

## GUEST EDITOR'S NOTE

It is not only language and speech that differ across people and change in the course of time but—perhaps as a consequence—researchers' aims, attitudes and perspectives also appear to undergo sweeping changes as time goes by. In addition, new topics come to be identified and traditional questions are suddenly investigated from novel angles. About ten years ago, Hungarian phonetics concentrated on the temporal and intonational structures of speech, the acoustic structure of certain speech sounds and the diverse ways of speech synthesis. Although the main tendencies are similar today, the exact approaches, the points of emphasis, the ways of problem seeking and solving, as well as the actual speech materials and methods used have become somewhat different.

Hungarian speech research currently gives preference to the investigation of spontaneous speech. The development of the BEA Hungarian spoken language database, involving approximately 100 hours of recorded material at the moment, provides ample material for various types of research (<http://www.nytud.hu/dbases/bea/index.html>). All BEA recordings are made in the same sound tight chamber under the same conditions; the speech material, containing various types of spontaneous speech, sentence repetition tasks, reading aloud, and conversations, will subsequently be processed and annotated in a uniform manner.

The present volume shows the latest results of phonetic research on Hungarian. The topics match the tendencies of international interest. A common feature of all papers presented here is that they intend to demonstrate hitherto unanalyzed or apparently changing factors in speech production.

A pilot study by Katalin Mády investigates some tendencies of vowel quantity neutralization supposed to exist in Hungarian. Two papers in the volume deal with two different aspects of coarticulation. One of them, written by Mária Gósy, András Beke and Robert Vago, analyzes the acoustic-phonetic consequences of anticipatory coarticulation in VnC sequences with respect to the duration of both the vowels and the nasals

in them. The other one, by Alexandra Markó, Judit Bóna and Tekla Etelka Grácz, deals with language-specific patterns of voicing assimilation. The speaker's articulatory gestures intended to represent a word exhibit relatively high variability across speakers. Mária Gósy's paper confirms this observation, and even finds large within-speaker differences in spontaneous speech. The intonation patterns of two types of questions are investigated in a paper by Louise Mycock. Viktória Horváth's paper explores the functional and acoustic-phonetic properties of the most frequently occurring hesitation form, a schwa-like vowel. A study by Tekla Etelka Grácz and Sarolta Bata analyzes the process of familiarization and the nature of the relationship between interlocutors as well as their effects on the properties of turn-taking and back-channeling in three-member conversations. The last chapter of the volume, by András Beke and György Szaszák, integrates phonetic research with its application to automatic speech recognition.

The eight papers in this volume clearly show that new topics and new results in speech research are nevertheless based on the predecessors' findings, hypotheses, and ideas.

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