

Language, Ideology and Politics in Croatia

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Izhajajoč deloma iz osnovnih tez svoje pred kratkim izšle knjige *Čiji je jezik* (*Čigav je jezik?*) avtor podaja pregled zapletenega odnosa med jezikom, ideologijo in politiko na Hrvaškem v preteklih dveh desetletjih, vključno z novimi primeri in razčlembami. Razprava se osredotoča na vprašanja, povezana s Hrvaško, ki so lahko zanimiva za tuje slaviste in jezikoslovce, medtem ko se knjiga (v hrvaščini) ukvarja s problemi jezika, politike, ideologije in družbenega jezikoslovja na splošno.

Based in part on his recent book *Čiji je jezik?* (*Who does Language Belong to?*), the author reviews the intricate relation of language, ideology, and politics in Croatia in the last 20 years, including new examples and analyses. The article emphasizes problems related to Croatia specifically, which might be of interest to foreign Slavists and linguists, while the monograph (in Croatian) deals with the problems of language, society, politics, ideology, and sociolinguistics in general.

Ključne besede: jezikovna politika, jezikovno načrtovanje, purizem, hrvaški jezik, jezik v nekdanji Jugoslaviji

Key words: language politics, language planning, purism, Croatian language, language in former Yugoslavia

Introduction¹

The aim of this article is to provide a general and brief overview of some problems concerning the intricate relation of language, ideology, and politics in Croatia in the last 20 years. The bulk of the article consists of some of the

¹ I would like to thank Marko Kapović for reading the first draft of the article carefully.

main points of my 2011 book *Čiji je jezik?* (Who does Language Belong to?), complemented by some new examples and analyses. The article emphasizes problems related to Croatia specifically, which might be of some interest to foreign Slavists and linguists, while the monograph (in Croatian) deals with the problems of language, society, politics, ideology, sociolinguistics, etc., in general, with many local examples included for practical purposes. The article does not intend to cover all relevant topics or possible problems – its purpose is to briefly present some of the issues related to the title in order to provide the readers with a general picture of some aspects of sociolinguistic and language policy problems in Croatia.

Language has been a matter of public importance in Croatia (and in other ex-Yugoslavian countries) for quite some time. This fact is perhaps best illustrated by the popularity of orthographical handbooks (*pravopisi* in Croatian) that often top the best-seller lists, the frequency of linguistic (or quasi-linguistic) debates, and comments in the media (often in the form of *jezični savjeti* ‘language advice’) or the importance of *lektori* (see below). The presence and importance of language in the public sphere was only augmented in post-1990 years, which is not surprising if one takes into account the wars in former Yugoslavia (the conflicts in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina being most important for our topic here), rising ethnic intolerance and nationalism in all former Yugoslavian countries, as well as major political and economic changes with a transition from a nominally socialist one party regime to a multi-party parliamentary ‘democracy’ and capitalism. All of these processes have had enormous influence on language. Here, we shall tackle some of them.

‘Proper’ Croatian?

As in English-speaking countries, laymen, but also some linguists (mostly Croatian language experts, *kroatisti* in Croatian), often speak of ‘proper’ and ‘improper’ language, i.e., of a ‘correct’ use of language.² This is, of course, completely unfounded from a scientific point of view since all words and forms used in a language variety are ‘correct’. Some of them may be standard and the others non-standard, but they are all, linguistically speaking, correct. Thus, Croat. *neš* ‘you won’t’ (instead of standard *nećeš*) is not ‘incorrect’, it is just colloquial (like English *ain’t* vs. *isn’t*). This simple fact, that non-standard words are not ‘incorrect’ but just non-standard, is often forgotten not only by lay people but also by some linguists. This is a part of what sociolinguists call the ideology of the standard language (Milroy 2007). Of course, there is nothing revolutionary in the claim that all forms that are in used in a language are ‘correct’. That is nothing more and nothing less than another way of pre-

² For this kind of claim and similar unscientific beliefs about language in English-speaking countries, see Bauer & Trudgill 1998.

senting the famous Saussurean principle of the arbitrariness of the linguistic sign. However, in Croatia the present author has often been called a ‘language revolutionary’ or a ‘language anarchist’ in the media for defending this claim, i.e., the scientific approach to language.³

Here we shall adduce a few more examples of what is often dubbed ‘incorrect usage’ in Croatian. In older Croatian and in some present day dialects as well, the genitive and accusative forms of ‘they’ and ‘all of them’ were gen. *njih, svih*, acc. *nje, sve*. In some dialects today, the old genitive forms appear in both cases, thus gen/acc. *njih, svih*. However, in the standard language a middle phase, attested in yet a third group of dialects, is taken: gen. *njih, svih*, acc. *njih, sve*. The consequence of this is that the accusative form *svih* is often stigmatized as ‘irregular’, while no such claim is made of acc. *njih*, although linguistically speaking there is no difference between the two. In the same manner, the colloquial form *sumlja* ‘doubt’ is stigmatized with respect to the standard (and historically speaking older – without the *mnj > mlj* dissimilation) form *sumnja*. However, the standard *šljiva* ‘plum’ with the younger palatalized *šlj-* instead of the older *sl-* (cf. dialectal *sliva*) is not perceived as ‘incorrect’ because it is a standard form.

Various other forms are proscribed on different grounds, thus the loanword *kazeta* ‘tape’ (usually pronounced with a -z-) is proscribed as ‘irregular’ because of the double -ss- (i.e., [s]) in German *Kassette*, French (and English) *cassette* and Italian *cassetta*. Thus, the etymology is the reason why standardologists claim that only the form *kaseta* with an -s- can be the Standard Croatian form. Here, we see a very interesting argument indeed: how a word is pronounced in a foreign donor language is deemed more important than how it is actually pronounced by speakers of Croatian. In the same manner, the colloquial form *orginalan* ‘original’ is stigmatized – it is ‘incorrect’ because of the Latin *orīginālis* (cf. standard *originalan*). A scientific approach would be to say that *orginalan* is a colloquial form of the word *originalan*, which has undergone syncope of the medial vowel -i-.

Prescriptivists often have problems with Latin loanwords; for instance, the word *optimalan* ‘optimal’ is frowned upon when used in the superlative form *najoptimalniji* ‘most optimal (lit.)’, because Latin *optimus* ‘best’ is ‘already a superlative form,’ despite the fact that speakers of Croatian normally use the form *najoptimalniji*, usually in order to put extra emphasis on it. Furthermore, not only are Latin loanwords problematic in the superlative – standardologists also claim that the normally used form *najbitniji* ‘most important’ is linguisti-

³ On one occasion, I was even called an ‘anarcholiberal’ in the media (*Vjesnik*, Feb 2, 2011) by a highly esteemed Croatian linguist (an expert in Romance languages) and a member of the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts. This is ideologically quite interesting, because the linguist in question has a generally conservative political stance (which is always rabidly anti-Yugoslavian in Croatia), but is using the word *anarholiberal*, which was a generic denunciatory disparaging term used by the communist officials in former Yugoslavia for all dissidents to the left of the communist party.

cally ‘impossible’ because *bitan* ‘important’ is to be (etymologically) connected to *bit* ‘essence’ (and essence is, of course, just one). There are numerous examples of such ludicrous propositions.

‘Improper’ language is often a result of a language change in progress.⁴ The greatest language change occurring right now in Croatian (at least in urban areas) is the gradual loss of intervocalic consonants *d* (as in *goina* instead of *godina* ‘year’), *m* (*iam* instead of *imam* ‘I have’), *v* (*eo* instead of *evo* ‘here you go’), *g* (*drai* instead of *dragi* ‘dear (pl)’), *b* (*trea* instead of *treba* ‘needs (3sg)’), *ž* (*kuiš* instead of *kužiš* ‘you understand (2sg)’), *t* (*vraiti* instead of *vratiti* ‘return’), *f* (*proesor* instead of *profesor* ‘professor’), *j* (*broevi* instead of *brojevi* ‘numbers’) and *k* (*neako* instead of *nekako* ‘somehow’).⁵ The exact process of this change differs depending on the dialect, phoneme in question and phonetic surroundings and has still not been studied linguistically.⁶ The presence of this language change in progress is a counter-argument to the often made proposition that writing and standardization slow down or impede language change. These consonants have been stable for centuries, during a time when most of speakers were illiterate, while the change is active now with the language highly standardized, taught in schools and the influence of the media at its highest. However, this particular language change (not perceived as one by ordinary speakers nor by most language experts) is not socially stigmatized and is just occasionally frowned upon with phrases like ‘sloppy pronunciation’, etc.

Linguistic Purism

Linguistic purism is basically an expression of nationalist and xenophobic ideas through language. Foreign or seemingly foreign elements in language are perceived as ‘unnecessary’, ‘undesirable’ and ‘dangerous’ and therefore language needs to be ‘cleansed’. The connection of linguistic purism and the uprising of nationalism in Croatia in the 1990’s was especially obvious. After the dissolution of Yugoslavia, Serbian loanwords were the most important group of words to be dealt with in Croatian. This was related to a commonly repeated narrative of the Croatian language as a victim of Serbian oppression in Yugoslavia. Later, English loanwords became the prime suspect. Today, the purist zeal is much weaker than in the 1990’s but *kroatisti* still like to speak

⁴ For the concept of ‘language change in progress’, see, e.g., Labov 1994: 43–113.

⁵ It is important to note that this is indeed a real change in progress developing incrementally (at least in Zagreb, which is the dialect I have field data from) and not a result of some sort of *allegro* changes in just a few frequently used words. The disappearance of consonants is in some cases indeed more or less limited to certain words (as in the case of the consonant *-k-*), but is completely phonetic in other cases (as with the intervocalic *-d-*).

⁶ The author has conducted some fieldwork on these processes in Zagreb, but the research is not finished and the results have not yet been published. See also Kapović 2011: 23–26.

of ‘unnecessary’ loanwords and one can hear language advice that one should not use loanwords if there are ‘good Croatian substitutes’, etc. The hard-line nationalist linguistic magazine *Jezik* (Language) even gives a prize for the ‘best new Croatian word’ once a year, although this event is mocked by most people and is very marginal to say the least. This year’s winner is the neologism *ispraznica*, which is supposed to replace the Latin loanword *floskula* ‘cliché, empty phrase’ (cf. Croatian *isprazan* ‘empty’).

In the general public, there were two basic responses to the purist rampage in the early 1990’s. One was making fun of the trend. This can be typified by the two common joke examples – *zrakomlat* (lit. ‘air-thrasher’) for the usual *helikopter* ‘helicopter’ and *vuneni travopas* (lit. ‘wooly grass-eater’) for *ovca* ‘sheep’. These two ‘words’ symbolize the popular ridiculing of linguistic purism. However, the other response was a fear of speaking Croatian (or rather speaking publicly and freely) due to the danger of ‘making a mistake’ or not ‘knowing your own language’. This kind of reaction was commented upon negatively even by some *kroatisti* of otherwise nationalist tendencies.

Purist efforts yielded mixed results. Some of the new (or reinstated) words, especially those used as specific terms, are regularly used today. For instance, the new term for ‘major’ in the Croatian army is now *bojnik* (while it was *major* in the Yugoslav army). The term *putovnica* ‘passport’ (coined from the word *put* ‘way, path’) is today used not only as a (new, post-1990) technical term but also in everyday language, while the loanword *pasoš*, previously in official use as well, is today only colloquial. The new word *izbornik* ‘national team coach/manager’ (cf. *izbor* ‘choice’) has completely replaced the older form *selektor*, while the Croatian word *zračna luka* ‘airport’ (cf. *zrak* ‘air’ and *luka* ‘port’) is used only in very formal occasions, with the loanword *aerodrom* still normally used in most circumstances. In other cases, neologisms remain obscure and fail (for various reasons), like the word *kopnica* that was supposed to be a replacement for the loanwords *AIDS* and *sida* (from French).

As can be expected, these purist tendencies are practically always incoherent and inherently paradoxical. Let us take the example of the two proposed neologisms, that have never been accepted, *limunika* for *grejpfrut* ‘grapefruit’ and *mamutnjak* for *džambo-džet* ‘jumbo jet’. These two forms were made from basic stems *limun* ‘lemon’ and *mamut* ‘mammoth’ in spite of the fact that these two words are obviously loanwords as well.

The inverted ‘logic’ that all that is unusual is ‘real Croatian,’ due to the post-1990 ‘re-Croatization’ of Croatian, has led to results that were opposite from what would be expected even from a purist/nationalist stance; for instance the Russian loanword *izvješće* ‘report’ gained some ground at the expense of the word *izvještaj* (of ‘pure Croatian descent’), the Czech loanword *žitelj* ‘inhabitant’ was sometimes used instead of the more usual *stanovnik* because it was falsely perceived as ‘more Croatian’, and even a Serbian loanword *ponaosob* ‘specifically, individually’ spread in writing as a variant to the usual *posebno/pojedinačno*, because its very awkwardness qualified it as ‘real Croatian’ even if this was completely off track in reality.

Language and Ideology

Political and ideological changes are always reflected in linguistic changes as well. This is illustrated by Orwell's description of new language use in the revolutionary Barcelona of 1936 in his *Homage to Catalonia* (1938). There, the removal of the old class division in society also brought with it a change in language use – the old *Señor/Don* 'mister' were replaced by 'comrade' and *Usted* 'you (honorific)' by *tú* 'you'. Even *buenos días* 'good day' was replaced by *salud* 'hello' (lit. 'health (to you)'). This can be readily compared to the use of *drug* 'comrade' and *zdravo* 'hello' (cf. *zdrav* 'healthy' and *pozdraviti* 'greet') in socialist Yugoslavia. After 1990, *drug* was, of course, changed back to the bourgeois *gospodin* 'mister' and *zdravo* has become highly stigmatized (*zdravo, družo* 'hello, comrade' was the basic greeting in socialist Yugoslavia), although some nationalist linguists have defended its 'Croatianess' with the argument that it appears in the prayer *Zdravo, Marijo* 'Hail Mary'. Of course, this was just a minor 'correction' in the dominant discourse that actually had the legitimizing role in the whole 'language cleansing' process and not a critique of the whole nationalist/purist agenda.

The shift from the real-socialist one party system to a capitalist liberal representative democracy, i.e., the shift from the communist to liberal/capitalist ideology, has brought about many changes in language as well. A classic example is the word *radnik* 'worker' – a pillar of the communist ideology. This word became highly suspicious and an attempt was made to replace it with *djelatnik* (especially for white-collar workers). Only in recent years has the word *radnik* slightly lost its 'communist connotation' and is being used more and more once again, which is apparently related to political changes as well as to the 2007–8 world economic crisis. Needless to say, another pivotal Marxist term *klasa* 'class' was also symbolically banished from public discourse, not only in the phrase *radnička klasa* 'working class' (it is interesting that this collocation is quite uncontroversial in English – although not in the Marxist sense of it, obviously⁷) but in relation to all sorts of society issues in general.

The Catholic component of the new nationalist ideology (the Croatian Catholic church still holds a hard-line anti-Yugoslav position) can be clearly seen in the replacement of the old *prije nove ere* ('before the new era') with the new *prije Krista* 'before Christ' and in the orthographical use of *Bog* 'god' and *Crkva* 'church (institution)' with an initial capital letter instead of the older normative forms *bog* and *crkva*.

A different result of the nationalist ideology and the war in early 1990's is seen in the fact that the word *Srbin* 'Serb' has a negative connotation in Croatia (it has a slight connotation of an insult and the word itself is sometimes,

⁷ In everyday language in English, it is usually used for 'manual labor'/'blue-collar workers', while in Marxist terminology (and thus in the socialist terminology of former Yugoslavia) it encompasses all people who work for a wage (whether they are blue- or white-collar or not).

although mostly jokingly and not very often, used as an insult) in spite of being used regularly in purely denotative meaning (as the ethnic term for ‘Serbian’) as well. This is also the reason why there is a slang expression *srbija* meaning ‘catastrophe’ (cf. *Srbija* ‘Serbia’). Interestingly, the word *Hrvat* ‘Croat’ has no such connotations in Serbia.⁸

It was not only the components of the old ideology that were stigmatized. For instance, the words *kapitalizam* ‘capitalism’ and *kapitalist* ‘capitalist’ were also avoided (not unlike the usage in non-post-socialist countries). Instead of ‘capitalism’, the phrase *tržišna ekonomija* ‘market economy’ was preferred, while ‘capitalists’ were instead named *poduzetnici* ‘entrepreneurs’ or *poslodavci* ‘employers’ (lit. *job-givers*). The Croatian (and Serbian) counterpart of the Russian term ‘oligarch’ is *tajkun* (from English *tycoon*), which is often used and has a highly negative connotation.

Ideological differences can also be seen in language use today. For instance, if one sees that someone has used a ‘neo-Croatian’ orthographic form *ne ću* ‘I won’t’ (instead of the old *neću* that is used by the majority), it is safe to guess that person is a rightist/nationalist. On the other hand, if someone uses the old, pre-1990, orthographical form *Evropa* (and not the new one, *Europa*, which is used by the majority in Croatia today), one can safely assume that this person is left-leaning (the same usually applies to the use of the already mentioned greeting *zdravo*, although this might vary in different places and circumstances).

Orthography and *lektori*

Although it might sound strange to an outsider, orthography has a special place in the Croatian social imaginary. Orthographic handbooks (called *pravopis*) are quite popular in Croatia, very often even bestsellers boasting numerous editions. Orthographic problems are also often topics of language-related discussions in the media. A notorious example in recent times is the already mentioned problem of *neću/ne ću*. Orthographic discussions are usually blown out of proportion, providing them with unnecessary attention and a false image of importance. These issues are often related to nationalist linguistic tendencies. For instance, one of the reasons adduced for writing *ne ću* is that this is part of the ‘Croatian tradition’, which is only partially and very conditionally true. The unspoken reason is that in this way Croatian would be differentiated from Serbian in one more point. However, more prosaic reasons also exist, as always – like profit from publishing new orthographic handbooks, since one needs to change something if there is to be an excuse for the publication of a new edition.

⁸ This can also be compared with the word *Cigan(in)* ‘Gypsy’ in both Croatia and Serbia, which is today not politically correct (the word *Rom* ‘Roma’ is used), because it is also used (unlike English *Gypsy*) in the meaning ‘bastard, prick’.

Like all prescriptivists, Croatian conservative prescriptivists usually include speakers' orthographic problems (usually concerning the writing of the notorious *č* and *ć* and *ije* and *je*, which are a problem for many Croatian speakers for various reasons) among the most important signs of the 'soon-to-come linguistic apocalypse', scolding speakers for not being able to learn their own language properly. All this in spite of signs indicating that the reluctance of ordinary people to learn absolutely all complex orthographic rules is not really a special trait of Croatia, but a common phenomenon everywhere, cf., for example, the problems that Spanish speakers have with writing accentual marks, not to mention English spelling, which is much more complex than the pretty much straightforward (except for a few problematic points) and mostly phonetic Croatian orthography.

Not completely unrelated to the problem of *pravopisi*, as we have already mentioned, there is a profession, quite important in Croatian culture, which is not always easily translatable to other languages. We are talking about *lektori* here. A *lektor* is a person that basically 'corrects' written texts, not unlike a living spell checker. Some of *lektor*'s roles are similar to those of a redactor in other countries, but there are considerable differences between the two (there is a word *redaktor* and a corresponding profession in Croatian as well). In Croatia, every serious publisher, newspaper, radio or TV station has a *lektor*. Checking the quality of language before publication is seen as crucial. In theory, and sometimes in practice as well, this is not necessarily a bad thing. Having additional people to check the coherence of a text, its style, intelligibility, etc. is certainly not an *a priori* crazy idea. However, the role of *lektori* in practice is usually not what it is supposed to be or what it could be.

The profession of *lektori* stems from Yugoslavian times and the need for language adaption of texts written in the 'Serbian/Eastern variant of Serbo-Croatian' to the 'Western/Croatian norm'. This was a standard procedure in news agencies, etc. From these times onwards, the position of *lektori* persists. Today, however, their role is often, or in most cases, negative because they are in practice enforcers of linguistic purism/nationalism and more often than not they pursue an overly prescriptive and non-scientific attitude toward language. There are often formal or informal lists, material or just in the heads of *lektori*, of 'suitable' and 'unsuitable' words. The latter list is, of course, populated with Serbian and English loanwords, 'incorrect' and 'illogical' uses of words, forms and phrases, etc. For instance, most *lektori* will always change the word *ponovo* 'again' (used all the time in everyday speech) to *ponovno*, because of some vague notion that *ponovo* is 'incorrect' or Serbian. Interestingly, the word *nanovo* 'again, newly' is never changed to ***nanovno*, because this form simply does not exist and the *lektori* do not seem to have issues with *nanovo* unlike with its poor cousin *ponovo*. Struggle against this kind of language policy on lower levels must be one of the basic parts of any progressive linguistic activism in Croatia.

One or four languages?

The question of the relation of Croatian and Serbian is a well-known and often debated topic not only in ex-Yugoslavian countries but in international socio-linguistics as well. In Croatia, it is still a very hot and controversial subject, intertwined with a lot of emotions and political issues. This became apparent once more in 2010, when a book called *Jezik i nacionalizam* (Language and nationalism) by the Croatian linguist Snježana Kordić was published. Kordić explicitly argues that the language of Croats (and Serbs and Bosnians and Montenegrins) is Serbo-Croatian. Since she is virtually the only Croatian linguist (although she has spent most of her career abroad) who openly supports this hypothesis and since the general public considers the term ‘Serbo-Croatian’ politically incorrect, it is no wonder that the book and the author received a lot of media attention (be it neutral, negative, or positive). The book rightly criticizes nationalism in language and in general and dispels some of the Croatian myths of the Croatian language as a victim of Serbian (and Serbians) in Yugoslavia. However, it falls prey to a liberal, orientalist, auto-racist perception of practically everything Croatian as unscientific and nationalist and everything Western as scientific and objective. This is, of course, a highly distorted view of reality, since unscientific stances on language can be found both in Croatia and in the rest of the world (cf., for example, Milroy & Milroy 1999 for English or the notorious French linguistic nationalism). In spite of the fact that Croatia has some peculiar characteristics of its own, largely due to its tumultuous recent history, and in spite of the fact that there are many negative tendencies in Croatian linguistics, the kind of radical dismissive approach often used by Kordić is hardly becoming in light of the situation in other countries/linguistic communities.

The Croatian/Serbian relation is hardly unique among world languages. It is *mutatis mutandis* very similar to the relation of Hindi/Urdu, Indonesian/Malay or British English/American English and German German/Austrian German. As we can plainly see, in some cases (like Hindi/Urdu and Indonesian/Malay) one usually speaks of two very close standard languages, while in others (like the various variants of English, German, French, Spanish or Portuguese) one supposes various standard forms of the same (pluricentric) language. The choice between these two options obviously depends on political, cultural and historical reasons (for instance, in all the latter cases except for German, the present linguistic situation arises from historical colonialism). Thus, in the area we are discussing right now, although the linguistic situation has not changed very much, before 1990 one used to speak of a single language (Serbo-Croatian), while now four languages are nominally claimed (Croatian, Serbian, Bosnian/Bosniak, Montenegrin), with the future of a separate Montenegrin still insecure in spite of serious standardologic work that is currently underway. As we have already said, in Croatia the term Serbo-Croatian is usually perceived, both by linguists and laymen, as anachronistic and politically incorrect. However, it is not hard to understand that some foreign linguists still use the term Serbo-

Croatian – whether this is due to tradition, reasons of economy (Serbo-Croatian is shorter than Serbian/Croatian/Bosnian/Montenegrin), citing old reference works that really do have the name Serbo-Croatian, *srpskohrvatski* or *hrvatskosrpski* in the title (like the famous Academic dictionary published by the ex-Yugoslavian Academy of Sciences and Arts in Zagreb) or just out of simple reluctance to get involved in local nationalist disputes.

However, there are two basic problems with the term Serbo-Croatian, even when we put aside nationalist arguments and the unwillingness of the majority of speakers of this language(s) to name it Serbo-Croatian. First of all, the problem is that the term Serbo-Croatian is not ethnically neutral – there is no Bosnian (Bosniak⁹) and Montenegrin in this name, even though they have never spoken any other language and it is as much their language as it is Serbs' and Croats'.¹⁰ Here, one should mention that the term Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian (BCS, or rather BCMS – Bosnian/Croatian/Montenegrin/Serbian), which is sometimes used in Western publications, does not yield negative responses from local linguists, since it seems that these are reserved for the term Serbo-Croatian only.

The other problem, when talking about Serbo-Croatian as the 'whole package' (including the dialects) and not just as a standard language, is that this term is no more scientific than the 'separatist' terms Serbian and Croatian, in spite of this being a major argument for the use of the term Serbo-Croatian by many. The simple fact is that, dialectologically speaking, there is no Serbo-Croatian, in the same way as there is no Croatian. The whole South Slavic area is a dialectal continuum, from Bulgaria in the South-East to Slovenia in the North-West. To draw the lines at the borders of Croatia and Slovenia on one side and Serbia and Bulgaria/Macedonia on the other makes linguistically no sense at all (see, for instance, Vermeer 1982, where the issue of the old strict dialectal division into Štokavian, Čakavian and Kajkavian is questioned, as well). Thus, there is no real linguistic entity that the traditional term Serbo-Croatian (comprising Kajkavian, Čakavian, Štokavian and Torlak) would encompass, although this is hardly a unique case since even linguists usually talk about standard languages or base their language divisions according to them (at least in the West), in spite of the fact that language standardization has a lot more to do with politics than with linguistics.

The answer might be in the use of the term Štokavian when talking about all four standard languages/variants in strictly linguistic texts. The term 'standard Štokavian' already exists, cf. *standardna/književna štokavština* (or *štokavštine*

⁹ Bosnian refers to the whole of Bosnia and Bosniak to Bosniaks (Bosnian Muslims) separately.

¹⁰ The sometimes mentioned comparison to Indo-European (*Indogermanisch* in German terminology) is not quite the same, since Indo-European is a strictly scientific term used for a reconstructed (not a living) language or a language family. This term is not likely to be a cause of any sort of dispute and it is not really bound to ethnicity – both parts of the compound are actually geographic terms.

in plural) ‘standard/literary Štokavian’, and this term is as precise and scientific as it is ethnically completely neutral, which is very important.¹¹ In any case, both local and foreign linguists should strive to treat the topic with less emotional and political charge.

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JEZIK, IDEOLOGIJA IN POLITIKA NA HRVAŠKEM

V prispevku je podan pregled zapletenega odnosa med jezikom, ideologijo in politiko na Hrvaškem v preteklih dveh desetletjih, pri čemer avtor deloma izhaja iz osnovnih tez svoje pred kratkim izšle knjige *Čiji je jezik (Čigav je jezik?)*, ob tem pa vključuje nove primere in razčlembе. Izpostavlja vprašanja, povezana s Hrvaško, ki so lahko zanimiva tudi tujim slavistom in jezikoslovcem, medtem ko se v monografiji ukvarja s problemi jezika, politike, ideologije in družbenega jezikoslovja na splošno.

Tako kot v drugih državah nekdanje Jugoslavije ima jezik velik pomen tudi v hrvaški javnosti. To dejstvo potrjujejo: popularnost pravopisov, pogostost javnih jezikoslovnih (kvazi)debat, medijski komentarji v obliki jezikovnih nasvetov (*jezičnih savjetov*) in pomembnost lektorjev. Prisotnost in pomembnost jezika v javnosti sta se povečali v

¹¹ One could make a counter-claim that Americans call their language English, which is not neutral, and that the same goes for Austrians with German, Argentines with Spanish, Brazilians with Portuguese or Quebecers with French, etc. However, the basic difference here is that all these nations have no problems in naming their language by the name of another nation. In the case of ex-Yugoslavia, this is not true, whether one likes it or not.

devetdesetih letih, in sicer po konfliktech na Hrvaškem ter v Bosni in Hercegovini, v času naraščajoče etnične nestrpnosti in nacionalizma v vseh državah nekdanje Jugoslavije ter v času velikih političnih in gospodarskih sprememb s prehodom iz formalno socialističnega enostrankarskega sistema v večstrankarsko parlamentarno »demokracijo« in kapitalizem.

Razprava obravnava tudi: (1) problem purizma, ki se avtorju večinoma zdi nekoherenten in paradoksalen, npr. raba neprepoznanih namesto ustaljenih prevzetih besed (*limunika* za *grejpfрут* 'grenivka'); (2) zamenjavo ideološko obremenjenih besed, npr. *radnik* 'delavec (s sprva komunistično konotacijo)' proti *djelatnik* 'delavec (brez te konotacije)', *kapitalizam* (z marksistično konotacijo) proti *tržišna ekonomija*; (3) vprašanje poimenovanja jezika samega, ki se nanaša na domnevno štiri nacionalne jezike, ki so z dialektološkega stališča del južnoslovenskega kontinuuma od Alp do Črnega morja.
