

A SOCIOLINGUISTIC TUG OF WAR BETWEEN SLOVENE AND SERBO-CROATIAN IN SLOVENIA TODAY¹

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1. Introduction

Yugoslavia is a country of many nations, nationalities and languages, but has (officially) no 'official' state language to function as a metalanguage for communication between those nations and nationalities. While the 'role of Slovene' is one of 'national consolidation' within the Socialist Republic of Slovenia, the role of Serbo-Croatian (spoken by about 73% of the population of Yugoslavia) is "generally speaking, that of an 'unofficial' mediator language between the Yugoslav nations and nationalities" (Radovanović 1983:57).

It is the purpose of this paper to explore some important factors and ramifications in this 'national consolidation' of Slovene and the 'unofficial' mediation of Serbo-Croatian by identifying some sociolinguistic aspects (in the broad sense of the term) of the Slovene-Serbocroatian language contact. After a brief structural and historical (sociolinguistic) introduction we shall examine in some detail several areas of this actual and potential language contact by pointing out certain catalysts instrumental in generating a certain (sociolinguistic) tug of war in this language contact. The emphasis will be on specific examples of people (guest workers at home and abroad), institutions (the Language Arbitration Tribunal, the Yugoslav People's Army) and the field of translation and interpretation as well as a note on mild humor. The examination of the sociolinguistic tug of war may show us not only some conflicting aspects of the 'national consolidation' of Slovene, but a not so 'unofficial' mediation of Serbo-Croatian as well.

2. Structural and Historical (Sociolinguistic) Relationship Between Slovene and Serbo-Croatian

Serbo-Croatian is the closest relative to Slovene in the Slavic language family sharing, for example, some prosodic features (e.g., tone and length, but in different distribution) and a number of grammatical categories (although with more nonshared inflectional forms). One unique feature of Slovene which is always pointed out by linguists and nonlinguists alike is its grammatical dual number, acquiring almost mythical connotations among some Slovenes. As for their orthographies,

Serbo-Croatian is based largely on the phonemic principle and Slovene on the morphophonemic principle (e.g., Serbo-Croatian *glazba* 'music' vs. Slovene *glasba*).

Some Slovenes have thought that the existence of standard literary Slovene in relation to Serbo-Croatian has been in a precarious position from the very beginning of its creation in the sixteenth century. A Slovene writer, for example, would certainly have a much wider audience if he were to write in Serbo-Croatian. Nevertheless, Primož Trubar and his successors did opt for the Slovene language and J. Dobrovský (in the beginning of the nineteenth century) well understood the irrevocability of Trubar's decision when he wrote to Kopitar: "Wäre doch Truber ein Kroat gewesen!" (If Trubar had only been a Croat!) (quoted in Lencek 1982:264). However, this Slovene-Serbocroatian (sociolinguistic-psycholinguistic) tug of war has been going on ever since. For example, F. Ilešič, in 1912, urged his Slovene countrymen to look to other Slavs and not to themselves for the enrichment of their language: "When we don't have (our own) term, [let's] not look for obscure Slovene localisms, but rather take the words from greater Slavic literatures. [It] is above all necessary and only natural for us to raise ourselves to the level of Serbo-Croatian,"² that is, to undergo the influence of the Serbo-Croatian (Toporišič and Gjurin 1981:561). I. Cankar, on the other hand, said the following a year later (in 1913):

"But the most disgusting, really disgusting, seem to me those people [Illyrian chauvinists] who without rhyme or reason try to connect the Slovene language with the Yugoslav question. They are just offering it [i.e., the Slovene language], just throwing it over the border and do not even ask who would give more for it. I have never seen a Croat who would come to offer his Croatian language. It's different here! We are so fed up with our [Slovene] culture that it becomes superfluous to us and we would most gladly just fling it over the fence" (Toporišič and Gjurin 1981:565).

3.0 The Dimensions and Ramifications of the Problem of Language Contact and Attitudes in Slovenia Today

The sociolinguistic tug of war between Slovene and Serbo-Croatian in Slovenia today is multidimensional, covering many domains of Slovene public life, and has repercussions outside Slovenia as well. The following five areas have been identified as some of the more important actual or potential contact situations or catalysts generating a direct or indirect sociolinguistic tug of war in various degrees. The first two items are discussed in some detail while the last three (3.3-3.5) are noted very briefly, but I hope in sufficient detail to suggest not only the nature of such sociolinguistic contact, but also the explicit or implicit attitude

toward such contact or 'confrontation,' exhibiting a special kind of language value and language reality in contemporary Slovene.

3.1 Yugoslav Guest Workers in Slovenia

One of the major reasons for tensions between Slovene and Serbo-Croatian in recent years has been the presence of some 200,000 workers (in Slovenia) mostly from the Serbo-Croatian speaking republics. As traditionally the most prosperous of the six Yugoslav republics, Slovenia has for some time been attracting (especially manual) workers from other republics since many Slovenes are no longer interested in doing certain jobs themselves. (It is interesting though that in spite of their position as the most economically developed nation in Yugoslavia, Slovenes were, according to one study, also the most "pessimistic about their immediate economic future" — see Tollefson 1981:147). The very names of such persons often cause tensions or frictions, e.g. *prišlek* (also *prišlec*) 'a newcomer from abroad, a stranger, a foreigner,' *južnjak* 'a southerner,' *Bosanec* 'a Bosnian,' *priseljenc* 'an immigrant,' *izseljenc* 'an emigrant.'

The term *prišlek* has already become a pejorative term in the contemporary Slovene sociolinguistic context and thus gets an occasional reprimand from Slovene officials, e.g. "workers from other republics in Slovenia [are] not *prišlek*, [but] are according to the constitution workers in associated labor with equal rights; they are citizens of the Socialist Republic of Slovenia and not only citizens of the Socialist Federaral Republic of Yugoslavia" (see Šlamberger 1982:2). Moreover, a *Borba* correspondent (stationed in Ljubljana) once objected to all such terms as *prišleci* or *izseljenci* or *priseljenci* and also criticized the construct *priseljenci z juga* 'immigrants from the south' as incorrect since "some have come also from the east and northeast" (J. Pjević, in a letter to *Delo*, January 23, 1982, p. 26). It should be pointed out, however, that in common parlance *priseljenc* (or, *prišlek*) *z juga* as well as *Bosanec* (cf. Matvejević 1982:21) sometimes refer to all 'immigrants' from every part of Yugoslavia. In other words, as far as most Slovenes are concerned (when speaking in generalities) all other Yugoslavs live in the south (*na jugu*) or are from the south (*z juga*).

As mentioned earlier, contact between speakers of the two languages can be observed in many domains of Slovene public life. When a 'negative' attitude exists (among Slovenes it is expressed mostly orally and much less in print) it is often less so because of inconvenience than it is because of hurt national pride, that is, a Slovene not being able to communicate fully in his own language in his own homeland. For example, one Slovene literary and social critic was upset when "a waiter in a Slovene hotel and a (female) employee at a Slovene post office do not

understand my order or request if it is given in Slovene'' (Rupel 1982:250).

The following two longer accounts tell us more about the extent of this Slovene-Serbocroatian language contact and the attitude toward it and suggest how possible 'confrontation' might be averted. First, the account about 'smallness' and the attitude at work in one Slovene enterprise (perhaps a factory).

[It] is a question of a spilling over (*preliv*) of foreign-speaking workers and their influence on the native [Slovene] population. It is not a matter of bigness or smallness of a nation; perhaps it is a question of 'openness' not only of the language, but also of the people and the language; it may be a matter of subservience instead of self-confidence, a matter of economic tyranny and even a wider tyranny altogether (*in tudi širše nasilje nasploh*). I do not like it when we say that the Slovene nation is a small nation, that Slovenia is a small land. But what can you do when the elite (*elita*) who conduct a work project (*delovna naloga*) — that is, the so-called work personnel (*delovni kader*) — speak a different language and drag their subordinates after them (*za seboj potegne podrejene*)! What can you do when the subordinates who otherwise comprise the majority in their home linguistic base begin speaking in a foreign language (*spregovore v tuji govorici*). They not only start talking [in that foreign language]; it happens — it is so at my enterprise (*podjetje*) — that it really depends on the person conducting the meeting. A boss (*šarša*) himself at times determines the language of communication (*jezik sporazumevanja*) and that is especially sad (Kuhar 1983:142).

This statement is interesting not only because of what it says but also because of what it does not say. It speaks of 'foreign-speaking workers' (*tujegovoreči delavci*) in Slovenia, but does not identify their language (in most cases they would be of course speakers of Serbo-Croatian). It mentions the importance of the managerial personnel in determining the language of communication to be used, but is not explicit as to the ethnic identity of those who are 'forcing a foreign language' upon their (Slovene-speaking) subordinates, i.e., as to whether the bosses (*šarža*) are native speakers of Slovene or Serbo-Croatian. Finally, it rejects the often expressed idea of 'national smallness' as being one of the most important reasons for Slovene language 'problems' and emphasizes instead the idea of 'subservience' and lack of 'self-confidence.'

The second account deals not only with the importance of 'foreign workers' in Slovenia and the resulting sociolinguistic problems of language contact, but also suggests how to alleviate or even reduce an adverse language confrontation.

[J.Š. started to speak] about a problem which I think has not been worked on sufficiently and clearly enough (*premalo jasno obdelano*) in the material for our conference deliberations, although it is important enough. It is a matter of those working people (*delovni ljudje*) from our other republics who are employed in Slovenia, but who do not know our language. We know that we cannot do without them, without their labor, and we also know that they would have to learn at least some Slovene. This is less important for some of them and more important for others. Those who employ such workers are also especially responsible for that. One of my acquaintances had this experience at one of the Ljubljana post offices, namely, when he asked for a pencil at the window, the girl behind the counter responded [in Serbo-Croatian], *ja vas ne razumijem* 'I don't understand you.' My acquaintance went away offended. And yet, his anger was not directed toward the right person, because those who were to blame for his annoyance (*nevšečnost*) were those who gave that girl a job for which she was not prepared. There must be other examples like this and they often cause bad blood unnecessarily. I think that our recommendations should include a clearly expressed request that work organizations (*delovne organizacije*) which employ workers from other republics should also see to it that these workers learn Slovene and that they learn it to the degree and in the time period required by the type of work they perform (Gradišnik 1983:125, 126).

These have been a few specific examples of language contacts and attitudes concerning non-Slovene Yugoslav 'guest' workers in Slovenia. There are at least two major deficiencies in this type of investigation. First, the very number of such 'guest' workers has never been determined, at least not officially, and, secondly, no detailed or thorough sociolinguistic or psycholinguistic or even sociological study concerning this contact and attitudes has ever been done in Slovenia.

There is no doubt that many speakers of Serbo-Croatian do live and work in Slovenia. If one only walks through the major towns of Slovenia one soon comes across certain areas where the major language of communication is mostly Serbo-Croatian. The 1981 (Yugoslav) census reports (see Popit 1982:20) that over 9 of the permanent inhabitants of the Socialist Republic of Slovenia are members of two dozen other (i.e., non-Slovene) nationalities, mostly Croats and Serbs. What is unknown, however, is the number of 'guest' workers who may also be in the process of becoming permanent inhabitants as well. As mentioned above, no thorough study of any kind about the two major languages in contact in Slovenia is available at the present time. There are, however, frequent comments (sometimes in the form of complaints) about this contact, mostly oral but at times even in print, a few examples of which appear in this paper.

3.2 Language Arbitration Tribunal

The dimensions and ramifications of the Slovene-Serbocroatian problem of language contact in Slovenia are essentially of two kinds, first, the actual problems of language contact and their solutions (see, e.g., some examples in 3.1) and, secondly, the attitudes of Slovenes toward their own language as well as their own nationality. These have already been touched upon in our brief historical background above. To better understand the following discussion, one must keep in mind the fact that the Slovene language has been to many Slovenes 'almost like freedom (*svoboda*),' like a "mysterious key (*skrivnostni ključ*) which opens all the doors of suffering and suppression under a foreign yoke to freedom." "The mother tongue has thus passed over into a Slovene legend and an untouchable relic (*nedotakljiva svetinja*)" (Moder 1982b:33; cf. also Jamnik 1982:1).

It is this 'untouchable relic' which has been one of the basic motivational factors for all kinds of puristic tendencies among Slovenes, past and present, the symbol of their existence, which has to be preserved at all costs and which cannot be entrusted even to a constitution since constitutions come and go and therefore cannot be an absolute guarantee of the status or even the very existence of the language. It is this kind of reasoning which probably best explains the question of 'oddness' posed by the London *Economist* not long ago: "The 1.7 m(illion) Slovenes are concerned that their own Slav language is threatened by Yugoslavia's main language, Serbo-Croat, also Slav but different. This seems a little odd, since the status of the Slovene language is guaranteed by Yugoslavia's constitution" (Slovenely speaking 1982:65). This constitutional guarantee is thus apparently not sufficient, especially when more and more speakers of Serbo-Croatian come to reside permanently in Slovenia and thereby 'demand' that their language becomes as 'valid' as Slovene in the public domains.

In any language contact, loanwords seem to be the most obvious and easily detectable elements of language. As for the sources and types of loanwords it is fair to generalize that English and Serbo-Croatian may be the two most important sources of loanwords in contemporary Slovene (English loans occurring perhaps more in writing and Serbo-Croatian more in speaking), the former containing both technological and sociocultural items (from *kompjuter* to *pin-up girl*) and the latter more journalistic and other loans, including swearwords. A recent American Slovene visitor to Slovenia made the following observation on the language situation there: "[And] just as Italian swearwords prevailed before the War, Serbian swearwords prevail a hundredfold today. You're just drowning in them, they're already forcing their way into your books, and on the stage." (Moder 1982a:40).

The problem of standardization (in the broad sense of the term) — resulting especially from the pressure of Serbo-Croatian on Slovene — has become in the minds of Slovenes so great or (perhaps psychologically) so important that, in 1980, a special section called *Slovenščina v javnosti* (Slovene in Public, or The Public Domains of Slovene) with a special committee called *jezikovno razsodišče* (Language Arbitration Tribunal) were established by the Socialist Republic of Slovenia. The following value-oriented (informal) comment by one of the initial members of the Tribunal gives us some background reasoning on that official action: “English and Serbo-Croatian, in their own manner, began to overstep in many ways the limits of rational coexistence. We ourselves began to spit into our own bowl and neglect the foundations of our nationality, our mother tongue. And thus a conscience had to be awakened, a conscience which is called *slovenščina v javnosti*” (Moder 1982b:33). The Tribunal advises the Slovene public mostly by means of newspaper articles on the proper use of the language and “invites all individuals, societies, organizations and all others who do care how we Slovenes speak and write, to send suggestions and proposals to [address given]. May good Slovene language be of our mutual concern!” (This invitation is appended to every article. See, e.g., *Delo*, July 10, 1981, p. 6.)

We can see from the above that the problem of the public domain of Slovene has acquired official recognition through the establishment of the Language Arbitration Tribunal. However, this Tribunal has also angered some Slovenes and non-Slovenes by being too much of a ‘linguistic campaigner’ for Slovene and thereby becoming too ‘nationalistic.’ The following are some ideas expressed by the Tribunal in January of 1982: (1) Those who come to live and work in the Slovenia *permanently* should try to acquire a sufficient knowledge of Slovene not only to be able to function adequately at work and in society, but also, when communicating with Slovenes, to try to use Slovene (not Serbo-Croatian) lest they might arouse a suspicion that they really do not want to use Slovene at all. (2) Do not eliminate subtitles in Slovene in television programs (given in Serbo-Croatian) for the sake of economic ‘stabilization.’ After all, “Are languages taken off like coats?, as Cankar would say.” “May our language never again be a piece of merchandise which can be sold for financial gain.” (3) An example of the rejection of the constitutional provision (which states that the official business communication should be Slovene) is given. An employee (a forestry engineer with a master’s degree) who has resided in Ljubljana for six years, executed all her official communication among Slovene institutions in Serbo-Croatian (and in Cyrillic at that). When requested to write in Slovene, the employee responded that she would not bother with Slovene. “Such an answer upset practically everybody in our institute.” (4) “In Yugoslavia there is no single Yugoslav language, but many

Yugoslav languages, among which is Slovene which has the normal right to be the medium of general official communication in Slovenia.” “We solved the question of the Yugoslav language in the 1930s in the sense of Cankar’s ideas on Yugoslavia as a political, but not thereby a linguistic unity” (Jezikovno razsolišče 1982:25).

There have been many reactions to such statements as those expressed above, at one time even culminating in a kind of public verbal showdown between the members of the Tribunal and some of their opponents, most vociferous of whom was a Serbian (Montenegrin) writer who resides in Ljubljana and who accused (in Serbo-Croatian, before a Slovene audience) the Tribunal panel of being “Aryans, small-time philological pedants and nationalists” (Slovenely speaking 1982:25), that the Tribunal had “no right to speak in the name of all the Slovene people, that there are no great or small languages, that there are only small and great linguists and that the five-member leadership of the Tribunal hold Aryan positions (jobs)” (Bulatović 1982b:6), and are the “enslavers” (*zasužnjevalci*) and “what they state is an expression of linguistic racism” (Bulatović 1982b:6; see also Zajc 1982:8). For an indignant reaction to Bulatović see, for example, Turk (1982:3), Kmecl (1982:2, 23, 24) and Levec (1982:333). One columnist characterized the above as follows: “The political character of the polemic is an indirect reflection of current happenings in our homeland where there is a confrontation between self-management, unitarianism and etatism” (Čepič 1982:10).

There is, however, another side of this problem, namely, a peculiar, traditional careless attitude on the part of many Slovenes toward their own language, an attitude which goes beyond a “blind and unnecessary acceptance of foreign clichés” or publishing Tanjug’s reports in inadequate Slovene, “all too often too slavishly under the influence of the Serbo-Croatian model” (such expressions or statements are often found in the spoken and written language). There is a hesitation to use Slovene as a vehicle of communication and, instead, there is an attempt to adapt to the other person’s language if at all possible. In other words, a Slovene almost assumes that when speaking with a non-Slovene (even in his own native Slovenia), it is he who must adapt to the foreigner’s language. When outside Slovenia, it is almost an unwritten law that, for example, in the Federal Assembly in Belgrade (where every delegate can speak in the language of his republic), a Slovene would not speak Slovene.

There are essentially two kinds of (contradictory) explanations given for this state of affairs. First, there is a traditional or historical feeling of inferiority (due to the small number of speakers, their existence under foreign domination, etc.), e.g., “a constant subconscious inferiority complex . . . systematically taught by our culture” (O.S.

1982:2). Secondly, a kind of almost superiority complex, e.g., "this happens because the Slovene mostly tries to compensate for his (linguistic and national) smallness by showing his intellectual 'superiority' over others, who are therefore implicitly assumed to be incapable of learning another language" (Toporišič 1978:482). The recent 'official' insistence by the Language Arbitration Tribunal that it is right and proper and constitutional to speak Slovene in Slovenia (and even Belgrade) rocked some Slovenes from their lethargic and lackadaisical attitude toward their own language and also upset some non-Slovenes as well when they were suddenly confronted with the latest reawakening of the Slovene sociolinguistic and psycholinguistic consciousness. While Slovenes could stand the downgrading of their own language by other Slovenes, they could no longer digest a "conscious opposition to their 'inferior' Slovene language" by non-Slovenes (see Levec, 1982:333).

3.3 Translation and Interpretation: The Case of Subtitles, Sports Commentaries and Mass Media

In contrast with a number of national cinematographies where the practice of synchronization of dialogues has become firmly established, the Yugoslavs have decided to use subtitles. V. Konjar (1983:336) says that "It has been agreed upon and enacted into law (*dogovorjeno in uzakonjeno je*) that in Slovenia we have the right to watch [non-Slovene] films provided with Slovene subtitles. For this purpose [all] importers or film distributors are obliged to prepare for the needs of the Slovene movie theaters one copy of each [non-Slovene film] with subtitles in Slovene." "However," continued Konjar, "as in many other areas of our life, here also the normative agreement on relations turns out to be one thing and their actual implementation quite another." In other words, the law is not obeyed and "[if] in Slovenia we still show [some] films without Slovene, i.e. with Serbo-Croatian, subtitles we do not merely violate the provision of the law, but and above all the integrity of the Slovene linguistic territory." "No less painful," continues Konjar, "is the quality of Slovene subtitles [which are] for the most part translations from Serbo-Croatian adaptations of dialogues, very often prepared in haste, superficially, not seriously (*z levo roko*), by those for whom Slovene is either a foreign language or something which is the least of their worries (*deveta skrb*)."

The most frequent argument for such a state of affairs is the economic one, i.e., 'economize at any cost' which, according to Konjar (1983:341), is a "forced excuse (*privlečen za lase*)."

He says that the real reason for that is the fact that such persons "treat Slovene as a necessary evil (*nujno zlo*) and deal with it, judging by film subtitles, in an exceedingly stepmotherly way (*skrajno mačehovsko*)."

Once a

(Sarajevo) film distributor was unable to deliver a copy of a film (in Serbo-Croatian) with Slovene subtitles (as specified by the law) for the following reason: the distributor ran out of copies because he “had to sacrifice (*žrtvovati*) all of them for the presentation of the film at foreign films festivals” (Schrott, 1982:11). Konjar (1983:430) says that “in short, it is a problem which is of concern to the Slovene cultural and political elite (*vrh*), that is, taking concrete steps and not merely repeating declarations and views which remain — also in this field — more and more often a mere dead letter on paper (*izigrana mrtva točka na papirju*)” and then ends his brief analysis of the problem with the following admonition (page 341): “We must demand full respect for the normative measures which are in force in this country (*ki so v tej deželi v veljavi*) regarding the Slovene language as a national language.”

As for translation in mass media, Dular and Fras (1983:86) state this: “It happens that translations [in mass media] are of poor quality also because they are made by people who are not professionally prepared for such a task. In editorial offices they often proceed as if every Slovene who has completed his military service is automatically capable of translating well from Serbo-Croatian in Slovene.” And their comment on sports is as follows (page 83): “Many Serbocroatisms are used in commentaries during the broadcasting of soccer games even when it is not a matter of translation; the situation has not improved in spite of frequent warnings of concrete and repeated lapses. No sports journalist took part in the preparations for our conference,” that is, for an all-Slovene conference on the Slovene language in the public domains in 1979. Perhaps the following characterization of Slovene journalists may shed some light on this state of affairs as well:

[It is a matter of] the attempts of Slovene journalists and others who appear in public (to use Serbo-Croatian when conversing with persons from other Yugoslav republics (including Macedonia) and with the members of the Yugoslav People’s Army. In this way they place themselves in a minority position and suggest that position to their listeners as well (besides, their Serbo-Croatian is most often bad) (Dular and Fras 1983:82).

3.4 The Yugoslav People’s Army (JLA)

As an official sociolinguistic domain, the institution of the Yugoslav People’s Army (*Jugoslovenska ljudska armada*, or JLA, in Serbian: *Jugoslovenska narodna armija*, or JNA) is linguistically closed to non-Serbocroatian speakers, that is, “Serbo-Croatian or Croato-Serbian is the official language of the Yugoslav People’s Army, therefore commands and education are carried out in that language.” (Aktualen pogovor 1983:17) This means that every soldier has to learn enough Serbo-

Croatian to be able to follow the required education and training and understand the commands. The aforementioned source says that Slovenes and Macedonians do not have any major difficulties in understanding Serbo-Croatian, while more difficulties are encountered by members of the Hungarian and Albanian nationality. The source also says that (non-Serbocroatian speaking) soldiers "are given the opportunity to use their mother tongue in the JLA in cultural and entertainment activities, in administrative and legal proceedings, in their contacts with comrades and officers and on other occasions. If this notion is not observed somewhere or sometime, it contradicts our rules and principles. In the armed forces, we devote much attention to procuring printed material, books, poems, etc. in all languages of our nations and nationalities."

The question, "How is the study of Slovene among the (military) officers who are serving in Slovenia and how is the instruction coming along in the units of the JLA?" was answered as follows: "In the halls of the JLA we organize Slovene language classes for officers and their families, on a voluntary basis" (Aktualen pogovor 1983:17). Toporišič once made the following observation (1978:485):

Almost no accommodation to Slovene exists in most areas inhabited by army personnel and dependents, i.e., in the barracks and concentrated military settlements. The dependent children of the personnel in Slovenia have separate schools with instructional programs identical to those in the Serbo-Croatian territory (that means, e.g., that there is no obligation for them to learn the language of the majority around them). These schools are also attended by a great number of children of non-Slovene parents permanently settled in Slovenia.

We can see from our earlier quote above that there are some provisions to learn Slovene in the "halls of the JLA." Nevertheless, the statement by Toporišič (made in 1976) may still hold true today since those present provisions (to learn Slovene) are "on a voluntary basis." What is more interesting though (in our examination of the Slovene-Serbocroatian language contact and attitudes) is the absence (intentional or unintentional) of follow-up questions or perhaps even some investigative reporting (on the part of Slovene journalists) as to whether there actually are any non-Slovenes (connected with the JLA) studying Slovene in Slovenia. Finally, Article 243 of the Yugoslav Constitution of 1974 (see The Constitution 1974:201) says that "In matters of command and military training in the Yugoslav People's Army, one of the languages of the nations of Yugoslavia may be used." We can see that the *one* language which *may* be used is no longer the 'unofficial' mediating language (i.e., Serbo-Croatian), but is, according to the colonel-general quoted above, the 'official' language.

3.5 Slovene Guest Workers Abroad and Slovene Representatives in Belgrade

It may be fitting to end this discussion on language contact and attitudes by mentioning another group of 'guest' workers, namely, the many thousands of Slovenes who work temporarily abroad. Toporišič (1974:484) mentions, for example, the "emigration of [Slovene] technical and medical workers (physicians, nurses) to western countries. To a great extent it is these gaps which are filled with the influx of Serbo-Croatian speakers [to Slovenia]." In 1979 a special magazine, written in Slovene, began to be published for such Slovenes abroad. It is called *Naš delavec* 'Our Worker' and is a joint publication (an informative and informational monthly) of Slovene newspapers and magazines for temporary workers abroad (the latter colloquially called *zdomci*).

In the September 1983 issue of *Naš delavec* we learn, for example, that "supplementary instruction in Slovene" for preschool and school children is given in about 110 cities in six West European countries. And its November 1983 issue states that there are in West Germany 430 teachers from Yugoslav nations and nationalities" (see *Nujnost učenja materinščine* 1983:42). In that same issue (page 43) we also learn about a "constructive" session of the Yugoslav-West German commission for children's education and about the fact that the "supplementary school" instructs only half (i.e. 35,000) of all the schoolchildren who could have such supplementary schooling in their mother tongue, that is, to supplement their regular education in German schools. What is interesting about this otherwise informative article (in terms of our discussion of language contact and attitudes) is its omission, intentional or unintentional, of specifying as to how many teachers of Slovene and how many Slovene-speaking pupils there are in that army of Yugoslav schoolchildren in West Germany. In other words, there is no follow-up, no special effort expended to provide such pertinent information in this magazine at this time.

Finally, while the above subtle lack of information (i.e., the hesitation on the part of Slovenes to be counted as such, especially when officially connected with Serbo-Croatian — the latter often termed simply 'Yugoslav') may be termed as a sin of omission, the Slovene politicians in Belgrade may typically be charged with the sin of commission, that is, by preferring to speak Serbo-Croatian rather than Slovene as guaranteed by the Constitution. The 'charge' against such politicians is levelled at times through mild humor, e.g., B. Novak (1982:17) in his Slovene humor magazine, *Pavliha*, once contrasted the Language Arbitration Tribunal and the Party as follows:

How can I believe that the Language Arbitration Tribunal is right as it fights for the equality of Slovene in language use

when my representative in Belgrade speaks in Serbo-Croatian or at least tries to. [And] the trade union likewise does not favor the use of Slovene in public. Comrade Potrč always spoke *jugoslovanščina* in Belgrade. [My] Party also confirms to me that I can have doubts in the correctness of the position of the Language Arbitration Tribunal. Comrade Šetinc spoke in Serbo-Croatian at the Central Committee of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia and so did Comrade Dolanc when he was still the secretary of the Central Committee. And the Party, comrades, is always right, at least that is what my most prominent comrades always assure me of.

4. Conclusions

This paper has examined several domains of Slovene-Serbocroatian language contact and the attitudes of speakers toward the two languages, but with an emphasis on Slovenes and their attitudes toward their own language when in contact with Serbo-Croatian. We can see that there are more and more opportunities for Slovenes to be in contact (passively and actively) with Serbo-Croatian, e.g., 'guest' workers in Slovenia, the Yugoslav People's Army, film subtitles in Serbo-Croatian, Slovene politicians in Belgrade.

While the role of Slovene may be considered as one of 'national consolidation' (the Language Arbitration Tribunal certainly being one of its foremost advocates), there are on the other hand attitudes and language practices (among Slovenes) which go contrary to that 'consolidation' idea. In fact, we might even say that Slovenes have a kind of schizophrenic love-hate relationship with their language. On the one hand, the Slovene language was and still is their 'untouchable relic,' their national value and treasure, but at the same time something to forget about as soon as confronted with a Serbo-Croatian speaker in Belgrade or abroad or even in Slovenia itself. This could be, of course, only a peculiar defense mechanism for preserving the language that way. After all, the language still exists in spite of historical odds. It should also be mentioned that the 'care' for the language exists outside Slovenia as well. It is seen, for example, in a recent public discussion about a prospective federal law requiring common core curricula (*skupna programska jedra*) in Yugoslav school textbooks on language and literature which would greatly reduce the number of Slovene authors in Slovene schools (see, e.g., Sile odpora 1984:2; also Izjava o skupnih programskih jedrih 1983:49 and Moder 1984:40).

As for the role of Serbo-Croatian it is obvious that Serbo-Croatian is no longer an 'unofficial' mediator language, but is becoming an 'official' language in more and more domains of Yugoslav public life (for some perhaps the *lingua communis* of Yugoslavia, cf. Naylor 1978) and speak-

ers of Serbo-Croatian also perceive it as such and therefore may not be interested in learning Slovene even if they live and work in Slovenia. Moreover, Serbo-Croatian itself is generally perceived abroad as the 'Yugoslav language.'

The sociolinguistic tug of war in Slovenia today is thus more than a tug of war between Slovene and Serbo-Croatian, it is also a (traditional) tug of war between Slovenes themselves, that is, between those who would like to deny their language as soon as confronted with non-Slovene speakers and those who consider their language as an 'untouchable relic' or treasure. Reconciling these three aspects of this sociolinguistic tug of war has been and will remain a challenge for Slovenes at home and abroad.

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NOTES

1. A small part of this paper is also being published in the *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, No. 52 (a special issue on Yugoslavia) in 1985.
2. All translations from non-English language sources are mine.

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