The Dictionary of Serbian Vernaculars in Vojvodinaor How to Keep Dialect from Oblivion

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Abstract
The Dictionary of Serbian Vernaculars in Vojvodina (Re nik srpskih govora Vojvodine) is the first regional dialectal dictionary of the Serbian language. It includes lexical material collected from about 250 locations in the northern Serbian province of Vojvodina, as well as the data from written sources of predominantly ethnological character. The basic intention in The Dictionary was, first, to present as comprehensive inventory of lexemes as possible (to the degree to which its card-catalogue is comprehensive), therefore not to differentiate lexemes. We accepted the standpoint that every word used in a vernacular also belongs to a dialect, regardless of its status in the standard language, thus deserving to be included in the dialectal dictionary, too. Second, the material was collected in the territory of Vojvodina as a whole, including the places with the Serbian population which belong to present Rumania and Hungary.

1 . Introduction

The Dictionary of Serbian Vernaculars in Vojvodina (Re nik srpskih govora Vojvodine) is the first regional dialectal dictionary of the Serbian language. It includes lexical material collected from about 250 locations in the northern Serbian province of Vojvodina, as well as the data from written sources of predominantly ethnological character. Today, the card-catalogue of *The Dictionary* includes about 150 000 cards created from 1980 till today. So far, the entries up to the letter J (according to the Cyrillic alphabet) have been prepared and three volumes have been published – the first volume includes the words with the initial letters A and B, the second V, G and D, the third Đ , E, Ž, Z, /©/, I, J. The editor of *The Dictionary of Serbian Vernaculars in Vojvodina* is Professor Dr Dragoljub Petrovi and it is being compiled by the lexicographers from the Matica Srpska's Section for Literature and Language in Novi Sad.

2. Selection of the Material

The basic intention in *The Dictionary* was, first, to present as comprehensive inventory of lexemes as possible (to the degree to which its card-catalogue is comprehensive), therefore not to differentiate lexemes. On the one hand, this resulted from the general situation in the Serbian lexicography - namely, the standard Serbian language does not have a normative thesaurus suitable to determine which items differ from the standard language and which do not. Furthermore, we accepted the standpoint that every word used in a vernacular also belongs to a dialect, regardless of its status in the standard language, thus deserving to be included in the dialectal dictionary, too. Second, the material was collected in the territory of Vojvodina as a whole, including the places with the Serbian population which belong to

present Rumania and Hungary. Thus we studied the situatioin in the region in which four dialects exist side by side. The largest part of that area, its central part, belongs to the Vojvodinian subdialect of the Šumadian-Vojvodinian dialect; in the southeast edge from Vršac to the surroundings of Belgrade people speak the Smederevo – Vršac dialect; in the.north and northeast, from Subotica to Sombor, there is a younger Ikavian dialect; in the west, in the very narrow strip along the Danube – the Slavonian dialect is spoken.

3. Structure of the Dictionary

The intention to achieve comprehensiveness of the lexical inventory, as well as complex dialectal circumstances in the region which is analyzed in *The Dictionary*, required solid methodological preparations before the entries were designed. Insight into the existing dialectological dictionaries of the rest of the Slavic world did not offer satisfactory solutions.

3. Phonological and Morphological Variants

In the first volume of *The Dictionary*, words having two or more phonological or morphological forms (disregarding the fact that they belong to different dialects or to the same dialect) were presented in the same entry, all listed in bold letters in the title of the entry with a slash to separate them:

abriktovati / abrihtovati -ujem (ne)svr

bezmatak m / **bezmatka** ÿ

becikl m / **becikla** ÿ / **becikle** s / **becikli** m / **beciklo** s

In the second volume, this principle was abandoned in order to achieve a better layout and easier orientation in *The Dictionary*, so the variants acquired the status of separate entries:

vàträq -áqa m

vàträw -áwa m

vàjngla ÿ

vàjndla ÿ

vangla ÿ

3.2. The Network of Meaning

Richness in lexical synonymy characteristic for our vernaculars also imposed a specific task to the lexicographers – how to determine the place of the lexicographic definition, i.e. to which of the synonyms the definition of the meaning should be attached. At the same time, it means that the entry should be also clearly cross-referenced with all other lexemes of the same semantic content; furthermore, all these lexemes should refer to the one which is defined, paying special attention to the fact that the references are clear and of the reciprocal direction. Thus a network of reciprocal links between the synonymous lexemes was established. Among several criteria which could be applied when giving priority to one of the synonymous lexemes, we decided to define the one which is most frequently found in the studied locations. At the end of the entry in which the meaning is defined, all synonyms arelisted after the bold arrow (©):

vîtlovati -ujem nesvr 'praviti tavanicu od vitlovki'. – Tñ se prâvilo kad se vîtlovalo (Åo – Mr Ne Er Ma Ja Ša Ph Go StS U Sd Bm; S P De Si

To Sb G K; Mo Bš Me) [TKPV]; © *bublijati, bubqiti, viklovati..* **ðevðïr** -íra m 'veãa
kuhiwska posuda sa rupiâastim dnom za ceðewe
skuvanog testa i sl.'; *ðèvðïr.* – Ðèvðïr – tñ je na rûpice (Vr). – Stâvi
ðèvðïr na stelâÿu (L). – Ja imam emajlirani a moja komšinica plehani
ðèvðïr (Bg – Bc Ss Sv Er Ne År Vo Bu H Ša Åo Go; To BP Dp RS Sb Ru G
Ðu K Mt; Ki NM Iz; Lo) [TKPV]; *ðevðþr* (Il); © *ðerðïv, ðerðija, rešetk*a,
*cedaqk*a, *cediqk*a, *cetk*a.
When other entries should refer to the one which includes the definition, an arrow is used (
®) which, when compared to the common abbreviation *v.* ('see') represents a new, visually
clearer solution:
vaqâra ÿ ® *vaqaonica*
vaqærnica ÿ ® *vaqaonica*
vaqonica ÿ ® *vaqaonica*
This way all lexemes related by semantic synonymy make a closed circle. To define the
meaning more precisely, a two-way arrow (ß) and two arrows of opposite directions (™)
were also introduced. The first symbol relates a word and its antonym when precisely the
opposite meaning helps create the idea about the meaning presented in the entry, and the
second symbol marks unreliable or incomplete synonyms, when the material does not offer
enough evidence to suggest the real synonymy:
aldamaš / aldomas / aldomaš / aldumaš m [...] **2.** 'åašãewe zbog uspešne
prodaje'. — Dòbro je prôdo, ìspläti mu se da plæti vêliki àldumäš (Fu); ß
alvalʉk;
voda ÿ [...] *mêka* ˜ ß *tvrda voda* (S);
belêška ÿ **1.** ¥; **2.** 'obeleÿje, oznaka'. — To se océåe jedæn prýt od jâbuke
i tý se belêške prâvu (Iz — Vš); ™ *baÿdar 1, beleg 1.*
beleg m / **belega** ÿ **1.** 'znak, oznaka'; *bèleg* (K); *bèlega* (Su S P Tu RS Fu Åu
G Ÿb Ðu; O Il); *belêg*a. — Sêko sam skamîje i prâvio ræboš (belêge, mûstru
što se mêri mléko u vedrîce (J) [ZbDT 188]; ™ *baÿdar 1, beleška 2;*
bàÿdär -ára m **1.** 'oznaka mere'. — Nè vidi se dòbro tæj bàÿdär (Fu — S);
™ *beleg 1, beleška* 2;

3.3. The Secondary Entries

To separate secondary entries, a graphic symbol (*f*) is used – a thick vertical line; for
example, in a verb entry, after the first such line there follows a verb of the opposite aspect,
after the second line the passive participle, and after the third line a deverbal noun (their
order depends on the derivation – which form is derived from which aspect). In other cases,
depending on the derivational capacity of the verb and on the form actually existing in the
card-catalogue, a reflexive verb might follow the line:
vézati vçÿem svr [...]; *f* trp **vçzan** -a -o [...]; *f* nesvr **vezívati**
vèzïvam/vèzujem [...]; *f* gl im **vezíväwe**;
víjati vþjam nesvr [...]; *f* ˜ se.
If the head of the primary entry contains a noun, the secondary status could be given to
possessive adjective(s) derived from the noun and to a collective noun:.
bûre -èta s [...]; *f* zb **bùrëãa**;

zâava ẙ [...]; *f* prisv prid **zævin** -a -o.

After the basic adjectival entry, there would be a derived adverb, and, if it exists, a nominalized adjective, comparative and superlative forms:

gospodski -a -o [...]; *f* pril **gospodski** [gospocki] [...]; *f* poim prid

gospodsko;

visok -a -o [...]; *f* komp **viši** -a -e [...]; *f* komp **vîšqi** -a -e [...]; *f* komp

visoåiji -a -e [...]; *f* sup **næjvîšqi** -a -e.

This way, *The Dictionary* also partly implies the cluster principle, but only to the degree which enables a good layout of its inventory. Starting from the third volume, *The Dictionary of Serbian Vernaculars in Vojvodina* also contains an index, introduced precisely because of the secondary entries, as well as because of the phonetic variants which would not always be found in the title of the primary entry.

4. Attitude to the Standard Language

Since *The Dictionary* is intended to be a comprehensive one, it contains many lexemes which are equivalent to the Serbian standard language or were standardized in time, although they are dialectal in origin. Thus, there appears a problem when trying to find the proper delimitation between the "dialectal" and "standardized". To determine this delimitation, it is important to consider two cases: a) if the word entered the lexical repertoire of the standard language with its complete phonological and morphological structure, and only partly with its semantic content, and b) if the word kept its obvious dialectal status, i.e. it was not standardized in any part of its structure.[1]

Between these two extremes, one can find several intermediate cases, and the basic problem could be reduced to the way one should treat words belonging to the first type. Lexicographers who created *The Dictionary*, headed by the editor Professor Dr Dragoljub Petrovi , believe that it is not necessary to define them, because such cases always include widely known, so-called ordinary words. Instead by a definition, they are followed by an encircled equality symbol (¥), a new graphic solution to mark the relation between a dialectal word and the standard language:

brâšno s ¥

zabádati zàbädam nesvr ¥

zábavan -vna -vno ¥

There remains an unsolved issue of the reliable verification of the very standard – that is, how the lexicographers who are to compile a dialectal dictionary of a language with so poor lexicographic literature about its standard language could be sure which status to attach to which word. Since no firm foothold is to be found in the existing dictionaries, participants in this work turn to their experience and linguistic intuition, as well as to their knowledge about the situation in the studied locations.[2]

5. Structure of Entries.

The accent of title words is marked every time when that accent is the only one found in all the locations from which the material was collected; however, if the recorded data show different accents, then the word is presented without the prosodic mark, and all its variants

are listed separately within the text of the entry, in italic and accompanied by the illustrative material, as well as the code specifying their geographical distribution:

astal m 'sto, trpeza'. — Na prosidbi se obiăno ugovaralo o devojăinom mirazu, kao i koliko ăe svekar dati »na astal«, »na ruvo«, tj. koliko ăe mlado-ўewin otac dati novca za kupovinu devojaăke spreme [ЎOBan 136]; *àstal.* — Stâvilä je vrúău âìniju na àstal (Bc). — Pûni àstali svatóva (L). — Primak-ni tu stolicu àstalu (Ob). — Sèdi za àstalom kô âga (CC — Jm Va Sot SR Er Ne MaÅr Le SM D; Mt Bi Pa Su BPS Sb Tu BG Åu G Ўb Đu K Kv Ga Kl La De To RS BP Bg Åj; Đ BA NK Sn Ki NM NB Me Tš A JT På Om Do Uq Kn Dbl VG; Lo Bat); *àstäl -ála.* — Dônela sam dêvet jâstuka, pa trþ jòrgana, pa dônela dvæ krèveta, pa šifònër, àstäl i åètir stòlice (Bšk). — A za svâdbu Péra dôno mnôgo astále za svê gôste (JT — Sv Ma Šu Vr Ja Ša Åo Ši Pt Ph Go StS Ob SB Sd; Si Kl Bå Dp Bg Ru; It Nz Bk Š Ko Db Bt O Pe F Sa Å Cp; I); *ástal.* — Pòsedaju za ástal wî trî-åètir (L). — Sèdili smo za ástalom i vèåerali (Kv). — Jæ kad sam bíla déte, ôndak je bílo ástal okrúgo i tý mæle stòlice i svî ôkolo sêdnedu i jéju (Bš — Mr Kk H; BM BB S Tv Su So St Bð BNS To Dr Snt; Mo Ki SC Ra It NM Ў Z Å); *astæl -ála.* — Slâmu u xæk donèse i tâj xæk mêtemo na astæl. (T). — Îsto tâko ìma stñl, astæl vêliki u c°kvu (Vš). — Mlæda sedþ za astæl i svê prþma dârove (J — Vr; Ў JT Ko Bk Ab Mg VS Dbl VG Kå) [TKPV]; *âstal* (Po) [LPÅ].

Since some recorded contexts include examples of several words presented in *The Dictionary*, some of the examples are repeated. To avoid too frequent repetitions, particularly the ones near one another, and to use the space economically, we introduced the left arrow (‰) which points to the place where the context has already been quoted:

veríўwaåa ў ® *oxaănica. –* Tý u òxaku, îma veríўwaåa, tæ gréda (Sv). ‰ *veriga* [TISS 23; PÅ ¡H 278].

In the cases in which the finite verb form implies two or even three forms of the infinitive (which usually have to be reconstructed), the one which comes first alphabetically is listed first, and other forms follow in square brackets. However, when there are two possible variants of the present form with one infinitive, they are also listed in the alphabetical order, but separated by a slash:

vîdeti [vîditi] -im nesvr
vrískati [vríštati, vríštiti] vríštim nesvr
vršiti vršem / vršim nesvr

6. Phrasal Expressions

Phraseological combinations are presented within the entry, in its very end, and could be twofold. First, there are stable syntagmatic combinations whose meaning depends on the expression as a whole; they are marked with a triangle (†) placed in front of such a combination. The second type of phrasal expressions includes the expressions in which words retain their basic meanings; they are marked with a square (‡):

† Kad nçma kîše, *dòbra* je i ròsa 'zadovoqiti se malim';
‡ *Dobar* ko lebac 'dobrodušan';
† Biti kost u *grlu* 'smetati';

‡ Koliko ga *grlo* nosi 'što moÿe glasnije'.

An example or a phrase containing an interesting formal specificity (which is a frequent case in dialects) is marked with a rectangle (¿):

voleti [voliti] *vôlim / vôlem* nesvr [...]; ¿ komp *vòlijem / vòlijem* 'više volim'. – Mærva vòlïje trávu – ako îma nègo lþšãe, a kôze òne vòlïju b°s, lþšãe (Go). – Jâ vòlijem òno neg sâd òvo (Ši). – Jæ vòlijem dîvjãåe jêsti nego pìtomo (Bg – År; St Kv; Mo Pd Ki NM SC Bš NB Km Me It Bk Š F Å) [Ban ¡ 52, 58, 111, 118, 120,121; Ban ¡¡ 141, 250; GG 12, 150; ZbDT 264]; ¿ sup *næjvòlijem / næjvòlijem* 'najviše volim' (St De RS Åu G Kv; NB E F) [GG 216; Ban ¡¡ 141].

Endnotes

ı Petrovi , Dragoljub: Introduction (), The Dictionary of Serbian Vernaculars in Vojvodina (............. ....), vol. 1: A-B, Novi Sad, 2000, 16. ₂ The Dictionary of Serbocroatian Literary Language and Vernacular (......:..............

....) of The Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts (from 1959 up to now, sixteen volumes have been published, A-O) is our most complete thesaurus; as it could be seen from its title, it does not set the criteria to determine whether lexical units are standard or nor. Second largest, The Dictionary of Serbocroatian Literary Language (.................... ....

......) of Matica Srpska and Matica Hrvatska (1967-1976), in spite of its title does not eliminate the dialectal words, so it is an even less reliable source for the evaluation of the position of a word in a language system.

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