

Long-lasting linguistic variation without language change

-A short survey of some interesting morphophonological variables from the late Middle Hungarian to the present-day spoken language-

In the paper I intend to describe some language variables of Hungarian to produce sufficient evidences that a kind of language variation does not cause any language change. Using the methodology of **historical sociolinguistics** (and as sources two groups of late Middle Hungarian records) I would like to describe some morphophonological variations of Hungarian (some of them exist from the 14-15th century), that can show us the type of stable linguistic variation so variation without language change.

The first one of variables are really two: the case markers of illative and inessive case: the suffix *-ba/-be* (with a hypercorrect *-ban/-ben* form) in illative case and the case marker *-ban/-ben* suffix (with a generally used *-ba/-be* form in spoken language) in inessive case. We can see that the case marking of illative and inessive case of Hungarian shows variation for many centuries and in present spoken language too. We can see that this centuries-old variation has no result, the alternation is quiet stable so it should not show us a language change in progress -and the language users choose a form of the variables written above depending on their sociocultural backgrounds. An the other hand we can see that there is an important difference between the written and the spoken language.

The second variable I intend to investigate is the adverbial suffix *-ért* which has almost three forms: the form *-ért* used in written language and in very formal spoken Hungarian the form *-ér* generally used in spoken language, and the stigmatized form *-é* used only in informal spoken language. Making investigations concerning this adverbial suffix we can see that the different forms of the suffix existing for more centuries did not cause language change.

The question we should answer is **why?** Why did not happen language change concerning the variables written above? It is not easy to answer this question but I am sure that the basis of the solution should be **the force of the written norm** and the **activity of language codifiers** and language cultivators that did not allow to become absolut the forms used by every speakers in non very formal spoken Hungarian.