

'Emic' Narratives in Dialectology: Dialect as a Thing of Value and the Value of Dialect

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The primary material of dialectologists (i.e. dialect narratives) most often justify the so called 'etic' discourses reflecting the researcher's perspective that introduce conceptions about the object *viewed from outside* (cf. Harris 1976, and Headland 1990). Any classification of dialects or re-evaluation of a dialect feature from the perspective of apparent time could serve as an apt example. Meanwhile, 'emic' narratives arising from the experiences of ordinary communities and representing the construction of meaning within a community (i.e. *viewed from inside*) should be related with the secondary material offered by dialectologists.

In the given paper, the data from the research in perceptual dialectology (PD) carried out in Lithuania that represent the knowledge and attitudes of the ordinary members (or the secondary material of dialect research) may serve as a basis for the discussion whether dialect is considered a thing of value in a contemporary society. The assessable approach to dialect has been reconstructed from the narratives of the community members that were collected during the PD research. The basis for the analytical discourse includes the data of the language attitudes of 264 young people (1–3 year students from the programmes with nonhumanities profile) that were fixed with the use of PD methodology (cf. Preston 1999, Preston 2018, and Cramer 2018). 48% of student's contingent come from regional locations and 52% represent city youth.

For the discussion of the analysed issues, i.e. dialect as a thing of value and the value of dialect, only the selected fragments from the carried out PD research have been included. The following segments of the narrative of an ordinary member of language community were considered as significant since they embrace: 1) reflection of language behaviour (e.g. *I (don't) know dialect; I (don't) speak in dialect; I (don't) use dialect in certain domains; I (don't) speak in dialect with interlocutors of certain age*); 2) a priori attitudes to dialect code (e.g. *I think dialect should (not) be used in certain domains; I think dialect should (not) be used with interlocutors of certain age*); 3) text-stimuli perception (*I think that X text-stimulus is (not) nice. I think so because...*).

On the basis of the reconstructed 'emic' narratives, the attitudes of the young people from cities and regions have been compared with an attempt to answer the question whether dialect is equally considered as (un)valuable language code in contemporary society.

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