

The Language of the Bačka Ruthenians in Yugoslavia

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In the Yugoslav Vojvodina the Ruthenians (masc. sg. in SC *Rusin*; *Rusnak* in the local speech; adj. SC *rusinski*, Ruthenian *ruski*) form a separate ethnic group, numbering some 35,000. Their main centers are Ruski Kerestur (SC Ruski Krstur), Kocur (Bačka Kucura), D'urd'ov (Đurđevo) in the Bačka; they also form part of the population of Novi Sad, Šid, and other places. Although their speech is linguistically classifiable as an Eastern Slovak dialect, they consider themselves a separate national group related to the Russian and Ukrainian and are so recognized by the Yugoslav authorities. They are Catholics of the Byzantine Rite (Uniates) and were settled in the Bačka during the eighteenth century from Eastern Slovakia or the Carpatho-Ukraine. They have elementary schools (eight years), and their speech variety serves as a written language, there currently being published in it a weekly newspaper (*Ruske Slovo*), a monthly children's magazine, and occasionally other publications of a literary-popular character. This sketch treats the standard variety of Bačka Ruthenian, as represented in the *Ruske Slovo* and the *Rusko-Ukrajinski Almanax bačvansko-srimskih pisatel'ox* (Ruski Kerestur, 1936).¹ Prose selections from the latter were read and recorded on tape by the Rev. Maksimilijan Buila, pastor of the Ruthenian church in Novi Sad and author of one of the stories in the *Almanax*.² It is my understanding that this variety of speech is very close to that used colloquially by the Ruthenians, although there are slight dialectal differences between some of the settlements.

1. *Phonemic description.* The phonemic inventory of Bačka Ruthenian is given in the table at the top of the following page. Stops, spirants, and affricates occur in pairs, one member of which is marked by voicing. At word boundary this distinction is neutralized, so that when juncture follows only voiceless consonants appear, while before consonants in which voicing is not distinctive and before vowels the voiced and voiceless counterparts appear to be in free variation, the voiced member usually appearing. Regressive assimilation in voicing takes place in consonant clusters. The phonemes /t'/ and /d'/ resemble their Czech and Slovak counterparts

Consonants:

	Labials	Apicals (front)	Palatals or retracted	Velars (back)
Stops	p	t	t'	k
	b	d	d'	g
Spirants	f	s	š	x
	v	z	ž	h
Affricates		c	č	
		ʒ	ʒ'	
Laterals		l	l'	
Nasals	m	n	ň	
Trill		r		
Glide		j		
Vowels:	i	u	Prosodic features: + ˇ ^ ` ' and pitch levels	
	e	o		
	a			

in that they have very little affrication (in contrast to Polish or Serbo-Croatian /č/ and /ž/). The phonemes /l'/ and /ň/ are palatal and resemble SC /lj/ and /nj/; /n/ has the allophone [ɲ] before velar consonants; /h/ is a glottal spirant; /x/ is a back velar spirant; /l/ before consonants and junctures has a "hard" allophone resembling Russian [l]. The phoneme /v/ has the allophone [w] before a juncture and frequently, as a free variant, before a consonant; elsewhere it is [v]. Labials and velars do not show noticeably fronted or palatalized allophones before front vowels, nor do the retracted consonants /š ž č ʒ/ show the markedly strong retraction (retroflexion) that gives the peculiarly "hard" quality to the analogous sounds in Polish and Ukrainian. Rather they resemble analogous sounds in Slovak or Serbo-Croatian.

There appear to be at least two junctures, open juncture /+ / appearing facultatively at word boundary, and major juncture /|/ appearing at the end of a major segment and being characterized by a slight slowing of speech-tempo or facultative pause. Coincident with major juncture there may appear rising or falling terminal contours /^/ and /˘/. Pitch levels exist, but were not investigated. With respect to pitch and juncture, this speech variety makes an aural impression somewhat similar to other Central European languages, e.g., Czech and Slovak.

Stress is primary (stronger) /' /, and secondary (weaker) /˘ /, as opposed to lack of stress. Each word, other than enclitics and proclitics, will contain one stressed syllable, which in words of more than one syllable will be next to last, counting proclitic prepositions, but not enclitics: /jútre | koló-mńe | nazberálo še+vel'o l'úgox | búli dōse+cíxi ↓ / 'In the morning

many people gathered around me; they were quite quiet.' Within the major segment, one stress will be primary and others, if present, secondary.³

Examples of consonants:

- p perši 'first,' xlopi 'boys,' bop 'broad beans'
- b bulo 'was,' l'ebo 'or'
- t toto 'this,' život 'life'
- d dobre 'well,' jeden 'one'
- t' dut'an 'store,' hospot' 'Lord God'
- d' d'erma 'well-sweep,' d'urd'ov 'Đurđevo'
- k koč 'coach,' takoj 'just then,' žobrak 'beggar'
- g gumne 'toward me,' begel' 'canal'
- f farbi 'colors,' šofer 'chauffeur'
- v veñec 'wreath,' pravo 'right,' krev 'blood'
- s sin 'son,' hlasom 'by voice,' čas 'time'
- z znam 'I know,' mrazi 'cold'
- š šicko 'all,' prešol 'went across,' možeš 'you can'
- ž žena 'woman,' možeš 'you can'
- x xutar 'farm,' cixo 'softly'
- h hajziban 'railroad,' mohol 'could'
- c cixo 'softly,' ocec 'father,' mac 'mother'
- z zeci 'children,' kazi 'where'
- č čas 'time,' začas 'in a moment,' koč 'coach'
- ž mažun 'jam'
- l lampu 'lamp,' bulo 'was,' mohol 'could'
- l' l'em 'just, only,' tel'o 'so many,' potal' 'that far'
- m možeš 'you can,' doma 'at home,' znam 'I know'
- n noci 'of night,' vona 'she,' jeden 'one'
- ń nigda 'never,' veñec 'wreath, halo,' koń 'horse'
- r radosc 'joy,' zora 'dawn,' doxtor 'doctor'
- j jeden 'one,' moja 'my,' takoj 'just then'

Examples of vowels:

- i toti 'these,' novi 'new,' sin 'son,' bila 'white'
- e nove 'new,' pes 'dog'
- a tota 'this,' nova 'new,' bala 'feared'
- o son 'sleep,' nos 'nose'
- u totu 'this,' novu 'new,' bula 'was'

Examples of utterances with stress and juncture marked may be seen in the sample text (7).⁴

Bačka Ruthenian, when written, uses the Ukrainian Cyrillic letters: И indicates /i/, and i—/i/ after /t' d' n l'/, otherwise /ji/. The palatal phonemes /t' d' n l'/ are indicated by writing one of the "soft-series"

vowel letters after the letter designating the corresponding non-palatal consonant, or by writing the soft sign in case no vowel follows. Otherwise the "soft-series" vowel letters represent /j/ plus the appropriate vowel.

2. *Some notes on diachronic phonology.* In terms of historical development, Common Slavic consonants remain unchanged, except as follows: (a) /g/ > /h/ (a new /g/ enters the system later through borrowing); (b) CS /r/ and /r'/ merge, as in standard Slovak, in all positions; and /t d s z n l/ before CS front vowels become /c ʒ š ž ň ĺ/. The reflexes of dental consonant (including /r/) before front vowel thus coalesce with the earlier Common Slavic reflexes of these consonants plus /j/ (</t' d'/ result from borrowings or special developments). Examples: *zešec* 'ten,' *zeci* 'children,' *cixi* 'quiet,' *nebo* 'sky,' **-ostī* > *-osc*, *žem* 'land,' *l'eto* 'summer,' *noha* 'leg,' *hlas* 'voice,' *tri* 'three.'

From /dl tl kv gv/ we have typical West Slavic reflexes: *modl'ic* 'pray,' *vivedli* 'led out,' *kridlo* 'wing,' *kvet* 'flower,' *hvizda* 'star.' The results of the second and third palatalization are: /x > š/ *vše* 'all,' /g > z' > ž/ *peňež* 'money,' /k > c/ *žobraci* (pl. of *žobrak*) 'beggars.' Protoslavic /tj dj/ > /c ʒ/: *ubuduce* 'in future,' *noc* 'night,' *vraca* 'returns,' *spomezi* 'among.'

Protoslavic TāRT-groups are represented by the following reflexes: TāRT > TRaT—*prax* 'dust,' *hlas* 'voice'; TeRT > TReT—*pred* 'before,' *m'lec* 'grind'; TurT > TarT—*harlo* 'throat,' *marxva* 'beet,' *karmel* 'he fed'; TirT > TarT when T is a dental consonant preceding a CS back vowel—*wardi* 'hard,' *čarni* 'black,' *zarno* 'grain,' *zmarznuc* 'to freeze'; otherwise, TirT > TerT—*šmerc* 'death,' *šerce* 'heart,' *cerpic* 'to suffer,' *verx* 'peak.' My material does not have enough examples of TulT and TilT reflexes to draw any conclusions. I have *dluho* < *dŭlgo 'long,' *vovk* < *vŭlkŭ 'wolf,' *poln* < *pŭlnŭ 'full,' *slunko* < *sŭlnik- 'sun,' and *slup* < *stŭlpŭ 'column.' The TulT/TilT reflexes appear to correspond to those of other Eastern Slovak dialects.⁵

As to vowel development, CS /ŭ/ seems usually to evolve to /o/, /i/ to /e/: *son* 'sleep,' *mox* 'moss,' *vonka* 'outside,' *kvitok* 'flower,' *l'ubov* 'love'; *zeň* 'day,' *ocec* 'father,' *pes* 'dog.' Nonetheless, there are examples where /i/ has become /o/, e.g., *pošol* 'went' (cf. OCS *šlŭlŭ*), and where /ŭ/ has become /e/, e.g., *kedi* 'when,' *ledi* 'then,' *teras* 'now,' *krev* 'blood.' In one stem, *dižž-* 'rain' (a form common to most East Slovak dialects), /i/ corresponds to an earlier /ŭ/. The reflexes of the jers seem to parallel those in the easternmost Slovak dialects (Pauliny, 127–129). The secondary jer appears as /e/ or /o/, depending apparently on the environment: *oheň* 'fire,' *vtor* 'wind.'

Initial /ju/ > /ju/—*jutre* 'morning'; internal /ju/ > /u/—*l'uzi* 'people,' *l'ubela* 'she loved,' *čudo* 'marvel'; /u/ > /u/—*druhi* 'other,' *duša* 'soul,'

plux 'plough'; /ɔ/ > /u/—*ruka* 'hand,' *buže* 'will be,' *predu* 'they spin'; /y/ > /i/—*višol* 'went out,' *mi* 'we,' *vi* 'you.' Sometimes /y/ > /u/, apparently influenced by an adjacent labial: *buc* 'to be,' *kobula* 'mare.'

CS /i/ > /i/—*vižel* 'he saw,' *ul'ica* 'street,' *mi* < **mi* 'to me,' *žima* 'winter'; /e/ > /e/—*žem* 'land,' *žena* 'woman,' *cepli* 'warm,' *veseli* 'gay'; /o/ > /o/—*dom* 'home,' *rok* 'year,' *oči* 'eyes,' *slovo* 'word,' *noha* 'leg,' *dobře* 'well'; /a/ > /a/—*čas* 'time,' *naš* 'our,' *rano* 'early,' *plakal* 'wept.'

The reflexes of CS /e/ and /ě/ diverge according to whether they were short or long in an earlier stage of East Slovak. Initial /e/ > /ja/ regardless of length: *jazik* 'tongue'; otherwise the reflex of a short *e* is /e/—*ščešce* 'happiness,' *mexki* 'soft,' *vec* 'more,' *zešec* 'ten,' *hl'edac* 'to look'; and the reflex of a long *e* is /ja/ after labials, /a/ elsewhere—*prekl'ati* 'to curse,' *vjazac* 'to tie,' *počatok* 'beginning,' *šeza* 'they sit,' *robja* 'they work.'

The reflex of a short *ě* is /e/—*šmelše* 'more daringly,' *do l'esa* 'to the woods,' *l'eto* 'summer,' *l'eta* 'flies,' *němi* 'dumb,' *xl'ep* 'bread,' *mešac* 'moon,' *človek* 'man,' *švet* 'world,' *zeci* 'children,' *šmeju še* 'they laugh.' The reflex of a long *ě* is /i/—*bili* 'white,' *bidni* 'poor,' *vitor* 'wind,' *šviža* 'fresh,' *vični* 'eternal,' *ridko* 'rare,' *xl'iv* 'stall,' *pisok* 'sand,' *špivac* 'sing,' *srin* 'Syrmyia,' *živka* 'girl,' *šnix* 'snow,' *osmixoval* 'smiled.' There are some rare instances of an /a/ in the place of a CS *ě*—*cali* 'all,' *bl'adi* 'pale.' These items recur in other East Slovak dialects, and may be Polish loans.

3. *The genetic position of Bačka Ruthenian in comparison with other Slavic languages.* As stated above, the speech of the Bačka Ruthenians is clearly classifiable as an Eastern Slovak dialect.⁶ This was already recognized by Olaf Broch in his commentary on the ethnographic texts published by V. Hnatjuk ("Aus der ungarischen Slavenwelt," *Archiv für slavische Philologie*, XXI [1899], 49–61), who states on p. 56: "... das 'Russinische' dieser Bacska-Kolonien würde somit nach meiner Benennung ein 'Ostslowakischer Cotaken-Dialekt' sein." As such, it of course falls squarely in the West Slavic group of languages. We have already noted the West Slavic reflexes in Bačka Ruthenian of CS /kv, gv, tl, dl, tj, dj/. As in other West Slavic dialects, epenthetic /l/ after labial is lacking at morpheme boundary: *žem* 'land,' *zroběni* 'done.' CS TāRT/TeRT reflexes are shared with other Czecho-Slovak dialects, with no trace of the East Slavic polnoglasie characteristic of all true Ukrainian dialects.

Within the Czecho-Slovak branch of the West Slavic group, our dialect shares very many phonological and morphological features with other East Slovak dialects. Thus, we have the merger of the reflexes of CS dental consonant plus front vowel (*t d/ > */t' d'/, the stage preserved in Central Slovak > /c 3/, while */s z/ > */š ž/, the stage preserved in many East Slovak dialects > /š ž/) with the Common Slavic reflexes of earlier dental + /j/. The evolution of the vowel system is typically that of East Slovak dialects. Phonemic vowel quantity, apparently once a feature

of all West Slavic dialects and still extant in Czech and in Western and Central Slovak, has been lost in most East Slovak dialects; however certain vowels (in Bačka-Ruthenian /ě/ and /ę/) show distinct reflexes depending on earlier length; this is in direct contrast to Ukrainian, which apparently never had phonemic vowel length (see my *Slavic Historical Phonology in Tabular Form* [The Hague, 1963], 85). Note that Bačka Ruthenian, unlike most other Slovak dialects, did not merge */ě/ and */ě/. Bačka Ruthenian merges reflexes of older long and short /o/ and /e/ respectively; this is in accord with a few (Southern) East Slovak dialects, but not with most other East Slovak dialects, which maintain separate reflexes of the older long and short /o/ and /e/. The backing of /i/ to /ü/ before the reflex of Common Slavic consonant followed by back vowel (/šmerc/ < /sümirti/ vs. /zarno/ < /zírno/) is shared with other East Slovak dialects. The reflexes of the strong jers are those of dialects in the extreme East of the Slovak speech area. Morphological features (see below) shared with at least some other East Slovak dialects include (this list is not exhaustive) generalization of the ending /-m/ in the first person singular, present tense (vs. Ukrainian -u), fusion of the older *i*-verbs and *i*/ě-verbs as indicated in note 8, generalization of /-ox/ in the genitive and locative plural of all nouns, and /-o/ in the nominative plural of possessive adjectives. Bačka Ruthenian shares penultimate word stress with other East Slovak dialects.

On the other hand, our dialect apparently has no features occurrent in any variety of Ukrainian which do not also recur in one or another East Slovak dialect. As is not uncommon in areas of transition between related languages, dialects on either side of the language boundary may show features common to languages on the other side. Put another way, isoglosses do not always run in well defined bundles. Thus some Carpatho-Ruthenian (i.e., true Ukrainian and hence East Slavic) dialects bordering the Slovak area show features in common with East Slovak dialects but not shared with standard Ukrainian. Such include penultimate word stress, the ending /-me/ in the first person plural of the present tense (vs. standard /-mo/), formation of a past construction with an enclitic auxiliary, enclitic forms of the personal pronouns, loss of epenthetic /l'/ after labial (Osturňa) and others. The evolution Common Slavic /g/ > /h/ is shared by Slovak, Ukrainian, and a number of other Slavic languages as well. So too, certain varieties of East Slovak share features with Ukrainian in contrast to other varieties of Slovak. Such features include the endings /-oho, -omu/ (rather than /-eho, -emu/) in the genitive and dative of the masculine and neuter singular of adjectives, the deictic adjective /tot/ and /buc/ 'to be'; all of these features occurrent in Bačka Ruthenian also occur in other indisputably Eastern Slovak dialects. Inasmuch as Bačka Ruthenian has been shown in regard to all the crucial features to fall into the West Slavic language group (and hence cannot *ipso facto* be Ukrainian,

i.e., East Slavic), to share a great number of phonological features with East Slovak dialects, and to share no feature with any variety of Ukrainian which is not shared with other East Slovak dialects, it appears that the linguistic classification of Bačka Ruthenian as East Slovak, rather than Ukrainian, is beyond dispute.⁷

4. *Morphology.* In terms of morphology, this speech variety offers little that is surprising. The verb shows the usual Slavic dichotomy of stems: present and infinitive; with present-future tense, present participle, and imperative formed on the former, the remaining forms on the latter. The usual verb classes are seen (classification based on occurrence of thematic vowels in the two stems):

	1st sg. pres.	inf.
<i>a</i> -verbs	čítam	čítac 'to read'
<i>i</i> -verbs	xožim	xožiť 'to walk'
<i>e</i> -verbs	šmem	šmec 'to dare'
<i>e/Ø</i> -verbs	ńčšem	ńesc 'to carry'
	bijem	bic 'to beat'
	vežmem	vžac 'to take'
(suffix <i>n/nu</i>)	rošńem	rosnuc 'to grow'
<i>e/a</i> -verbs	pišem	pisac 'to write'
	dajem	davac 'to give'
(suffix <i>u/ov</i>)	bešedujem	bešedovac 'to talk'
<i>i/a</i> -verbs	kričim	kričac 'to scream'
	bojim še	bac še 'to fear'

The present-future tense is formed by adding the following endings to the present stem: 1st sg. *-m*, 2nd sg. *-š*, 3rd sg. *-Ø*, 1st pl. *-me*, and 2nd pl. *-ce*. The third person plural ending is *-(j)u* (*a*- and *e*-presents) or *-(j)a* (*i*-presents). In *e*- and *i*-presents, the thematic vowel is dropped before the third person plural ending; *j* occurs after a vowel (and after a labial in *i*-verbs).

The present participle is formed by adding the formant *-c*- plus adjective endings (or *-i* for adverbial form) to the third person plural of the present-future.

To form the imperative, present stems with thematic *i* or *e* drop these vowels. The imperative formant is *-j-* after vowel, *-i-* after consonant cluster, zero otherwise. Stems in /d t/ substitute /3 c/ before it. The endings are 2nd sg. *-Ø*, 2nd pl. *-ce*, 1st pl. *-me*. Examples: *čítaj*, *-ce*, *-me* 'read!,' *bešedu**j*, *-ce*, *-me* 'talk!,' *piš*, *-ce*, *-me* 'write!,' *maxńi*, *-ce*, *-me* 'shake!'

The infinitive ending is *-c*: *čítac* 'to read.'

The *l*-form is made by adding the formant *-l-*, plus the endings *-Ø*,

-a, -o, -i: čital m., čitala f., čitalo n., čitali pl. In this form, *i*-verbs change thematic *i* to *e*.⁸

The past participle is made by adding the formant *-n-* or *-t-* (the latter only to verbs with Ø thematic vowel and stems ending in vowel or /r/) to the infinitive stem; before this formant thematic *i* is replaced by *e*. Following the formant are regular adjective endings: *čitani* 'read,' *zrobjeni* (<*zrobic*) 'done,' *kupovani* (<*kupovac*) 'bought,' *vipiti* (<*vipic*) 'drunk up.' If the infinitive stem ends in a consonant (*e/Ø*-verbs), thematic *e* is added before the formant *-n-*: *preveženi* (< *prevesc*) 'carried over.' A verbal noun is formed by morphophonemic palatalization of the past participle formant and addition of neuter noun endings: *čerkan'e* (< *čer kac*) 'squeaking.'

The *e/Ø*-verb *isc* 'to go' is formed quite regularly on the stem *id-* in present and infinitive (with appropriate morphophonemic changes) and *iš-* in the *l*-form. The *e/Ø*-verb *jesc* 'to eat' is quite regular, except for the dropping of thematic vowel and stem-final *-d-* in the present forms other than the third person plural and replacement of *-d-* by *-s-* with occurrence of ending variant *-a* in the third person plural present. The verb *buc* 'to be' has the present stem *bud-* and the anomalous copula forms *som, si, je, zme, sce, su*; "there is" is *jest*, "there is not"—*net*.

The principal verbal constructions are the past (anomalous copula plus *l*-form in first and second persons; *l*-form alone in third person), the imperfective future (present-future of *buc* 'to be': *buzem, buzeš . . . budu*, plus the infinitive of an imperfective verb), and the conditional (*l*-form + *bi* + copula in first and second person; *l*-form + *bi* in third person). In the conditional, *bi* + *som* and *bi* + *si* are usually replaced by *bim, biš*.

The noun declension is summarized in the table given on page 40. Movable /o/ and /e/ occur before zero ending: Ns. *son*, Gs. *snu*; Ns. *oves*, Gs. *ovsu*. Morphophonemic shift of dentals and velars to palatal/retracted occurs before ending *-e*. In the genitive sg. masc., living beings take *-a*, non-living *-a* or *-u*. In the dative sg. masc., *-ovi* is preferred for living beings, particularly persons. In the accusative singular and plural masc., living beings take the genitive ending, non-living—nominative. In the nominative pl. masc., only nouns denoting persons take the ending *-e* or *-ove*. In the instrumental sg. fem. (particularly the *žena*-class) older speakers use *-ov* rather than *-u*. Stem-extending neuters follow the regular neuter declension, but insert *-en-* or *-ec-* (sg.) ~ *-at-* (pl.) before all endings but the nominative and accusative sg.; e.g., NAs. *kurče* 'chick,' *vreme* 'time,' Gs. *kurčeca, vremena*, NAp. *kurčata, vremena*. Masculine nouns declined according to the *a*-class (*vladika* 'bishop') may have, as alternate endings, in the DLs. *-ovi* and in the Np. *-ove*, while the accusative pl. is like the genitive. The plural of *zecko* 'child' is *zeci*, etc.; the plural of *brat* 'brother'

Masculine		Neuter	Feminine	
			<i>žena</i> -class	<i>zver</i> -class
Vs	-e, -u	-o (-e)	-o	-i
Ns	-Ø (-o)		-a	-Ø
As	like Ns or Gs		-u	
Gs	-a (-u)	-a	-i	
Ls	-u (-ovi, -e)	-u		
Ds	-u (-ovi)			
Is -om			-u	
Np	-i (-ove, -e)	-a	-i	
Ap	like Np or Gp			
GLp		-ox		
Dp		-om		
Ip		-ami (-mi)		

is N *braca* or *bratove*, GA *bratox*, etc.; the plural of *oko* is NA *oči*, GL *okox* or *očox*, etc.

The adjective declension is summarized in the table on the next page. Possessive adjectives with the formants *-ov-*, *-in-* (*bratov* 'brother's,' *sestrin* 'sister's') as well as the pronominal possessive adjectives *maj*, *naš*, *čij*, etc., have Ø in the nominative sg. masc. and *-o* in the nom. pl.: *bratovo zeci* 'brother's children'). The forms of *jeden*, *jedno*, *jedna*, Np. *jedni* 'one' belong morphologically to the adjective class and have regular adjective endings. The comparative is formed by suffixing the formant *-š-* (less frequently *-ejš-*); the superlative by prefixing *naj-* to the comparative.

Cardinal numerals from two through six (*dva*, *tri*, *štiri*, *pejc*, *šejsc*) have regular plural noun endings in the oblique cases, except the instrumental, where they have *-oma* ~ *-ma*. Thus, *dva* (**dve* does not occur), *dvox*, *dvom*, *dvoma*; *tri*, *trox*, *trom*, *troma*; *pejc*, *pejcox*, *pejcom*, *pejcoma* ~

Masculine		Neuter	Feminine	Plural
N	-i	-e	-a	-i (-o)
A	like G or N		-u	like G or N
I	-im	-ej		-ima, -imi
L				
G	-oho			
D	-omu		-ix	
			-im	

pejma. Numerals from seven on are not declined. The items *ezer* 'thousand' and *milijon* 'million' are masculine nouns.

5. *Syntax*. Use and formation of perfective and imperfective verbs is analogous to that in other East and West Slavic tongues. Pronoun objects usually occur in short enclitic form. In a verbal construction the negative particle occurs before the main verb (as in Czech and Slovak) rather than the auxiliary (as in Serbo-Croatian): *otedi som ho nigda ne čul hrac aňi špivac* 'from that time on I never heard him play or sing.' In the third person the copula is often zeroed in the present tense (as in Russian and Ukrainian). Subordinate nominal clauses are introduced by *že* or *da*, purpose clauses are introduced by *da*: /vipatrálo mi | že tåg mǎlo+žadála ↓ / 'it seemed to me that she asked so little'; /kèl'o som ju gót | odháňal | da iže spác | / 'however much I urged her to go and sleep.'

The use of *da* is apparently a Serbo-Croatism. Compare the use of *da* to introduce an unreal condition: /i búla+hotóva | zróbic | hróbnu | eixótu | da móhla ↓ / '—and she would have been willing to create the quietness of the grave, had she been able'; the use of *jág da* for "as if" (SCr. *kao da*); the modal use of *da* to indicate obligation: /cò da vam vrácim | za vašo múki ↓ / 'What should I return to you for your trouble?'; or other uses comparable to Serbo-Croatian: *hajde da čujem* 'let me hear,' /stráx ↑ da mi dàco ne búže ↓ / 'fear lest something happen to me.'

6. *Loanwords*. For obvious historical reasons the Bačka Ruthenians, living in close contact with Hungarians and Serbs, have a very large number of loans from these languages; of Hungarian origin are: *vašar* 'fair,' *pajtaš* 'friend, pal,' *gazda* 'landlord; independent farmer,' *katona* 'soldier,' *varoš* 'city,' *salaš* 'farm,' *koč* 'coach,' *lanc* 'chain,' *hol't* (a land measure). Of

Serbo-Croatian origin (some ultimately from Greek or Turkish) are: *briga* 'care, worry,' *čajka* 'boat,' *jeftika* 'tuberculosis,' *bagren* 'acacia,' *du'an* 'store, shop,' *hajde* 'let's go, go on,' *ogrozd* 'gooseberry.'

Bačka Ruthenian, like all the languages of former Austria-Hungary, borrowed extensively from German. Some loans, like *viraxovac* 'to calculate' (cf. German *rechnen*) or *razic* še 'to take counsel' (cf. German *raten*) are very old loans, while such as *kirbaj* < *Kirchweih* 'Kermesse,' *hajziban* < *Eisenbahn* 'railroad,' *farba* < *Farbe* 'paint,' *kufer* < *Koffer* 'suitcase,' *fertal* < *Viertel* 'quarter-hour,' *špital* < *Spital* 'hospital,' *faxovec* 'skilled worker' (cf. German *Fach* 'specialty'), probably were acquired since settlement in the Bačka. It is possible that some of the German words were borrowed through Hungarian or Serbo-Croatian, rather than directly from German. A large proportion of the Hungarian and German loans are shared with Serbo-Croatian dialects of the region.

Bačka Ruthenian also has a few loans from Church Slavic, *svjati* 'Saint, holy,' *hospod* 'Lord,' possibly *vladika* 'bishop,' and from Ukrainian, e.g., *urjadnik* 'official,' *slavjański* 'Slavic' (candidates for priesthood were frequently sent to Galicia for schooling).⁹ A Turkish loan which appears also in Bulgarian, but not apparently in Serbo-Croatian, is *mažun* (a kind of fruit preserves). Finally, there is the usual contingent of pan-European *Kulturwörter*: *poet*, *romantika*, *elegantni*, *literaturni*, *dialekt*, *student*, *bužet*, *asfaltni*, *park*, *fodbal* 'soccer,' *šofer*, *avtobus*, *televizija*, *atmosfera*, *socijalistički*, *motor*, *traktor*, *amater*, *mašina*, *fabrika*, *sistem*, *kvalitet*, *produkt*, *politika*, etc.

7. Sample text.¹⁰

/slũnko rucálo | červěnu švėtlosc | slĩcnu | jag mōja krėv ↓ kōč
stánul | a mǎc+višla na dráhu ↓ zá-ńu | bǎba i drúhi ↓ có-že ↓ zapíta
še ↓ bũlo jej jásno ↓ zapl'ánta še | dvǎras ↓ trĩras ↓ i spádla bi ↑ ál'e
ju zatrimáli ↓ zaml'ėla ↓ odvėdli ju nũka ↓ mñė ználi | i odnėšli na
póscel' ↓ scėl som zĩsc | i ratóvaz ju ↓ bál som še | ěi je dǎco ěe búze ↓

i tėras ↑ kėt še sėtim tōho ↑ kolò-mñe prel'ėci ěarna slútńa | oxabja-
jũci za sòbu stráx | kòtri me vpláši ↓ móršėim še ↓ zavėram ěci+da ěe
vĩjim | jėj l'ėco | hl'ibóko upadnũte | na-kòtrim še ěita l'em brĩga zǎ-mñe
| i stráx ↑

da mi dǎco ěe búze ↓ pozekũjem bóhu ↑ že jej ěe bũlo hórše | že
vitrimála ↓

l'ėdvo še osvıdomėla | i okripėla | ũš+prixozėla gũ-mñe | ratovála
me | rušajũci mėxko | ěeosėtno | mōjo prosėtni rǎni ↓ pa vnóci | kėl'o som
ju gót | odhǎnal | da ěze spǎc | ěe ěšla | i l'em še pitála | ěi dǎco žǎdam ↓ a
mėšac | l'ubopĩtno štũrjal | svòjo víčno | naklibėne l'ėco | do xĩži | i jǎg da
prekóscel | scėš ogrózdĩ ↑

jũtre | kolò-mñe | nazberǎlo še+vėl'o l'ũzox | bũli dōsc+ćxi ↓ i
odlućėli | žė | dōras trėba ěz do doxtóra | tōho i tóho | bò je dóbri | a
tũńi ↓ /

Translation:

The sun cast a red light—like my blood. The coach stopped and mother came out onto the road, after her, grandmother and others. "What (happened)?" she asked. It was clear to her. She swayed two or three times and would have fallen, but they held her up: She fainted, they led her inside. They took me down and carried me to a bed. I wanted to get out and come to her aid; I was afraid something might happen to her.

Even now, when I remember that, a black feeling sweeps around me, leaving after itself a fear which terrifies me. I shudder; I close my eyes so as not to see her deeply fallen face, on which was to be read only concern for me and fear lest something happen to me. I thank God that it was not worse for her; that she endured it.

She had hardly come to herself and regained strength that she came to me, consoled me, softly touching my sensitive wounds. And that night no matter how much I urged her to go and sleep, she did not go, but only asked whether I wanted anything. And the moon curiously pushed her eternally smiling face into the house, as if to mock (me): "Do you want some gooseberries?"

Next morning there gathered about me many people—they were quite quiet and they decided that I must immediately go to Dr. So-and-So, since he was good—and cheap.

NOTES

- 1 I also possess an interesting grammar of Bačka Ruthenian: Gabor Kostel'nik, *Hramatika bačvan'skoruskej bešedi*, Ruski Kerestur: Ruske narodne prosvitne društvo (printed by the Srpska manastirska štamparija, Sremski Karlovci), 1923. I am informed that the Ruthenian scholar, Gavril Nad', has written a grammar which is not yet published.
- 2 I am particularly grateful to the Rev. Father Buila for his assistance and also to Professor Pavle Ivić and to Daniel Dudok, *asistent* for the Slovak language, both of the Philosophical Faculty at Novi Sad, for information concerning the Ruthenians and for bringing me into contact with Ruthenians in Novi Sad.
- 3 Stress (either primary or secondary) always falls on the second from last syllable of a unit consisting of the morphological word plus any preceding proclitic (but not including a following enclitic) or on the sole syllable of such a unit if it consists of but one syllable. Stress cannot, however, be considered, solely because of automatic occurrence in terms of a morpho-syntactic unit, to be non-phonemic, inasmuch as word boundary, though sometimes marked by plus juncture, is by no means always marked on the phonemic level at all, particularly between a stress-bearing word and a following enclitic. An alternate analysis to the one presented above would be to set up one additional juncture, whose phonemic features would consist solely of neutralization of voicing in a preceding consonant if a vowel or consonant in which voicing is non-distinctive follow *and* occurrence of stress in the second syllable preceding it, unless a similar juncture precedes the first preceding syllable. Such a juncture would coincide with the end of any morpho-syntactic word and the beginning either of such a word or of a proclitic preceding such a word, if present. Such a juncture would make it possible to specify the point at which neutralization of voicing takes place without the rather unsatisfactory expedient of mentioning units from another descriptive level (i.e., the morpho-syntactic word, as I have done above) but would still not

eliminate a phoneme of secondary stress, since the occurrence of stress on monosyllables (which may be either stressed words or enclitics) would still not be automatic.

I have belabored this point to some extent for the reason that precisely the same difficulties arise in the analysis of such languages as Polish and Macedonian, concerning which the statement is frequently encountered that stress is non-phonemic, because it occurs automatically on a specified syllable of the "word" (a unit usually not otherwise defined). Unless the position of stress can be shown to occur automatically in relation to juncture or some other *phonological* phenomenon, such statements involve a serious confusion of levels of analysis (I leave aside the fact that there are items in both Polish and Macedonian, whose accentuation does not conform to the supposedly automatic rule, e.g., Polish [améryka] 'America'; for Macedonian examples see pp. 21-22 of Lunt's *Grammar of the Macedonian Literary Language* [Skopje, 1952]).

- 4 Slant lines are used here only where it is necessary to be explicit that phonemes are referred to. Otherwise, they are omitted from examples cited in the text or in tables. Single morphological words are cited in phonemic transcription, but with indication of suprasegmental phonemes omitted; longer utterances are cited with indication of suprasegmental phonemes other than pitch level (except for some examples in section 5 which I took from written material and from which I have omitted suprasegmentals). In the transcription of utterances morphological words are separated by space. Stress bearing proclitics are linked to the following unit with a hyphen. This is purely for reading ease; neither of these conventions has any phonemic significance; all phonemic junctures heard are explicitly indicated by the appropriate symbols /| +/.
- 5 Information concerning East Slovak dialects other than Bačka Ruthenian is drawn from: O. Broch, "Studien von der slovakisch-kleinrussischen Sprachgrenze im östlichen Ungarn," *Skrifter udgivne af Videnskabselskabet i Christiania, II. Klasse*, 1897, No. 5, and 1899, No. 1 (Falkus, Dubravka, Koruml'a). Jan Fedák, "Zo Šarišského hláskoslovía," *Sborník na počest' Jozefa Škultétyho* (Matica slovenská, 1933), 499-560 (Plavnica, Gromoš, Plaveč, L'ubotin; also some information on dialects near Sabinov and Prešov); N. van Wijk, "Die Stellung des Ostslowakischen innerhalb des Čechoslovakischen," *Sborník . . . Škultétyho*, 561-570. Jan Fedák, "Zo Šarišského tvaroslovía" (same localities as Fedák's article above); Z. Stieber, "Przyczynek do dialektologii Zemplina"; Adolf Kellner, "Příspěvek k jazykové charakteristice Plavnice"; and N. van Wijk, "Ostslowakisch und Lachisch"; the above four in *Sborník Matice slovenskej*, XIII (1935). Z. Stieber, *Zarys dialektologii języków zachodniosłowiańskich* (Warszawa, 1956); E. Pauliny, *Fonologický vývin slovenčiny* (Slovenská akadémia vied, 1963); Ján Stanislav, *Dejiny slovenského jazyka, I: Úvod a hláskoslovie* (Bratislava: Slovenská akadémia vied, 1956).

Information on Carpatho-Ruthenian (Ukrainian) dialects is drawn from: O. Broch, "Zum Kleinrussischen im Ungarn," *Archiv für slavische Philologie*, XVII (1895), 321-416, and XIX (1897), 1-21 (Ubl'a); J. Vira, "Hláskosloví osturňského hovoru," *Sborník Matice slovenskej*, VIII (1930), 69-124 (Osturňa).

- 6 Determination of the exact genetic history and linguistic position of Eastern Slovak is beyond the scope of this article; N. van Wijk, Z. Stieber, J. Stanislav, E. Pauliny, and various other linguists have written on this point. Opinions have not been lacking that Eastern Slovak dialects represent Slovakized Polish or Ukrainian dialects, though the more authoritative position seems to be that they represent, for the most part, essentially Slovak dialects which in the course

of their history have been subjected to strong Polish and Ukrainian influences. Certain it is that Eastern Slovakia and neighboring Carpatho-Ruthenia have been areas of linguistic and cultural diffusion, where Slovak, Polish, and Ukrainian speech varieties have influenced each other and have, in many cases, been influenced by a non-Slavic language, Hungarian.

- 7 The national consciousness of the Bačka Ruthenians which asserts that they are an ethnic group apart from the Slovaks has, of course, no bearing on the linguistic classification of their dialect, just as what I have written concerning the linguistic affiliation of their speech must not be construed as in any sense denying their right to consider themselves either as a separate ethnic group or as Russians or Ukrainians, as they see fit.
- 8 The descendants of verbs of the CS *i/ě*-class have /i/ in the infinitive; there is no separate *i/e*-class: Thus, *zožic*, *zožel* 'to walk,' *vižic*, *vižel* 'to see.'
- 9 As in the case of the German loans it is, of course, impossible to state with absolute finality that the cited Hungarian and Church Slavic loans may not in some cases have been borrowed by way of Serbo-Croatian. However, I do not believe this likely, for the following reasons: The Vojvodina is an area of mixed population, so that the Bačka Ruthenians came into direct contact with both Hungarians and Serbs. In pre-First World War Hungary, the official and prestige language was Hungarian; the Serbs were simply another, albeit much more numerous, minority nationality. The Bačka Ruthenians are also reported to have had a tendency to Magyarize (O. Broch in the previously cited article in *Archiv*, XXI, states, p. 55: "Von der jetzigen Geschichte der Bacs-Rusnaken weiss Herr Inatjuk zu erzählen, wie sie augenscheinlich magyarisirt werden . . ."), so that it would appear probable that borrowing of Hungarian words was made directly from Hungarian speakers, rather than from neighboring Serbs. As the Bačka Ruthenians were already under strong Hungarian influence in their old homeland before they settled in the Vojvodina, it is of course not excluded that they brought many Hungarian loans with them when they settled there. At least one loan I have found, *bežč* 'Vienna,' shows the diphthong characteristic of some Hungarian dialects rather than long [e:] of the standard language, which would imply direct borrowing from such a dialect rather than through Serbo-Croatian, which, as far as I know, has only /béeč/. In the case of Church Slavic loans, I believe it even less likely that they are borrowed by way of Serbo-Croatian. The Bačka Ruthenians are not Orthodox and hence do not share churches with the Serbs. In fact, the word *hospot'* represents a Ukrainian or Russian Church Slavic pronunciation, not Serbian, which is /góspod/.
- 10 The translation following the text is intended to be idiomatic English, but aims more at faithful rendition of the original than at any pretension of elegance. The text is a passage from the short story "Mac" (Mother) by Silvester Salamon from the *Almanax*, 143-144, as read by Father Buila. The rather slow and deliberate reading style accounts for what is probably a larger than usual number of major junctures.