

Kontra, Miklós and Anna Borbély, eds. 2021. *Tanulmányok a budapesti beszédről - a Budapesti Szociolingvisztikai Interjú alapján* ('Studies on Budapest speech based on the Budapest Sociolinguistic Interview'). Budapest: Gondolat Kiadó.

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Edited by the leading Hungarian linguists Miklós Kontra and Anna Borbély, *Tanulmányok a budapesti beszédről* is a collection of articles written between 1989 and 2021 as part of the Budapesti Szociolingvisztikai Interjú ['Budapest Sociolinguistic Interview'] or BUSZI project. This project was ongoing between 1985 and 2010 in the Institute for Linguistics of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences or MTA and led by Miklós Kontra. (The project continued for a few years even after 2010, although in a more limited scope, led by Tamás Váradi.) The volume contains both newly written articles, such as the one by Miklós Kontra on the history of the project, and republished older ones, at times with additions and modifications to their original versions. The book consists of two large parts: the first part contains introductory articles that contextualize the project itself, and the second consists of several individual studies that concentrate each on a specific topic within the BUSZI project.

As Kontra highlights in his historical overview in Chapter 2, the main aims of the BUSZI project were to complement the written corpora and the intuition-based studies that until then were the norm in research about Hungarian language use in Budapest. The new project was to rely on a relatively large speech corpus, thus enabling sociolinguists to compare the language uses of various social classes living in Budapest as well as to investigate speech styles, meaning the degree and kind of attention that speakers pay to the way they talk. The project also aimed to secure comparability with possible future phenomena and investigations, although to-date, thirty-five years since the beginning of the project, no such comparative investigations were carried out. In accordance with these rather ambitious aims, the project has practically covered the entire spectrum of the structure of language, ranging from phonetics and phonology through morphology, syntax, and lexis, all the way to stylistic and discourse features. Accordingly, the book is itself structured along the two concerns of contextualization and focused analyses promised by its division into these two large parts.

It is important to clarify in connection with the research methods applied throughout the BUSZI project that the investigations were largely built upon Labovian foundations, with the interviews being adapted versions of the classic Labovian sociolinguistic interview tailored to a

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Hungarian context. Thus, the interviews consisted of two major sections: a guided conversation about a given set of topics, and a set of linguistic tasks and tests, such as sentence completion, judgement of grammaticality, reading aloud pairs or lists of words or phrases or entire short passages (a complete list and descriptions of the interview materials is to be found in Chapter 2, 21-22). Still within the same Chapter 2, written by Kontra, one of the sections is given the rather telling title of "What do we know today that we did not know before this research?" (38). Here the author highlights the relevance of the BUSZI project in Hungarian (socio)linguistic research, namely, that it reveals the patterns of variation and change in the contemporary Budapest speech. What this means is explained in detail in the specific articles that follow this entire introductory part. More specifically, after the introductory articles in the first eight chapters, which clarify important details and methodological considerations in connection with the BUSZI project, the rest of the volume consists of pairs of articles that study issues of phonetics, morphology and syntax, followed by single articles that focus on issues of vocabulary, style and discourse.

The two articles about phonetics, offered in Chapters 9 and 10, concern variables that are relevant from a sociolinguistic point of view because their use may exhibit social stratification or geographical (dialectal) variation. Accordingly, these two articles study these aspects of variation, approaching their use from what might be referred to as a sociophonetic perspective. In Chapter 9, Helga Hattyár, M. Kontra and Fruzsina Sára Vargha investigate the presence (or absence) of the closed *ĕ* sound in the BUSZI speech sample, such as in the words *hĕgyĕs* and *hĕgyes*. In Chapter 10, Anna Borbély and András Vargha expand on the variability of the *l* sound across five different professions, thus establishing a rather strong correlation between the occupation of the participants and the presence or absence of postvocalic *l*-deletion in their speech, as in forms such as *fĕd* or *vĕt* instead of *fĕld* or *vĕlt*. While both these articles also open the possibility of continuing the research done in them with an extended scope in future (in terms of both expanding the sample size and taking further aspects into consideration, including the phonetic environment of the sound in question, etc.), they already offer a very informative insight into the contemporary Budapest speech, as far as some of its most sociolinguistically relevant phonetic variables are concerned.

The two articles constituting Chapters 11 and 12 investigate the use of different morphological variables across the BUSZI sample. Similarly to the two articles on phonetics, these studies also draw their conclusions regarding social stratification, and in addition the second of them also introduces a sociocognitive aspect to the understanding of its findings, which is a rather novel interpretative horizon in Hungarian sociolinguistics. This article refers to the integration of social and cognitive processes by interpreting mainly sociolinguistic variation in a cognitive framework. Chapter 11 is written by Kinga Mátyus, Julianna Bokor and Szabolcs Takács, who jointly investigate the BUSZI data on the widely researched topic of the (bVn) inessive suffix and its formal [bVn] and informal [bV] variants, as in *iskolában* versus *iskolába* with both meaning 'at school.' Their investigation takes into consideration factors such as gender, age, and level of education, thus arriving at significant conclusions especially in the case of the level of education, where it seems that the more educated the participants are, the more likely they are to use the formal [bVn] variant.

Chapter 12, written by Borbély, focuses on two morphological variables: (nVk), the informal *nák* variant of which is highly stigmatized as opposed to its formal counterpart *nék*, as well as the *jöttök* versus *jösztök* variation in the second person plural form of the verb *jönni* ['come']. This article introduces an interpretative approach that counts as highly innovative in

Hungarian sociolinguistics, as it takes into consideration not only the socioeconomic background of the participants and the contextual style they are speaking in, but also sociocognitive factors, such as their awareness of the variability of the forms in question, as well as the place and role of standard language ideology in their answers. Among other things, an important conclusion that Borbély arrives at is that standard language ideology seems to have a much larger influence on educated participants than on less educated ones, which may sound like a rather intuitive finding at first glance, since educated people are obviously also more aware of this ideology, but the way this correlation is demonstrated here is extremely convincing.

Considering issues of syntax, Daniel Szeredi's article in Chapter 14, on relative pronouns and their antecedents, is the sole English-language contribution in the book. Together with Ilona Kassai's article in Chapter 13 about the particle *-e*, which is commonly used in indirect questions like: *Nem tudom, felkeltek-e már* ['I don't know if they are up yet.'], these two studies constitute a significant part of the volume, as they provide fantastic examples of how the BUSZI data are meant to be analyzed in a quantitative fashion. Both studies were carried out with outstanding scholarly rigor, and their findings are presented in a meticulous way that allows for easy reconstruction of the procedures and considerations implemented in these two works.

Titled *Szócsinálás* ['Word Making'], Chapter 15 by Miklós Kontra is devoted to lexis. This article discusses the highly interesting topic of the strategies that respondents use to name an object that is unknown to them, and thus it also sheds light on the mechanism of lexical innovation in general. Although Kontra discusses only one specific case, of the term *kapocskiszedő* ['staple remover'], still, the tendencies described in this article are insightful regarding lexical innovation in general. Similarly to Kontra's article, Csilla Bartha and Ágnes Hámori's article in Chapter 16, on a specific issue of style, also contains a number of general insights. Starting out with an overview of the existing research on style in Hungarian sociolinguistics prior to their own work, the authors set the scene for their presentation of the BUSZI findings on style. Bartha and Hámori refer to a wide range of both classic and cutting-edge sources (including studies of the sociolinguistics of gender) in connection with the social constructivist approach to style, exemplified by the works of Nikolas Coupland, Howard Giles, Deborah Cameron, Don Kulick, Natalie Schilling-Estes, Mary Bucholtz, and Kira Hall, to name just a few, placing their own empirical study in an updated international context. The authors then present their findings based on the stylistic analysis of fourteen BUSZI interviews, focusing primarily on instances of style shifting in the guided discussion parts, as well as documenting and interpreting the wide variety of strategies used by the participants throughout the interviews. Finally, the authors draw the conclusions of their research not only with respect to style but also about issues of identity, patterns of interaction and various conversational as well as discourse phenomena. Their conclusions concern mainly the role of style in face-saving and -presenting strategies, self-characterization and participant relations, thus shedding light on the close connections between style and interactional as well as emotional involvement, and other factors such as focusing on one's conversation partner, the degree of interactivity and spontaneity versus elaboration, etc.

Continuing the direction set in the previous chapter (written by the same authors), in Chapter 17 Bartha and Hámori explore a discourse-related topic, namely the dynamics of speech modes in interaction. Similarly to Chapter 16, this study also begins with a survey of the relevant theoretical background, on the backdrop of which the authors present their own findings concerning the stylistic relevance of speech accommodation theory based on the BUSZI data,

thus highlighting several typical examples of it from different levels of the language. The novelty of this article lies in its original analyses of specific linguistic examples related to the fields of phonetics, grammar, lexis and discourse, all with respect to speech accommodation theory. Thus, Bartha and Hámori practically link their two chapters on discourse and style to previous chapters of the book that likewise concentrate on these same fields of linguistic inquiry. Given the kind of comprehensive stance that this article takes, it is a very appropriate ending to the selection of studies presented in the volume as a whole.

Finally, in a unit titled *Varia*, two more articles by Miklós Kontra present a few further BUSZI findings about speakers' linguistic insecurity and about a set of independent variables that seem to influence participants' answers in the oral sentence-completion tasks. Coming after the previous articles that treated each a certain field of linguistic inquiry (such as phonetics, morphology, syntax, etc.), these two articles together approach a wider variety of linguistic issues and variables through the unifying perspective of sociolinguistics. It is exactly this unifying perspective of sociolinguistics that makes this comprehensive collection of articles a coherent whole. Even though the individual articles investigate discrete findings of the BUSZI project from a wide range of angles, the sociolinguistic mindset and interpretative horizon unites them all, and they all have an equally legitimate place in this heterogeneous yet congruent and sophisticated volume, which provides a thorough and exhaustive account of the entire BUSZI project.