

Tom M. S. Priestly. *From Phonological Analysis at My Desk to Linguistic Activism with Slovene in the Austrian Alps*. University: Balkanistica–SEESA, 2014, xviii + 65 pages. ISSN 0360-2206.

The book under review is a slightly modified version of the Kenneth E. Naylor lecture with the same title, given by Priestly (hereafter P) on April 28, 2006. Its length (about eighty pages, including the editor's preface, short biographies of Kenneth E. Naylor and Tom M. S. Priestly, a bibliography and illustrations) and its, at first sight, peculiar title both reflect the fact that the text of the book originated as a lecture. Although the text is probably very close to the original lecture, post-2006 developments have occasionally been woven into the text. P writes in his Acknowledgements that „several comments in the text are now out-of-date; they were first made in my Naylor lecture 2006 and not all of them were updated in the later written version“. There is also a brief postscript at the end of the book containing other noteworthy developments since 2006.

The subject of the book is P's work on the Carinthian Slovene dialect of the village of Sele, Zell in German, and the sociolinguistic situation in Sele from the 1970s onwards. The dialect of Sele is one of the better described dialects of Slovene. The first to write about the Sele dialect was the Russian scholar Aleksandr Vasiljevič Isačenko, in a monograph published on the eve of the Second World War (1939). On a number of occasions (esp. in Priestly 1994), including in the book under review, P has pointed out inadequacies in Isačenko's description of the dialect. Since the early 1980s, P has dedicated over a dozen scholarly articles to the Sele dialect. Dialectal data from Sele are also included in Karničar's 1990 monograph about the Slovene dialect of nearby Obir/Ebriach.

The book is, to a large extent, a summary of P's earlier scholarly work on the dialect of Sele. After a brief introduction, a short chapter describes how P conducted his fieldwork and offers a useful geographical description of Sele. After these introductory pages, P comes to the main topic of the book: language use, language attitude

and language maintenance in the Sele dialect. He discusses linguistic variation within the dialect on a lexical, phonetic/phonological, morphological and syntactic level. These variants are conditioned by geographical, generational and contextual factors as well as language attitude. The next chapter describes social change in the twentieth century, the changing attitude of the speakers towards the Sele dialect and changes in language use. Which language a present-day speaker of Sele Slovene selects in which social context is determined by the same factors that play a role elsewhere in Carinthia (cf. Lausegger 1993; I encountered the same situation during my own fieldwork in the area around Brdo/Egg in the Gailtal): Standard Slovene is used in church, in primary school and in songs and plays; dialectal Slovene at home and in social settings when all present are native speakers of the same Slovene dialect; dialectal or standardized German in all other situations. It is argued, following Priestly, McKinnie & Hunter 2009, that the maintenance of Slovene in Sele depends on speakers having a positive attitude towards the dialect, on the frequency with which they use it, and on their linguistic competence.

The fifth chapter describes the openly hostile attitude towards speakers of Slovene of the large group of nationalist German-speaking Carinthians, with peaks of animosity in the aftermath of World War One, during World War Two and in the 1970s. The controversy over bilingual place-name signs, the role of former *Landeshauptmann* Jörg Haider and the annual commemoration of the 1920 plebiscite are all discussed in some detail before the book ends with some reflections on P's own efforts to change the attitude of the Slovene speakers towards their mother tongue.

P's dialectological work stands out among publications on Slovene dialects because it highlights linguistic variation within a dialect and pays attention to the underlying sociolinguistic mechanisms at the same time. P's holistic approach, characteristic of dialectological research in the Anglophone world from the late 1960s onwards, shows how dialectal (micro)variation and change are better understood when the sociolinguistic situation is taken into account, while at the same time detailed attention to the linguistic data can lead to interesting sociolinguistic insights. It would be desirable to see similar research conducted in other areas where Slovene is a minority language, and P's book serves as an example of how this research can be done.

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