

РЕЦЕНЗІЇ • REVIEW

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ANIKÓ BEREGSZÁSZI – KATALIN DUDICS LAKATOS TWENTY-TWO. HISTORY OF 22 YEARS OF HUNGARIAN NATIVE LANGUAGE EDUCATION IN TRANSCARPATHIA (Termini, Törökbálint, Hungary, 2023. 172 p.)

Газдаг Вільмош, Чурман-Пушкаш Аніко. Аніко Берегсасі – Катерина Дудич-Лакатош. Двадцять два. 22 роки угорської рідномовної освіти та виховання на Закарпатті (Спілка Termini, Терекбалінт, Угорщина, 2023. 172 с.).

One of the first substantial Transcarpathian Hungarian works to reach reading public was published in 2023 by lecturers Anikó Beregszászi and Katalin Dudics Lakatos at the Department of Philology of Transcarpathian Hungarian College of Higher Education named after Ferenc Rákóczi II. It presents the main policy and results of the last 22 years of the Hungarian native language education in Transcarpathia, analyzing and summarizing the concept of native language education, the possible methods, the effectiveness and the participants' language attitudes in Transcarpathian Hungarian education planning and management.

In the foreword of the publication, the authors emphasize that the Transcarpathian Hungarian community «even before the start of the war since February was forced to fight its daily political and other conflicts in difficult educational and political conditions» (p. 10) in order to preserve the educational network and to restore their native language education.

At the very beginning of the first chapter entitled «Stages of a story» it is emphasized that «the process of restoration of Hungarian native language education in Transcarpathia is closely related to the scientific study of the language situation, language use, language attitude and native language education of the Transcarpathian Hungarian community dating back to the second half of 1990s» (p. 12). Regarding the beginning of the reform of native language education, the authors underline that it is mostly connected to the «Living Language» conference held in Uzhhorod in 1995 and István Csernicsko's monograph «The Hungarian language in Ukraine (in Transcarpathia)», published as the first volume of the series «Hungarian language in the Carpathian Basin at the end of the 20th century», and the creation of the first concept of Hungarian language planning in Transcarpathia is connected to the specialists of Transcarpathian Hungarian College of Higher Education named after Ferenc Rákóczi II. It is also emphasized that the need to restore teaching in the native language, which arose increasingly in the 1990s, received appropriate scientific support only in 2000, based on the research that has become known as Iskola 2000 (School 2000), as its results exposed the subtractive approach that was used before and the effectiveness of teaching the native language that focused mainly on grammar to a

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large doubt. According to the authors, «on the basis of the results of Iskola 2000, the idea was formulated that Hungarian-language education in Transcarpathia should aim to automatically adapt the use of the language to the discourse situation for those who graduate from school», and that «native language education and teachers should reject the one-norm approach. Such curriculum and textbooks should be used which consider the values and peculiarities of the use of the Hungarian language in details in Transcarpathia and help determine their application, but the choice is for the student, according to the native speaker's communicative competence» (p. 24). Based on the results of a scientific research that started in the early 2000s, a new curriculum using an additive approach was completed in 2005 and the corresponding new Hungarian language textbooks began to be published. In 2012, Anikó Beregszászi published a methodological manual and a collection of related tasks, which the author called «The impossible becomes possible», referring to the nature of the situation.

In the second chapter, entitled «Development of Transcarpathian Hungarian language Education in the Light of Curriculum and Textbooks», the authors provide the reader with a more detailed analysis of the already mentioned new curriculum and textbooks. It is emphasized that the Hungarian language curriculum from 2005 was the first curriculum in which the following topics are mentioned: Language and language varieties. Variability and relative constancy of languages. A person – several language varieties. Virtual equality and actual inequality of language varieties. Linguistic discrimination and language tolerance. Typical characteristics of local Hungarian language varieties (dialect characteristics, consequences of language contacts: borrowing, code switching, pragmatic characteristics); differences compared to other varieties of the Hungarian language. Situational (adjusted to speech situation) language use (p. 34).

Evaluating the pinnacle of the Transcarpathian reform of Hungarian native language education, the authors draw attention to the description compiled in 2017 by the Department of Hungarian Philology at the Transcarpathian Hungarian College of Higher Education named after Ferenc Rákóczi II, «it became possible to change the system, content and form of requirements for final exams in Hungarian language in Transcarpathian Hungarian secondary schools» and to achieve that «the final Hungarian language exam in Transcarpathia to be equated with the final exam in Hungarian language and literature in Hungary at intermediate level» (p. 38–39). In the following sections, it might be read in more details about the educational and political decisions that threaten the network of Hungarian schools in Transcarpathia, as well as about the new (2018) curriculum, which ignored the results of the previous years and was adopted in a simplified form, without reference to the framework curriculum of Hungary, as well as a detailed analysis of a series of relevant textbooks. In a separate section, the authors discuss the emergence of dialects in Transcarpathian Hungarian language textbooks, emphasizing that teaching in the native language has ignored the peculiarities arising from the differences between varieties of the Hungarian language at home and abroad for a long time. In the new textbooks having been published since the 1990s, which were based, in particular, on socio-dialectological aspects and related to the program compiled with an additive approach, the focus was on the fact that «the Transcarpathian Hungarian student should encounter a confident and positive attitude towards dialects and varieties of his/her native language in the process of learning the standard» (p. 53–54). With regard to the 2018 curriculum and the series of textbooks related to it, the authors clearly state that they are a significant reversal compared to the results of the previous years, as «they are not suitable for dispelling either negative or positive

stereotypes, and do not convey to students objective, scientifically based information about their native language varieties» (p. 58).

In the third chapter, the authors report on the results gathered from a 2006–2008 survey on the language awareness of Hungarian schoolchildren in Transcarpathia, with a special emphasis on opinions related to different language varieties and dialects. The research, which was conducted over two academic years, covered 46 schools in 37 settlements of Transcarpathia, and a total, about 1,500 students of eleventh and ninth grades were interviewed. Presenting the results of the survey, it is emphasized that «the young people who took part in the survey are aware of the differences between different language varieties, and it also turned out that the varieties they call dialects do not have much prestige among them, so they are careful and reserved when speaking about the speech characteristic of their own place of residence» (p. 67), and that «the majority of students consider dialect speech as an obstacle to success and self-realization, emphasizing the importance of learning the language standard» (p. 70–72). With regard to students' awareness of standard norms, they emphasize that due to the peculiarities of old textbooks, «young people are most aware of the use of those phenomena that were previously given special attention during linguistic purism and native language education, and the largest ratio of conversational, non-standard answers was given regarding elements that are characteristic, local, dialect phenomena (p. 77).

In the following section, the authors seek an answer to the question of whether additive teaching of the native language is effective in practice. Comparing the data from the survey presented in the previous section and the survey repeated 10 years later (in 2018) facilitates to ascertain that «the change in attitudes recorded in 2005 has results that might be demonstrated with empirical data» (p. 86). Based on the comparison of the research results (e.g., assessment of dialects, related personal relationships, and conscious attitudes of the native speaker), the authors underline that the positive change occurred clearly «due to the additive approach and secondary school textbooks compiled with this approach» that is clearly reflected in the more objective and rational nature of the answers received, as well as in the fact that «students express much more cordiality towards dialects and native speakers with dialects than before» (p. 94). In connection with the development of native language education in the publication, the role of teachers in this process is repeatedly highlighted, so it is not surprising that in addition to students, a research was also conducted among them in 2008 and 2018, the results of which, as in the case of the study of students, also indicate that «over the last 10 years, the opinions, expressed by Transcarpathian Hungarian teachers about dialects have changed in a positive direction» (p. 107). In addition to the general assessment of dialects and the native speaker's attitude towards them, the above-mentioned studies also focus on the phenomena that are strongly stigmatized in the linguistic purism literature, such as the use of variants of verb suffixes like *-suk/sük*, *-szuk/szük*, *-csuk/csük*, *-nák*, the place of the interrogative word *-e* in the sentence, the future tense form of the predicate *kell*, the locative suffixes *-nál/-nél* instead of *-hoz/-hez/-höz* in the meaning «to», as well as the use of *-tól/-től* in a similar function. In this regard, the authors draw attention to the fact that, although «from the point of view of knowledge of the standard, the pace of success is slower», informants have nevertheless become more conscious over the past 10 years, including about the non-standard phenomena characteristic of local speech use compared to previously interviewed research participants (p. 128).

The fifth and final chapter is entitled «Opportunities of forming language tolerance. Language education at the Transcarpathian Hungarian College of Higher Education

named after Ferenc Rákóczi II». Regarding this issue, the authors emphasize that in the minority situation «the preservation of the native language and the network of native schools are a matter of community, language policy and language planning at the same time, since the future and survival of the community through the language of instruction and the content, approach and methods of teaching Hungarian as a native language may effectively influence the preservation of its identity, the goals of national policy and language policy might be effectively implemented through educational planning» (p. 131). They also emphasize that from the point of view of the implementation of the goals of the language and educational policy formulated in the early 2000s, it is also extremely important that» which approach higher educational institutions apply for planning their courses on teacher training, and on what scientific basis their goals are» (p. 133). In this regard, a positive example is the various educational programmes of the Ferenc Rákóczi II Transcarpathian Hungarian College of Higher Education, where all students, not only philologists, have the opportunity to learn about language approaches on a scientific basis. Students on other faculties have the opportunity to choose from a range of optional courses including «subjects taught in Hungarian that develop language use and form language attitudes, such as Language and Society, Bilingualism in the Carpathian Basin, Basics of Hungarian Orthography, Official Hungarian Language, and Language of Scientific Research (p. 141).

In the section «Afterword. Instead of a Summary», the authors note that it is impossible to summarize the work, since the purpose of the work was the actual summary in which they wanted to describe the results and failures of the last twenty-two years of Hungarian native language education in Transcarpathia, and thereby draw attention to the fact that achieving community goals regarding language and educational policy requires «comprehensive analysis of textbooks, including textbook series, continuous monitoring of curricula, coordinated and well-considered preparation of textbooks and curricula» and, above all, peace is needed in Ukraine (p. 146).

The publication ends with a list of academic literature more than twenty pages, so those who are interested in the topic have the opportunity to read about the scientific works mentioned in the book in details. The authors also publish a selection of photographs at the end of the book, showing the publications of the Department of Philology of II Transcarpathian Hungarian College of Higher Education named after Ferenc Rákóczi II and the Antal Hodinka Linguistics Research Center. The 172-page book, despite its solid scientific foundation, is comprehensible and deserves the experts' attention involved in planning language education and writing textbooks, practicing teachers and students currently studying, as well as non-specialists interested in Hungarian native language education in Transcarpathia.

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