

On German-Croatian and Italian-Croatian Language Contact

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ABSTRACT

Croatia has always been a multilingual environment. The influence of German and Italian was empowered through direct political influence. During the second part of the 18th and in the 19th century native speakers of German and Italian used Croatian as a second language carrying out their duties at work. This bilingualism can tentatively be referred to as bureaucratic bilingualism. Native Croatian speakers used Italian and German as a second language in certain social areas. Such bilingualism can tentatively be called civic bilingualism. It can be assumed that starting with the 1960s civic German and Italian bilingualism no longer existed. Language contact within the daily life results in German and Italian loanwords in Croatian which are still actively present and used in daily communication.

Key words: *loanwords, language contact, culture, bilingualism, daily communication, Croatian, German, Italian*

Introduction

Language is not an end in itself. It is a necessary prerequisite for human activity, and, as such, it represents an expression of a person's affiliation with a specific political or cultural community. These communities, however, do not function in isolation. They are in constant communication with their neighboring political and cultural communities. It is, therefore, not enough to define cross-cultural communication quantitatively, as something more or less, compared to intra-

cultural communication¹. Cultural contact is always carried out through daily language contact of two or more cultures. Such language contact is achieved through direct and indirect social interaction of individual speakers, and it reflects complex cultural and political phenomena.

The term language contact encompasses the process of the language contact, as well as the results of the influence of one language onto the other, which is primarily reflected in loanwords. It also needs

to be pointed out that language contact is a complex of closely interconnected linguistic, cultural, and political phenomena. An important element, therefore, of Croatian-German and Croatian-Italian language contact is bilingualism, especially social bilingualism.

Just like any other term, the term culture is conditioned by its heritage and the context in which it is being used. Since terminology enables the formation of understanding of a certain context, and its interpretation, for the purpose of understanding the German-Croatian and Italian-Croatian language contact, we will differentiate between two levels of culture. The first level is the level of the so-called »eternal culture« – the culture of books, museums, theaters, music, and galleries. Culture is, however, not comprised solely of intellectual and imaginative works; it equally includes the way of life in general, a nation's traditions and practices, memories and perceptions. Culture, as we understand it in the context of language contact, is a complex experience.

Croatia has always been a multilingual environment, unlike Austria or Italy, where bilingualism occurs only in the bordering regions. Within the City Council of Zagreb in the 13th century, four language groups were equally represented: Croatian, German, Hungarian, and Italian (*lingua sclavonica, lingua theutonica, lingua hungarica, lingua latina*). That part of Croatia was settled, early on, by German artisans – »a German street« in Zagreb is mentioned in 1386 – which means that already at this time German was used in daily communication. (Under the term German, in this text we refer to Bavarian – Austrian dialects). The situation on the Adriatic coast was similar, where the influence of Italian, or more precisely of the Venetian dialect, was recorded very early on, in the 10th century. During the following centuries, the influ-

ence of German and Italian on Croatian was additionally empowered through direct political influence.

Historical Background

The linguistic situation in the part of Croatia under Habsburg rule during the second part of the 18th century is especially interesting. At that time, three languages were used: Croatian, Latin, and German. Croatian, namely the Kajkavian variety, was the language of daily communication, but also the language of public-law contracts, royal decrees, and other official documents. Croatian classes used the Latin language to counteract the Hungarian and Austrian language threat. For this reason, Latin remained the official language of the Croatian Parliament until 1847. Towards the end of the 18th century, German became the dominant language of communication throughout the monarchy, as well as the official language of education and science². After the fall of the Venetian Empire, which ruled Dalmatia for four centuries, Napoleon agreed to place the Venetian estates in Dalmatia and Istria under the Austrian rule. The Austrian government organized the bureaucratic apparatus, mostly using the people from Lombardy and Venice. The official language was Italian. In 1805 Austria lost Venice, Dalmatia, and Istria, as Napoleon united Dalmatia and Istria with the Kingdom of Italy. Napoleon's civil administrator, Dandolo, delivered his first public announcement in Zadar using Italian, but also in Croatian, as Croatian was the language of daily communication of Croatian intelligentsia, i.e. the city dwellers, as well as the only language used in the rural areas³.

Countless historical facts point to uniform and virtually synchronous processes that took place in the South and North parts of Croatia – Croatian was used a language of daily communication, and

partly in public communication; official politics encouraged the use of native language in official and public communication, so that fluency in Croatian was a condition of public service employment. This, in turn, means that social bilingualism appeared in two forms. On the one hand, in the part of Croatia under the Habsburg rule there were native speakers of Croatian, who used German as their second language in certain social areas; this category included the aristocracy, the townspeople, and the intelligentsia. Education was a prerequisite for this sort of bilingualism. The situation in Southern Croatia was similar – native Croatian speakers used Italian as a second language in the same social conditions. Such social bilingualism, with Croatian as the first language, and either German or Italian as a second language, can tentatively be called civic bilingualism. On the other hand, however, there were native speakers of German or Italian, who, during the course of carrying out their duties at work, used Croatian as a second language. This social bilingualism can tentatively be referred to as bureaucratic bilingualism.

Bureaucratic bilingualism resulted in publication of Croatian grammar books

for native speakers of German and Italian. In Dubrovnik, in 1808, Franjo Marija Appendini published his grammar book for Italian native speakers, entitled »Grammatica della lingua illirica«. Judging by the number of published titles, the interest of German speakers for Croatian was much greater. At the end of the 18th century Ignac Szent-Martony's »Erläuterungen zur kroatischen Sprachlehre für Teutsche« was published, and was sold out in a matter of months. In Osijek, in 1778, Marijan Lanosović published »Neue Einleitung der Illyrischen Sprache für Teutsche«, and in 1833 »Grammatik der Illyrischen Sprache für Teutsche« was published by Ignjat Alojzije Brlić.

Linguistic Borrowing

The culture of daily living has always been open to outside influences, and language contact within the daily life results in loanwords. The preparation of food, as well as all other traditions connected to food, is an extremely important aspect of the culture of daily living. Since recipes for the preparation of food have always been communicated both orally and by writing, the cooking recipe became one of the oldest types of written documents.

TABLE 1
GERMAN AND ITALIAN LOANWORDS IN COOKING TERMINOLOGY

<i>Croatian</i>	<i>German</i>	<i>Croatian</i>	<i>Italian</i>
lungenbratn	Lungenbraten	brodet	brodetto
šnicl	Schnitzel	špageti	spaghetti
kuglof	Gugelhupf	salata	insalata
indijaner	Indianerkrapfen	pašta	pasta
griznokrl	Grießnockerl	limunada	limonata
gablec	Gabelfrühstück	pomidor	pomodoro
faširano	Faschiertes	melun	melone
ekstravuršt	Extrawurst	palenta	polenta
marelica	Marille	brokula	broccolo
paradajz	Paradeiser	bakalar	baccalà
štrudl	Strudel	salama	salame

Cooking literature reflects the social and economical situation. It is, therefore, not surprising that the greatest number of German and Italian loanwords in Croatian of daily communication are, indeed, found in cooking terminology (Table 1)⁴.

Loanwords from German and Italian also often appear in the vocabulary connected to homes and homemaking in general (Table 2)^{5,6}. The situation is similar with clothing terminology (Table 3).

A study conducted on five hundred high school and college students from Zagreb in 1999 shows that a great majority of them use German loanwords in daily communication: 86% of subjects

used German loanwords for car parts, all of them used loanwords in various card games, and 80% used German loanwords when cooking. Unfortunately, no such study was conducted for Italian loanwords in Croatian, but based on personal experience, we can safely conclude that such a study would yield similar results to the study conducted among the young people of Zagreb.

After the end of World War II, German and Italian, for ideological reasons, became second rate foreign languages. Social, civic bilingualism could only survive within the close circle of family communication, and was, therefore, doomed to die

TABLE 2
GERMAN AND ITALIAN LOANWORDS IN HOME AND HOMEMAKING TERMINOLOGY

<i>Croatian</i>	<i>German</i>	<i>Croatian</i>	<i>Italian</i>
badevana	Badewanne	špina	spina
protvan	Bratpfanne	pasabrod	passabrodo
forhang	Vorhang	kučarin	cucchiaio
forcimer	Vorzimmer	gvantijera	guantiera
cukerdoza	Zuckerdose	bičerin	bicchiere
širajzl	Schüreisen	kušin	cuscino
škare	Schere	lancun	lenzuolo
tram	Tram	punistra	finestra
vaga	Waage	pjat	piatto
vašlapn	Waschlappen	saloča	salotto

TABLE 3
GERMAN AND ITALIAN LOANWORDS IN CLOTHING TERMINOLOGY

<i>Croatian</i>	<i>German</i>	<i>Croatian</i>	<i>Italian</i>
falda	Falte	takuin	taccuino
rajsferšlus	Reißverschluss	borsa	borsa
ajner	Einnäher	faculet	fazzoletto
taška	Tasche	koramela	coramella
cviker	Zwicker	mudante	mutande
druker	Drucker	bareta	berretta
geltašl	Geldtasche	špigeta	spigetta
girtl	Gürtel	kalceta	calza
mider	Mieder	vešta	veste
remen	Riemen	veštit	vestito

out. We can assume, with a great degree of certainty, that, starting with the 1960s, civic German and Italian bilingualism no longer existed. Civic bilingualism was also directly connected to the influence of the so-called »eternal culture«, and the considerably weakened cultural ties with Italy and Germany further caused its demise.

The culture of daily living is more stable; it changes only gradually. This explains why German and Italian loanwords are actively present and used in daily communication. Identities of human communities are today being increasingly

doubted, because of the understanding that they are multi-layered, which is confirmed by both the loanwords and the lost bilingualism, as results of language contact. On the other hand, the need to recognize cultural and linguistic communities by their very monistic quality has been deeply rooted into the European tradition⁷. When solving the issue of the influence of cultural and language contact, therefore, we must begin with the assumption that communities with similar cultural traits represent equivalent stages of cultural development, and not the unconditional acquisition of provincial culture.

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O NJEMAČKO-HRVATSKIM I TALIJANSKO-HRVATSKIM JEZIČNIM DODIRIMA

SAŽETAK

Hrvatska je oduvijek bila višejezična sredina. Utjecaj njemačkoga i talijanskoga bio je osnažen izravnim političkim utjecajem. U drugoj polovici 18. stoljeća i u 19. stoljeću izvorni govornici njemačkoga i talijanskoga koristili su hrvatski kao drugi jezik u državnoj službi. Ova vrsta dvojezičnosti može se uvjetno nazvati činovničkom dvojezičnošću. Izvorni govornici hrvatskoga koristili su talijanski i njemački kao drugi jezik u određenim društvenim situacijama. Takva dvojezičnost mogla bi se nazvati građanskom dvojezičnošću. Može se pretpostaviti da od šezdesetih godina prošloga stoljeća njemačka i talijanska građanska dvojezičnost više ne postoji. Posljedica jezičnoga dodira u svakodnevnom životu jesu brojne njemačke i talijanske posuđenice koje su još uvijek prisutne i koriste se u hrvatskom u razgovornoj komunikaciji.