

Multilingualism on the Istrian peninsula – its reflection in old newspapers published in Istria (1850-1938)

Croatian Istria is acknowledged as the most linguistically diverse region in the country. Today, it numbers 5 major minority languages, along with some other minor languages, standard Croatian, and local Chakavian varieties of Croatian. The most recognizable linguistic varieties of Istria, which also trace their roots several or more centuries back in this region, are Venetian, Istro-Romance, Montenegrin Shtokavian vernacular of Peroj, Istro-Romanian, and Slovenian. This linguistic frame was even more enriched by languages such as German and Hungarian in its past. Newspapers in Istria first appeared in 1850; the first newspapers were printed in Italian and were called *Il popolano dell'Istria*. On the other hand, the first Croatian language newspapers of Istria appeared twenty years later and were called *Naša sloga*. The corpus of scanned newspapers available online consists of four Croatian language newspapers (*Naša sloga* 1870-1915; *Hrvatski list* 1915-1918; *Istarska riječ* 1923-1929; "Istra" 1937-1938), four Italian language newspapers (*L'Azione* 1919-1921; *Corriere Istriano* 1934-1938; *Il Giornaleto di Pola* 1900-1906; *Il Popolano dell'Istria* 1850-1851), and two German language newspapers (*Polaer Tagblatt* 1905-1918; *Brioni Insel-Zeitung* 1910-1913).

Although newspapers were printed in three different languages in Istria in the 19th century and early 20th century, two or all three languages occurred sometimes at the same time in certain contexts since newspapers in Istria at the time were meant to be read by the Croatian Istrian majority regardless of language. Istrian Italians, on the other hand, spoke little Croatian and to some extent German, while Austrian population of Istria possessed some practical knowledge of Italian and Croatian. Nevertheless, there was a good amount of attested examples of linguistic interferences in Istrian newspapers of the 19th and early 20th century. *Naša sloga*, num. 8, 1871 – In the section *Različite vesti* (Miscellaneous) on the fourth page, the author of the article offers translation of some postal terms into Italian in brackets. *Prijemnice* (or *recipissi*) means "receipt"; *povratnice* (or *retur recipisse*) means "returnreceipt", and *skrižaljke* (or *stampilje*) denotes a kind of leaflet listing all inbound and **Linguistic analysis** *Naša sloga*, num. 10, 1870 – In the section *Književne vijesti* (Literary news) on the fourth page, the author of the article recommends a novelette written in Italian by a priest S. Tomichich who was born in Rijeka. The article opens with the name of the novelette in Italian: "**Alle Madri Novelle, Riflessioni e consigli sulla coltura della percezione intellettivade' fanciulli, compilati o tradotti da Fr. S. Tomichich**, [...]" The description of the novelette runs then in Croatian. *Naša sloga*, num. 8, 1871 – In the section *Različite vesti* (Miscellaneous) on the fourth page, the author of the article offers translation of some postal terms into Italian in brackets. *Prijemnice* (or *recipissi*) means "receipt"; *povratnice* (or *retur recipisse*) means "returnreceipt", and *skrižaljke* (or *stampilje*) denotes a kind of leaflet listing all inbound and outbound deliveries. *Stampilje* in this example, is not a translated word, but rather an adopted word from Italian. The text runs: "* (Slavenski jezik kod poštah) ima se polag naredbe ministarstva odmah upeljati u Primorju Istri i Kranjskoj, stoga moraju poštarski uredi odsada izdavati sve **prijemnice (Recipissi), povratnice (retur recipisse)**, u obće sve **križaljke (stampilje)** itd. – Braćo Dalmatinci, jeste li čuli?, *Naša sloga*, num. 16, 1871

– On the third page of this edition, two common characters of Istrian jokes – *Franina* and *Jurina* make their appearance for the first time in print. In the joke, *Franina* asks *Jurina* the following: "Si čul, da su tamo dole va Italije na dve mesteh, a **Volosca e Lovrana**, školu odprli?, *Naša sloga*, num. 1, 1872 – There is a message in Italian inserted in Croatian text in section *Dopisi* (Reports) on the second page; the text reads: "[...], pak su odlučili da ostanu kao i dosada sva četiri. **Che paghi la scarpa grossa!** E, liepo je Pazinskoj gospodi, kad za njihovu školu plaćaju *petnaest po sto* [...]", The insert in Italian is actually a Venetian proverb which literally translates as: "May he pay the big shoe". On the same page, but in a

different section, entitled *Nekoja prava i dužnosti pomorskih kapitanah i mornarah* (Some rights and duties of sea captains and sailors) some words are glossed in Italian in brackets. A law that was passed by Austrian empress Maria Theresa is mentioned only in Italian in brackets (*Editto politico di navigazione*); *točka zakona* or "item of legislation" is glossed as (*punto*), and *kolikoća i kakvoća* meaning "quantity and quality" are glossed as *quantità e qualità*.