

Gerhard Neweklowsky *Der Gailtaler slowenische Dialekt: Feistritz an der Gail/Bistrice na Zilji und Hohenthurn/Straja vas. Unter Mitarbeit von Denise Branz, Christina Kircher-Zwittnig und Juruj Perč.* Klagenfurt-Wien/Celovec-Dunaj: Drava Verlag/Založba Drava. 2013. 178 pages. ISBN: 9783854357193.

The languages of the “old” Slavic minorities in Austria, the Slovenes in Carinthia and Steiermark and the Croatians in the Burgenland, only rarely receive the attention they deserve. This is surprising because these languages are of special interest to linguists for a number of reasons. Firstly, they show the effects of intense, long-term contact with neighbouring German dialects. These contacts often resulted in large-scale lexical and structural borrowing. Although all areas show heavy borrowing, the influence of German is not always equally large and the elements that were borrowed are not always identical. Secondly, both Slovene and Croatian spoken in Austria often preserve archaisms not found in Slovenian spoken in Slovenia or Croatian spoken in Croatia. Finally, the Slovene and Croatian dialects in Austria (unfortunately) often present interesting case studies for language loss and language death.

Detailed studies of the subjects mentioned above are made more difficult because of the linguistic heterogeneity of the Slovene and Croatian spoken in Austria. In the case of Carinthian and Styrian Slovene, this is because their 1400-year presence in mountainous terrain with only limited mutual contact led to significant dialectal differences. In the case of Burgenland Croatian, the people who settled the Burgenland in the 16<sup>th</sup> century from various parts of what are now Bosnia and Croatia brought different dialects with them. As a result, there is a patchwork of Croatian dialects in the Burgenland. In order to obtain a clear picture of the Slavic spoken in Austria, one would thus have to take into account every single dialect. At present, this is impossible because only a very small percentage of the dialects has been described with enough detail. Because almost all Slovene and Croatian dialects in Austria are endangered, one would expect that describing them would have the highest priority

in the Austrian, Slovene and Croatian linguistic communities. Sadly, this is not the case (See Houtzagers 2013 about Burgenland Croatian.). Over the last 25 years, only two monographic descriptions of a Croatian dialect in Austria (Neweklowsky 1989, Mühlgaszner & Szucsich 2005) and two monographic descriptions of a Slovene dialect in Austria (Karničar 1990, Pronk 2009) have been published. Dialectal data have further been made available in a handful of articles and a few unpublished *Diplomarbeiten*, e.g., Krivograd 1996, Černut 2008. At this rate, the vast majority of Slavic dialects in Austria will have disappeared before they have been properly described.

It will be clear from the above that the publication of a new monograph about the Slovene dialect of the Gailtal ‘Gail Valley’ in Carinthia is already in itself great news. The monograph in question offers a description of the dialect of the eastern part of the Gailtal on the basis of fieldwork conducted in the villages of Feistritz, Achomitz, Göriach and Draschitz as part of a seminar about Slovene dialectology at the University of Klagenfurt. The only description of this dialect to date is Viktor Paulsen’s unpublished 1935 dissertation. Because Paulsen focusses on the phonology of the dialect and operates with a limited number of forms, much of the dialect has until recently remained obscure. The author of the new description is the experienced dialectologist Gerhard Neweklowsky, who wrote the book in cooperation with Denise Branz, Christina Kircher-Zwittnig and Jurij Perč. Neweklowsky (hereafter N) has spent the last 40 years researching Slovene and Croatian dialects and has written a number of important monographs and articles about these dialects (See the references at the end of this review.). Let us take a closer look at his monograph about the Gailtal dialect.

The first 38 pages of the book form the introduction, with a useful overview of the role of the dialect in church and school and a description of previous research. The next 45 pages describe the grammar of the dialect: phonology (including historical phonology), morphonology, (limited) morphology and selected observations about syntax. This is followed by a small selection of interesting lexical items. In these sections, N often contrasts his findings with the data in the existing dialectological literature, in particular with Paulsen’s description and with my own 2009 description of the dialect spoken in the westernmost Slovene speaking villages in the Gailtal. The chapter on grammar is followed by a number of dialect texts with translations into German and Standard Slovene (16 pages), an overview of the structural similarities and differences between the dialect of Feistritz and other Carinthian Slovene dialects, a comparative lexicon and an extensive bibliography.

The rich comparative lexicon of 64 pages contains over 1500 entries and regularly offers the corresponding forms from Paulsen 1935 and Pronk 2009, often also from other Carinthian dialects and the Standard Language. The notation used in the lexicon is not always consistent, especially when there exists variation in pronunciation. Examples are the inconsistent notation of etymologically long vowels in closed syllables and the notation of reduced *schwa* in posttonic, non-final syllables. The dialect appears to allow optional shortening of long vowels in closed syllables and

optional deletion of *schwa* in posttonic, non-final syllables. When *schwa* is lost, voice assimilation may occur (N 48, 62). In the more western dialects, voice assimilation is rarer in such cases (Pronk 2009: 33). Variants resulting from the reduction of *schwa* are, e.g., infinitives in *-nətə* or *-ŋtə*, e.g., *zdígnətə*, *spwákənətə*, but *sprázŋtə*. Verbs in *\*-C-iti* normally have a long vowel in the root, e.g., *róbtə*, *prprábtə*, but some examples show shortening of the vowel in a syllable that became closed after the reduction of *schwa*, e.g., *ròbtə* (twice), *sprábtə*. Yet other infinitives retain a long vowel but do show voice assimilation after *schwa* loss, *wáptə* < *\*vabiti*, *pəzáptə* < *\*pozabiti*. The preservation of vowel length in some of the verbs mentioned above in *-nətə/-ŋtə* contrasts with the situation in the western part of the Gailtal, where such verbs always have a short root vowel, e.g., *zìgŋti*, *spwákŋti*, *sprázŋti*.

An example of variation that is not due to orthography is the fact that verbs ending in stressed *-itə* are accented in two different ways in the book: we find a number of verbs in *-ítə*, e.g., *nasítə*, *hadítə*, *wazítə/wəzítə*, *prəsítə*, *zəmítə*, *daβítə*, while most verbs have *-itə*, e.g., *nadrítə*, *pakrapítə*, *pamadítə*, *padarítə*, *prməknítə*, *sədítə*, *skačítə*; *spətəknítə*, *šəšítə*, *zɡadítə sə*, *zɡəβítə sə*, *žəβarítə*, *žənítə (sə)* (examples from N 50, the dialect texts and the lexicon). Note also *wəčítə* ‘to teach’ next to *wəčítə sə* ‘to learn’ (N 168). These variants are remarkable if one of them is not due to a typing or printing error. N does not mention the allomorphs explicitly in the section on grammar. Although the distribution is not perfect, all except one (*daβítə*, with the exceptional present *daβón*) of the verbs in *-itə* have root-stress on an etymological *\*o* in the present, while most of the verbs in *-ítə* have end-stress in the present. In the western Gailtal, the suffix always has a high tone when stressed, e.g., *nəsíti*, *ndríti*. The subject deserves further investigation.

The number of typing errors I noticed is very small. Here is a short list: *matika* (39) for *matíka*; *smìətnák* (157) for *smíətnák*; *bašk* (106) for *βàšk*; *kàmba* (106) for *kàmβa*; *bóləzŋ* (56) for *βóləzŋ*; *pandələk* (61) for *pandíələk*; several infinitives in the lexicon end in *-ti* instead of correct *-tə*, while some infinitives cited from the western Gailtal dialect end in *-tə* instead of correct *-ti*. There are a few other forms that are cited from Pronk 2009 in which a typing error occurs: *pələdati*, *pələdan* (144) for *pələdati*, *pələdan*; *pəsnəti* for *pəsnéti* (145); *mənka* for *mènka*. In some other cases, the form is cited correctly, but the data in Pronk 2009 are incorrect: *dlóg* (121) should be *dlóg*, *gwáze* (126) should be *gwáze*, and *blišče* (115) is not a noun meaning ‘lightning’ but only a 3sg. present form meaning ‘flashes’.

My own fieldwork in the eastern part of the Gailtal is limited to a few hours only (2011, informant Maria Bartoloth from Göriach, born 1938), but it largely conforms to N’s data. The only structural difference concerns the two diphthongs *iə* and *uə* that N distinguishes, reflexes of either older long vowels or resulting from a relatively recent stress retraction. In cases belonging to the latter category „konnten vereinzelt Diphthonge des Typs *ea*, *oa* gehört werden“ (N 60). Mrs. Bartoloth, however, consistently distinguishes *iə* from *ea* and *uə* from *oa*, with *iə* and *uə* from a long vowel and *ea* and *oa* resulting from stress-retraction. Her language is, in this respect, more

archaic than that of N's informants. Other archaisms in Bartoloth's language not included in N's book are the imperative *spə* 'sleep!' and the 1pl.pres. *žanèama* 'we drive' and *parèama* 'we wash' (from earlier *\*ženemò*, *\*peremò*). For verbs of this type, N (69) provides a 1pl.pres. *pačéma* 'we bake', with the same vocalism as 1sg. *pačén*, 2sg. *pačěš*, 3sg. *pačé* (similarly in the western Gailtal). Another interesting verbal form is the neuter past participle of 'to be', *βūə* (*βūə* in my own field notes) < *\*bilô* (cf. masc. *βiw*, fem. *βwà*). This form confirms that the Gailtal dialect underwent the forward shift of the falling tone, i.e., *\*bilo* > *\*bilô*. This stress shift is found in all other dialects of Slovene, but it has been a matter of debate whether the Gailtal dialect also took part in the shift (See Pronk 2011 with lit.).

N draws attention to two other forms that are interesting from a historical point of view: the nom.pl. *štânžə* along with nom.sg. *štānga* 'pole', a loanword from German *Stange*, and the nom.pl. *štīnžə* 'stairs' from German *Stiege*, dial. *stiange*, cf. loc.pl. *štīnŋah*. These two nom.pl. forms show an unexpected -ž-, without doubt the product of palatalization of *g* before the following front vowel \*-e which eventually became -ə. The nom.pl. of feminine *a*-stems usually shows a relatively recent dialectal Slovene palatalization of *\*g* to -*j*-, e.g., nom.sg.f. *drúga* 'other', nom.pl.f. *drújə*. According to N (62), the different palatalization product in *štânžə* and *štīnžə* must be due to the much older, so-called, first Common Slavic palatalization of velars. This is unlikely to be correct. The first Common Slavic palatalization of velars can be dated around the sixth century AD. Even most loanwords that were borrowed from Germanic in the Common Slavic era entered Slavic after the first Common Slavic palatalization of velars had ceased to operate (Pronk-Tiethoff 2013: 236), making it extremely unlikely that these two local borrowings underwent this palatalization and preserved the resulting paradigmatic alternation for 1500 years. I think that *štânžə* and *štīnžə* are much more recent borrowings and that they took part in the Slovene dialectal palatalization that normally produced *j*. The unexpected palatalization product *ž* must be due to the preceding nasal. There is an almost exact parallel in Frisian, where *g* was normally palatalized to /*j*/, but to /*dz*/ after a nasal (Bremmer 2009: 30-31), e.g., Old Frisian *hei* 'sense' < *\*hugi-*, but *lendze* 'length' < *\*langi-*. Like in Frisian, the different reflex can be explained from earlier distinct realizations of /*g*/, namely as an occlusive [g] after a nasal, but as a fricative [ɣ] in other positions. The fricative realization of /*g*/ is found in other western dialects of Slovene, but has been lost in the Gailtal dialect. A trace of it is found in the word *dóhčäs* (N 65) 'boredom' < *\*dŋčäs*. Another remnant of the past fricative realization of voiced stops is the absence of final devoicing in the Gailtal dialect (N 55). Although most Slovene dialects devoice final voiced stops, the north-western ones do not (Ramovš 1924: 189, 217, 234). In the same dialects, fricative realization of voiced stops is either preserved up to this day or can be shown to have existed in the past (cf. the map in Greenberg 2001: 36).

N's book is rich in data and detail and must be regarded as an important contribution to Slavic studies in general and to Slovene dialectology in particular. Moreover, its contribution is not limited to linguistics. The attitude towards speaking Slovene in

the Gailtal appears to be changing. It is not a major change, but one senses that there is less shame, less hesitation to speak Slovene in public, than there used to be a decade ago. Adults who grew up as monolingual German speakers are now starting to ask their parents and grandparents why they did not teach them Slovene as well. This may be due to a change in attitude in all of Carinthia (cf. Priestly 2014: 52–54), but I like to think that, in the Gailtal, the fact that outsiders are taking an interest in the dialect helps to boost the confidence of the speakers.

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