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BUILDING AN ACADEMIC COMMUNITIY IN THE PERIOD OF 1960-2010

1. Academic community and linguistic research in the 20th century

Academic community as a term implies several diverse forms of existence and work of individuals who pursue scientific disciplines at universities, scientific institutions and/or academies of sciences and arts. Primarily, that term refers to individuals who contribute in various ways to a specific scientific field and to the development of science at large. Their contribution is in doing research in domestic and international research projects, gathering into expert associations that organize different conferences that discuss the results of their work, publishing of reviews, books and works that affirm their authors among other academic communities at local and international levels. Various forms of educating new cadres (pre-graduate, postgraduate and doctorate studies), as well as writing student textbooks and handbooks are also part of the academic community's interests. The standard for recognizability of an academic community in the public life of a country can also be measured as reflected through established awards and acknowledgements that affirm the very vocation or youth that is the very future of the given academic community.

For the scientific disciplines that have been traditionally present in this area the issue of forming an academic community is no longer actual since there is a generational continuity. New generations follow and internalize unquestioned certain rules of behavior that are present in the academic community. However, as for new scientific disciplines in the last several decades, such as diverse interdisciplinary fields in domain of linguistic research, it is necessary to explain the pathway of interdisciplinary academic community formation, the ways it has expanded and individuals who have contributed to internalization of the knowledge in given political and societal circumstances.

Creation, work and expansion of an academic community lies right in the hands of those who are involved in building a certain scientific discipline. However, it has to be kept in mind that such a process is always based on several conditions. Besides the scientific data, an important role is also played by social and political events (wars, extensive population migrations, or disintegration of existing states and formation of new ones).

It is important to notice interdependency of several dimensions in one particular process whose focus is on individual contributions in building of an academic community.

In the first half of the 20th century a change of the basic paradigm in the science of language occurred. Namely, that science was at first predominantly monodisciplinary,

but in the second half of the 20th century it had become multidisciplinary by getting connected to various academic disciplines, primarily to psychology (psycholinguistics), sociology (sociolinguistics) and other humane disciplines such as ethnology (ethnolinguistics), anthropology (anthropological linguistics) – to mention just a few that had been actualized in this area. Changes in a particular scientific discipline are usually initiated by individuals dedicated to certain aspects of scientific research. After a while, a personal initiative usually grows into a general societal change. Data published in different languages about the history of the science of language testify to that.

I write here about personal contributions to promulgation of interdisciplinary approaches to language in the course of 50 years of work in which I had gone a long way from being an assistant to becoming a professor emerita.

2. From (self)education to educating others in academic interdisciplinary community

I enrolled at the Faculty of Philosophy in Novi Sad, Group for South-Slavic languages, in the academic year 1959-1960. At that time, I had no clear idea about my major and the future use of acquired knowledge. Actually, when I graduated from „Jovan Jovanovich Zmay" gymnasium and from secondary ballet school in Novi Sad, my plans were related to ballet.

Our student group was small, only five of us (four females and one male). What made that group of ours exceptional was that we had opportunities to listen to instructions about South-Slavic languages primarily in theoretical interpretation of structural linguistics that was at that time taught systematically only in our group at the Faculty of Philosophy in Novi Sad. At that time, it was a prestigious theoretical orientation. It was expected that my future theoretical orientation would be directed to the same theoretical and methodological field, further confirmed by the title of my graduation work, *The Structure of Two Songs Written by Momchilo Nastasiyevich* (published in 1965 under my former last name Vasilyev). In accordance with that theoretical approach was also my master thesis entitled *Syntax constructions with adjective in Serbo-Croatian literary language* (published in 1970 under the last name Savich). At that time I was unable to get to see the scope of other contemporary theoretical approaches to language (partly because my interest was still prevailingly focused to plays and theatre; in my student years I was employed at a theatre).

At the end of 1968, according to decision by Vojvodina Executive Council, the Institute for Linguistics was founded in Novi Sad with the goal to develop organized scientific research on Serbo-Croatian language. I transferred from the Serbian National Theatre to that newly formed scientific institution, thus changing the primary professional orientation toward the science of language. Abandonment of an art that did not enjoy a particular reputation in this society (as was the case with ballet) and moving into scientific institution for language research that implied reputation and capability, was a huge shift in my life and further heavy work in self-building.

From the very start, those who worked at the Institute on numerous projects were Velimir Mihaylovich, Gordana Vukovich, Militza Grkovich, Miryana Jotzich, Mato Pizhuritza

and I. Vera Vasich and Lyilyana Nedelykov joined our team later. We worked on long-term research projects on the basis of which the capital works on the history of language were supposed to emerge. Those future works were related to the era prior to Vuk Karadzich (18th and 19th centuries) and to contemporary Serbo-Croatian language.[9] In contemporary linguistic there were prospective lexicology projects (terminology dictionaries) and the project of Serbo-Croatian grammar: usage of cases (Miryana Jotzich, Gordana Vukovich and I worked on that project). Working on projects at first implied forming adequate corpus of empirical data for each cited field. In case of our project, that meant writing out examples from selected texts based on a Questionnaire that contained 246 questions (which resembled a methodology employed in the work on dictionary at the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts` Institute for Serbo-Croatian language). We gathered abundant empirical material while working on that project. However, the project was abruptly terminated and was never realized. Making computer database and analysis was at that time a well-known technique in other language centres around the world. That technique was not there in that initial stage of our work on the project. In the years to come, the collected empirical material was used in part for individual works of those who collaborated on the project, but it was insufficiently accessible to a wider scientific community.

Our work had all the characteristics of an independent institute because it was separated from the Faculty of Philosophy's Department of Linguistic both physically and in terms of its program. Today, I deem that it was an advantage to be involved with research full work time and concurrently be self-educated in an independent institution.

In 1971, when work on the grammar of cases ceased, both Miryana Jocich and I went on to a new project, *Syntax research on children talk*. The essence of that project was its interdisciplinary approach. The very title of the project indicated such an approach because researching children talk entails by necessity its relation to thought development. We had personal motivation in the research because at that time my older daughter was making her first steps toward speaking (the right time to notify her speaking material). A similar situation was with Miryana's son and later with Vera Vasich's nieces. All three of us had been writing down examples from development of children talk in their family surroundings. We kept journals about talk development of monolingual children in the early stage from first to third year.

Melaniya Mikesh[10] was a crucial person in that project which she led from 1971 to 1976 at the Institute for linguistic in Novi Sad. I inherited the leadership position from her and held it until the year 2000. No wonder the project on children talk development gained a full financial support from the regional administration. There had been a continuity of that research at the Faculty of Philosophy in Novi Sad (Svenka Savich, 1989). The professor at our Department at the Faculty of Philosophy was Milivoye Pavlovich, who wrote a doctoral dissertation on the subject in Paris at the beginning of the 20's. Melaniya Mikesh

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[9]   The project was financed by the regional committee for scientific research. Basic research results were published in various publications.

[10]   I noted her biography in my book entitled *Svenka Savich and collaborators* (2009: 122-135), while a bibliography of her work appears in the works authored by Plemenko Vlahovich, Ranko Bugarski and Vera Vasich (2009).

acquired her doctorate degree in Novi Sad (1964), before a committee in which Pavlovich was also a member. Her thesis was devoted to vocal system development of bilingual children. She had continued research within that aspect. For example, she dealt with much enthusiasm with the issues of grammatical development, not only with the three of us at the Institute, but also with all the other co-workers (primarily with Plamenko Vlahovich, later on with Layosh Gentz from Psychology Department at the Faculty of Philosophy in Novi Sad). At that time, she was mostly oriented toward structural description of children expressions while keeping in mind the psychological demands for development.

What was our task at the new project? First of all, in order to research talk development we had to learn „the skill" because we had no instructions on that in the course of our studies. Generally, instructions and talk research were at that time very scarce in national linguistic literature, particularly when it came to certain standardizing process of the spoken material because the focus of analyses was on written texts. Such a focus stemmed from a conviction that talk was chaotic and therefore it was impossible to establish any rules that could be applied to written material. In the course of our master studies we did not have a subject of methodology in research of contemporary standard language that would have allowed students to practice research techniques (even tough research on notifying dialects developed those methods by necessity).

Melaniya Mikesh had great organizational skills. I also made efforts to develop the same character skills. Melaniya Mikesh was a mentor dedicated to our growth. Instigating others to do research and work as a team was her basic trait, yet she allowed much freedom for her co-worker. She always expressed her opinion about a given phenomenon in language development. She cared a lot about young people's presence in the international academic community and we were those young people at that time. In her understanding, exchange with others was a priority. Therefore, she sent us to different conferences abroad, organized discussions and initiated our research projects. For example, I attended a conference in the Czech Republic that discussed functional sentence perspective (the approach we learned in the course of postgraduate studies, but never practiced it). There I met many established Slavists whose field of work was precisely the syntax approach (scientists like Jan Firbas and Josip Silich), but also individuals from the next generation. A significant paper presented at that conference was that of a young linguist from Stockholm, Osten Dal. He is now an distinguished scientist in language typology. In the mid 90`s, I established a cooperation with him on the project of typology of European languages).

Another thing that Melaniya Mikesh insisted upon was a team work based on her conviction that this was one of the elements that maintained and expanded the academic community. She had different ways to lead us to team work. As the result, the first works by us, the assistants, emerged in co-authorship with her. In the course of team work on the project our friendships in the academic community matured and grew ever stronger, as well as our cadre structure. It is crucial for a young researcher that his or her mentor is involved, particularly when a new thing not covered by relevant national literature comes up (in the given case it was psycholinguistic orientation) and all the relevant material is published in foreign languages. Reading expertise literature from that new field got us engaged into the language of profession, the language of psycholinguistic. At first it was a prolonged and

tiresome process, but the effort put forth guaranteed its future faster progress of „consuming" literature and writing autonomous works. Melaniya Mikesh would bring the literature and insisted that I read it and underline those words whose meaning I did not know. Then she would explain them to me in the general context of sentences and text. That was how small dictionaries authored by us were later published in books and in that way our contribution became accessible to all those who were getting familiar with that issue (Miryana Jotzich and Svenka Savich, 1974).

We attended the national and international scientific and specialized meetings, not only in order to meet with other researchers, but also to tell them about our activities which was a prerequisite for our competence in the international community because the science knows not the regional borders. Connecting with others seems nowadays a totally normal thing to do, but in the beginning of the 70`s that was not an easy process when it came to psycholinguistic because it was an emerging discipline at that time.

There is no great use of a newly acquired knowledge unless it is shared with colleagues in the academic community. Therefore, like it or not, I had a double task: to get well educated and to agitate within my country for the idea of interdisciplinary language research, which again I would assert outside the country by the research on our corpus. My role in everything was that of a mediator, which means that I facilitated circulation back and forth of works, publications and reviews.

We organized numerous lectures, conventions and public discussions in Novi Sad, mostly focused on a variety of issues in interdisciplinarity of language. That developed a community whose visibility is now manifested through gatherings, exchanges, public debates, as well as published works and books that media reports on.

Incentivized by Melanija Mikeš's way of work and this new way of thinking about language, primarily about the spoken material, I readily collected empirical material for talk development of twins along with Mirjana Jocić. That was later the basis of my doctoral dissertation (Svenka Savich 1977; 1980). We now paid attention to conversation as a sole analyses unit of social interaction, not to a grammar unit – sentence. We started to annotate children-adult spontaneous conversations in family settings. Since conversations are larger units, we segmented them into smaller units for analyses (sometimes as expressions, other times as exchanges). We became aware that our conclusions depended upon the analyses unit of talk development of children as related to the talk of adults. I focused on children and Miryana focused on adults with whom those children conversed (Miryana Jotzich 2006). Our team also held constructive consultations about parameters to measure language development. We talked about that with various guests from abroad who helped us on the project (Dan Slobin, Gordon Wales, Margaret Bulova, Grace Sugar, Maurine Schilds, Magdalena Smochinska, to name just a few). We spotted difficulties in applying the criteria for progress in talk development based on the number of morphemes (as then was suggested by Roger Brown as far as adoption of English language was concerned). Through our teamwork we slowly mastered *analyses of conversation*, an approach that was at that time new in developmental psycholinguistic studied by the international academic community.

At that time, a challenging theory in describing language was Noam Chomsky's trans-

formational-generative grammar. In the course of our pre-graduate studies, no professor gave any systematic instructions about that grammar in terms of the clauses in Serbian language. Such an instruction is a common thing today. However, in the course of our postgraduate studies we began to acquire the initial knowledge on the subject (namely, 1957 and 1965 versions of that theory). That entirely new European approach interesting primarily to young researchers, but it hanged outside then existing curriculum and pre-graduate studies program. Besides, structural theoretical-methodological approach had been a part of instructions for some 20 years without a prospect of changing that paradigm in the basic Serbian Studies curriculum primarily because its advocates within the academic setting held a theoretical primacy and academic dominance. Actually, at that time the structuralist academic community in Serbian Studies was in the stage of spawning the second generation of researchers and instructors, while generativists were not even in the initial stage of forming their academic communities. The same case was with psycholinguistics.

Acquired basic knowledge about transformational-generative grammar was a guarantee for a collective work (Melaniya Mikesh and Svenka Savich, 1972) where the main idea was to confirm the following: when child accepts syntax rules of clauses in its mother tongue (Serbo-Croatian in this case), it also accepts the rules of transformations (in this case formation of nominal sintagma in a clause). In that work, we were not particularly critical about the theory itself. The examples of sentence constructions were given isolated from the context and the course of child's talk with adults. Immediately after that work, we had become increasingly aware that theoretical approach did not encompass numerous aspects of that which occurs in dialogues that go on between children and adults. Our focus was now increasingly directed toward that which is happening between persons engaged in a communication because a dialogue actually represents a process that two individuals work out as a joined effort. Besides, our colleagues abroad whom we cooperated with were not thrilled with Chomsky's theory (particularly with analyses of sentences in a vacuum as pointed out by Maurene Schilds), so they turned to conversational analyses. Briefly, we were also directed toward the theories in developmental psycholinguistic. Those theories were becoming more and more part of our new knowledge, but also of our personal conviction in thinking about the essence of a language.

Theories of Vigotsky, Piage, Jerome Brunner, Rodger Brown, Dan Slobin (to mention just a few) were already the framework for systematic exploration of child language development. Roger Brown offers medium length of expression (measured by the number of morphemes) as a potential parameter for child language development. Slobin (a postgraduate student at Rodger Brown's class) takes several basic principles and prerequisites for their realization by taking into account what a child hears in his or her first speaking input and what is its potential for language (as a human being). In other words, that is the time when incentivizing influences from the very psycholinguistic come into play. Psycholinguistics then absorb significant ideas from psychology related to relations between thought and language along with critical relation to Chomsky's claim about the innate nature of language.

The shift from structuralist approach through transformational-generative approach to interactive psycholinguistic way of thinking had its positive aspects when it came to

my theoretical formation. Self-education in that new direction consisted of connecting linguistic knowledge that I had with the knowledge from psychology that I was acquiring at that time. Then I learned statistical methods. Those methods are important elements in processing empirical material that was introduced to psycholinguistic by psychologists. Linguists had also taken over that material.

In that developmental period, the most important thing for all of us was awareness of the importance of representative corps of empirical data for analyses. We were supposed to form such a corps that consisted of the issues of gathering, notifying, keeping in analyses units and analyzing material in developmental psycholinguistic. The corps became and has remained the main field of my interest and care to this day.

In that process, I gradually shifted from a small linguistic academic community formed within the Institute of linguistic into an academic community that suited my current interests about acceptance and development of children language and talk. That individual work was productive because in that new academic environment I met persons who dealt with children development in various other ways. For example, at that time Smilyka Vasich and her colleagues from the Institute for experimental phonetic and talk pathology in Belgrade worked on issues of talk development in children with difficulties in development. I also encountered other theoretical approaches, for example Charles Ozgud's basic psycholinguistic theory, as well as theories of Jean Piage, Leo Vigotsky and Jerome Brunner. Brunner's theory was at that time promulgated by Ivan Ivich and his team at the Faculty of Philosophy in Belgrade, mostly at Psychology department. That was crucial in my case in a sense of my move from the centre of a single theoretical angle (structuralism) to interdependence of thought and talk development. That occurred at the right moment because those psychologists at Psychology department in Belgrade had just begun to take interest in Noam Chomsky`s theory. Chomsky, as we know, claimed that linguistics is a part of cognitive science. The essence of his teaching is an idea that there is an innate capability for language that developmental psycholinguists should have actualized by their research. Ivan Ivich wrote a doctoral dissertation about how children develop symbolic function (Ivan Ivich 1978). He also classified language function within symbolic function which entailed the question of relations between innate and acquired in both thought and language developments. Ivich gave solid proofs that Chomsky was only correct in part when he claimed that children have innate language abilities.

In that way, my small academic community expanded. Actually, I joined the Belgrade community since I became a member of the Society of psychologists in Serbia, attended their meetings, published my first article in magazine *Psychology* (1972) and received their *Psychological news*. Finally, I obtained my doctorate degree at the aforementioned Psychology department of the Faculty of Philosophy in Belgrade. Members of the committee that evaluated my dissertation were my mentor Vera Smilyanich, Ivan Ivich, Nikola Rot and Ranko Bugarski.

I had to study world literature on children talk in order to write my doctorate dissertation. The outcome of that study was a publication entitled *Developmental psycholinguistic – an annotated bibliography* (Svenka Savich, 1976) which largely helped those who had just started to work in that field of institutional education. Thus, my self-education

was of use to those who followed suit as far as educating themselves for interdisciplinary approach to institutional circumstances teachers. That is an example how individual efforts are useful to the academic community and how they gradually shape and expand that very community.

Another segment of the same process was an awareness that a new, in this case inter-disciplinary approach had to become available to academic public wider than linguistic community. For that reason, I wrote articles on the topic of our research. I also founded annual publication *Psycholinguistic meetings* featuring research results obtained in Ljubljana, Zagreb, Zadar, Sarajevo, Novi Sad, Belgrade, Nis, Skopje and Titograd (Podgorica). Five meetings altogether were held prior to crumbling of once united Yugoslavia, which helped to homogenize research over the common work in the entire (former) country.

An important segment of that activity was to publish books that announced research results of the project. From 1974 to 1985, we published the following books at the Institute (in a series *Adoption of language*): *Models in children talk syntax* (Miryana Jotzich and Svenka Savich, 1974), *Development psycholinguistic* (Svenka Savich, 1976), *Talks between a sister and a brother* (Vera Vasich, 1983), *Children narratives* (Svenka Savich, 1985). There is no doubt that a large number of our research projects have established us on the universal level (see, for example, a compilation of works by Miryana Jotzich, 2006).

After obtaining my doctorate degree, the next crucial event was my visit to international community, actually my five-year postgraduate studies at the University of California in Berkley, where I studied under instructions of psycholinguist Dan Slobin (1979/80 academic year). That beautiful year was filled with theoretical discussions during Dan Slobin's seminar. The focus was on interlanguage differences in talk adoption of children in early age. Doctorate students who attended the university participated in discussions as well as seminar participants from various European countries. Besides intensive work in that study group that was made up of today's renowned experts (Jef Vershueren for pragmatism, John Baiby for typology, Nensy Badwin for children talk and others), I also attended John Serl's course on language philosophy, Robin Lakeoff's course on gender and talk, John Gamperc's course on sociolinguistic, Chrles Fimore's course on case problems and numerous lectures by guest professors during that academic year. That year, 1980, for the first time George Lakeoff and Paul Kay publically announced at their lectures their ideas about cognitive linguistic as a new orientation that should explain relations between language and mind by taking experience into account. That was a different way to explain theoretically Noam Chomsky's work. The research of artificial intelligence in that time produced encouraging results at Berkley in terms of critical denial of Chomsky theory. Briefly, the fact that I was specializing at the centre that was actually a centre of resistance movement to Noam Chomsky's ideas had strengthened my resolve in the field psycholinguistic and cognitive linguistic of different theoretical orientation which I later transferred to our project in Novi Sad.

In 1977, our Institute was integrated with Department of South Slavic Languages. I became a part of the Faculty of Philosophy, or better said the Institute for South Slavic Languages (current Department of Serbian Language and Linguistics). The assistants of the Institute were gradually integrated into teaching courses. However, as interdisciplinary

trained researcher with a doctorate degree in psychology science, oriented to research in domain of children talk, there was no curriculum subject I could teach and assert that knowledge in the process. Thus, I remained in research for another decade.

From 1977 to 2000, I led a project named *Psycholinguistic research*. Within that project, I had an opportunity with my students and various collaborators to research different language issues. I also organized numerous public forums and discussions. We expanded psycholinguistic community which we established during our annual meetings. I co-authored my works with collaborators and mentored numerous works of graduate students at our department. Several research projects of students whose mentor I was were awarded at the contest of the University of Novi Sad (for example, the work of Ivana Antonich, 1983 and 1985, and Slavica Shokitza in 1985, to mention just a few).

As I said at the beginning, a new discipline should also exist in the plans and programs of graduate and postgraduate academic studies. In 1984, my suggestion to teach Psycholinguistic within recently restored master studies at our department was accepted. The students from other departments were also eligible for matriculation so that psychology, English, German and Slovak languages students were able to opt for that subject. In short, student academic community was gathered around the subject that facilitated exchange between the students of various groups and served the needs that arouse out of postgraduate master studies.

I felt well-versed theoretically, so in the next 10 years I had been asserting the stance about importance of establishing rules about the use of conversational language, while keeping in mind context, speaking counterparts and common experience from the examples that had been notified in spontaneous speaking situations in Serbian and other languages. Due to collaboration with students and senior sholars of various degrees of academic education in that project, we were in the process of building Novi Sad corpus of spoken Serbian language (Addendum 1: Novi Sad corpus of spoken Serbian language, 1975-2000). Psychologists Veronika Mitro and Ivana Antonich made a significant contribution to the final development. Their work was oriented to global Serbian linguistic issues. That was how the revival of cadres of the very discipline began. An academic community of now interdisciplinary trained researches expanded thus. In the course of three decades for which the project lasted, over 50 different persons cooperated for short or long time. Almost all of us congregated around the project of children narrative capabilities. Wallace Chaiff at Berkley had an interesting course on basic cognition and language with focus on intercultural and interlingua narration characteristics. That course incentivized me to do a research entitled *Development of children narration* upon my return to Novi Sad (Svenka Savich, 1986). Thus, I transformed what I learned at Berkley to our cultural settings. The main objective of Wallace Cheiff's project was to point out cultural differences in narrative abilities of adults (by using a nonverbal sound film for narration) in languages of different typological structures (English, Greek and Japanese). He searched for interdependency of language structures and cultural influence to cognitive images. Based on Cheiff's film, the basic objective of my research was to point out in Serbian language material traits of narrative abilities that develop during growth of children aged 3 to 18, as well as that besides the cultural aspects the gender and age aspects play an important role in such a process For that

reason, conclusion of my research (conducted in Vojovdina in 1981-1984) was that children narration abilities were influenced by gender dimension (which is, for example, very expressed in teenage years) and the type of societal relations that children are raised with (in our particular case that is expressed in how offspring of migrant families understand private and common ownership).

At the time when the results of our research were published, that kind of narration research was at the starting point in our region. Since the book entitled *Children narratives* (Svenka Savich, 1985) came first with that theoretical approach, I gave a more detailed review of different theories about adult narrations. In my theoretical growth, that was a significant leap from psycholinguistic to discourse analyses.

On one hand, the very same theoretical approach I built into different research projects that were always directed to groups of talk counterparts who had lesser positions in society: the only children, twins, Roma children and children of our emigrants worldwide (Savich Svenka, 1989). On the other hand, I caused an increased interest for language behaviour of women who also have less influence to society. With all that, I had not lost the feeling that what we had been researching was important enough to be announced to international academic community.

From 1984 to disintegration of our common state, I organized an annual course of interdisciplinary language issues in the Interuniversity Center for Postgraduate Studies in Dubrovnik. Among attendees there were Snyezhana Kordich, Aida Bagich, Bernard Nezhmak, Veronika Mitro and Ivana Antonich, to mention just a few of those that are currently established in academic community. In that way, I expanded the circle of those who were potentially interested to promulgate the idea about necessity of interdisciplinary research approach to language. Topics varied from pragmatism and psycholinguistic to cognitive linguistic and discourse. The attendees were mostly students from all over the world who would gather for a week and exchange ideas, create companionships and expand their knowledge within – at that time still existent – Yugoslav language community. That experience confirmed my conviction that building an academic community was an obligation of each member if we wanted to establish a scientific discipline in the public. In my case that was an effort to approach language while taking into consideration various theoretical approaches when it came to the use of language.

3. The importance of empirical data corps to maintain and advance interdisciplinary academic community

At the beginning of the 8th decade of the last century the actual trend in this country, when it came to science of language and disciplines directed to that science situation, just as it was the case in other countries, was to form valid and reliable corps of diverse empirical data about Serbo-Croatian language. The purpose of such a data was to use it in the process of language standardization. Ever more agile corps linguistic was now opposed to transformational-generative approach (that aims for universality) by emphasizing the importance of individual empirical information and its concrete use in language itself. At that

time, a data corps for conversational English was already formed in Lund and it served as a model for various discussions on improving parameters for *representative corps* of conversational language. In communication with their director (Jan Svartvik, 1990), we gradually formed our parameters for conversational Serbian (in which there is only one part of corps conversation of children and adults now). There is printed material for each particular item as well as audio record (systematized in audio library), transcribed material in a form of analyses unit with data about cospeakers and context. There were 35 volumes composed altogether with more than half a million words. Many student works had arisen based on that material. Authors of those works were not only graduate, postgraduate and doctorate students at our department because the material is available in the country and worldwide.

Theory about dialogue and conversation is obvious in the system for conversation *transcription* into a written form that we have developed and adapted to our needs. Our transcription method was a contribution to at that time ongoing discussion about global transcription standardization of spoken language.

Collecting of that material began 40 years ago. Today it is available in a form of journal entries about children's speech development (single children: Sarah, Vladan, Natasha, Tatyana) and twins (Sveta and Mileta, Sanya and Maya, Yasmina and Danko). Over 2000 pages of typed text has not yet been transferred into a contemporary electronic form (not digitalized) which creates difficulties for potential comparative analyses with other corpuses. However, the works based on this corps and those that by default contain examples from empirical materials they are based on have remained. Although huge efforts were put forth into gathering, recording and transcribing empirical material of spoken Serbian (and Croatian) language, it is not sufficiently available to wider academic community today. Similar situation is with material collected and transcribed from conversations among adults. Today, that material is in a form of volumes, audio records and works written by cospeakers and students, created within the projects, or in a form of required student papers for Discourse analyses subject (graduate, master and doctorate works). The lesson we have learned from the experience of collecting, sorting and storing empirical material for analyses is that abrupt technology development affected wider availability of empirical language data in academic community. Certain individuals in the community have to make a timely transformation of collected empirical data into new technological forms. Otherwise, the research projects on language remain invisible for generations of researches to come. The continuity of empirical data is an important catalyst of academic community. This continuity is necessary for a valid diachronic study of adult and children language development because the use of spontaneous talk of diverse group within a society is one of direction parameters that a language takes in the course of its development. For example, we can follow the process of language democratization by investigating the use of individual talk or conversation segments, such as curses in public and private use (Svenka Savich and Veronika Mitro, 1996), different forms of addressing and greetings, or in short (unedited) newspaper articles (such as announcements or individual news in written media).

The data obtained from research on talk may contribute to removal of certain prejudices about the function and use of language. My doctorate dissertation exactly proved the extent to which interaction with an adult person is important for talk development of both

twins and each particular twin in a twin pair. For example, there is a general assessment in literature that twins are "others". Literature also says that they are not "good enough" when it comes to talk development. Namely, they lag in talk development because they feel no need for an adult person (since they always have a pair at hand, another twin who is almost on the same level of talk development), thus they seek to develop so-called "autonomous talk" that only they are able to understand. Contrary to all results of research on twins to that point, I concluded that, when exposed to sufficient presence of adults, twins have favourable talk development alike the only children. In fact, compared to only children they even advance more in domains that are important for getting independent from another twin pair. That domain is adoption of symbols that mark personality (personal name, possessive pronoun *I*). I concluded in that research that having one's identity is stronger than twin situation in a pair.

In fact, while working on my doctorate thesis I switched to researching language and talk characteristics, from those less asserted in society (children) to those who suffer two-folded discrimination, such as twins. They are doubly discriminated as children and also because they are born as twin pairs. It was a challenge to research the position of the latter because such data is usually missing since only "those others" are described in the science of language. Thus, at the end of 70s` I began research on talk development in children of migrating families. I visited several countries for the sake of a hand on experience. At one such visit, I met Tove Skutnab Kangas (Tove Skutnab Kangas, 1979) who would have an extent influence on our work on children mother tongue, from the very definition of phenomenon *the mother tongue*. That definition insists on ideological factor (politics) that affects the research of migrants` language, but also the overall education of their children (for example, at that time we were not able to research linguistic development of our migrated children without having an approval from local authorities).

At that time, several researches from Yugoslavian centres dealt with issues of the mother tongue among the migrant children in Germany, Sweden and France. Therefore, I suggested that children talk and language of our guest workers abroad be unified into a Yugoslavian project. The process of contracting, mediation and negotiations about such project had lasted for several years. During the late 80`s I traveled from one centre to another (the centres were located in Belgrade, Sarajevo, Ljubljana, Zagreb, Podgorica and Skopje), summoned research team, held small meetings in order that the problems would be understood more clearly. However, the break-up of Yugoslavia soon ensued, so the project did not come to realization as a Yugoslav project, but rather as a Slovenian project. The work on that project created research community that began a common project, which remained only in the form of a book that I edited and published as *Intercultural interaction as a form of education of migrant children* (Svenka Savich, 1989). The book was published right before the disintegration of Yugoslavia.

At that time, I collaborated with those who researched child language development of Roma children in Serbia. In the beginning, I was involved with kindergarten children, later with school age children and finally with Trifun Dimich at Romology school and other collaborators that worked on the project termed Psycholinguistic research. Alike children in migrant families and twins, Roma children are constantly exposed to situation of double

discrimination: for being children and because they belong to totally marginalized social groups.

I'll repeat this fact one more time: in order to survive and expand, the most crucial thing for an academic community is to educate new cadres. At the end of the 80s` I suggested to our Department that one semester subject *Analyses of discourse* should be introduced into curriculum. That was accepted, so I created the program of that course. Soon, based on teaching experience, I wrote a textbook entitled *Discourse analyses* (Svenka Savich, 1993). Next year, also on my suggestion, that subject became two-semester course for students in final years of studies. Analyses of discourse can be taught in various ways because it is an interdisciplinary field where language, culture and ideology intertwine. Focus on talk among parties in the context and in spontaneous conversational situations was my dominant approach. Conversation in that approach encompassed units larger than clauses (sentences). For that reason, I presented several theories in the textbook: Serl's speaking acts theory, Grace's model of conversational implicators, Sheglofov's method of analyzing telephone conversations, Chaiff's cognitive model, Bahtin's speaking genres and theory of being marked by Susane Flaishcmann. I also included the empirical material from Novi Sad corps of conversational language. Even after almost two decades, those theories represented basis for different works about discourse. This subject is taught today at Department for Serbian language and linguistic and at other departments at the Faculty of Philosophy in Novi Sad and other universities across Serbia. That means that interdisciplinary community is now being expanded through higher education system, which is a good sign that it would survive in the curriculum.

I wrote numerous papers about particular discourse types that up to that point did not have a recognizable importance in the literature on Serbian language (particles in telephone conversations, curses, jokes, various advertisements, expression of sympathies, apologies, etc.). Logically, I was also interested in discourse of written texts, primarily in various forms of scientific texts, particularly those related to power over language. Media language is also a large field. I have been working in that field together with several collaborators, one of whom was Dubravka Valich-Nedelykovich.

Briefly, I got involved into the international academic community and compared my own data with research results on other languages. I also focused on research of the use of language of individuals with less influence on society, but also of those who mightily rule over language. All that had significantly affected my pursuit of theoretical bases of language whose focus was the context and ideology (politics).

4. Politics and the academic community

In 1988 and 1989, in cooperation with Joana Baiby from Buffalo University, I created a draft project, formed a team of experienced researchers (the members of the team were Yasmina Grkovich, Dubravka Valich, Vesna Polovina and Vera Vasich among others,) and invited a group of female students to cooperate with us. In September 1991, a three year international Yugoslav-American project *Ways that discourse and typology reflect cognition:*

time, aspect and modality in Serbo-Croatian language was approved. I headed that project financed by the American-Yugoslav committee at the Ministry for science and technology (1990-1993, No JF-024). A couple of interdisciplinary fields coincided in the project: discourse and language typology. The project had a couple of objectives. First objective referred to new research data: we were supposed to establish the way that language marking of time and aspect in our language reflects the process of cognition of speaking representatives. The data from Serbian language was compared to that from other languages in Joanne Baiby's corpus. Back then, she had already systematized a database of categories for more than 80 different languages. The other objective was to form cadres for the scientific discipline called typology of language. Joanne Baiby was supposed to visit this country and work with younger researchers on the issues of language typology, which is a specialty that made her renowned in the international academic community. At that time, language typology was non-existent in this region. Unfortunately, out of three approved years of financing, we worked for only two years and published several excellent works. In 1993, the financing of the project was halt due to well-known political relations between Serbia and USA, when USA stopped scientific cooperation and Serbia found itself isolated from the world academic community. Thus, huge efforts that were put forth for several years remained invisible. By necessity, I turned over to other interdisciplinary topics of use of language.

The same political events in this (new) country also affected other activities that I formed and built on the Yugoslav level concerning the academic community (psycholinguistic). Psycholinguist conferences of researches from Ljubljana, Zagreb, Sarajevo, Belgrade, Skopje, Novi Sad and Podgorica were no longer held. Wars made impossible academic gatherings in those times of gradual disintegration and formation of new countries. There was a lack of mutual trust, which is so important in an academic community. There was also a lack of strength to raise ourselves above political events. I even fell into depression because of certain cases in that period. For example, the activity on building an international student network for interdisciplinary field of language research, which I began at the Interuniversity centre for postgraduate studies in Dubrovnik, stopped. Dubrovnik was bombed, the centre was greatly damaged and its library virtually demolished. Even when the Centre was renovated, political relations between the Republic of Croatia and this country were not opportune to continue such sort of activity. My efforts on being an agile person to create an international academic community of researchers and students in several cited examples did not give valid results in a given political context of wars, migrations and creation of new states. Briefly, the science largely depends on politics.

However, when everything seemed lost, due to Joanne Baiby and her colleagues in the international academic community of world typologists, Osten Dal from Stockholm was entrusted by European Union to start a project on language typology. He also invited me to join the research team considering my knowledge on discourse analyses. Besides Dal, the team was made of Jouko Linsted, Hano Tomola (Slavists from Finland), Martin Haspermann of Hannover, Ekhard Kenig of Berlin, to mention just a few of today's most renowned scientists from that field. European community was also supposed to adhere to the sanctions. That implied isolation of this country. However, the project head insisted

on exemption in my case, so that I could be involved in the project. I cite this personal example in order to illustrate how important it is to have a support of the international academic community which can guarantee for certain individuals. Therefore, from 1995 to 1999, I attended project meetings at different European university centres twice a year, where I exchanged experience with my colleagues. In that period, I wrote my works on time in narration, an issue that was not sufficiently investigated in the literature on Serbian language. In the last decade of the 20th century, precisely from 1990, many associations were formed in Serbia. Those were civic initiatives for faster formation of the civic society. Within such actions, I articulated more clearly the initiative that had been conceived earlier about gender sensitive language as an important element of overall action for equality of "others". At that time, I worked extensively on other issues related to women from various social and language groups.

Disintegration of common Serbo-Croatian language domain into individual languages also touches upon understanding of language identity, primarily that in public and official use. It was shown that newly-formed political elite in the newly-formed country (that successively changed its names from Yugoslavia to Serbia and Montenegro to Republic of Serbia) was well aware that language was the means to homogenize the nation and that it was important that state took care of the language as its mighty instrument. Thus, several frameworks for national language identity were already outlined in the Law on the official use of language (1991) and *The Serbian language orthography* (Mitar Peshikan, John Yerkovich and Mato Pizhuritza, 1993) and later on when the Committee for standardization of the Serbian language was formed in 1997. In those state documents there were no indications that a care would be taken about equality of "others" (there were just implicit terms about that), which also excluded gender sensitive talk and anything related to language discrimination. For that reason, certain civic associations and individuals in those associations had taken that task upon themselves. In recent times, that task has also been undertaken by ombudsman offices formed by the authorities in Belgrade and Novi Sad. We see that authorities are not sufficiently interested in language issues when it comes to equality of all citizens.

My interest into gender and language originated in the early 70s`, but it became more extensive after my return from specialization in Berkley (1980). That issue was actual not only at the Linguistic departments at Berkley and at the entire University, but everywhere in the USA. At that time it was a political issue. Actually, it was a part of overall intensive activity on gender equality, but also equality of other ethnic and marginalized groups.

Following theoretical enforcement at the courses dedicated to that issue, I slowly shifted my focus from the very language material (clause, morphemes, i.e., suffixes for female professions and titles) to that which is done in conversation in a given context. That topic again placed focus on the issue of corps upon which the conclusions are based, on my demand for a consistent use of female gender form for professions and titles held by women. No longer was spontaneous conversational language the focus of attention, but before all the domain of the official use of language in institutions of the societal system. The objective was to prove the thesis about existence of patriarchal matrix for visibility of women in public and official language and to explain the mechanism of ideologization of language

for the sake of patriarchization and conveying that matrix to new generations. The issue of standardizing gender equality in language is above all a political issue, not the issue of structure of Serbian language. As a finish of many years of collecting empirical material for the issue of gender and language, we published a book *Gender and language* (Svenka Savich et al. 2009). In the book, we presented a basic dictionary of professions and titles held by women in Serbian language and concrete rules on how to apply gender sensitive language in practice, primarily in official and public domain. Thus, the work on formation of a corps of research data was expanded once again because one of the objectives in the book was to show how empirical data notified in various dictionaries, media and conversational language prove the thesis that use of female gender forms for professions and titles held by women existed in earlier periods of Serbian language developments.

5. Conclusion

The term *academic community* implies several different forms of existence and work of those involved into academic disciplines at universities, scientific institutions and/or academies of sciences and arts. Creativity, work and promulgation of academic community is always in the hands of those involved in building an academic discipline, but it must be always kept in mind that such a building process is multidimensional. Besides scientific aspects, an important role in that process is played by different political and social upheavals (such as wars, migrations, disintegration of certain state communities, creation of new states, changes in societal system, etc.). Therefore it was my goal to show in this text the interdependence of several dimensions of a single process with a focus on individual contributions to the building of an academic community.

It is a common practice that a level of belonging to a certain scientific community is measured by popularity of certain works. Popularity of certain volumes ranks individuals within a community by giving them a status or a position of certain power in the society. That in turn means that popularity is also a societal parameter: heading scientific research projects, getting opportunities for specializations and prestige (e.g., scholarships, the highest university vocations, vocation of professor emeritus, membership in national and international academies of sciences and arts, etc.). That is why that is an important parameter. For example, it has been noted that from 1980 to the present my book *How Twins Learn to Talk*, was quoted more than 80 times. The parameter of popularity is not negligible. Based on that parameter one is able to evaluate *influence in wider community* (unfortunately, our libraries do not maintain data about this parameter).

Nevertheless, individual contributions to scientific communities are far richer than this criteria which renders invisible long-term process and circumstances in which quoted contribution has been realized. Thus through my personal example, I gave in this text more detailed explanations of other dimensions. Since there are many ways in which an academic community is being built and maintained, the information presented in this text should contribute to reevaluation of existing understanding and remind of many important components that secure existence of a community.

For example, a parameter for existence of an academic community could also be a degree of homogenization of members: *mutual trust is the foundation on which a community is built*, which also refers to an academic community. At first, our little academic community at the Institute was significantly homogenized, which is confirmed by the fact that after more than 40 years we have maintained our cooperation and academic support. Due to that we have achieved the first and important element which is the basis of an academic community: *trust and continual mutual cooperation among the members.*

Another parameter could be corps, or a sum of empirical data which is systematized for the sake of research in a given academic community and available for everyone's use because such data confirm the academic community among other disciplines. That is why a significant part of our efforts focused on formation of several important *corps* of material of conversational language: of children (in early childhood, from various conversational situations), adults (from various conversational situations) and women (particularly those situations which refer to links between gender and language).

The third important parameter for a good academic community is *building scientific cadre* since no academic community can exist without generational continuity. That huge pedagogical and mentor's work is the task of everyone in a community, the task I took with a big responsibility (compare Appendix 2: Mentor's work and Appendix 3: One-year research projects).

The fourth parameter can be individual innovations, such as creative affirmations of interdisciplinary language research projects in diverse subdisciplines (such as psycholinguistics, discourse analyses, gender studies, etc) in our case. A part of collective knowledge could be a factor which obstruct innovative actions in insufficiently flexible academic community. They are part of community's history.

Upon all these parameters, I was elected Professor Emeritus.

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Appendix 1: NOVI SAD CORPS OF CONVERSATIONAL SERBIAN LANGUAGE: 1975-2000.

Faculty of Philosophy, Department for Serbian language and linguistics

Project: Psycholinguistic research, led by Prof. Dr Svenka Savić

1. Talk of reporter from football match, S. Savić, 1997; V. Mitro, 1994.

2. Narrative discourse of adults: Film about pears, I. Antonić, 1983.

3. Narrative discourse of children: film about pears, V. Mitro, 1994.

4. Narrative discourse of adults: the book about frog, V. Mitro, 1995.

5. Narrative discourse of children: the book about frog, V. Mitro, 1995.

6. Narrative discourse of adolescents: the book about frog, V. Mitro, 1995.

7. Conversation between kindergarten teacher and children, M. Agić, 1983.

8. Conversation between a teacher and first grade child, M. Agić, 1983.

9. Telephone conversations, S. Šokica, 1986, V. Mitro, 1993, V. Vukša, 1994, V. Mitro, 1998.

10. Conversation between a physician and a patient, V. Mitro, 1993.

11. Service conversations, V. Mitro, 1991.

12. Conversation at the court, I. Antonić i V. Mitro, 1991.

13. Science lectures, I. Antonić, 1991.

14. Pannel discussion, I. Antonić, 1991.

15. Consultations between mentor and postgraduate students, I. Antonić i V. Mitro, 1991.

16. Interviews, V. Mitro i D. Valić-Nedeljković, 1991.

17. Talk between a producer and actor at a theatre, Ž. Tomić, 1994.

18. Everyday adult conversations, V. Mitro, 1995.

19. Everyday conversations between children and adults, V. Kukolj, V. Mitro i V. Vasić, 1995.

20. Everyday talks among children, V. Mitro i V. Vasić, 1995.

21. Everyday talks between adolescents, V. Mitro, 1995.

22. Curse words, V. Mitro i S. Savić, 1993.

23. A discourse in a kindergarten, M. Jocić i V. Vasić, 1980.

24. Religious discourses: homiletics, S. Savić, 1992.

25. Religious discourses: lectures, V. Mitro, 1995.

26. Religious discourses: interviews, D. Valić Nedeljković, 1992.

27. Discourses of written messages directed toward talk, V. Mitro, D. Valić Nedeljković i S. Savić, 1993.

28. Communication with pets, V. Mitro, 1993.

29. Jokes, V. Mitro, 1994.

30. Journals about talk development in children age 1,0 - 5,0, M. Jocić, S. Savić, V. Vasić, 1983. V. Gurjanov, 1992.

31. Written discourses, V. Mitro, 1994, 1995; S. Savić, 1994, I. Čurić, 1998.

32. Written discourses: fax and e-mail messages, V. Mitro, 1994.

33. Medium session talk, V. Mitro, 1995, R. Mirilov, 1998.

34. Official conversations, V. Mitro, 1995.

35. Political discourse, S. Savić i V. Mitro, 1995.

Appendix 2: MENTOR'S WORKS

MASTER THESIS
Faculty of Philosophy of the University in Novi Sad

Dragica Marković (Bećar) – Linguistic analyses of coined expressions in the works of Laza Kostić (1986)
Mara Agić – Children talk in transition from kindergarten to school age: syntax, semantic and pragmatic analyses (1986)
Ivana Antonić – Language as a means of convicting others (1993)[11]
Vesna Kukolj – Talk adaptations of adults toward children in a family setting, (1993)
Gordana Štasni – The relations of talk and gender in adolescent narratives, (1999)[12]
Danijela Vladić-David – Discourse characteristics in adolescent talk, (2000)
Dejan Pralica – Discourse characteristics of the epistles, (2005)[13]
Miloš Pankov – Ideological discourse: a sample of a political speech in Serbia, (2005)
Gordana Bursać – Characteristics of a scientific discourse: master thesis, (2006)[14]
Milica Bracić – Discourse analyses of gesture talks – discourse characteristics of addressing and greetings in Serbian language, (2007)

Asociation of Centres for Interdisciplinary, Multidisciplinary Studies and Research of the University of Novi Sad – Centre for gender equality
Milana Grbić – Analyses of discourses of gender stereotypes in elementary school textbooks, (2007)
Gordana Nikolić – Gender stereotypes in textbooks for in lower grade textbooks for children with slight mental insufficiencies, (2008)
Juliana Jovičić – Intercultural and gender approaches to German and Serbian literature in XIX century: Contribution of women writers Talfj and Mine Karadžić, (2011)

DOCTORAL DISSERTATIONS
Faculty of Philosophy in Novi Sad

Larisa Razdobutko – Nouns that signify human limbs: pragmatic analyses of meanings in the Serbian and Russian languages, (1994)[15]

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[11] Published in an excerpt entitled *Communication and convincing. Zbornik Matice srpske za filologiju i lingvistiku* (1994). 37: 41-50.

[12] Published under the title *Narration of adolescents. Školski čas srpskog jezika i književnosti*. Časopis za metodiku nastave srpskog jezika i književnosti. Broj 1. Beograd (2000).

[13] Published under the title *Religious and ideological discourse in epistles written by the Serbian Orthodox church. Religija i tolerancija* br. 5, Center for empirical research of religion, Novi Sad (2006).

[14] Published under the title *Characteristics of a scientific discourse.* Novi Sad: Bistrica, Filozofski fakultet (2007).

[15] Published under the title *Semantics and pragmatic somatism in Serbian and Russian languages.*

Klara Sentđerđi – The role of mother tongue in learning a foreign language as a professional language, (1994).
Dubravka Valic Nedeljković: Pragmatic characteristics of radio interviews (1997)[16]; Nadežda Silaški – Discourse of advertisement texts in lady's magazines that are published in Serbian and English languages: genre analyses, (2005)

Faculty of Philosophy, University of Nis

Svetozar Popović – The beginner's steps in learning a foreign language through the method of children as professors, (1995).

Appendix 3: **One-year projects directed by Prof. Dr. Svenka Savić**

– *Use of letters in private communication between teenagers in elementary and high schools in Serbia*, Faculty of Philosophy in Novi Sad, The Society for Serbo-Croatian language and literature in Vojvodina, under the auspices of the Institute for scientific work in Vojvodina, 1985-1986.
– *Psycholinguistic in Yugoslavia*, Faculty of Philosophy in Novi Sad, under the auspices of the Institute for scientific work in Vojvodina, 1987-1988.
– *Research on Roma language*, Faculty of Philosophy in Novi Sad, under the auspices of the Institute for scientific work in Vojvodina, 1988-1989.
– *Future tense in Serbo-Croatian language,* Faculty of Philosophy in Novi Sad, under the auspices of the Institute for scientific work in Vojvodina, 1989-1990.

Prevod Aleksandar Veljić

Beograd: Vedes (2003),
[16]   Published under the title *Radio interviews: pragmatic traits of interviews with church personalities that were aired over radio.* Beograd : Zadužbina Andrejević (1999).