

1. Description of the subject matter of the dissertation:

An ethnic group of some eight to nine thousand people speaking the Kaj Croatian dialect can be found in seven communities and two municipalities – the people moved into - along the Mura River in Zala County. My dissertation deals with the analysis of the language of this small ethnic group and the collection of their vocabulary. I have also tried to find historical facts related to the past of the region.

- I expatiated upon the phonology and morphology of the language in the course of its analysis.

- ♦ Phonology:

- Stress, distinctive role of stress, its stylistic attributes and shifting of accent
- Vowels and consonants constituting the vocal system of the language
- Vowels in accentuated and unaccented positions.
- The development of ancient vowels and consonants in the language
- Irregular phonetic changes

- ♦ Morphology:

- Alternation of vowels in the etymon

- Nouns:

Lexical and grammatical attributes of nouns,

- cases
- types of inflection
- diminutive and hypocoristic forms

- Adjectives:

- definite and indefinite forms of adjectives
- inflection of adjectives
- comparison of adjectives

- Pronouns:

- types and inflection of pronouns
- use of demonstrative pronouns with prepositions
- contraction emerging in case of interrogative and relative pronouns

- Numerals:

- the types of numerals
- inflection of certain cardinal numbers

- Adverb:
 - grouping and types of adverbs
 - comparison of adverbs
 - formation of adverbs
 - adverbs are used as verbal prefixes
- Verb:
 - aspect
 - grammatical number and person
 - mood
 - voice
 - tense
 - infinitive/participle
 - verb classes
- Prepositions:
 - construed with one case and two cases
- Conjunctions:
 - subordinating and
 - co-ordinate conjunctions
- Sentence-words

- Historical part:
 - ◆ Data relating to the past of the region
 - ◆ Situation of the Church
 - ◆ history of the settlements in the region
 - ◆ origin of their names.
- Appendix:
 - ◆ A trilingual word-book describing the language of the ethnic group

2. Objective of the dissertation:

Research of the language of the Croatian people living in Zala County is an important and urgent matter.

Traditional small-scale farming has almost completely disappeared owing to the change in way of life. This is why closed communities have come apart.

Natural and forced assimilation appeared in this region, too.

As language of the minority, it remains in contact with the language of the nation being in the majority.

National minorities are considered the connecting link among nations.

My dissertation may contribute to the common history of Hungary and Croatia which looks back upon more than thousand years.

Aims of research work done by me:

- Research and analysis of the characteristics of the dialect used by the Croatian people living along the Mura River;
- Collecting the lexical material of the ethnic group;
- Compilation of the Kaj Croatian/standard Croatian/Hungarian word-book of the region based on the vocabulary collected;
- Finding an answer to the question whether the Croatian people living along the Mura River are original inhabitants or immigrants;
- Contribution to the survival of the language of this ethnic group and retrieval of its reputation.

3. Methods applied in the course of the research work:

For the reason that I myself was born and brought up in the region along the Mura River, where I still live, I have relied on my knowledge of the vernacular, which I

inherited from my ancestors and enriched in the course of my life, to a large extent during the analysis of the language. I also called on informants for the purpose of collecting the vocabulary and phonological and morphological analyses of the language. While choosing the informants, the main efforts were as follows:

- It should be people who were born along the Mura River and whose mother tongue is Croatian.
- It should be people who lived here all their life and did not leave their birthplace for an extended time.
- They should be at least 65 years old.
- They should represent different settlements in the region.

The question and answer method was not sufficient in many cases during the interrogation of informants. Interviews and deep going interviews had to be conducted on many occasions for obtaining the adequate forms of words and phrases. Since a large number of nouns and verbs are used only in certain

cases and forms, above was particularly important in the course of collecting morphological data.

Theory is supported by many examples in the phonological and morphological analyses. The examples and illustrative sentences are indicated in standard Croatian and Hungarian, in addition to the Kaj dialect. As for the examples in Kaj language, symbols in general use in Croatian dialectology are applied. Special literature in Croatian and Hungarian, being connected with Slavic linguistics, and knowledge of dialectology, general linguistics and comparative linguistics, acquired in the course of studies for a doctoral degree of linguistics, were applied during the research work. Archival researches were carried out in Zalaegerszeg, Szombathely, Zagreb, Veszprém and Varaždin for the purpose of drawing up the chapter containing historical facts. I looked into the archival material of parishes to be found in the region. I also studied works dealing with regional history in Croatian and Hungarian.

Words are listed in alphabetical order, in dictionary entries, in the dialectological word-book. Each entry contains following data:

- Entry-word
 - Indication of grammatical forms and word class:
 - Indication of gender as well as genitive singular and plural forms in case of nouns.
 - Indication of aspect, first person praesens singularis and third person pluralis, imperativus, participium praeteritum, participium passivus and supinum forms in case of verbs.
 - Indication of comparative form in case of adjectives.
 - Indication of comparative form in case of adverbs (if applicable).
 - Meaning in standard Croatian
 - Meaning in Hungarian
 - Illustrative part with sample sentences in Kaj Croatian language
 - Idiomatic expressions and well-known phrases
- Symbols in general use in dialectology are applied with respect to the entry-word, grammatical forms and the illustrative part.

4. Results:

- The language of the Croatian people living along the Mura River can be divided into three minor groups according to the phonological characteristics:

1. Murakeresztúr and Fityeház
2. Tótszerdahely
3. Other settlements in the region: Molnári (Mlinarce), Petrivente (Petriba), Semjénháza (Pustara), Tótszentmárton (Sumarton).

Kaj Croatian speaking inhabitants of the two cities (Nagykanizsa and Letenye) are moved from the villages and bring with their characteristics.

- ♦ Aspects and criteria forming the basis of above division:

- Different development of palatal-nasal *ń*
- Pronunciation of *i* vocalic in unaccented position
- Change of *a < ǒ* in accentuated and unaccented position
- Change of *a < e* in unaccented position
- Phones to be found in the place of palatal-nasal of unaccented position

- Pronunciation of *e* vocalic

- The Croatian people living in Zala County are original inhabitants. They used to live here as early as the time of the Hungarian conquest. This certifies:

- ♦ The geographical and historical facts, i.e. names of settlements of Slavic origin, situation of the Church, the Croatian surnames in the assessments of taxes of the age and the names of toponyms.
- ♦ The archaic features of the language, which can still be found in its phonetics and declension, support this theory.

- the 'on' velar and the 'en' palatine resonant as well as the marks of the 'sva' phone.
- The remaining of the ancient 'v' prefixure
- The remaining of the ancient \emptyset morpheme in the pluralis genitivus form of the masculine and neuter nouns
- The remaining of the ancient \emptyset morpheme as well as the '-i' desinence originated from the 'i' root by the feminine nouns belong to the E declining in case of pluralis genitivus.

- The ancient ending of the nouns belong to the I-type of declining. The ending –ste of the verbs used in present tense, plural form, second person, which is the heritage of the athematic palaeoslavonic verbs.
- People also moved into the region from the area called Muraköz in the days after the expulsion of the Turkish. This certify:
 - Facts of regional history,
 - phonological and morphological allomorphs: variants rising in the place of jaty, sva, *və, *v, ŋ, d', sekunder tj, prosthetic consonantals, syllable builder l phones
- The Hungarian language affects the development of the language:
 - Hungarian consonantal
 - Hungarian pronunciation of vocals
 - The long-lived use of vocativus
 - The use of adverbs as preverb
 - The form of adverbs with prepositios
 - Two types of infinitive – difference in the understanding because of the polysemy

- Hungarian loanwords
- Use of diminutive and hypocoristic form of nouns.
- The l liquid isn't palatalize and isn't any l – ʃ opposition in the language
- Trilingual dialectological word-book comprising over fifteen thousand entry-words.