

PROBLEMS IN LANGUAGE CONTACT
AND THE SOCIAL MEANING OF
LANGUAGE AMONG AMERICAN SLOVENES

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The following article consists of two parts: first I give some examples of language interference or transference¹ on different levels of language structure (phonological, morphosyntactic, lexical); second I discuss briefly the social meaning of language in some of these examples and also point out different areas in Slovene-American cultural life which might be examined in terms of this *social* meaning of language.

Phonological Transference

The Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis, according to M. H. Moustafa (1979:435), predicts that speakers will have difficulties in learning a second language in areas where the native language lacks correspondence. By implication, this hypothesis predicts that speakers will not have difficulty, or relatively less difficulty, in a second language in those areas where the native language corresponds with the second language. The latter may be a bit more complicated than it appears at first.

Let us take the phoneme /v/ in American English (= AE) and in Contemporary Standard Slovene (= CSS). In AE, /v/ is usually described, in articulatory terms, as a voiced labial fricative or constrictive and at times even as a voiced labiodental fricative (Stageberg, 1981:27). In CSS, /v/ has a number of allophones, but before a vowel it is a voiced labiodental fricative. Therefore, there should really be no great difficulty in pronouncing this sound before a vowel in the two languages, e.g. CSS *víl* (G Pl of *víle* 'fork'—not a forked utensil, but an implement or piece of equipment) vs. AE *veal* 'the meat of a calf.' And yet, it is not uncommon for Slovene learning or speaking AE to say [w] instead of [v], i.e. *veal* becomes *we'll* 'we shall/will,' *vet* 'veteran; veterinarian' becomes *wet* 'moistened, damp,' *vest* 'a sleeveless garment' becomes *west* 'the general direction of the sunset,' *Louisville* becomes 'Louiwille' and *Nashville* 'Nashwille.'

Why this mispronunciation? The sound [v] in AE is a strong spirant or fricative consonant and native speakers of AE are very sensitive as to any deviation from that partial closure. Therefore, the major difficulty for a Slovene mispronouncing that [v] in AE really lies in the nature of the Slovene [v] itself: in CSS [v] is pronounced as [v] before a

vowel. However, that is not exactly what occurs in colloquial Slovene, as one researcher, Tatjana Srebot (1973:91), pointed out some years ago and Professor F. Bezlaj even before that (in 1939). Srebot writes:

In general colloquial speech (except for a dialectally colored colloquial speech in Northeastern Slovenia) which is characterized by a less tense pronunciation, we pronounce that sound very lazily (*leno*) by hardly (or not at all) raising the lower teeth to the upper lip so that the sound which we articulate loses its fricative feature and becomes a sound approximating [v] or even a bilabial continuant with or without a closure, without lip-rounding or with slight lip-rounding, that is, [u] or [w], the latter two especially if the colloquial speech of the speaker is colored by a dialect of the Upper Carniola (Gorenjsko).

Thus when an educated Slovene reads or speaks in public he tries to pronounce, before a vowel, a labiodental [v] with a partial closure. However, when he speaks English, he disregards his Standard Slovene pronunciation and follows, instead, the reflexes of his colloquial, more spontaneous, everyday speech habits. It is the colloquial, not the standard, variety of Slovene which contributes to his mispronunciation of [v] as [w] before a vowel in AE.

Speakers of AE have similar difficulties in learning Slovene. While in AE the two sounds are independent phonemes (*veal* vs *we'll*), in CSS, on the other hand, [w] is normally described as a predictable variant of /v/, that is, it occurs initially as a (voiced/voiceless) bilabial continuant [w] before a (voiced/voiceless) consonant and after a vowel, e.g., *vsak* [wsák] 'each, every,' *vse* [wsè] 'everything, all,' *vzeti* [wzèti] (*w* = voiced [w]) 'to take,' *povsod* [powsót] 'everywhere,' *zdravje* [zdráwje] 'health.' In AE, [w] cannot occur (initially) before a consonant, while it can, of course, in Slovene. Therefore, many of my second-generation informants do not perceive that sound before a consonant and simply omit it, e.g. [so pršli si Amériko] (CSS *so prišli vsi v Ameriko*) 'they all came to America'—i.e. [si] instead of [wsi] and the preposition *v* [w] or [u] is also omitted, [pa je zél tíste kárte] (*pa je vzel tiste karte*) 'and he took those cards'—i.e. [zél] instead of [wzév] (see Paternost, 1976:121).

It should be pointed out, however, that wC- may alternate in most cases with uC-, thus [wsè] or [usè], but the uC- pronunciation reflects a more careful pronunciation, a slow speech as well as perhaps a more formal situation. The fact that my informants omit w- (in wC-) indicates that they rarely heard a uC- pronunciation (which they would have been able to perceive more easily) and that is quite understandable since they had heard spoken Slovene mostly in an informal situation where wC- is more common. Once I asked persons of Slovene descent to write down the birthplace names of their ancestors and one respon-

dent wrote the place name *Rovte* [rówte] as “Rote.” This could reflect the lack of perception of [w] in (V)wC(-). On the other hand, the respondent might also have been influenced by the spelling in AE where *o* in that position stands for a diphthong and might still have pronounced the form as [rówte].

Morphosyntactic Transference

As on the level of morphology and syntax, the structural effects of interference or transference can be viewed in terms of two kinds of speakers, those whose primary language is Slovene and those whose primary language is AE. For example, those whose primary language is AE and who have not had much practice in speaking Slovene tend to eliminate the declension altogether, e.g. [vídem an móš] (CSS *vidim enega moža*) ‘I see a man,’ [z mój stríc] (*z mojim stricem*) ‘with my uncle.’

Word order also tends to differentiate the two groups of speakers, e.g. one first-generation speaker would use the construction *pred dvema dneva*, while his American-born son would say *dva dni nazaj* ‘two days ago.’ Or, a first-generation woman would say (when speaking AE), ‘I will be soon back,’ based on her normal Slovene word order, *Bom kmalu nazaj*.

Of the prepositions, *na* and *za* are probably the most problematic. The preposition *na* is quite often used in place of *v*, e.g. “je bil na Vietnam” vs. CSS *je bil v Vietnamu* ‘he was in Vietnam.’ And *za* is used at times only in imitation of AE, e.g. *ona je čakala za tebe* ‘she waited for you’—*za* is never used in such a construction in Slovene.

The distinction between adverbs indicating position (location) and adverbs indicating direction (the latter with verbs of motion) is generally not observed, that is, only locational adverbs are used, e.g. *ko doma pridem* ‘when I come home’ (*domov* is normal Slovene.) The omission of the reflexive particle *se* often occurs, e.g. [je spešelájzaw] vs. CSS *se je specializiral* ‘he specialized,’ *veselim* vs. CSS *se veselim* ‘I’m glad’ (Paternost, 1976: 127). And the normal ‘double’ negative in Slovene is reduced to a ‘single’ negative here, e.g. *Pomagaj /onim/, ki nič imajo* (*imajo* should be *nimajo*) ‘Help /those/ who have nothing’ (Hodnik, 1981:19). It is interesting though that if the interference or transference were from substandard AE, i.e. ‘I don’t have nothing,’ it would produce the ‘normal’ Slovene.

Lexical Transference

This is the area of the greatest problems in communication. Although there have been great leveling tendencies among those persons whose primary language is AE (the neat case-and-gender paradigms of

the CSS no longer exist among many speakers of American Slovene [AS]), one can still recognize the basic structure as being Slovene. However, there would be some difficulty in recognizing the language on a strictly lexical level, that is, on the level of lexical meaning where unasimilated loans are concerned.

There are basically two types of loanwords, loanblends (a combination of both AE and AS morphemes and words) and loanshifts (either a loan translation or a loan extension). [Spóhan číken] 'fried chicken' is an example of a loanblend. In a way, most grammatically assimilated nouns or verbs borrowed from AE could also be considered as loanblends, that is, their lexical morphemes being AE and their grammatical morphemes being AS, e.g. (*bojo*) *bildal* (= *bild-a-l*) 'they will build,' (*bom*) *playala* 'I will play' (fem.). It appears that practically all verb loans are of the *-ati* type.

Among loanshifts, loan translation often presents great problems, e.g. "air and noise pollution" was once rendered as *zračna in hrupna polucija* 'air(y) and noisy pollution' (Gaber, 1979:26, 39). While *polucija* is a fairly common term nowadays in CSS, the structure used is not adjective + noun (*zračna polucija*), but rather noun-nominative + noun-genitive, i.e. *polucija zraka* 'pollution of air.' As for the second example, I would think a construction like *polucija s hrupom* (or, *polucija s šumon*) 'pollution with noise' might be used, i.e. *s* + instrumental. And "junk food" was rendered as *odpadna hrana* 'waste or refuse food, scraps (i.e. leftover or unwanted bits of food).' Although 'junk food' may be such 'useless' food at times, still the normal meaning is this: "a quickly prepared or ready-made food containing a large proportion of food substitutes, and usually rich in carbohydrates, such as imitation potato chips or cheap commercial bakery products" (Barnhart, 1980:266). One first-generation informant suggested that perhaps the expression *hitra hrana* 'fast food' might also be used for 'junk food' while another informant identified the latter as *nezdrava hrana* 'unhealthy food.' Problems in loan translation also occur, of course, in transference from Slovene to English, e.g. *fant od fare* 'a reliable or admirable person; a handsome lad' was once rendered in a formal-equivalence translation, 'boy of the parish' (*fant* 'boy, lad, young man,' *fara* 'parish') (Odorizzi, 1981:10). (For a discussion of some problems in English-Slovene translation equivalence, see Paternost, 1970.)

As for loan extensions, there is, for instance, *papir* 'paper,' but as in AE, with the meaning of 'newspaper.' There is one verb, *znati* 'to know' which is used more and more instead of *poznati*. Both may be rendered in AE with 'to know.' However, *znati* has at least one semantic component that *poznati* does not have, namely, *znati* cannot have an animate object or complement. Therefore, *tisto znam* 'I know that one /that lady/' is in normal Slovene *tisto poznam* (Paternost, 1976:129).

Moreover, *znati* is also used instead of *vedeti*, thus *znam, da te boli* 'I know that it hurts you' (Peshel, 1981b:3) would normally be *vem, da te boli*. This verb is also used in the negative form, e.g. *Neznam, kje bi startala* 'I don't know where to start' vs. CSS *Ne vem, kje bi začela*, or *Neznam, Tina: to je tvoj dream ne moj* 'I don't know, Tina, this is your dream, not mine' vs. CSS *Ne vem, Tina, to so tvoje sanje, ne moje* (Peshel, 1981a:3).

It appears then that all these three verbs (*znati, poznati, vedeti*) can be rendered with 'to know' in AE. The difficulty, of course, is in going from AE to Slovene. The above examples show that some American Slovenes tend to use only one form (*znati*) for all three. If one is to select only one AE equivalent for each verb then perhaps the following equivalent might be most appropriate: *znati* 'to know' (with inanimate complement), *poznati* 'to be acquainted with,' and *vedeti* 'to have knowledge of' (generally an intransitive verb, but there is *vem to, da* 'I know that . . .').

What are some possible reasons for this reduction of use of these forms? One reason, certainly, is a general tendency to simplify or economize, especially in this case. But then, why choose *znati*, and not one of the other two? The root *zna-* is much more productive than the root *ved-* (*znati, poznati, znan, oznanjévatí, oznanilo, znanje, znanost, znanstven, znanstvenik, znanstvo*, etc. vs. *vedeti, veda, vednost*, etc.—that is, these come to mind without searching the dictionary). And, of the two forms, *znati* and *poznati*, the former is shorter and therefore perhaps more economical. However, there may be another reason for choosing *znati*, namely, in many areas, Slovenes are in contact with Croatians who use *znati* also with animate objects or complements. (More about this below.)

One (historical) objection might be raised as to the above semantic differentiation between *znati* and *vedeti*. France Prešeren, in his poem *Kam?* 'Where (to)?' uses both forms almost interchangeably.

Oblak ne ve, in val ne kam, / Kam nese me obup ne znam.
Samo to znam, samo to vem, / Da pred obličje nje ne smem.

'The cloud does not know, and the wave (does not know) where, / (and) where the despair is taking me I do not know.

I only comprehend, I only know / that I must not (appear) before her face.'

However, the two verbs are used in the poem for greater formal and stylistic effectiveness. (See Neuhäuser, 1981:157, for the other verses of this poem as well as Neuhäuser's interesting analysis of the role of the phonetic [sound] metaphors in lyric poetry of the romanticism.)

The Social Meaning of Language

Dell Hymes suggests that the main orientation of linguistics is to be a 'socially constituted linguistics' (Hymes, 1974:196), expressing the view that it is social (or, stylistic) function which gives form to the ways in which linguistic features are encountered in actual life. The goals of a socially constituted linguistics are then to identify and analyze the ways of speaking in a community together with the conditions and meaning of their use. A number of the examples discussed thus far can be viewed in terms of the social (or, stylistic) meaning of language.

In sounds, there are stylistic as well as referential features and contrasts. For example, the sounds [v] and [w] occur in both languages, AE and CSS; however, their distribution is different in the two languages, they are independent phonemes in AE, but allophones of a phoneme in CSS. Thus, in one instance the reference is to a phoneme and, in the other, the reference is to predictable variants of a phoneme. Moreover, the use of [w] instead of [v] (before a vowel) by some Slovenes in AE may be viewed as a stylistic feature, that is, the choice of [w] results from an (unconscious) selection of a phonetic feature of the colloquial, rather than standard, variety of Slovene.

In meaning, there are likewise both social and referential features and contrasts. For example, the verb *znati* has at least one structural or semantic component which distinguishes it from *poznati*, namely, *znati* can be used only with an inanimate complement and its referential meaning of 'to know' is thus restricted in that way. The fact that among some American Slovenes *znati* carries the semantic load of all three verbs (*znati*, *vedeti*, *poznati*) may be the result of several sociolinguistic factors: (1) the broad meaning or the numerous semantic components of the AE verb 'to know'; (2) the productive root (-)zna- and a much less productive root (-)ved- in Slovene; (3) a social contact between Slovenes and Croatians in some areas, that is, a close contact with (Serbo)-Croatian and its very productive use of *znati* which may be used for all three Slovene verbs discussed here (*znáti*, *védeti*, *poznáti*), cf. *znati* in Jurančič, 1972; and (4) perhaps the use of *znati* in place of *vedeti* in one or two Slovene dialects may also be a factor for some speakers.

Let me elaborate a little more on the two types of meaning, social and referential, mentioned above. Referential meaning refers to the meaning of a linguistic referent; in 'structural linguistics' it may be said to have a referential function, that is, (following Hymes, 1974:79) it comprises 'fully semanticized uses as norm,' it denotes a 'single homogeneous code and community,' speech community is 'taken for granted or arbitrarily postulated,' etc. For example, the verb *sfiksati* in AS may be described, in terms of referential meaning, as a loan verb from AE with the meaning of 'to fix, to prepare,' following the typical

Slovene derivational structure of such forms, namely, the typical *-ati* suffix (here it is a short infinitive or perhaps a supine) and the use of the prefix *s-*. The form does not occur in Slovene, but it is fairly common in AS.

And what about the social meaning of such forms? Following Dell Hymes, the social meaning is part of 'functional linguistics' and it contains a 'gamut of stylistic and social functions,' speech community is viewed as 'code-repertoires, or speech styles,' and fundamental concepts are not taken for granted or arbitrarily postulated, but are 'taken as problematic and are to be investigated' (Hymes, 1974:79). We may therefore ask, what is the stylistic or social function of the form *sfiksati*? In this particular context, *diner sfiksati*, one could use (even in AS) the normal Slovene equivalents, *pripraviti* 'to prepare' or even *skuhati* 'to cook' *kosilo* 'midday meal' or *večerjo* 'supper.' So even for some American Slovenes, *diner sfiksati* might be stylistically marked forms while for others they may be unmarked. And yet the meaning of use of such forms, and there are many such forms in AS, is much more than that.

First of all, it should be pointed out that spoken (or, written) Slovene is rarely obligatory for the necessary communicative purposes of most American-born Slovenes. The only communicative need for most of my informants or respondents is to speak with their immigrant parents; when the parents die there is no longer any reason to keep up with spoken (or, written) Slovene. That is, when a language is gradually restricted to the private world (the inner world, the family) and that world is broken up (with the passing of the native speakers) the linguistic link is no longer necessary and language shift is quite normal. If the language is to be restored or continued, other factors or motivations must bring that about.

One such factor or motivation that comes up persistently is the fact that many second-generation Slovenes use Slovene for 'exclusion' purposes, that is, Slovene is used as a secret language of communication when parents (and others) do not want their offspring to hear what they are talking about. Another factor or motivation is just plain entertainment or amusement. Such language is even printed from time to time just for that purpose, namely, to amuse or entertain.* The following are two texts of such 'amusing' language, one from the *Ameriška Domovina* (American Home) of Dec. 1, 1981, published in Cleveland, Ohio (Rozina, 1981), called Text A; and the other from the *Nova Doba* (New Era) of April 9, 1981, published in Ely, Minnesota (Peshel, 1981), called

*Since its aim is to amuse, there may of course be some question of how spontaneous and unpremeditated such language is in the entertainment columns of the Slovene-language press. This aspect of the problem, sociolinguistic in its own right, cannot unfortunately be discussed in this short paper.

Text B. Text A was given by V. Kralj and reported by F. Rozina and Text B was reported by K. Peshel. The underlined forms are the special features of AS.

Text A

Oni dan je Mary pravila prijateljici Rozi, da je bil ta mali *boysek* tako *sik*, da ga ni upala iz *hauza* spustiti. Rekla je, da je bila ves dan *bizi*; *front rum* je poklinala, *kičen* poveksala in *štepse* v *bejzment* pomila. Potem se je pa še v *drogštor* peljala po rcnije za *bojska*; in smola je hotela, da je na poti domov *karo zbrovkala*. Ko je bila že tako strašno *tajer*, je bilo treba pa še *Žanu diner sfiksati*, ko je prišel domov iz *šape* . . .

Rozi pa se je jezila na tiste, ki nimajo otrok in na nas zmiraj *kikajo*, češ, kakšna sramota je, da svojih otrok nočemo učiti slovensko.

Text B

Good morning, Tina. Kaj pa je? *Gledaš kinda tired*.

Pa še *how*, Mima.

Kaj si bila *sick*? Povej.

Neznam kje bi startala.

Start at the beginning, Tina.

OK. Jaz sem vidla *advertising* v *magazine*, da naj *fillam out coupon* za *free trip for two* v Las Vegas. *Yesterday* sem *sendala coupon* in potem povem Tonetu da *maybe* bom *winala trip to* Las Vegas. On pravi da ne gre. Pa sem rekla *OK* pa bo šla Mima z mano.

Sinoči sem imela *such a nightmare* da sem še zdaj *tired*.

Kaj si *dreamala*, Tina?

Ti in jaz smo bile v *gambling casino* in jaz sem *playala nickel slot machine*. Sem dela *nickel in the machine* pa sem dobila deset ven. 'Tu je *fun*' sem rekla in sem popevala:

'Daj, daj srček nazaj. Daj, daj, srček nazaj.'

Pa sem *playala* naprej pa vidim da so vsi *nickli zeleni*. Aha, sem rekla, zdaj imajo denar tudi v *technicolor*. *Pretty soon* sem *hitala jackpot*. Joj, joj, kaj je bilo potem. *Pandemonium*. Vsi *ljudi* so prišli *around me* in gledali velik *pile of green nickels on the floor*; pa sem *stoopala down* da poberem *nickels* in vsi *nickli* so postali *green frogs* in so skakali *all*

around. People so začneli kričat in dva managerja so hitro prišli in rekli: 'Who is responsible for this?' In vsi so pointali fingers na me in rekli: 'She is.' Pa managerji so pickala up by the elbows in nesli ven na street in so rekli: 'And don't come back.'

Jaz pogledam dol in vidim da sem barefoot; sem feelala so embarrassed. Pa sem screamala: 'Mima, Mima, kje si?' in ti si turnala tvoj back on me. Zakaj si turnala tvoj back, Mima?

Neznam, Tina: to je tvoj dream ne moj.

Saj res, sem tako mixed up.

Text A is a fairly good phonetic representation of AE borrowings in AS, presented in a consistent Slovene spelling with but one deviation (*boysek* should have been spelled *bojsek* as it is done elsewhere in the text). Most loans become part and parcel of the structure of Slovene (e.g. *s-fiks-a-t*, *po-veks-a-l-a*), that is, there is a grammatical agreement of case, number, gender, etc. The initial statement (by the reporter) tells us that the story is presented *malo zares, malo pa kar za špas* 'a little bit serious, and a little bit just for fun.' Text B, on the other hand, resembles in some ways more AE than AS, e.g. many of its loans are written in AE rather than in Slovene and therefore appear to be less incorporated or assimilated into AS, if at all. It should be pointed out that the text is titled "Tina in Mima" (*in* 'and') and it is a regular feature appearing in each issue of the newspaper.

A closer analysis of these two texts tells us that they really represent two basic varieties of AS, two structures depending upon function, reflecting two kinds of speakers (or, readers), those whose primary language is Slovene and those whose primary language is AE. Text A makes use of some 80% of word forms from CSS and 20% of word forms from the AS in the narrow sense of the term, i.e. the assimilated loans from AE. (A longer and more varied text would show us, of course, also features of AS which go beyond the simple and obvious lexical borrowings.)

Text B, on the other hand, is much more mixed in terms of structure, lexicon and spelling. Its structure comprises forms from the CSS, colloquial Slovene (*vidla* ← *videla*) and some AS grammatical features, e.g. a morphological leveling (*začnela* ← *začnem*, *začeti*, the normal CSS *gledati* 'to look at, to watch' being used here to include the semantic component of *izgledati* 'to look, to appear (as)'). Its lexicon is about 61% CSS, 27% AE (unassimilated loans) and 12% AS (more or less assimilated loans, etc.). However, almost two thirds of word forms in AS (the 12% of the B Text) also have AE spelling.

While some grammatically unassimilated loans do occur in Text A (*sik* 'sick,' *tajer* 'tired,' *kičen* 'kitchen'), the text is definitely Slovene that is, AS. Text B, on the other hand, is a great mixture of Slovene

(CSS and AS) and AE. The social meaning of such (spoken or written) texts may be seen thus in both individual forms or constructions as well as in the purpose or use of the text as a whole. In either case, the forms point to a somewhat different kind of speaker or user of the language, namely, either a person whose primary language is AS (Text A) or a person whose primary language is AE (Text B). For example, *kičen* [kíčen] (with a long *í*, because a short vowel cannot occur in nonfinal position in Slovene) would be a feature of Text A, while *kìčen* [kìčen] with a short (*i*) would be a feature of Text B. The same occurs with *diner*.²

On the level of the text as a whole, Text A would tend to make an effort to incorporate or assimilate most of the forms into the structure of Slovene and would consider using the language for both serious and humorous purposes. Text B, on the other hand, would tend not to assimilate forms or expressions into AS to the extent that Text A does and it is also freer to use AS for nonessential communicative purposes as, for example, amusement in this particular case. Moreover, while Text A may be said to be an example of transference, involving assimilated words or phrases, Text B, on the other hand, is really an example of 'code-switching' (cf. Redlinger, 1976), involving unassimilated words, phrases, and whole sentences.

It appears from this discussion that the study of the social meaning of language is essential for a greater understanding of language. There are of course other aspects of language culture which could and should be investigated, e.g. the social meaning of language in (monolingual and bilingual) advertisements and the social meaning of language in newspaper obituaries and memoriams. Finally, a deeper insight into the study of language use as a crucial human activity may also be given by the relatively new field of study, called *text linguistics* (cf. Beaugrande and Dressler, 1981) because of its emphasis on regularities, motivations, and preferences rather than rules and laws, its emphasis on dominances rather than strict categories, and its emphasis on acceptability and appropriateness rather than strict grammaticality and well-formedness.

NOTES

1. The term 'transference' is preferred by some, because it merely describes the phenomenon while the term 'interference' may carry pejorative or even 'disruptive' connotations. (See Redlinger, 1976:42, 43.)

2. If the question is asked as to why a form like *diner* is borrowed in AS, one might respond as followed: (1) *Dinner* is the chief meal of the day, eaten in the evening or at the noon hour and has to be rendered in Slovene either as *kosilo* 'lunch' (eaten at noon or in early afternoon)—also *obed* (a more literary form) or *večerja* 'supper' (i.e. evening meal). Thus, the wider meaning of the term *dinner* and the more specific meanings of *kosilo* (or,

obed) and *večerja* would tend to favor the borrowing *dinner*. (2) *Kosilo* (or, *obed*) used to be the chief meal of the day, eaten at the noon hour or, in recent decades (in Slovenia), at an early afternoon or a mid-afternoon hour and would again not correspond to the more or less traditional evening meal (*dinner*) in the U.S. (depending on one's work, of course). (3) Moreover, the AE sociolinguistic environment certainly exerts pressure to borrow the term since it is constantly used in the AE society at large. (4) There is, however, another reason which cannot be disregarded either. Professor Morton Benson suggested to me (in a private conversation) that *dinner* is simply easier to pronounce than either *večerja* or *kosilo* or similar such terms in other languages as well. I agree.

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