

KONTRA MIKLÓS

Szegedi Tudományegyetem, Bölcsészettudományi Kar (University of Szeged, Hungary)

#### SOME METHODOLOGICAL PROBLEMS IN THE SZEGED SOCIOLINGUISTIC INTERVIEWS

A major problem in our study of language variation and change in Szeged (population c. 160 000) is how and to what extent the linguistic data analyzed are influenced by various components of the interview situation. One such component, an independent variable, is the language variety used by the fieldworker. Two fieldworkers (one used the local *ő*-dialect, e.g. *körösz* [kørøst] 'cross' vs. standard Hungarian *kereszt* [kerest], the other used the standard variety with *e*) interviewed the same respondent (born and raised in Szeged, a vernacular speaker of the local dialect). By analyzing comparable parts of the two interviews, we seek to answer two questions:

- (1) Does intraspeaker variability occur in both interviews, especially concerning the *ő* forms?
- (2) If so, is there a correlation between the fieldworker's variety and the respondent's linguistic behavior?

Another important component of the interview situation is the location where the interview takes place. In order to study this effect, two interviews were conducted (with the same fieldworker and respondent, both vernacular speakers of the local dialect) in different locations: first, in the home of the respondent, second, in a university professor's office (which projects an official and scholarly aura). A comparison of the two interviews may show the effect of the location of the interview on the language use of the respondent.

Thirdly, we will look at the effect of the interpersonal relationship between the fieldworker and the respondent on the respondent's language use. The basic assumption, of course, is that, with the progress of the interview, more and more trust will come about between the respondent and a good fieldworker. This changing interpersonal relationship during the interview may have an effect on the respondent's language use. We will look at the frequencies of use of local Szeged forms in the various phases of the interview, both in the speech of a local dialect speaker and of an in-migrant from a non-*ő* region.

Our results should not be overgeneralized. Nevertheless, they may contribute to fellow linguists' awareness of how components of the sociolinguistic interview situation may influence the linguistic data analyzed.

\*\*\*\*\*

PS. An as yet undescribed effect in the international literature: that of the respondent's behavior on the fieldworker's body height, will also be documented.