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TÉZISEK

HELTAI JÁNOS IMRE

NYELVCSERE ÉS A NYELVI REVITALIZÁCIÓ LEHETŐSÉ-  
GEI MOLDVÁBAN

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# Language shift and possibilities of language revitalization in Moldavia

## I. Purpose, topic, materials and methods

1. The dissertation deals with language shift in the Hungarian speech communities of Moldavia. It presents the current characteristics of the use of Hungarian language varieties in Moldavia, it examines the vitality of the language varieties, and the communities' attitudes that are related to the language varieties and influence their use. It attempts to outline the tendencies that – if there is no intervention - can be expected in the future based on the present processes. It considers the possibility and efficiency of such interventions that could contribute to the revitalization of the local Hungarian language varieties.

2. The communities under study. Due to the unreliability of the relevant census data in recent decades, it is not easy to determine the number of Hungarian-Romanian bilingual speakers in Moldavia. We can mainly rely on the ethnographer Vilmos Tánčzos's estimations, which are based on local enquiries (Tánčzos, 1999). (The author is currently working on the publication of fresh data, see Tánčzos Interjú [Tánčzos Interview], *Transindex*, 18 September 2008). Altogether, there are approximately 50,000 (Hungarian-Romanian) bilingual people living in 80-85 settlements in Moldavia today. However, the number of Roman Catholics, who may be considered to be of Hungarian origin and are religiously separate from the Orthodox Romanian majority, is around 240,000.

The widely accepted view on the origin of Moldavia's Hungarians today, which is supported by linguistic, ethnographical and historical data, is that Moldavia's Hungarians arrived from the Carpathian basin to their present habitation after the Hungarian conquest (Lükő 1936, Benkő 1990, Juhász 2004a, 2004b). Gábor Lükő supposed that the first settlers' place of origin was the valley of the Szamos, near the Upper Tisza. Based on linguistic arguments, Loránd Benkő proposed that they originally came from the middle and southern parts of Mezőség, but Dezső Juhász did a micro-examination on the data of the northern Csángó village which is the only one recorded in the RMNyA. and he pointed out that the roots of the people of Szabófalva should rather be sought in northern Mezőség, south of the confluence of the two Szamos rivers.

Researchers also agree that the Hungarians of Moldavia consist of two different layers. The first one is the layer originating from Mezőség, which was made to settle to Moldavia as early as the turn of the 13-14<sup>th</sup> century as a consequence of Hungarian imperial politics. This group was followed by a continuous wave of emigrants from Szekler Land. Nevertheless, the process that can be regarded a mass settlement only started in the middle 18<sup>th</sup> century following the massacre at Mádéfalva (1764). This layer of Moldavia's Hungarian speaking inhabitants that arrived later moved mainly from the eastern part of Szekler Land: Csík, Gyergyó and Háromszék (see Tánčzos (1999): 10). Starting from the time of the battle of Mohács, the Hungarians of Moldavia remained without the support of the home-country, in parallel with the weakening of the strong Hungarian Kingdom.

The area of the Hungarian settlements in Moldavia is supposed to have been larger than it is today, but the wars and the processes of assimilation resulted in the shrink-

ing of the settlement area and also in the disintegration of the unity of the settlement structure (op. cit. 10). Today, there are bilingual villages in a more or less contiguous area in two islands: around the northern Románvásár (Roman) and the southern Bákó (Bacau). In the literature, the former one is commonly referred to as the northern Csángó while the latter one as the southern Csángó group.

3. Hungarian linguistics has already studied extensively the language varieties of the Hungarians in Moldavia. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, a dictionary (Wichmann 1936) and a language atlas (Gálffy-Márton-Szabó 1991) was published, the internal divisions among the Hungarian language varieties were explored (Szabó T. 1959), and there were numerous advances in the description of the structure of the language varieties. Only later did attention turn toward the issue of language shift, although Gyula Márton already noted the effects of the Romanian language (1972). The first works which were from certain aspects focusing on the phenomena originating from bilingualism and the process of language shift were issued in the 90's (Fodor 1991, 2001; Murádin 1993; Péntek 1996; Tánczos 1995, Sándor 1996a, 1996b, 2000). The members of our research team published their studies dealing with such questions in the years following the millenium (Bodó 2002, 2003, 2004a, 2004b, 2005; Bodó-Heltai-Tarsoly 2003, Heltai-Tarsoly 2004, Heltai 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007a, 2007b). On the topic of the linguistic research of the Csángós in Moldavia see Tánczos 2004.

4. The present dissertation uses the results of two "research projects" done in Moldavia. I had the possibility to take part in the work of both research teams - first as a university student, then as a doctoral student - in the preparations as well as in the field work and the processing of the data. Both research teams are connected with the Department of Hungarian Language History, Sociolinguistics and Dialectology of ELTE. The first research started in 2001, the second one in 2005.

4.1. The research that started in 2001 was financed by the Ministry of National Cultural Heritage; it was titled "Sociolinguistic and linguistic geographical analysis of the language use of the Csángós in Moldavia" (A moldvai csángók nyelvhasználatának szociolingvisztikai és nyelvföldrajzi vizsgálata). The sociolinguistic research group used half-structured questionnaires. We put the prepared questions to the informants during free conversations taking into consideration the circumstances of the speaking situation and those of the communication. In the first year, the conversations were recorded on tape; later on, digital recordings were made. The questions asked in the interviews were formulated based on the theory of ethnolinguistic vitality. We collected data from 14 research points altogether. As the result of the research, a large amount of qualitative data is available in the form of (transcribed) sound recordings.

We formulated the questionnaires on the basis of the theory of sociolinguistic vitality. I consider this theory a possibility to describe the situation of minority speech communities. With its help, we can describe the language situation of the speech communities studied along specific points of examination and in a way that makes them comparable. Its advantage - developed during the decades - is that it enables the researcher to examine the subject from several aspects.

The minority speech communities were examined along three major vitality factors (economic, social group status; demographic characteristics; institutional background) already with the help of its original variety, which was introduced in 1977 by H. Giles and his colleagues. From the 80's on, the basic direction of research changed (Bourhis and colleagues 1981): besides examination of the speech community as a whole, analysis of the individuals belonging to the community and of the individuals' opinions on the group received heightened focus (subjective vitality factors). In the third phase of the development of the model (Allard and Landry 1986, see also Harwood, Giles and Bourhis 1994), not only the individual's opinion, but the speakers' ideas, beliefs and aims relating to the future of the speaking community and the minority language were also taken into consideration as a factor that determines vitality. Thus the emphasis was put on the examination of the tendencies to be expected, which strengthened the prescriptive character of the model. Naturally, during the international and Hungarian use of the model (for example Appel and Muysken 1987; Garami and Szántó 1991, 1992; Radó; Köpf 1996; Kádár 2005), and also during our own work, it became obvious that beside its numerous advantages, its weaknesses must be taken into account, too (on this topic, see the original model in Bartha 1999: 135). Our team compiled the questionnaire taking into consideration the latest refinements of the model as well as experiences in its use and criticisms levelled against it. The original questionnaire was modified several times during the work, and for the experienced collectors it basically served as the framework of the half-structured interview.

4.2. The results of another Moldavian project, in which I could participate, are also available for analysis. Within the framework of a NKFP project, the compilation of the Moldavian digital (diachronic) language atlas started in 2005, coordinated by the research group called Geolinguistic Workshop, which belonged to the Department of Hungarian Language History, Sociolinguistics and Dialectology of ELTE. Due to the sociolinguistic list of questions connected to the language atlas questionnaire, there are available data which can be easily processed and interpreted in a quantitative way and are collected from 21 Moldavian settlements.

We collected the entries of this new Moldavian language atlas from the 1,200 entries of the three volumes (two published and one in manuscript) of *McsNyA*. (*Atlas of the Moldavian Csángó Dialect - Moldvai Csángó Nyelvjárás Atlasza*) compiled in the 1950's. According to the research plans, this will be the first atlas of the region from which we can draw diachronic consequences as the data collection is partly repeated 50 years later. The questionnaire of the language atlas contains 250 entries (questions). Out of these, 25 questions are of a sociolinguistic nature. These survey the informants' linguistic biography, habits of their language use and their ideas about language. However, these questions were not compiled with regard to the theory of ethnolinguistic vitality, but with the help of the questionnaire of Miklós Kontra's sociolinguistic analysis in the Carpathian Basin (see, e.g., Kontra 1996), thus we omitted those questions which were uninterpretable for the informants in Moldavia and those which were aimed at language knowledge and linguistic behaviour.

As the method of compiling the sociolinguistic questionnaire was different to that of the other survey, naturally we obtained different kind of information as well. The strictly defined collecting parameters of the data of the language atlas and the closed,

structured interview enable us to gain numeric, quantitative data regarding the habits of language use of certain speech communities.

4.3. Besides these two groups of data, the dissertation makes use of some personal experience, too. In the summer of 2002, I took part as a teacher in a two-week long summer language camp organised for children aged between 8-14 in the village of Lészped by the river Szamos. I spent some more time in this village in later years as well; in 2004 I applied the technique of participating observation when I was trying to take part in the life of my host family and the village, while in 2005 we were doing the test collections of the above-mentioned language atlas there. I managed to learn more about the life of the village and speakers' habits of language use by keeping a field work diary, recording conversations and constantly observing than it would have been possible only with interviewing.

The dissertation uses the results collected at 18 research points; it makes use of the data gathered in 11 speech communities of the first research and in 13 of the second one, thus the research points of the two projects are partly the same.

5. The full analysis of the linguistic situation is realised in two phases. First, the dissertation summarises those characteristics of the Moldavian linguistic reality which are general and typical of all the speech communities under study. This is done on the basis of the results from the sociolinguistic and linguistic geographical survey (that is, the first one) built upon the theory of ethnolinguistic vitality.

With the thorough examination of 13 selected speech communities, I will demonstrate the complexity of the Moldavian language situation in order to be able to explore the regional characteristics and the differences between the different speech communities. For this purpose I will use the sociolinguistic questionnaire which includes 25 questions and belongs to the NKFP project. In these parts I analyse 205 informants' answers categorised in a quantitative way. When choosing the speech communities to represent, I take into consideration the settlement structure, the historical traditions, the time when the settlements were formed and the origin of the inhabitants, that is, the historical and sociocultural typicalities. In this way, I analyse the differences between the speech communities by separating three regions.

## II. The structure of the dissertation

The dissertation consists of four main units.

1. The first, introductory part will present the research underlying the results. I will report on the experience of the field work and data processing, on the difficulties and dilemmas that emerged during work and on their solutions.

Further sections of the first chapter will discuss issues related to the definition, identification and description of the communities studied, that is, the various groups of ethnic Hungarian speakers in Moldavia. In order to make the approach to the topic of the dissertation as broad and as thorough as possible, I will also present aspects of the Moldavian settlement history that had a decisive role in the development of the present linguis-

tic situation. This will provide an opportunity to present the basic features of the internal structure of the group under study in the following parts of the paper. In the last part of the first chapter, I will briefly introduce the 18 speech communities examined.

2. In the second chapter of the dissertation, I will concentrate on those linguistic characteristics and habits of language use which are common to all Moldavian Hungarians. The answer to this question is obtained from detailed analysis of the interviews that are based on the theory of ethnolinguistic vitality. Built on five basic viewpoints, we can adequately survey those features which in some way connect the historically, sociolinguistically and linguistically very divergent Hungarian speech communities of Moldavia. These are the following: 1. speakers' ideas on the heterogeneity of language use; 2. strategies to define and position one's own language variety; 3. system of ideas in connection with bilingualism; 4. system of ideas on the future of minority language variety; 5. system of ideas on linguistic socialization. These five topics are the five parts of the second chapter.

3. The third chapter is exploring the heterogeneity of the group(s) studied and the consequences of this circumstance. I will conduct the analysis based on the data from 205 interviews recorded in 13 speech communities. On the basis of the historical-geographical conditions of the speech communities, I divide them into three regions: four of the villages (Újfalu, Szitás, Bahána, Szalánc) represent the settlements along the river Tatros, five (Pusztina, Frumósza, Lészpéd, Szoloncka, Szerbek) represent the originally Szekler villages lying north, northwest of Bákó. (I regard the latter ones as one unit - instead of the geographical separation of Lészpéd that is situated on the bank of the Beszterce - and for the sake of simplicity I will call them the 'settlement group along the Tázló'.) Finally, the last four speech communities are chosen from the settlements along the Seret (Bogdánfalva, Diószén, Klézse, Trunk). The justification of analysing the Hungarian language area of Moldavia in such a division results from the natural, historical, and ethnic relations.

Based on the data, I will examine some of the factors that determine linguistic behaviour: education and employment, employment in Hungary or Transylvania, and the custom of intermarrying within the communities. In subsequent subchapters I will analyse the ideas about the regional questions of language use and about prestige relations. This is followed by an examination of the speakers' ideas about their own language competency and the questions relating to the habits of language choice. The summary of the chapter is preceded by a description of the ideas on the community's practice of linguistic socializing.

4. The fourth chapter of the paper is focussed on the question of language revitalization and the possibilities of language planning. In the first subchapter, I present a model proposed by Fishman (Fishman 1991, 1993; Fishman ed. 2001) to reverse language shift, and I define the linguistic conditions of the speech communities within the framework of this model. Then I review possible arguments for the preservation of the Hungarian language in the case of these communities, and the level of acceptance that Hungarian language planning can expect in the Moldavian speech communities. In the last chapter of the paper, I will outline some principles of a language planning programme which aims to slow down and possibly stop or reverse language shift. This programme starts from Fish-

man's theory, it builds upon the linguistic situation outlined on the basis of the results of the dissertation, and it considers the differences in speakers' ideas.

### III. Results

1. In my paper I use the expression Moldavian Hungarians or in some cases, as a technical term, Moldavian bilinguals to name the members of the communities studied. The ethnonym Moldavian Hungarian is well-known both in Hungarian scholarship and in the speech communities. As opposed to the expression Csángó, it does not have any negative meaning. Neither in Hungary nor in Transylvania does it imply a disparaging attitude, and the speakers themselves have no objection to this name - at least in a historical perspective.

However, some restriction is still needed because Moldavia's Hungarian speaking inhabitants do not have a uniform self-identification. It is a scientific commonplace that the Moldavian Hungarians did not take part in the process of the Hungarian nation's development and for a long time they were not affected by Romania's efforts to build a nation, either (see Tánzos 1997; quoted by Pozsony 2005: 148-149). Therefore they definitely have a special identity. Ferenc Pozsony very aptly calls the identity system that was typical of the communities until the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century "medieval-like ethnic identity consciousness", the remarkable elements of which are Hungarian language, Catholic religion, and folk traditions associated with the Hungarian language (c. w. 148). At the same time, there have been efforts to integrate Moldavian Hungarians into the Romanian nation since the Romanian nation-state was formed. As a result, the identity of the speech communities in the Moldavian Hungarian villages is going through a significant structural change, and it is hard to define this identity.

Some researchers describe the result of these changes as a mixed, transitional identity, which is neither Romanian nor Hungarian and which is constantly being overwritten during the interactions of one's own group and the others, and thus it is in permanent change (Simon-Péter 2004, Simon 2005).

Its consequence is that "it is not possible to define the Csángós as a Hungarian subethnicity nor as a group assimilating into the Romanian nation" (Simon 2005: 25). Others suppose that the only way to represent the identity structure of the definitely very heterogeneous minority society is to survey the certain life courses as case studies (Peti 2006). The common feature of these approaches is the acceptance of the thesis that the Moldavian Hungarian villages have problems of identification and legitimation. This is indeed so, however it is not the result of two "colliding extremist discourses" (Diaconescu 2005: 9) (that is, the aspirations to integrate them into the Hungarian or the Romanian nation) but it is partly a natural concomitant of the political-economic events of recent years, and partly the effect of the Romanian endeavours for assimilation.

Thus the situation is not that two nations are simultaneously trying to integrate an ethnic group which has long been uncertain about its own identity. In my opinion, the Moldavian bilinguals today form a complex of communities that, due to historical reasons, can be described as a group with elements of Hungarian identity (language and traditions) which is just being assimilated into the Romanian nation. The Catholic inhabitants of Moldavia have never had Hungarian national identity as it is interpreted in the modern way, and the Hungarian aspirations for integration have never been strong eno-

ugh to seriously affect the development of the communities' identity and their integration into the Hungarian nation. The programmes and experiments that started after the political transformation in Hungary, ideologically motivated by the desire to integrate these people into the Hungarian nation or to reinforce, in some form, their Hungarian identity might contribute to a deepening of their identity crisis, although they are not directly responsible for it, at least not to the same extent as Romania's long-standing efforts to assimilate them.

Therefore we must distance ourselves from the discourse which looks at the recent decades of Moldavian Hungarians' history as a Romanian-Hungarian nationalist fight that aims at incorporating the Moldavian communities. Aware of the fact that in this case we cannot talk about a modern national identity found in nation-states, I will still call these communities Moldavian Hungarian speech communities, using the word Hungarian in an ethnic sense. This ethnic sense of identity has been seriously disturbed by the events of recent decades. In subsequent parts of the first chapter, I will point out that the possibility of using this name is supported both by the communities' origin and settlement history and the data that is available about speakers' historical consciousness.

This special identity structure naturally influences both the practice of field work and the method of data processing. The other remarks of the first chapter relate to this fact.

The field worker often faces ideas related to local language varieties and/or language use that are in contradiction with certain historical or linguistic facts due to an intense lack of knowledge or sometimes misinformation. Compared to what we are used to in other parts of the Hungarian speaking area, in Moldavia there is a big difference between objective linguistic reality and its subjective construction and interpretation (by the speakers). It is extremely important to realize this when we analyse the ideas about language and develop the steps of language planning on their basis: this is why language planning cannot reach its aim only on the basis of activities built upon the reality that speakers construct. It also needs to aspire to minimalize and counteract the deformations which are caused by an external pressure working against the preservation of the minority language.

Due to their special identity structure the communication strategies of the bilingual Moldavian speakers greatly differ from those usually employed elsewhere in the Carpathian Basin. Therefore successful data collection postulates the minimalization of these differences; otherwise the data obtained can be misleading. The informant's major responsibility is to recognize the unusual purpose and metalinguistic nature of communication; while the field worker's task is to take into account the informant's divergent experience on language and communication.

2. I divide into five groups the ideas about language which provide the basis to analyse the typical features of Moldavian language use in the process of language shift. Firstly, I examine how the speaking community's members define their own language variety, what ideas they form on its status and how they position it in comparison with other Hungarian language varieties. Secondly, I analyse the question how bilingual speakers in Moldavia evaluate the surrounding communities' habits of language use and language choice. Then on the basis of the analysis of the interviews, I consider what ideas the Moldavian speech communities have about bilingualism and the future of the minority language variety, and

furthermore how these ideas influence the communities' changes of language use. Finally, I present those strategies of minority linguistic socialization which are now - although to a variable extent - simultaneously present in the communities' lives. As the result of the analysis, we can claim that language shift is in progress in every bilingual speaking community today. We can state this on the basis of the following:

- a) In speakers' thinking, the status of one's own language variety is surrounded by significant uncertainty. For various reasons and to various extents, the prestige of this variety is extremely low in general. It is quite often not clear to speakers that their native language variety is a variety of the Hungarian language.
- b) For different reasons, speakers suppose that the distance between their own language variety and the vernacular Hungarian of the Carpathian Basin is huge. (In connection with this, the thought of creating an independent "Csángó koine" has emerged in the discourse of Hungarian language planning - I will deal with the question of creating such a language variety, and with the pros and cons of the result and use of the experiment in the final chapter of the dissertation.)
- c) The speech communities' relation to their own bilingualism is variable. Bilingualism has no intrinsic value for the speakers; the (emotional, intellectual or even rational) motivation to maintain bilingualism is in most cases missing. The practical value of bilingualism can be interpreted in the coherent system of external effects and it is in continuous change. Since Hungary's language policies have negligible effects in Moldavia and Hungary's ability to attract cultural and economic capital is limited, Moldavian bilingual speakers are less and less motivated to use the practical values of their bilingualism and to retain a positive attitude towards bilingualism.
- d) The future of this minority language variety is endangered in all the examined speech communities. At the same time, speakers' ideas about the future of the language variety do not correlate with the expectations that can be formed by analysing the actual linguistic processes. Even if speakers indicate the possibility of the weakening or disappearing of their language variety, in the vast majority of cases they do not formulate any value judgement about this phenomenon. When defining ethnic identity, knowing the minority language variety is not necessarily a decisive aspect - partly due to the communities' historical-ethnic conditions and partly to the language policies of recent decades. This is exactly why speakers do not connect the possibility of its disappearance with the feeling of their identity being threatened either in its individual or in its collective respects. In other cases, the members of the speech communities do not indicate the possibility of the disappearance of the minority language variety; as they do not take note of the changes, these speakers can also be regarded emotionally unmotivated in language preservation.
- e) The modified strategies of minority linguistic socialization also suggest that a language shift is in progress. The key period of language shift is the continuous and already excessive and seemingly final repression of primary socialization in the minority language, and parallel with it the advancement of the majority language in those areas of communication where the use of Hungarian was typical until recent decades. The delayed socialization strategies of the second language, which

probably appear temporarily, can be regarded as the concomitants of language shift that slow down the processes but they do not stop or reverse it.

The duality to simultaneously indicate and form the process of language shift is typical of almost all the above-mentioned phenomena of language and language use. The low prestige and repression of the language variety, the drastically and - from the perspective of language preservation - negatively changing features of language use, the uncertainty of the ideas relating to bilingualism and the future of the language variety, the diverging character of these ideas, and their relatively large distance from the picture explored in our survey, the transformation of socialization strategies are not only the sure signs of language shift but they are also its causes and active motivators. Their effects add up and accelerate the process of language shift.

3. In the following, I examine the aspects from which the habits of language use and the attitudes toward language are or can be different in the certain regions. Based on the analysis of the features of language use in the regions, we can make the following statements:

- a) Speakers' indicators of education in the region of the Seret are higher than the corresponding indicators in the two other regions.
- b) From all the three regions, only a few members of the elder generation went to Hungarian a school or class. However, the group along the Tatros has not had the chance to take part in any kind of Hungarian education since the political transition. This was also visible during the analysis of the data that measured Hungarian language education.
- c) Among the speakers along the Seret, there are slightly more people who work outside the speaking community. This also means that this region has the highest percentage (although still under 20%) of speakers who are not schoolchildren and live in the environment ruled by the majority Romanian language.
- d) Most people working in the Hungarian speaking areas came or come from the communities along the Tatros; almost every third speaker has experience of employment in Hungary, and approximately the same number of people has experience of employment in Transylvania. Speakers along the Tázló tend to have experience from Transylvania, while people along the Seret have that from Hungary.
- e) The prestige of the Moldavian language varieties is relatively low in all three regions. The relations of prestige only partly reflect the differences between the linguistic conditions and the characteristics of language use in the three regions.
- f) Regarding the ideas about minority language competence, the differences between the speakers of the different regions are similarly small. Nevertheless, there can occasionally be significant divergences between different villages.
- g) Along the Seret, the young and the middle-aged generations use Hungarian in significantly fewer communication situations than speakers of the same age in the other regions. Here the linguistic phenomena associated with language shift are present to a greater extent. There are differences between the two other regions, too: regarding the degree of using the minority language variety, the villages along the Tatros use the minority language less than the ones along the Tázló.
- h) The differences between the regions are less pronounced in communication situations where the minority language has so far managed to preserve its use.

The economic and sociocultural characteristics have an important role in the development of the habits attached to language use: the speech communities' education and possibilities for mobilization are in connection with the ideas about language and/or with the habits of language use. The differences between the different regions are larger in respect of the habits of language use than with ideas: the strongest distinctions appeared in connection with those questions which ask about the language that speakers use in their communication with various communication partners. Although there were differences relating to the questions about ideas as well, these were usually much smaller. This suggests that in a situation where language shift is occurring the picture we get on the basis of studying actual language use does not necessarily correspond to the picture that we get from looking at what the speakers think about their language use: the cognitive picture about language and language using habits in speakers' minds changes in a slower way than their actual habits of language use. Speakers suppose that the language using practice of the past and the present will be usable in the future as well, because they do not reckon with the simultaneous and quick change of linguistic and non-linguistic circumstances.

4. At the beginning of the fourth chapter, I use Fishman's model developed to reverse language shift (Fishman 1991, 1993; Fishman ed. 2001). I present the scale which describes the grades of language shift in 8 points (qualified scale of communicational breaking points between age groups). The scale is based on the analogy of the Richter scale that measures the intensity of earthquakes, and it can be regarded the summary of the theory. The degree of being endangered grows from the first grade toward the eighth.

Then on the basis of the scale I define the linguistic condition of the speech communities under study, which - with a few exceptions - indicates a transitional state between the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade on Fishman's scale. Since the grades of the scale make the description static, the situation can be depicted in more detail if we position the communities on a continuum from the sixth to the seventh grade. The 7<sup>th</sup> grade is characterized by the preservation of a socially unique and ethnolinguistically active adult community speaking the minority language, while the requirement of reaching the 6<sup>th</sup> grade is to ensure the intergenerational continuity of language transmission. If we define the decreasing number of minority language interactions as the main criterion to move towards the 7<sup>th</sup> grade on the imaginary continuum, we can say that out of the three above-mentioned regions, the communities along the Seret (Bogdánfalva, Klézse, Diószén) are the furthest away from the requirements of the 6<sup>th</sup> grade. These are followed by the villages along the Tatros (Szitás, Újfalu, Bahána). The Szekler-like villages along the Tázló (Pusztina, Frumósza, Lészped) are the closest to the requirements of the 6<sup>th</sup> grade. However, in respect of the habits of language use, none of these regions' communities reach the stabilizing circumstances described in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade, especially not the requirement of the intergenerational continuity of language transmission.

In the following, I will survey the arguments for preserving the Hungarian language in the case of these communities. Here I should like to point out that the minority language is much more than one of the many identity factors, because it carries in itself various other elements of identity: all the things that can be considered the community's knowledge and that distinguish the community from the majority or other communities. The damage that the community's members suffer when the minority language is repressed is

not primarily manifested in the fact of losing their "Hungarianness", but in the disappearance of a communal existence and in the loss of (moral) values implied in this communal existence, which are mainly sustained by Hungarian language. The preservation of the Hungarian language in Moldavia can be a legitimate purpose of language planning not because we want to avoid the loss of values traditionally worded in the discourse in the Carpathian Basin, but because in the light of the above the loss of the language is much more than the final loss of Hungarian ethnicity. Thus the basis of legitimation is not the aspect of the loss concerning the Hungarian speaking community but the aspect of the damage to the Moldavian speech communities.

Another circumstance, which can be interpreted as a dilemma as well, becomes unambiguous from this perspective: how large the difference is when the place of local language varieties is taken by a Romanian language variety and when it is confronted with a variety of Hungarian vernacular language or maybe (simply theoretically) with a local regional vernacular language. While in the first case all the values carried by the minority language are lost, in the second the values attached to the language variety probably (and, due to the expansion of the microworld, normally) go through a transformation but they do not perish drastically. Thus in this way, the community might live through the world's changes with less pain and loss.

I firmly believe that Hungarian language planning has a chance to succeed somehow only if it takes the following duality into account: the speech communities (and their members individually) always choose the best possible solution in the (given) language situation when they decide on the language and mode of linguistic socialization. Therefore the diminishing use of the Hungarian language variety in primary minority language socialization is the best possible answer in the given sociolinguistic situation that the communities can give to the challenge created by the altered circumstances. Thus in formulating action plans it is a very important but not an exclusive requirement to know and analyse the community members' beliefs and linguistic behaviour. Nevertheless, the new situation has some aspects which the community members do not and cannot assess, but which are still existing parts of reality that need to be considered. Therefore the most important requirement of all Hungarian language planning concerning Moldavia is to optimally harmonize the community members' interests (that they themselves can assess) and the communities' common interest (that the speakers do not and cannot assess). In other words: to compose a programme for language preservation but by all means make it a programme that is supported by the members of the community.

Today this is only partly satisfied: language planning activities that aim at preserving the Hungarian language varieties and strengthening the competence in the Carpathian Basin's vernacular are not uniformly accepted among the members of bilingual communities. A quite significant number of speakers have a neutral attitude towards the aspirations of Hungarian language planning. Only a small part of the speakers support the endeavours. At the same time some sections of the speech community refuse to cooperate in the current linguistic and sociocultural situation.

In the following, I will point out that a successful Hungarian language planning programme has among its important features an independence from emotions resulting from and rooted in Hungarian national identity, and also a moderateness which takes realities into account when formulating certain ideas. External financial and intellectual support is essential as it is at most the readiness to receive such a programme which commu-

nities have (or which can be developed). This cannot come from anywhere else than the Hungarian state and the Hungarian world of science, that is the Hungarian language community. However, creating the required support is not a realistic possibility today.

Although most of the programmes aimed at slowing down or reversing language shift are not success stories (Bartha 2003: 69), it is also certain that the (Moldavian Hungarian) language revitalization does not belong to the world of utopies either, in case all the conditions are satisfied. Therefore we talk about a special duality: reaching any kind of success practically has very little reality – the basic conditions are missing for that – but in theory, performing a reasoned and large-scale programme, which has the community's support, could result in serious successes, the slow-down and stopping of language shift, and finally in the stabilization of bilingualism.

In the closing part of the dissertation, I outline a few basic ideas of a language planning programme which fits the above conditions. The programme concerns two areas: language use in the church and the question of education.

Introducing masses in Hungarian would mainly have importance and symbolic significance from the aspect of changing prestige relations. If the vernacular Hungarian of the Carpathian Basin could have more ground in Moldavian ecclesiastical language use, then probably the prestige of local Hungarian language varieties would also suddenly increase. However, the most significant questions of language planning relate to the issues of education. The major purpose of language planning in the short run is the intergenerational transmission of the minority language within the family. This needs the elaboration of programmes that influence the speech communities' primary socialization habits. However, these cannot be externally managed in a direct way. Education is the area with the help of which it is possible to influence the community members' system of ideas about bilingualism and about the preservation of the minority language variety already in the medium run. Thus the best possibility in education is to develop programmes which convince the speech communities that besides Romanian it is again worth socializing the new generations in Hungarian as well. Its method can be the creation of conditions that do not prescribe primary Romanian (monolingual) language socialization for the members of the community.

Three principles characterize the linguistic education programme which is built upon the language situation determined on the basis of the Fishman scale and which aims at slowing down, stopping and finally reversing language shift: (1) Although the community's support can be won over to the acquisition of the Carpathian Basin's language variety, this by no means can be reached without using, and thus activating and developing the knowledge that exists in the local language variety. The purpose is only partly the acquisition of the Carpathian Basin's language variety: on the other hand - in accordance with international language pedagogy and the aspirations considered desirable in other Hungarian speaking areas - it is the development of a regional vernacular – dialect bilingualism (Kiss 2003: 236). The prestige of the mother tongue variety can also be raised with a teaching programme which applies a contrastive educational method building upon the knowledge in the local language variety, and which regards the local language varieties as possibilities to be used for learning the Carpathian Basin's dialects. (2) A system of bilingual kindergartens needs to be developed, which requires the redistribution and expansion of human and financial resources and a new attitude compared to the educational endeavours so far. The principal aim is to influence primary language socializati-

on, and the kindergarten is the ground where - with the help of an external institutional system - language planning can get the closest to the age of primary socialization. The third principle (3) is to enforce the strategy of a new ideological education which knows and acknowledges the speech communities' specific identity system, and which in the education emphasizes the development of the traditional identity structure beside realizing bilingualism.

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## Publications and Presentations in the Topic of the Dissertation

### Publications

- Nyelvi tervezés Moldvában. [Language Planning in Moldavia] In: Drescher J. A. – Herr J. (szerk.), A MANYE XI. (pécsi) és XII. (szegedi) konferenciája nemzetiségi és nyelvpolitikai tárgyú előadásából. Szekszárd, Pécs és Budapest: MANYE. 2003. 67-72. (Bodó Csanáddal és Tarsoly Eszterrel)
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