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Introduction

The joining of dialectology and sociolinguistics seem to play a key role in getting to know the regional variants of present-day Hungarian language. According to Jenő Kiss the consequence of the sociologization of dialectology and the spreading of the sociolinguistic attitude resulted not only in the enrichment of different methods but also in the enlargement of various topics. The range of the linguistic discipline's duties examining the regional variants according to a descriptive point of view has increased with the analysis of regional language use and its social embedment. That's how the double task of dialectology has developed (Kiss 1999:419).

This double task was set as an aim by numerous examinations among linguistic research in Hungary and in the neighbouring countries as well. Studies have been published dealing with the system of regional language variants in Hungary, their changes (cf. Szabó 1986, Kiss 1990, Guttmann 1992, Bokor 1995, Kontra 2003 etc.), and works analysing the features of the minority language usage (cf. Bartha 1993, Csernicskó 1998, Göncz 1999, Lanstyák 2000, Borbély 2001 etc.). The Hungarian dialectological research in Slovakia has so far dealt with the structural examination of dialects (cf. Danczi 1939, Arany 1944), dialectal-lexicological examinations have been pursued (cf. Csáky 1988, Cs. Nagy 2003, Gágyor 2004), and also the first atlas of the Hungarian dialects in Slovakia was published (Sándor 2004). In its approach Anna Sándor's work has become the most significant and up-to-date (Sándor 2000), which serves as a basis for other subsequent Hungarian sociodialectological researches in Slovakia.

The aim of my dissertation, entitled *The Dialect and Language Usage of Nagyhind*, is to enrich the range of listed sociodialectal research, keeping the above mentioned double task in view. My research focuses on: 1. the present day system of the dialect of Nagyhind and its dyachronic and synchronic changes; 2. the present day language usage of the Hungarian minority language community of Nagyhind, the linguistic consequences of bilingualism and situations of language shift.

The dialect of Nagyhind has become known in dialectal literature especially since the research done for *The Atlas of the Hungarian Dialects*. During this research process attention was attracted to the specific manifestation of illability in Nagyhind (Bárczi 1947).

Among the ethnographical studies a poem was found about Nagyhind (Manga 1942), and also a lesser-known collection of dialect words from 1904 from the Nitra region, in which some data can be found about Nagyhind (Atovich 1904).

The most detailed source of this dialect so far is *The Atlas of Hungarian Dialects* (MNYA.), the place of research which was Nagyhind among others (Csz 5.). Other publications deal with the dialect according to the data of this atlas. Loránd Benkő treats the given data in terms of language history (Benkő 1961), Samu Imre discusses it among linguistic islands in his dialectal systematizations (Imre 1971).

Other researchers publish their thoughts about the possible development of this dialect too (Deme – Imre 1975), moreover Nagyhind is dealt within issues regarding the history of settlements and geography of words (Zelliger 1988). The *Hungarian Dialectology* also deals with Nagyhind referring to the intense changes of its dialect (ed. Kiss 2001).

From among the Hungarian linguists in Slovakia István Lanstyák refers to this dialect with reference to historical contactology (Lanstyák 1988, 2003).

New data regarding the present day language usage of Nagyhind are provided in the recently published *The Atlas of Dialects of the Nitra Region* (NyvA., Sándor 2004), some of them which are collated with the data of the MNYA. by Erzsébet Zelliger (2007).

Recent publications dealing with the dialect of Kupuszina also make mention of Nagyhind (Csíkosné 2002, Silling 2004, 2007).

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- Gágyor József 2004. *Tallósi tájszótár. I–II*. Pozsony: Madách–Posonium.
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According to the data provided the survival of the Hungarian language in the village has been impeded by several factors: the use of Slovak is more frequent, the younger generation hardly speaks the language, the majority language variant is more prestigious, there is a weak relation to the motherland, the community does not have the strength of self-organization, they are quite pessimistic about the future of their language, and the positive attitude of the majority – experienced during the examination – does not manifest itself in solving favourably the occurring conflicts regarding language usage.

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The structure of the dissertation

The dissertation consists of five parts closely connected to each other. The **first part** gives a survey of the village's history, ethnography, the proportion of its population, its distribution according to nationality and mother tongue, religious affiliation, sex and age-groups, the standard of education, sectors of the economy and lines of occupation. The **second part** sets forth the different scenes of language usage. It examines which languages are used on different language usage scenes. This part goes into details about the language usage of both formal and informal scenes. The **third part** deals with the historical data of the dialect of Nagyhind. With the help of the relevant literature and my own research it provides data about the history of illabiality. This chapter also deals with the similarity between the dialects of Nagyhind and Kupuszina. The **fourth part** of the dissertation, and largest in length, gives the characterization of the dialect in Nagyhind. Beyond the structural description according to the data of the dialect atlas it gives the results of dyachronic, and according to my own gatherings the results of synchronic changes. The **fifth part** touches upon the most up-to-date issue of the Hungarian minority language usage of Nagyhind, the standing of bilingualism and language shift. The research approaches this issue with examinations of attitude and textual analyses.

Research Methodology and the subjects

In drafting my dissertation I have employed different methods of gathering data and numerous sources following the principles of scientific research. I summarized the references of historical, geographical, ethnographical, genealogical literature about Nagyhind, I looked for data in archives and I used the data of the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic.

I began my research by collecting the historical data of the Hungarian dialect of Nagyhind. To make my researches more intensive since 2004 I spent 3-4 weeks in Nagyhind every summer. Thus, I managed to observe my subjects in their natural life circumstances without disturbing their communication system and I also tried to avoid the undesirable consequences of observer's paradox (Labov 1972: 181). During my stay in Nagyhind I recorded some texts several hours in length, some of them secretly recorded, which were used – without naming the subjects – to document objective and subjective linguistic data (cf. Kiss 1995: 30), and attitudes told unconsciously. Apart from that I used sociolinguistical interviews too, which were used for characterizing the private scenes of language usage. During my research I also used a questionnaire survey, which was used to examine the attitudes regarding biligualism and language shift, and also the recent usage of the headwords of the atlas. Choosing the subjects I tried to focus on the village's social stratification (Balogh 1990:84). 78 subjects took part in the survey.

The results, findings and conclusions of the dissertation drawn from the above mentioned parts can be summarized in what follows:

Historical and demographical changes

1. The changes of the ethnic area affected the village of Nagyhind several times, but until the 20th century the village kept its Hungarian majority. The village can be characterized by the proximity of the language border. The neighbouring villages are Slovak, Nagyhind is connected to the Hungarian linguistic island in the region of Nitra only through the settlement of Kalász.

2. The Hungarian population began decreasing from 1945. The rapid language and nationality shift began in 1976, when

Opinions and views regarding the language usage and change in Nagyhind

The regrettable conclusion drawn from the factors regarding the society, demography, language choosing and language usage of the Hungarian language community of Nagyhind is that the process of the language shift is close to its end. The last part of the dissertation deals with language attitudes which is a very important factor in the process. The one aspect of hope from this examination is the fact that it focuses on the Hungarian language community's – at an advanced state of language shift – and the Slovak majority's (living together with them) habits of language choosing, their attitudes related to language shift, languages and varieties. The most important lessons are the following:

1. Most subjects with Slovak mother tongue speak Hungarian in a passive way. Half of the group, as they expressed, can communicate with some Hungarian words, but only 20% of them speak the language occasionally.

2. The prestige of the Slovak language in addition to its obvious social prestige is strengthened by the fact that the local Slovak variant is very close to the Slovak standard.

3. Most subjects consider the Hungarian dialect of Nagyhind as a peculiar, regional variant and the majority's attitude towards this local dialect is rather positive. The Hungarian subjects set a higher value on the language of such communities where the proportion of Hungarians is higher and where the dominance of the Slovak language is not so strong.

4. Most informants regard Hungarian as a language of the older generation, according to them it is unobjectionable and to a certain extent they are attached to it emotionally. It proves that most Slovak inhabitants would also be sorry if this Hungarian dialect was dying out.

Changes of the dialectal phenomena in Nagyhind

1. Among the dialectal sections the phonetical changes are the most significant. From the discussed tendencies the labiality/illabiality has changed the most. In comparison with other gatherings this phenomenon has entirely disappeared. The use of labial phonemes happens according to the standard in most cases and during the gatherings done recently the labial tendency has appeared much more powerfully in contrast to the illabial phonemes.

2. The other changes of the dialect's phenomenon can be felt to a lesser degree. The use of *ě, í*, the dropping out of the *l* at the end of the syllable and the palatalization are such striking phenomena of the dialect, which are used widely and are approaching to the standard only in some examples.

3. Some other phenomena can be observed too, whose changes are socially bound. The dialectal phenomena considered striking are avoided especially by the middle-aged language users.

4. The linguistic changes are influenced by the Hungarian standard and the Slovak language deriving from the contact situation. The influence of contact can be felt especially in the changes of the lexis, but it also plays a role in the development of several phonetical, morphological and syntactic phenomena.

5. The use of the Hungarian standard in the life of the community is less considerable; because of the lack of Hungarian schools there is no possibility to master the language, only through the media and the occasional use of it with strangers, and in public scenarios the use of the Slovak language is common.

6. On the basis of the present day state of the dialect of Nagyhind it can not be regarded as a linguistic island. Its dialectal phenomena fits into the system of the Hungarian dialects in the Nitra region.

the village was joined administratively to the neighbouring Slovak village of Kishind. The Hungarian school was closed down and the language of the administration has become Slovak as well. These disadvantageous measures resulted in the Hungarian language being pushed into the background and the acceleration of the language shift.

3. Nagyhind with its 350 inhabitants belongs to the villages in the district of Nitra. Three-quarters of the population is Slovak. A quarter of the people with Hungarian as their mother tongue identify themselves as being Slovak. Almost two-thirds of the Hungarian population is over 55, one third is middle-aged, the younger generation hardly speak Hungarian.

Language usage scenarios of Nagyhind

1. According to the data of the official census 34,86% of the population of Nagyhind is a native speaker of Hungarian. Analysing the different language scenarios we can point out that this proportion is not reached on any of the scenarios.

2. On formal scenarios like family life the use of Slovak language is dominant. From the 114 households 57 communicate only in Slovak, 19 for the most part in Hungarian and 38 in Hungarian as well as in Slovak. In the 38 mixed households the young and middle-aged family members use Slovak among themselves. Hungarian is used to communicate with one of the parents or with an older member living with the family. Younger members in these mixed households rather use Slovak among themselves. Older, single Hungarian inhabitants also speak Slovak with their grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

3. From the official language usage scenarios in the Village Hall of Nagyhind the language of the personal oral administration in 70% of the cases is Slovak, according to the estimations of the employees, and the remaining 30% in Hungarian. The employees

of the office are Hungarian native speakers. The written form of administration is exclusively Slovak.

There has been no Hungarian school in Nagyhind since 1976. Now the first four grades are taught in Slovak in Kishind. In the local kindergarten Hungarian education was only used between 1976 and 1978. From 1979 there were classes in Hungarian for 5 years, but since then the language of the classes has become Slovak. At present 14 children attend the monolingual Slovak kindergarten in Nagyhind.

The local Roman Catholic congregation is led by a Slovak native speaking priest. The language of the religious services in Nagyhind is mainly Slovak. On weekdays and every two months on Sunday there are services held in mixed languages. During these services the congregation sings in Hungarian and the first reading is in Hungarian as well. The priest reads the prayer, the Gospel and the prayer of offering in Hungarian but the rest is read and told in Slovak. The sermon is preached only in Slovak.

Within other language scenarios the use of Slovak is the dominant as well.

Historical data of the dialect of Nagyhind

The dialect of Nagyhind is one of the examples of the characteristic manifestation of illabiality. This phonetic speciality has attracted many renowned researchers. The most determinant study about the issue in its entirety is linked with the name of Loránd Benkő (Benkő 1961) according to which the occurrence of pure illabiality (the absence of the labiodental phonemes of *ö, ő, ü, ű*) and the genetic inherentness of the dialects of Nagyhind and Kupuszina has become known from dialectological literature.

Further dialectal systematizations (Imre 1971, ed. Kiss 2001),

taking Benkő's study as a starting point as well as recent research, state the spreading of labiality in Nagyhind as compared to this study (Sándor 2004, Zelliger 2007). More theories were born about the origin of this peculiar illabiality. The gatherers of the atlas render the Slovak linguistic influence or an inherent linguistic development probable (Deme – Imre 1975), and the historical contactology researches consider the development of illabiality in Nagyhind as a result of the language change (Lanstyák 2003).

According to former linguistic data and the historical onomastics it can be ascertained that:

a) Datas gathered around the turn of the century (Thurzó 1899, Szűcs 1904) certify that this phonetic phenomenon was strong throughout the whole region of Nitra but it was not exclusive.

b) The illabiality can be shown in earlier examples in the dialect of Nagyhind (Atovich 1904), but the absence of the labial vowels (the so called pure illabial phenomenon) can not possibly be proven by the help of these.

c) The region's ethnic aspect changed in the 18th century and the language boundary changed too. The data about the history of the settlement certify that the population of Nagyhind became mixed for a while, then it became Hungarian again. From the theories about the dialect's development this data makes possible the one based on Slovak influence (and on language shift).

d) The historical examination of the illabiality in Nagyhind can be possibly done using onomastics too. But according to the data provided the illabial tendency can be proven less because there were not enough surnames, sobriquets and geographical names, which would have been relevant from the point of view of illabiality-labiality. With the help of historical onomastics, from the examined surnames of Kupuszina and Nagyhind 20 agreed. This data is important from the point of view of the settlement's history.