ADDRESS in UKRAINIAN LANGUAGE: 
a study of language variation and change

Ukrainian is a language, which receives very little attention in the world, although it is spoken by 47 Mio. people. It is lacking of a generally used norm, and therefore language variation is a common appearance. For these reasons Ukrainian – more precisely the Westukrainian variety of Ukrainian language – was chosen for this socio-linguistic empirical study, that deals with language variation and change and further includes comparative information (Ukrainian-German).

The presented study – diploma theses in the field of Applied Linguistics (University of Vienna), closely connected with the project "Address in Some Western European Languages: a Study of Language and Social Change" of the University of Melbourne/Australia (Head Researcher: Prof. Michael Clyne) – is focusing on the use of pronominal and nominal forms of address in the Western Ukraine (L’viv). It intends the description of variation and changes within the Ukrainian address system. One of the main aims is the development of a model, which includes the pragmatic factors in address choice, reflects their hierarchic relationships and mutual influences.

Data – 24 interviews – was collected in L’viv/Ukraine (in 05/06.2004) and analysed using quantitative as well as qualitative methods.

Results show, that address choice in Ukraine is a highly complex process. Especially address use in family currently undergoes deep changes, and therefore allows high variation. Besides address habits of young generations are determined by variation, caused by different values, education styles, as well as language contact (Ukrainian-Russian).

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