

SLOVENIAN LINGUISTICS TODAY

Editor's Foreword

I

This special edition of *Slavistična revija*, designed as a collection of original research articles, essays and studies, presents, both in Slovenian and English, thematic fields researched during the past ten or fifteen years which have left a mark on the linguistic thought in Slovenia. The contributions for the present volume have been largely written anew or at least revised or supplemented.

The idea to present the research conducted by current Slovenian linguistics internationally, which had been considered for quite some time by the linguistic editorial board of *Slavistična revija*, was finalized in the autumn of 2004, when the financial reality of such a »project« was brought forward by the executive editor, Prof. Tomo Korošec. The ambitious plan to publish all the contributions also in the English language has proven a substantial burden from not only the scholarly and organizational viewpoints, but also the financial one.

Which were the starting criteria for the formation of thematic fields and thus for the selection of authors in this volume? First of all, precedence has been given to the generation of linguists who had followed in the footsteps of eminent linguistic personalities such as Prof. J. Toporišič, Prof. M. Orožen, Prof. B. Pogorelec, Prof. Z. Zorko, and succeeded them in educational and research institutions. In addition, both formal and content-related criteria have been taken into account. We have certainly aimed to include topics which had been treated in monographs, presented in relevant journals, had proven relevant to the field of linguistics and had therefore been often treated, subjects which can also be topical in the European area or are particularly relevant to the Slovenian region, etc. We have, hopefully, managed to present the main fields of expertise of individual authors who, to a great extent, form the current linguistic thought in Slovenia and transfer its findings to lecture halls on a regular or temporary basis.

However, it needs to be stated that the situation presented here provides just an approximate picture of the current ability of Slovenian linguistics for two basic reasons. Firstly, the contents had to be narrowed down for the purpose of this publication. The wealth of production by Slovenian linguists, however, inspires hope, since it shows all the liveliness and dynamism of Slovenian linguistics as this is co-created by the youngest generation; during the two years of the preparation of the present volume, several important works have either been published or are about to be published, such as the text-linguistic monograph *Besedilne značilnosti javne govorjene besede* [Textual Characteristics of Public Speech] by Mira Kranjc, the phonetic-phonological monograph *Samoglasniški nizi v slovenščini* [Vowel Clusters in Slovenian] by Peter Jurgec, and the sociolinguistic monograph *Slovenščina v stiku z nemščino* [Slovenian in Contact with German] (forthcoming) by Saška Štumberger. The second reason for the limited scope of the present volume and thus the number of authors' contributions lies in the financial resources available to the publishers.

II

The present volume consists of twenty three articles organized into three basic thematic groups: *Grammar and Lexicon* brings fifteen studies, subdivided into sections on Contemporary Language and on Language in Diachronic Perspective, which, to a certain degree, affects the research methodology. It proved sensible to further subdivide the Contemporary Language section into General Linguistic Topics with six contributions, Dialect Topics with two contributions and Corpus Linguistic Topics with another two contributions. The Language in Diachronic Perspective section comprises five articles. Three extensive studies have been grouped under the heading *Textology and Journalistic Writing*, and five under *Sociolinguistics*, with the last contribution, dealing with developmental changes in early childhood speech, verging on the field of psycholinguistics.

At least four studies from the thematic group on grammar and lexicon are directly based on findings concerning the organic connectedness between these two metalinguistic concepts. The study entitled *On the Categorialness of Lexemes between Lexicon and Grammar* (A. Vidovič Muha) is to be seen as a kind of basis underlying the formation of the common grammatico-lexical section. The syntagmatic aspect, which is next to the paradigmatic aspect the basic defining element of the lexical meaning, stems from the categorial semantic features, the defining units of sentence elements; therefore a change in the syntactic function of a lexeme results in a change in the categorial semantic features and thus in a change of the lexical meaning. The basic textual unit – the sentence meaning – thus becomes an element connecting the lexicon and the grammar. The totality of the language is confirmed by the study *Metonymic Meanings: Syntagmatic Aspect* (J. Snoj) in which the author (following Apresjan) includes the proposition of the sentence in her argumentation for the metonymy of the lexical meaning. The syntagmatic aspect serves as the basis for a semantic typology of verbs in the study *Valency in Standard Slovenian with Special Reference to the Verb* (A. Žele); the semantic difference in a verb results from the difference in its valency as a semantico-structural syntactic phenomenon. The word-formational contribution *Stylistically Marked New Derivatives – A Typology* (N. Logar) also builds on the possibility of syntactic and syntactico-semantic interpretation of derivatives, on the generative-transformational connection between the syntactic unit – the syntactic base, and the derivative as a connection of morphemes; the inability to carry out such a procedure affects the word-formational stylistics. The study entitled *Some Characteristics of the Dual in Slovenian* (A. Derganc) discusses the vitality of the syntactic category of number, with particular attention being paid to the dual. The only non-semantic article within this thematic group is the contribution *Formant Frequencies of Vowels in Tonal and Non-Tonal Standard Slovenian* (P. Jurgec), dealing with differences between the formant structure of the vowels in non-tonemic and tonemic speakers.

Both contributions from the field of Slovenian dialectology are of interest particularly from the viewpoint of possible, if only indirect, methodological comparison. The first, entitled *Structuralism in Slovenian Dialectology* (K. Kenda Jež), brings an overview of the structural analysis method, connected particularly to the introduction of traditional phonological procedures in the 1960s in, for example, the works by J.

Rigler. The article *A Geolinguistic Examination of Gender in Singular: Neuter Nouns in -o in Slovenian Dialects* (V. Smole), however, is based on the method of the so-called linguistic geography as used in the Slovenian linguistic atlas.

The studies from the field of corpus linguistics present the possibilities of corpus data use in the lexicon or lexico-semantic research following the methodology of frequency. The survey *Corpus Linguistics and Lexical Descriptions of the Slovenian Language* (V. Gorjanc) uses concrete examples to illustrate the possibilities of following changes appearing in the lexicon of the Slovenian language. The article *Corpus Approach in Phraseology and Dictionary Applications* (P. Gantar) presents an experiment to test the degree of semantic unity of multiword lexemes on the basis of syntagmatic criteria (collocations).

The five studies from the Language in Diachronic Perspective section put forward individual morpho-lexical and phonological issues. Outside this framework remains the article entitled *Notional Elements of Marko Pohlin's Kraynska grammatika (1768)* (J. Honzak Jahić), stressing the difference in the sociolinguistic configuration of Slovenian and Czech respectively, based on a comparison with Rosa's and, partly, Pohl's grammars. The innovative survey *The Slovene Sound System through Time* (M. L. Greenberg) discusses the lasting and processual character of phonetic change in language development; the explanation of these changes shows an intertwining of structural, social, cognitive, and geographical factors. The study *Verbal Aspect in Correlation with Other Verbal Categories in the 16th-Century Slovenian Literary Language* (M. Merše) establishes a functional correlation between the lexical categorial feature of aspect and the syntactic verbal categories, particularly the tense, but also the mode and the voice, based on the analysis of Slovenian Protestant texts. Also dealing with morphological issues of Slovenian is the contribution *Participial and Gerundival Constructions in -č and -ši in Slovenian* (M. Jesenšek), focussing on the origins of both forms and the attitude of the standard language towards them. A grammatico-lexical topic is discussed in *Prepositional Phrases in the Development of the Slovenian Literary Language* (I. Orel). Based on an analysis of extensive material, the contribution aims to track down formal and semantic changes in prepositional phrases from the 16th century until today. The stylistic aspect, resulting from the datedness of such phrases, is mainly based on the paradigmatic – synonymic – point of view.

The second thematic group, dealing with textology and journalistic writing, comprises three essays. A valuable critical survey *On Elements of Text Linguistics in Slovenian Linguistics* (T. Korošec) brings views on the creation and development of textology in Slovenia since its beginnings in the 1970s, when the frameworks of traditional poetics and rhetoric were sought to be preserved, covers the 1980s, characterized by individual reflections on European textology and dealing particularly with journalistic and scientific language issues, until today, when we can witness an independent text-linguistic progress both in individual dissertations as well as monographs. Another survey, based on interesting material, is provided in *Stylistics of Journalism and Journalistic Style: From the First Daily Newspapers to the Tabloidisation of the Media* (M. Kalin Golob); the study builds on the monograph *Stilistika slovenskega poročevalstva* by Korošec, which is, according to Kalin Golob, »the first really exhaustive and theoretically complete stylistical and textological analysis of

journalistic texts also in European and American linguistics«. The development of Slovenian journalism is presented by means of an interpretation of these issues as understood by some linguists and also by means of an analysis of journalistic texts. The study *The Use of Semantic Potency of Phraseological Units* (E. Kržišnik) belongs to the textological thematic group only indirectly; it provides a presentation of a textologically recognizable typology of phraseological renewals (taking into account both main phraseological schools, the Russian and the German), while aiming to achieve terminological clarity and unambiguousness in Slovenian phraseology.

Among the five studies grouped under the third thematic sociolinguistic section, the afore mentioned article titled *Language Development in Early Childhood: Developmental Changes between the Ages of Three and Four* (S. Kranjc, L. Marjanovič Umek, U. Fekonja) is a psycholinguistic one. By monitoring the textual, structural-syntactic and pragmatic competence, significant quality changes in the language development of three- and four-year-olds can be established while taking into account the child's social environment. Two contributions in particular build on the linguistic-cultural aspect: *On Foreignisms and Borrowings in Slovene* (M. Snoj) discusses the need to distinguish between borrowed lexemes from the viewpoint of the medium as this affects the social status of the borrowed lexeme, namely its formal or colloquial status. The study *Language, Society and Culture: Slovene in Contact with English* (N. Šabec) particularly interesting findings concerning the diversity of linguistic-cultural patterns in both languages and the consequent potential misunderstandings in communication. The survey *The Outlines of Slovenian Language Policy* (M. Stabej) presents the tendencies of the current Slovenian language policy, based on important documents and official standpoints. The success of a language policy is conditioned by the success of »the plan for the assertion of the status of the Slovenian language«. The contribution *Attitudes towards Social Speech among Different Social Groups in Slovenia* (A. E. Skubic) is innovative with respect to the questionnaire-confirmed conclusion that education affects the evaluation of language or the attitude towards various marked language elements. It brings an interesting finding that middle-school educated people show greater intolerance towards vulgarisms, dialectal and slang expressions than primary-school or university educated people.

III

The outlines of current Slovenian linguistics as given in the present volume bear witness to a wide dispersal of themes, but also manage to show the main thematic foci. While it is true that the grammatico-lexical topics viewed both synchronically and diachronically remain at the centre of interest, it cannot be denied that Slovenian linguistics of the present moment is characterized by significant textological and sociolinguistic shares. One option to confirm the validity of the conclusions put forward by all three segments is offered by corpora of texts as one of the directly applicable branches of corpus linguistics.

For the publication of this extensive volume, the first one to bring an authors' presentation of Slovenian linguistics, thanks are due to my fellow linguists from the editorial board of *Slavistična revija* for their cooperation in both the conception of

this volume and many a scholarly decision. I would especially like to thank the executive editor, Prof. Tomo Korošec, for having supported the idea of bringing out such a volume and for his help in soliciting financial support for the publication. The translators have, naturally, carried out an important task, particularly our colleague, Ms. Marta Pirnat Greenberg, who has not only translated a considerable number of the contributions herself, but has also undertaken the responsible and necessary task of coordinating the translations by so many different translators. My sincere thanks to all of them. Appreciation and recognition for her hard work should be expressed to editorial board member, Dr. Andreja Žele. She knew how to bring together and motivate a competent group of translators and coped with their coordination, which surpassed the technical and reached into the scholarly. I would also like to thank the Scientific Research Institute of the Faculty of Arts for its financial contribution to the translation and publication of this volume.

Hopefully, this extensive account of the current abilities of Slovenian linguistics, if only fragmentary, will find its way to both Slovenian and foreign professional audiences and help stimulate an interest in the Slovenian language, as well as Slovenian science and culture on the whole.

Ada Vidovič Muha
Editor