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DONALD F. REINDL. 2008. *Language Contact: German and Slovenian*. Bochum: Universitätsverlag Dr.N. Brockmeyer, 234 pp.

The work under review here has been intended to present a comprehensive examination of German influx on Slovenian standard language and dialects (in terms of phonology, morphology, syntax and semantics), thus it constitutes yet another significant contribution to the field of contact linguistics. The study is divided into ten chapters.

The introductory chapter gives essential information on the sociolinguistic background of the contact situation in question. THOMASON & KAUFMAN (1988: 35) say that “it is the sociolinguistic history of the speakers (...) that is the primary determinant of the linguistic outcome of language contact”. Therefore, the analysis of language contact phenomena must be preceded by studying the extralinguistic background of the contact setting. Here, the author takes into consideration some of the relevant circumstances that have led to the present language situation such as geographical adjacency of the two languages, various geopolitical factors, historical contacts, linguistic and political movements and purism, to mention a few.

In the second chapter, a number of methodological issues are addressed. One of the difficulties examining language contact phenomena lies in establishing whether particular linguistic feature that occurs in a language is a contact-induced change or just an internally motivated one. As THOMASON (2001: 91) suggest “the possibility of multiple causation should always be considered (...) [as] it often happens that an internal motivation combines with an external motivation to produce a change”. The author, for instance, notices that “[t]he notion of German as a direct agent is the least controversial in the field of lexicon”. He claims that “[t]he statistical probability that Slovenian would independently create a string of phonemes identical to a German lexical item – and independently assign it the same semantic value (...) is completely untenable” (p. 25).

Chapter three provides only general comments on the vocabulary borrowing from German, since, as put by the author (p. 29), “this study does not focus on lexical borrowings”. He stresses the need to distinguish the notion of overt vs. covert lexical Germanisms, and says that the latter “can (...) have effects on the phonological and morphological systems of a language by introducing new phonotactic combinations (...) or by bringing their own inflectional morphology with them – in effect, serving as a *Trojan horse* for language change” (p. 31).

Chapters four and five elaborate on these aspects of phonology and morphology that may be attributed to German influx.

As far as the possible influence of German on Slovenian phonology is concerned, three areas of exploration have been pointed out: accentual phenomena, vowel phenomena and consonant phenomena. The loss of phonemic pitch and accentual retraction are the two accentual features being investigated here. As put by the author, “[i]n both cases the hypothesis for German influence is a reasonable one (...) [yet] in neither case is there sufficient evidence to conclusively support such a hypothesis” (p. 36). As for vowel phenomena, an in-depth account has been provided into such issues as e.g. front rounded vowels, the emergence of shwa, akanje (i.e. the reduction of certain vowels to *a*) and diphthongal phenomena. In the

section on consonant phenomena, in turn, attention is given to variety of absorbing questions such as final devoicing, loss of softness, erosion of *h*, loss of some palatal affricates, palatalization of *s* in clusters, etc. All in all, a conclusion may be drawn that the approximation of the phonological systems of the two languages in contact is significant.

With regard to morphological phenomena discussed in the work reviewed here, inflection and word formation are the areas that have undergone thorough examination. Under the section on inflection, a number of issues have been amply described. Among others gender leveling (masculine morphology on adjectives and participles in reference to female speaker) is discussed. Although the origin of gender leveling continue to be unexplained, “the direct influence of German cannot be discounted, because it provides a corresponding model” (p. 73).

Furthermore, an account is given on instances of German interference in the case system of Slovenian. Case confusion often happens to be the case here. It also appears that Slovenian moved towards German as for simplifying some aspects of its case inflection. Yet another issue taken into consideration here, are the uninflected adjectives. Although some Slovenian adjectives lack inflection for gender/case due to e.g. historical reasons, the exposure to German origin adjectives (remaining uninflected if used predicatively), “may have reinforced their status as uninflected forms” (p. 81).

As for Slovenian derivational morphology and word formation in general, it seems that German impact is much clearer than it is the case with the inflectional morphology. In this section, the author considers the effect of language contact in relation to e.g. verbal prefixation, nominal and other affixation, nominal compounding, various types of numerical phenomena, compound prepositions, and finally, the loss of adverbial morphology. It appears that in many instances Slovenian verbal prefixes closely correspond to German ones, thus the likelihood that they constitute a case of structural borrowing is strong. Similarly, a number of examples of lexical items exist in which some (nonverbal) prefixes and suffixes of German origin do occur. The formation of noun plus noun compounds, in turn, diverge from typical patterns of Slovenian and other Slavic languages. As regards compound prepositions believed to be recent innovations, it seems that German, that is particularly abundant with such linguistic units, “would have provided a strong model for Slovenian to imitate” (p. 94). Finally, the author reports on the development of bare-stem adverbs, that again, result from the interaction between the two languages in contact.

Chapter six focuses on syntactic innovations. It is a widely accepted view (cf. WINFORD 2003) that languages have more trouble borrowing elements of syntax than units of other levels of language. Yet in the contact situation discussed here, as argued by the author, “[a] large number of syntactic features of modern Slovenian are (...) attributable to possible German influence” (p. 97). Subsequent sections are devoted to verbal, nominal, pronominal, prepositional, conjunctive phenomena, etc. Among verbal phenomena that may arise from the language contact situation, the author distinguishes verb-second positioning (Slovenian has higher proportion of such structures than e.g. Serbo-Croatian), infinitive in commands (Slovenian in general expresses commands with a verb form inflected for the imperative), reflexives (some of which Slovenian may have acquired or lost under German influence), phrasal verbs (where, for instance, some German “separable prefix verbs” are calqued into Slovenian), sporadic postverbal negations, verb-initial conditionals and other.

Nominal subgroup of syntactic novelties include three types of possession. Preposed genitives, for example, are said to be atypical to Slavic languages. Given the presence of a suitable German model, it is fair to conclude that such structure is of German origin. As for pronominal phenomena, two distinct issues have been addressed here: “the use of overt subject pronouns in non-emphatic contexts and the decreased frequency in the usage of reflexive possessive pronominal adjective *svoj*” (p. 120).

The remaining sections of this chapter deal with a number of other syntactic innovations that can be said to potentially result from the contact situation. Slovenian has, for instance, in comparison to other Slavic languages, quite a large number of postpositions. Furthermore, it has a considerable number of compound prepositions (again, it cannot be adjudicated conclusively, whether these recreate German patterns or simply constitute a general trend in Slavic languages).

Chapter seven (Syntagms and collocations) focuses on such word combinations that imitate foreign patterns. Since they are fully realized in native morphemes, they do not betray their foreign origin. Yet another difficulty for the researcher to encounter is the fact that similar expressions or juxtapositions of words often arise independently in a number of languages. The author investigates here e.g. some reflexive constructions (believed to be derived from German), certain nominalization patterns, prepositional patterns and similes.

Chapter eight addresses some of the German effects on semantic aspects of Slovenian. First issue to discuss is the semantic extension or semantic copying in which a lexeme extends its meaning due to the influence of foreign counterpart. A few obvious cases (including e.g. nouns, verbs, adverbs) are presented here. Furthermore, semantic confusion is examined. It “involves the assigning of additional meanings to a word on the basis of confusing homonyms or homophones in a contact language”, as noted by the author (p. 162). Two more questions – *onikanje* (the use of 3rd person plural pronoun in polite address) and grammatical gender are taken into consideration as well. *Onikaje* clearly permeated into Slovenian from German, but gradually eroded during the 20th century. As for grammatical gender, it is being demonstrated here that some nouns may have changed gender due to German influence.

Chapter nine discusses briefly the issue of bi-directionality of language influence. Although the influx of German on Slovenian and its dialects has proven considerable, some noticeable Slovenian affect on certain local German dialects (e.g. Carinthian and Styrian) has also taken place.

The final chapter recapitulates the important issues that have been addressed in the work. The key goal was establishing the extent of German impact on Slovenian and its particular dialects. The interaction between the two languages in contact usually triggers a number of novelties that would be less probable to occur without the contact setting. Such contact-induced innovations in Slovenian have proven to be numerous and of various kinds. The author brings together all the contact-induced features in a typology (commenting on the likelihood of German impact) and points out the questions that have yet to be extensively investigated.

In sum, the book reviewed here broadens considerably our understanding of how languages in contact interact. The detailed description of the German-Slovenian contact phenomena provided here (and illustrated with numerous examples) helps realize the extent of

intricacy or complexity of the interplay of languages in a contact situation. The work is thus indispensable for anyone interested in contact linguistics.

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