

**Language history: functions and culture transfer
(Zagreb experiences)**

Orsolya Nádor, PhD

Károli Gáspár Református Egyetem, Sveučilište u Zagrebu

Hungarian Studies in Zagreb are situated at the meeting point of two less known languages. Although both being official languages in the European Union, both Croatian and Hungarian belong to the less known and studied languages. There are also other languages and cultures forming this kind of relationship such as e.g. Estonian and Hungarian, Finnish and Hungarian, Slovakian and Slovenian. While different belonging the number of their native speakers, they are all languages which only a few decide to study and still far fewer want to make them to their profession. Historical studies and therefore also studies of language history play an important role in emphasising the fact that a centuries-long historical, linguistic and cultural intertwining makes the Croatian-Hungarian relationship special.

Hungarian Studies at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences of the University of Zagreb are located at the same institute as Turkology and Jewish Studies. This year we are celebrating the 20th anniversary of the Department of Hungarian Studies. The number of the students is constant with totally 60-70 students in the BA and MA programmes (from which 10-12 students a year enrol in the MA programme). After the accession to the EU, despite our hopes, neither Hungarian nor Croatian have attracted an increased number of language learners.

The *language history course* on which the presentation is focussing takes place in the second term of the fourth year of the program. Its purpose is not only to give an introduction into the history of the Hungarian and in its historical relationships (e.g. loanwords) but also (as synthesising studies) to explain issues which can not be discussed in the language courses and further to lighten the complicated system of the East Central European language area.