do it.	54
This is a usual and frequent phenomenon among those in Transcarpathia, although I do <u>not</u> do it.	32
I have not encountered anything like this in online communication.	10
I have encountered such a case but I have no idea what the reason for it is.	3
I have encountered such a case but I consider this especially annoying and senseless.	8
I think it has a function signifying identity/sense of belonging.	17
I think it is used because online communication is informal, it is for fun.	34

Table 4. Opinion of people answering the questionnaire on code-switching in online communication

Respondents also had to express their opinion of code-switching in online communication in open questions. For this purpose, I used a public Facebook post written the following way: “Do we have to prepare for the *zálík* from the first 5 *rozgyil*?” (‘Do we need to prepare for the exam from the first 5 chapters?’) The respondents of the questionnaire had to characterize this statement with 2 words, based on their first impression. Altogether 260 responses were collected from the respondents. In certain cases, the respondents answered not only in one word but a sentence. I used the word cruncher function of the ATLAS.ti software to list the answers. This function counted the word occurrences, then I could categorize the answers based on their shared features. Below, I introduce the opinions related to the statements on code-switching; the numbers in parentheses after the answers indicate the number of occurrences.

1. Answers related to word and language use: interesting word use (6), funny language use (4), to-the-point language use (3), multilingual language use (3), mixed language use (2), unique language use (1).

2. Answers related to wording: unintelligent wording (2), I do not speak/write like this (1).

3. Answers related to bilingualism in Transcarpathia: Transcarpathian (13), mixing languages (10), bilingual (9), *po zákárpátszki* (1), *po násomu* (1), Transcarpathian Hungarian university students from Ungvár speak like this, no one else (1), usual in Transcarpathia (1).

4. Answers related to Ukrainian language, environment, people: Ukrainian style (12), includes Ukrainian words (5), speaker whose mother tongue is Ukrainian (1), mostly used by people going to Ukrainian school (1).

5. Answers related to the intelligibility of the statement: hard to understand (34), understandable (20), I don’t understand it (8), makes no sense (5), not understandable for many (4), not understandable for someone in Hungary (1), understandable if we speak Ukrainian (1), those at home understand it (1), unreadable (1).

6. Answers expressing likes/dislikes: the mixture of words is annoying (14), disturbing (10), strange (7), I don’t like it (3), rustic (3), normal (2), I don’t tolerate it (2), average (2), not too advantageous (1), confusing (1), not correct/incorrect (1), I like it (1), correct this way as well (1).

7. Answers referring to frequency of occurrence, familiarity: usual (21), every day (14), frequent (5), I hear it rarely (3), regular (2), familiar (2), sometimes this happens (1), *zálík, rozgyil* – everyone calls it this way (1), many of us use it like this at home (1), natural because participants understand each other better this way (1), unusual (1).

8. Other answers: confusion (3), ambiguous (2), it happens (2), does not speak Hungarian (1).

According to the most often mentioned answers of respondents the statement is understandable, usual and includes Ukrainian words. At the same time, there were also clearly negative answers among the most frequent responses, for example, that the sentence was annoying, Ukrainian and disturbing.

8 Summary

In this research I examined the use of code-switching by participating university students in their own oral and online communication, the cases in which they switch between codes, and the types of attitudes associated with code switching used in oral communication and online messages.

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This research was conducted with the help of a questionnaire survey and interviewing. When processing the results, it was revealed that the two methods nicely supplemented each other. On the one hand, the interview data confirmed the findings of the questionnaire, on the other hand, they also provided important additional information.

The hypotheses formulated at the beginning of the research have been confirmed. Code-switching is typical of both the oral and online communication of Transcarpathian Hungarian university students studying in Hungary (Hypothesis 1). Their code-switching is in most cases conscious, they use it for humor, to make the communication friendlier, informal and funnier. At the same time, it is frequent that the respondents switch codes out of habit, and because there are words that they can recall in Ukrainian faster in certain cases (Hypothesis 3). Based on scholarly publications related to code switching, there are several popular myths in connection with language contacts that may even influence the attitudes of people less competent in linguistics. Without introducing the meaning of the linguistic myths to the respondents, they simply had to answer a question whether they agree that the use of multiple languages within the same communication results in unintelligible, senseless discussion. Moreover, whether they agree that the alteration between the languages in the communication of Transcarpathian Hungarians means that they do not speak either Ukrainian or Hungarian well. The great majority of respondents disagreed with both statements. To prove this, most respondents explained the causes of code switching by Transcarpathian Hungarians and the inadequate knowledge of the Hungarian language was not included in any of their answers (Hypothesis 2).

After examining the attitudes of participants towards code-switching, we can claim that the respondents consider code switching to be a natural and usual phenomenon, however, there were several respondents for whom statements including code-switching are disturbing and annoying.

The results of the research indicate that code-switching is characteristic not only of the oral and online communication of Transcarpathian Hungarians living in the Ukraine but also those young Hungarians from Transcarpathia whose language use is also strongly affected by the monolingual Hungarian environment due to their educational mobility. Based on their responses, they perceive code-switching to be a natural phenomenon, the key causes of which are humor and being used to it.

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