Slavic Sociolinguistics in the Post-Iron Curtain World: A Survey of Recent Research

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Abstract: This article provides a general overview of research in Slavic sociolinguistics after 1989, focusing particularly on the most recent work (2010–16). Trends in sociolinguistic research in the East, West, and South Slavic areas are discussed, and in the conclusion the article considers perspectives for future research.

1. Introduction

The title suggested for this contribution to the Silver Anniversary issue of the *Journal of Slavic Linguistics* (*JSL*) raises an interesting question: more than 25 years after the collapse of socialist regimes in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, does it still make sense to refer to the fall of the Iron Curtain when discussing the state of Slavic sociolinguistics? The answer, I think, must be a qualified "yes." Although it would be inaccurate to say that no real sociolinguistic research was conducted in Slavic-speaking countries before the fall of the Iron Curtain—and we must always keep in mind that we are dealing with a number of different countries with their own individual conditions and traditions of linguistic research—it is clear that under communist rule, scholars in these countries often had little opportunity or interest in conducting many types of sociolinguistic research,[1] and researchers from abroad had limited access to do their own studies. The situation changed after 1989, but some effects of this comparative neglect of sociolinguistics during the socialist period can still be seen today. One indication of this is the relative scarcity of articles about Slavic language varieties in the major international journals devoted to sociolinguistic research.[2]

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[1] For more information on the kinds of sociolinguistic studies that were conducted in individual countries and the factors that influenced the directions of linguistic research in the Eastern Bloc, see the papers in Harlig and Pléh 1995.

[2] With the exception of the *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* (*IJSL*), which regularly publishes thematic issues, some devoted to a single language or language family (see below)

A number of articles or book chapters that survey Slavic sociolinguistic research have appeared previously. In addition to the essays in the volume by Harlig and Pléh (1995) cited in fn. 1, Lauersdorf (2009) gives a comprehensive overview of research published by North American scholars from the 1960s to the present in his introduction to a special issue of *JSL* devoted to sociolinguistics. He points out that the majority of these studies have focused on South and East Slavic languages and concludes that the main areas of research emphasis represented from the 1960s through the 1980s (language planning and standard language development, language contact phenomena, language variation and prestige varieties, and, to a lesser extent, minority language maintenance) continue to be the focus of most work by North American scholars in the following decades, although other topics also begin to be addressed more frequently from the 1990s onward. Chapters in the *Routledge Handbook of Sociolinguistics around the World* (Ball 2010) also provide overviews of the sociolinguistic situation and sociolinguistic research in different areas of eastern Europe. Kontra, Nekvapil, and Kiełkiewicz-Janowiak (2010) discuss sociolinguistics in the Czech Republic, Poland, and Hungary. They note the strong influence of the Prague School on Czech sociolinguistics, which until recently was focused almost exclusively on the standard language, corpus planning, and the concept of language cultivation originally advanced by linguists of the Prague Circle. More recent research has introduced qualitative and quantitative methods to study speakers' behavior and attitudes towards language variation. Poland had a better-developed tradition of sociolinguistic research prior to the fall of the Iron Curtain, but in subsequent years there has been more freedom to explore minority language issues, the relationship of language and identity, and language variation, which has been accompanied by a decreased emphasis on a unitary standardized norm as the ideal. Sociolinguistic research in Poland has also increasingly adopted empirical methods. Gulida (2010) devotes almost half of her chapter on the Russian Federation, Ukraine, Belarus, and Moldova to language policy and planning, but also gives a concise outline of the history of sociolinguistic research in the region and discusses research on minority languages and language shift, creoles and pidgins, sociolects, language and gender, discourse and pragmatics, language attitudes, and language variation. Sociolinguistic research, particularly in some of these latter areas, has become more vibrant and more informed by western theories and methodologies in the decades since the collapse of the Soviet Union. This overview is particularly valuable because it focuses almost exclusively on research conducted by scholars in these countries, and it cites a large number of studies that may not be well known or readily accessible to outside researchers. Robert Greenberg's (2010) chapter on "Sociolinguistics in the Balkans" takes a different perspective from the first two, focusing on questions of language planning and policy in the region in light of the adoption and implementation of the European Charter on Regional and Minority

Languages. In a similar vein, Marc Greenberg (2015) discusses Slavic soci-olinguistics in the age of globalization by focusing on two case studies (the Russian/Soviet Empire and its aftermath and the rise and fall of the Yugoslav ideal) where the Slavic languages can provide particularly useful insights for questions of language planning and policy.

Although space does not permit me to discuss them all here, I should mention the thematic issues of the *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* (*IJSL*) devoted to individual Slavic languages or the Slavic region that have appeared from 1989 to the present, most of which are cited by Lauersdorf (2009: 13, fn. 18). Since the time of that publication, two more have appeared: Kulyk 2010 and Cope and Eckert 2016, both discussed below. The introduc-tions and other articles in these issues offer a good perspective on the "state of the art" in sociolinguistic research in different parts of the Slavic world. Finally, we should also note Kamusella, Nomachi, and Gibson 2016, a recent collection of essays devoted to Slavic languages, identities, and borders in the post-Iron Curtain world.

Given the number of languages involved and the fact that the field of so-ciolinguistics is itself so broad, it is not possible to give here a truly compre-hensive picture of the current state of Slavic sociolinguistic research. In an attempt to avoid duplicating what has already been written, the current article will focus mainly on publications from 2010–2016, and it will necessarily be highly selective.[3] The following sections will discuss recent sociolinguistic research in the East, West, and South Slavic areas, and the conclusion will summarize the main trends and suggest avenues for future research.

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[3]   Unlike Lauersdorf 2009, the present survey includes authors outside of North Amer-ica and attempts to give more information about the contents of the cited publications. Given the limitations on space for this special issue of *JSL*, this means that difficult decisions had to be made about what to include. Extensive searches were conducted using a variety of sources (including Linguistics and Language Behavior Abstracts (ProQuest), the EBSCOhost Online Research Databases, WorldCat, published bibliog-raphies, and tables of contents for relevant journals), but the focus here is generally on work that is illustrative of various trends and that is more widely accessible. Note also that in most instances individual essays in edited volumes devoted to Slavic sociolin-guistics will not be cited separately, in order to save space; the contents of the volume as a whole will just be described in general terms. I would like to thank an anonymous reviewer for comments on the manuscript and its coverage. There is no doubt much work that remains unknown to me, and I hope that readers will forgive both inadver-tent oversights and omissions that I felt were necessary.

2. East Slavic

Much of the most recent research on Russian deals with Russian in contact with other languages, focusing on questions of language policy, language attitudes, bilingualism, and code-switching or the use of mixed language varieties. A number of studies are devoted to Russian vs. minority languages within the Russian Federation, but these typically concentrate on the minority languages rather than Russian itself (see, for example, contributions in Stolz 2015). More attention has been paid to the situation of Russian in other countries of the former Soviet Union and in émigré communities elsewhere. For example, Blauvelt (2013) examines the status of Russian in contemporary Georgia, using survey data together with matched-guise experiments designed to determine attitudes towards Georgian, Russian, and English among ethnic Georgians and Russians in Tbilisi, as well as attitudes towards Georgian, Russian, and Armenian or Azeri in two other locations. Muth (2014) applies the methodology of linguistic landscape analysis to investigate the use of language for the construction of cultural identity in the self-declared Republic of Transnistria, which broke away from Moldova in 1992 and where Russian is the dominant language. Głuszkowski (2012) attempts to answer the question whether the bilingualism and frequent code-switching of Russian Old Believers in a community in Poland has resulted in the development of a mixed language. The recent volume on the Russian language outside the Russian Federation edited by Ryazanova-Clarke (2014) contains ten chapters utilizing diverse approaches to address a variety of topics: language rights and the legal status of Russian in the post-Soviet space; attitudes towards the Russian language, its social roles, and the relationship of language and identity in Belarus and Ukraine; the perception, performance, and negotiation of identities in Russian-speaking communities in Estonia, Italy, and Israel; linguistic features of global Russian, represented by usage in the U.S. and Latvia, compared to Russian in the homeland; and efforts by Russia to promote a homogeneous global Russian linguistic and cultural identity as an expression of soft power. The volume also includes an excellent introduction by the editor on Russian and the sociolinguistics of globalization, which provides context for the individual contributions. For more on Russian in Ukraine and Belarus, see below.

Although a significant amount of attention has historically been paid to language and gender in Russian sociolinguistics (see for example Mills 1999, where eight of the eleven essays focus on Russian), it appears that only a few marginally relevant articles have been published in international venues in the period since 2010. Variationist sociolinguistic studies are also rare; see Gulida (2010: 395–96) for a few examples. Otherwise, more recent works typically address variation in the context of the established norms of the standard language and variability in educated usage rather than focusing on the relationship between variation and social factors.

Gorham (2014) gives a history of Russian linguistic culture from the Gorbachev era to the present, examining language ideology, language policies and the politics of language (including discourse on language purism and language and national identity), and the influence of the Internet. Other recent work addresses similar themes; e.g., Hristova 2011 on the linguistic and sociocultural characteristics of Olbanian (the language of a specific Internet subculture, also known as *йазыг падонкафф*) or Argent 2014 on metaphors used in media discourse on language purism.

Sociolinguistic research focusing on Ukraine and Belarus shares many of the predominant concerns outlined above for Russia and often deals with issues associated with Russian-Ukrainian or Russian-Belarusian language contact. Kulyk 2010 (a thematic issue of *IJSL* devoted to Ukraine) contains articles on patterns of language use, language ideologies and attitudes, and the relationship of language and identity in different regions of Ukraine; patterns of language usage and attitudes in the media; the ways that different language groups are portrayed in Ukrainian political discourse; and the role of language ideologies in establishing the corpus of standard Ukrainian. Kulyk (2011) examines speaker attitudes about the status and corpus of Ukrainian in focus-group discussions about language policy, finding a widespread perception that the corpus of Ukrainian is inadequate for its new status and extension into areas where Russian was traditionally dominant. Other recent studies on language policy and legislation include Kulyk 2013 on language policy in the Ukrainian media and Charnysh 2013 on minority language rights. Practices of language usage on the internet are addressed by Nedahkivska (2010), who analyzes texts from various websites in the context of language contact and language status, focusing on the authors' choices to use Ukrainian, Russian, and/or English. Šumarova (2012) provides a very useful survey of Ukrainian sociolinguistic research in the post-Soviet period, focusing on works published in Ukraine, which are less well known outside the country.

Given the long coexistence of Russian and Ukrainian within Ukraine and the pattern of unequal bilingualism, the prevailing language ideology values "pure language," as shown in Friedman's (2010) article on practices in two elementary Ukrainian language and literature classrooms. The (socio)linguistic features of mixed Ukrainian-Russian speech, which is popularly seen as a "degraded" or "impure" variety (and is often referred to as *suržyk*, usually with a derogatory implication), have been previously treated in a number of works, such as Bilaniuk 2005 and Romanova, Zhironkina, and Vakhtin 2007.[4]

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[4] *Suržyk* originally referred to a mixture of wheat and rye flour, which was considered lower quality than pure wheat flour, and the term was also extended to refer to someone of mixed ethnic or racial background. Now it is used almost exclusively to refer to a mixed language variety, but the connotations of impurity remain (see Bilaniuk 2005: 104; cf. also the introduction to Hentschel, Taranenko, and Zaprudski 2014).

A similar contact situation exists in Belarus, which was even more heavily Russianized during the Soviet period. Articles focusing on Belarusian-Russian mixed speech (BRMS), or *trasjanka* (lit. 'a mixture of hay and straw'), include Hentschel 2013 and Hentschel and Zeller 2014, both of which use corpus data to show that the distribution of Russian and Belarusian elements is not "chaotic," as popularly believed, but rather systematic. BRMS also necessarily figures in other research on language practices and attitudes in Belarus. Hentschel et al. (2015) analyze survey results to determine what correlations exist between the respondents' self-reported knowledge and usage of Belarusian as opposed to Russian or BRMS, their attitudes towards these language varieties, and their sociodemographic characteristics and political orientation (pro-EU or pro-Russia). Nativized varieties of Russian in Belarus appear to be diverging from the standard norm in Russia; Woolhiser (2012) discusses the sociolinguistic status and characteristics of "Belarusian Russian" and speakers' attitudes towards the language. Hentschel, Taranenko, and Zaprudski 2014 is a very interesting collection of comparative and individual studies of *trasjanka* and *suržyk*.

Ruthenian (or Rusyn) gained increasing recognition as a distinct Slavic language beginning in the 1990s (see, for example, Magocsi 1996, 2004), although no single standardized variety exists.[5] Language policy and linguistic identity in Galicia and Transcarpathia are treated from a historical perspective in recent works by Moser (2011, 2014) and Csernicskó and Ferenc (2014).

3. West Slavic

Polish sociolinguistic research is comparatively diverse. There is a considerable amount of research on communities of Polish speakers outside of Poland, dealing with both local varieties and the standard language, bilingualism and language contact, language attitudes, and identity; e.g., Krasowska 2010 on ethnic Poles in the Bukovina; Ostrówka and Golachowska 2012 on a Polish community in Belarus; Głuszkowski 2011 on Veršina, a village about 130 km north of Irkutsk that was founded by Polish settlers in 1910; Kuņicka 2014 on the Polish language in Latvia; Geben and Ramonienė 2015 on language use and self-identification of Lithuanian Poles; Warditz 2014 on language contact and syntactic variation in Polish spoken in Germany. Interestingly, there are also several recent sociolinguistic studies concerning the adoption of regional English features by Polish immigrants (Drummond 2012, 2013; Newlin-Łukowicz 2015, 2016).

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[5]   Note that the variety used in Serbia and Croatia was already officially recognized in the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Kushko 2007 and Vaňko 2007 provide concise discussions of different standardized varieties.

Research on local varieties in Poland often takes a more explicitly sociolinguistic approach, not limiting itself to the traditional model of dialectological research, as can be seen in some of the articles that have appeared in *Gwary dziś* since 2001.[6] Miłobóg and Garrett (2011) apply the techniques of perceptual dialectology to investigate attitudes towards regional varieties of Polish. Grochola-Szczepanek (2012) uses data from individual interviews, surveys, and focus-group discussions to analyze the current sociolinguistic situation of the dialect of the Spisz region (which spans the Polish-Slovak border), focusing on gender differences in language use.

Przybyła and Teisseyre (2014) use computer algorithms to analyze a corpus of transcripts of speeches given in the Polish *Sejm* (Parliament), showing that various features of these texts can be used to accurately identify the gender, level of education, and party affiliation of the speakers. The more typical variationist methodology is employed by Abramowicz in his 2008 dissertation, which examines three linguistic variables (stress placement in two types of forms and the variable attachment of person/number agreement marking) and their correlation with socioeconomic characteristics in data collected in two speech communities.

Language planning and policy, at least with respect to standard Polish, has received little recent attention. Lisek (2014) compares language policy in Poland and Germany, and Rataj (2016) compares language ideologies and attitudes towards the standard language among British and Polish university students. The status of Kashubian and (to a greater extent) Silesian is still disputed in Polish linguistics. A volume devoted to Kashubian appeared in the series *Najnowsze dzieje języków słowiańskich* (Breza 2001), and it gained official recognition as a regional language in 2005. Zieniukowa (2007) provides a discussion of opinions about the status of this variety in publications since 2000, and Dołowy-Rybińska (2010) discusses Kashubian language revitalization efforts. Attempts to amend Polish law in order to also elevate Silesian to regional-language status have been criticized (Cząstka-Szymon 2013). Kamusella (2011) discusses the history of the changing perceptions and status of Silesian and attempts to codify it (see also Kamusella 2016 and works cited there), and Michna (2014) compares status planning and identity politics among Carpathian Rusyns and Silesians.

Research on Sorbian focuses mainly on language contact and the threatened status of Upper and particularly Lower Sorbian as minority languages. Šatava (2005) discusses language maintenance and ethnic identity, based on field research conducted with middle- and high-school students in Bautzen and Kamenz (Upper Sorbian). Broermann (2007) similarly analyzes language attitudes among students in Bautzen, in comparison with students belonging to the Swedish minority in Finland. A comparison of the Sorbian sociolin-

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6 Available at http://www.ptpn.poznan.pl/Wydawnictwo/czasopisma/gwary/gwary.html.

guistic situation with Gaelic, another endangered minority language in Europe, can be found in Glaser 2007. Marti (2007) discusses Lower Sorbian as a "double–minority" language, in respect to both German and Upper Sorbian.

There has traditionally been a large amount of research on language planning and policy for Czech, due in large part to what has often been described as a diglossic relationship between Standard (literary) Czech and Common (colloquial) Czech (see Bermel 2014). Neustupný and Nekvapil (2006) discuss problems of both Czech and minority languages in the Czech republic in the context of theories of language management, focusing especially on the period since 1989 (see also Nekvapil 2007 on the impact of EU accession on language policy). Bermel (2000, 2007) examines problems of language standardization and language ideologies in his studies of register variation and orthographic reform. Wilson (2010) adopts a variationist approach, using both quantitative and qualitative data to analyze the accommodation of Moravian dialect-speaking students in Prague towards Common Czech; his findings also have implications for ongoing language planning debates concerning the relationship of Standard and Common Czech.

The articles in Cope and Eckert (2016) investigate multilingualism and minorities, including both minority language communities in the Czech Republic and Czech minority communities elsewhere (in the US, the Russian Federation, and Romania). Lišková (2012) discusses the role of language and the use of discourse strategies in the construction of identity among ninth-graders of various ethnic/national backgrounds in schools in three different Czech cities.

There is little international scholarship on the sociolinguistics of Slovak. Most of the recent publications are found in Slovak scholarly journals, some of which are available online, or in conference proceedings and other edited volumes, most of which are not widely accessible. Slovak was historically in a disadvantaged position relative to Czech, for a variety of reasons. Although Slovak achieved official equality with Czech in the former Czechoslovakia after 1968 and became the official language of an independent Slovak state in 1993, there is still a sense among some groups that the language is threatened (Ondrejovič 2010a). The status and norms of the standard language and questions of language policy represent one of the main areas of sociolinguistic research. Szabolcs and Kontra (2000) provide an analysis of Slovak language policy in the 1990s. Language policy and the controversial amendment of the law on the national language in 2009 are addressed by Ondrejovič (2010b) and Dolník (2011), among others. The relationship of urban spoken varieties or dialects to the norms of the standard language and attitudes towards different varieties are discussed, for example, by György (2012), Bánik (2012), and Patráš (2012). Language contact between Slovak and Hungarian (in both Slovakia and Hungary) is also a focus of attention; see, for example, Dolník and Pilecký 2012; Homišinová, Uhrin, and Ondrejovič 2013. Nábělková (2007) examines the situation of Slovak-Czech language contact after Slovak independence.

Finally, we should mention here Kamusella's (2009) monumental history of the role of language in politics and the formation of national identity in Central Europe, which focuses on Polish, Czech, Slovak, and Hungarian in the 19th and 20th centuries, but also discusses the broader cultural and linguistic context.

4. South Slavic

The lion's share of sociolinguistic research on South Slavic languages has been devoted to the central South Slavic area.[7] Much of this interest can be attributed to the disputed status of language varieties in the region, with the shift from an officially recognized Serbo-Croatian language in the Yugoslav period to four separate official languages today: Bosnian, Croatian, Montenegrin, and Serbian. This situation creates a fertile ground for studies of language policy and planning and the relationship of language and national identity, of which there are too many to consider individually here.[8] Book-length studies include Greenberg 2004, Gröschel 2009, Gustavsson 2009, and Langston and Peti-Stantić 2014; see also the historical overview by Alexander (2013). Readers may consult the bibliographies of these works for additional references.

Bosnian, Croatian, Montenegrin, and Serbian varieties have also been the object of other types of sociolinguistic research. Attitudes towards local varieties and/or the standard language are investigated in a number of works; e.g., Škifić 2011 on dialects vs. the Croatian standard; Kišiček 2012 on urban varieties of Croatian; Sujoldžić and Šimičić 2013 on varieties on Korčula; and Volenec 2015 on the Croatian orthographic norm. Žanić (2009) provides an interesting sociolinguistic study of the use of regional or local varieties of Croatian in dubbing different characters in animated films. Language contact, bi- or multilingualism, and code-switching are other frequent topics; e.g., Bartha and Borbély 2006, Ilić 2014 on Serbian communities in Hungary; Sujoldžić 2008, Skelin Horvat and Muhvić-Dimanovski 2012 on language varieties in contact in Istria; Ščukanec 2012 on the Croatian language and identity in the Burgenland (Austria); and Hlavac 2012 on code-switching by young Croatian-Australian adults.

A more limited amount of research focuses on language variation (especially with relation to the standard languages); e.g., Granić 2010 on variation in

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[7] "Central" here is used in a loose geographical sense, referring to the part of the South Slavic dialect continuum between Slovene in the northwest and Macedonian and Bulgarian in the southeast. This designation has been adopted by some linguists as a cover term when referring to the group of language varieties formerly classified as Serbo-Croatian.

[8] Research on policies towards minority languages in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro, and Serbia will also not be considered here due to a lack of space.

Croatian pronunciation and prestige; Pennington 2010 on allomorphy in long-form adjectival endings in Bosnian, Croatian, and Serbian; Tolimir-Hölzl 2011 on variation in usage in Bosnia-Herzegovina; Dimitrijević-Savić 2012 on language variation and slang usage in Serbia; and Mrdak-Mićović 2015 on variation in expressing thanks and congratulations in Montenegrin. The intersection of language and gender or sexuality is the object of several recent studies: Filipović (2011) analyzes the role of gender and power in the standardization of Serbian; Perović (2012) discusses gender, language, and identity in Montenegro; Bogetić (2013) analyzes lexical collocations used by gay Serbian teenagers in personal ads; and Stanković (2013) investigates gender-specific features of discourse styles used by gay men and lesbians in a Serbian Internet forum. Other research also centers on discourse; e.g., Vuković (2012) examines the relationship of pronoun choice and political ideology in parliamentary discourse in Montenegro, and Felberg and Šarić (2013) analyze discourse and the construction of linguistic identity in the Croatian and Montenegrin media.

Slovene is also well represented in sociolinguistic research. Language policy and planning, focusing on the standard language, is a prominent topic. Stabej (2007) gives a history of the Slovenian standard language and language policy in the former Yugoslavia, while Stabej (2006) provides an overview of language policy in Slovenia after its independence. Tivadar (2010) argues that the standard norm, despite questions about its learnability and prestige among speakers of diverse dialects, continues to serve its communicative functions in contemporary society, and Tivadar (2012) focuses on the codification of the spoken norm. Language policy with respect to minority languages and attitudes towards bilingual education are discussed by Zver (2012) and Novak Lukanovič and Limon (2012, 2014).

Slovene in contact with other languages has been treated from a number of different perspectives. Novak Lukanovič (2010) discusses the sociolinguistics of language accommodation in ethnically mixed areas of Slovenia, and Mikolič (2010) examines language attitudes in Slovene Istria. The relationship of language and identity in Slovene communities outside Slovenia is investigated in a number of works; e.g., Pertot 2011 (Italy); Lokar 2013 (other former Yugoslav territories); and Weichselbraun 2014 (Carinthian Slovenes). Slovene in the linguistic landscape is analyzed in Rasinger 2014 (Carinthia) and Tufi 2013 (Trieste).

Attitudes towards Slovene language varieties or specific expressions are analyzed in various works; e.g., Skubic 2006, Fras 2012, Trupej 2014, Zemljak Jontes and Pulko 2015. Lundberg (2013) applies sociolinguistic research methods to the study of a rural dialect group.

There is a well-developed tradition of sociolinguistic research in Bulgaria (see the essay in Harlig and Pléh 1995), but this work is not that well known outside of the country. An important venue for the publication of research by Bulgarian scholars since the late 1980s has been the proceedings of the biennial

conference of the International Sociolinguistic Society in Sofia, which cover a broad range of topics but are not widely available.[9] Recent research on language planning and policy concerning the standard language focuses mainly on EU integration and globalization; e.g., Bojadžiev 2005, 2008; Pačev 2007; Ivanova 2014. Language contact, bilingualism, and minority language policies in Bulgaria are addressed in a thematic issue of *IJSL* (Angelov and Marshall 2006). With respect to Bulgarian communities abroad, Adamou (2010) discusses Pomak (see below) in contact with Turkish and Romani in Greece; Vassileva and Yankova (2015) investigate code-switching among first-generation Bulgarian immigrants in Canada; Kornienko (2015) discusses sociolinguistic and communicative aspects of the language usage of Bulgarians in Ukraine; and Nomaki (2016) treats the sociolinguistic history of the Banat Bulgarians.

Language variation and change are less well represented in recent works, at least those that are more widely accessible. Videnov (2008) describes processes of change in rural areas in Bulgaria, and Micova (2014) discusses the use of regional features in the construction of identity online. Discourse and pragmatics are treated in a few works, such as Comati 2009, which analyzes personal ads in the framework of speech-act theory and conversational pragmatics.

Macedonian is a relatively young standard language (which gained official status first in 1944), and sociolinguistic research here also tends to focus on language standardization and the relationship of other varieties to the standard. Topolinjska 1998 includes articles on the standardization process, Skopje and Ohrid varieties in relation to the standard, and the relationship between dialects and the standard in emigré communities, as well as the sociolinguistic situation of Macedonian in Greece. More recently, Kramer (2008) considers the process of language standardization as reflected in the work of individual writers in the first half of the 20th century, and Kramer (2015) examines the standardization of orthography and recent debates on this topic. Browne (2012) discusses the relationship between Bulgarian and Macedonian and decisions made in the standardization process, and Marinov (2013) gives a more detailed history of Macedonian standardization. At least two recent conferences have been devoted to language policy, the norms of the standard language, and Macedonian identity (Velkovska 2006, 2011). Ǵurkova and Gruevska-Madžoska (2014) discuss the findings of a national research project on contemporary problems of language planning, including survey results on attitudes towards the standard and usage in formal and informal situations.

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[9]   In fact, in the bibliographies of European sociolinguistic research published in the journal *Sociolinguistica* for 2010 and 2011 (the most recent years that contain a section on Bulgaria), the Bulgarian listings consist exclusively of articles published in these conference proceedings.

An earlier work by Friedman (2003) gives a good overview of language and the construction of identity in geographic Macedonia.

Language policy with respect to minority languages is discussed by Treneska-Deskoska and Spasov (2012) and Xhaferri (2014). Knjižar, Stanković, and Bošnjaković (2013) analyze the ethnolinguistic vitality of the Macedonian community in Serbia. Other research deals with Balkan discourse particles in the context of standardization and the construction of identity (Fielder 2012) and regional and social variation in the marking of definiteness (Karapejovski 2014).

Work on areal features of the Balkan Sprachbund focuses largely on grammatical structures and lexical borrowing but necessarily includes sociolinguistic aspects of language contact as well. Friedman (2011) provides a very useful overview of research on Balkan language contact and its sociolinguistic context; see also, for example, Friedman 2012, Nomachi 2015.

There are also several regional South Slavic varieties whose speakers do not wish to identify with any of the established languages. Resian speakers in northern Italy have resisted minority language policies providing instruction in standard Slovene in school and prefer to view Resian as a distinct regional language (Steenwijk 2003). Some of the Catholic Bunjevci in Serbia do not identify as either Croatian or Serbian and are promoting their variety as a distinct language (Belić and Ilić 2014; see also Vuković 2010). Many Pomaks (Slavic-speaking Muslims living mainly in Bulgaria, but also in northern Greece and northern Turkey), also view Pomak as a language distinct from Bulgarian (Srebranov 2006, Osterman [Olson] 2014). Pomak activists have established ties with Slavic-speaking Muslims known as Goranci, Gorani, or Torbeši living in the region spanning the border between Macedonia, Albania, and Kosovo (who usually refer to their language simply as *našinski* 'our [language]'), and some members of both groups are promoting the idea that they represent a single ethnicity (see also Steinke 2016 on the Gorani variety). Slavic-speaking Muslims from these different areas participate in online discussions and communicate with each other mostly using their own local varieties, which some write in a Turkish-influenced orthography (L. J. Olson, personal communication, 2 August 2016). Increased awareness and contact among these groups could eventually promote some degree of linguistic convergence.

5. Conclusion

The Croatian linguist Dalibor Brozović (2001: 5) stated that "[b]y far the most interesting and significant issue dealt with by sociolinguistics in the Slavic world is the standard language question." Although it is often difficult to draw sharp distinctions between research in different subfields of sociolinguistics, since an individual publication may combine different frameworks and methodologies, it seems safe to say that the traditional emphasis on standard

languages continues to feature prominently in Slavic sociolinguistic research today. The specific historical and political conditions in the region have made questions of language planning and policy particularly important, and like all languages today the Slavic languages are also subject to new influences and pressures created by globalization and technological innovation. These changing conditions have created new challenges for language management, and there has also been increased international attention to language rights, which has required countries to deal with issues of minority language policy. Language contact, bilingualism, and attitudes towards different language varieties have also received an increasing share of attention, and dialect studies more frequently include a social perspective on language variation and change.

Slavic linguistic research in general has traditionally favored introspective rather than empirical methods, but since the 1990s we can see an increased use of corpus, survey, and interview data as well as the adoption of new theoretical paradigms for the study of sociolinguistic topics. The increased availability of Slavic corpora online makes corpus-based research more feasible, but many existing corpora are based mainly or exclusively on published nonfiction and fiction texts. However, a growing number of spoken corpora are now being developed, which offer new opportunities for sociolinguistic research (see, for example, Kuvač Kraljević and Hržica 2016, von Waldenfels and Woźniak 2016).

Variationist studies of the type pioneered by Labov and other American and British scholars remain rare in Slavic sociolinguistics. Because the Slavic countries and languages were not part of the first wave of variation studies, which interpreted variation mainly in terms of preconceived concepts of socioeconomic status and viewed speakers' behaviors as more or less determined by their position in a fixed social and linguistic system, they have also lagged behind in the adoption of a more nuanced understanding of variation as a means by which speakers constantly construct and reconstruct identities, both for themselves and others (the second and third waves of variation study, according to Eckert 2012). Although this framework is beginning to gain broader acceptance, as can be seen in a number of the studies cited here, there is much room for new research of this type in the Slavic world.

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