

## Research Objectives of the Department of Experimental Linguistics for the year 2007

### 1. *Neurolinguistic research*

Participants: Zoltán Bánréti, Éva Mészáros, Katalin Szentkúti-Kiss, Judit Szépe, and 3 PhD students.

1.1. The theory of grammar in the light of language pathology data: research on mental grammar includes efforts for describing the relationship between subsystems of structure-building operations and certain memory subsystems, primarily in structures of tense and verb – object agreement. Based on test data from aphasic and healthy subjects the aim is constructing a model relating to principles of universal grammar on the one hand, and accounting for functions of memory subsystems on the other.

1.2. Performing joint physiological research with the HAS Institute for Psychology (on number-person agreement, tense agreements, and the agreement of the definite object marker). Extending research activities to subjects with agrammatic aphasia. Results gathered from these physiological investigations, complemented by data from reaction time experiments already completed, can give a clearer picture of healthy and damaged sentence analysis processes.

1.3. Further analysis of the processing of temporal relations of events will be commenced with investigating compound sentences where the event time of the main clause should be determined relative to that of the time clause. Method applied: ordering pictures corresponding to event times expressed in the target sentence. We have developed grammaticality decision tasks for testing information processing related to sentence aspect.

1.4. Research related to aphasic sentence comprehension will include the offline testing of the comprehension of semantically reversible transitive sentences (applying the method of sentence-picture matching) in case of different predicate types, with canonical and non-canonical thematic role order variants of three different construction types: (i) topic-predicate (ii) multiple topics, (iii) topicless structure. Discovery and comparative analysis of comprehension patterns of sentences containing *agentive* and *psychological* verbs in groups with agrammatic and Wernicke's aphasia.

1.5. Continued gathering of data containing deviances of phonological sequence organisation from aphasic subjects, lapses, and old-age mistakes. Of the operations of phonological sequence organisation strategies, we aim to discover the linear reordering processes operating on segment feature assignment in the studied deviance types.

Building a corpus based primarily on data from paraphasia, lapses, mistakes of healthy subjects and dementia patients in old age and, secondly, on data of healthy and pathological language acquisition processes.

### 2. *Psycholinguistic research*

Participants: Ágnes Lukács and Bence Kas.

2.1. Investigating traits of language development disorder specific to Hungarian, focussing on new areas such as the adaptation of word order tests applied in aphasia research for development tests, conducting the tests and interpreting their results.

2.2. Under OTKA grant *Analogy-based formal approach to phonology and morphology*, well-formedness judgments related to different forms of defective stems will be tested in a psycholinguistic experiment.

### 3. *Speech research:*

Participants: Ilona Kassai and PhD students

3.1. Analysis of the linguistic material gathered by questionnaire survey (240 questionnaires) on “silent” predicates in incomplete questions, started in 2006 under the project MTA/CNRS, will be continued.

3.2. In order to give a more exact definition of sonority, one of the key concepts in phonology by providing an adequate universal cross-language scale, similarities and differences between sonority scales applied for different languages will be examined. The aim is to produce a scale more uniform and more detailed than the one used today, relying on objective acoustic measurements and somewhat less objective psychoacoustic data.

#### **4. Sociolinguistic research**

Participants: Csilla Bartha and members of the Department of Sociolinguistics

4.1. Under the European Union project DILING (Dimensions of Linguistic Otherness) -- FP6 SSA the first version of a volume will be produced, containing country review studies on the situation of linguistic minorities of eight participating countries, as well as theoretical studies by international experts. At the end of the first report period a progress report concerning professional, financial, legal, and ethical topics will be prepared for the European Commission.

Organisation of a two-day DILING workshop in June 2007 in Pécs (ICML 11 pre-conference workshop).

4.2. Under the project no. KFP 5/126/2001, *A nyelvi másság dimenziói: a kisebbségi nyelvek megőrzésének lehetőségei (Dimensions of linguistic otherness: possibilities for preserving minority languages)* research will be carried out on topics such as the relationship of identity and language and the role of linguistic attitudes and ideologies in language shift. Results will be publicised as written studies and presentations at international conferences.

4.3. Preparing a theoretical study on the relation of minorities, bilingual education programs, and language maintenance, offering an outlook on international practices.

#### **5. Research on languages spoken by Roma communities**

Participants: Csilla Bartha, Anna Orsós, and Andrea Szalai

5.1. Editing the volume *Roma communities and their languages in the Carpathian basin* (Budapest: Nemzeti Tankönyvkiadó)

5.2. Extending existing chapters of the Boyash sentence grammar and writing new ones. Extensions: Types of the simple sentence: Attributive sentences. Sentences of existence. Possessive sentences. Interrogative sentences. The yes/no question. Chapters to be written: Compound sentences: The initial section of the sentence (conjunctions, topic). The subjunctive in main and subordinate clauses. Relative clauses. Clauses with the conjunctive "kă". Conditional sentences. Sentence formulas. Greetings, oaths, curses, etc. Vocatives. Formulas with communicative purposes.

5.3. Completing and submitting the doctoral dissertation "Oath and gender in the linguistic ideology of a Transsylvanian Roma community".

5.4. Research cooperation with Susan Gal (Chicago University) and Michael Stewart (University College of London) in the following two topics: 1. *Pragmatic value and gender*, 2. *Language ideologies in statistical discourse: the case of the Gypsy minority in Hungary*

5.5. Preparing selective bibliographies of Hungarian and international literature on Romani linguistics and of Hungarian literature on Boyash linguistics.

## **Research Objectives of the Department of Experimental Linguistics for the year 2008**

### **1. *Neurolinguistic research***

Participants: Zoltán Bánréti, Éva Mészáros, Katalin Szentkúti-Kiss, Judit Szépe, and 3 PhD students.

1.1. Writing a comprehensive study summarizing the characteristic features of morphosyntactic agreement operations of Hungarian agrammatic aphasics based on the results of production and sentence comprehension test conducted so far. Building on empirical generalizations, conclusions relating to the theory of grammar will be drawn.

1.2. Investigating the comprehension of Hungarian transitive sentences containing non-accusative predicates and causative verbs in case of three sentence construction types: (i) topic-predicate, (ii) multiple-topic, (iii) topicless structures, with both canonical and non-canonical thematic role order sentence variants.

1.3. Prolonged gathering and processing of corpus data containing deviances of phonological sequence organisation with the intention of producing a structured database, using primarily data from paraphasia, lapses, mistakes of healthy and demential subjects in old age and, secondly, data of healthy and pathological language acquisition processes.

1.4. Working out the categorization of information narrowing operations manifested in phonological mistakes/lapses, and performing quantitative investigations on a lapse corpus of spontaneous speech.

1.5. Developing therapeutic material for aphasia patients: preparation of a systematic package for practicing noun/verb retrieval promoting both individual and institutional therapy of aphasia. The pictorial test/practice material will be recorded on digital storage media. Financial resources for the project are to be provided by research grants.

### **2. *Psycholinguistic research:***

Participants: Ágnes Lukács and Bence Kas.

2.1. Concluding the tests on language development disorders. Evaluating and summarising the results. Psycholinguistic analysis of analogy processes operable in linguistic knowledge

### **3. *Sociolinguistic research***

Participants: Csilla Bartha and members of the Department of Sociolinguistics

3.1. Continuing collective projects and individual research work started in 2007 on the following topics:

- Research of language shift and linguistic revitalization in East-Central Europe.
- Continuing the project DILING, organising the second DILING workshop (to be held in the Ukraine). - Preparing policy recommendations for individual countries and for the entire region.
- Forms of language shift and language maintenance in minority communities (comparative research).
- The theory and practice of language shift, language maintenance and linguistic revitalization.
- Forms of social intercourse, bilinguality, minority and majority attitudes, prejudices in linguistic communities living in Hungary.
- Approaches to classifications of bilinguality
- Ideologies related to bilinguality.
- Bilinguality and language shift in the Mura region (synthesis of research results)
- Paradigms of sociolinguistics: quantitative and qualitative methods.

- Sociolinguistic interpretations of style.

#### **4. Research on languages spoken by Roma communities**

Participants: Csilla Bartha, Anna Orsós, and Andrea Szalai

4.1. Boyash linguistics: the Boyash descriptive grammar (which also includes information on phonetics/phonology, morphology and syntax) to be published in 2008 is an unparalleled venture not only of Hungarian but international linguistic research. Impact analysis of the published volume, starting work on designing a new corpus that is indispensable for Boyash language teaching as well as for extending the Boyash vocabulary to better reflect current usage and also for appearing on the international scene.

4.2. Romani linguistics: starting the topic *Romani discourse on legal and political matters. Discourse positions, oath, responsibility* The aim of the research is analysing linguistic ideologies in the legal context of the community, with a special regard to producing and sharing responsibility by means of communicative interaction.

4.3. Linguistic variables and social barriers: the planned project focuses on an understudied issue of Romani linguistics, intradialect variation. Speakers do not only perceive linguistic variations of their dialect but also identify them, producing and maintaining social barriers by emphasising or ignoring differences.

#### **5. Speech research**

Participants: Ilona Kassai and PhD students

5.1. Investigating the operation of exchange, insertion, deletion, shortening and lengthening of sounds (reflected in the database of the Hungarian Dialect Vocabulary) as general principles valid for young children acquiring language as well as for elderly speakers and aphasic patients. Word structure reordering methods of dialect speakers, such as deletions, insertions, metatheses, can be conceived as unconsciously performed tests of the psychological reality of phoneme connections, which may give clues for the empirical characterisation of one of the key concepts in language description, well-formedness.