

FOREWORD

It is more than two hundred years since qualified engineers have been trained at the Technical University of Budapest and its predecessors in Hungary. Engineer training is going on in several foreign languages as well besides Hungarian, such as English, German, French and Russian. There is also a considerable number of students who, being foreign citizens, take their degree in Hungarian as a foreign language. The University operates as a multi-lingual university, therefore the knowledge of foreign languages receives a great emphasis. This is natural for other reasons as well, since our graduates are expected to have high-level foreign language skills due to the linguistic and geopolitical position of Hungary, the language demands for the engineering profession, as well as our efforts towards integration into the United Europe. Therefore the University operates an Institute of Modern Languages with more than a hundred employees for the training and further education of students and instructors, where the five language departments provide a wide variety of courses in 12 languages for 5,000 students. Besides basic language training courses, a number of special language subjects (special technical language, communication skills, crosscultural background knowledge, etc.) and the translation and interpreting training speciality provide opportunities for students to improve their language proficiency.

Research activities at the Institute of Modern Languages serve as a background for developing up-to-date educational work, new course contents and adequate course materials. The main research areas of the Institute are the following: applied linguistics, language pedagogy, methodology, special language research, translation and interpretation science, and the culture of the target language countries. There is a great number of research performed in groups or individually, some of them in cooperation with fellow institutions and departments in Hungary or abroad. Our results are published at conferences and in publications. There is also an independent periodical of applied linguistics and language pedagogy edited by the Institute, titled 'Folia Practico-Linguistica', issued once or twice a year.

It is a common characteristic of research that starting from theoretical issues, the results of research activities are utilized in educational practice. Therefore all our topics are related to the educational activities performed at the University and the Institute. Our present selection of essays shows a part of this work.

The eight studies published here form three major units. The first three studies (A. Aradi, G. Lukács, Z. Sturcz) are related to the areas and interrelations of theoretical linguistics, applied linguistics, contrastive linguistics and language pedagogy. They can be classified as basic ap-

plied linguistics training. The next group of studies (J. Vidéki Reményi, I. Fister, A. Kárpáti) are from the fields of applied linguistics, language pedagogy, and special methodology: the essays lead from the analysis of the language demands of special training through completing specific projects to special syllabus design, thus illustrating the interrelations of research work and educational activities. The two studies of the closing unit (J. Sárvári, Á. Élthes) provide examples of the marked interdisciplinary and intercultural features of today's language training as well as of the direct contact of language studies with other subjects. It is also revealed that language learning skills, motivations, and teachers' activities are complicated both in terms of methodology and language pedagogy.

The authors of the studies are head instructors and instructors participating in Ph.D. training who have been involved in the special field represented by them for a considerable period of time, having other publications in their subject as well. Six of the studies are in English, two of them are in German and French, respectively, due to their special topic and contents. We hope that the materials published here will contribute to the improvement of the reader's knowledge about applied linguistics and language pedagogy. Our studies are recommended not only for language teachers but to all people interested in language teaching and language culture.

Zoltán STURCZ
Director
Institute of Modern Languages