

Internal and External Borders of the Slovak Language: The Slovak Language as the National Language and Language of the Diaspora

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Introduction

The borders inside a language and borders of languages – this is an important issue in terms of linguistics, culture, and society. The borders in the Slovak language represent an important ethno-significant element, both in self-identification and in identification of others. For example, Slovaks identify themselves by their language (Slovak), country, etc., but their non-Slovak dialogue partners also identify the speech of Slovaks as Slovak by external factors as well. There are two important points that should be mentioned in the issue of Slovak language borders:

1. that the linguistic borders of the Slovak language exceed geographical borders of Slovakia;
2. that the borders of the Slovak language within the administrative legal and national borders are not clearly identified.

The first point to be noted is that the Slovak language as the national language in its most diverse functions is naturally fullest represented in the mother country, in Slovakia. The sociohistorical basis of the national language is formed by the national community. Before the emergence of a literary standardized Slovak language, divergent tendencies in the Slovak national language prevailed. Strong convergent-integrative ten-

dencies began to manifest themselves only after the implementation of a literary standardized Slovak language in the nineteenth century. Within communication types and domains in Slovakia, it is an internally intricately differentiated language. But in addition, the Slovak language is also used in border areas within the natural bilingualism of the local border type. With its area of 49,035 km², Slovakia is quite a small landlocked country in Central Europe. Slovakia borders the Czech Republic in the northwest, Poland in the north, Ukraine in the east, Hungary in the south, and Austria in the southwest. Therefore, the Slovak language was naturally influenced by these neighboring languages in the past, especially by Czech and German. Moreover, in all these countries there live members of the Slovak minority who found themselves there after the First World War. In addition, the Slovak language is in very good condition in Vojvodina (in today's Serbia), Romania, and Croatia, and there are numerous Slovak enclaves even from the eighteenth century. A large number of Slovak-speaking people are living in North and South America, Canada, Australia, etc. According to the book *Sprievodca slovenským zahraničím*, it is estimated that 2.6 million people who are Slovaks by origin live beyond the borders of Slovakia. This is half the number of Slovaks in Slovakia.¹

The second point to be noted is the fact that the Slovak language is the official state language in Slovakia. This means that this language is constantly used by 5.3 million citizens of the Slovak Republic (of which about 15% of the population are ethnic minorities) in official contact. The vast majority of members of national minorities are symmetrically bilingual. The ethnic structure in Slovakia is as follows: 85% are Slovaks, about 10% are Hungarians, 4.6% are ethnic Roma (at least, people who willingly claim to be ethnic Roma), and 0.2% are Ruthenians. Conventional national minorities include the Czechs, Poles, Germans, Bulgarians, Croats, and Serbs. After the independence of Slovakia (in 1993), there are registered about 15,000 long-term-living foreigners, and many nomadic languages began to be used.

¹ *Sprievodca slovenským zahraničím* [Slovak Foreign Guide] (Bratislava Zost. Ľ. Bartalská, 2001).

Thus, a separate Slovak language is determined both by internal linguistic borders whereby the Slovak language is internally structured and by external borders whereby the Slovak language integrates into a wider language area.

1. Research on Borders of the Slovak Language

Slovak linguistics did not pay special attention to the problem of borders. In the past, the issue of language borders was particularly a focus in comparative linguistics centering on the development and origin of the Slavic languages, or, let us say, even more broadly oriented toward the development of Indo-European languages. Typological works represent another group of comparative studies. Here, we can find initial revealing tracks of interest in research on the borders of the Slovak language. The Slovak language belongs to the fleective synthetic language group in pursuance of language expression, but also mainly in pursuance of linguistic structures.

Currently, in addition to following traditional comparative linguistic studies (comparative and typological), language coordinates and boundaries are more or less determined within the field of contrastive linguistics.

Among traditional researches on the Slovak language, only research on the Slovak dialects and its territorial division clearly focuses on the issue of borders of the language. Despite a rich tradition of dialectological research on the Slovak language even here, research still did not work intentionally on the issue of language borders. Dialects are still perceived as an integral part of the national language. We will return to the problem of territorial division later. Now, I would like to point out that the Slovak dialects beyond Slovakia were always examined as an integral part of the Slovak language with a background in the development of Slovak dialects in Slovakia (for example, Daniel Dudok: on Slovak dialects in Vojvodina; Pavol Ondrus: on Slovak dialects in Hungary; Pavol Rozkoš: on Slovak dialects in Romania; Jozef Štolc: on Slovak dialects in the former Yugoslavia).

2. Character of Borders between Languages and of Borders in the Language

The borders of the Slovak language are determined by several aspects: genetic, typological, areal, etc. Thus, they acquire the character of moving borders that vary in developmental and communication space. One of latter functional principles of expanding frontiers in use of the Slovak language is reflection of the Slovak language from the perspective of a foreigner and interest of foreigners in the active use of the Slovak language. Jana Pekarovičová opens her monograph with the following words: "It is gradually becoming more common to meet a foreigner who is communicating in Slovak or is looking for ways to get this ability, even in Slovakia or in various educational institutions abroad."² These are encouraging words for Slovak as a language with a relatively small number of users. And also, the foreigners speaking Slovak in Slovakia are enjoying quite decent support. The Slovaks are tolerant and grateful to foreigners for their manifestation of knowledge and for choosing to use the Slovak language.

Some resident users of the Slovak language may have concerns about the exosphere and the use of foreign terms in the Slovak language. Naturally, non-Slovak users bring to the Slovak language elements of their own endosphere that are, however, in a new majoritarian communication space perceived as xenic. This is because non-Slovak users come from different social and cultural lives. But no one objects to these communication interventions in the development of the Slovak language, even ordinary users of the Slovak language and linguists.

But the same or similar manifestations of linguistic behavior are evaluated differently among Slovaks and expatriates living a long time abroad when they arrive in the communication area of Slovakia.³

On the other side, more users of the Slovak language including some linguists are no longer so indulgent and polite towards the language

2 Jana Pekarovičová, *Slovenčina ako cudzí jazyk* [Slovak Language as a Foreign Language], predmet aplikovanej lingvistiky (Bratislava: Stimul, 2004), p. 7.

3 Slavomír Ondrejovič, *Jazyk, veda o jazyku, societa* (Bratislava: Veda, vydavateľstvo Slovenskej akadémie vied, 2008).

manifestations of the natural users of the Slovak language, which are motivated by the exosphere or are in some relation to reality abroad. And such attitudes are no longer considered to be ecological. Numbers of notable works have recently been written about these “linguistic” tensions.⁴

Most of the current discussions on the Slovak language are legitimately focused on the situation in the central communication and spatial area – on the linguistic situation in Slovakia. Only a minority of the linguistic and civic community in Slovakia is intimately familiar with some of the existential manifestations and varieties of the Slovak language outside the borders of Slovakia. Therefore, we still do not know the borders of the Slovak language.

We can talk about a dual type of linguistic border in this phenomenon: internal and external borders of the Slovak language.

To the field of internal borders we can include a complex tangle of developmental language phenomena including the adstrate and substrate spectrum. Thanks to these phenomena, the Slovak language is highly diversified with a cleverly built language-systemic and communication infrastructure. This process is not finished; the internal segmentation of language is in intensive progress even today, and this progress is enhanced by the wide social network and complicated interactive relationship between users. When it comes to solving the problem of internal borders of the Slovak language, the present systemic-linguistic infrastructure is in a state of radicalization. The infrastructure arguments are only “yes – no,” but the strength of these arguments encounters a wall of insufficient acceptance by members of the linguistic community. The Slovak language can no longer wear a bulletproof mask. For the linguistic community at the turn of the millennium, it is closer to considering the scale concept of language for its use in public. In such a situation, the new pragmatic-linguistic concept of a literary standardized Slovak language is logically formed. This model is systematically presented in the most recent publication of Ju-

4 For example, Ondrejovič, *Jazyk*; Juraj Dolník, *Teória spisovného jazyka so zreteľom na spisovnú slovenčinu* [*Theory of literary language*] (Bratislava: Veda, vydavateľstvo Slovenskej akadémie vied, 2010).

raj Dolník. This work is based on the positions of “self-communicating bearers of a particular language unit.”⁵

The external borders of the Slovak language relate to the development of the Slovak language under foreign conditions or under developmental conditions of linguistic enclaves and diaspora. In our recently published book on these issues, we registered approximately thirty countries with already-mentioned existential forms of the Slovak language.⁶ Slovak language manifestations in the concrete environment are all over-specific and they depend on the surrounding contact languages, cultural discourse, and the intensity and quality of pulsatile communication vectors. First of all, these manifestations depend on the specific needs of the language community and of language behavior in a variety of communicative spheres and situations. However, the common denominator for all foreign Slovak communities is a tendency to diasporization. Even traditional Slovak language islands, such as the Slovak language in Vojvodina, in Romania, or in Hungary, are clearly urbanizing and moving towards a linguistic diaspora.

The Slovak language of users living outside Slovakia apparently cannot leave a significant mark on communication skills and on communication convenience between Slovak speakers. However, it can expand the space of the Slovak language through compromise speech replicas. New language impulses do not penetrate into language usage only by direct language contact. Spreading of means of expression takes place even by distant forms. Even today, it is sometimes difficult to determine the actual border of language contacts. Therefore, in relation to the process of transmission of words, Galina P. Neščimenková talks about mixed, contact-distinctive transmission.⁷ This kind of linguistic globalization is not only a Slovak specificity: this feature of transmission is at least characteristic of the whole language Euro-area. This is characteristic of

5 Dolník, *Teória spisovného jazyka*, p. 117.

6 Miroslav Dudok, *Zachránený jazyk. State o enklávnej a diasporálnej slovenčine* (Nadlak, 2008).

7 G. P. Neščimenko, “Zaimstvovaniia kak proiavlennie kul’turno-iazykovykh kontaktov i ikh funkcionirovanie v iazyke-retsipiente,” in *Vstrechi etnicheskikh kul’tur v zerkale iazyka* (Moskva: Nauka, 2002), p. 132.

the language situation of Slovak that is a rather noticeable process of globalization. The borders in a language and between languages are not as sharp as they once were. The Slovak language is not influenced just by centers of language power, although it is largely regulated by them. The main influence comes from the users themselves. Therefore, we allowed characterization of the border of the Slovak language as a shifting border that is independent of abstract concepts or of an administrative (horizontal) view on the border phenomenon. The Slovak language border issue should not be seen as an object but as a process. Borders depend primarily on a dynamic process that is continuously shaped by people speaking in a constant interactive relationship. We perceive them (the borders) as an osmotic phenomenon. But unlike osmosis in chemical terms, which is about the spontaneous penetration of solvent molecules via a membrane into a solution, in terms of osmotic linguistic borders, it is about free as well as intentional permeation. This follows from interactive and inter-group language skills.

In this context, it is worth remembering the language self-confidence of most viable Slovak enclaves in Vojvodina and Romania. If preventive tools of linguistics had been strengthened, language self-confidence would be the same in some other neighboring countries, at least in those where Slovak has minority language status. Long-lasting evolution in specifically different conditions of language contacts and in acculturation processes allowed in these countries the preservation of the Slovak language in a shape that was inevitably replaced in Slovakia by newer forms that are more acceptable in the modern cultural life of contemporary users. On the other side, this long-lasting evolution allowed integration into its language skills such elements of the exosphere, which began to appear in the communication practice of the homeland only after opening of horizontal, "solid" borders. Thus, allowance for certain pluricentric concepts of the Slovak language in the field of Slavic studies might already have been made.⁸

We do not mean only lexical doublets and variants, which penetrate into the standard Slovak language through the openness of communica-

8 Dudok, *Zachránený jazyk*.

tion opportunities within the shifting borders of the national language. After all, for example, the lexeme of the substantive *sálaš* is not only a dialectism in the speech of the Slovaks in Vojvodina, Romania, Hungary, and Croatia, but, by its substantive meaning (approximate transl. = farmhouse in a remote area in a flat landscape), it exceeds the stylistic layer and extends the semantic field of the Slovak original standard written form of the lexeme *salaš* (transl. = shed, sheepfold, or small sheep farm in isolated mountainous countryside). It is therefore two separate cognitive-linguistic categories. For example, there are the standard terms *obec*, *osada*, etc. with extended meaning in the public speech of the Slovaks in Vojvodina, where the substantive *osada* (transl. = 1. settlement, 2. village) has the meaning of *obec* (transl. = 1. township, 2. municipality) and *obec* has the meaning of *okres* (transl. from standard written language = district). As another example, there are semi-communication variants or interlingual homonyms of this type, for example, *baňa* (transl. from standard written language = noun 1. mine, 2. pit; but in the speech of the Slovaks in the former Yugoslavia, the meaning of the word *baňa* = noun. 1. spa, 2. well).

Therefore, the spreading of the borders of the Slovak language in grammatical, textual, or some other layer should be noted as well.

When we consider the extension of the language borders of the Slovak language, we do not mean the inter-linguistic context only. Osmotic pressure is also present in the context of the inter-linguistic situation. Mutual language relations and causalities are perhaps the central issue of the most pushy slovakistic researches nowadays. But these researches are quite understandably focused on the central communication area of the Slovak language, and the peripheral zones and areas are mapped only occasionally. But also here are excellent results achieved, both from a material perspective as well as from a methodological one. We are referring to research into the use of the Slovak language in Eastern Slovakia at Prešov Linguistic School.

Impulses from foreign Slovak communities are involved in the interaction of language relations to a much lesser extent, and not even because they could have been tongue-tied communities (experience says it is rather the opposite), but because the existential matrices in the developmental conditions of language diaspora create a character of dissipa-

tive lingual and communication networks. While the Slovak language potential is one that is disappearing, the language potential of the host lingual community is not.⁹ Our knowledge of the language of these communities and knowledge of their contribution to a nationwide language thesaurus is complicated, *inter alia*, by the fact that we are dealing with heterogeneous and diffuse forms of language use. Therefore, our hypothetical conclusions may often be unadvised. At a recent philological conference, a certain Slovak lexicographer considered the possible influencing function of Slovaks from Vojvodina in the spread of the linguistic structure *Vidíme sa!* (verbatim of the English phrase *See you!*) in the communication area of the Slovak language in Slovakia in the last decade. Though it is true that this linguistic structure appeared much earlier in interpersonal communication between Slovaks in Vojvodina than in Slovakia, it is necessary to take into account the wider exosphere with a greater number of languages involved in this communication game, and not only the Serbian language that was the probable intermediary language in the linguistic expression of Slovaks from Vojvodina. But in Slovakia, we would acknowledge English (*See you!*) to be a host language rather than the Serbian language.

Anyway, the horizontal concept of a border between the center and the periphery in the Slovak language is becoming a thing of the past. The vertical concept is becoming more dominant. This is because the separation or the distance between the center and the periphery as a spiritual value in language is not worth its retardant role anymore. This is doubly true today at a time of information and communication technologies, when we can even completely abolish the distance or even talk about distance being in its final era; Frances Cairncross is encouraging us to think in these terms.¹⁰

In lexical and linguistic frameworks (borders), there is also included an **ecolinguistic** dimension (within democratization of the Slovak language, there is acceptance of the comfortable language alongside other varieties) and a **lingual-aesthetic** dimension where an existential motivation to employ these sources in the Slovak language can be seen.

9 Dudok, *Zachránený jazyk*.

10 Frances Cairncross, *Konec vzdálenosti* (Brno, 1999).

Thus, for example, in the sphere of public communication of **Slovaks in Vojvodina**, there is a common phrase in use: *chrestomatia* (transl. = chrestomathy) (used for example as a title of the publication *Chrestomatia slovenskej vojvodinskej poézie*, 2010: Backi Petrovac). In Slovakia, although this expression is known, in this context, preference is given to the domestic expression *čítanka* (transl. = 1. reading-book, 2. textbook). Slovak prescriptive linguists suggest the use of the term *čítanka* in Vojvodina as well. But for the local people there, *chrestomatia* is quite a comfortable expression, and is also in use in a broader language area, particularly in the Serbian language. And from the perspective of ecolinguistics, its use is in order and it represents a common standard within the creation of a linguistic image of the world of these users of the Slovak language in Vojvodina. The expression *čítanka* in the speech of the Vojvodina Slovaks is reserved only to refer to a reading book – as a teaching tool in literature at primary school.

3. Pluricentric Character of the Modern Slovak Language and the Slovak Language in Vojvodina

We have mentioned the Slovak language in Vojvodina in several contexts already, especially from the perspective of the nascent reflection of the Slovak language as a moderately pluricentric language.

The Slovak language is a differentiated, constructed language, which fully corresponds to its users. Therefore, the new developmental **concept of the Slovak language as the state language** may seem too narrow (or at least, it may seem too narrow for language planning within this concept represented by the so-called law on Slovak language enacted in 1995, and its later revision), because, according to several data, there remains more than half a community of native users of the Slovak language beyond the etatistic reach of Slovak borders.¹¹

Thanks to the social, cultural, and historical aspects mentioned, but especially to the language premises themselves, it is absolutely not pointless to think about the modern Slovak language as a pluricentric

¹¹ See the following website [<http://www.uszz.sk/sk/pocty-a-odhady/>].

language, which does not develop in all its complexity only in the homeland, but also has the character of a modern language in many Slovak enclaves.¹²

We can speak about a certain level of pluricentrism of the Slovak language and about the expanding borders of the modern Slovak language, as evidenced by both external and internal language features. Social status is one of its external premises. According to Heinz Kloss, literary standardized languages are pluricentric, or let us say, they report several equalized forms, where they figure as official and administrative languages of several independent states.¹³ According to the external social criteria, the Slovak language as a pluricentric language on a developmental horizon represents a dynamic category, and ultimately, the Slovak language abroad is in use as a language of public communication in Serbia, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Poland, Hungary, etc. In contrast to the somewhat outdated concept of language pluricentrism by H. Kloss, pluricentrism of the Slovak language is conceptualized and enhanced by distinctive ethno-cultural, communication, pragmatic, regiolectal, and similar vectors.

Since this was the direct cause of the beginning of specific development in the new environment, we will now briefly clarify this issue: How did the Slovaks come to these parts of the former Yugoslavia?

More organized, Slovaks began to migrate from the overpopulated Slovak counties of Upper Hungary to Vojvodina in today's northern Serbia in the eighteenth century, where this flat land remained almost completely depopulated after Ottoman raids. Therefore, Empress Maria Theresa supported the immigration process not only in Vojvodina, but in the whole region, in the so-called Lowlands. Colonization of border regions (the so-called Military Frontier) was in the charge of the Royal Chamber and it was coordinated from Vienna. This settlement was characterized by national, linguistic, cultural, and religious heterogeneity. Besides the Slovaks, also Germans, Hungarians, Romanians, Ruthenians, Czechs, etc. began to settle in this region. Vojvodina is now

12 Dudok, *Zachránený jazyk*.

13 Heinz Kloss, *Die Entwicklung neuer germanischer Kultursprachen seit 1800* (Düsseldorf, 1978), p. 67.

a part of Serbia. It consists of the districts of Bačka, Banat, and Srem. Vojvodina lies in the northern part of Serbia; it has a total surface area of 21,500 km² with a population of 2,032,000 inhabitants. The capital is Novi Sad and it is characterized by the fact that there are six official languages: Serbian, Hungarian, Slovak, Romanian, Croatian, and Ruthenian. According to data from 2002, there live here Serbs accounting for 65.05%; Hungarians, 14.28%; Slovaks, 2.79%; Croats, 2.78%; Yugoslavs, 2.45%; Montenegrins, 1.75%; Romanians, 1.5%; Roma, 1.43%; Ruthenians, 0.68%; and other nationalities, 7.19%.

The first Slovak settlers settled in Petrovac, Futog estate of Bačka district in the year 1745 (until today, Petrovac has been one of the most prosperous Slovak Vojvodina villages), with gradually emerging Slovak enclaves in other villages of Bačka (Slovaks of the Lutheran religion settled in Kulpín, Bajša, Hložany, Selenča, Silbaš, Kysáč, Laliť, and Palanka; Slovaks of the Catholic religion settled in Topola, Temerin, and Kupusina, but these, however, later became hungarized [process of magyarization]). In Banat district, Slovak villages have arisen (Párdány – today's Međa, Malý Gaj, from where they very soon resettled to other villages, and further, Kovačica, Padina, Jánošík, Biele Blato, Hajdušica, Aradáč, Zrenjanin, etc.). In Srem district, Slovaks settled in Stará Pazova at first and gradually settled in Boľovce, Bingula, Erdevik, Šid, Ljuba, Dobanovci, and Lug.

The main characteristic of Slovaks moving to Bačka, Banat, and Srem districts, respectively, to today's Vojvodina, is that it was organized and supported by the King's Chamber and by the new landlords. In the name of these, authorized persons (so-called impopulators) brought the immigrant people, mostly under generous conditions, and settled them in areas devastated after the departure of the Ottomans (as it is documented by Futog landlord Mihajlo Carnojević and by the records of Slovak inhabitants of Petrovac from 1745). As a matter of fact, at that time, a labor force in the Lowlands was very rare, so some benefits were provided for the settlers. They were granted land for cultivation, they were offered a discount on the building of houses, assistance was offered to them in obtaining agricultural tools, and so on, so they could cultivate their allocated land as soon as possible and grow produce for themselves and for the country.

The Slovak population from less fertile mountainous regions (from all counties of Central Slovakia – but mostly from Hont, Novohrad, Gemer, and Zvolen Counties, from some counties of Western Slovakia, and from all counties of Eastern Slovakia) have voluntarily migrated to the fertile regions of the Lowlands. Many left individually due to poor living and religious conditions, and many fled because of growing aristocratic oppression.

Already in the eighteenth century had Slovak settlers settled in the surrounding Slovak linguistic areas, in Komárno, Hont, Novohrad (Nógrád), Pest, Heves, Borsod, and other counties of today's Hungary. Later, they moved further south to Vojvodina. So the first Slovak settlers in Bačka, Srem, and Banat came directly from Slovak counties or Hungarian counties.¹⁴

In several cases, especially in villages with a Slovak majority, there exist many written records with an exact date of arrival and origin of the Slovaks in Vojvodina (such as documents about Slovaks moving to Kysáč, or to Slovanski Bardan).¹⁵ But most often there is circumstantial evidence handed down in the family or in surnames containing the name of the original region of the immigrants (surnames with suffixes of the following type: *-an*, *-ian*, *-en*, *-ec*, *-ský*, *-áč*, etc., for example: *Turčan* (native of Turiec), *Chlebian* (from Chlebany), *Častven* (from Častá), *Oravec* (native of Orava), *Stupavský* (from Stupava), *Hronec* (native of Hron), *Záhorec* (native of Záhorie), *Myjavec* (from Myjava), *Ábelovský* (from Ábelová), *Medovarský* (from Medovarce), *Kokavský* (from Kokava nad Rimavicou), *Cinkotský* (from Cinkota, now part of Budapest), *Krnáč* (from Krná v Novohrade), etc.). These Slovak surnames are preserved until today.¹⁶

14 Ján Sirácky, *Sťahovanie Slovákov na Dolnú zem v 18. a 19. storočí*. (Bratislava: Veda, 1966).

15 See, for example, Ján Marko, "Cesty presídľovania slovenských rodín z Bardáňa," in M. Dudok, ed., *250 rokov života Slovákov vo Vojvodine* (Beograd-Nový Sad, 1996), pp. 29–53.

16 Daniel Dudok, *Priezviská Slovákov v Juhoslávii* (Nový Sad: Spolok vojvodinských slovakistov, 1999).

Today in Vojvodina lives a stable Slovak community of about 60,000 members. It is one of most viable Slovak foreign communities that cultivates its language through a strong network of pulse vectors of language preservation.¹⁷ There are Slovak schools from the lowest level to university education and the Slovak language is used in church and in public relations; the Slovak community is devoted to literature, they publish their own newspapers and books in the Slovak language, radio and television broadcasts are aired in the Slovak language, and so on. But it is true that the Slovak language in Vojvodina has the status of a minority language and all users of the Slovak language are also Slovak-Serbian bilinguals. Besides the Serbian language, Slovaks also came and still come into direct contact with Hungarian, Romanian, Ruthenian, and other languages, but these languages do not have such an impact on the Slovak language as the Serbian language.

The Slovak language in Vojvodina (as in other enclaves and diaspora) is an (integral) part of the Slovak national language. However, as the language of the enclave, it has exceeded the borders of the national language and recruited such means of expression that constitute a specific regiolect. The Slovak language in Vojvodina does not store a linguistic memory of language from the motherland only, but includes a mixture of phenomena characteristic of the Mediterranean, Balkan, and Central European language area. And it does not manifest itself only at the most open language level – at the lexical level itself. As such, the lexical level differentially keeps culturemes that have lost their transparency or are absent in other interlingual areas. What exactly do we mean? For example, in the Slovak enclaves of the Lowlands is a difference between the nouns *dyňa* (*Citrus vulgaris*) – *melón* (*Cucumis Melo*), or even in common dialect speech *gerega* – *d'iňa*, while in Slovakia, there is a lexical distinction in the regular communication of this form: *červený melón* (transl. = watermelon) – *cukrový melón* (transl. = sweet melon). Parallel development of the contemporary Slovak language in Slovakia and the Slovak language of the enclave also takes place at other language levels.

In the Slovak language of the enclave, such as the Slovak language of Vojvodina, miscellaneousness appears at the phonetic-phonological

17 Dudok, *Zachránený jazyk*.

and grammatical level, in the communication, stylistic, and pragmatic spheres and so on.¹⁸

For example, at present, the quantity of language expressions of the Slovaks from Vojvodina is preserved both in literary manifestations and in ordinary speech. Recently, however, the internal border of language has been disrupted and vernacular customs strongly penetrate into the spoken standard of the language. This is the result of language democratization and of expansion of language features in the Slovak spoken form in this community. This is manifested especially in monophthongization in place of the standard positional diphthong *ô* in the words *mój* < *môj*; *móžem* < *môžem*; *vóbec* < *vôbec*; *vól'a* < *vôl'a*. Separation from living language production in the homeland is reflected by alternating vowels in the root of substituted words.

Quite frequent are alternations of the standard short vowel *a* with the non-standard vowel *á*: *kávka* < *kavka* (zool. *Coloeus*); of the short vowel *i* with the non-standard vowel *í*: *korída* < *korida*; *líga* < *liga*; of the standard vowel *u* with the non-standard vowel *i*: *bife* < *bufet*; *bista* < *busta*; *dina* < *duna*; and so on. In the grammatical layer is characteristic gender conversion; significant is masculinisation (transition and classifying of feminine and neuter nouns to masculine nouns): *adad'o* m. < *addagio* n.; *alpínium* m. < *alpínium* n.; *andante* m. < *andante* n.; *briket* m. < *briketa* f.; *broš* m. < *brošňa* f.; *brús* m. < *brúska* f.

Original structures are preserved at the syntactic level, but by a significant increase in the functions of the Slovak language in Vojvodina over the last fifty years, the formation of evident convergent and divergent syntactic phenomena has occurred. Convergent-divergent processes in the development of syntactic constructions take place mainly within the functional structuring of the text (linguistic expression) and move on the line of communication spheres, from official communication to conventional communication, and to family communication and interpersonal communication. The bilingual situation has allowed an increase in the usage of the type as a deverbative structure: *dat' príspevok* – *prispiet'*

18 Miroslav Dudok, "Jazyková situácia a členenie slovenčiny v juhoslovanskej Vojvodine," in *Sociolingvistické aspekty vývinu slovenčiny* [Sociolinguistica Slovaca 1] (Bratislava, 1995), pp. 216–226.

(transl. give contribution – contribute). Deverbative structures became significantly domesticated (and standardized) after 1945 in the Serbian language.¹⁹

In the language of the Slovak language community in Vojvodina, there are clearly seen certain traces of balkanization at an internal level, thanks to the Serbian language being the dominant language through which penetrates more information on the mentality of Slovak language users in Vojvodina:²⁰

- a) penetration of the structure “*da* + present continuous verb” into common colloquial Slovak language instead of the standard infinitive construction (*chcem da spievam* < ser. *želim da pevam* ---> *chcem spievať*) (approx. transl. = I want **to singing** < ser. I want **to sing** ---> I wanna sing);
- b) domestication of clausal member formants of such kind as *jeden*, *nejaký človek*, etc.

4. Foreign Slovak Language

Almost three centuries ago, the Slovak language stepped out of its developmental center and left the borders of Slovakia, known as Upper Hungary and later the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and then Czechoslovakia. When it comes to the language of the Slovak community outside of Slovakia, it is still productive to use the term “language of the enclave” and “language of the diaspora.”

Language of the enclave linguistically, and particularly ethnically and culturally, forms the character of a relatively compact community. A language enclave is the result of development of the European geopolitical situation from the eighteenth to the twentieth century. The Slovak language of the enclave is the result of external geopolitical changes. After the reforms of Maria-Theresa and Emperor Joseph II, and after the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire in southern Pannonia, in the

19 Živojin Stanojčić, *Gramatika i jezik* (Titograd, 1987).

20 According to Milorad Radovanović, *Spisi iz kontekstualne gramatike* (Sremski Karlovci-Noví Sad, 1997).

Lowlands and in the Bohorului Mountains (in today's Romania) arose strong Slovak language islands with uninterrupted cultural, spiritual, and physical contact with the homeland. After 1918, on these islands of Slovak language, Slovak minorities were formed. And then, the Slovak minorities found themselves in new state formations, outside of the borders of Slovakia, being Slovak minorities in Romania, Yugoslavia, Hungary, Bulgaria, Poland, and Ukraine. After the breakup of the former Yugoslavia in the twentieth century, more numerous Slovak minorities found themselves in new developmental conditions in Serbia and Croatia, and in small numbers scattered in Slovenia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Bosnia, and Herzegovina; after the collapse of the Czechoslovak Federation, a Slovak minority also found itself in the Czech Republic. Thus, the numerous Slovak communities acquired the status of a national minority.

The language of the diaspora is heterogeneous in nature: its bearers are individuals and community members who live dispersed, far from the core of the native people.

At present, the number of Slovak foreign enclaves is decreasing, but on the other hand, the number of Slovaks who live in diaspora conditions is increasing. This tendency is not characteristic of Slovaks overseas only, but is also characteristic of Slovaks in the countries of the former Yugoslavia. In Slovenia, Montenegro, Bosnia, and Herzegovina, the Slovak language never had the character of an enclave language: there is a natural kind of Slovak diaspora. The tendency towards diasporization is already manifest even in Vojvodina. It is a natural development of enclaves in urban conditions and in conditions of free movement of people.

However, it is necessary to consciously promote pulsatile vectors to maintain the foreign Slovak language in its broadest functional scope to avoid being replaced by its users with a dominant language. This creates a need **to constitute preventive linguistics even in slovakistics**. We have outlined the first theoretical attempts of this kind in our publication.²¹ The basis of the theory and practice of preventive linguistics, when it comes to Slovak enclaves and diaspora, is in the conscious support of the Slovak educational system, promoting manifestations of

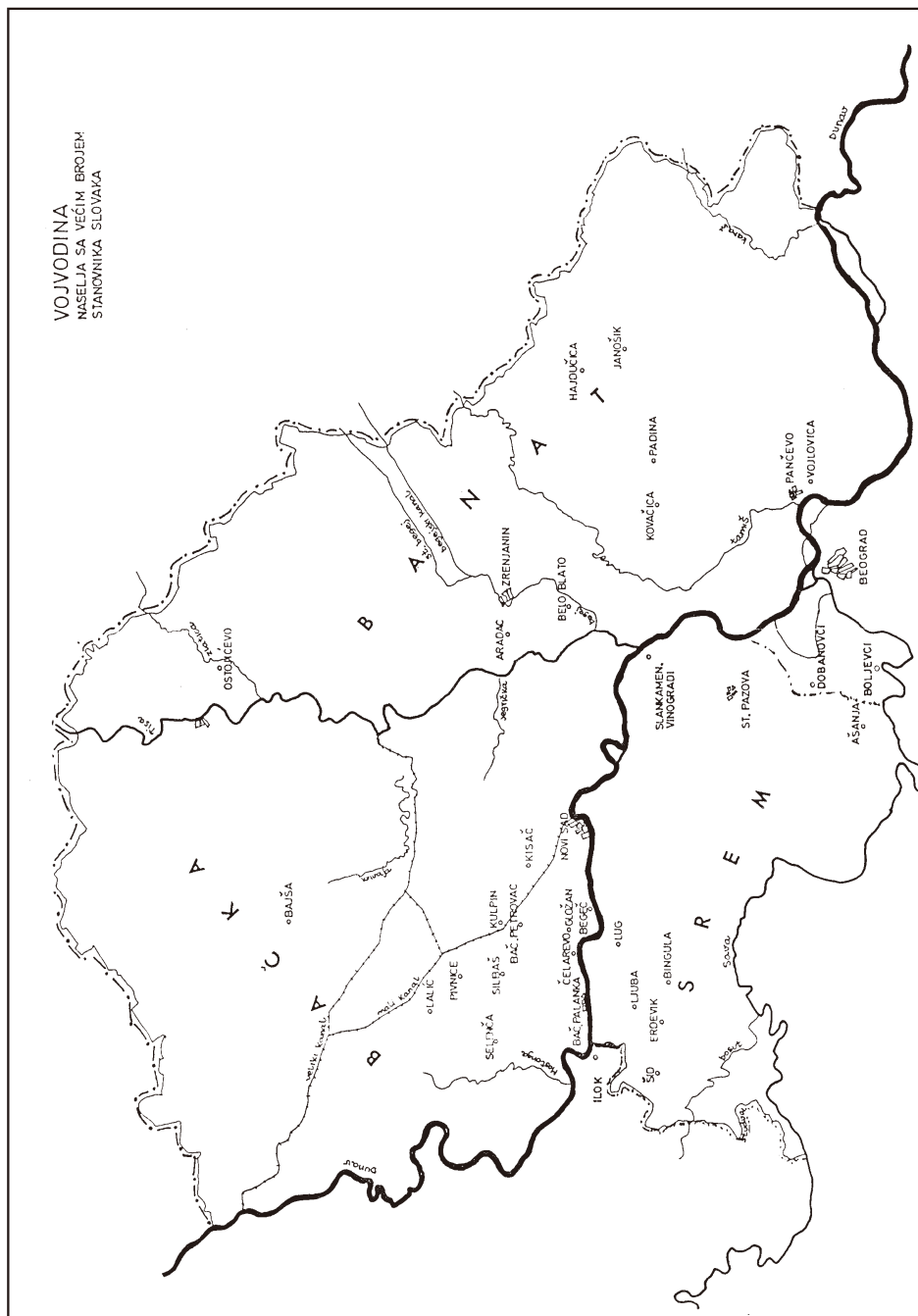
21 Dudok, *Zachránený jazyk*.

cultural and spiritual life, supporting cultural traditions, but also stimulating economic independence. Literary Slovak language in Vojvodina is used as a language of education from preschool to university, as the language of public communication of the radio, television, and press, as the language of literature, and as a monumental language in church. In the family circle and in the street resounds the dialectal form. The central Slovak dialect is used most often. The Western Slovak dialect is used only in the village of Pivnica and in the Catholic part of Selenča. Therefore, Slovaks in Vojvodina are deservedly symbolically called a “vivid sprig.” It is not like this in Slovak foreign countries elsewhere. In many countries, Slovak is an already-dormant language, as it is called (language in a close family circle).

5. Conclusion

We would like to emphasize once again that research on language borders is an important topic in contemporary linguistics. On the features of the Slovak language, we have pointed out that the borders of the Slovak language are indeed firmly established, but are heterogeneous in nature. As we have outlined, the borders can be internal and external. They represent the natural givenness of the Slovak language, and in our opinion, they should remain so. And finally, let me express my sincere thanks to my Japanese friends, colleagues, and organizers of this seminar for the opportunity to participate in such a scientific event presenting issues on Slovak language borders and for the opportunity to specifically introduce fundamental issues of the Slovak language in Vojvodina.

Appendix 1: The Major Settlements of Slovaks in Vojvodina



Source: Dr. Mila Bošić (1987), *Narodna nošnja Slovaka u Vojvodini* (Novi Sad: Muzej Vojvodine)