

Krisztina Sófalvi

**Romanian and German Language Forms in the Hungarian Daily Press of Transylvania
between the Two World Wars**

The theses of the PhD dissertation

I. Introduction, history of the period, press history

The theme of the PhD dissertation is the appearance of language contact phenomena on the written language of Transylvanian Hungarians between the two world wars. This phenomenon is an important factor of the language use of the Transylvanian Hungarians living in minority in their native country. In the special historical period starting in 1920, within changed ethnical conditions, the appearance of foreign language elements (first of all Romanian forms, but Germans as well) in the written Hungarian press was an important station on the way leading to the borrowing of foreign words and bilingualism.

The dissertation is divided into four chapters.

The first chapter contains first of all a presentation of the historical antecedents of the main Romanian language policy orders. The short presentation of the Hungarian policy towards the nationalities from before 1920 is important because later the Romanians coming to power often applied it as a reason for their abuses committed against minorities. A short summary follows about the history of researches done on the Hungarian-Romanian language contact in the twentieth century. In this chapter I still present some of the basic language restrictions concerning Hungarians, which restrictions appear in the newspapers as well. The chapter also contains press history issues, by means of which we may get a better understanding of the analyzed phenomena. There is a short presentation of the applied research methods, and the choosing of the analyzed newspapers. A short summary follows about the importance of researches made on language contact phenomena in written language.

II. Romanian Language Forms

The longest part of the dissertation is the grouping of Romanian language forms, namely an analysis of what, when and how appears in Romanian in the Hungarian papers, and of the factors which might have influenced the choice between the Romanian or Hungarian, or the bilingual form. The first part of the chapter presents the Romanian language forms belonging to the official vocabulary, which means a significant part of the presented material. I divided the official words, parts of texts appearing in Romanian into four groups: 1. names of official jobs; 2. names of offices and institutes; 3. titles of official announcements and

orders; 4. names of official documents. The division is followed by a presentation of the connection between the newspaper column, genre and the occurrence of Romanian official words. The next subchapter concentrates on the Romanian language forms appearing in the texts of advertisements. Five groups can be divided here: 1. names of firms and companies; 2. names of products; 3. names of newspapers and editors; 4. names of jobs and other Romanian words appearing in small ads; 5. advertisements written in Romanian. The chapter contains the presentation of the Romanian place-names as well, which are the most significant group of Romanian language forms in their quantity. Although Romanian place-names often occur in the official texts as well, there is a tabular presentation of the (Hungarian/Romanian/bilingual) names of the main towns from the texts of the advertisements because the ads contain a comparable quantity of place-names. After this we can find the regulation of the public place (street and square) names and I present the most frequent ways of naming the public domains in the Hungarian newspapers after 1920, and there is a short summary in this respect about the main towns' public place names appearing in the papers.

III. German Language Forms

The third chapter presents the German elements, less in quantity, but in a similar way to the presentation of the Romanian language forms. Although here I could not find the parallel of all the presented Romanian language form groups (the motivations behind the appearance of Romanian and German elements were totally different), there is a subchapter for official words which contains the few German institute names or those institute names which contain German elements. These are mainly names of institutes being at the borderline of the official and economical sphere. The second, longer part of the chapter is about the advertisements containing German language forms because there are a lot of German company names which often appear alone or together with their Hungarian or Romanian names. Furthermore we can find examples for the advertisement texts appearing in Hungarian, Romanian and German at the same time, completed by original copies from the papers at the end of the dissertation. The German small ads also belong to the advertisement sphere, and the chapter is finished by the presentation of the few German place-names, the names of localities and public places.

IV. Sociolinguistical aspects of the presented language forms

The last chapter is a summary, discussing the connection between the presented Romanian and German language forms and code-switching and the researching possibilities of code-switching in written language. The problem of difficulties in translating proper-names is also mentioned. The analysis gave an opportunity to make some kind of division between the

Romanian and/or German language forms appearing more or less „voluntarily” and those Romanian words and texts which appeared in the Hungarian papers as a result of language policy pressure. The former is illustrated by German advertisements and parts of texts which appeared in the Hungarian papers before and after 1920 in the same form, but the Romanians appeared only after 1920. The chapter and the whole dissertation is finished by a conclusion about the connection between the analyzed language forms and the social conditions and about the attitude of editors and advertisers towards the changed linguistic rights conditions.

The bibliography is followed by supplements containing original copies from the newspapers mentioned in the dissertation.

V. Publications

My papers relating to this research discuss some issues of the dissertation in earlier phases of the research, publishing partial results and I published a paper about some Romanian place-names appearing in earlier Transylvanian place-name collections.

Sófalvi Krisztina 2006. *Román Helynevek Szabó T. Attila Erdélyi Helynévtörténeti Adattárában*. Emlékkönyv Szabó T. Attila születésének 100. évfordulójára. Magyar Nyelvtudományi Társaság, Budapest. 66 – 69.

Sófalvi Krisztina 2007. Írott nyelvi kódváltás a két világháború közti magyar sajtóban (Brassói Lapok, Keleti Újság). Benő Attila – Fazakas Emese – Szilágyi N. Sándor (szerk.): *Nyelvek és nyelvváltozatok. Köszöntő kötet Péntek János tiszteletére* 2. A Szabó T. Attila Nyelvi Intézet Kiadványai 4. Kolozsvár. 278 – 292.

Sófalvi Krisztina 2007. Román nyelvi elemek a két világháború közti időszak erdélyi magyar naplapjaiban. *Féltúton* 3. konferencia.

http://linguistics.elte.hu/studies/fuk/fuk07/sofalvi.k_KA_VA_T.pdf

Sófalvi Krisztina 2008. Román közterületnevek a két világháború közti időszak romániai magyar napilapjaiban. *Névtani Értesítő* 30: 101 – 115.