

**LANGUAGE WARS AND THE RENDERING OF ACCOUNTS:  
THE AMBIGUOUS CASE OF SERBO-CROATIAN-  
A CASE STUDY OF SEVEN LANGUAGE USERS**

by

Sanja Kovac, B.A.

A thesis submitted to  
the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research  
in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Arts

School of Journalism and Communication

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## **Abstract**

By employing the accounts theory of Scott and Lyman (1968) and using some of their strategies like excuses and justifications, consultative and frozen linguistic styles, and identity switching, the ambiguity of the Serbo-Croatian language is examined and applied in seven interviews. Six of the interviewees were from Croatia: the schoolteacher, the priest, the government representative, the manager of the radio station (a Czech national), the newspaper editor, and the language editor. The seventh interviewee was an immigrant, a Croatian national, who immigrated to Canada in the 70ties.

The Serbo-Croatian language was defined as an ambiguous event due to a lack of clarity to define its content and meaning in practice. As well, many descriptions of the concept were perplexing. Based on the unclear status (ambiguity) of the Serbo-Croatian language, a qualitative study of interviewing was employed to determine the explanations and behaviours of the Croats regarding this unified language.

Through language and interaction, people understand (account) for an ambiguous event or in this instance, the Serbo-Croatian language. Five propositions were set to specifically address each of the distinctive linguistic devices in ambiguous situations and to seek their likelihood in the accounting of each of the interviews.

The results of the study varied among the participants and they confirmed the ambiguity of the Serbo-Croatian language.

## **Acknowledgments**

I wish to express my deepest appreciation to the many people in Croatia who contributed to this research not only to those that I have previously known, but also to those whom I recently met. To the radio station manager, my dear friend with whom I spent interesting and exciting war days in Croatia in 1992/1993. I thank her for her unreserved participation in this study. She was extremely helpful in providing information concerning the Czech language compared to the Serbo-Croatian language. It was also a pleasure to see again my former drama and the language schoolteacher, who always showed only respect for her students and taught with love and enthusiasm. These same qualities she demonstrated in the community. Thanks to the priest who was of assistance in describing the role of the church and his role in nurturing the Croatian language. His love for the Croatian language was inescapable. I am grateful to the newspaper editor who was an interesting and articulate contributor, and who added to the diversity of personalities and interactions. It was a refreshing experience. My appreciation extends to the government representative, who availed himself for an interview despite his busy schedule. A special gratitude is reserved for the language editor, who demonstrated enormous knowledge regarding this topic. Her active hands-on approach to language matters is commendable. Last, but not least, my appreciation is expressed to the immigrant whose love for Croatia even from far away was apparent and difficult to contain.

I would be amiss if I did not also indicate a special word of appreciation for my parents, who provided me with shelter, food, and transportation while in Croatia. I

dedicate this research to my mother who continues the courageous battle with cancer and to whom I wish a speedy recovery.

I also would like to thank all my teachers and professors who have influenced me throughout my education. A special thank you to the faculty at Carleton University and to my thesis supervisor Dr. Ross Eaman whose guidance and encouragement has enabled me to complete this research.

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## INTRODUCTION

Following World War II, what was called the Serbo-Croatian language was supposedly imposed upon Croatia as part of what was then Yugoslavia. For a chronology of relevant events, see Appendix I. Although the advocates of this new language claimed that Croatian and Serbian were more or less equally represented, its critics (mainly Croatian) believed that it was, in several aspects, actually much closer to Serbian than to Croatian and was, in fact, a thinly veiled attempt to make Serbian the dominant language in Croatia. This argument was made not only by Croatian linguists, but also by many ordinary citizens who lived in Croatia between the Second World War and Croatian independence in 1991.

Upon closer inspection, however, what actually happened is decidedly less clear. Not only do the linguists give different and, at times, even contradictory accounts. Even the accounts given by those who experienced, and in some cases were involved in, the supposed imposition of Serbo-Croatian (e.g. teachers, priests, journalists, and government officials) is also contradictory and confusing. At the end of the day, it is not clear whether there was a deliberate state-based project to impose Serbo-Croatian on the Croatian people. Even if there was such a project, it is not clear whether it significantly affected the use of Croatian in everyday life or whether Serbo-Croatian was even a single language. For many Croats, it was obviously a factual creation. Nevertheless, for others it is better understood as a nationalistic myth among Croats.

The supposed imposition of Serbo-Croatian is not only of historical interest in its own right as a possible case of linguistic imperialism, hegemony, or even genocide (what has been called “linguicide”). It is also a classic example of people trying to make sense

of a phenomenon of which they only have partial, fragmented, and biased knowledge. In such situations, words and phrases, if repeated often enough, can seem to become realities, even when the evidence for those realities is fleeting.

In the case of Serbo-Croatian, the social construction of meaning generally took the form of explanations. Moreover, these explanations were usually of a justificatory nature. That is, they sought to explain, or explain away, the actions of particular individuals, groups, institutions, or society (“one’s country”) as a whole. Such rationalizations were the original focus of what is a relatively new area of research known as the “sociology of accounts.” Since its inception in the late 1960s, accounts theory has broadened its terrain to include non-justificatory types of accounts. However, justificatory accounts remain an integral part of its concern. It is the theorizing about such justificatory accounts, which will be drawn upon to help understand attempts to make sense of the alleged imposition of Serbo-Croatian. This theorizing, which was actually most productive at the outset of the sociology of accounts, works quite well to throw light on the process of sense making with respect to Serbo-Croatian. Its weakness, however, is that it does not specifically consider sense making in situations of high ambiguity. In the course of this thesis, therefore, an attempt will be made to explicate some of the particular features of rationalizing events for which the evidence is ambiguous.

The concept of an ambiguous event is obviously a relative and in some respects an ambiguous one itself. However, a meaningful distinction can be drawn between those events through which people live that have a clear and unquestioned existence for them, even though their individual experiences may be quite different. No one living through the Great Depression or World War II had any doubt about the occurrence or even the

general nature of those events. On the other hand, people living through the so-called Cold War were probably less clear overall as to what exactly they were experiencing. Not only their experiences, but also their explanations of the event in question would have varied considerably. While all events have a discursive dimension to them, ambiguous events are essentially those with a strong textual basis. A classic example would be the Great Awakening in the mid-18th century America, which was a much a creation of discourse as it was a set of actual religious conversions. Ambiguous events are not essentially fictive in nature, however; their key characteristic is that their actual nature is not clearly perceived even by those who take their existence for granted. Descriptions of them tend to be poorly described, vague, and even contradictory.

The suggestion that the “imposition” of Serbo-Croatian is best treated as an ambiguous event arises in part from the difficulty of getting a clear and consistent explanation of what precisely it involved from either the linguistic “experts” or the persons interviewed for this study. While some of the latter do not seem to have had any doubt that some such imposition occurred (or was attempted), they are generally short on details about what this meant in daily life. Their explanations are also at times contradictory, especially when it comes to explaining *what* was actually imposed; that is, what was Serbo-Croatian in *linguistic* terms. Given the complexities of language, this failure is readily understandable. The question, though, for this study is how did this kind of complexity affect *accounts* of imposition? Does ambiguity result in different account-giving strategies or emphases of the kind considered by accounts theory generally?

It should be emphasized that the purpose of this thesis is not to sort out the truth of the matter regarding the nature or even existence of Serbo-Croatian. Certain “facts”

are reasonably certain. For example, Serbian was clearly given primacy in the government and the military. Also, there was strong opposition to Serbo-Croatian among those Croats who understood it as a form of linguicide -- as well as a degree of guilt in some cases that they, or their fellow citizens, did not do enough to resist its supposed imposition. Nevertheless, beyond establishing claims such as these, no effort will be made *to decide between* the accounts given of the Serbo-Croatian "project." The purpose rather will be to take certain theoretical claims about giving accounts generally and examine the extent to which these apply in the case of ambiguous events. This will be done through an intensive examination of one such event: the imposition of Serbo-Croatian.

It should be noted that accounts theory does not actually generalize in terms of accounting for non-ambiguous events per se. There is not, therefore, a baseline against which to measure the differences that arise in the case of ambiguous events. However, the approach adopted for present purposes will be to propose differences that might be expected to occur in the case of ambiguous events and test for these differences. This leaves open the possibility that what has been found for an ambiguous event might also apply to a non-ambiguous event. However, this is less a failure of the present research than a commentary on the overall state of research in this area. A comparative study of ambiguous and non-ambiguous remains necessary, but is beyond the scope of this research. It should be noted, however, that there are good counter-intuitive reasons for expecting significant differences in account-giving between ambiguous and non-ambiguous events. In the case of the Great Depression or World War II, there are powerful cultural explanations of why these events occurred and who is to blame for

them. Ordinary citizens are generally not required to come up with justifications on their own. In the case of more the ambiguous events, such explanations are less well established in the fabric of society. An equally important factor, however, is the relative “distance” between ordinary people and ambiguous versus unambiguous events. Why did the Depression occur? A parent who lived through it would likely have no difficulty accounting for it to their children. Why was there a Cold War? Here a clear explanation would probably not be as readily forthcoming.

The primary research for this thesis was conducted, after many months of preparation, between 29 November and 19 December 2006. It took the form of seven (7) in-depth interviews conducted with carefully selected members of Croatian society who experienced Serbo-Croatian as *a reality of some kind*. The questions used to help structure these interviews are provided in Appendix 2. The questions were mainly open-ended and were adjusted to each participant’s background during the actual interview. The original intention was *not* to elicit justificatory accounts. As it turned out; however, such accounts were offered in every case. Because the interviews were semi-structured, the researcher was able to ask follow-up questions in relation to the participants’ responses. The prepared questions were given to the interviewees about four weeks in advance to serve as a general guideline. The interviews ranged from 50 to 90 minutes in length and were digitally audio taped for the purpose of easier transcription, translation, and access to crucial information for the research. The researcher herself transcribed and translated all of the materials collected for this study.

The seven participants in the study were from varying social backgrounds and had experienced Serbo-Croatian from differing perspectives. They were: i) a former schoolteacher of Serbo-Croatian; ii) a language editor at the national newspaper *Vecernji List*; iii) a newspaper editor of *Pakracki List*; iv) radio station director at Radio Daruvar; v) a priest; vi) the current Secretary for Secondary Education in the Department of Science, Education and Sport; and vii) a Croatian immigrant to Canada.

Taken as a whole, the participants generally assumed that Serbo-Croatian was imposed upon the people of Croatia in one form or another. They also thought it necessary to defend, justify, or rationalize either their own behaviour or the reactions of others to this supposed imposition. In each case, they used various strategies by way of justifying or rationalizing such behaviour or reactions. What is of interest for this thesis is the extent to which these processes of justification or rationalization were affected by the ambiguous nature of the event in question.

Chapter 1 of this thesis will provide a brief overview of the sociology of accounts. It will then derive from this literature certain theoretical claims about the rationalization of any kind of event. The research method section explains a case study and its relevance for this research. In addition, it will set forth specific propositions as to whether these claims should or should not be expected to apply in the case of ambiguous events. Chapters 2-8 will then test these propositions for each of the seven participants in this study. The results will be set forth and discussed in Chapter 9. In general, it will be argued that making sense of events for which some kind of justification is necessary does proceed in significantly different ways depending on whether these events are ambiguous or not.

As an example of non-ambiguous event calling for “justifications,” consider the residential schools program in Canada. Although some Canadians may not know many of the details, most are now aware how aboriginal children were forcibly removed from reserves, placed in church-run schools, and forbidden from speaking their native languages. For most Canadians, there is no doubt that this event happened and little doubt as to what generally took place-or is said to have taken place. Clearly also, there would be no surprise in being asked (individually or collectively) “How could this have happened? Why did Canadians go along with it? How could Canada-or the Church, or government officials, or ordinary Canadians – have condoned this?” That is, there would be nothing surprising in being asked to “render an account of this event.”

At the same time, however, an individual Canadian might not accept personal responsibility for the “event” or even allow that it was “all bad.” Blame might be deflected to others or the need for blame reduced by pointing to positive benefits for some aboriginals. No doubt, “sad tales,” “appeals to defeasibility,” and so forth would all be involved in such accounting overall. What is less clear is what would be the general proportions of such devices- and whether, in cases of non-ambiguous events such as this one, these proportions or tendencies are significantly different than in cases where the “event” itself is more ambiguous, even for those involved in it.

In general, it is proposed that ambiguity should normally affect how accounts are rendered since it’s harder to feel the necessity of accepting responsibility for something where one is less sure of exactly what happened or who was behind it. It is this general assumption that my research proposes to test.

## CHAPTER 1

### ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK, METHOD, AND PROPOSITIONS

#### Defining an Account

Accounts theory is a relatively recent branch of sociological investigation, one that has yet to be fully exploited. It has, however, been utilized in a number of disciplines, including psychology, literature, history, anthropology, and communication. (Orbuch, 1997: 456) Early approaches focused on the “study of what constitutes ‘acceptable utterance’ for untoward action.” (Scott and Lyman, 1968: 61) This approach remains the most useful orientation for the present purposes. That is, an account will be taken to be “a linguistic device employed whenever an action is subjected to valuative inquiry.” It is “a statement by a social actor to explain unanticipated or untoward behaviour -- whether that behaviour is his own or that of others.” (Scott and Lyman, 1968: 46)

In recent years, accounts have been defined more broadly. For example, Harvey defines an account as a “story that contains a rich array of plots, characters, and patterns of interaction.” In his view, accounts are similar to photo albums because they are “organized to our recollection of the significant others and relevant events, and interpretation of their meaning in the larger picture of our lives.” (Harvey et al., 1990: 4, 7) However, this approach removes the justificatory element in accounts, making it less applicable to the present study.

Buttny and Morris differentiate between “accounts for actions” and “accounts of actions.” (Buttny and Morris, 2002: 286) Accounts *for* actions are ones that arise from a challenge to the actor’s behaviour, whereas accounts *of* actions arise from the need to

understand some event. The former are essentially the same as justificatory accounts. In each case, different methodological and theoretical perspectives have been employed. The most applicable of these for present purposes is the language and social interaction tradition, which “looks at accounts as texts or as exhibited within a transcript and examines the various interactional moves and collaboration in constructing the social reality of events.” (Buttny and Morris, 2001: 285) This tradition relies on qualitative methods of examination, like interviews, as opposed to the quantitative approach of the social psychological tradition. Though Scott and Lyman used both traditions, the qualitative approach will be used to test my propositions as derived from their work.

Accounts theory emphasizes “one feature of talk,” namely “the giving and receiving of accounts.” (Scott and Lyman, 1968: 46) Its recent focus is on the behaviour of the social factors for which some issue is problematic or does not make sense. Under normal circumstances, accounts are not necessary because persons, actions, and events are assumed to speak for themselves. Only in the case where a problem arises does the need for an account become imperative. As Shotter argues, “people’s normal behaviour is ... routinely ‘accountable’ in the sense that is intelligible and legitimate without question.” (Shotter, 1985: 173) Recent accounts theory concentrates, therefore, on the behaviour of people in a situation or with regard to subject matter that is vague and unclear to them. They try to make sense of it by engaging verbally in explaining the given phenomenon. However, this approach would seem to narrow the range of account-giving unnecessarily. People may be challenged to give, or feel the need to give, an account of their behaviour where it is clear *what* they have done, but not *why* they did it.

As with Scott and Lyman, my focus will be on “linguistic forms that are offered for [an] untoward act.” (Scott and Lyman, 1968: 47)

### Scott and Lyman’s Analytical Framework

The original analytical framework of sociologists Marvin Scott and Stanford Lyman remains a useful basis examining accounts related to the imposition of the Serbo-Croatian language. For my purposes, however, only five of their various distinctions will be utilized for examining account-giving in cases of ambiguous events. These distinctions are:

#### *Excuses vs. Justifications*

Scott and Lyman begin by distinguishing (pp. 47-51) between excuses and justifications. Excuses are a type of account where people consider an act to be wrongful or inappropriate, but do not accept full responsibility for the act. Excuses are thus “socially approved vocabularies for mitigating or relieving responsibility when conduct is questioned.” Like excuses, justifications are “socially approved vocabularies that neutralize an act or consequences when one or both are called into question.” However, unlike excuses, justifications assert the “positive value” of an act “in the face of a claim to the contrary.” Generally, the act is still deemed to have been improper, but certain circumstances compel its commission and thus “justify” its occurrence.

#### *Types of Excuses*

Scott and Lyman further distinguish (pp. 48-50) between different types of excuses and justifications. Excuses are divided into: i) appeals to defeasibility or cases where a person claims that he/she “was not fully informed or that his (or her) ‘will’ was not completely free;” ii) scapegoating or cases where a “person will allege that his or her

questioned behaviour is a response to the behaviour or attitudes of another; and iii) self-blame or cases where a person tries to redeem their guilt for an action or event by pointing to a personal oversight or shortcoming.

### *Types of Justifications*

Justifications are divided (pp. 51-2) into: i) “sad tales,” or the selected (often distorted) arrangement of facts that highlight an extremely dismal past and therefore, “explain” the individual’s present state; ii) denial of injury, or cases where the account-giver acknowledges the performance of a certain act, but maintains that it was acceptable because no one was injured, no one of concern was involved, or the consequences were trivial or marginal; and iii) appeal to loyalties, or cases where the account-giver “asserts that his or her action was permissible or even right since it served the interests of another to whom he or she owes an unbreakable allegiance or affection.” The latter two types of justification are considered to be neutralization techniques; they seek to reduce the effects of the specific acts by finding the positives in the untoward acts.

### *Linguistic Styles*

Scott and Lyman also distinguish (pp. 55-6) between four main “linguist styles” or idioms that are used in making excuses or justifications. These “often indicate the social circles in which it will be most appropriately employed” and are related to the degree of social intimacy and usually overlap in practice. First, the *intimate style* is “the socially sanctioned linguistic form employed among persons who share a deep, intense, and personal relationship.” Secondly, the *casual style* “is used among peers, in-group members, and insiders.” Thirdly, the *consultative style* is “that verbal form ordinarily employed when the amount of knowledge available to one of the interactants is unknown

or problematic to the others.” (56) And finally, the *frozen style* is used when there is a social or material barrier between the account-giver and the listener, but they are required to interact.

### *Degree of Identity Switching*

According to Scott and Lyman, account-givers engage, to a greater or lesser extent, in what they call identity switching. The variation depends in general on the situation and status of the account-givers. Identity switching is particularly tricky because it casts doubt on the accounts previously made by claimants/interviewees. This is especially significant when contradictory accounts from the claimants are given. Because “individuals have multiple identities,” they are both capable of strategic identity change and vulnerable to involuntary identity imputations.” In the encounter between the account-giver and the listener, identities are negotiated because each of the interactants has an interest to minimize loss and maximize gains related to the particular situation or the issue in question. This is strategically important to both the interviewer and interviewee. Furthermore, “one account generates the question which gives rise to another; the new account requires re-negotiation of identities.” (59-60)

### Research Method

A case study approach is not a choice of methodology, but is rather the choice of an object of study that interests the researcher. (Stake, 1995: 438) It does not map out a specific analysis for the research to ensue, but is a specific theory that is established or created from a case study. In general, it is a study of a particular situation rather than the guiding principle of the research or its outcome. The focus in a case study is on the descriptions and explanations of the participants rather than the way the data (interviews)

was gathered. (Babbie and Benaquisto, 2002: 308) A case study research method is “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident.” (Yin, 1984: 23)

The interview is one of techniques by which the data can be collected in a case study, but multiple sources of data can be used. (Babbie and Benaquisto, 2002: 308) In a case study, the details from the viewpoint of the participants are at the forefront of the analysis (Stake, 1995), which is the focus of this research. “Case studies aim to give the reader a sense of ‘being there’ by providing a highly detailed, contextualized analysis of an ‘instance in action’.” (MacDonald and Walker, 1977: 182)

The main objective of a case study “is to focus on the specificities of the case, providing rich, detailed data.” (Babbie and Benaquisto, 2002: 308) The findings in a case study can only be relative to the people in the study and in a specific context, and are not applicable in the broader context or to other language users. This is primarily because of the “reasonable freedom” of the researcher in controlling the selection of the participants and the inquiry style. (Stake, 1994: 238)

Usually, one participant or a small group is preferred in a case study because it aims to present in-depth descriptions and explanations. (Babbie and Benaquisto, 2002: 308) As a result, the smaller sample size allows for explanations that are more detailed. This is the advantage of this type of research design. Especially, when the case studied is complex, like the case of the Serbo-Croatian language.

Researchers do not randomly select the participants in a case study. They often use “information oriented sampling” because the average participant is less informed

about the subject of the study (Flyvbjerg, 2006: 219) The data is more descriptive and richer when the participants are purposefully picked due to their personal and professional knowledge and experience concerning the subject.

The personal characteristics (background) of the participants and their community is significant in case studies, which may influence the overall findings and outcome of the research. (Archer, Gibbins, and Youngman, 1998: 114)

This research is a case study of the seven language users that lived or were living in Croatia during the communist period when the Serbo-Croatian language was in effect. The users (participants) of the highly ambiguous Serbo-Croatian are the objects of this case study. The emphasis is placed on the descriptions of the participants rather than the cause-effect relationship of Serbo-Croatian. A case study “might be useful in the preliminary stages of an investigation since it provides hypotheses (or propositions), which may be tested systematically with a larger number of cases.” (Abercrombie et al., 1984: 34) It is a valuable tool in establishing propositions for this research, which are set out in the following section, and for the testing of the proposed theory.

### Propositions for Testing

Based on the above five distinctions, five propositions related to the rendering of accounts in situations involving ambiguous acts or events are proposed. These propositions will provide the framework for examining the interviews conducted for this study. They are as follows:

#### **Proposition #1**

It is proposed that *in the offering of excuses* in cases of high ambiguity, *appeals to defeasibility and scapegoating are more likely than self-blame.*

**Proposition #2**

It is proposed that *in the making of justifications* in cases of high ambiguity, *there will be a greater reliance on "sad tales" than on denial of injury or appeal to loyalties.*

**Proposition #3**

It is proposed that in situations involving high ambiguity, *there will be a greater tendency to offer justifications rather than excuses.*

**Proposition #4**

It is proposed that in situations involving high ambiguity, *there will be a greater use of consultative and frozen styles.*

**Proposition #5**

It is proposed that in situations involving high ambiguity, *there will be a tendency towards greater identity switching.*

**Rationale**

Whether the individual accounts of Serbo-Croatian gathered by the researcher will bear out these propositions, this remains to be seen. However, the reasons for making these particular propositions are essentially as follows. First, where the nature or even the occurrence of an event is unclear, there is a greater distance between the event and those who were involved *with* (not necessarily *in*) it. This would, therefore, tend to mitigate against self-blame. Secondly, such remote events are easier to justify in terms of a long history such unfortunate occurrences. Thirdly, although some degree of excusing may occur, the same distance factor will result more in justifications than excuses. Fourthly, the tendency to justification will be reflected in greater use of the consultative and frozen styles (which according to Scott and Lyman are often tutored, memorized, or

written down in advance). And finally, because people's roles will be less clear in cases of event ambiguity, they will be more likely to engage in identity switching (eg. from government employee to concerned citizen or from concerned citizen to loyal employee) as the response of the interviewer seems to demand.

To date, the focus in account theory had been on the people giving accounts. However, in exploring these propositions, it will need to be kept in mind that the listener is another significant actor in the interaction with account makers. For Manusov, the researcher should incorporate the role of listener, which may influence and affect the explanation process. (Manusov, 1996: 158) In the present case, the interviewer's questions were significant in the process of accounting for the Serbo-Croatian language situation and its imposition.

## CHAPTER 2

### THE SCHOOLTEACHER: HISTORICAL AND SYSTEMIC ACCOUNTING

Born in Dezanovac in 1938, the schoolteacher whom I interviewed graduated from the Pedagogic Academy (now the Teacher's College) in Zagreb. As part of the educational system's regular upgrading process, she later obtained a degree specifically to teach the Serbo-Croatian language. Throughout her career, her teaching was in the upper primary years, grades five to eight. During the war in 1991, her private residence was destroyed. She retired in 2004, after 47 years of teaching.

In discussing the imposition of Serbo-Croatian, the schoolteacher's "account" often seemed memorized and "consultative," which might be expected given her knowledge of the Serbo-Croatian language and her desire to provide information to the interviewer that she assumed was not known. She made frequent use of "sad tales" approach, but also made contradictory statements in her accounts. She frequently appealed to a loyalty to the Croatian nation as related to the Croatian language. In accounting for the Serbo-Croatian language imposition, she was concerned more for the Croatian language status and its position as an independent language.

#### **Proposition #1**

It is proposed that *in the offering of excuses* in cases of high ambiguity, *appeals to defeasibility and scapegoating are more likely than self-blame.*

In discussing how a Serbian colleague imposed Serbo-Croatian, the schoolteacher takes herself off the hook by putting much of the blame on the school principal (scapegoating), while making an appeal to defeasibility in the case of the parents (their will was not entirely free):

I remembered one of my former colleagues who worked as a language teacher in the lower grades that encouraged and taught Cyrillic rather than the Latin alphabet. When her pupils had learned the Cyrillic alphabet, she required that all of their work should be written in Cyrillic in spite of the fact that it was not authorized by the school curriculum. If not complacent, the students were disciplined. The principle and the parents that were quietly objecting knew this, but a more profound revolt did not take place because the teacher had the support of her superiors. She was Serbian and any conflict would be interpreted as opposition to the Serbian nation. The parents objected, but the principal did not respond despite his knowledge about the issues.

An appeal to defeasibility is also implied at one point in her account of the historical development of Serbo-Croatian: “Mirko Bogovic, in the second edition of the periodical of *Neven* in 1852, emphasized that the large perplexity for Croatians is to manage their own affairs and consequently their inability to decide independently about the status of their language.” On the other hand, scapegoating (of “state politics”) underlies her subsequent claim that: “In the mid-1950’s, the idea about a united literary language for Croatians, Serbs, and Montenegrins were reanimated. The state politics tended to neglect the differences between the Croatian and Serbian language, and Croatian words were deemed the worse solution.” In general, however, “fault” for the imposition of Serbo-Croatian rests solely with the Serbs as the main scapegoat:

In 1960, the united Serbo-Croatian orthography appeared. These are historical facts, which demonstrate that the Serbs constantly tried to impose their influence and their language on the Croatian people... There are other important events regarding the struggle for the Croatian language. In the so-called Second Yugoslavia (1945-1990), the Croatian language was guaranteed legal equality with the other official languages of this state (Serbian, Slovene, and Macedonian). However, in practice, in all of the federal administration, army, administration,

and diplomacies the Serbian language prevailed.

Similarly:

the Serbian language has been for centuries imposed on the Croatian people. The aspirations of Serbs to destroy Croatia have been a long-lived vision... The Serbs have worked gradually with their principal slogan being: "(A) Nation without the language and culture-is not the nation". Therefore, the Serbs wanted to impose on Croatsians, their customs, their culture, and their language, and then to control Croatsians. From Serbia, Serbian music and songs have proliferated (when people sing and play music, they do not think about politics)...

The schoolteacher clearly rejects any form of self-blame, as in the following statement:

I did not approve, and condemned the censoring of the Croatian language. The writers and linguists mostly felt this censorship. In the publishing companies, the Serbian writers had the advantage. The books were printed in the Cyrillic (the Serbian letter) and ekavian dialect. Teachers in the schools experienced this censorship. The Croatian readers contained more texts written in Cyrillic than the Latin alphabet. The orthography had included Serbian words or it was bilingual, in both, the Croatian and Serbian language.

This is supported by an appeal to defeasibility; she could not personally do anything because of the process of curricular change:

Since I have always worked in school for 47 years, I have experienced many changes in the school program and the curriculum over the many years. I think there were about six program changes. Every program yielded a different orthography and I did not know at times, what was accurate. I had always valued my work. Because the teacher or professor is the public person that performs a public function allocated by the state, I had never been in conflict with others due to the possibility of losing my job. In addition, I am an individual that efficiently and orderly performs all of the requested tasks. I really loved my work. Regardless of the language conflict, I have always found the balance...

There are actually several defeasibility claims here. Her will was not completely free because of her love for the Croatian language, her fear for losing her job, and her concern with how the small community of Lipik would react and consequently treat her. Because she had always worked in Lipik, her social standing in the community and her reputation

could be jeopardized.

### **Proposition #2**

It is proposed that *in the making of justifications* in cases of high ambiguity, *there will be a greater reliance on "sad tales" than on denial of injury or appeal to loyalties.*

In seeking to deflect any criticism on herself, the schoolteacher not only offers excuses but points, by way of justification, to the larger "sad tale" of Croatian language history. For example, she pointed out how:

In 1850, there was a Literary Agreement in Vienna with Croatian writers and known Illyrians: Ivan Mažuranić, Demetrius Demeter, Ivan Kukuljevic and others, and representatives of Serbia: Vuk Stefanovic Karadzic and Đuro Danicic. They established some basic directives for the common development of a literary language and orthography for Croats and Serbs. This agreement failed, but the revival attempts have been successful with Ljudevit Gaj being the one of the reformers. The following has been achieved: it has united Croatian in one literary language; they have accepted the unique Latin writing (the letter), and elevated the position of Croatian language. Further, the linguists were not ready to retreat. They were unhappy. In the middle of the nineteenth century, the orthographic confusion and the language war still existed. The aspirations existed for the usage of our vernacular language.

She also related how:

In Croatia, there was a large population of Serbian people ... and therefore, it was easier and faster to propagate the Serbian culture and language from Serbia because the Serbian population in Croatia readily accepted and promoted it throughout Croatia... ...All of this was done with the intention that the Croats would lose their identity.

At one point, she suggested by way of denial of injury that:

Croats were able to talk privately in their own language and this was not prohibited, but it was not looked at as something positive. This was not very well received by others, but nobody really reacted publicly or loudly despite the underlying notion that the Serbian language was the desired language. For example, when friends who were in the army and off duty spoke Croatian there was no reaction, but the notion of Serbian language as the primary language was very much inherent.

Similarly, she recalled that:

During the period of communist Yugoslavia, Croatians did not raise concerns regarding the Serbian language influences in Croatia because this was considered normal. Croatians did not speak loudly about the influences on their language although they were not pleased, but they have been silent...

This statement utilizes the denial of injury technique by noting that Serbian language influence was “considered normal,” implying that it was trivial or insignificant. Denial of injury is not relied on heavily, however; in fact, the consequences of private acts of using Croatian were thought to be marginal and did not affect the Serbian language preference. Nor did she seek to justify her own behavior in terms of her loyalty to others (though a little of this come though in her excusing).

### **Proposition #3**

It is proposed that in situations involving high ambiguity, *there will be a greater tendency to offer justifications rather than excuses.*

The schoolteacher used both justifications and excuses evenly, not particularly preferring one or the other. She used excuses mostly when accounting for personal experiences in her workplace and justifications when accounting for her general knowledge about the Serbo-Croatian language. Because the excuses generally seek responsibility, it was easier for her to mitigate any personal blame for the Serbo-Croatian language imposition and the Serbs were convenient scapegoats. When using justifications in her accounts, she mainly referred to the Croatian language and its position than the Serbo-Croatian language, which would make the Croatian language status equally ambiguous in the merger.

#### **Proposition #4**

It is proposed that in situations involving high ambiguity, *there will be a greater use of consultative and frozen styles.*

In her accounts of the linguistic history of Croatia, the schoolteacher used the consultative style to include more background information, probably because she was uncertain if the interviewer possessed this information. For example, the linguistic history refers to the events like the Vienna Agreement, the Novi Sad Agreement, and the events surrounding the Croatian Spring movement in the 1970s in Croatia. Furthermore, she provided background information on the political history like the Illyrian movement that contributed to the standardization of the Croatian language, but strived for the political unification of the South Slavs.

She also went into the technicalities about the differences between the Serbian and Croatian language to account for the problematic nature of the Serbo-Croatian language and its imposition. She stated:

The Croatian language has three dialects: stokavsko (shtokavian), cakavsko (chakavian), and kajkavsko (kajkavian) and ijekavsko-jekavski (ijekavian-jekavian) pronunciation (mlijeko (milk), vjetar (wind)). The Serbian language has only the ekavian pronunciation (mleko (milk), vetar (wind)). The alphabets are also different. Croats write with the Latin alphabet while Serbs use the Cyrillic script.

The Serbian language is different from the Croatian language. The Serbian language pronunciation is ekavian and the letter is Cyrillic (dete (child), vetar (wind), mleko (milk), and devojka (girl)). Some words are pronounced the same as the Croatian words such as klupa (bench), sunce (sun), some words are similar, and some words are completely different (biljeznica-sveska (notebook), sat (hour)-cas, kruh (bread)-hleb, tuci (beat)-biti, kupus (cabbage)-zelje, grah (beans)-pasulj, and juha (soup)-supa).

The follow-up questions or elicitations by the interviewer solicited further accounts that attempted to explain the use of Serbian and Croatian wording in the unified

language. The schoolteacher replied: “a combination of two languages did exist, but the advantage was always given to the Serbian language. In no way were the languages regarded as separate.” She accounted for the advantage of the Serbian language in the unified, Serbo-Croatian language, but further elicitation by the interviewer prompted further information from the schoolteacher to provide examples of wording in regards to the domination of the Serbian language. Her example of the preference of the Serbian word *stanica* (station) instead of the Croatian word *kolodvor* best illustrates this advantage of the Serbian language over the Croatian language. The schoolteacher elaborated further on the Serbo-Croatian language imposition by using examples, after the initial elicitation of the interviewer.

The schoolteacher employed two different levels of justification and excuse in her accounts: one referred to her status as a teacher, and the other referred to the position of the Croatian language because of the imposition of the Serbo-Croatian language. The schoolteacher mentioned the war in Croatia often when accounting for the events that had taken place before the war, which is the focus for this research. The schoolteacher was significantly affected by the events surrounding the war even if she did not admit this.

With the questions having been provided in advance, the schoolteacher arrived for the interview with written responses. Her written presentation of the accounts would qualify as a frozen linguistic style. However, based on the social proximity or intimacy between the interviewee and interviewers, this linguistic style would be problematic because this interviewer was her student in the small town of Lipik where the people are very close to each other. Nonetheless, our previous student / teacher relationship or this

authoritarian relationship may be the reason for the frozen linguistic style due to this previous social barrier.

The schoolteacher described and explained the events surrounding the Novi Sad Agreement of 1954:

Many Croatian and Serbian writers and linguists continued the discussion about language and orthography. They have concluded the following and I quote, "there is no need to violently equate the Croatian and the Serbian language because of the national reasons, but it would be beneficial to approach both languages according to the linguistic authenticity and along its home origin". Further, one of the conclusions reached in Novi Sad was that "In the name of the language it is always necessary in its official use to emphasize both of its aspects (Croatian and Serbian).

Her account of the Novi Sad Agreement stated the historical evidence and the use of direct quotes indicates the frozen linguistic style that was memorized.

### **Proposition #5**

It is proposed that in situations involving high ambiguity, *there will be a tendency towards greater identity switching.*

As mentioned, the schoolteacher accounted in part for the Serbo-Croatian language imposition in terms of "state politics" which "tended to neglect the differences between the Croatian and Serbian language, and Croatian words were deemed the worse solution." However, she also laid part of the blame on Croatian nationals, especially during the communist period. This contradiction points to an identity switching strategy; since her main claim was that, the Serbs were responsible.

There was also a contradiction between her general argument about how the Serbo-Croatian language was imposed and her statement that she "...was never denied opportunity to speak the Croatian language..." As a teacher of the Serbo-Croatian

language, she was supposed to teach the unified language based on government policy, which influenced her ability to use the Croatian language, at least in public. This contradiction reflected her switching between her public and private persona.

### **Summary of Results**

The schoolteacher interview provided considerable support for propositions #1, #2, and #4, fair support for #5, and no support for #3. Of the five propositions, the schoolteacher supported three. The equal use of both excuses and justifications in her accounting was an unaccepted outcome in the situation of high ambiguity. Her support for the use of contradictory statements also adds to the ambiguity of the Serbo-Croatian language. The absence of “self-blame”, the frequent use of “sad tales”, and her reliance on a consultative style is expected in cases of high ambiguity. This was a significant part of her accounting. Based on these findings, the schoolteacher’s description of the Serbo-Croatian language varied considerably in different situations, especially in her private and the public life, which often diverged.

## CHAPTER 3

### THE PRIEST:

#### THE CHURCH AS CROATIAN LANGUAGE PROTECTOR

Born in Vukovar, Croatia, in 1948, the priest soon moved with his parents to the village of Vetovo in the Pozega district and spent most of his childhood there. He eventually obtained his Master's degree in theology from the University of Zagreb in 1985. He recalled being "not very satisfied with the corrections" to the language of his thesis. During his postings to various Croatian towns and churches, he often participated in church restoration and rebuilding. This was the case in his most recent appointment in Lipik.

In accounting for the Serbo-Croatian language, the priest mostly referred to the position and the status of the Croatian language in the "unified construct." Furthermore, his accounts about his experiences within the Church and language dominated. He rendered accounts by choosing his words carefully and using the Croatian language. For the priest, the Serbo-Croatian language "project" was not terribly problematic for the Church, because church and the state were separate in Yugoslavia. However, outside of the church, it was for him an ambiguous issue in mind. In his view, the Serbo-Croatian language was not enforced within, or by, the Church. Historically, the Croatian Church contributed to the codification of the Croatian literary standard by employing Church Slavonic. (Monnesland, 1997: 1111) From an early time, its influence and connection with the Croatian language were significant. As well, publishing by clerics in the

Croatian language (Bukowski, 1979, 327-28) helped to insulate the Church to remain unaffected by later developments in the language.

In rendering an account of Serbo-Croatian, the priest exhibited the frozen, memorized linguistic style. He used appeals to loyalty, appeals to defeasibility, and scapegoating. He also made use of the two levels of accounting: one referring to his role as a priest, the other accounting for the Croatian language status in Croatia and Yugoslavia.

### **Proposition #1**

It is proposed that *in the offering of excuses* in cases of high ambiguity, *appeals to defeasibility and scapegoating are more likely than self-blame.*

In the following excerpt, the priest uses scapegoating by blaming the official politics for the imposition of the Serbo-Croatian language in the public realm in Croatia.

He states:

The Serbo-Croatian language was imposed on the population. The old proverb states that the "language of people determines the ownership of the country." This is the assumption from Roman period and in the former Yugoslavia, the officials have lived by this rule, which was the reason for this imposition. All of the national minorities, and there are about fifteen or more, had the Serbo-Croatian language imposed in their literature and in their everyday speech.

Responsibility for the Serbo-Croatian language imposition is placed on the official politics that favoured a unified language in Yugoslavia. For the priest, the notion of a single Yugoslav nation and one single language was closely related and was used by officials to impose the Serbo-Croatian language. Communist Yugoslavia, based on the partisans' slogan of "brotherhood and unity," attempted to implement the same in cultural matters, such as a common language. (Okey, 2005: 429)

The priest also suggested that the ideological underpinning of the country determined the language rather than the people of Yugoslavia. For him:

Yugoslavia had been specifically politically outlined and unfortunately, because of such a conception and the existing ideology, the language was defined accordingly. If the language was called Croatian instead of Serbo-Croatian this would entail larger political, economical, and every other scope of influence and power for the Croatian people, which would be in opposition to the political order of Yugoslavia. If the Serbo-Croatian language was used instead of the Croatian language then this automatically closes the circle, which is Yugoslavianism or Serbian aspect.

Here the priest shifts responsibility for the Serbo-Croatian imposition to the communist government and its politics that was heavily involved in language matters. However, for him, this Yugoslavianism was Serbian because of the domination of the Serbian language in the federal institutions.

Elsewhere, the priest blamed the Serbo-Croatian language imposition and the responsibility for that imposition on the Croatian rather than the communist government and its politics. He asserted: "Croats have allowed the introduction of the Croatian or Serbian language (or Serbo-Croatian)." By shifting responsibility to Croats, of which he is one, this might seem to be a case of self-blame. However, the priest also argued that the public use of Serbo-Croatian was somehow not problematic. This account is more difficult to explain, but could be taken as an appeal to defeasibility and could be interpreted differently.

In accounting for the Serbo-Croatian language imposition outside of the Church setting, the priest explained that the only time he was unable to use the Croatian was when "everyone in former Yugoslavia who had military service in the Yugoslav army had to communicate with his or her superiors in the Serbian language and not in the

Croatian language.” For the priest, it was during his military service that his ability to speak his native Croatian language was altered. The priest accounted for the instances when he used Croatian words during the military service and indicated the actions that were enforced by the superior officers: “My superiors would warn me. I think that it was not appropriate to do so, but no one dared to dissent for fear of repercussions. The language in the army was pure Serbian, but the writing was not in Cyrillic.” In this account, the priest excuses the wrongful behaviour of the command officers in the Yugoslav Army by appealing to defeasibility, whereas for him the fear of repercussions was the main deterrent in using the Croatian language. As a result, he was not completely free in making decisions while in the military, because he had to “act in a pre-determined way” and “to behave and speak as imposed by officials.”

### **Proposition #2**

It is proposed that *in the making of justifications* in cases of high ambiguity, *there will be a greater reliance on “sad tales” than on denial of injury or appeal to loyalties.*

As mentioned, the Catholic Church had been the staunch proponent and loyal to the Croatian language, which includes the priest. This loyalty is the positive consequence of the Serbo-Croatian language imposition that was enforced outside of the Church. The value of the loyalty to the Croatian language within the Church was for the priest immense. “In the church circles in which I have grown up and spent most of my adult life, the Croatian language was fostered and we were very watchful to employ standard Croatian literary language.” Despite the public enforcement of the Serbo-Croatian language, the Church is thought by the priest to have always cherished the Croatian

language and that was encouraging for the people that attended its service. He admits that it was probably confusing for people to experience the differences in language used in the Church and the way they learned their language in school. Nevertheless, despite the confusion, people were also familiar with the differences between the two languages.

In accounting for language use in his work as well as the work of other priests, the priest suggested: "Whenever in the parish office, during holy mass, in the pulpit, during the sacrament offering, or during a funeral, we were always mindful to talk in the Croatian standard literary language." In this account, the priest appeals to the loyalty of his colleagues and justifies the use of the Croatian language in the Church as permissible because of the other priests that shared the same professional commitment like the interviewee.

Because the Croatian language was nurtured in the church and was separated from the state or the politics, this act was of value and significance for the people.

Inside the church, we have had more freedom. There was a freedom of holding the mass, sermon, the sacrament offerings, and the church rites at funerals, but it was required in the church and outside of the church not to convey or express political opinions. Especially the political elements that were considered in ideological conflict with socialism and communism by the government were prohibited in the church and outside of the church... The church was open to the spirit of the language. This was very important that there was an opportunity to talk and sing in your own, beautiful language.

This encouraging use of the Croatian language in the church amid the Serbo-Croatian language imposition was not without limitations. During communism, people that worked for the federal government like doctors and teachers often avoided going to church for fear of losing their job. The separation of the state and the church was more likely related to the clergy rather than to the ordinary people.

For the priest, “the Croatian people like every other nation in the world has a right to the national consciousness, the right to its state, and the right to their language, which is connected to one’s nation.” In this account, the priest appeals to the loyalty of the Croatian nationals, for whom he shares fondness and affection. Like the schoolteacher, the language distinction based on national belonging was significant.

The priest used ‘Sad Tales’ when he explained the influences of the Serbo-Croatian language outside of the church that were according to him very influential.

He related the following story:

In my conversation with the bishop in Jaksic, we debated about the problem that people were too long in the Yugoslav community, despite the fact that the Croatian language was guarded in the church, but generally, the influences from outside of the church in this Lipik language area were great. The priest was asking about the correct way of saying or writing the word podsjetiti (to remind) or potsjetiti, which according to the bishop is connected to the people that corrected or were involved in the language issues. Today, the problem about writing or spelling and saying particular words emerge because of many years of political pressures in all spheres of life in Yugoslavia.

In this account, the priest associated the state of the Croatian language outside of the church to the dismal past or the Serbo-Croatian imposition, which also explains the difficulties in defining the Croatian language at the present.

### **Proposition #3**

It is proposed that in situations involving high ambiguity, *there will be a greater tendency to offer justifications rather than excuses.*

Because the Serbo-Croatian language was never mandatory for use in the Church, the priest emphasized the positive value of the Croatian language in his accounts. He demonstrated a greater tendency towards justifications than excuses, but not really

because of any perceived ambiguity about the Serbo-Croatian language in his mind. For him, the Serbo-Croatian imposition was never problematic within the Church and his life. It was his resistance to the unified language that was the focus of his accounting.

#### **Proposition #4**

It is proposed that in situations involving high ambiguity, *there will be a greater use of consultative and frozen styles.*

When he arrived for the interview, the priest had a number of different books, but during the interview, he never used any books to reference or provide information. This gesture seemed to imply that he came prepared for an interview and that he would use the information he acquired or memorized from the books in his possession. Before agreeing to participate in interviewing, the priest was reluctant about the topic, which on one hand is reasonable because the Serbo-Croatian language was not problematic in the church, but at the same time, the books in his possession might suggest to the interviewer that he was academically inclined to answer all of the questions. He was well prepared to answer questions provided to him in advance, but the use of the written material to prepare for the interview may have presented a material barrier for the interview to proceed more causally, without the sense of the pressure to conform or that certain expectations must be met by an interviewee.

The priest's strategy was to impress the interviewer about his knowledge and his life experience, especially in the area of his work of building churches, which the quantity of the information provided to an interviewer best illustrated. About one page single-spaced was used for the priest to address in detail all of this information. This

might be interpreted as a cue to the interviewer that he belonged to a specific social community that required extensive educational attainment and pointed out that his personal achievements were equally impressive.

In accounting for the Serbo-Croatian language, the priest was quite expressive and animated. For example, the priest stated: “Serbo-Croatian is not a language of the heart, the soul, and the mind, but more the language of politics and control.” As well, he added: “Serbo-Croatian is very heavy and vulgar and is not acoustic. In my opinion, the Serbo-Croatian language is not very ear-receptive while the Croatian language is mild and pleasing to the ear.” Furthermore, when comparing the Serbian and Croatian language, he suggested that “the Serbian language is hard and in some elements coarse. On the other hand, the Croatian language is melodious with beautiful expressions.” This profound involvement in the issue might be related to his position as a priest, where this linguistic style particularly flourishes during the sermon or in delivering a eulogy.

When the priest accounted for his experience in military and the mandatory use of the Serbian language, the priest simplified the answer that he was at the time denied the opportunity to speak the Croatian language. This answer prompted the interviewer to elicit other responses from the priest to describe the situation in the military and how did it affect the Croatian language (What happened if you used a Croatian word?). This further elicitation did not prompt more information sharing from the interviewee.

#### **Proposition #5**

It is proposed that in situations involving high ambiguity, *there will be a tendency towards greater identity switching.*

Initial reluctance by the priest to participate in the interview was because he was convinced that there were right and wrong answers, which the interviewer insisted was not the case, but his personal experiences were most important for the interview. This strategy was certainly significant to ensure an interview and to maximize the gain in collecting all of the necessary information. For the priest, to maximize the gains for an interview, the use of the books in preparing for an interview had been significant because of the issue in question. The Serbo-Croatian language imposition was for him, personally, inside the church, not problematic. The use of books had served him to negotiate this to his advantage.

For example, when asked if in the unified Serbo-Croatian language, the Serbian elements dominated over the Croatian elements, the priest was not concrete. He answered: "In my opinion, Serbo-Croatian is not a language of the heart, the soul, and the mind, but more the language of politics and control. It has been influenced and inflated by politics." He was in a situation, in the church, where the Serbo-Croatian language was not problematic as it was outside of the church, which in rendering accounts then presented an obstacle in answering the question on this topic.

The main responsibility for the Serbo-Croatian language imposition was for the priest, the politics of communism. For a person, who during communism was not involved or allowed to get involved in politics, the political and the governmental issues in his rendering of accounts dominated. For him, the church was the only place that was resistant to the political influence on language because of the separation of the church and state during the communist era.

For the priest, justifications prevailed over excuses because inside the church the Croatian language was used. He was in a position to find positives in the Serbo-Croatian imposition and that is why mainly justifications prevailed in his accounting. Though outside influences of the Serbo-Croatian language on people was a significant occurrence for the priest, he seemed to make fewer connections between the two. The significance of the language influences inside the church and outside the church were not adequately linked by the priest. His role as the protector of the Croatian language was most important to him in his accounting.

The priest rarely used identity switching because his situation or involvement with the Serbo-Croatian was minimal. The linguistic status quo was challenged within the church. The Catholic Church and priests resisted the unification of language always and remained faithful to the Croatian language because the language within the church was never altered as it was outside of the church. The unification of the language never influenced the church's linguistic position within the communist society. Because the Church was prohibited to be politically involved in public, their linguistic involvement was hence more favourable in providing for the people in the communities influenced by the Serbian language, which often caused confusion between the two languages. The Church was not of concern for the communists because it did not yield real power politically, as did the Communist Party. However, it was significant that the Croats who attended church heard the Croatian language.

## **Summary of Results**

The interview by priest provided considerable support for propositions #1, #3, and fair support for #4, and no support for #2, #5. The Serbo-Croatian language was for the priest only problematic outside the church (e.g. during his military service), but not inside the church. The results yielded from his accounts were mainly reflective of his experiences inside the church, but inclusive of his experiences outside the church or in contact with other parishioners. Because of this, the support or lack of support for the propositions was equally distributed, not overly supportive of the majority or minority of propositions.

## CHAPTER 4

### THE GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVE: POLITICAL AND RESERVED ACCOUNTING

The government representative was born in 1955 in town of Vidovice in Bosnia and Herzegovina and attended school and in both Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia. In 1980, he graduated from the University of Zagreb, Faculty of Philosophy, Department of Croatian language and the literature. Since then, he has worked in the school system for 20 years. His political career began in 1992 when he became a member of the Croatian Social Liberal Party after Croatia's first parliamentary elections. He was elected to the Croatian parliament in 2000 where he holds the position as vice president of the parliamentary Committee for Education, Science, and Culture and other mainly cultural committees. His current and major position also includes the position of the State Secretary for Secondary Education.

The government official's accounting for the Serbo-Croatian language imposition was mainly based on his experience as a teacher and his concern for the position of the Croatian language. His current position in the Croatian government provides him with more information about the current situation of the Croatian language after the dissolution of Yugoslavia. During the interview, he was quite annoyed with some of the questions, especially ones that addressed the Serbo-Croatian language because he did not believe in the currency of that term. Furthermore, during the interview, interruptions such as phone calls were a constant distraction.

As a former schoolteacher, the grammatical and the speech style of the government representative was apparent. Regarding content, his political inclination was more powerful. Based on his current position as an elected politician, he was aware of his authority and power, which he used to position himself more favourably in the interaction process.

In rendering accounts, the government representative mainly used the frozen linguistic style, scapegoating, and appeals to loyalties. As a politician, he at times contradicted his previous claims, which questioned the accounts made on different occasions. Resisting accounts was often the case for this interviewee because he appeared more careful due to his current political status. The political implications in the language matters in the Yugoslav area are often at the forefront of most of the accounts and the conversations, especially outside of the linguistic circles. (PranjkoVIC, 2001: 31)

The politics is hence not a surprising development for the politicians such as the government representative, but ordinary people are not immune to the politics and language either.

### **Proposition #1**

It is proposed that *in the offering of excuses in cases of high ambiguity, appeals to defeasibility and scapegoating are more likely than self-blame.*

The government representative made appeals to defeasibility to excuse the behaviour of the Croatians that accepted the communist ideology and the unified language. For him:

Some of the individuals that were publicly supportive of the language ideology of one language, in another milieu such as the privacy of their homes and in

communication with their friends used the Croatian language. Therefore, the language unification was more on a public or political level and not on a private level where the Croatian language stayed true to its individuality.

He claimed that acceptance of the communist ideology by Croats did not necessarily entail the acceptance of the unified language in the private realm, but only in public. This would suggest that they were not completely free when making these choices and they used Serbo-Croatian language in public because of their specific employment or when attending Party functions and meetings.

The government representative considered the Serbo-Croatian language to be an imposition that was highly influenced by the ideology of communism, which for him was the main culprit in the unified language creation. "I considered it unacceptable and improper to allow one language to be greatly influenced by any ideology and another language so that Croatian becomes completely unidentifiable to its population throughout so many years." Moreover, he viewed negatively the Serbo-Croatian language imposition because of the Serbian language influence was another contributor for the alterations in the Croatian language.

The influences of the Serbian language were for him because of "the Serbian media that were well represented and present in the border areas of Croatia with Serbia or areas where the Serbian population was in a majority influenced the situation in regards to language." Another wrongdoer for the imposition of the Serbo-Croatian language was the Serbian media that was influential in Croatia.

In accounting for the status of the Croatian language in communist Yugoslavia and some of the Croatian wording that was not allowed, the government representative viewed this negatively, but responsibility for this act was placed on the government

politics.

The censorship certainly had existed. This censorship had been imposed by the higher structures in the government with an aim to promote and contribute to the advancement of the idea of brotherhood and unity that would be reflected in the language construction.

The politics of communism to create one nation with one single language was enforced and any differences between the Serbian and the Croatian language were minimized by not allowing some of the wording that was actively used before the unification of the languages. For example, the words that were prohibited from the active Croatian vocabulary included “pricuva (reserve), vojarna (barracks), casnik (officer), and pucanstvo (population).” (Grcevic, 2002: 151)

In response to the imposition of Serbo-Croatian language, the government representative explained: “In the majority of cases, I would say that Croats have been loyal. I am also certain that there were individuals that accepted the communist ideology and its imposed social and political structures, which the language was an important part.” For him, the Croats who accepted the communist ideology were to blame for the Croatian language’s less favourable position in comparison to the Serbo-Croatian language, but this behaviour by Croats was excusable.

## **Proposition #2**

It is proposed that *in the making of justifications* in cases of high ambiguity, *there will be a greater reliance on “sad tales” than on denial of injury or appeal to loyalties.*

In accounting for what he took to be the Serbo-Croatian language imposition, the government representative justified the positive acts of the people in Croatia by referring to their private use of the Croatian language. He stated: “on a private level . . . the

Croatian language stayed true to its individuality.” The positive value of the Croatian language’s use for the government representative was seen in the Catholic Church. “The church was an invaluable institution that played an important role in the preservation and maintaining the Croatian language during the mass and in its communication with the religious community.” Here he appeals to the loyalty of the Croatian people to the Croatian language in the private realm as well as in their religion.

As with the other interviewees, the government official confirmed the significance of the Croatian language and the Croatian nation. He appealed to the Croatian nationals with whom he shares affection to find the positive in the act of the Serbo-Croatian language imposition. The government representative suggested:

The language is very important for people’s identity. The language primarily defines the nation and the people. Petar Preradovic, the Croatian poet had written about language. His famous poem titled “My mother tongue” in 1861 clearly echoed the significance of a language for a nation . . . Language connects people. Therefore, first, the language connects all Croats.

He referred to the distant past in Croatian history and to the poetic writings at the time that were significant to the national feelings of Croats. During 1861 when Petar Preradovic wrote, Croatia was under Hapsburg rule and the unification into Serbo-Croatian language was not in effect. However, the struggle of Croats under different rulers, like the Hapsburgs who tried to impose language on them had been the important marker for Croats in their struggle against political domination. (Cuvalo, 1990: 118) The linkage of the nation and language for Croats mostly evolved in times of need to prevent political supremacy of the rulers on its soil, which was related to the language events that took place during communism and the unification of the language.

**Proposition #3**

It is proposed that in situations involving high ambiguity, *there will be a greater tendency to offer justifications rather than excuses.*

The government representative mainly relied on excuses rather than justifications because of his political inclination of blaming mostly the communists for the Serbo-Croatian imposition. For him, excuses prevailed at least in blaming others rather than taking personal responsibility for his own actions. According to him, he was always in position to speak and use the Croatian language. Therefore, the ambiguity of the Serbo-Croatian language was rather perpetuated by the politics during communist times and not by the ordinary people. In this instance, the excuses prevailed because he differentiated between the political aspiration of the government for a unified language and the aspirations of average citizens for the separation of the languages.

**Proposition #4**

It is proposed that in situations involving high ambiguity, *there will be a greater use of consultative and frozen styles.*

The difficulties in completing an interview with the government representative were immense because of his current posting as a member of Croatian parliament, which was in session and for the most part, he had to attend. During the numerous attempts by an interviewer to carry on an interview, the government representative repeatedly emphasized that he was “doing me a favour” in agreeing to an interview, which accentuated his social standing and power. His position of authority was apparent and determined from the outset and defined both of us as social strangers because he was

resolute to highlight his superiority in this brief encounter.

During the interaction process, his demeanor was authoritarian and he seemed not very welcoming. The government representative's 'superior' attitude affected an overall atmosphere that seemed awkward. On numerous occasions, the government representative informed this interviewer about his busy schedule. He was more concerned about his image than the problematic event discussed for this research. The interviewer felt pressured to complete this interview because of the prior engagements of the government representative who kept postponing the interview, which may have influenced the fact that the interviewer had fewer elicitations or additional questioning with this interviewee.

#### **Proposition #5**

It is proposed that in situations involving high ambiguity, *there will be a tendency towards greater identity switching.*

The government representative divulged that he was never denied the opportunity to speak his native or Croatian language, but he also contradicted this statement. He claimed that when he attended school,

the higher percentage of the teachers there taught mostly in the Serbian language rather than the Croatian language . . . The teachers had a responsibility, for example, if they used the Serbian word *tacka* (period) to mention the Croatian word *tocka* too. However, most often this was not the case.

This statement implied that the teachers mainly taught the Serbian language and that any differences between the two languages were not enforced. In rendering this account, he relied on his current knowledge about the language situation rather than the knowledge he had at that time, which indicates the negotiation of identity by the interviewee by

attempting to further his claim or the argument that the Serbian language had an advantage over the Croatian language.

In one of his previous accounts, the government representative claimed that the Serbo-Croatian language was imposed in Croatia, but this claim could be challenged. He stated:

These two languages have been always distinct . . . these two languages have always been independent, the Croatian and Serbian language. The affinity of Unitarianism during the communist period relative to language attempted to artificially create one language Serbo-Croatian out of two separate languages.

According to him, the attempt to unify the two languages failed and, therefore, the imposition of the Serbo-Croatian language should not have been problematic.

Furthermore, he emphasized on another occasion (appeals to loyalty section) the private loyalty of Croats at home and in the church, which suggested that the imposition of the unified language was not overly problematic because it allowed people to nurture the Croatian language. Elsewhere, however, the confusion between the two languages was considered to be problematic.

In relation to the loyalty of Croats to their language, the government representative valued and viewed positively these developments during the Serbo-Croatian language imposition. However, when accounting for the involvement of the ordinary people in language issues, he was less optimistic. He suggested: “the professional public is more likely to be interested and to monitor the current activities regarding language. The broad public is less interested.” For him, the linguists are more inclined to get involved and care for language than ordinary people, but during the Serbo-Croatian language imposition, the ordinary people nurtured the Croatian language privately even if it was prohibited in public use.

When accounting for his experience as a pupil in Bosnia and Herzegovina, he stated:

When I was schooled in the primary and secondary education system in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the language was called the Croatian or the Serbian language. In addition, the area that I was schooled in consisted of a majority of Croats, but the higher percentage of the teachers there taught mostly in the Serbian language rather than the Croatian language without reference to the Croatian language.

Bosnia and Herzegovina was once part of former Yugoslavia and the language situation did not differ from the Croatian language situation. The government representative accounted for the preference of the Serbian language during his education period, but he was not specific in accounting for that preference. This prompted the interviewer to elicit more information about the Serbian language advantageous position in the schools. The interviewer asked: "Can you mention one example that reflects this preference of the Serbian language?" The government representative replied:

Although there was a document, which addressed the equality and the tolerance of the two languages, not all teachers abided by these guidelines . . . The teachers had a responsibility, for example, if they used the Serbian word *tacka* (period) to mention the Croatian word *točka* too. However, most often this was not the case.

He did provide additional information, but was unclear about the document that was for the equality of the Serbian and Croatian language. According to him, both languages should be used equally, but the tolerance would also imply that either language could be used, which could depend on the instructor or the teacher. According to Greenberg, the tolerance and the unity of both languages in communist Yugoslavia was advanced, and therefore, any expression of the distinction between the Croatian and Serbian language was not defined by the Constitution. (Greenberg, 2001: 23) Emphasizing the Serbian and the Croatian word would then elicit the distinction between the two languages, which

was not permitted. His additional information was lacking more findings that were factual.

The government representative was highly political in accounting for the Serbo-Croatian language imposition. He was not very candid and his accounts about the Serbo-Croatian language imposition mirrored his political ambition, which several contradictions in his accounts best substantiated. The contradictions in accounts or identity switching prevailed in his overall accounting. He attempted to re-negotiate his positions about the imposition of Serbo-Croatian on the political level and in the everyday lives of Croatian people.

Justifications were lacking and excuses, except self-blame, were mostly represented in his accounting. Appeals to loyalty were his main form of account and “denial of injury” and “sad tales” were absent. He differentiated between the Serbo-Croatian language imposition and the position of the Croatian language in this combination. When rendering accounts about the Croatian language use, he was inclined to stress more its positive value, apart from the Serbian language. The Serbian language was still viewed negatively by him because of the insistence on unification by the government that was not realistic. In contrast, to stress the negativity of the event and assign responsibility mainly to the politics of communist government rather than his own, excuses were better fitted because they were more specific and more general than individually assigned responsibility.

## **Summary of Results**

The government representative's interview provided considerable support for propositions #1, #4, #5, and no support for #2 and #3. Despite an expectation to provide more justifications than excuses in the cases of high ambiguity, the latter prevailed in this interview. Because his explanations were based mainly on his current position in the government rather than his previous experiences as a schoolteacher, he viewed the problematic nature of Serbo-Croatian in the political context. This political context (or communist past) was for him dismal, but did not result in the surfacing of any significant "sad tales".

The communist politics and ideology dictated the language issues, and therefore for him, the responsibility of others was easily defined, apart from any self-blame. The government representative supported three out of five propositions established, emphasizing the ambiguity of the Serbo-Croatian language.

## CHAPTER 5

### THE RADIO STATION MANAGER: ACCOUNTING FOR NATIONAL ALLEGIANCES

The radio station manager was born in 1952 in Daruvar where she has been continually employed with Radio Daruvar since 1974 as a journalist (international contributor). In 1998, she was promoted to the position of manager of the radio station. Since its inception in 1968, Radio Daruvar has provided programming in the Czech language. One of her previous positions was with a Czech newspaper publishing institution called "Jednota." She is a fifth generation Czech and her education was mainly attained in Czech schools, but her journalism degree was completed in the Croatian language. She indicated that the popularity of her radio station exceeded the popularity of the national radio or Croatian radio in her region.

The radio station manager was one of three media representatives in my research. Her accounting about the Serbo-Croatian language imposition related to the experiences in the media of this problematic event. As a representative of the Czech community and the only participant in this research that was not a Croatian national, she also accounted for the Czech language status during the Serbo-Croatian imposition. Given that her position as station manager was acquired after 1991, however, it was not actually a factor in her accounting.

The radio station manager did not restrict her accounting to one particular trait or information, but relied on many different types of accounts and used different strategies to address them. She used appeals to loyalty to acknowledge her adherence to the Czech

nation as well to the Croatian nation. When rendering accounts about the Czech and Slovak language, she used more of the consultative style because she was not aware how much of the information about the topic was known to the interviewer. In addition, she accounted for the language situation in Yugoslavia (or Croatia) and the language condition in communist Czechoslovakia. Because of the friendship between the interviewer and interviewee, the presentation of accounts was less contrived than with the government representative and was more casual. However, several contradictions were observed in her accounting. On occasion, she used the appeals to defeasibility and denial of injury to excuse and justify her positions for the Serbo-Croatian language imposition and the status of the Croatian language.

### **Proposition #1**

It is proposed that *in the offering of excuses* in cases of high ambiguity, *appeals to defeasibility and scapegoating are more likely than self-blame*.

In accounting for the Serbo-Croatian language imposition, the radio station manager suggested: “Without doubt, the Serbo-Croatian language was imposed. Between the First and Second World War, the Serbs intentionally settled in the Croatian territory with the intent of breaking up and equalizing the ethnic and language ratio to create Yugoslavia.” For her, the Serbo-Croatian language was clearly imposed and this imposition was viewed negatively. She used scapegoating in blaming the Serbian population for inhabiting Croatian areas and viewed the migration process as strategic and political, which language was also of significance. Initially, a form of conspiracy theory prevailed in her accounts of her own experience as a journalist at the radio station

during the communist era. “At this radio station, the majority of the managers and editors-in-chief had been Serbs before the homeland war.” She confirmed the problematic and the negative event of the imposition, but placed responsibility for the imposition clearly on the Serbs.

Later, however, she shifted the responsibility elsewhere for the imposition of the Serbo-Croatian language. She contended: “This was devised politically and it was associated with the centralism and the centralist’s politics of Yugoslavia or Serbia, specifically from Belgrade . . . I think that the political circumstances had positioned the status of language.” Belgrade was the Serbian capital and the capital of Yugoslavia, which directed most of the affairs, including language.

When rendering accounts about the Serbo-Croatian imposition and its effect on the Croatian people and their language, especially during her work as a journalist, the radio station manager explained:

I had a feeling that Croatian was not allowed to be used and uttered during the communist rule. I remember the first time we used in our broadcast the phrase Croatian Radio Daruvar during the Croatian war of Independence: it was proclaimed with such anxiety and fear.

In this account, she told a story that explained the dismal past of the Croatian language during communism, which she related to the events that occurred when the unified language dissolved. This is essentially an appeal to defeasibility, emphasizing the negativity of the Serbo-Croatian language unification due to the Croatians’ inability to speak their own language. The feelings of the ‘anxiety’ and ‘fear’ when the Serbo-Croatian language was dissolved and Croatian language became an independent language best acknowledge that people did not freely determine the way their language should be defined.

## Proposition #2

It is proposed that *in the making of justifications* in cases of high ambiguity, *there will be a greater reliance on “sad tales” than on denial of injury or appeal to loyalties.*

For the radio station manager, “in former Yugoslavia, it was not allowed to use any other language, but Serbo-Croatian in any public institution . . . Especially among my generation of the 50s, the Serbian words always creep in during our conversation.” She explained that the mixture of both languages was enforced during communism.

Nonetheless, as a representative of the Czech nation, she was able to use the Czech and Croatian language between her friends:

Personally, I talk to Croatians or Serbians in the Croatian language. Instantaneously, when in contact with the Czech people I talk in the Czech language. I do not even think to start to converse in Croatian language with the member of the Czech community.

She also used the denial of injury justification technique. She found the positive value in her private contact with Czechs and Croats, which trivialized the consequences of the Serbo-Croatian language imposition.

The manager of the radio station accounted for the connection between the language and national identity, which she linked to both the Czech and the Croatian nation. She suggested:

Language is the pillar of every culture . . . Without the Croatian language, the Croatian culture would cease to exist or to survive . . . I think that we feel much closer to others that use an identical language. It is just magnificent to realize that similarities in language and speech do exist . . . I am fifth generation Czech and there is an apparent sense of national belonging in this language . . . For the preservation of Croatian national identity, the improvement and the nurturing of the Croatian language are crucial.

For her, the use of the Czech and Croatian language was important because of the manager’s loyalty to her fellow Czechs and Croats because of her own allegiance to both.

As a person of Czech dissent and an individual that lived in Croatia and socialized mostly with Croatians, the manager of the radio station indicated a dual loyalty, which differentiates from other participants in this research that mainly exhibited loyalty to Croatians.

In the next account, the radio station manager used the denial of injury justification, where the Serbo-Croatian imposition was unquestioned and remained problematic, but the adaptation of the Croatian or Serbian words appear normal.

She suggested:

I would say that in Daruvar, the Czech language is 99 percent identical to the language spoken in the Czech republic. However, the remaining one percent of the language we would find Croatian words being used. Therefore, the Croatian language also had Serbian words, which Croatians have adopted and these words have remained Croatian.

The process of adoption of the wording from each language is described by her as common or happened in every language. This is then less injurious or the consequences of the Serbo-Croatian language imposition were trivial or minimal.

### **Proposition #3**

It is proposed that in situations involving high ambiguity, *there will be a greater tendency to offer justifications rather than excuses.*

The radio station manager equally used excuses and justifications in accounting for the Serbo-Croatian language imposition. However, her justifications mainly relate to the national loyalties to Czechs and Croats, which was very important to her. Because she used Czech language more frequently than Serbo-Croatian language professionally and personally, the radio station manager was more in a position to justify than excuse

her accounts.

#### **Proposition #4**

It is proposed that in situations involving high ambiguity, *there will be a greater use of consultative and frozen styles.*

The manager of the radio station provided information about the Czech and Slovak language and the use of Czech language in Daruvar area where she lived. She accounted for these events based on her assumption that the interviewer may not be aware of or possess this information. While the language situation differed in communist Czechoslovakia, their political situation was similar. Both countries were communist, but both languages were used independently despite their similarities. (Nablekova, 2007: 56) Either people spoke Czech or the Slovak language and they were never unified. Language wise, for Grubisic, in former Czechoslovakia, the Slovak language was dominated by the Czech language in the country, which makes the Croatian language status within the Serbo-Croatian language closer to the Slovak's language position. (Grubisic, 1991: 376) Hence, the radio station manager was more inclined to account for the Czech language in comparison to Croatian language within Croatia rather than its status compared to the Slovak language in then Czechoslovakia.

The radio station manager accounted for the differences between the Czech and Slovak language.

The difference between the Czech and Slovak language is extremely large. I would rather compare this difference like the difference between the Croatian and Slovene language. These are two different languages. They are very different in their grammar. For example, I can understand some of the Slovak language, but not completely. The Slovak language requires much more knowledge and skill. This is not because the Slovak language is harder than the Czech language, but

these two languages have to be learnt separately. I do not understand the Slovak language fully and as a Czech person, I would not even dare to either translate or write something in Slovak despite my ability to write for the Czech newspaper and my flawless knowledge of the Czech language.

Yet, the Croatian language and the Slovene language are not completely different, but in general, the Slovene and Croatian language are separate languages. The kajkavian, one of the Croatian dialects spoken around Zagreb is similar to the Slovene language.

(Monnensland, 1997: 1104) For the manager of the radio station, the difference between the Slovak and Czech language are immense. She conceived that the differences between the Czech and Slovak languages are barrier for her communication with the Slovak population.

When rendering accounts about the differences between the Czech and Slovak language, the interviewee shared substantial information, but the interviewer acquired additional information to include information regarding the Serbian and Croatian language. Most of the elicitations occurred after the interviewee accounted for the Czech and Slovak language differences or the position of the Czech language as compared to Croatian language. For example, the following questions were asked, “Can you compare the differences between the Czech and Slovak language with the differences between Croatian and Serbian language?” “How would you explain the position of the Croatian language and the Czech in the Daruvar area?” “Did you think that there were similarities or differences in the positions of both these languages?”

When rendering accounts, the radio station manager used humour or laughed, especially when explaining the status of the Czechs and Czech language in Daruvar because she assumed that interviewer was aware of the situation during the communist era. The laugh was at time used by the interviewee during rendering accounts to break

off from serious or uncomfortable questions or to tone it down and to underscore the friendship between the interviewee and interviewer. The more casual style was advantageous for both the interviewer and the interviewee in obtaining more information. Nevertheless, because of the friendship between the interviewer and interviewee, the interviewer might be in the position to try to avoid any discomfort for the interviewee. The interviewer joined in when she laughed to maximize the gains of information sharing. Furthermore, during accounting, the interviewee often used the phrase “you know”, which might be an indication that either she perceived the shared information was known to the interviewer or she sought conformation from the interviewer that the information was accurate or acceptable. The interviewer often nodded to encourage the interviewee in sharing the information and to provide a more comfortable atmosphere for the interviewee.

In another instance when accounting for the importance of the language for the nationality or ethnicity, the radio station manager used my personal name to describe the linkage between the two. She stated: “Sanja, even during this interview I am thinking how to perfect my pronunciation not because you are taping our conversation...” By referencing my name or using my first name, this linguistic style implies the friendly relationship between the interviewer and interviewee.

For the manager of the radio station: “...Daruvar always had been a multiethnic community and every individual has accepted the languages of different nationalities...” This account acknowledged the tolerance of other languages, like the Serbian language, but this is contradictory to some of her previous accounts that indicate the Serbo-Croatian language imposition and its mandatory use in public. Furthermore, her claim that the

Serbian language negatively influenced the Croatian language contradicts this account about the acceptance of any languages in her community.

### **Proposition #5**

It is proposed that in situations involving high ambiguity, *there will be a tendency towards greater identity switching.*

When accounting for the imposition of the Serbo-Croatian language, the radio station manager at times contradicted herself. The blame for the imposition was on the Serbs and their intentional migration to Croatia. Afterwards, the blame for the imposition was placed on the political centralist politics during communism that defined the language accordingly. She previously claimed that the responsibility for the imposition of the Serbo-Croatian language was solely on the Serbs as well as the politics of communism that enforced the unified language. She accounted that the majority of the Serbs were in the authority positions at the radio station, which influenced the use of the language that was more pro-Serbian. On a different occasion, the radio station manager accounted for her personal significance of the nation and suggested: "I was never preoccupied or interested in people's nationality." Her disinterest with the people's nationality was certainly in disconnect with radio station manager's previous account where she was aware of the Serbian nationality being predominantly represented at the radio station.

In another instance, the radio station manager downplayed the differences between the Serbian and Croatian language. "Differences between the two languages do exist, but I do not think the differences are too drastic. I think about 55 to 60 percent are

the same words.” This contradicts her previous statement that the Serbo-Croatian language was imposed and problematic for Croatian people because the mutual understanding hence would not present any difficulties for communication purposes.

The previous description of the radio station manager regarding the adoption of Croatian words into the Czech language and Serbian words into the Croatian language appeared to be common occurrences was then contradictory. If adoption of wording is common or a conventional occurrence, then the imposition of the Serbo-Croatian and the influence of the Serbian words on the Croatian language were minimal or not significant.

When accounting for the Czech language changes, the radio station manager refrained from accounting for the events that may took place since the breakup of Czechoslovakia. She rather pointed to the changes in the Croatian language and some of the wording that was absent during the communist period. This question might have been suspect for the manager of radio station because she was less informed about the language situation in former Czechoslovakia. Furthermore, for her, the vulnerability might have rested on that the reaction to the changes would question some of her previous accounts. For example, when she accounted for the differences between the Czech and Slovak in comparison to the differences between the Serbian and Croatian language, she said: “I would not make a very strong comparison between these differences in languages. I think that Serbian language is more understandable in regards to the Croatian language than the Slovak language is in relation to Czech language.” Besides her limited knowledge about the situation, she might have been concerned that the comparison was impossible and changing topic was the best strategy to avoid further questions. Her answer about the comparison of the differences was very short, which

again might indicate that her knowledge about the subject was not sufficient. Equally, her position as a journalist might have provided for less interest in language, but more for the news aspect of journalism.

She stated “my Czech heritage and my status as a national minority directed me towards the study of journalism.” The representation of the Czech language and Czech community was more significant for the manager of the radio station than the linguistic issues concerning the variety of languages. Furthermore, she suggested that during communism: “I had always talked the way I did and read on the radio as it was edited.”

The radio station manager thus assigned responsibility to Serbs even though her loyalty was with the Czech population and Czech language, but her experiences as a radio journalist had involved Serbian coworkers and based on that, she accounted for the Serbo-Croatian language and its imposition. Self-blame was absent in her accounting. Her split loyalties to the Czech and Croatian nations were reflective of her social relationships within the workplace and outside. The maintenance of the national relationships was for the radio station manager essential. Her ability to speak the Czech language was never jeopardized by the other language influence like the Croatian language or by the Serbian language. The radio station manager’s allegiances to the Czechs and Croats provided her with more impartial information about the Serbo-Croatian language because of her understanding of the position of minority languages during communism. The knowledge of the both languages afforded her with a larger community of speakers as well as different community of nationalities.

## Summary of Results

The radio station manager's interview provided considerable support for propositions #1, fair support for #5, and no support for #2, #3, #4. She did not provide support for the majority of the propositions for this research. This could have occurred because of her national adherence to the Czech nation and the cultivation of the Czech language in her private and the public life. As a result, for her the Serbo-Croatian language was not an event that affected her (or Czech language) in any significant manner.

## CHAPTER 6

### THE NEWSPAPER EDITOR:

#### INCONSISTENT AND GENERATION-RESTRICTED ACCOUNTING

The editor of *Pakracki List* was born in 1962 in Pakrac. He received his degree in Journalism, majoring in the political science from the university in Zagreb. He was employed in 1988 by the *Porec Herald* as a journalist. He has been in the current position as editor-in-chief and the manager of the *Pakracki List* since 1992. *Pakracki List* is a local newspaper, which covers topics that are of concern for the population of an area with a circulation of about 1350 copies and serves about 4000 families. The editor's experience in journalism spans 15 years. Most of his career was in his hometown of Pakrac, which during the war of 1991 was extremely devastated.

The editor was the first person interviewed and the second representative of the media for this research. He was a very interesting and rigid interactant and was annoyed by some of the questions. His accounts regarding the Serbo-Croatian language differ significantly from those of other participants in the research. He was the only one who claimed that the Serbo-Croatian language was *not imposed*, but was a result of "life." For him, the Serbo-Croatian language was generally not a problematic event and hence the Croatian language was not affected by the Serbian language influence. Besides claiming that the Serbo-Croatian language was not imposed and that it was generally accepted, the newspaper editor was infuriated by the dissolution of the Serbo-Croatian language. He viewed attempts to define the Croatian language after the Serbo-Croatian language had

been dissolved as an imposition. At numerous points, however, the newspaper editor also contradicted these claims.

### **Proposition #1**

It is proposed that *in the offering of excuses* in cases of high ambiguity, *appeals to defeasibility and scapegoating are more likely than self-blame.*

The newspaper editor made an appeal to defeasibility in the majority of his accounts to mitigate responsibility for the issues concerning the use of Croatian language or wording. This was the case, for example, when the interviewer brought to his attention the case of Dr Sreter that was from the same town as the interviewee. In 1987, Dr. Sreter was sentenced to 60 days in jail for using the Croatian word *umirovljeni casnik* (retired army officer) instead of *penzionisani oficir* under a patient's occupation on the hospital records. (Grcevic, 2002: 152) When rendering account about the incident with Dr Sreter, the newspaper editor stated: "I heard about this from others, but personally, I did not have a chance to check this story while he was still alive. Nevertheless, this happened before the eighties, but it is possible." In this account, he claimed that he was not informed about the incident because it happened before the 1980s, when his "active life" began, but it was documented that the incident occurred in 1987. Though the editor was informed about the incident from others, he was adamant that because of his inability to personally verify the story then, the information was for him not credible.

At one point, the newspaper editor explained "as a child who grew up in the 80's, I am not familiar with the language used during the Independent States of Croatia (NDH) in World War II or what language was in use in the 1930's in Pakrac." In this account,

the newspaper editor excused his lack of information because of the times he grew up, despite the fact that this information was documented. This type of accounting by the editor might have been the result of his attempt to share only information that he personally experienced, but on different occasions, he related knowledge about events that were well documented.

According to the newspaper editor:

In my opinion, the language had not been changed forcefully, but I am too young to recall such events. In addition, I have not learned or heard any complaints from older citizens about the forceful imposition of language. I think that it is unnecessary to emphasize or assume there was any existence of an imposition or intrusion in the language.

Besides denying any intrusion or imposition of the Serbo-Croatian language in Croatia, the newspaper editor again used the appeals to defeasibility to excuse his position by stating he was not fully informed about the language situation at the time. Referring to the time he commenced his active life, the newspaper editor suggested in regards to the position of the Croatian language: "In my time from the beginning of 1980's, I have not felt or noticed any negativity towards Croatians and the Croatian language." He suggested that he was not informed about the Croatian language position in another period.

When he accounted for the Serbo-Croatian language introduction rather than its imposition in Yugoslavia, the newspaper editor's description of the event was viewed as problematic because "I think that there is one Serbian language, and one Croatian language. The difference is in the large number of the words . . . integration had not been successful . . . The Serbo-Croatian language was artificially created." The Serbo-

Croatian language was then, not based on the will of people to choose their language and the differences between the two languages existed, which is appeal to defeasibility.

### **Proposition #2**

It is proposed that *in the making of justifications* in cases of high ambiguity, *there will be a greater reliance on "sad tales" than on denial of injury or appeal to loyalties.*

The newspaper editor relied mainly on denial of injury in his accounts, excluding "sad tales" and appeals to loyalties.

In the next account, the newspaper editor used the denial of injury justification for the Serbo-Croatian introduction because the consequences of the act were trivial or unimportant. He said:

Partly, it was the result of politics, and in part, it was the product of life, which happened in this area from 1945 to 1990. After 1945, people started intensely to immigrate and move to this area. In addition, some people had moved from Pakrac. Pakrac is a part of Slavonija (Slavonia), which is an area with rich soil and a vast area of land. Because of this fact, this area certainly attracted people that had lived in Bosnia in the forests and the mountains that had very poor surroundings and conditions. These people brought with them their language and their culture. The mixing of people and languages occurred. Partly, the immigrants accepted the language of people of Pakrac, and in communication with the immigrants; the people of Pakrac accepted certain words from the immigrants. Thereby, there came into existence the Serbo-Croatian or Croatian or Serbian language. When I went to Zagreb for middle school, my colleagues noticed many Serbian expressions in my everyday speech. This was normal for me because of the way I talked in my town.

Besides being lengthy, his account about the Serbo-Croatian language creation was justified because of the movement among people for mostly economic reasons. For the newspaper editor, it was an ordinary occurrence that did not have any genuine impact on the people or their language, especially on him. The influences of the Serbian language for the newspaper editor were minimal and not worrisome.

The next account is similar to the previous account where the newspaper editor claimed that his language use was reflection of the area where he lived, which included a large Serbian population. This account refers to the events relative to his journalistic experience and the use of language. He stated:

An example from Poreč when I worked for a newspaper where my colleagues noticed many Serbian words in my speech is the best indicator about differences in the language. My speech is a reflection of my life from an area with a large Serbian population . . . In 1988, when I started to work for “Poreč Herald”; I had to be careful not to use these strong Serbian words. This was in Istria, which had been otherwise the most tolerant area in Croatia towards different nations.

In this account, the newspaper editor justified the use of the Serbian words in his writings because of his childhood spent in the area with a large Serbian population. Hence, the consequence of the use of more Serbian words in his speech was insignificant because they were part of his life. The experiences in the language use differed for the newspaper editor, depending on the national ratio of the populace in different areas. His experience was mostly with the newspaper in Pakrac, his hometown with a larger Serbian population, as opposed to Porec or Zagreb where the Croatian population predominated.

In relation to the Croatian language position within the Serbo-Croatian unification and the Serbo-Croatian language creation, the newspaper editor asserted:

[The Croatian language] simply disappeared as it was integrated into Serbo-Croatian through life. Because of the changes and organization of society, which was modeled on the Soviet Union, it followed that there would be changes in the language . . . In addition, words like sekretar (secretary), sekretarijat (department), and komitet (committee) became widely used. Similarly, the Russian organizational model of the army and police was created. This Russian model carried Russian terms and the words like oficir (officer) and komandir (commander) replaced the Croatian words of casnik and nacelnik. The police and the army used the pro-Soviet expressions and therefore, it influenced a change in the language.

The newspaper editor claimed that the Croatian language was integrated into the Serbo-Croatian language, but explained the political reasoning that he only briefly mentioned in the preceding account. Similarly, he claimed that as result of politics, the Croatian wording was replaced by ideological terminology, which again was for him a natural occurrence that was not problematic or marginal to be viewed as an imposition of the Serbo-Croatian language. For the newspaper editor, the disappearance of the Croatian language was not significant or even an issue. Furthermore, he acknowledged that the Croatian language was an independent language before its unification after the Second World War when it was unified with the Serbian language.

In relation to the use of Croatian language despite the Serbo-Croatian language existence, the newspaper editor justified the use of both Serbo-Croatian and the Croatian language. For him: "...At that time, Yugoslav socialism was very liberal and almost nothing was being prohibited. Therefore, I did not feel I was being denied the use of my language... I never felt that I was denied the opportunity to speak Croatian." The newspaper editor justified the act of the of the Serbo-Croatian language introduction because it did not affect the Croatian language in any way. For him, because of the politics of communism that was tolerant and open-minded, the Croatian language was no exception. The newspaper editor perceived the liberal politics in the 1980s to be a positive force for the language as well as in a general sense.

The standard language remained Serbo-Croatian after 1974, the Croatian or Serbian language in Croatia, but it was still not allowed to list any differences between the two languages. (Monnesland, 1997: 1109) With the changes in the Constitution of 1974, the Croatian language gains were minor and the unified, Serbo-Croatian language

remained unchanged. In the 1980s, after the death of Tito, which the newspaper editor referred, the political and economic situation was grim in Yugoslavia. The disagreements between the representatives of each republic [collective presidency] had been plaguing any consensus on important issues. (Goldstein, 1999: 189) The shortages of electricity, coffee, or washing soap were regular occurrences. The political and economic situation actually worsens in the 1980s in Yugoslavia.

When rendering accounts about the Serbian language advantage in the government, especially in the Army, the newspaper editor suggested:

Serbs were considered the winners in World War II. They are a nation that loves uniforms and the army unlike Croats, which dislike uniforms and the army. Serbs dominated the higher officer ranks in the Yugoslav army in contrast to Croats. It is then normal to accept that the official language will be the language of the people with the largest number of participation in this service. I think that the Serbian language is a very vulgar and crude language and ideal for the army unlike the Croatian language.

In this account, the editor justified the use of the Serbian language in the army service because the consequences of this act were trivial for the Croatian language because it was ill fitted for use in the Army anyway. The Army officials in Yugoslavia argued that the words in ekavian/Serbian are shorter and sound firmer for the army culture than the (i) jekavian/Croatian words. (Pranjko, 1997: 148) Hence, the newspaper editor's account of the language in the army is similar to the claims of the Army officials.

The newspaper editor suggested: "... I think that people here really do not care or think about language too much..." which could indicate his overall view that the Serbo-Croatian language was not imposed and its consequences are not significant. Here he justified acceptance of the Serbo-Croatian language because the interest of people for language was subsidiary or a trivial matter.

**Proposition #3**

It is proposed that in situations involving high ambiguity, *there will be a greater tendency to offer justifications rather than excuses.*

The newspaper editor used more justifications in his accounts, but he relied solely on denial of injury to minimize any perception of the harsh consequences of the Serbo-Croatian enforcement or influence on people. Self-blame or scapegoating was not a part of the editor's accounting, but he used an excuse of the generational or the specific era for information sharing.

The Serbo-Croatian was not viewed as an imposition or as problematic event [often contradictory]. Because of this, the denial of injury was predominantly included in his accounts. For him, the positives in the unified language prevailed, but the importance of an independent Croatian language was emphasized less.

**Proposition #4**

It is proposed that in situations involving high ambiguity, *there will be a greater use of consultative and frozen styles.*

Since the initial contact with the editor of newspaper in Croatia to schedule the interview, his attitude had been the main barrier in the interaction. He confirmed the receipt of the questions for the interview and sarcastically concluded that he would go along, if this topic were of interest to me. Despite the fact that these questions had been e-mailed to him about a month in advance, he never voiced any disagreement to the line of questioning. Hence, this sudden dissent had created an awkward atmosphere for

interaction. The newspaper editor confirmed the struggle in interacting with others before, specifically in his workplace:

I worked in different positions, editorial and managerial, which caused some of the gaps in my overall experiences. Sometimes the disagreements about certain issues have forced me to return to my work as a journalist rather than as a manager.

His account reveals that as a journalist he had less hurdles than in the managerial or the position of authority.

When accounting for the Croatian language and the incident with Dr Sreter who used a Croatian word, the newspaper editor asserted "...I heard about this from others, but personally, I did not have a chance to verify this story while he was still alive." In this account, he seemed to rely only on the information he personally experienced or verified by himself.

For the interviewer, the interview with the newspaper editor was uncomfortable, but it was not a deterrent in completing the interview. On the contrary, the interviewer was resolute to remedy the situation for the purposes to induce more information sharing. Besides nodding, uses of the wording like, "yes", "exactly", and "sure" were some of the vocabularies that despite the social barrier among the interactants did elicit more information from the interviewee and produce a number of questions by the interviewer.

When asked to account for the denial of the opportunity to speak Croatian language based on the Serbo-Croatian language imposition, the editor answered negatively to any kind of the prohibition of the Croatian language. By asking "Why?" the interviewer produced more information sharing by the interviewee.

**Proposition #5**

It is proposed that in situations involving high ambiguity, *there will be a tendency towards greater identity switching.*

The newspaper editor previously suggested that “The Serbo-Croatian language was artificially created...” but when accounting for its creation, he described the process to be natural or a result of the migration of the Serbian people to Croatia from other parts of Yugoslavia. These two claims contradict because the artificial creation of the Serbo-Croatian language implies that it was fake or false. Later on, he accounted for the Serbian language influence on the population through the resettlement of people in different parts of Yugoslavia.

Furthermore, when accounting for the Serbo-Croatian language, he claimed that the unified language was not intrusive in any way, but then he claimed that he was unaware of the language situation because of his age and that elderly people never complained about the unification. It was contradictory for him to claim that the Serbo-Croatian language was not an intrusive creation and at the same time claim that he was unaware of this because of his age. This would also contradict his previous claim that the Yugoslav society was liberal in many respects, including language matters.

Another contradiction in the accounts of the newspaper editor relates to his knowledge about certain events that occurred before the 1980s. In one instance, he claimed: “...As a child that grew up in the 80’s, I am not familiar with the language use in the 1930’s in Pakrac.” On another occasion, explaining the differences in the terminology from before and at the present, the newspaper editor suggested: “...The civic terminology from the thirties has returned and of course, this has affected the

terminological changes in the language...word like delegat (delegate) had been used instead of the word zastupnik (representative).” He alleged that he was unaware of the language situation in the thirties, but later claimed differently and provided a number of examples to confirm this. Subsequently, the editor of the newspaper claimed in relation to the use of the Croatian language apart from the Serbian language: “... I am not familiar with the language used during the Independent States of Croatia (NDH).”

Before that, he accounted for the language used at that time. He suggested:

The Independent State of Croatia had some ugly laws that tried to express an unnecessary level of the Croatian spirit and culture in all segments of life, which provoked the contrary effect. The attempt was made to have every version of the language as “pure” Croatian and to “clean” it from every foreign influence... the Ustase had their own language rules and regulations...In order to stress their negative influence, it was prohibited for the regular army (partisans) to use these same terms... Korijski orthography ...functioned during the Independent States of Croatia, throughout World War II.

In another instance, the newspaper editor accounted for the linkage of the language to national identity:

Language is the foundation of the culture of every nation. A language’s strength in the world is not only determined by the population number that speak a certain language... people study German and English, the languages of strong cultures written by Goethe and Shakespeare. I think that language is exceptionally important for every nation and their national identity. ...I think that language is exceptionally important for every nation and their national identity. When you visit the beautiful Adriatic coast and lay on the beach, when an individual starts talking to you, it is immediately clear who is Italian, Czech, or German... Language connects people.

For him, there is a significant role for language in identifying people’s national belonging. Later in accounting for the significance of an independent Croatian language, he suggested: “The language should not be a determinant of one’s

nationality... The Croatian nation is not measured by the usage of Croatian expressions, but in many other ways. By paying taxes, the Croatian nationality will be more prominent and respected.” He contradicted his previous account concerning the importance of language in relation to national identity.

The newspaper editor claimed that he was never denied an opportunity to speak the Croatian language, but afterwards, he did argue:

When I was in the Yugoslav army in 1980 / 1981 in Belgrade, I was told by my superiors that the "letter is the Latin alphabet, and the language is Serbian". When you spend a year in such surroundings when you are only 19 years old, you are easily influenced. Then when you return to your hometown, it is inevitable that you have adopted Serbian words and expressions. A certain length of time had to pass to be able to get rid of the words and the expressions adopted during that time.

In this account, the newspaper editor experienced the advantage of the Serbian language during his army service and suggested difficulties when he returned home to get rid of the Serbian language influence.

### **Summary of Results**

The newspaper editor's interview provided considerable support for propositions #1, #3, #4, #5, with no support for #2. He supported the majority of the propositions established in instances of high ambiguity like the Serbo-Croatian language. Because of the high ambiguity of Serbo-Croatian, he was likely to provide more support for nearly all the propositions. The non-supported proposition #2 was primarily rejected in this interview because of the main view of the newspaper editor that the Serbo-Croatian was not a problematic event that was imposed. As well, the political and the language past of

Yugoslavia (and Croatia) was not dismal, which explained the absence of “sad tales” in his accounting.

## CHAPTER 7

### LANGUAGE EDITOR

#### COMPREHENSIVE AND CONSULTATIVE ACCOUNTING

The language editor was born in 1957 in Imotski. She had been employed in “Vecernji List” since 1979 on the recommendation of one of her university professors. “Vecernji List” is a widely popular and the most read newspaper in Croatia with a circulation number of 150, 000 copies. During the Yugoslavia era, this reached 500,000 copies. This popularity is often identified with Zagreb more than any other region in Croatia. Her position in the “Vecernji List” as a language editor involves: “...correction of the grammar and the style errors in the text...to modify and harmonize text in accordance with the Croatian language grammar rules and conventions...correcting the orthographic, grammatical, and style errors...” She is also a journalist that regularly contributes to the “Vecernji List” and tackles many issues related to language, especially the lack of concern of people for the status of their language and the influence of foreign words on the Croatian language.

The language editor graduated from what was then called the Faculty of Arts and Humanities in Zagreb, in the Yugoslav language and literature, and in the French language. Throughout her career, she had always worked at “Vecernji list”, where she started as a student.

The language editor has published a number of books (“Oh, that Croatian”, “Orthography and Grammar in Verse and in Picture”, and “The Language Guide from Practice into Practice”) that addressed the approaches to language for children and the

issue of foreign words in Croatia. She is active in the workplace and outside of the workplace to educate and to advocate for improving and understanding language issues for Croats.

In the presentation of her accounts about the Serbo-Croatian language imposition, the language editor mainly used the consultative linguistic style by providing generous amounts of the information in response to every question. Her knowledge about the past and the present language issues is immense, which reflected her eagerness and readiness to share this information with the interviewer. This interview was the longest one indicating the vast information and the knowledge that this interviewee was willing to share for this research. Because the language editor answered her questions thoroughly, the interviewer honoured most of her accounts.

The language editor accounted for the Serbo-Croatian language imposition and its effects on the Croatian language. She also shared the accounts that relate to her own experiences as a language editor faced with the imposition in the media environment.

### **Proposition #1**

It is proposed that in the offering of excuses in cases of high ambiguity, appeals to defeasibility and scapegoating are more likely than self-blame.

When rendering account about the Serbo-Croatian language imposition, the language editor stated:

The name of the Croatian or Serbian language was imposed because of the propaganda of the communist idea of brotherhood and unity. Therefore, the brotherhood and unity was only feasible if the language of the two largest nations were subsumed under a common language and into one language. It was easier to implement socialism if the language was called the Serbo-Croatian language or Croatian or Serbian language. It was a political decision that was endorsed by the

Novi Sad Agreement... its definition in former Yugoslavia had been a politically imposed language solution.

In this account, the language editor used scapegoating to blame the political forces in Yugoslavia that attempted to unite all nations with one language under one roof. For her, the responsibility for the Serbo-Croatian language creation was political or by the communist forces that came together in Novi Sad to determine a unified language. The language editor emphasized that it was the name of the language that was imposed rather than being imposed in practice. She claimed that she and her colleagues were aware that it was a political decision that did not affect them. She differentiated between the Serbo-Croatian language imposition in theory or how was it was federally determined or prescribed as opposed to its practical use.

Furthermore, the responsibility for the imposition of the Serbo-Croatian language shifted from the political to a more selective group of people. According to the language editor: "...The intent was to create a unified language to subtly enforce the idea of a Greater Serbia. This was completely transparent. In addition, the idea of a Greater Serbia included the notion of the Yugoslav nation..." For her, language and nation are linked and the Yugoslav nation was representative of the Serbian nation, which she viewed as dominant.

The following few paragraphs include scapegoating and appeals to defeasibility. When accounting for the Serbo-Croatian language imposition, the language editor modified an excuse for the act. In the next paragraph, the language editor excused the Serbo-Croatian language imposition by stating:

The responsibility for the destruction of the Croatian language is solely on the Croatian people. We should not delude ourselves in blaming the Serbs for all of our ills, but the Croatians are also culpable for the obliteration of the Croatian

language. I really do not want to pass judgment on their stance because it was a personal orientation, but I believe that in every well-established state, the official language in use should be determined and everyone should adhere to the determined conventions. People should respect the official language regulations regardless their national affiliations...I think that the Croatian people did not have enough interest and were not sensitive to language issues...

For the language editor, the responsibility for the imposition was on the Croats because they were unable to contest the unification of the language as well as their disinterest in language matters. Self-blame is apparent when she uses the word “we”, which would be inclusive of her too in passing the blame, but in the continuation of the passage, she used the word “their”, which is less inclusive of her in isolating her personal responsibility. Furthermore, in the same account, the language editor used the appeal to defeasibility to excuse the Croatians’ responsibility for the Serbo-Croatian language imposition. She suggested: “... However, I think that this behaviour could not be viewed as erroneous because people were unable to acquire all of the information about the language. Everything was done secretly, without public knowledge.” The language editor minimized the responsibility of the Croats for the Serbo-Croatian imposition by claiming that there were not fully informed about the importance of language and attested to the secretive nature of the communist system, including issues involving language matters.

In the next account, the language editor excused the behaviour of the Croatian people in the acceptance of the Serbo-Croatian language name. He claimed they were not aware or informed about the importance of the Croatian language for their national identity. “During the period when political force was used to impose the language name onto people, I think that there were people that did not vociferously express their standpoint because they were unaware of the significance of the language and their belonging to the particular nation.” As with other participant in this research, for the

language editor, national identity and language are linked.

In the next account, the language editor used appeal to defeasibility to excuse the act of secrecy because of the inability to freely, without constraints use solely Croatian material that did not include Serbian in its heading: "...The orthography that had been secretly written abroad in 1971 was secretly brought into Croatia and used in secrecy..."

### **Proposition #2**

It is proposed that *in the making of justifications* in cases of high ambiguity, *there will be a greater reliance on "sad tales" than on denial of injury or appeal to loyalties.*

In the next account, she justified the Croatian language autonomy, which was the positive objective for her, by using the dismal past ["sad tale"] that explained her position on language status. She stated the following:

No, I was always able to use the language of my ancestors because of the region that I was born. However, I witnessed that for the Croatian Christmas Eve or Christmas, the electricity often had been turned off, but certainly not because the grid overload. This incident was indeed unpleasant, but it did not suggest that Christmas would somehow be vanished. Incidents such as this were a bit corrupt, but it did not undermine the belief that we will be recognized based on language because language is an important aspect of the identity...

Accounting for the incident during the Christmas celebration represents the sad tale that was used by the language editor to emphasize the importance of the Croatian language to national identity, which for her, the Serbo-Croatian language never accomplished. The positive valued in the described incident is for the language editor, the determination of the Croatian nation for recognition based on language.

Furthermore, in the following "sad tale" excerpt, she pointed to dismal past of the Croatian language that had to be remedied:

...we used the underground channels to acquire language books from 1940 and then copy the information from each other. Then, the older editors provided us with information on how to correctly write and pronounce different words. This means that we were alone, without any special instructions or decree, in our attempt to safeguard the Croatian language... Some of editors in chief argued for example that the word *zvanicno* (official) should be acceptable instead of replacing it by word *sluzbeno* because TANJUG (ex-Yugoslav news agency) insisted on the *zvanicno saopcenje* (official announcement or official notice) and we would edited in *sluzbena objava*... We have used a neutral term that had been the reflection of the Croatian and not the Serbian language... many in *Vecernji List* had questioned the role and the purpose for the language editors. These reservations certainly had surfaced and should not to be disputed, but it was not publicized. I know that *Večernji List* has always been language-edited and I believe that this was a positive thing...in *Vecernji List* we had constantly battled to preserve the Croatian language in an era where the Yugoslav press agency *Tanjug* provided directives...

The language editor positioned her accounts based on her role as a protector of the Croatian language. This protectionist role was especially evident in her accounting about her newspaper's conduct concerning the employment of language during communism.

She also related how:

Despite the Novi Sad agreement and the official orthography, the journalists and the language editors in Croatia used Guberin's orthography from 1940. This orthography was a starting point for the proofreading of texts in the Croatian language. All public institutions, like the Lexicographic department and the Croatian Television that was called during Yugoslavia the Zagreb Broadcasting Corporation used internal manuals for the Croatian language. The knowledge of the Croatian language was transmitted orally and textually...

The constant struggle for the preservation of the Croatian language tradition had been a major thread throughout her accounting.

In the following account, she used another "sad tale" of the Croatian language preservation:

When I came to work for the *Vecernji List* as a student, I utilized the Pavesic's dictionary and I acquired additional knowledge from my colleagues... the Pavesic's language guide...was deemed as an undesirable option throughout communist Yugoslavia. The texts received from other newspaper agencies, at least from the period of 1979 that I had witnessed, were always in the Croatian

language... The language of the press is a specific language and we had to adapt and to recognize the words that were under the influence of the state apparatus that we had received. I think that we were a large and significant barrier to prevent the influence of Serbian words in the Croatian language. I think that we have done it effectively.

According to the language editor, the loyalty of Croats to their language was commendable, but this is the denial of injury justification. Besides her own contribution and loyalty to the Croatian language in the newspaper, she stated:

I think that regardless of the area in which they grew up, the parents were always aware of their sense of belonging. Croats are very religious and the church had been a genuine protector of the Croatian language. The church and the Franciscans in Bosnia have been valuable for the preservation of the Croatian language and the Croatian culture in general and this influenced the older generations. The people never rejected their language regardless of the state control and state instructions such as the Novi Sad agreement... The people that lived in rural areas were more loyal to the Croatian language preservation than the people in the large centers were.

For the language editor, the justification for loyalty to the Croatian language was a positive development that the church had also contributed. She acknowledged the role of church in the preservation of Croatian language, which the priest had personally attested. The loyalty of Croatian people, at least privately, was an important factor for the Croatian language to prosper despite the public usage of the Serbo-Croatian language. The positive in this act outweighed any consequences that might have been trivial anyway. The language editor here used the denial of injury technique to find the positive, Croatian language loyalty in the untoward act, which was Serbo-Croatian language imposition. For her, then, the consequence of the Serbo-Croatian language were trivial because the loyalty to the Croatian language was unwavering. The love and loyalty for the Croatian language was for her an appeal she shares with other Croatian nationals.

In the next account, the language editor associated the importance of the Croatian language to national identity [appeal to loyalties]:

...it is our passport to the world. Croatians have to be attentive to their language like every other nation because language distinguishes people and identifies us. Therefore, language is absolutely one of the most important terms of reference. The Croatian language capital manifests itself in the kajkavski (kajkavian), stokavski (stokavian), and cakavski (cakavian) dialects. Croatians should nurture domicile idioms to account for the variety of available choices when troubled with the use of foreign words. The Croatian language must be nurtured because it is crucial for the preservation of our identity. The lack of fostering of Croatian language will jeopardize our position in the European Union. We simply must nurture the Croatian language, but we do not wish to impose it on anyone. ...I think that without the language, the culture of the nation would vanish because the diversity of the nation would be distorted...

In this account, the appeal to loyalties and the consultative style overlap, this was mainly applicable to all of her accounts.

She extended the importance of language loyalty and national identity outside the Croatian borders by including the editions of her newspaper published in Germany and neighbouring Bosnia and Herzegovina. She suggested: "...The foreign edition of *Vecernji List* is available in Germany, which further facilitated the promotion of the Croatian language and the preservation of the national identity." She used appeal to loyalties of Croats abroad and highlighted the significance of their Croatian nationality to the Croatian language. Her appeal to Croats abroad deepened her appeal because it serves to appeal to the Croatians that are miles away and her affection for her fellow Croats is even more profound. A similar appeal to loyalties was emphasized in the next account in which she stated:

*Večernji List* is also published in neighbouring Bosnia and Herzegovina and it is essential for the preservation of the national consciousness of Croatians there. It is important that Croatians with dual citizenship are aware of the protection of Croatian culture and identity in their homeland. People from Herzegovina embrace unique language distinctiveness that depends on their living

arrangements or the community of people living in the area. Therefore, the edition of *Vecernji List* for Bosnia and Herzegovina uses words and the expressions that are unique to that region.

She appeals to fellow Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina by extending and reaching for Croats loyalties outside of Croatia, but emphasized the richness of the Croatian language that is specific to the different regions where Croatians live. Similarly within Croatia she suggested: "... The text is differently language-edited for the Dalmatian edition and differently for the edition for Istria because in every edition we strive to preserve distinctiveness of the regional dialects. I think it is the attribute of the language to protect the language learned at home and the language learned at school."

Again, she accentuated the wealth of the Croatian language because of the dialects. These were nurtured mostly in the home and differed from the standard language used in the school. She sees the positive value in the dialects that are part of the Croatian language. The language editor justified the use of the Croatian dialects because of their compelling importance for the Croatian language and the Croatian nation.

### **Proposition #3**

It is proposed that in situations involving high ambiguity, *there will be a greater tendency to offer justifications rather than excuses.*

In her accounting of the Serbo-Croatian imposition, the language editor heavily relied on justifications, especially "sad tales" rather than excuses. She based these assumptions mainly on her experience working in the media and in everyday life where she used the Croatian language and not Serbo-Croatian. The language editor used justifications rather than excuses because she positioned her accounting in the language

developments before the unification of the language into the Serbo-Croatian language in Croatia.

She was convinced in the inherent language development, especially the Croatian language, apart from the Serbian language. For her, the Serbo-Croatian language imposition was problematic, but its effect on the Croatian language for her personally was not particularly injurious (denial of injury), which was another type of justification that she used. Additionally, she employed another type of justification, such as appeal to loyalties where she finds positive in the untoward like Serbo-Croatian imposition by appealing to Croats whom she cares for. The language editor also used excuses, such as scapegoating, but did this rarely. She mainly positioned the accounts by blaming Croatian nationals, who she is a member, for the Serbo-Croatian language imposition and its effects on the Croatian language, but she negotiated this position throughout the accounting by shifting responsibility for the imposition to other individuals, which was contradictory at times. Although her own responsibility for the act was absent and even though she did not personally accept responsibility for the Serbo-Croatian language imposition and its effect on the Croatian language, she did partially express personal regret for the language situation that entailed during communism. The language editor employed the 'sad tale' to emphasize the dismal past that justified her accounts for the Croatian language as an autonomous language.

Many of the different types of excuses and justifications by the language editor overlapped.

#### Proposition #4

It is proposed that in situations involving high ambiguity, *there will be a greater use of consultative and frozen styles.*

The language editor accounted for the assortment of the information, which she may perceive that the interviewer was unaware or did not possess [consultative style]. She provided a number of examples in wording to account for the differences between the Serbian and Croatian language. For example, she explained:

In 1935, the Serbian author Boskovic had written about the differences between the Croatian and the Serbian language. The differences in the terminology are numerous. For example, the Serbian word *brijac* (barber) represents the individual that does shaving and the tool used for shaving. On the contrary, in the Croatian language the word *brijac* (barber) represents the individual that conducts the shaving while the tool used for shaving is called *britva* (razor). Therefore, there are semantic differences and lexical differences. About 10,000 words differ from the Serbian words and these two languages cannot be the same.

In detail, even including the date of the specific historical episode, the language editor explained the differences between the languages. The language editor was very knowledgeable about language topics. Subsequently, the information that she shared was enormous, and she went beyond to include details about the language that she deemed were significant.

Notably, her accounting of the influences in her current career and throughout her studies as a well-known Croatian linguist was very informative. She provided many names of people that influenced her career and their views about the significance of the Croatian language. She confirmed:

My present job was secured on the recommendation of Professor Stjepan Babic who was my examiner... I have learned considerably from Zorka Kovačić, who was a legend of *Vecernji List* and had worked ominously on the preservation of the Croatian language. In addition, Strahimir Primorac, Jasna Molak, and Milan Ivkovic were central in sustaining the Croatian language because they always

language-edited texts... I have numerous notes from Mrs. Zorka, one of the senior editors that included these Croatian words, which I had inherited...

She was very detailed and specific in information sharing, which for her was important in defining her own role as a language editor.

When accounting for the differences between the Croatian and Serbian language, the language editor provided substantial information, including a number of words to clarify the differences for the interviewer and to point out that the Croatian language is an independent language. She asserted:

For example, many Croatian words contain the letter h while numerous Serbian words do not. For instance, the word *cahura* (cocoon; bullet shell) in Croatian spells *caura* in Serbian language. This is only one from many other differences. Then, the Serbian language includes more words of Russians origin than the Croatian language. For example, in the Serbian language the present tense is *ja cu da ti kazem* (I can tell you) while in Croatian it is *ja cu ti kazati*. The lexical differences are numerous too. In the Serbian language one word could have two notions while in Croatian these could be a two different notions like I mentioned before with the word *brijac-britva* (barber-razor).

The differences described were informative for the interviewer, especially the wording in both language that can be confusing and the fact that the same words might have different meanings. Because of the problematic nature of the Serbo-Croatian language title, for the language editor, it was significant to point to the differences of both languages as well as to highlight the Croatian language's independent status.

While the consultative style was mainly employed in the structuring of the accounts by the interviewee, the casual style was also significant in the presentation. These two presentation styles overlapped. The interviewee was very informative in account making, but in the interaction process between the interviewer and interviewee, the casual style could be defined based on the mutual or common interest in language issues, which for both was equally beneficial.

At the start of the interview, when she accounted for her background, the language editor, to maximize her gains in relation to professional and personal credibility stated: "... I do not intend to falsify or attribute onto self larger merits than deserved or add anything to look more deserving. I really want to attest to the issues related to the Croatian language from my own experience..." For her, it was significant to explain for the interviewer that she was a trustworthy participant in this research. It was for her advantage to appear a reliable participant, which would enhance the credibility of her information she provided for the interviewer. Furthermore, she strategically acclaimed: "... I think that my contribution for your thesis will be best served if I stay true to my experiences." By referencing to the success of the research and the final product (thesis) for the interviewer, the language editor tactically attempted to maximize gains of the interviewer, which in account making is often the role of the interviewer rather than interviewee. This was a reversal of roles in the interaction process in account making, which benefited both because it clarified the interaction process in advance, making it more informal.

#### **Proposition #5**

It is proposed that in situations involving high ambiguity, *there will be a tendency towards greater identity switching.*

In accounting for the Serbo-Croatian language imposition, the responsibility for the language editor was at times shifted from the political to the Serbian domination and towards the culpability of Croats for the imposition. These differences and gaps in the accounting question the real culprit for the imposition of the Serbo-Croatian language.

The contradictions in the accounting for the responsibility for the language imposition questions the language editor claims and it demonstrates that the unified language conception was confusing for many people. It was unclear what the concept of the Serbo-Croatian language really represented.

Another contradiction by her relates to the language use in “Vecernji List”:  
“...Vecernji List has never been overly Croatian and prone to the Yugoslav or Croatian chauvinistic pressures... the majority of the readers are observant about Vecernji List’s moderate and scholarly approach to language.” In this account, the language editor implied that the newspaper took a moderate position in language, while in another instance she claimed differently. Even during communism, according to the language editor: “...the texts that were received from the federal press agency Tanjug were always altered to mirror the standard Croatian language.” Hence, at the time “Vecernji List” strived to preserve the Croatian language. This is contradictory to her statement about the aspirations of the newspaper to remain moderate, not overtly Croatian or Yugoslavian. The nurturing of the Croatian language in her newspaper was hence not clearly defined and determined.

### **Summary of Results**

The language editor’s interview provided considerable support for propositions #1, #2, #3, #4, and no support for #5. The newspaper editor was more likely to rely on the justifications and “sad tales”, but less likely to adhere to identity switching. The lack of identity switching by the language editor might have be due to her ability to consistently use Croatian language in her work and at home. Because she was more

concerned about the status and fostering of Croatian language, the language editor was more likely to rationalize about the Serbo-Croatian language as a vague concept that was not problematic.

## CHAPTER 8

### THE IMMIGRANT TO CANADA: SIMPLIFIED AND CONFINED ACCOUNTS

The immigrant to Canada was born in 1949 in Zadar and graduated from the electrical-engineering school in his hometown in 1969. In 1971, the immigrant served in the Yugoslav Army as part of his compulsory service, but afterwards, he was unable to find work. He traveled to Canada in 1972 at the age of 22 on a ship on which he was employed, and upon arrival, he experienced hardships and uncertainty in an effort to remain in Canada. In the end, after the necessary legalities had been finalized, he settled in Montreal where he lives today with his family. The immigrant is currently self-employed as an electrician. He often visits Croatia because of family members still living there.

The interview with the immigrant to Canada was the shortest one. He was the least educated interviewee for this research. The Croatian immigrant when rendering accounts mainly used scapegoating in mitigating the responsibilities for the conducts questioned in this research. Furthermore, the 'sad tales' and the appeal to loyalties were identified in his accounts. The accounts of the Croatian immigrant focused on his experience in Croatia and the difficulties that he encountered before living for Canada. He accounted for the use of language before and when in Canada, in communicating with other immigrants from the Yugoslav region. His loyalty to the Croatian language was apparent despite his lack of expertise or knowledge about the language. The cultivation of the Croatian language by ordinary people in Croatia despite the Serbo-Croatian

language enforcement was commendable.

### **Proposition #1**

It is proposed that *in the offering of excuses* in cases of high ambiguity, *appeals to defeasibility and scapegoating are more likely than self-blame.*

The Croatian immigrant to Canada accounted for the Serbo-Croatian language imposition by using scapegoating:

...the language was imposed... The Serbs worked very hard to destroy any trace of the Croatian identity in literature, in speech, in tradition, and in history because the Serbs wanted to control all of Yugoslavia. Here in Canada, the Serbs always address me as Dalmatian or a person that is from the Dalmatia province in Croatia, and do not ever refer to me as a Croatian from the country of Croatia.. There are many words that were imposed on the Croatian people with the intention of causing confusion...

To mitigate or excuse any responsibility for the Serbo-Croatian language imposition, the Croatian immigrant blames the Serbs for the imposition of the Serbo-Croatian language in Croatia and he linked this to the experience in Canada when socializing with Serbian friends. The Croatian immigrant linked the political control of the Serbs to the language domination, which for him, translates into imposition. The Serbs were the major culprits in destroying the Croatian language that was part of the Croatian national identity. For him, as all of the other participants, the language and national identity are favourably linked.

In another instance, when accounting for the Serbo-Croatian language imposition the Croatian immigrant suggested: "... the aim of communists was for Croatians to forget their own language. It was for the purpose of their domination on the whole territory of Yugoslavia... During Yugoslavia, the Croatians have forgotten their Croatian

words and language because of the political regime that was structured for the purpose to make Croatians forget their language.” The responsibility for the imposition was for him on the communist government that was in cohort with the overall political domination. The negative event, Serbo-Croatian language imposition was for him a result of the communist politics of control, which is another example of the scapegoating used by the interviewee. For the Croatian immigrant, the imposition was viewed as an intentional act aimed at Croatians and their language.

## **Proposition #2**

It is proposed that *in the making of justifications* in cases of high ambiguity, *there will be a greater reliance on “sad tales” than on denial of injury or appeal to loyalties.*

In the next account, the Croatian immigrant used the dismal past [“sad tale”] to justify his position that the Croats and Croatian language had been historically subjected and hence, the Croatians were deserving of the right to their own identity and language.

He stated:

...In the past, Croatia was constantly attacked and attempted to be conquered by many world powers. The position and location of Croatia made it attractive to many that wanted to acquire it. For example, Zadar, my hometown was until 1945 occupied by Italians, and before 1945 it was ruled by the Austro Hungarians, and at last by communists. Croatians never went to war to conquest or across the borders of other countries with the intention of dominion over other territory... Mussolini, which occupied Dalmatia, had annulled these words too and the Italian language was the only acceptable language. The same applied when the Hungarians ruled Croatia...

For the immigrant, the different political rulers and the government had influenced the language imposition in Croatia, which for him was unacceptable. In this ‘sad tale’, he presented Croatia as a victim throughout history and then, the Croatian language was

victimized too. Similarly, in the next account or 'sad tale', he represented Croats and their language as victims specifically during the communist system, which he experienced personally. He affirmed:

I feel very uncomfortable and troubled because the Croats in Croatia were considered as second-class citizens and nation. Every other nation seems comfortable and entitled in proclaiming its national belonging, but I do not feel that Croats had the same right. I remember, in 1969 or 1970 when I was 17 years old that Croats felt oppressed. Everywhere, in prominent positions such as army and in the police, the Serbs prevailed.

The immigrant described the depressing times that influenced his outlook on life, which brought him later on to Canada.

Despite the negativity in these events, he found something positive. "The Croatian language had been always oppressed due to many changes and the governance of the country. If the language were extinguished, the nation and culture would be extinguished too. However, the Croatian language has endured regardless the years of persistent attempts at its eradication." Here, he used the denial of injury and "sad tale" justifications to find a positive in the untoward act, Serbo-Croatian language imposition, which was the unwavering loyalty of the Croatian people to their language. Despite the grim historical events for him, the Croatian language subsisted. Here, he also appeal to loyalties of the Croatian people and emphasized the importance of the Croatian language to the Croatian people with whom he shares allegiance.

The immigrant accounted for his use of the Croatian language in Canada as well as the other nations in migration. He suggested:

Here in Canada, in Montreal, in 1971, the immigration had been nationally blended and Croatian and the Serbs were meeting together. I have been always proud of my Croatian language and my Croatian dialect. Regardless of the wide circles of the acquaintances of different nationalities, I have always used and spoke in the Croatian language. I was never ashamed. The people of the other

nationalities from former Yugoslavia had always communicated and talked with me in their own native language.

For him, the use of the Croatian language in Canada had never been problematic as well as for other people migrating from the former Yugoslavia and settling in Canada. The immigrant to Canada justified his use of the Croatian language because the consequences of this act were insignificant. He used the denial of injury to neutralize the untoward act, such as Serbo-Croatian language imposition by emphasizing the positive, which was use of his own language despite that the language was defined and enforced differently on the people in Yugoslavia. Hence, this did not affect the Yugoslav people living outside of their native country. The immigrant in this account also emphasized and he was quite proud of his Croatian dialect [chakavian] that is exclusive to the Dalmatian region of Croatia, which was another identifying language factor for him. For Hackett (2000), the dialects played an important role in Yugoslavia in hindering the imposition of the Serbo-Croatian language. Similarly, his incident in the Army echoes Hackett's argument where the immigrant viewed the dialectical usage as a positive occurrence, especially in the circumstances where the Serbian language prevailed. He suggested:

... When I was in the Yugoslav army, the divisions based on nationality were regular occurrences, Croats on the one side and Serbs on the other side. There were many incidents and the Serbs mainly complained about Croats being separated from other groups. However, we always maintained that this separation was not nationality based, but due to our same culture and way of life. The Serbs often objected that we intentionally used our own dialect so they were not able to understand us.

Besides the denial of injury or that the consequences of national divisions were marginal, the interviewee also appeals to the loyalties of Croats that were able to resist the imposition of the Serbian language in the Army. For him, the common interest for Croats in the Army was to be together and to nurture their Croatian language.

Despite his belief that the Croatian nation and the Croatian language had been subjugated in communist Yugoslavia, the immigrant acknowledged that he was never denied an opportunity to speak Croatian language. He suggested: "I had always talked in Croatian language". On many occasions in his accounting, the Croatian immigrant appealed to the loyalty of the Croatians to emphasize the power and survival of the Croatian language in the midst of the Serbo-Croatian language imposition. He explained: "...One cannot disregard their own nationality, but there are many good and bad people in every nation. I love to meet and to converse with members of my own nation because we are connected in relation to our culture, our nationalism, and our language. I respect others, but I am Croatian and I love Croatian people."

### **Proposition #3**

It is proposed that in situations involving high ambiguity, *there will be a greater tendency to offer justifications rather than excuses.*

The immigrant tended to use more justifications than excuses in accounting for the Serbo-Croatian imposition. His appeals to loyalties are particularly significant because of his love for the Croatian people and the Croatian language. He was in a better position to use the Croatian language than the Serbo-Croatian language because of the area of Croatia, Dalmatia, which used a unique dialect.

The self-blame in the immigrant's accounts was absent as well as the appeal to defeasibility. For him, only politically and professionally people were restricted, which did not include language. The Serbo-Croatian language imposition for the immigrant was of significance only on the level of the communist government and its ideology, but

not in essence or practiced by the people.

In his accounting, he mainly appealed to the loyalty of the Croats to the Croatian language, which was not the Serbo-Croatian language that was the imposter in this case. He relied on the “sad tales”, but less than to other types of justifications.

#### **Proposition #4**

It is proposed that in situations involving high ambiguity, *there will be a greater use of consultative and frozen styles.*

At the beginning of the interview, the Croatian immigrant corrected the interviewer's first question about the Serbo-Croatian language by requesting the use of the Croatian or Serbian language term instead of the Serbo-Croatian language while questioning. For him, it was significant to use the designation for the language employed in Croatia instead of the one used in Serbia or by international linguists. The interviewer explained to the interviewee that the Serbo-Croatian language designation is shorter and easier for pronunciation in English [and Croatian] and the use of the specific term was not intended for diminishing the importance of any language in this unified construct. For the interviewer, it was important to explain to him the intent for using the Serbo-Croatian language term because he was obviously uneasy with this term. This further explanation would serve for the interviewer to maximize gains in completing the interview by acknowledging and addressing the interviewee's concerns to avoid any discomfort that might present a barrier between the interactants. It was important to remove any obstacle, when possible for the interview to proceed efficiently. Additionally, his insistence for the use of the Croatian or Serbian language designation demonstrates the

sensitivity of the language issue in the former Yugoslavia that most of the participants displayed in this research. The difference in use of prefix in the language title really does not alter the linguistic practices. (Naylor, 1991: 80) Because of the interviewee's modest knowledge as well as the social status, the interviewer avoided further hurdles that would impede on the completion of the interview as well as add to the informative merit of the immigrant's accounting.

When rendering account about the difference between the Serbian and Croatian language, the Croatian immigrant accounted and confirmed the differences between the two languages, but at the end of the account he suggested: "...I think that the Croatian and the Serbian language should have been always two separate languages; however, I am not a linguist." He questioned his own expertise or the knowledge about the language issues, which confirms that his social status had been a deterrent or the barrier in the interaction. Because of his modest educational background, the Croatian immigrant was less likely to undertake the relevance of the language in his accounting.

Because the interviewer and interviewee are both Croatian nationals, the common interest they share is for the Croatian language to prosper. Besides the modest knowledge about language issues and his educational attainment, the lack of information sharing by the interviewer might have been the result of the ethnic connection of the interviewer and interviewee. This ethnic connection may have presented for the Croatian immigrant an actual barrier for the sharing of information because he may have assumed that the interviewer possessed all of the information about the language. While his information sharing about the language was lacking, the interviewee explained in detail his account about the arrival to Canada and the events that transpired at that time. The

hardships that he endured before his arrival to Canada seemed to have affected him greatly. His hardships during communist Yugoslavia mainly centered on the dire economic circumstances such as his inability to find work rather than the Serbo-Croatian language or Croatian language concerns, which explains where his interest was concentrated. The Croatian immigrant's personal experiences were more influenced by the grim economy and the communist politics in Yugoslavia that favoured members of the Party, which was discerned in his account making.

The short answers and the scattered ideas about the language were indicative of his inability to effectively describe the required information to the interviewer. The brief and condensed accounts by the Croatian immigrant provide a lack of information sharing about the language.

#### **Proposition #5**

It is proposed that in situations involving high ambiguity, *there will be a tendency towards greater identity switching.*

The Croatian immigrant to Canada was contradictory at times. When accounting for the responsibility of the Serbo-Croatian language imposition, he condemned the Serbs and the communist government in different instances. The responsibility for the imposition is then confusing and unclear because it questions the validity of both claims made by the interviewee.

The immigrant to Canada was the last one interviewed and his accounts lacked information. Despite this, it was important to include his accounting to present that the process of rendering accounts is not always successful, but certain social barriers makes

the process more challenging. The immigrant was the only one of the interviewees that before agreeing for an interview had many questions about the process and especially about the use of his accounts afterwards. He seemed concerned that his information and his name would be published in the newspaper, and it took a lot of convincing from the interviewer to reassure him otherwise. The reservation remained and his lack of information in the interview may be result of his lack of trust in the interviewer about the way his information will be disseminated or used in the future.

In another instance when describing the effects of the Serbo-Croatian language imposition on his education and the life in general, the Croatian immigrant suggested: “Maybe this had an influence on my life, I do not know...” After this statement, he continued to relate to the political circumstances, such as communism that influenced his inability to find an employment, which prompted his future decision to leave for Canada. For the immigrant, finding employment seemed a bigger issue than the use of language. When unable to account for specific events because of his lack of knowledge about the language issues, the interviewee often opted for the avoidance of account by changing the subject to a more comfortable position for him to address or explain.

While in many accounts, the immigrant observed the connection between the language and the national identity, in account making on the importance of the language for the Croatian identity; his account was not clearly stated. He suggested: “I think that internationally the Croatian language is not of importance to other states, but it is of importance for the young generations within and outside of Croatia.” His account was poorly executed and he did not explain the real meaning of language for Croatian identity and his reasoning. He avoided accounts because he may have perceived that he had

already accounted for it previously. The interviewer honoured this account because the following question about the cohesiveness of the society based on the language was expected to elicit an additional response, but even additional responses were not very descriptive in form or beneficial in content. The contradictory accounts were not substantial.

### **Summary of Results**

The immigrant's interview provided considerable support for propositions #1, #3, #4, fair support for #2, and no support for #5.

Because of his dismal life experiences, which brought him to Canada rather than his dismal language experience, the immigrant was less likely to share information about the Serbo-Croatian imposition. As well, contradictory accounts were less likely to occur. Furthermore, living in the area of Croatia that nurtures dialectical expressions, unique to the Croatian language, he was less likely to be influenced by the Serbo-Croatian. Even when serving in the military where the Serbian language dominated, his Croatian dialect prevailed.

In contrast, the immigrant is more likely to use the justifications rather than excuses because of his loyalty to the Croatian language and the Croatian people, which was quite important for him. For him, the responsibility of others [like Serbs or communists] was more likely because he associated communist politics with the language matters.

## CHAPTER 9

### FINDINGS, DISCUSSION, AND CONCLUSION

The purpose of the preceding research has been to create a modest basis for better understanding the processes by which people in their daily communication make sense of, or “account for,” certain kinds of events as a regular part of communication; namely, those for which some kind of justification or rationalization seems to be called for. More particularly, its focus is on the sub-category of such events that are of a more ambiguous nature in terms of what has occurred or is taking place, even for those who would see themselves as participating in the event rather than merely observing it from a distance. Do we tend to account for such events differently than in cases where the event itself is relatively transparent?

To explore this question, which is not directly addressed by the existing literature on accounting, the “imposition” of Serbo-Croatian during the postwar period has been used as a case study. As a social language project, it is of interest in its own right, including its implications for communication as language control. However, the primary purpose of examining it in the present context is to see what light it may throw on the process of accounting for ambiguous events. In the case of Serbo-Croatian, there were two types of accounting involved. The first involved the “need” to justify the belief that Croatian is fundamentally distinct from Serbian and could not be merged into a Serbo-Croatian compound without suffering its own destruction. The second type of accounting arose from the possibility that the Croatian people nonetheless “went along with” this attempted destruction or did not resist strongly enough. While these two objects of

accounting are closely related, the main concern in the present study is with the latter. How have Croatians in various walks of life accounted for their own personal, as well as their country's, reaction to Serbo-Croatian? More particularly, how did they do so when it was by no means obvious exactly what Serbo-Croatian was linguistically, when the "instruments" of its imposition were not always easily identifiable, and when the implications for their own lives varied considerably?

To help answer this question, seven (7) in-depth interviews were conducted in order to test five specific propositions as to how such accounting might be expected to differ from what occurs in the case of accounting for relatively straight-forward or non-ambiguous events. In each case, various *qualitative* judgments were made as to the relative fit between each hypothesis and the evidence provided by the interview. While the use of seven lengthy interviews involved a substantial degree of analysis, it was considered essential to have a fairly broad spectrum of accounting situations. In some cases, the individual assessments are relatively clear-cut; in other cases, interpretation of the evidence is necessarily more speculative. Taken as a whole, however, some interesting and relatively clear patterns have emerged.

## FINDINGS

The overall results of the research are set forth globally in Table 1 below. Given that accounting for events obviously differs from one person to another, regardless of the type of event, it is not surprising that none of the interviews supported all five propositions. The important question is how much support overall did the various

Table 1

	The schoolteacher	The Priest	The Government Representative	Radio Station Manager	The Newspaper Editor	Language Editor	The Immigrant to Canada
<b>P1</b>	Support	Support	Support	Support	Support	Support	Support
<b>P2</b>	Support	No Support	No Support	No Support	No Support	Support	Fair Support
<b>P3</b>	No Support	Support	No Support	No Support	Support	Support	Support
<b>P4</b>	Support	Fair Support	Support	No Support	Support	Support	Support
<b>P5</b>	Fair Support	No Support	Support	Fair Support	Support	No Support	No Support

propositions receive. As Table 1 indicates, Proposition 1 received the most clear-cut support (all of the interviews), followed by Proposition 4, which received support or “fair support” from all by one of the interviews. Propositions 3 and 5 received substantially less support: four “supports” out the seven interviews in the case of 3; and two “support” and two “fair supports” in the case of 5. The proposition that received the least support was 2 (four “no supports”).

## DISCUSSION

**Proposition #1:** It is proposed that in the offering of excuses in cases of high ambiguity, appeals to defeasibility and scapegoating are more likely than self-blame.

The results for Proposition One suggest that in cases of ambiguous events, people are less likely to engage in “self-blame” or accept personal responsibility for what they feel they are experiencing. This may be a result of feelings of relative helplessness to change or improve the situation. For example, the schoolteacher, who was conceivably

in a position to include more Croatian wording in her teaching, accounted for this in terms of fear of losing her job and did not consider this response “blameworthy.”

In gravitating from self-blame to the offering of “excuses,” the range of such excuses offered was fairly broad, from putting the blame on Serb nationals to focusing on the communist government and its policies. This divergence is itself an indicator of ambiguity in the sense that it is not obvious to all of those affected who is actually doing the “imposing” in question. The schoolteacher, the radio station manager, the language editor, and the immigrant to Canada mainly blamed Serbs, while the priest and government representative held the communist ideology and politics responsible for the imposition. The major exception was the newspaper editor for whom there was no imposition as such; he avoided scapegoating, but engaged instead in “appeals to defeasibility.” His main accounting consisted of saying that he was not informed or did not know about the incidents concerning the language in his hometown; in this way responsibility was avoided. For the other interviewees, the excuses offered made frequent appeals to defeasibility, especially in terms of the overall lack of freedom in communist Yugoslavia.

**Proposition #2:** It is proposed that in the making of justifications in cases of high ambiguity, there will be a greater reliance on “sad tales” than on denial of injury or appeal to loyalties.

Proposition 2 received the least degree of support from the evidence of the interviews. “Sad tales” were used by the schoolteacher, the language editor, and the immigrant, but not from others. The “sad tales” which were used involved historical

events like the language agreements in Vienna and Novi Sad or talked about the constant struggle to preserve the Croatian language. Reliance on “sad tales” was expected to be greater than denial of injury and appeal to loyalties because the imposition of Serbo-Croatian would be better explained by past language or political events that were harsh for the people. However, despite the use of “sad tales” by some of the participants, the other two forms of justification were more common. Somewhat surprisingly, the language editor included many “sad tales” in her responses, which would presume that she personally experienced the dismal situation regarding Serbo-Croatian, which was not in fact the case. However, her “sad tales” were mainly directed at the federal institutions, indicating possible discrepancies between the private and public experiences of Serbo-Croatian.

The failure of the priest, the government representative, the radio station manager, and the newspaper editor to use “sad tales” can be explained in various ways. For example, the priest was able to practice the Croatian language in the Church; the radio station manager used the Czech language to defy the influence of Serbo-Croatian; and the government representative focused on the position and importance of the Croatian language instead of Serbo-Croatian. The lack of use of “sad tales” was thus a reflection in part of personal and professional circumstances. Moreover, the “appeals to loyalty” were mainly used to justify the view that Croatian is clearly distinct from Serbian, as opposed to justifying the failure of Croatians to resist Serbo-Croatian more vigorously. Finally, all of the interviewees agreed that they were never denied the opportunity to speak Croatian.

**Proposition #3:** It is proposed that in situations involving high ambiguity, *there will be a greater tendency to offer justifications rather than excuses.*

The third proposition received support from four out of the seven interviews; that is, justifications were somewhat more frequent than excuses in accounting. Most of the justifications took the form of emphasizing the public or private use of Croatian in resistance to Serbo-Croatian. However, the schoolteacher, the government representative, and the radio station manager relied more on excuses instead of justifications. There was thus no clear pattern of support for the third proposition.

**Proposition #4:** It is proposed that in situations involving high ambiguity, *there will be a greater use of consultative and frozen styles.*

There was strong support for the fourth proposition. The radio station manager's interview was the only one that did not support this proposition. She provided more information about the Czech language than Serbo-Croatian. Furthermore, the frozen linguistic style was not applicable in her case because of the mutual friendship shared between the interviewer and interviewee. The fair support of the fourth proposition by the priest was based on his reliance on the frozen style, but not on a substantial use of the consultative style. The considerable use of the consultative and frozen linguistic styles had been well established within the parameters of Serbo-Croatian as an ambiguous event.

**Proposition #5:** It is proposed that in situations involving high ambiguity, *there will be a tendency towards greater identity switching.*

The fifth proposition was moderately supported. While the priest, the language editor, and the immigrant gave quite consistent accounts overall, there were clear contradictions in the case of the government representative and newspaper editor and a number of contradictory statements in the accounting by the schoolteacher and radio station manager. Arguably, those for whom the event in question was *most* ambiguous were the most prone to contradiction, which generally fits with the evidence. Besides the ambiguity of the event, for the contradictions to surface in a greater or lesser extent, the status of some of the interviewees was of significant influence. Interviewees that attempted to appear more reliable based on their occupation like the government representative negotiated this by often-conflicting statements. Furthermore, the contradictory statements were more likely where the interviewer used more of the elicitations like in case of the newspaper editor and new accounts differed from before. The contradictions varied based on the ambiguity of the Serbo-Croatian, but also depending on the process of interaction in account giving and account-receiving.

## CONCLUSION

Taken overall, the results suggest that accounting for more ambiguous types of events does display different characteristics than in the case of less ambiguous events. As has been emphasized, there is no clear baseline for normal accounting in the case of relatively non-ambiguous events. The approach of this study has been to propose plausible differences and then to assess the extent to which the pattern projected for an

ambiguous event is substantiated. It may well be that the patterns do not in fact differ, or do not differ as substantially as expected. However, the results for ambiguous events remain valid or at least instructive. Only further research can determine whether these results do or do not apply to non-ambiguous events.

As Table 1 has shown, there are significant differences in the accounts among the interviewees. Although not all of the five propositions researched for this study were substantiated, the overall result strongly suggests that the main concern of my research was confirmed; namely, that in applying a justificatory model of accounts to events, it is critical to distinguish between the kinds of events being accounted for, which Scott and Lyman did not do.

Moreover, Scott and Lyman dealt mainly with the rendering of accounts in day-to-day encounters (e.g. a doctor asking patient why she/he did not take his medicine). However, the rendering of accounts also occurs in public communication situations (e.g. legislative debates, the opened page of a newspaper). Although the context of accounting in the present study was essentially private (an interview situation), the issue was a public one; that is, the type of event that would be accounted for in public situations. For such situations, Scott and Lyman's model has provided a useful starting point, but needs to be developed further, beginning with a more sophisticated classification of the kinds of events being considered.

This is clearly a very promising area for further research, especially if combined with other considerations such as the type of logic or reasoning employed in the rendering of accounts—which none of the accounts research has done to date.

Scott and Lyman's initial approach was the basis from which the interviewee's responses were examined. Needless to say, since the late 1960s others have expanded the types of devices used in accounts-making to include for example, denials and apologies. However, in case of the Serbo-Croatian imposition, these devices did not materialize because they were not applicable to the responses of the participants. In this spirit, then, some other accounts of other ambiguous or non-ambiguous events or behaviour might benefit from these recent developments where these devices might be more valuable. Some refinement of the categories of accounts might be beneficial for a broader application and in a different context.

Research of this magnitude always had its advantages as well as its disadvantages. The advantage of this research is certainly in addressing the region of the former Yugoslavia and its people to include the linguistic subject area rather than being political or war related. While rendering of accounts may have been at times politically charged, it was not a significant part of this research and it was certainly not something that was addressed in any of the known categories for rendering accounts.

## *Appendix 1*

### THE ORIGINS OF LANGUAGE UNIFICATION IN MODERN CROATIA

#### CHRONOLOGY

**600-700:** Croats arrived in present day Croatia from the area known as the Ukraine. (Jelavich, 1990: 12)

**803:** Religious conversion of Croats from paganism to Christianity

**864:** Emergence of Old Church Slavonic in liturgy, which Cyril and Methodius, two Slavic speaking brothers from Greece, had first used during their Christianization of South Slavs. This spread to the South Slavs and gradually became the official literary language, and at the same time it began to develop variants as each Slavic area introduced its own indigenous elements.

**925:** Formation of the Croatian Kingdom with Tomislav as its first ruler, who was crowned by Pope John X. Croatia gradually increased its territory, which resulted in the development of different dialects in the different areas.

These dialects were based on geography rather than ethnicity, which included:

- 1. Stokavsko (stokavian):** spoken in central Croatia
- 2. Kajkavsko (kajkavian):** spoken in Zagorje, Podravina, and Zagreb
- 3. Cakavsko (chakavian):** spoken in Dalmatia, Istria, and the islands in the Adriatic.

**1100:** First evidence of the Croatian language was on the Baska stone tablet. (Mogus, 1995: 21)

- 1102:** Hapsburg Monarchy was created after the dispute over the acceptance of the Pope's injuncture to fight the Seljuk Turks, which enabled Ladislaus I of Hungary to assume control. (Guldescu, 1964: 183)
- 1526:** Ottoman rule (retained control until 1699) after the defeat of the Hungarians by the Ottoman Turks in the Battle of Mohacs. (Cuvalo, 1990: 6)
- 1578:** Serbians settle in Croatia because economic and political concessions were granted by the Hapsburgs to attract among others, the Serbian settlers into the area in return for military service. Although South Slavs, the Serbs belonged to the Greek Orthodox church and used a different script (Cyrillic) and dialect (the ekavian variant of stokavian) than the Croatians.
- 1790:** Hungarian control was strengthened following the death of the Hapsburg emperor. They attempted to impose the Hungarian language on the non-Hungarian people within these lands. (Babic, 1964)
- 1830-1840:** Illyrian Movement [Ljudevit Gaj] aimed at countering the threat of cultural assimilation through linguistic as well as the political unification of all South Slavs. (Hackett, 2000) It contributed to the standardization of the Croatian language to include the stokavian dialect as its literary standard over other dialects.
- 1848-49:** Hapsburg rule was restored and the idea of a linguistic union of South Slavs was created because of the Hapsburg subjugation.
- 1850 (March 28):** Vienna Literary Agreement proposed the common, unified language as a basis for the unification of the South Slavs. (Greenberg, 2001: 4) It was an informal agreement signed by a group of Croat (i.e.

Ivan Mazuranic and Ivan Kukuljevic- Sakcinski) and the Serbian intellectuals (i.e. Djura Danicic and Vuk Stefanovic Karadzic).

Vuk Stefanovic-Karadzic (1787-1864) was the creator of the modern Serbian language and he also created the model for the new unified language based on the Latin letters, the ijekavian variant of stokavian dialect, phonetic (sound-based) spelling (“Write as you speak” and “Speak as it is written”), and relied considerably on borrowing from other languages to create new terms and words.

- 1866:** Revival of Yugoslav unity or “Yugoslavism” idea by Bishop Josip Juraj Strossmayer (1815-1905) in Djakovo and his associate, Canon Racki, based on a common language. (Cuvalo, 1990: 13) He established the South Slav Academy of Sciences and Arts.
- 1889:** Karadzic’ follower Maretic [Croatian Vukovite] published a “Grammar and Stylistic of the Croatian or Serbian literary language”, which favoured the Serbian variant and excluded the morphological traits of the kajkavian and cakavian dialects in Croatian.
- 1892:** Ivan Broz published a common orthography that followed Karadzic’s principles closely.
- 1903- 1913:** Beginning of the Serbo-Croatian cooperation against Hapsburg domination was initiated by Stjepan Radic, the leader of the new Croatian Peasant Party, which imparted significance in the Hapsburg Empire and Hapsburg rule.
- 1914-1917:** During World War One, the quest for the political unification of South Slavs was fueled by the Allies and achieved at Corfu [Corfu Declaration] on July 20, 1917.

**1918:** The Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes was established on December 1<sup>st</sup> with Serbian prince regent Alexander as the future ruler of the new state. It was the first incarnation of Yugoslavia.

The Serbian language acquired a stronger position and influence in Croatia and other areas in the kingdom with a nationally mixed population. Serbo-Croatian became mandatory in the schools.

**1920:** Pressure for the political and linguistic autonomy of Croats increased and Stjepan Radic mobilized the ordinary Croats for that cause.

**1924:** The Croatian linguist Maretic, follower of Vuk Karadzic, published the “Guide to Croatian or Serbian Language”, which excluded Croatian words like povijest (history) and knjiznica (library) for the sake of linguistic unity.

**1928:** Radic was gunned down in the Serbian parliament and his death created political unrest and violence within Croatia against the hegemony of the government in Belgrade.

**1929:** The Kingdom of Yugoslavia was named and the political and language crisis intensified.

The Serbian language variant (stokavian/ekavian) in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia was preferred in the military and governmental institutions because Belgrade was the capital of the Kingdom.

In general, the mixture of both languages had been enforced and in Croatian schools, the Serbian language had been incorporated into the school textbooks.

**1934:** The political and language ties was loosened by the assassination of King Alexander in Marseilles and the transfer of power to Prince Paul created a less

centralized state. The different parties began openly to examine the unified language and emphasized the differences between the Serbian and Croatian language.

- 1935:** Radoslav Boskovic had published an article in the Serbian magazine “Our Language” [Nas Jezik] and concluded that the difference would be about three to four thousands words.
- 1937:** The Communist Party of Croatia was established under the Communist Party of Yugoslavia whose activities were later channeled through the anti-fascist movement. (Goldstein, 1999: 127)
- Josip Broz Tito (1892-1980), a Croat and the future leader of communist Yugoslavia surfaced.
- 1939:** Partial political and linguistic autonomy of Croatia was achieved and this provided for writings emphasizing the differences between the Croatian and Serbian language.
- 1940:** Petar Guberina and Kruno Krstic published the book “The Differences Between the Croatian and the Serbian Literary Language” and identified about 4,500 words.
- 1941:** During the Second World War the political and linguistic unification of South Slavs was suspended. Yugoslavia was attacked by Germany, Italy, Hungary, and Bulgaria on April 06. Yugoslavia was portioned among the Axis powers. The Independent State of Croatia [Ustashe], fascist puppet state was created on April 10 in Zagreb.
- Pavelic, the leader of the Independent Croatian state gave Italy almost the entire

Adriatic Coast and only the Italian language was allowed in that area of Croatia. The Ustasha regime enforced a rule of terror and mass killings of non-Croatian occurred. The attempt of the Ustasha was “to impose exaggerated linguistic purism” and any foreign or Serbian words were prohibited and sanctioned. (Langston, 1999: 84)

This period in Croatian history marked the absolute termination of the Serbo-Croatian language. The korjenski [etymological] spelling was enforced.

**1943:** Foundation for “The Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia” was first introduced on November 29 at the “Antifascist Committee of People’s Liberation of Yugoslavia.” The antifascist movement grew stronger with support from the Allied forces.

The equality of the four official languages [Serbian, Croatian, Slovene, and Macedonian] was recognized and the official publication of the Committee was printed in all four different languages. (Banac, 1984: 247)

**1945:** The Second World War ended and communist Yugoslavia was created. The “partisan liberation movement led by Croatian communist Josip Broz Tito” came to power in Yugoslavia. The six republics were created: Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia, and Macedonia with two autonomous provinces Vojvodina, and Kosovo and Metohija. The capital of Yugoslavia was Belgrade. “It was centralized state, completely in the spirit dictated by the Communist Party, centrally constituted with one man at the head of a small group who decided all essential questions.” (Goldstein, 1999: 154-156)

**1952:** The idea of linguistic unity resurfaced by the initiative of the Serbian linguist Belic who published a common grammar.

In Croatia, the journal titled “Language” for the cultivation of the Croatian literary language based on the post-war trends had been published. (Mogus, 1995: 201)

**1953:** In the journal “Letopis”, the Serbian literary foundation had published an inquiry into the language unity and possible modifications that should be made to the national language.

The public debate about the national language among writers, linguists, and public figures mounted.

**1954:** Novi Sad Agreement achieved the formal linguistic unification and the Serbo-Croatian language was created as an official language of Croats, Serbs, and Montenegrins.

**1960-1970:** The Serbo-Croatian orthography was issued in 1960. The Serbian edition using Cyrillic letters and the Croatian edition written in Latin letters.

In the late 1960s, the government permitted travel to other countries. Also, the influx of foreign capital was substantial because of the tourists’ invasion to the Croatian Adriatic Coast. The influence of Western music and newspapers was also significant. Religious freedoms became more lenient because of the signing of the protocol between Yugoslavia and the Holy See that clergy would not interfere with the political matters of the country.

**1967:** Two editions of the Serbo-Croatian dictionary were published. The Croatian edition written in ijekavian with Latin letters and the Serbian edition written in

Cyrillic using the ekavian variant. (Mogus, 1995: 204) Croatian linguists opposed the acceptance of the ekavian and ijekavian variants, which would permit and consent to the official status of the ekavian variant in Croatia. (Greenberg, 2004: 53)

The “Declaration Concerning the Name and Position of the Croatian Literary Language” on March 16, 1967 was signed by 180 scholars and cultural institutions in Croatia. They wanted to establish the equality in status and use of Slovenian, Croatian, Serbian, and Macedonian in federal institutions and the consistent use of the Croatian standard language. (Goldstein, 1999: 177)

**1969:** During the “Croatian Spring” Movement, the political and linguistic unity was challenged. The Movement did not only include linguistic aims, but it intended to engage people politically against the rigid communist system that was preventing public and personal freedoms.

**1971:** “Croatian Spring” was brutally suppressed by the Yugoslav Army and some of the protesters were jailed and expelled from the Party.

The “Croatian Orthography” written by Babic, Finka, and Mogus, was destroyed in the paper factory because its title did not identify the Serbo-Croatian language name, but only the Croatian language. (Grcevic, 2002: 151)

**1973:** Stjepko Tezak and Stjepan Babic published “The Review of the Grammar of the Croatian Literary Language.”

**1974:** The Yugoslav Constitution was amended, but the linguistic practices remained unchanged. In Croatia, the name was changed from Serbo-Croatian to Croatian or Serbian language, but it still did not allow to list any

differences between the two languages. (Monnesland, 1997: 1109)

**1980:** Death of Josip Broz Tito created a political and economic crisis.

The disagreements between the representatives of each republic [the collective presidency] had been plaguing any consensus on important issues. (Goldstein, 1999: 189) The shortages of electricity, coffee, or washing soap were regular occurrences.

**1986:** The book titled “The Syntax of the Croatian Literary Language” had been published by Radoslav Katicic, but the Croatian language had to include the epithet ‘literary’ in its identification. (Mogus, 1995: 210)

**1988-1989:** The political crisis deepened and national sentiments dominated.

The rise of Milosevic in Serbia and the annexation of the provinces of Vojvodina and Kosovo and Metohija to Serbia proper escalated the political situation.

**1990:** The first democratic elections were held in Croatia and the nationalists won.

Franjo Tudjman, the center-right leader of the Croatian Democratic Union had been elected when the communists suffered defeat

**1991:** Croatia succeeded from Yugoslavia on June 25 and the linguistic unity was completely abandoned.

The dissolution of the Serbo-Croatian language and each republic of former Yugoslavia identified their language according to their own national designation.

## *Appendix 2*

### *Interview Questions*

Please, state your full name and your current or previous occupation / position?

In what time were you born?

Before 1945

After 1945

What are your education background, your work experience, and any experience in academia?

At anytime in your life, did you believe that you were denied the opportunity to speak your native language?

If you were denied the opportunity to speak your native language how was your education and life influenced by this fact?

Do you think that the Serbo-Croatian language and the Croatian language is one language, without any differences?

Do you think that Serbo-Croatian was imposed on the Croatian people? Why?

Have you at anytime, as a Croatian, been unable to use the language of your ancestors?

Do you think that the discrimination and elimination of the Croatian language in former Yugoslavia was related to the overall negative view of the Croatian nation and people? Why?

What do you think and how do you feel about the Croatian language being censored during the communist rule?

Can you speculate on the reasons behind the Croatian language censorship? Why did the communist government ban the Croatian language?

Are you aware of the recent changes in the Croatian language and orthography? Do you know exactly what these changes entail?

What do you think about recent changes in the Croatian language and orthography?

Do you think that these changes are necessary and why?

Do you think that these changes have been forced onto the people without their consent?

How does the Serbo-Croatian language differ in relation to the newly introduced Croatian language?

Can you mention the difference between the two languages?

Do you think that the changes in Croatian language are reflective of the political changes?

Do you think that there is more to it than a political reason?

Did these changes influence your work or everyday life in any way? If yes, how?

Is language important for the Croatian identity, culture, and national self-determination? Why?

A common language plays cohesive role in the society; it brings people, especially in the big communities together. Do you feel closer to your fellow Croatians knowing that your language is defined according to your ethnicity or nationality?

Did these changes influenced the way you communicate with other people? How?

Do you think that the current changes in the language could not be achieved without political changes? Why?

Are recent changes in Croatian language important for the future generations? Why?

What would you say to the critics who claim that Croatian language changes are introduced to the population only for purpose of distancing itself from the Serbian language?

### **The Schoolteacher**

Can you describe your experience in teaching the Serbo-Croatian language and Croatian language?

What are the differences and if there are any?

How the changes in the language influenced your work as a schoolteacher and your communication with the students?

Are students receptive of these changes or not?

Is there a difference between the use of Croatian language in schools and everyday life and communication?

What are these differences and how do they affect the schoolwork that differentiates from the communication aspect?

What role do you think parents should play in their children's life in enforcing these changes?

Many older generation parents have grown up in the communist system and their language base is in Serbo-Croatian. Do you think that there are sources that could enhance or improve their knowledge of Croatian language?

### **The Priest**

Please tell me more about yourself. What was your education and career? What are some of your interests?

What do you know about changes in Croatian language and orthography?

What is your opinion concerning the changes in the Croatian language and orthography?

Is there any difference in the liturgy from before and now?

How did the changes affect your liturgy?

How did you adapt to these changes?

Are the current liturgy books written in Croatian or Serbo-Croatian?

Did writing parish pamphlets changed in any way from before?

How did parishioners adapted to the changes in the language?

Are there any instances in which parishioners pointed out to you regarding use of new words?

In meeting with other priests, are there strong advocates for the Croatian language and orthography use in the mass?

Is there an official church position in regards to use of Croatian language and orthography or is it more on the individual level that these decisions are made?

In your interaction with the younger parishioners (conformation, catechism), do you notice some difference in language use among them?

### **The Government Representative**

Do you think that Croatians have been loyal to the use of the Croatian language in former Yugoslavia in spite of the censorship of the communist government?

Do you think that secretly many Croatians used their language to maintain the cultural connection and the national identity?

Do you think that the distancing of the Croatian language from the Serbian language is purely nationalistic intent on the part of the government as some critics argue or do you think that there are other important factors to consider?

Do you think that people outside of Croatia are more likely to see the separation of Croatian from Serbian language as a negative event?

Why do you think this is?

What are some of the positive aspects of separation of the Croatian language from the Serbian language?

The Novi Sad agreement of 1954 declared the unification of Serbian and Croatian into one uniform language. This was clearly a political step in an effort to create 'Yugoslav' nation.

What were the effects of this unification on the Croatian language and its people?

What do you think about variants in language, specifically the variants that point to the differences in Croatian and Serbian language?

Do you think that these variants are important factors in the language?

The "Croatian Spring" movement in 1970s, besides the political changes, called for the introduction of the Croatian language separate from the Serbian language.

Do you know more about these events? Explain.

How is politics and language related?

What is the response of the people of Croatia regarding the new changes?

Are people calling or writing to comment about the language use?

What are some general comments?

Can you mention few instances?

How did you and government staff adapt to the language changes?]

Did you or they require certain training to be able to keep up with these changes?

If not, how do you deal with these changes?

What is the role of the Council for norm and standardization of Croatian language?

Why was this council formed in the first place (reasons behind)?

Did your department or any other governmental or non-governmental department conducted a research on recent changes in Croatian language and orthography to find out what ordinary people may think about these changes?

If yes, what were the results?

If not, why not?

Do you know any other country, beside Croatia, that introduced the similar changes in language?

If yes, can you name them and account for any similarities or differences with the Croatian case?

### **The Radio Station Manager**

How important is it for the rural and smaller media outlets to adapt to the Croatian language and orthography changes?

Do you think that there is a linguistic gap between larger and smaller areas in relation to Croatian language changes?

If yes, how to bridge this gap?

Did you receive any directives from the government in relation to the language use and how to implement these changes?

As a radio-station, do you have a language editor?

When you play a song on the radio or have an interview, do you notice any new words being introduced by the artist/interviewee?

What is the response of the listeners regarding the new changes?

Are people calling or writing to comment about the language use?

What are some general comments? Can you mention few instances?

How did you and the radio station staff adapt to the language changes?

Did you require certain training to be able to keep up with these changes?

If not, how do you deal with these changes?

How do you see your role, as a representative of the media in Croatia, in introducing the Croatian language changes to the larger public?

Do you see the media as an important contributor in the Croatian language changes?

Many older generation parents have grown up in the communist system and their language base is in Serbo-Croatian.

Do you think that there are sources that could enhance or improve their knowledge of Croatian language?

**The Newspaper Editor-“Pakracki List”**

How long you have been an editor of a newspaper?

What are the differences between your previous position and this one?

How did you feel in your previous work when using Serbo-Croatian instead of Croatian language in the newspaper?

Can you tell me more about Pakracki List:

Its readership,

Approximate circulation number,

The area it covers, and its content?

Your newspaper circulation is much smaller than i.e. Vecernji List and you serve a much smaller and rural public.

Do you think that the circulation of the paper influences the language used by your readers?

Do you think that because of your rural public, you are less or more preoccupied with the changes in Croatian language?

How important is it for the rural and smaller media outlets to adapt to the Croatian language and orthography changes?

Do you think that there is a linguistic gap between larger and smaller areas in relation to Croatian language changes?

If yes, how to bridge this gap?

Did you receive any directives from the government in relation to the language use and how to implement these changes?

What is the response of the readers regarding the new changes?

Are people calling or writing to comment about the language use?

What are some general comments?

Can you mention few instances?

How did you and the newspaper staff adapt to the language changes?

Did you require certain training to be able to keep up with these changes?

If not, how do you deal with these changes?

How do you see your role, as a representative of the media in Croatia, in introducing the Croatian language changes to the larger public effectively?

Do you see the media as an important contributor in the Croatian language changes?

Many older generation parents have grown up in the communist system and their language base is in Serbo-Croatian.

Do you think that there are sources that could enhance or improve their knowledge of Croatian language?

**Language Editor-“Vecernji List”**

You mentioned some of the books you have published. What are the titles of these books? Can you briefly tell me more about the content of these books?

Can you tell me more about Vecernji List:

Its readership,  
Approximate circulation number,  
The area it covers, and its content?

What is the role of language editor in Vecernji List?

How long you have been an editor of a newspaper?

What are the differences between your previous position and this one?

How did you feel in your previous work when using Serbo-Croatian instead of Croatian language in the newspaper?

Were Croats loyal to the use of the Croatian language in former Yugoslavia in spite of the censorship of the communist government?

Did many Croats secretly use their language to maintain the cultural connection and the national identity during the communist era?

Do you think that the distancing of Croatian language from the Serbian language is purely nationalistic on part of the government as some critics argue or do you think that there are other important factors to consider?

Do you think that people outside of Croatia are more likely to see the separation of Croatian from Serbian language as a negative event?

Why do you think this is?

In your opinion, what are some of the positive aspects of separation of the Croatian language from the Serbian language?

The Novi Sad agreement of 1954 declared the unification of Serbian and Croatian into one uniform language. This was clearly a political step in an effort to create a ‘Yugoslav’ nation.

What do you think were the effects of this unification on the Croatian language and its people?

What do you think about variants in language, specifically the variants that point to the differences in Croatian and Serbian language?

Do you think that these variants are important factors in the language?

What is the response of the readers regarding the new changes?

Are people calling or writing to comment about the language use?

What are some general comments?

Can you mention few instances?

How did you and the newspaper staff adapt to the language changes?

Did you require certain training to be able to keep up with these changes?

If not, how do you deal with these changes?

How do you see your role, as a representative of the media in Croatia, in introducing the Croatian language changes to the larger public?

Do you see the media as an important contributor in changes to the Croatian language?

Did you receive any directives from the government in relation to the language use and how to implement these changes?

Many older generation parents have grown up in the communist system and their language base is in Serbo-Croatian.

Do you think that there are sources that could enhance or improve their knowledge of Croatian language?

### **The Immigrant to Canada**

Tell me about yourself. What are your past and present education and career experiences?

Where are you originally from and when did you come to Canada?

Why did you come to Canada?

When did you come to Canada and at what age?

Have you returned to Croatia since it has become independent?

What languages do you speak?

Do you speak your native language at home?

What do you think about Serbo-Croatian language?

Do you know anything about recent changes in Croatian language and orthography?

What are some changes that you are aware of?

What do you think and feel about these changes in the Croatian language?

What differences in Croatian language did you observe from before and now?

How was the Croatian language treated during the communist period or in the pre-communist period?

Have you bought a new Croatian dictionary?

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