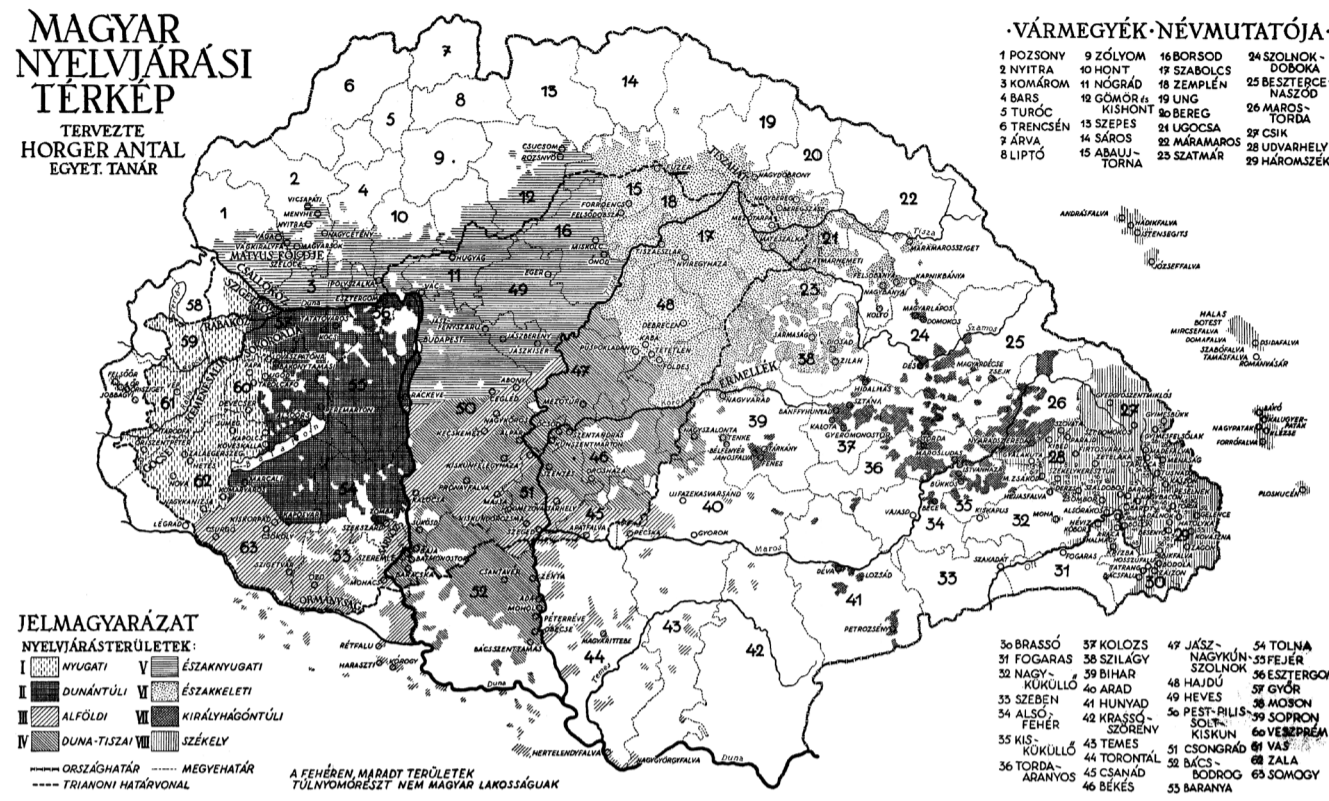# THE SPATIAL DISTRIBUTION OF HUNGARIAN DIALECTS

Dezső Juhász, János Bárth M.

Dialects are spatially distributed varieties of natural languages, and constitute relatively autonomous subsystems of them. They are historical formations, products of linguistic differentiation, influenced by internal and external factors in their development. The *spatial spread* of linguistic phenomena is significantly influenced by geographical factors, territorial changes in power relations, administrative and transportation networks, their relationship with economic and cultural centres, population movements, speakers' access to vernacular and literary language, and the state of multilingualism. The *decline of dialects* in the 20th and 21st centuries is primarily perceived at a *social* and *cultural* level: there are fewer speakers, they use dialects in fewer situations, and the number of bilinguals proficient in both dialectal and standard language is on the increase. They can easily switch to the larger community's 'normative' variants as needed. The extent and pace of this decline are greatly influenced by prestige factors and the speakers' attitudes towards their dialect: how much they feel ashamed of or avoid using their local language variety in public settings. The home and social circle are now the main domains for the uninterrupted use of dialects.

From the history of Hungarian dialectology

Since the **classification of Hungarian dialects** by Ferenc Verseghy and Ádám Pálóczi Horváth, several attempts have been made, and the need for mapping dialect areas was first raised by *Ferenc Toldy (Schedel)* (1805–1875) in an 1843 research proposal. The first scientific monograph was authored by *József Balassa* (1864–1945) (1891, with a coloured map appendix from

1905) 1. Between the two world wars, *Antal Horger* (1872–1946) provided a descriptive overview with an accompanying map of Hungarian dialects (1934) 2. More recently, we can refer to the works of *Samu Imre* (1971) and Dezső Juhász (2001). Based on Samu Imre's (1917–1990) work, *The Atlas of Hungarian Dialects* (MNyA) distinguishes 18 pure and 10 mixed dialect types, albeit without a substantive presentation of the dialects in Romania due to limited fieldwork opportunities in the 1950s. The publication of *The Atlas of Hungarian Dialects in Romania* (RMNyA) led to a comprehensive typology covering Transylvania and Moldova. *Dezső Juhász*, in the handbook *Hungarian Dialectology*, identifies 10 major dialect regions and 43 dialect groups 1.

Dialectologists have developed various *language atlas types*, varying greatly in the number of languages represented, geographical coverage, research point density, and thematic organization of linguistic data. *The Atlas of Hungarian Dialects* (MNyA, 1968–1977, in 6 volumes) was originally planned as a work covering the entire Hungarian language area. It depicts the most characteristic dialectal phenomena and draws its material from the most representative conceptual spheres of Hungarian folk culture. Since the majority of the relevant fieldwork took place in the 1950s and early 1960s, political difficulties led to a significant underrepresentation of Romania and Zakarpattia (Ukraine). A follow-up study entitled *New Hungarian Dialect Atlas*, covering the entire Hungarian language area
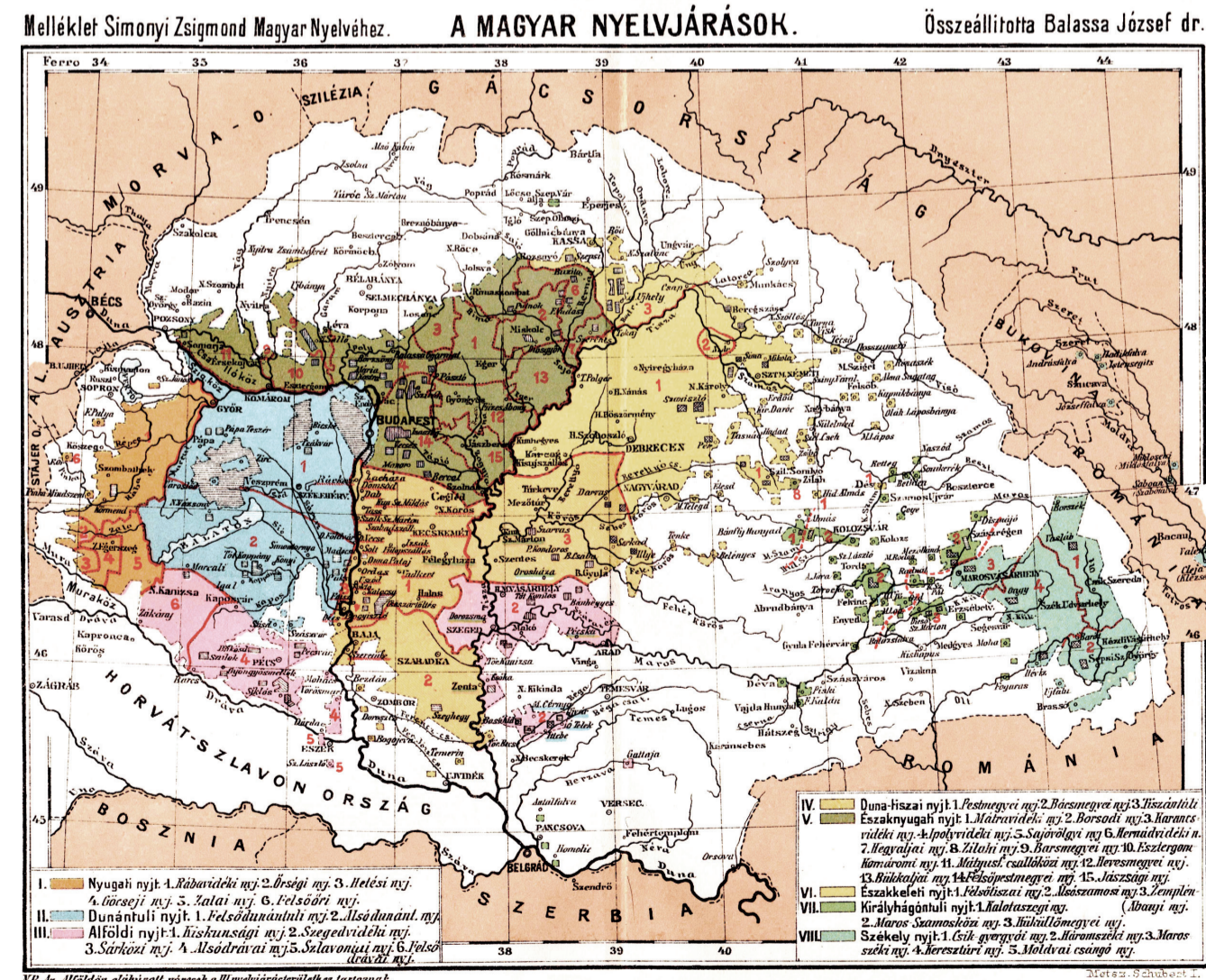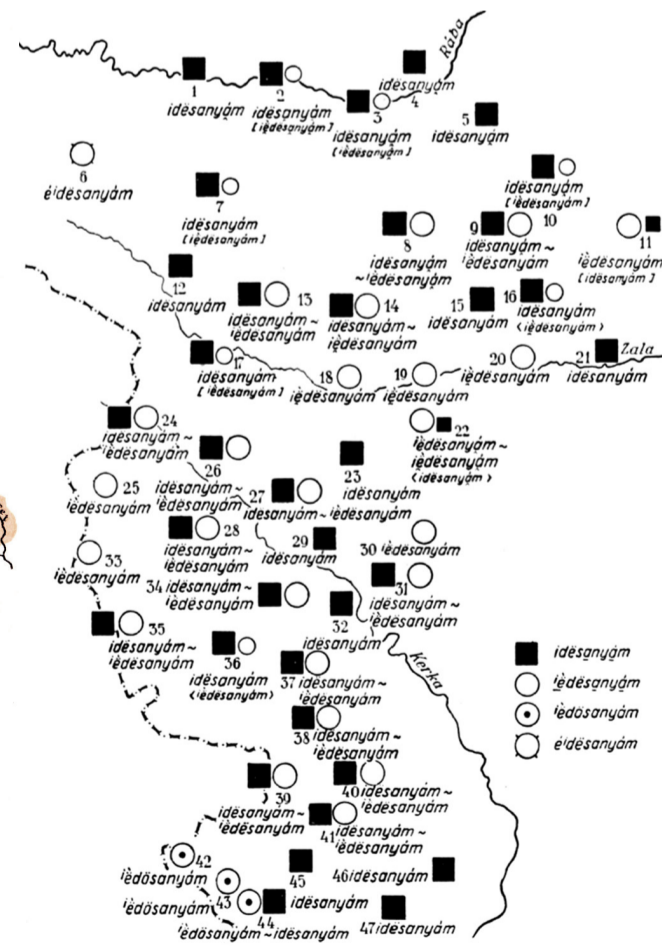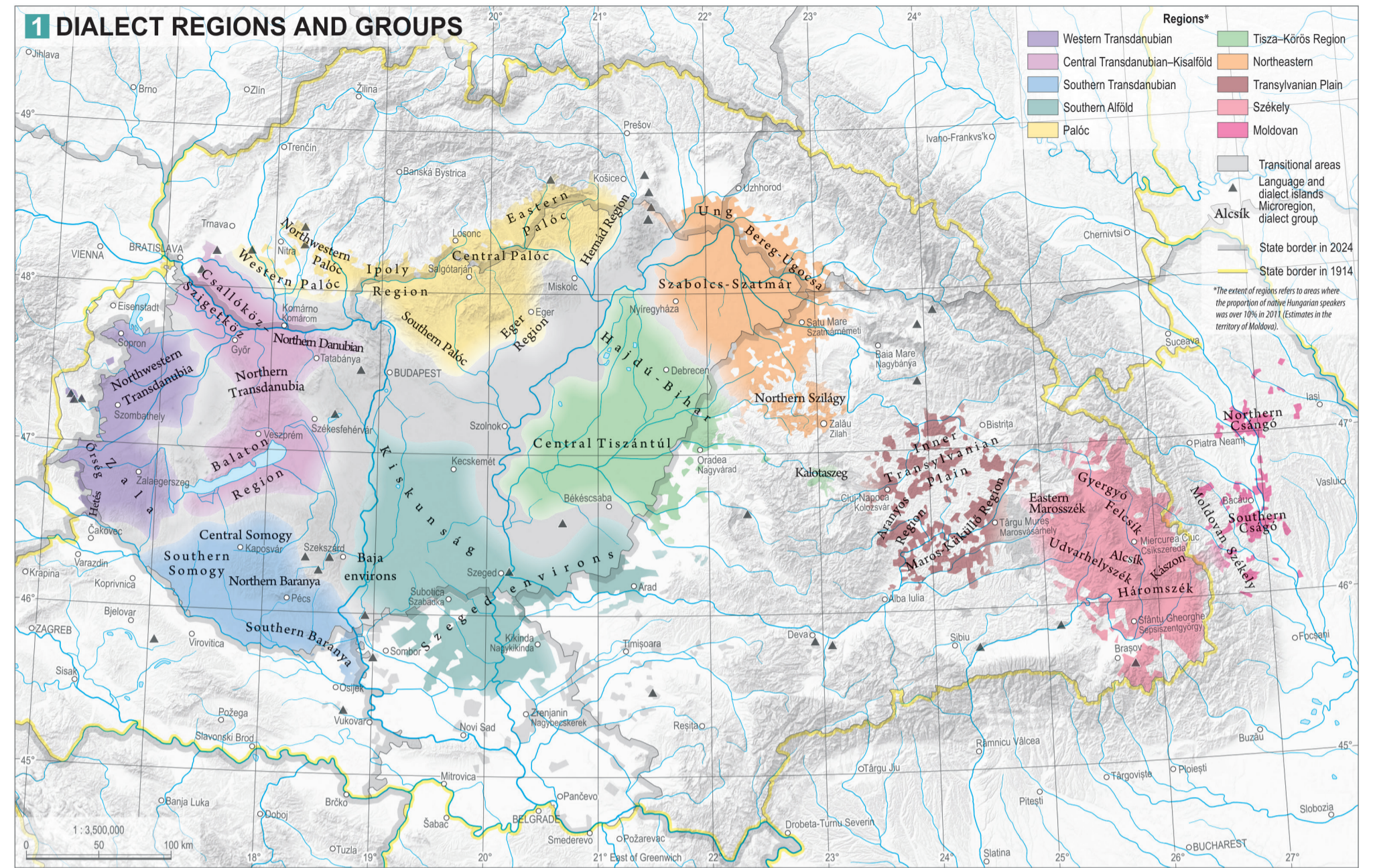
with fewer research points and a smaller questionnaire, was conducted after the turn of the millennium by a joint research group from Eötvös Loránd University and the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (ongoing).

The fieldwork for *The Atlas of Hungarian Dialects in Romania* (RMNyA, 1995–2010, in 11 volumes) was conducted alongside that of *The Atlas of Hungarian Dialects*. Both are identical in their approach and purposes, but RMNyA used a questionnaire about three times the size of the latter for expanded lexical data collection. Being aligned in terms of research point density and employing similar data collection and phonetic transcription techniques, integrated maps between these two general atlases can be created.

Data collection for both comprehensive atlases took place in the 1950s and 1960s. The phenomenon maps in the present section were created by utilizing and merging data from these original sources. The original atlas sheets provide precise phonetic transcriptions of local pronunciations at each research point. Our phenomenon maps represent data types using colourful symbols. They depict fine phonetic variations in a
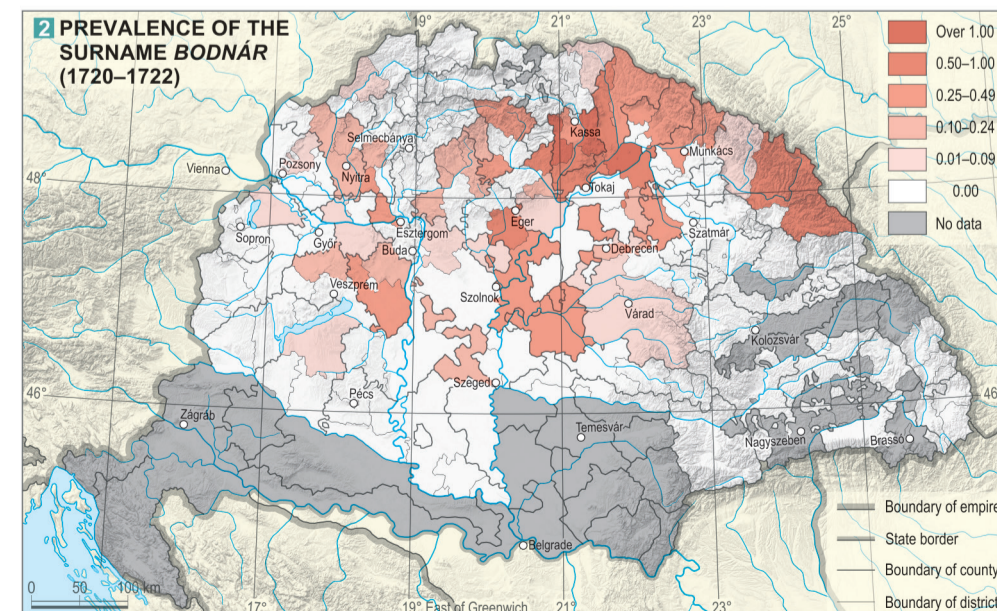
simplified transcription with fewer diacritical marks. Linguistic data is presented only in the legend area of the maps.

General regional atlases provide comprehensive overviews of the dialects of one or more smaller geographical regions. The first such work is Őrség and Hetés *Dialect Atlas* (1959) by József Végh (1912–1997) 3. More recently, we can mention Lajos Cs. Nagy's *Medvesalja Hungarian Dialect Atlas* (2011), presenting the Palóc dialect of a smaller region near Fiľakovo/Fülek. The number of Hungarian regional atlases is approaching twenty.
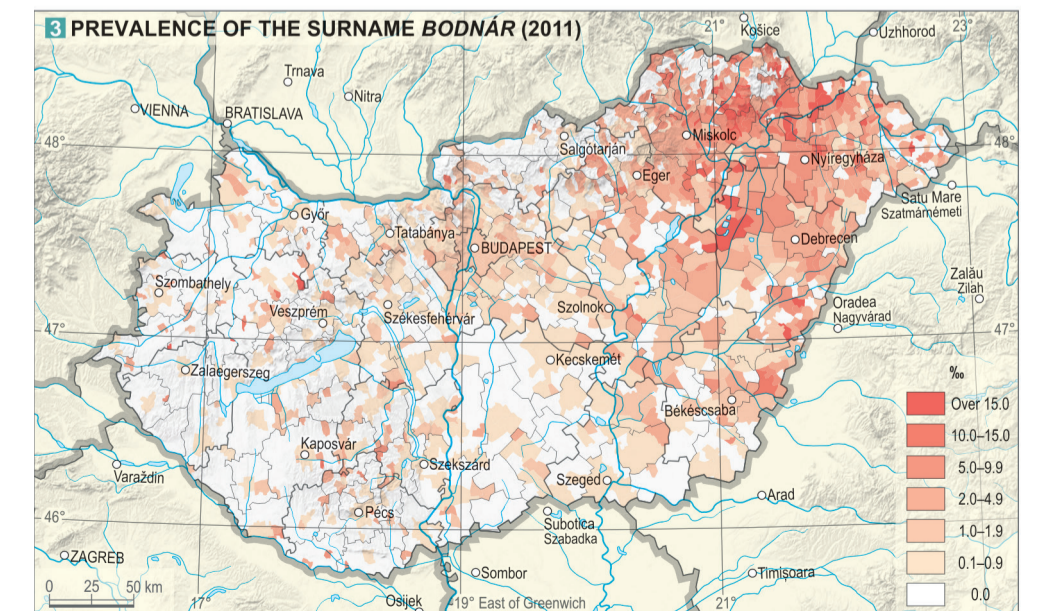
Dialect target atlases are characterized by a dense network of research points and linguistically thematized content. Examples include: Lajos Balogh (1933–2020) and Lajos Király (1936–), *Atlas of Animal Sound Imitations, Invitations, and Herding Calls in the Somogy Dialect* (1976); László Timaffy (1916–2002), *Atlas and Dictionary of Technical Vocabulary for Carts and Wagons in the Kisalföld Region* (1985).

Name atlases, name maps. Proper names exhibit spatial distribution similar to other elements of language.

Name geographical maps depict typological, phonological, morphological, lexical differences observed in naming and name use. The geographical arrangement of individual proper name types can be influenced by geographical, social, and historical factors. Therefore, name geography provides important contributions to linguistics and onomastics. For example, an atlas page showcasing the historical 2 and contemporary 3 prevalence of the surname *Bodnár*, derived from a now extinct dialectal equivalent of *kádár* 'cooper', clearly illustrates that the name was primarily used in the northeastern part of the language area, and to a lesser extent in the central region, particularly in the Tokaj-Hegyalja area. Despite historical and social changes, this territorial pattern did not significantly alter by the turn of the millennium. Place names, due to their role in communication and orientation, reveal much about the language of the community. They can preserve archaic expressions and geographical common nouns that are now extinct. An example is *lok*, which possibly meant 'water-side marsh' or 'valley between two hills', but by the 20th century, it survived only in

2 *Map of the Hungarian dialects (Horger 1934)*

1 *The Hungarian dialects (Balassa 1905)*

3 *Language atlas of the Őrség and Hetés (Végh 1959, detail): édesanyám/my mother)*

1 DIALECT REGIONS AND GROUPS

Regions*
Western Transdanubian
Central Transdanubian-Kisalföld
Southern Transdanubian
Southern Alföld
Palóc
Tisza-Körös Region
Northeastern
Transylvanian Plain
Székely
Moldovan
Transitional areas
Language and dialect islands. Microregion, dialect group
State border in 2024
State border in 1914

*The extent of dialects refers to the proportion of native Hungarian speakers being at least 10% in 2011. Estimates in the territory of Moldavia.

1 : 3,500,000

2 PREVALENCE OF THE SURNAME *BODNÁR* (1720–1722)

Over 1.00
0.50–1.00
0.25–0.49
0.10–0.24
0.01–0.09
0.00
No data

3 PREVALENCE OF THE SURNAME *BODNÁR* (2011)

Over 15.0
10.0–15.0
5.0–9.9
2.0–4.9
1.0–1.9
0.0

Boundary of empire
State border
Boundary of county
Boundary of district

geographical names. Based on the Transylvanian Place Name Historical Database collected by Attila Szabó T. (1906–1987), a map by János Bárth M. **4** shows its characteristic use in Székely Land, with a distinct presence in Călata/Kalotaszeg region.
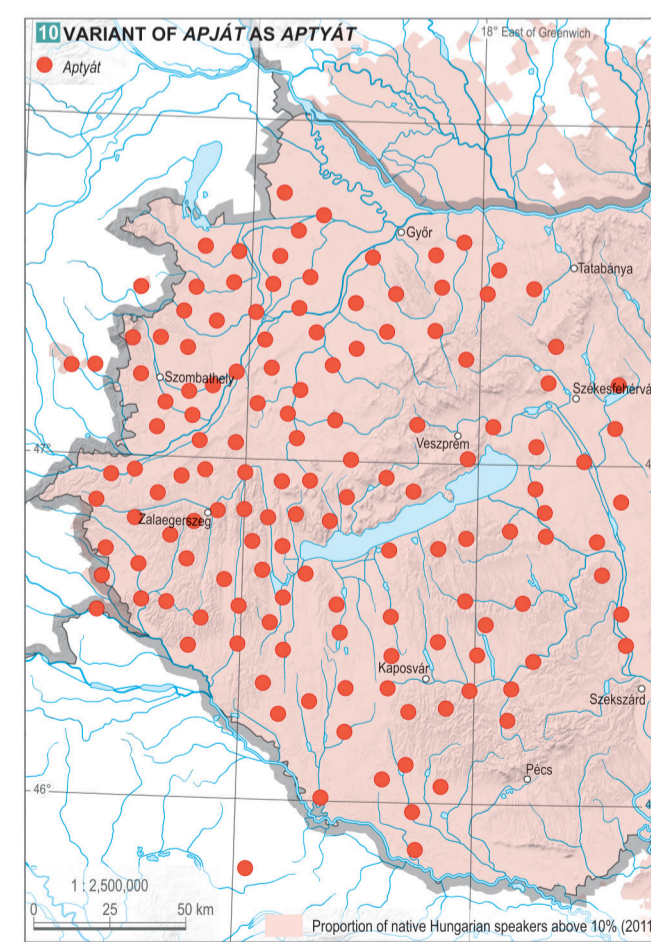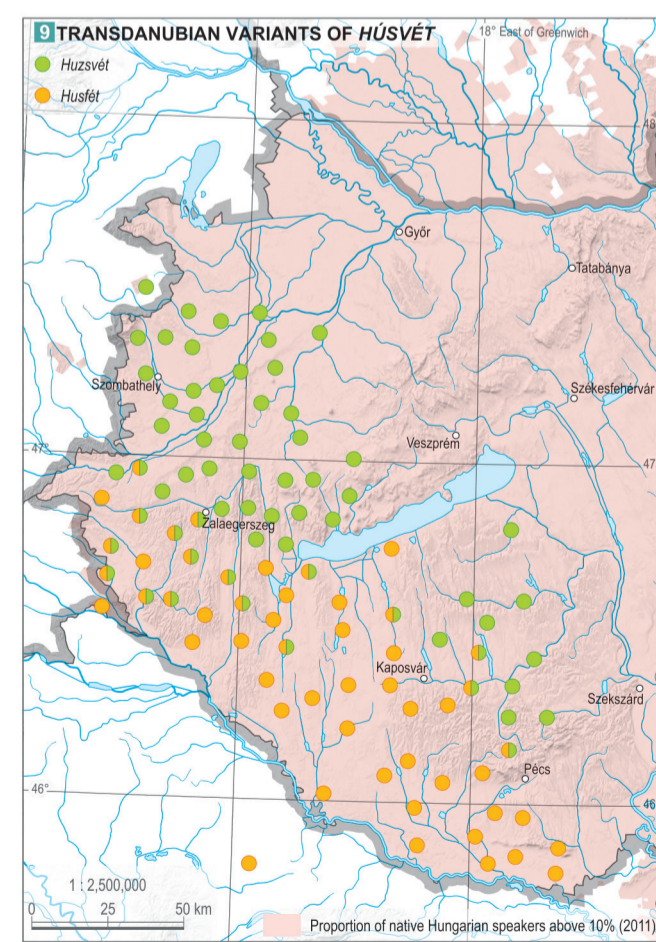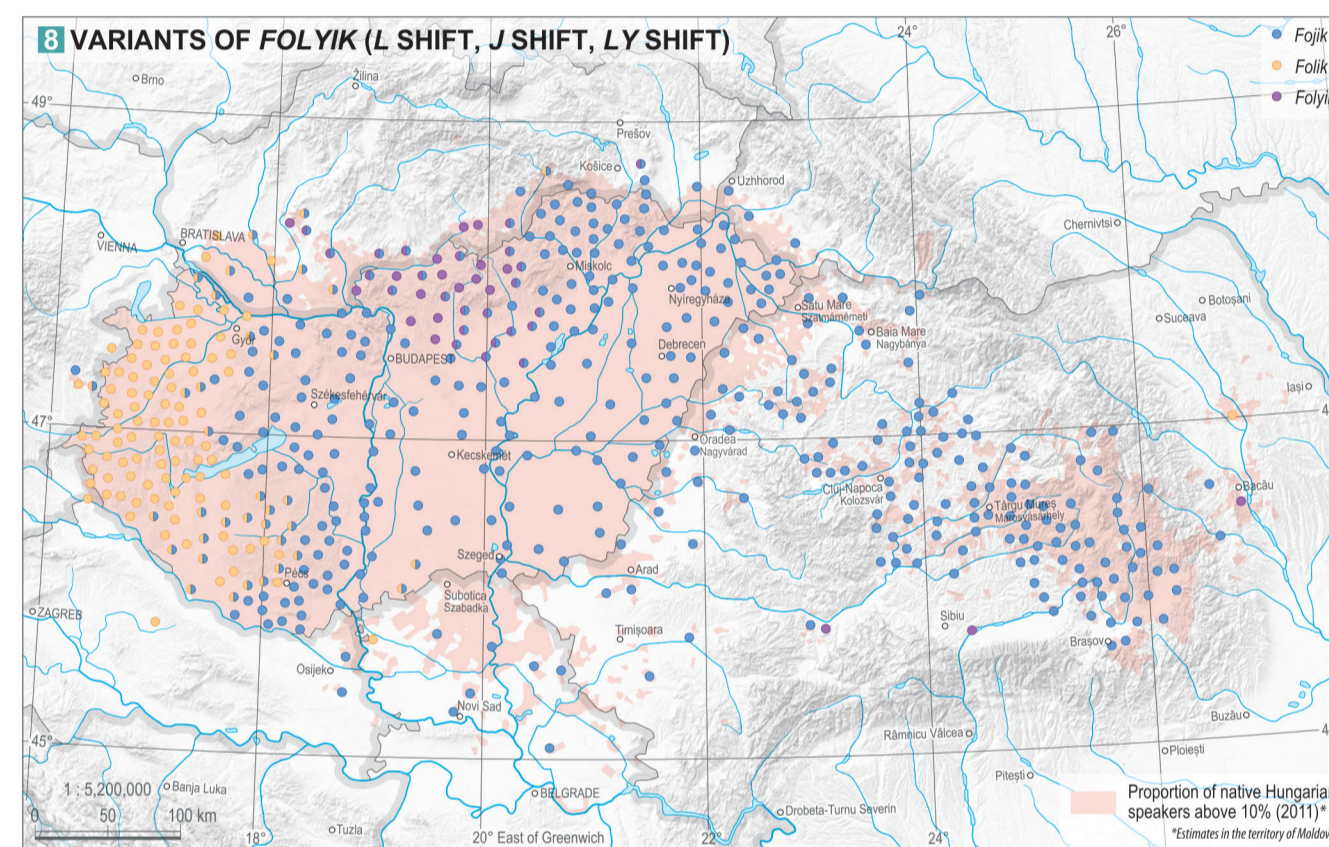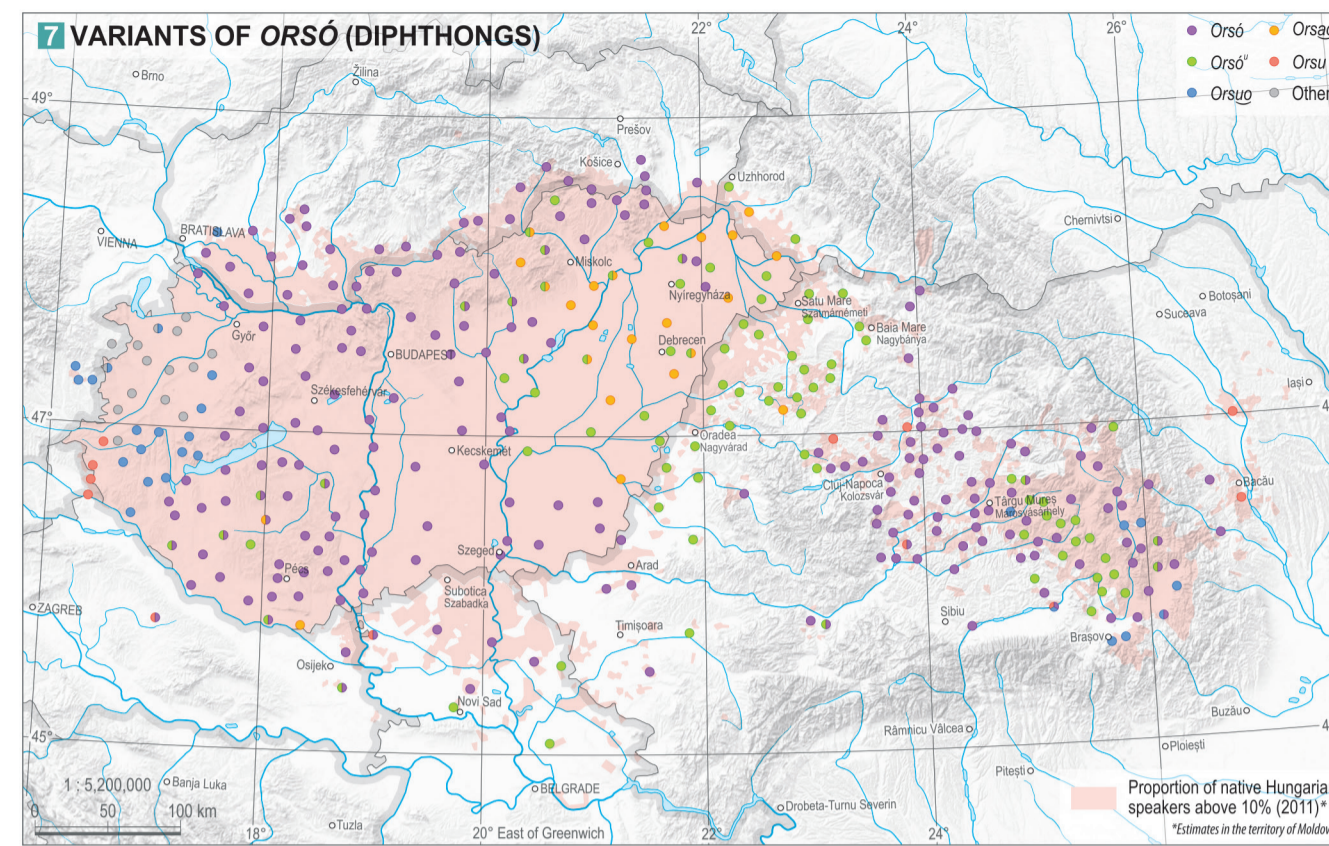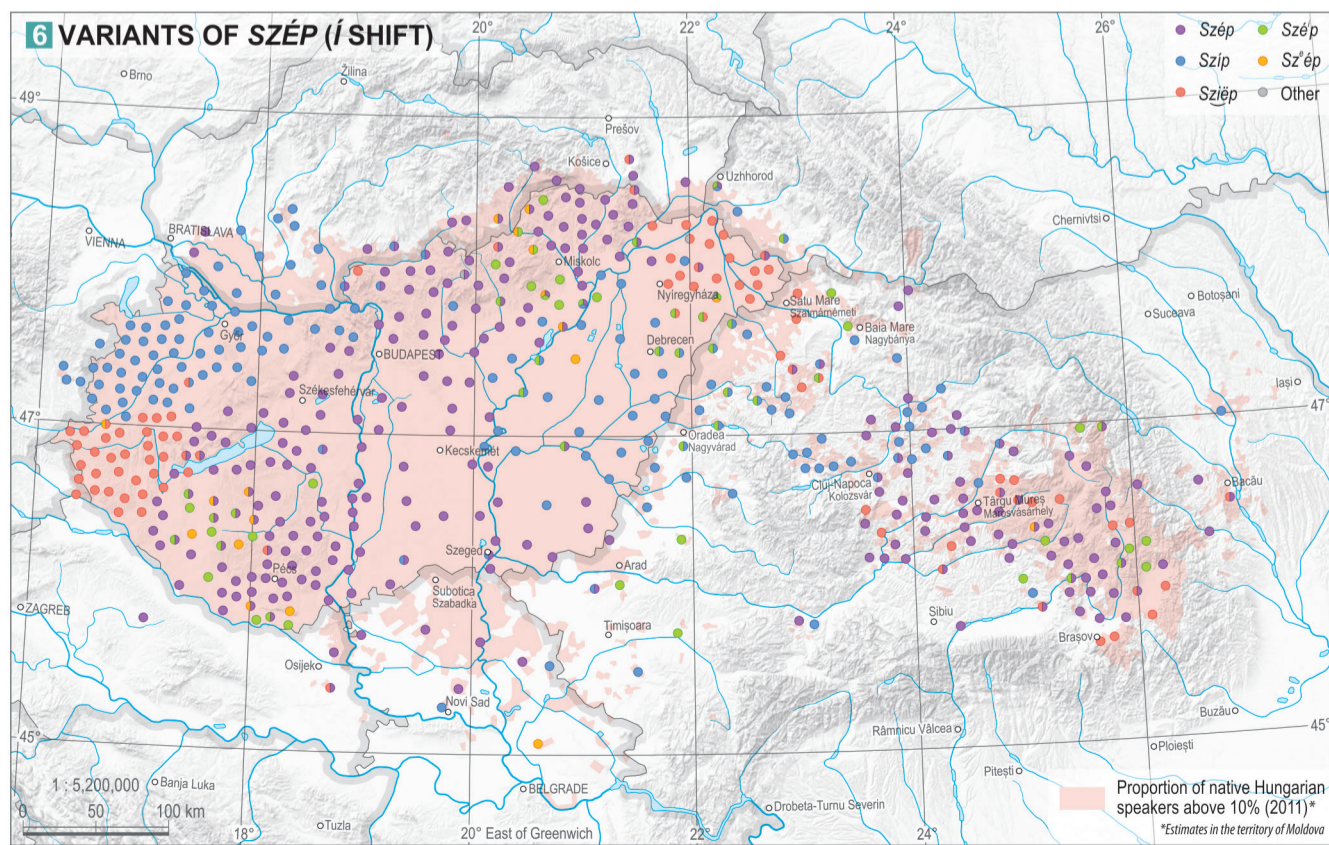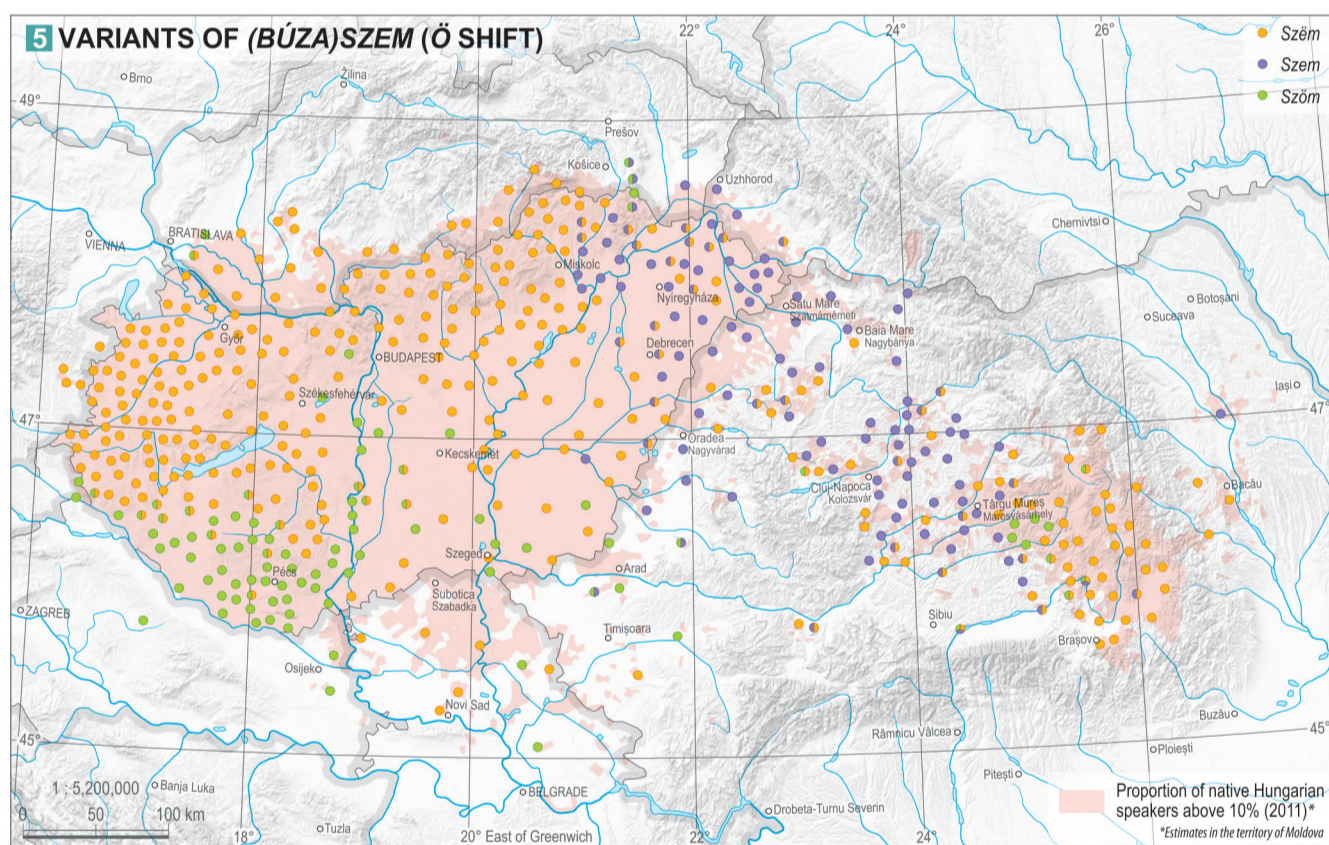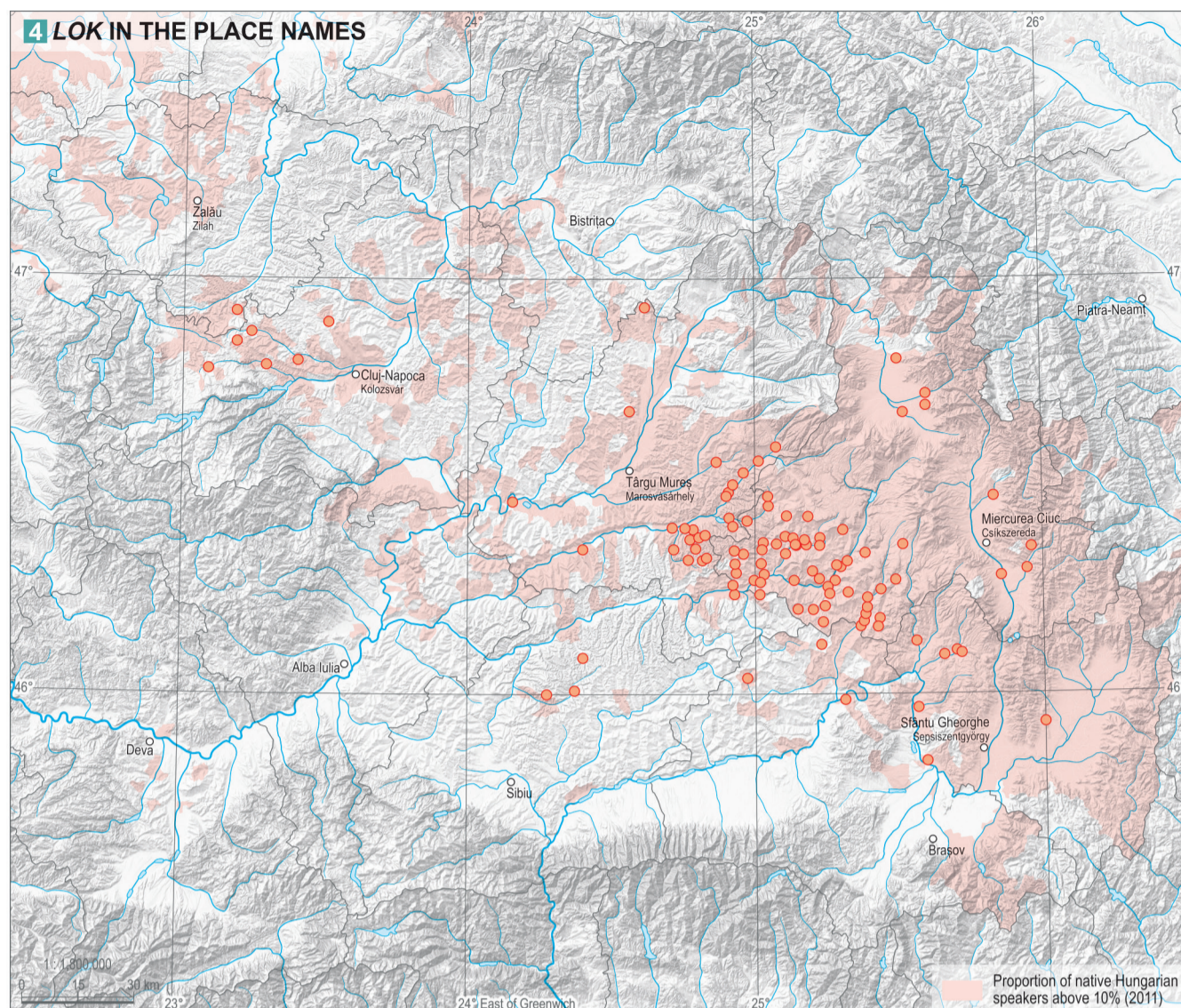
Hungarian dialect regions and groups

Research results define 10 major dialect regions, with transitional areas and mixed dialects situated between them. Additionally, language geography is diversified by dialect islands **1**.

1. Western Transdanubian: This region distinguishes mid *ë* from low *e* (*gyerëk* 'child') and uses more open *e* vowels than Standard Hungarian (*käcskä* 'goat'). The sounds *ó, ő, é* are diphthongized to *uo, üö, ië* (*szuo* 'word', *lüö* 'he shoots', *kiëz* 'hand'). The vowels *í, ú, ű* are typically short (*tiz* 'ten', *husz* 'twenty', *tüz* 'fire'). It features the *j > l* shift (*folik* 'it flows'), and, unlike in Standard Hungarian, the consonant *v* causes regressive voicing (*Vazsvár* 'Vasvár'), or is sometimes devoiced after a voiceless obstruent (*Feriho* 'to Feri'). In syllables following *á*, the vowel *a* often raises to *o* (*házo* 'his house', *lábom* 'my leg'), and after a consonant, *j* becomes *gy/ty* (*dobgya* 'he throws it', *aptya* 'his father'). Locative suffixes include *-bu/bü, -rul-rü, -tul-tü* corresponding to standard *-ból/-ből, -ról/-ről, tól/-től*, respectively (*ház-bu* 'out of the house' etc.). In more archaic areas, vowel harmony may be absent (*Feriho* 'to Feri') or stronger than in the standard (*fülö* 'his ear', *hínya* 'to call': originally, the root *hí-* is assumed to have had a back vowel). The form of the infinitive suffix is *-nyi* (*várnyi* 'to wait'). The most diverse subgroups are found in Őrség, Hetés, Göcsej, and the isolated Oberwart/Felsőőr.

2. Central Transdanubian-Kisalföld: The pronunciations of *ë* vs. *e ~ ä* are similar to the Western Transdanubian type but there is no diphthongization of *ó, ő, é*. The vowel after *á* is, again, *o* (*háto* 'his back', *lábos* 'pan'); the *j > gy* shift is more typical after *r* than elsewhere (*várgyo* 'he waits for it', but *kapja* 'he receives it'). The vowel *á* is slightly less open, and in the Kisalföld region, there is a strong tendency of the *é > í* shift (*míz* 'honey', *võlegíny* 'groom', *szípsíg* 'beauty'). The shortening of *í, ú, ű* can be observed, but not as frequently as in Western Transdanubian dialects. The locative inflections are also more closed (*házbú* 'out of the house', *tetőrű* 'off the roof', *annyátú* 'from his mother'), and the omission of *l* is typical with the suffix *-val/-vel* (*hajóva* 'with ship', *tehéne* 'with cow'). The infinitive suffix is *-nyi*, rather than the standard *-ni*.

3. Southern Transdanubian: A major feature here is a wider occurrence of *ö* (*öszik* 'he eats', *mögy* 'he goes', *löszök* 'I will be'): instead of mid *ë* found in other dialects (*lëhet* 'can be', *verëm* 'I beat it', *vëtt* 'he bought'), *ö* appears (*löhet, vöröm, vött*), except for a few monosyllabic or disharmonic words (*në* 'don't', *lë* 'down', *së* 'neither', *gërënda* 'beam'). This dialect region exhibits closing diphthongs in Somogy County and Ormánság (*karóu* 'stake', *mezőü* 'field', *kéis* 'knife'), along with other Transdanubian features (more open *e*, less open *á*, *j > l* shift, the voicing effect of *v*, *-nyi* infinitive, etc.). In Baranya County and in Slavonia, the first-person plural definite verb form matches the indefinite form (*kinyitunk a kaput* 'we open the gate'), and third-person singular definite conjugation includes forms like *láti* 'he sees' and *mondi* 'he says' (for standard *láttya, mongya*). The forms of verbs with a *v* stem (e.g. *lő* 'shoot', *hív* 'call') vary: *lün, hín* in the west, *lűj, híj* in Baranya, and further east *lűl, híl*, or *lű, hí*. In Baranya County, the third-person plural possessive suffix is *-ik, jik: lovik* 'their horse', *kertyik* 'their garden'.

4 *LOK* **IN THE PLACE NAMES**

Proportion of native Hungarian speakers above 10% (2011)*
*Estimates in the territory of Moldova

5 VARIANTS OF *(BÚZA)SZEM (Ő SHIFT)*

● Szém ● Szem ● Szöm
1 : 5,200,000
Proportion of native Hungarian speakers above 10% (2011)*
*Estimates in the territory of Moldova

6 VARIANTS OF *SZÉP (Í SHIFT)*

● Szép ● Szép ● Szíp ● Sz'ép ● Szép ● Other
1 : 5,200,000
Proportion of native Hungarian speakers above 10% (2011)*
*Estimates in the territory of Moldova

7 VARIANTS OF *ORSÓ* (DIPHTHONGS)

● Orsó ● Orsó ● Orsó ● Orsu ● Orsuo ● Other
1 : 5,200,000
Proportion of native Hungarian speakers above 10% (2011)*
*Estimates in the territory of Moldova

8 VARIANTS OF *FOLYIK* (L SHIFT, J SHIFT, LY SHIFT)

● Fojik ● Folik ● Folyik
1 : 5,200,000
Proportion of native Hungarian speakers above 10% (2011)*
*Estimates in the territory of Moldova

9 TRANSDANUBIAN VARIANTS OF *HÚSVÉT*

● Huszvét ● Husfét
1 : 2,500,000
Proportion of native Hungarian speakers above 10% (2011)

10 VARIANT OF *APJÁT* AS *APTYÁT*

● Aptyát
1 : 2,500,000
Proportion of native Hungarian speakers above 10% (2011)

mikó 'when', *öccő* 'five times', *pöndő* 'underskirt', *tótam* 'I pushed'. In some areas, verb forms like *tanijja* 'he teaches it', *mondi* 'he says', *monditok* 'you (pl.) say' are still heard. The infinitive suffix is *ni*.

5. Tisza–Körös Region: This region also contrasts mid *ë* with low *e*, and its *e* sounds are either similar to the standard quality or slightly more open. The *ó, ő, é* sounds are realized as closing diphthongs; another notable feature is a strong *é > í* shift (*felesíg* 'wife', *vírës* 'bloody', *húsvít* 'Easter'). The *ö* sound tends to be avoided in variable forms (*sëpër* 'he sweeps', *vëdër* 'bucket', *vërës* 'red'). Like the standard language, this dialect region has no *j > l* shift (*fojik* 'it flows', *ajja* 'its bottom'). Stems exhibiting length alternation in the standard are often invariant: *nyúlak* 'rabbits', *fűzes* 'willow forest', *húszas* 'twenty (adj.)'. Verbs ending in *-t* have both longer and shorter past-tense forms (*sütöttem ~ süttem* 'I baked', *vetéttem ~ vettem* 'I sowed'). The base form of verbs with a *v* stem is mostly vowel-final: *hí* 'he calls', *rí* 'he weeps', but *l*-final forms are also present: *nyöl* 'he grows'. Locative suffixes often have a more closed pronunciation (*házbú* 'from the house', *szekérrú* 'from the cart'). Indicative forms of *t*-final verbs coincide with the corresponding imperative forms: *tarcsa* 'he holds', *lássa* 'he sees'.

6. Palóc: A common feature of Palóc dialects is unrounded *à*, with the long counterpart *ā* (*fàj à vàllàm* 'my shoulder hurts'). Otherwise, they share several features with neighbouring dialects. For example, the western variant, similar to the Kisalföld dialects, exhibits *é > í* and partially *j > l*, while in the east, it has Northeastern-type closing diphthongs. In the central areas, the palatal lateral *ly* is still present, unlike in the standard where it has merged with *j* (*hólyag* 'blister', *golyó* 'ball'). Another distinguishing feature is the long low *ē* phoneme (*szēl* 'wind' vs. *szél* 'edge'). The *ü > i* shift is common (*kilső* 'outer', *pispëk* 'bishop', *siket* 'deaf'), as well as *ë* for standard *ö* (*csëpp* 'drop', *bëgre* 'mug'). The vowel *i* can palatalize *t, d, n, l* (*szeretyi* 'he loves it', *gyinnye* 'melon', *ënnyi* 'to eat'). In noun stems exhibiting *é – e* alternation in the standard, the *e* can be preserved: *tehen* 'cow', *veréb* 'sparrow', *szeker* 'cart' (cf. standard *tehén : tehenet, veréb : verebet, szekér : szekeret* 'nominative : accusative'). Past-tense forms of *t*-final verbs have shorter forms: *nyittam* 'I opened', *köttem* 'I knitted'. The instrumental suffix (standard *-val/-vel*) does not assimilate (*szekervel* 'with cart'). The translative suffix (standard *-vá/-vé*) is harmonically invariant (*hàmué vàlyik* 'it turns to ashes'). Lack of number agreement is common (*fàzik à kezejim* 'my hands are [lit. is] cold').

7. Northeastern: This dialect region does not employ the *ë – e* contrast, and its use of *e* is in line with the standard language (*ember* 'man', *gyerek* 'child'). The vowels *ó, ő, é* are closing diphthongs (*vaot ~ vout* 'it was', *keës ~ kéis* 'knife', *öüz* 'fawn', etc.), but *é* can also be an *ië* diphthong in positions of the *é > í* shift (*niëgy* 'four', *viër* 'blood'). The difference between opening and closing diphthongs is phonemic (*fëjl* 'half' vs. *fiël* 'be afraid of sg.' (the standard version of both is *fél*). The vowels *í, ú, ű* are often short (*viz* 'water', *ut* 'road'), while syllable-final *r, l, j* consistently lengthen the preceding vowel (*embër, kör* 'circle', *hàjlik* 'it bends'). The suffix *-n* can appear in some verbs in the indicative (*megyen* 'it goes', *teszen* 'it puts', *leszen* 'it will be' etc. vs. standard *megy, tesz, lesz*). In certain areas, the polite imperative form of verbs ends in *-ik* (*üjjík le* 'please sit down', *ne mennyík el!*, 'don't leave!'), and in some regions, the forms *vári* 'he waits for it', *tudi* 'he knows' are used instead of *várja, tuggya*, while *mosuk* 'we wash it', *vetük* 'we sow it' are used instead of *mossuk, vettyük.*

4. Southern Alföld: The most characteristic phonological feature of this dialect region is the overuse of *ö* (*köröszt* 'cross', *kendör* 'hemp', *köll* 'must'), but the *j > l* shift is not present: *ijen* 'like this', *gója* 'stork'. The *ó, ő* sounds are often raised to *ú, ű*: *lú* 'horse', *kű* 'rock', *túrú* 'cottage cheese', including the locative suffixes: *-bú/-bű, -rú/-rű, -tú/-tű*. Syllable-final *r* and *l* can be omitted with compensatory lengthening of the preceding vowel:

8. Transylvanian Plain (Mezőség): The *ë* sound can only be found in traces. The northern areas have a mod-

erate é > í shift, and diphthongs are not present. In many areas, the system of long vowels is shifting towards short or half-long vowels (*házbol* 'out of the house', *elött* 'in front of'), while word-final *r, l, j* trigger lengthening. A most distinctive feature of this region is the *o > a* shift (*bagár* 'bug', *katana* 'soldier', *malam* 'mill' vs. standard *bogár, katona, malom*). Such more open characterization can also affect ö, especially near the Mureş and Târnava rivers, although this time it does not result in phonemic merger. Among the archaic features of this dialect region, we mention the use of familial locative suffixes (*Sándornott, Sándornól, Sándorni* 'at, from, to Sándor's place') and forms like *megyen, teszen, viszen*.

9. **Székely:** Despite numerous common features, this is one of the most heterogeneous dialect regions, primarily due to historical reasons. Based on historical linguistic data, we know that the Székely people, in connection with the eastern border defence during the 12–13th century, settled in their current territory. The eastern Székely dialect is related to Western Transdanubian (e.g., via opening diphthongs *uo, üö, ië: juo* 'good', *füöd* 'earth', or via more open ä compared to *e*: *ästä* 'evening', *mäkëg* 'he bleats'); the dialect in Odorhei/Udvarhelyszék region mostly resembles the Baranya County dialect, with the extended use of ö and other systematic parallels. The western Székely dialect has absorbed several features of the Transylvanian Plain dialect (including a weak *o > a* shift). Additional Székely characteristics include the lengthening effect of final *r, l, j*, forms like *tehen* 'cow' and *szeker* 'cart' in the nominative singular, the presence of the narrative past (*vára*, 'he waited', *kére* 'he asked'), and the remote past (*járt vala* 'he used to go'). The first person plural conditional is formed in the definite conjugation as *látnók* 'we would see it', *kérnők* 'we would ask for it' (vs. standard *látnánk, kérnénk*), and traces of archaic suffixes can be found in familial locative suffixes: *Józsini, Józsinitt, Józsinul* 'to, at, from Józsi's place'.

10. **Moldovan:** From the Middle Ages onward, several waves of Hungarian groups settled in Moldova. Today, Moldovan Hungarians are commonly referred to as Csángós, although originally this term only applied to archaic dialect-speaking settlements around Roman and Bacău. The larger, southern block of Moldovan Hungarians mostly descends from the neighbouring eastern Székelys. Northern, and partly southern, Csángós exhibit the *o > a* shift of Transylvanian Plain. Northern Csángós and the more archaic islands in the Transylvanian Plain are also connected by the affrication of *ty* and *gy* (*kucsa* 'dog', *dzserek* 'child' vs. standard *kutya, gyerek*), *e* instead of unstressed ö (*füstes* 'smoky', *jöjen* 'let him come', *ördeg* 'devil' for standard *füstös, jöjjön, ördög*), and conversely, ö instead of unstressed *e* (*öreg* 'old', *körtö* 'pear' for standard *öreg, körte*), and *o* instead of *a* (*soho* 'never', *lobbon* 'ignite', *folu* 'village' for standard *soha, lobban, falu*). In northern Csángó, palato-alveolar *s* often alveolarized to *sz* (*maszt* 'now', *eszmit* 'again', compare standard *most, ismét*). The strong influence of Romanian is mainly evident in intonation and in loanwords. Moldovan Hungarians are bilingual with Romanian dominance, and their use of Hungarian is limited to family and small community settings, facing a significant decline.
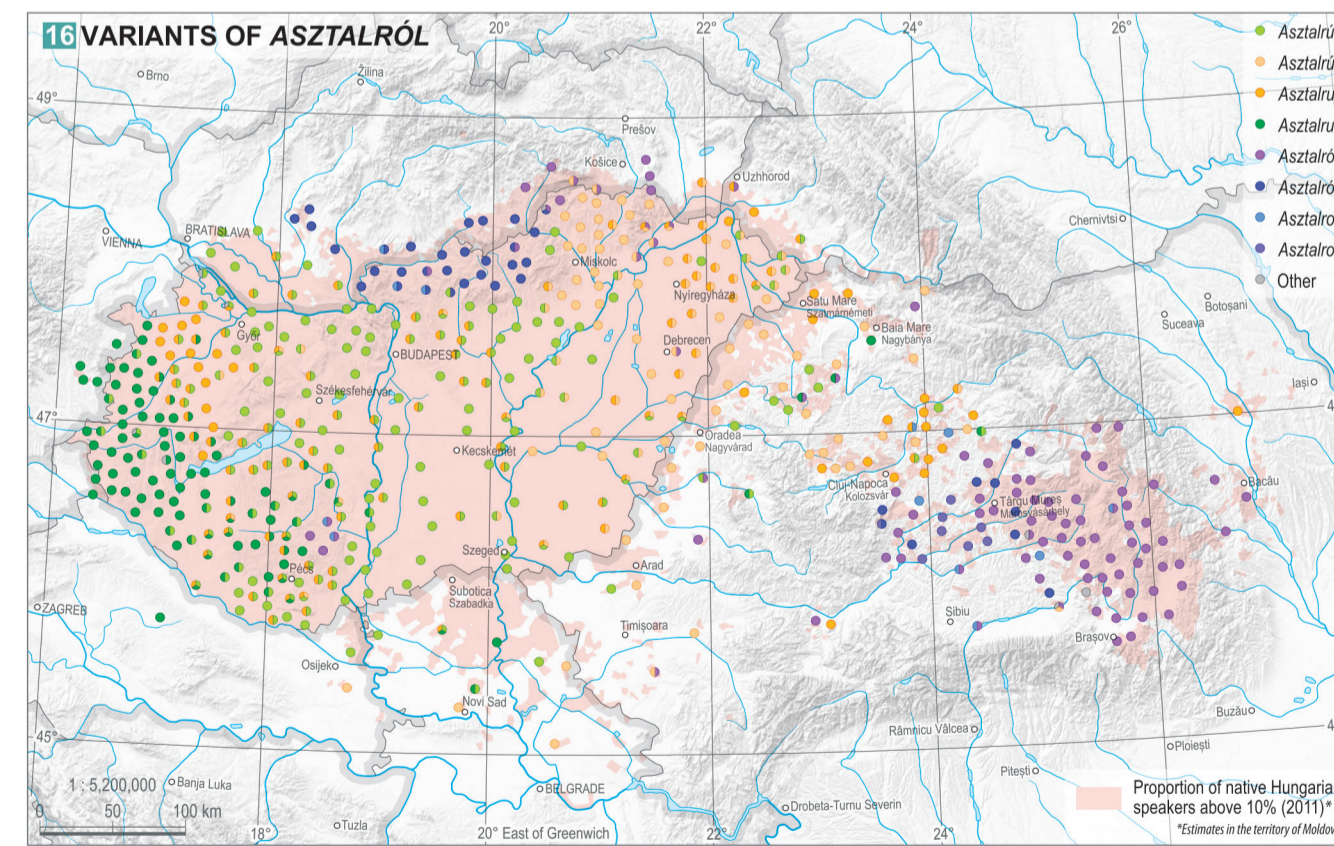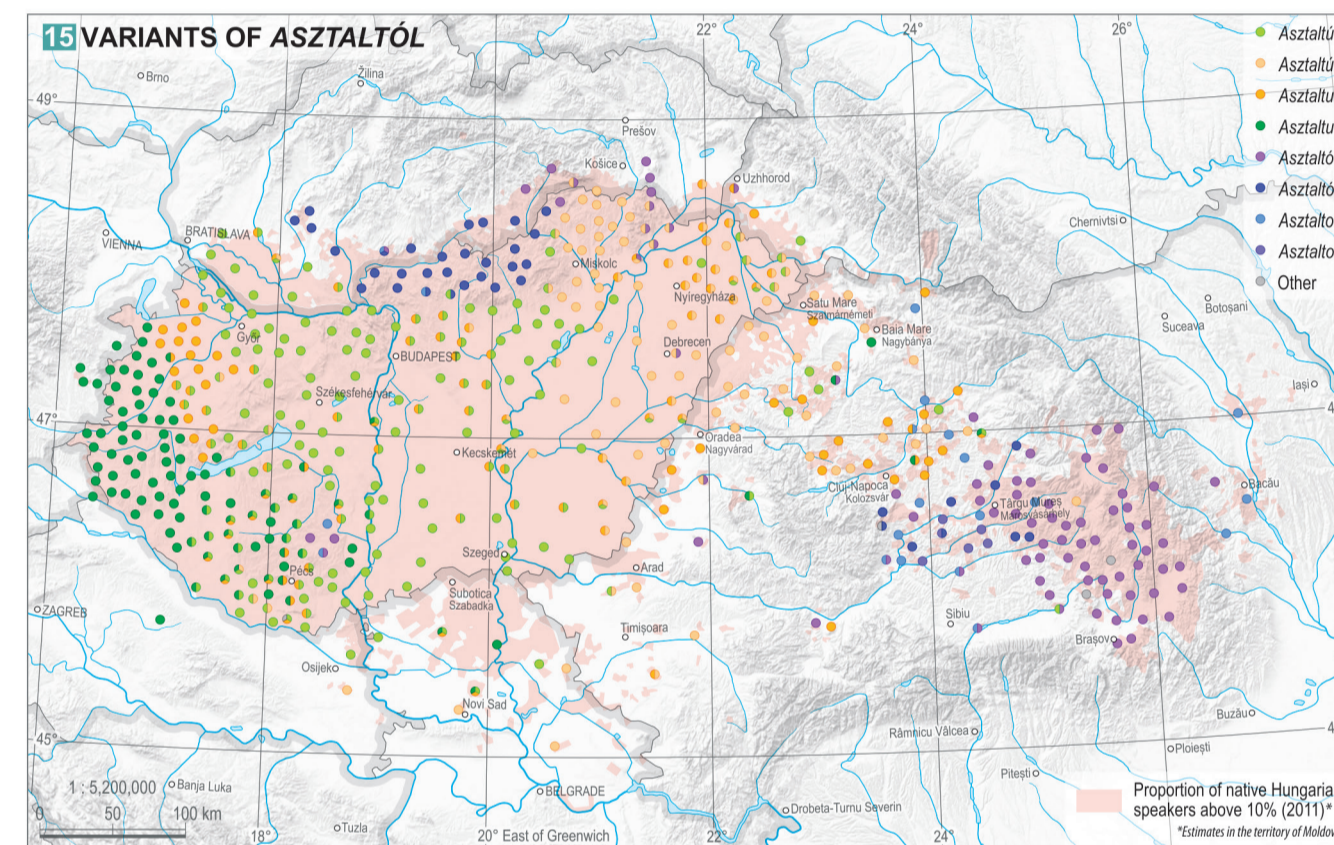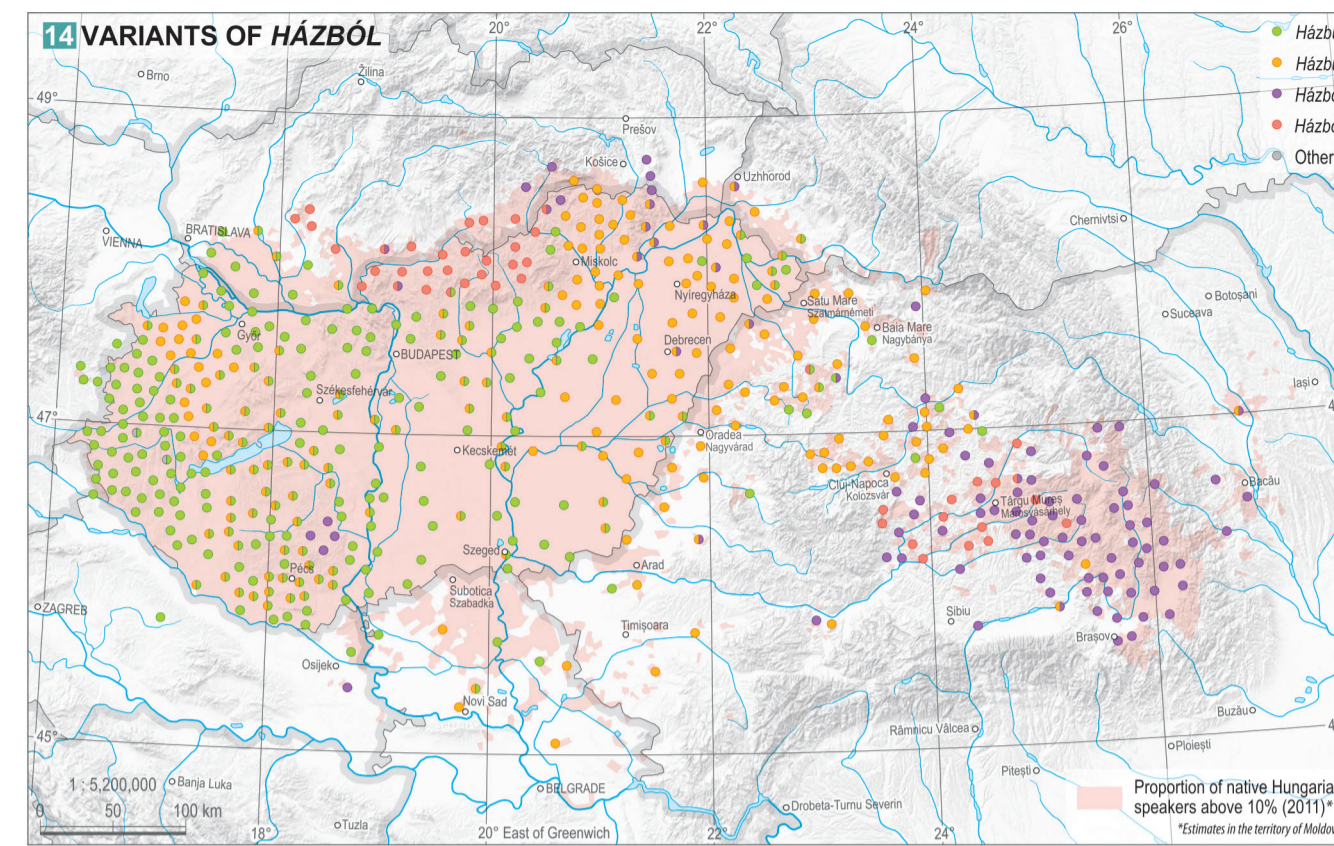
Language and dialect islands

Linguistic geography as depicted on maps often shows distinctive island-like patches. An enclave of a language that is surrounded by different languages forms a language island, whereas if surrounded by a different dialect of the same language, it is called a dialect island.
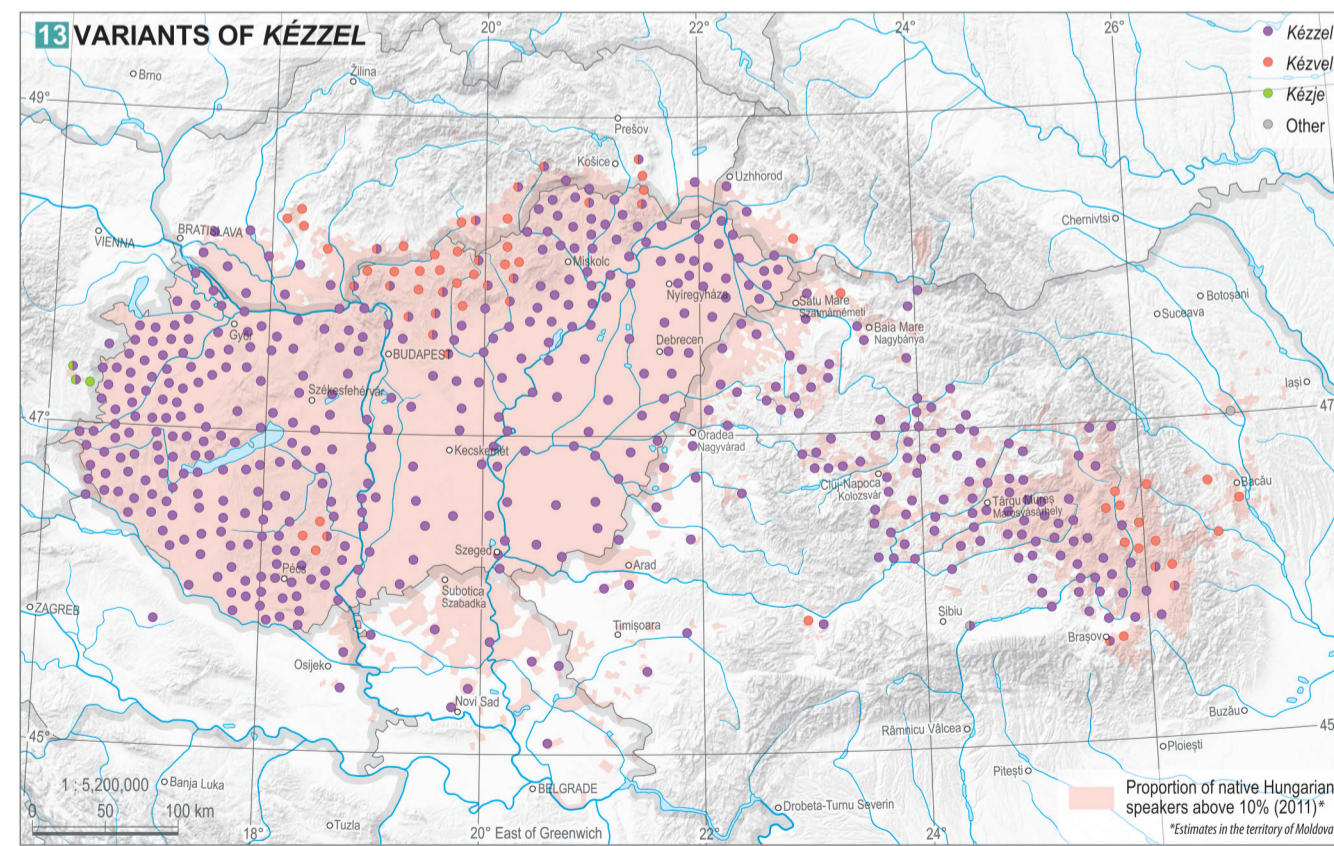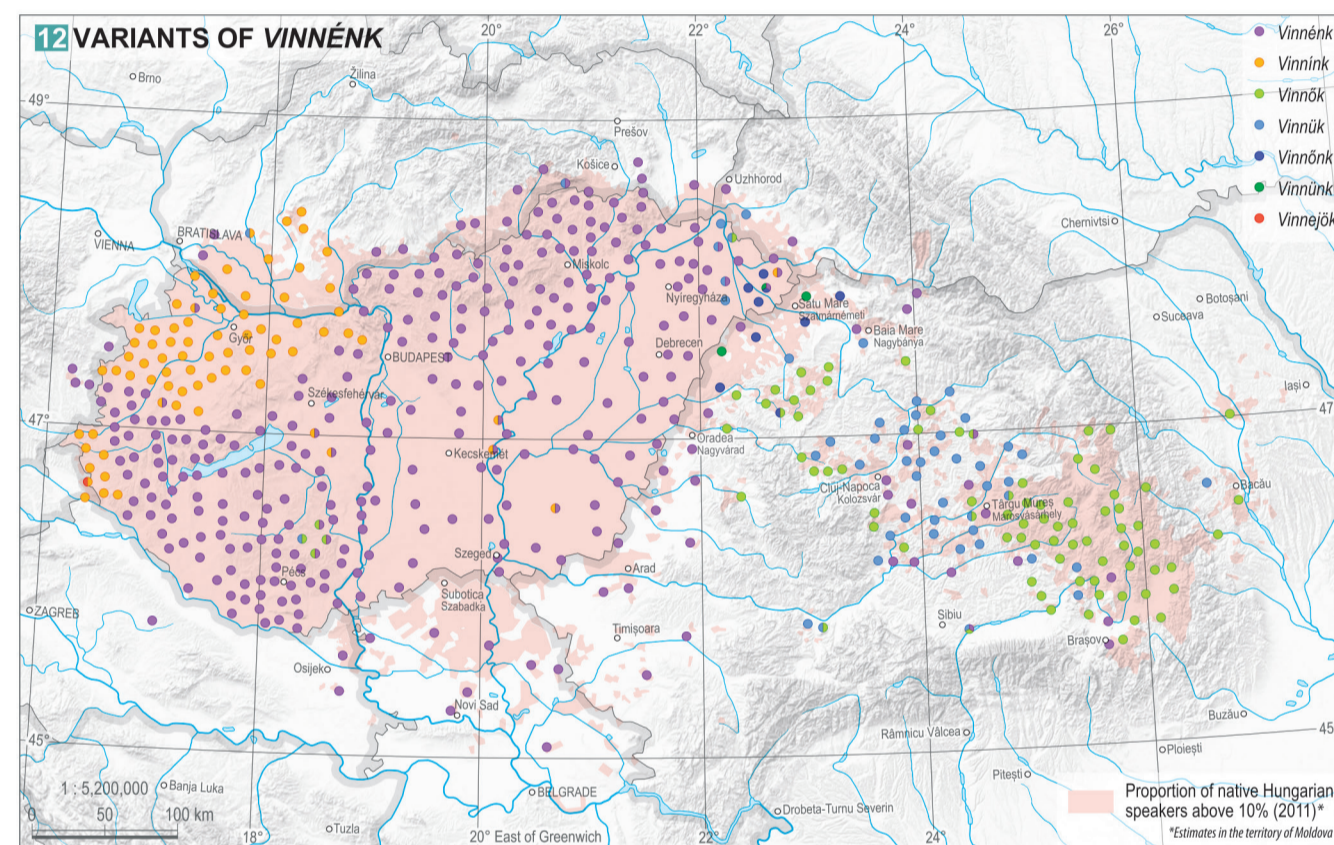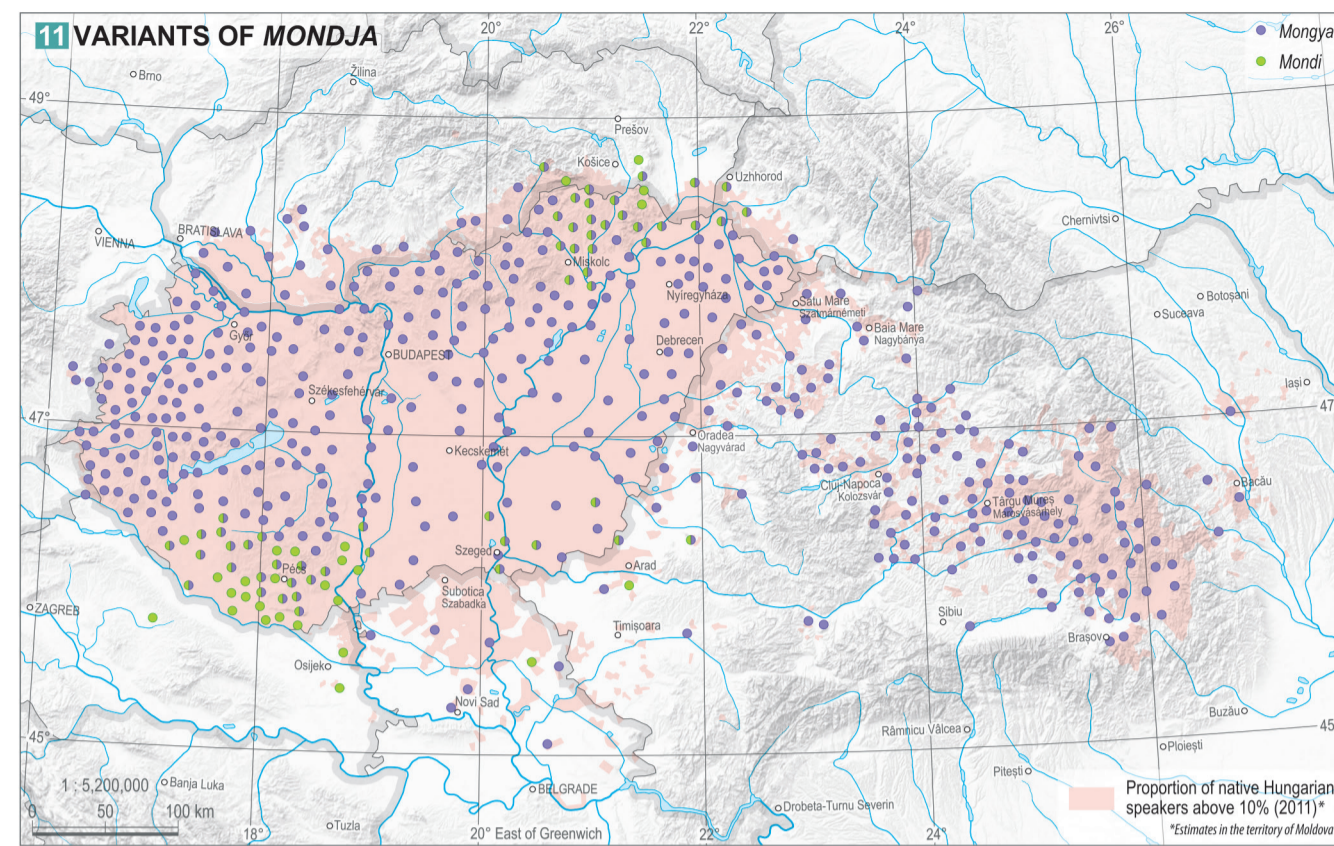
Both individual and grouped settlements can find themselves in island-like situations. The formation of language or dialect islands is primarily driven by migratory movements: spontaneous or organized relocations, but sometimes it is only the linguistic environment that changes. The residents of Oberwart/Upper Őrség region, now part of Burgenland (Austria), are the descendants of early medieval Hungarian border guards, but over the centuries, they lost their natural continuity with the surrounding Hungarian population and became isolated. On the other hand, Moldovan Hungarians migrated to their current location in

11 VARIANTS OF *MONDJA*

Legend: Mongya, Mondi

1 : 5,200,000 — 100 km — 20° East of Greenwich

Proportion of native Hungarian speakers above 10% (2011)*
*Estimates in the territory of Moldova

12 VARIANTS OF *VINNÉNK*

Legend: Vinnénk, Vinnink, Vinnõk, Vinnük, Vinnünk, Vinnünk, Vinnejök

1 : 5,200,000 — 100 km — 20° East of Greenwich

Proportion of native Hungarian speakers above 10% (2011)*
*Estimates in the territory of Moldova

13 VARIANTS OF *KÉZZEL*

Legend: Kézvel, Kézvel, Kézje, Other

1 : 5,200,000 — 100 km — 20° East of Greenwich

Proportion of native Hungarian speakers above 10% (2011)*
*Estimates in the territory of Moldova

14 VARIANTS OF *HÁZBÓL*

Legend: Házbú, Házbúl, Házból, Házbó, Other

1 : 5,200,000 — 100 km — 20° East of Greenwich

Proportion of native Hungarian speakers above 10% (2011)*
*Estimates in the territory of Moldova

15 VARIANTS OF *ASZTALTÓL*

Legend: Asztaltu, Asztaltu, Asztaltú, Asztaltu, Asztaltó, Asztaltó, Asztaltó, Asztaltó, Other

1 : 5,200,000 — 100 km — 20° East of Greenwich

Proportion of native Hungarian speakers above 10% (2011)*
*Estimates in the territory of Moldova

16 VARIANTS OF *ASZTALRÓL*

Legend: Asztalrú, Asztalrú, Asztalrúl, Asztalrúl, Asztalról, Asztalró, Asztalró, Asztalró, Asztalro, Other

1 : 5,200,000 — 100 km — 20° East of Greenwich

Proportion of native Hungarian speakers above 10% (2011)*
*Estimates in the territory of Moldova

several waves. The Székelys achieved a higher degree of clustering, especially along the Trotuş, Tazlău and Siret rivers, which resulted in stronger linguistic and dialect vitality. There are also Székely and Transylvanian Plain settlements in southern Transylvania (and elsewhere). The furthest Transylvanian Plain type settlements reached as far as the valley of the Crişul Negru/Fekete-Körös to the west and Vyshkove/Visk in Zakarpattia to the north.

The pursuit of better livelihoods is the most well-known reason for migrations, but they can also be due to organized military and economic resettlements.

Such were the resettlements of the Székelys for border defence, to the eastern part of Transylvania, and temporarily to Bihar County and Arieş/Aranyos Valley. The western entrance of the Carpathian Basin, along the Danube, was guarded by Székelys. Some of them assimilated into the Slavic environment, but their southern group's dialect still preserves the characteristic ö sound from the Árpád era. The same population settled in the Košice/Kassa region, to guard north-south military and trade routes, and they speak a similarly archaic dialect (Bidovce/Magyarbőd and its vicinity).

Several modern-era migrations in Hungary resulted in significant dialect and language islands. The first (and last) instance was the 18th-century resettlement following the Turkish occupation, targeting the depopulated areas of the central and southern Alföld (such as Kiskunság, Southern Tiszántúl, Bácska, and Banat). It was during this period that numerous north and south Hungarian (Palóc and Jász) dialect islands emerged in these regions. The 18th century repopulation of these areas also involved Transdanubia; it was the main source for Hungarian migration to Slavonia at the end of the 19th century. A peculiar state-organized instance was the resettling of the Székely groups from Bukovina to Transylvania and the Lower Danube area between 1883 and 1910. The remaining Székely population in Bukovina was relocated by the Hungarian government in 1941 to the recently recaptured villages in Bácska. In October 1944, they fled from returning Yugoslav troops to Transdanubia, where they found a new home mainly in Tolna and Baranya counties after the expulsion of the Germans in 1946–47. Most of these Hungarian dialect and language islands that took shape over the past three centuries were research points of the two comprehensive dialect atlases.

Dialect features

Dialects are complete grammatical systems with their own phonology, morphology, vocabulary, phraseology, and syntax. However, the higher the linguistic level, the fewer specific features characterize only one particular dialect. This means that the most distinctive features of a dialect are phonological. Illustrative maps of dialect phenomena have been created for phonology, morphology, and vocabulary.

In **phonology**, dialects can differ in their sound inventories, characteristic sound qualities, and their sounds' frequency of use. In the northern part of the Tiszántúl region and the Transylvanian Plain, there is only one type of *e* phoneme as in the standard language. Other areas contrast a mid ë with a low *e*: *ti mëntëk* 'you are going', *ők tëgnap mëntek el* 'they left yesterday'; *hëgyës szög* 'sharp nail', but: *hëgyes táj* 'mountainous landscape'. The Central Palóc dialects distinguish two long é phonemes, the standard variant and the more open ē as in *jēg* 'ice', *kēz* 'hand' (accusative: *jeget, kezet*). Consequently, *szël* means 'wind' while *szél* means 'edge', *fēl* means 'half' while *fél* means 'be afraid', etc. The palatal lateral *ly* is a phoneme in Central Palóc and in some peripheral dialects; its former systematic presence is still reflected in the orthography (*gólya* 'stork', *hely* 'place', *folyik* 'it flows', pronounced in the standard as *gója, hej, fojik*). In certain dialects, ó, ő, é are realized as closing or opening diphthongs: *szóu* 'word', *võü* 'son-in-law', *kéjr* 'he asks', or *szuó, vüő, kiér*. Palóc dialects feature unrounded *a* and rounded *ā*: *apām hāza* 'my father's house'. Some dialects replace standard é with í (*szíp* 'beautiful', *nígy* 'four'), and mid ë with ö (*embör* 'man', *gyerök* 'child').

Among phonological phenomenon maps, the word

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(búza)szem 'wheat grain' [5] primarily shows ë ~ ö variation (with ö occurring in Southern Transdanubia and Southern Alföld). However, in dialects without ë, the possibility of a shift to ö is minimal. We illustrate the é > í shift with variations of szép 'beautiful' [6]. The main areas of that shift are the Central Transdanubian, Kisalföld, Tisza–Körös, and certain Northeastern and Transylvanian Plain regions. However, there is also data for opening and closing diphthongs (sziép, széíp, etc.). Diphthongization typically occurs in the standard language's ó, ő, é; our map shows its regional distribution in the word orsó 'spindle' [7], showing significant areas with opening (orsuó) and closing (orsóu, orsao) diphthongs, or sometimes short high vowel forms (orsu). Regarding consonants, we illustrate the presence of the archaic ly phoneme and the related j ~ l variation with the verb folyik 'it flows' [8]. The areas with preserved ly are concentrated in Central Palóc with some traces in southern Transylvania and Moldovan Csángó islands. The l sound occurs in items like this in western and southern Transdanubia. We conclude the illustration of consonantal phenomena with two Transdanubian regionalisms. The well-known voicing effect of v is exemplified by the distribution of the word húsvét 'Easter' [9]. The epicentre of the pronunciation huzsvét is in the Western part of the Southern Transdanubian region and in Somogy County. Between the two epicentres, a distinct progressive devoicing of v (husfét) is present. The other Transdanubian tendency is the realization of j as ty/gy after a consonant. We illustrate [10] this with the word apját 'his father', which has a typical Transdanubian pronunciation: aptyát.

In **morphology**, suffixes that are unknown in the standard language may occur. For example, we can observe the use of the familial locative suffixes: bírónott, bírónól, bíróni 'at, from, to the judge's (house)'. The phonology of common suffixes can also vary: házbúl 'out of the house', beszélnyi 'to speak' (vs. standard házból, beszélni). Archaic dialects may lack assimilation or vowel harmony: Feriho 'to Feri', Nyitráre 'to Nyitra', lovakval 'with horses' (vs. standard Ferihez, Nyitrára, lovakkal).

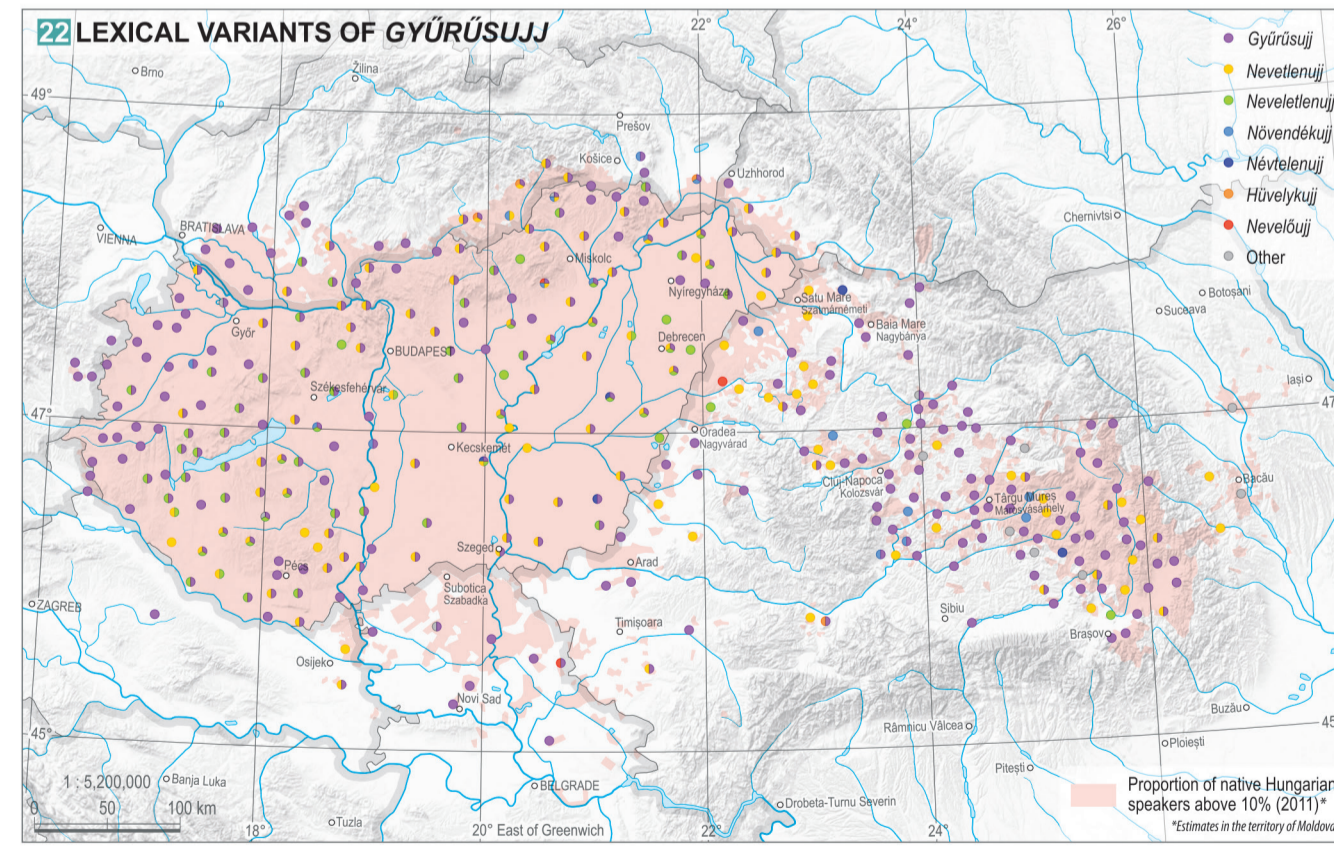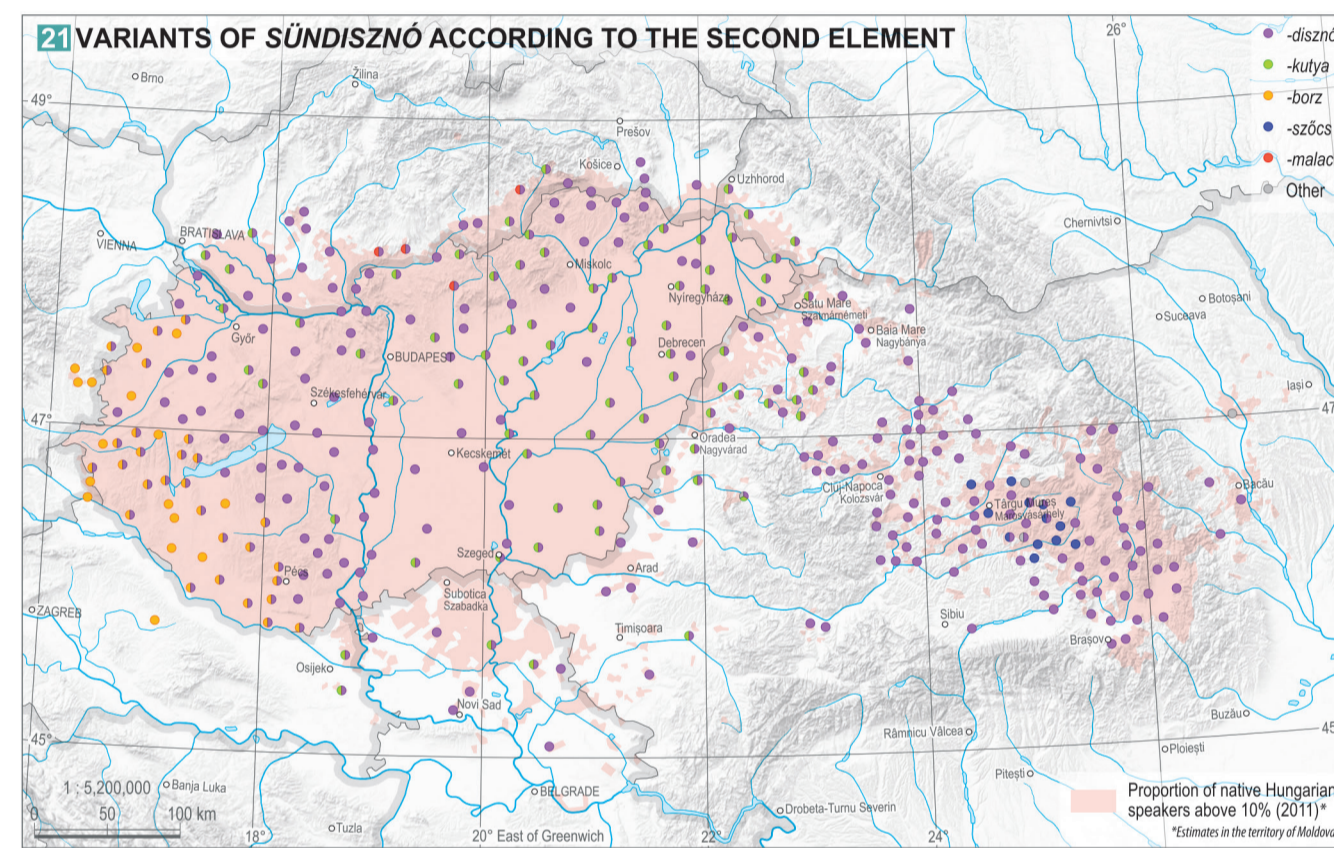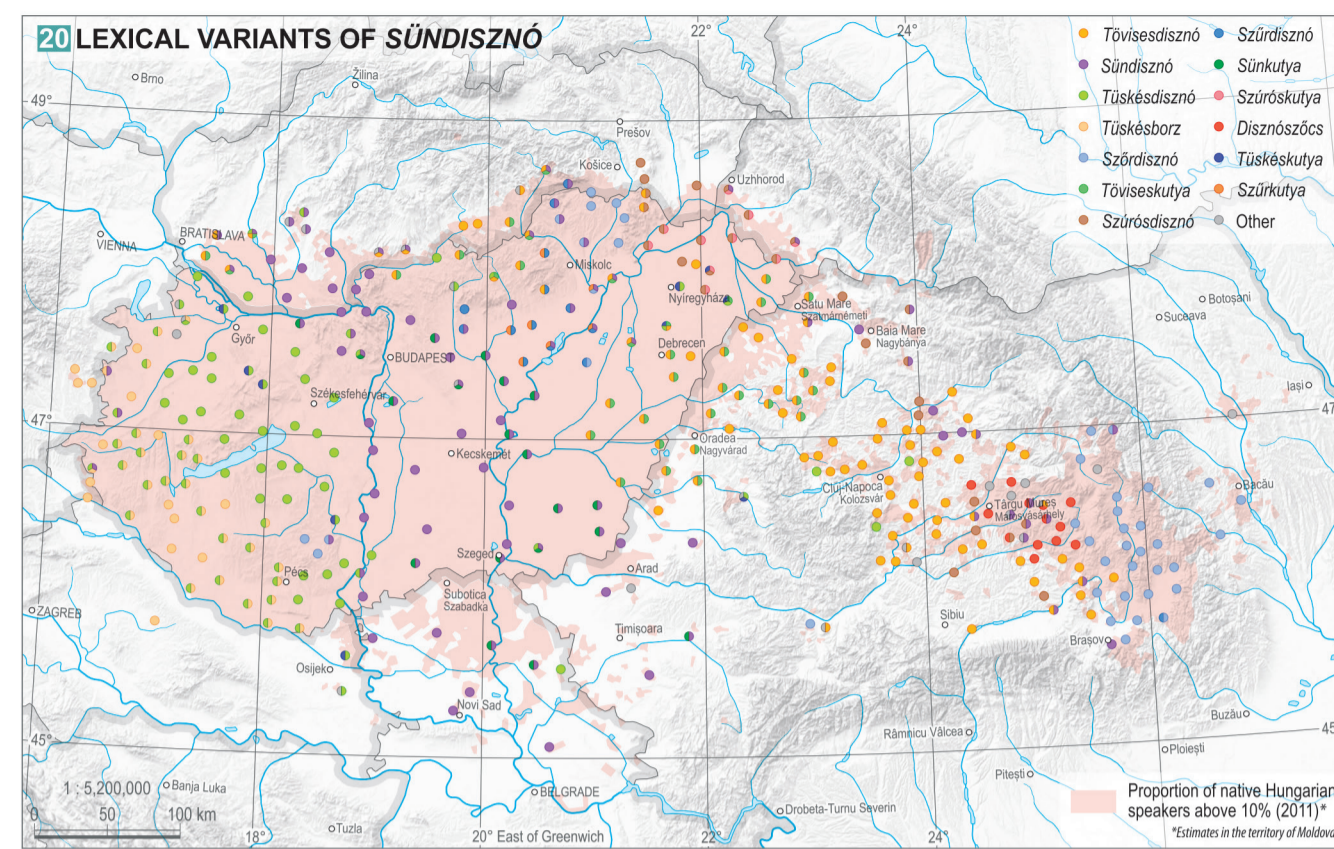Regarding verb inflection, we present two examples. The map of mondja 'he says' [11] highlights mondi variants which are most prominent in Southern Transdanubian, and occur in Southern Alföld and Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén County as well. The historical linguistic connection of the Southern Transdanubian and Southern Alföld dialects is evident, though their continuity was interrupted by the Ottoman conquests in the Danube–Tisza Midland. The presence of mondi in the northern regions has multiple explanations, such as independent internal development or medieval resettlements related to border defense. Among conditional verb forms, we created a map for vinnénk 'we would take' [12]. The definite-object form (vinnők 'we would take it') is clearly distinct in many dialects from the indefinite form (vinnénk 'we would take sg.'), whereas in the standard both forms are vinnénk. In Transylvania and Moldova, the dominant form is vinnők, while in Transylvanian Plain and in some isolated Northeastern dialects, the highly archaic vinnük form is found. Mixed forms such as vinnőnk and vinnünk appear in the transitional zones. The Székely dialect islands in Southern Transdanubia which emerged after WWII largely use the Transylvanian vinnők form.

Regarding noun inflection, the lack of assimilation of v in the instrumental suffix -val/-vel is an archaic feature. It is predominant in the Palóc region, but it has also persisted in some peripheral dialects and dialect islands. The Bukovina Székely settlements in Southern Transdanubia have also preserved the archaic pronunciation [13]. Locative suffixes show variation mainly in
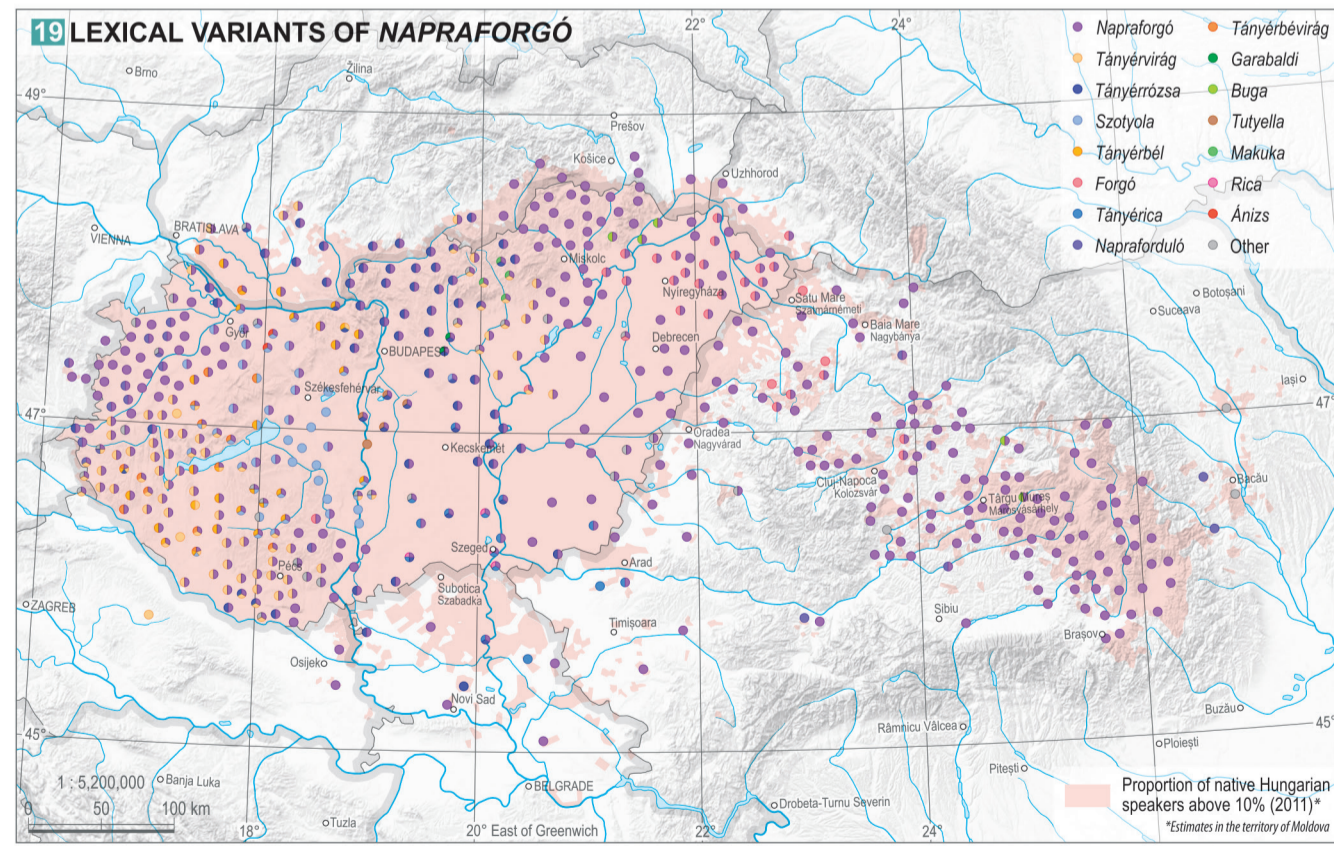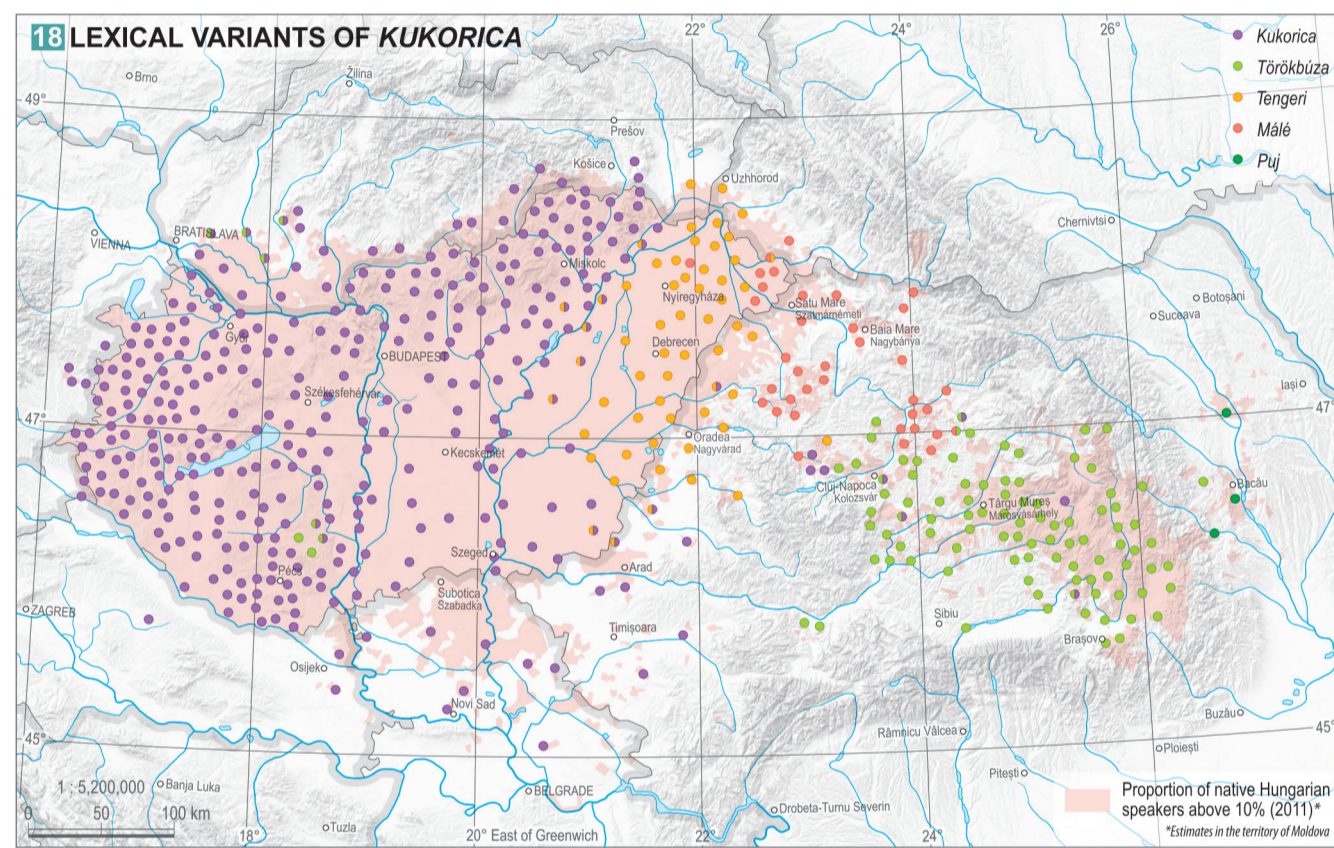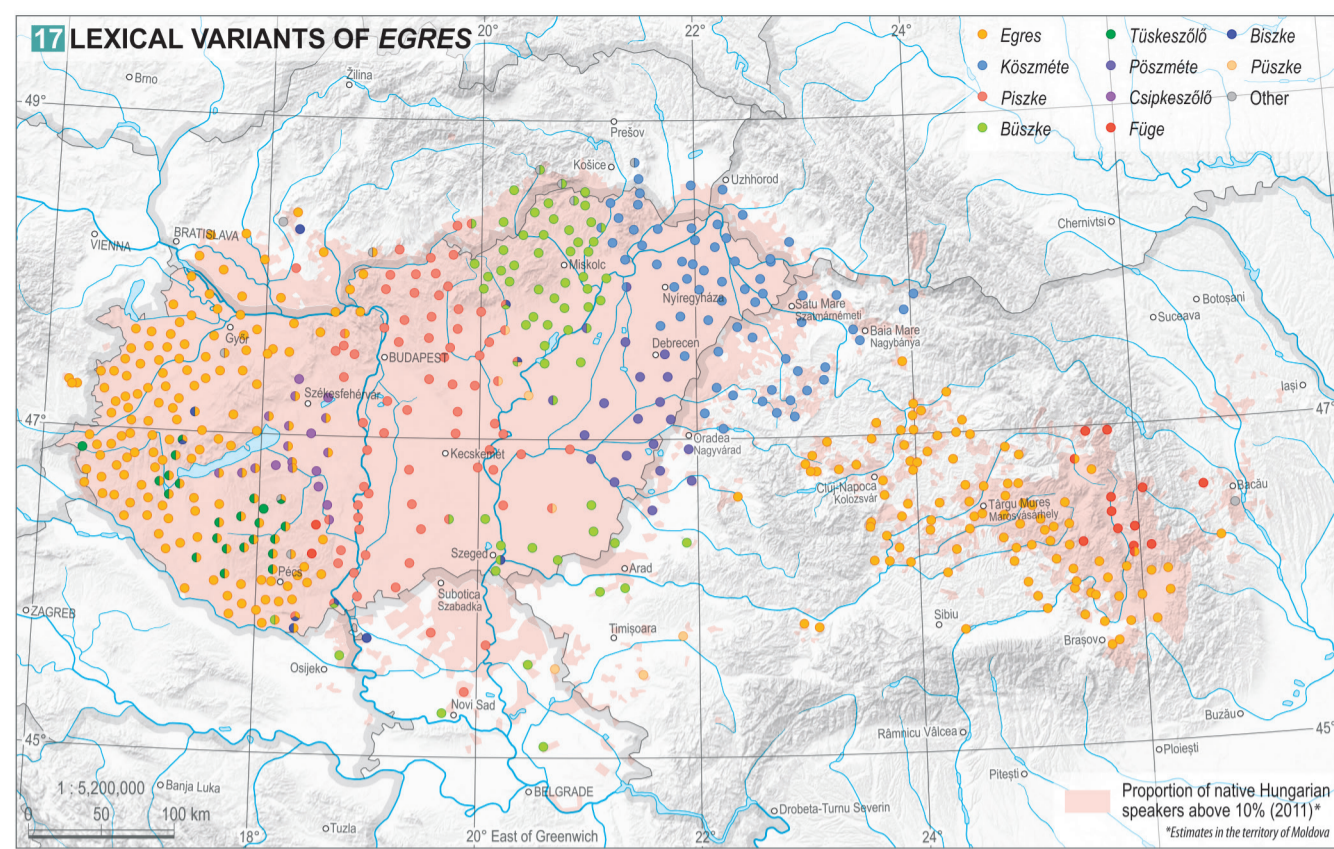
vowel height (ó ~ ú, ő ~ ű) and the absence or presence of l. The variants of the suffix -ból are illustrated by the map of házból 'out of the house' [14]. The historically more archaic form is clustered in Székely Land, but it is also notable in certain eastern Palóc, Northeastern, and Transylvanian Plain dialects. The Bukovina-rooted dialect islands in Southern Transdanubia feature the Székely type, and the preservation of l is also characteristic of the traditional eastern regions. The distribution of the suffixes -tól and -ról are illustrated by the maps of asztaltól 'from the table' [15], and asztalról 'off the table' [16].

17 LEXICAL VARIANTS OF EGRES

18 LEXICAL VARIANTS OF KUKORICA

19 LEXICAL VARIANTS OF NAPRAFORGÓ

20 LEXICAL VARIANTS OF SÜNDISZNÓ

21 VARIANTS OF SÜNDISZNÓ ACCORDING TO THE SECOND ELEMENT

22 LEXICAL VARIANTS OF GYŰRŰSUJJ

In **vocabulary**, dialect lexicology traditionally distinguishes three main types: true dialectal words that are absent from the standard language, such as biling 'bunch of grapes', pakulár 'accounting shepherd', kóber 'roofed cart'; form-based dialectal words that differ from their standard equivalent in pronunciation, such as pazdërgya 'chaff', girizd 'clove', fiső 'comb' (vs. pozdorja, gerezd, fésű); and meaning-based dialectal words with peculiar meanings, such as medence 'wooden tub' (vs. standard 'basin'), megcáfol 'tear apart' (vs. standard 'refute'), apró 'measles' (vs. standard 'small'). These types of deviations from the standard language can of-

ten be combined. Dialects are particularly rich in idioms and proverbs, such as akkora, mint a mënnyei lajtërgya 'tall and lean person' (lit. 'as tall as the heavenly ladder'), Mëgy bele, mint Ladámbo a mënkü 'He can drink a lot' (lit. 'It goes into him like the thunderstone to Ladány'), Nem sokat vásítottam a küszöbgyit 'I didn't visit him much' (lit. 'I did not wear off much of his doorstep').

The spatial distribution of vocabulary items is the most variable one across linguistic levels. The following maps provide examples from the folk terminology of plant and animal life, as well as body parts.

The map of egres 'gooseberry' [17] includes, for example, the modern variants of that loanword, which is an internationalism in several European languages and also refers to unripe, sour grapes. It may have entered Hungarian from Italian and/or German during the Old Hungarian period, and became widespread across the entire language area. It is heavily present in Transdanubian and Transylvanian dialects. Köszméte is the characteristic form in Northeastern dialects, borrowed from Eastern Slavic languages, also indicated by its geographical distribution. In the central language area, piszke and its variants (biszke, büszke, püszke etc.) dominate. These are internally derived words, likely from the root of piszkál 'to poke'. Pöszméte is a hybrid form that emerged in the transition between piszke and köszméte, while csipkeszőlő (lit. 'lace grape') and tüskeszőlő (lit. 'thorn grape') are metaphorical compounds.

The map of kukorica 'maize' [18] reveals a distinct lexical distribution: the western and central language areas are dominated by the internationalism kukorica, while the Tiszántúl region primarily uses tengeri. Törökbúza (lit. 'Turkish wheat') occupies Central and Eastern Transylvania (along with western dialect islands), while the Romanian loanword málé occurs between Partium and Transylvanian Plain. Another Romanian loanword, puj, is found only in Moldovan dialects.

The map of napraforgó 'sunflower' displays one of the most diverse lexical patterns [19]. The standard form is known throughout the Carpathian Basin, while the similar forgó (lit. 'rotating') is characteristic of the Northeastern region. The metaphorical term tányér 'plate' gives rise to various forms such as tányérrózsa (lit. 'plate rose'), tányérvirág (lit. 'plate flower'), tányérbél (lit. 'plate core'), tányérbélvirág (lit. 'plate core flower'), and tányérica. Rica is a shortening of tányérica, both used in the Southern Alföld dialects. Other forms include buga, tutyella, szotyola, ánizs, makuka, garabaldi etc.

Alongside phonological variations, sündisznó 'hedgehog' provides examples of folk creativity through compounds and semantics [20]. The first element sün 'porcupine' can be replaced by similar-sounding words such as szőr 'fur' or szúr 'wool fabric', as well as other lexemes evoking prickliness: szúrós 'prickly', tövises 'thorny', and tüskés 'spiky'. Apart from disznó 'pig', other animal names can also appear as second elements, such as kutya 'dog' or borz 'badger'. The second elements can be individually mapped as well [21], revealing that borz is characteristic of Transdanubian, malac 'piglet' of Central Palóc, and szőcs of Transylvanian.

In the map of gyűrűsujj 'ring finger' [22], the first elements of the compounds reveal an interesting semantic distribution. The most widespread (and likely oldest) word, known throughout the Carpathian Basin, is gyűrűsujj. Another commonly used word is névtelenujj and its variant nevetlenujj (lit. 'nameless finger'), the latter alternating with neveletlenujj (lit. 'ill-raised finger'). Here, neveletlen actually means 'underdeveloped' or 'smaller', compared to the adjacent middle finger. This is supported by forms such as növendékujj (lit. 'adolescent finger') and nevelőujj (lit. 'nursing finger').

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