

Burgenland Croatian (northern and central Burgenland, Austria)

1. The Burgenland Croatian corpus of spoken texts

The following description focuses on the data collected within the framework of the “EuroSlav 2010” project as presented in the PANGLOSS collection.

Here the Burgenland Croatian (BLC) corpus consists of twelve texts recorded in 2012 especially for our project. The informants are five women (born between 1932 and 1965) and four men (born between 1939 and 2001). One of them speaks the Central Burgenland Croatian dialect of Nikitsch (BLC *Filež*, three texts), the others refer to the varieties of various northern villages: Oslip (*Uzlop*, five texts), Trausdorf (*Trajštof*, two texts) and Wulkaprodersdorf (*Vulkaprodrštof*, two texts).

The BLC recordings are presented in the PANGLOSS collection at the following linguistic levels: orthography (phonological transcription in the broadest sense), phonetics, morphological and morphosyntactic glosses with English metalanguage, and French and German translations. In addition, there are audio files that can be listened to in individual sentences and as a whole.

For an explanation of the structure and the levels of analysis of the texts presented in the corpus, we refer to BREU & ADAMOU (2011), ADAMOU & BREU (2013) and BREU (2017). As for special reference to the Burgenland Croatian sub-corpus, see BREU et al. (in preparation), with comments and English translations of the analysed sentences.

2. General overview

Burgenland Croatian is a minority language on a Central-South-Slavic basis, which is still spoken in a number of villages in the Austrian Burgenland, western Hungary and western Slovakia.

Information on the total extent of immigration and the historical distribution (peoples’ borders, language areas) finds, in particular, in BREU (1970). Tables XIII and XIV in the appendix of this book provide a simplified overview of the decline in settlement areas from 1600 to 1930. On the state of research into the language and history of the Burgenland Croats at that time, cf. the introduction in the classic work by NEWEKLOWSKY (1978: 19–28), who himself contributed significantly to the knowledge of this multiply structured micro-language. KO-SCHAT (1978) presents a monographic description of the local northern BLC dialect of Baumgarten (*Pajngrt*) and beyond with a helpful dictionary for understanding dialectal texts, including those in the PANGLOSS corpus.

Summaries of the historical and more recent linguistic situation can be found in BENČIĆ (1998a), TORNOW (2002), BREU (2014), KINDA-BERLAKOVICH (2019) and HOUTZAGERS (2020). On actual language use in the Burgenland Croatian enclaves, cf. the detailed (though no longer quite up-to-date) sociolinguistic field research in JODLBAUER & TYROLLER (1986), and SZUCSICH (2000: 861–874), including “socio-economic, socio-cultural and socio-psychological” aspects.

The collection of essays by NEWEKLOWSKY (2010) deals with a variety of aspects of the peculiarities, usage and distribution of Burgenland Croatian in the past and present. The contact-induced characteristics of BLC in comparison with Carinthian Slovene in Austria and the Sorbian languages in Germany on the basis of specific grammatical phenomena are dealt with in BAYER (2006).

3. Position, glottonym, immigration

3.1 Geographic position of the Burgenland Croatian linguistic area

Figure 1 shows the geographical position of the four villages west and south of Lake Neusiedl (Hungarian *Fertő tó*), from which the PANGLOSS texts originate. They are situated in the centre of a larger linguistic area, corresponding more or less to the yellow rectangle on the smaller map.

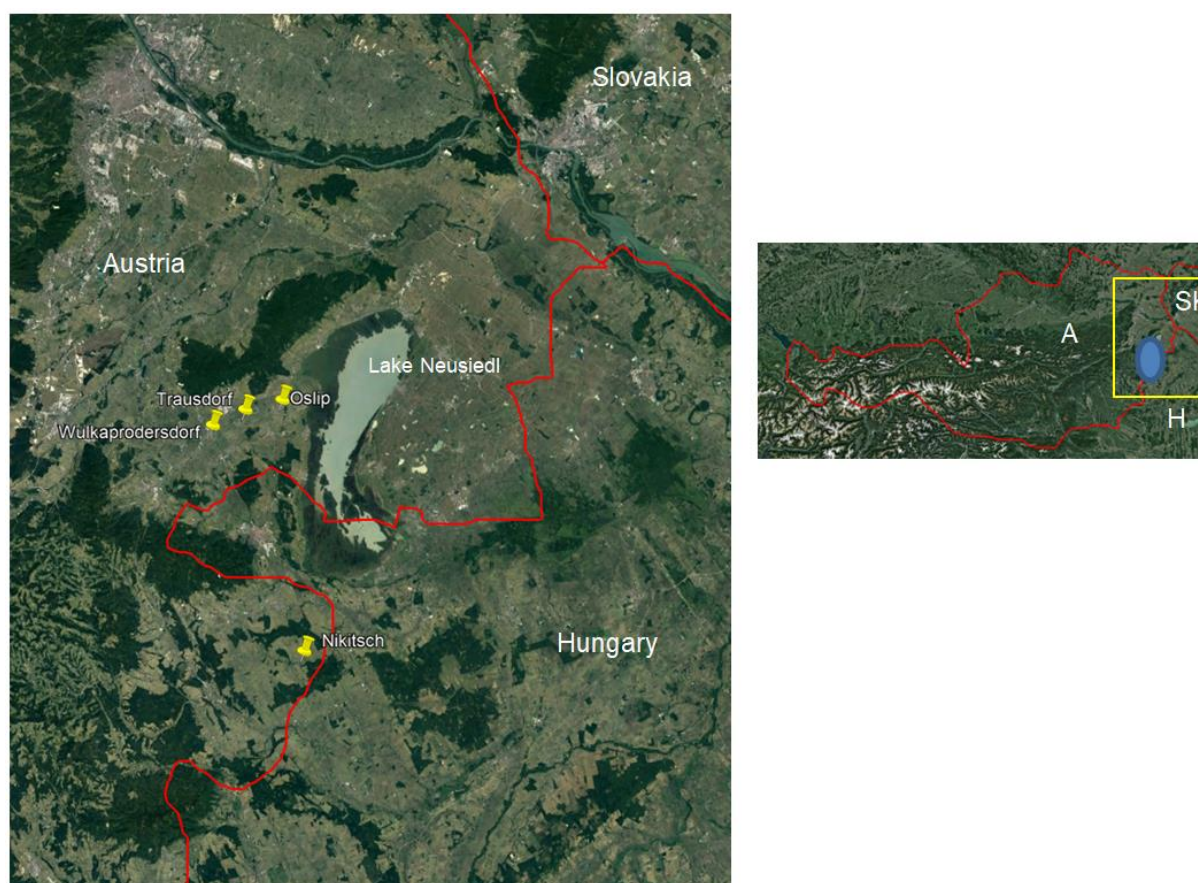


Figure 1: The Burgenland Croatian villages in the corpus (Google Earth)

3.2 Internal structure and glottonym

All in all, the Burgenland Croatian settlement area, which consists of several scattered linguistic islands, lies in the east of Austria (today practically exclusively within the province that gave it its name) and in the neighbouring areas of Slovakia and Hungary. For the total extent of the villages in which Burgenland Croatian is still spoken today, including the historical settlements, see NEWEKLOWSKY (1978: 346–347) and HOUTZAGERS (2008: 294) with relevant maps.

The Burgenland Croatian dialects in Austria are divided into a large area to the west and north of Lake Neusiedl, an area to the south of this Lake in central Burgenland, separated from the northern enclaves by the Hungarian territory around Ödenburg (*Sopron*), and the elongated and further subdivided area of southern Burgenland.

The Burgenland Croats brought the glottonym *hrvatski* ‘Croatian’ and the ethnonym *Hrvat* ‘Croat’ with them from their historical area of origin, in contrast, for example, to the Molise Slavs in southern Italy, coming from the Dalmatian hinterland outside historic Croatia; cf. the explanations referring to the *Na-Našu* corpora in the PANGLOSS collection, as well as the detailed comments on these texts in BREU (2017). To distinguish themselves from the Croats in the mother country, they refer to themselves more precisely as *gradišćanski Hrvati*, i.e. precisely “Burgenland Croats”, according to their territorial affiliation to *Gradišće* ‘Burgenland’.

3.3 Classification and linguistic affiliation, online resources

Up to now, Burgenland Croatian does not yet have its own ISO code, but is counted as a Croatian dialect. In this respect, the ISO code *hrv* also applies to this minority language. There are, however efforts for a code *hrv-bur*, which would take into account the peculiarities of the BLC dialects with their own developments, especially due to language contact.

<https://www.ethnologue.com/language/HRV>

<http://www.endangeredlanguages.com/lang/1230>

Genetically, BLC originates from the Serbo-Croatian language continuum, mainly on a Čakavian basis, with more or less strong Štokavian and Kajkavian influences, depending on the region they are spoken. In this respect, it belongs to the western group of Central South Slavic, or, if one assumes a division of South Slavic into only two subgroups, to the southern (Serbo-Croatian) subgroup of Western South Slavic, just like the Croatian, Serbian, Bosnian and Montenegrin standards: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Slavic-languages#ref74891>

Other relevant links:

Wikipedia (27/01/2021)

https://hr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gradišćanskohrvatski_jezik

Scientific Institute of the Burgenland Croats (27/01/2021)

<http://www.zigh.at/index.php?id=6&L=0>

Croatian Cultural Association in the Burgenland (27/01/2021)

<http://www.hkd.at/>

3.4 History of language contacts

Emigration from the original settlement areas took place in the 16th century. The fact that Burgenland, which at that time still belonged entirely to the Hungarian part of the Empire, was chosen as a destination for resettlement was due in large part to the Hungarian magnates, who often owned land in both the old and the new homeland, in addition to their geographical proximity.

At the time of the arrival of the new Croatian settlers, the receiving areas were sparsely populated, but by no means deserted, so that language contact can be expected from the very beginning, with German as the main *lingua franca* on the one hand, but also with Hungarian as the state language on the other (BREU 1970). The influence of German in its high-level form as well as its regional varieties has increased considerably since the incorporation of Burgenland into Austria in 1921 (Treaty of Trianon).

3.5 Origin and historical distribution of the Burgenland Croats

In the past, Burgenland Croatian was much more widespread than it is today. While it is now spoken not only in Burgenland proper but also in border areas of Hungary and Slovakia, Croatian-speaking settlements once existed in Moravia and Lower Austria, too; cf. BREU (1970), and, in particular, also Map IV appended to the volume of PALKOVITS (1974).

The emigration of the ancestors of today's Burgenland Croats occurred as a reaction to the Ottoman-Turkish expansion in the Western Balkans. As shown in Figure 2, the settlers mainly originated from central Croatia, south-west Slavonia and north-west Bosnia in the vicinity of the *Sava*, *Kupa*, and *Una* rivers, where Kajkavian, Čakavian and Štokavian dialects met. For more detailed sketches see NEWEKLOWSKY (1978: 281) and HOUTZAGERS (2008: 296).

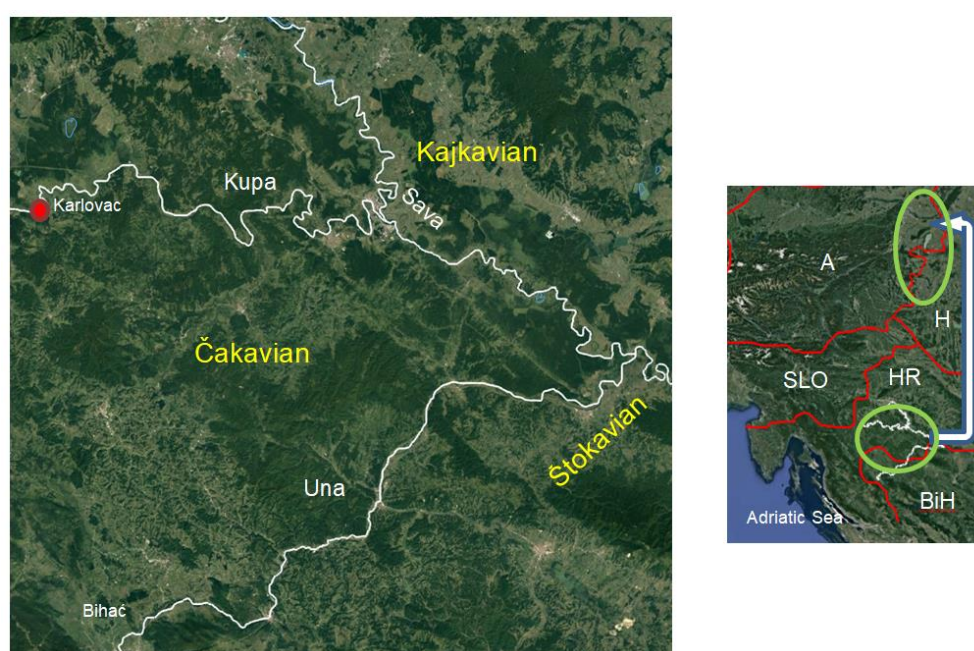


Figure 2: The area of origin of the Burgenland Croats (Google Earth)

On the small secondary map in figure 2 the present-day state borders have been added, as well as the relative localisation of the old and the new homeland.

4. Dialectal classification in the Serbo-Croatian continuum

NEWKLOWSKY (1978: 266–280) and HOUTZAGERS (2008: 296–300) assume like IVIĆ (1961/62) that today's isoglosses are largely pre-migratory. So, the dialectal differentiations of Burgenland Croatian probably go back for the most part to the areas of emigration.

The three villages of the *Poljanci* group in our corpus, located west of Lake Neusiedl, may originate from an area relatively far to the west between *Karlovac* and *Bihać*. Nikitsch, located in central Burgenland, belongs to the *Dolinci* group, settling somewhat further east in the area of origin.

The *Haci* group located north of the lake, who in the old homeland probably settled in close proximity to the *Poljanci*, is not represented in our corpus. The same is true for the *Southern Čakavians*, the *Štoji* and the *Vlahi*, living in southern Burgenland and in adjoining Hungary. All of them inhabited the southernmost territories already in the original area, on either side of the *Una* river. Those coming originally from east of the *Sava* and possibly from north of the *Kupa* are Kajkavians. They now live in two villages on the Hungarian southern shore of Lake Neusiedl. In contrast, all other Burgenland Croatian dialects, including those in the corpus, are Čakavian, with the exception of the southernmost ones, showing more or less pronounced Štokavian features.

The term “Čakavian” refers, among other things, to the use of the interrogative pronoun *ča* ‘what’. It contrasts with the use of *što* in this meaning in the southern Burgenland (and in the Serbo-Croatian standard languages in general) and with *kaj* in the two abovementioned Kajkavian dialects in Hungary; see NEWKLOWSKY (1978: 377, map 1). The term ‘Ikavian-Ekavian’ as an additional feature of our Čakavian texts refers to the inconsistent development of Proto-Slavic **ě > i*, for instance in BLC *dite* ‘child’ < **děte* vs. **ě > e*, e.g. *leto* ‘year’ < **lēto*. This contrasts with the purely Ikavian dialects of southern Burgenland (*dite*, *lito*) and also the purely Ekavian characteristics in the two Kajkavian dialects in Hungary (*dete*, *leto*); cf. NEWKLOWSKY (1978: 378, map 2).

5. Legal and demographic situation, number of speakers

The rights of the Burgenland Croatian and other linguistic minorities were laid down in the Austrian State Treaty of 1955 (Article 7). An expansion of cultural and educational opportunities has taken place since the end of the 1970s, for example by means of the Ethnic Groups Act of 1976 (amended in 2011), the establishment of a Croatian editorial office in the Burgenland regional studio of the Austrian Broadcasting Corporation ORF in 1979, and television broadcasts since 1989.

In addition, (Burgenland) Croatian was introduced as an official language of education and schooling, which led among other things, to the opening of the

bilingual *Bundesgymnasium* (Federal Grammar School) in Oberwart in Central Burgenland in 1992, and in 1994 the Minority School Act passed; cf. HÄNEL et al. (1997), KINDA-BERLAKOVICH (2005), and *Vorteil Vielfalt* (2004). Since 2000, bilingual place-name signs may be erected, as a means of recognition of the Burgenland Croatian municipalities. In the four villages considered in the PANGLOSS corpus, (Burgenland) Croatian is permitted as an official language and it is also the official liturgical language of the Catholic Church.

Despite such possibilities of identification, the number of speakers of Burgenland Croatian has decreased considerably in recent decades. From the Austrian censuses 1923–2011, an approximate overview of the development of the population and the ethnic group affiliation (BL-Croats) in the Burgenland Croatian villages can be obtained; cf. diagram 1. It must be taken into account, however, that the data in question do not necessarily correspond to the real linguistic situation, since one has to rely on the answers of the interviewees, which for political and other reasons often led to deviating, mostly lower figures. Despite the question on the colloquial or mother tongue in the censuses up to 2001, a statement about the vitality of Burgenland Croatian can only be made for the older period, since the actual use of the language in the Burgenland Croatian ethnic group had declined considerably in the meantime, see below.¹

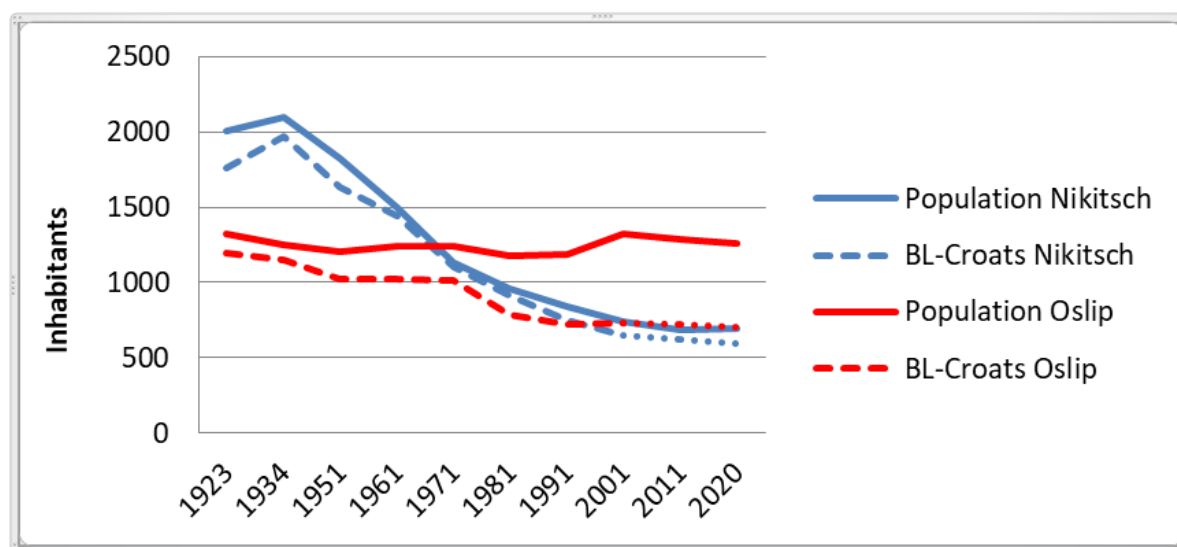


Diagram 1: Demographic development in Nikitsch and Oslip

This diagram, based, in principle, on the censuses and other data from *Statistik Austria*, shows the demographic development of the Central-Burgenland village of Nikitsch (marked in blue) with respect to the total population and the affilia-

¹ On the problem of the question on the “colloquial language” in the censuses and on the legal status of BLC cf. VEITER (1985), which may, however, be considered as partially outdated due to recent more positive regulations. With respect to the negative attitude of individual young Burgenland Croats to their language of origin, see for example SZUCSICH (2000: 872–873); in contrast, older speakers continue to be emotionally attached to it.

tion of part of it to the Burgenland Croats (dashed).² It should be kept in mind that before 2001 the official censuses did not distinguish between “Croatian” and “Burgenland Croatian”. In this respect, the figures collected earlier may be somewhat too high.

Since the “colloquial language” has no longer been surveyed since the 2011 census, the ethnicity for 2011 and 2020 in this diagram was interpolated (dotted) on the basis of the total population figure surveyed and is thus fictitious. The conspicuous decline since the Second World War is largely due to emigration, mostly to Austria’s capital Vienna, less so to Eisenstadt, the capital of Burgenland, and no longer to overseas emigration as was the case in the interwar period. The migration to Vienna has resulted in a relatively large number of Burgenland Croats living there today.

The municipality of Oslip was used for comparison (marked in red); see also *Poljanci* (2008: 28–29). Here in northern Burgenland, the total population is hardly declining, but this is mainly due to German-speaking immigrants, recognisable from the greatly reduced proportion of Burgenland Croats since the 1970s. The situation in the two villages of Trausdorf and Wulkaprodersdorf, also present in the corpus, is similar to that in Oslip, even with a significant increase in the total population. Although the relative proportion of Burgenland Croats remains high in Nikitsch in Central Burgenland, their absolute number has decreased significantly due to the strong general population decline.

While it can be assumed for earlier times that the commitment to the (Burgenland) Croatian ethnic group entailed the use of Burgenland Croatian, this is no longer true for more recent times, as can be seen from observations on the spot and the reports of older speakers. Especially among schoolchildren and younger adults, language loyalty is declining sharply in favour of the German majority language in its regional and supra-regional varieties. All data on the actual number of speakers can therefore only be impressionistic estimates. For example, the total number of 45,000–50,000 “speakers” (within and outside Burgenland proper) estimated in SZUCSICH (2000: 874) was probably at the upper end even then, compared to 19,460 in the 1991 census for Burgenland and 24,500 in the 1993 micro-census.³

² See also the compilations in *Historisches Ortslexikon Burgenland* and VUKOVIĆ (2006: 267. In Diagram 1 the figures for (the village of) Nikitsch are conspicuously lower than in the more recent censuses based on municipalities (for example for 2001: 1511 inhabitants with a share of Burgenland Croats of 88.9%), because the latter also include the villages of Kroatisch Minihof and Kroatisch Geresdorf, belonging to the municipality of Nikitsch, too.

³ Cf. also the assessment of official censuses by the HKD (*Hrvatsko kulturno društvo u Gradišću* = Croatian Cultural Association in Burgenland), translated: “In 1991, according to official statistics, there were 19,460 people in Burgenland who stated Croatian as their mother tongue or used Croatian as a colloquial language. In Vienna this number was around 6,300. According to church surveys, about 35,000 people in Burgenland want to attend Sunday mass in Croatian, while the Croatian Cultural Association estimates that at least 15,000 Burgenland Croats live in Vienna. This discrepancy illustrates very well the problem of official surveys.” https://www.hkd.at/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=71&Itemid=246&lang=de (Accessed 27/01/2021)

On the other hand, the sheer number of potential speakers says nothing about the actual use of the minority language. Almost only older people still really use it as an everyday language.⁴ On the reasons for the drastic decline in language loyalty among Burgenland Croats, mainly on an economic and legal basis, cf. for example ILLEDITS (2015). As of today, BLC as the vernacular of the Slavic villages in Burgenland concerned is obviously an endangered language variety. The Unesco Language Encyclopaedia classifies it as “definitely endangered” (MORSELEY 2010: 24).

6. Linguistic characteristics of Burgenland Croatian

It should be emphasised once again that our collection of texts as well as their grammatical description refer exclusively to the Burgenland Croatian dialects of Nikitsch in central Burgenland (*Dolinci*) and to Oslip, Trausdorf and Wulkaprodersdorf in northern Burgenland (*Poljanci*).

6.1 Lexical borrowings and borrowing statistics

The older loanword stratum of Burgenland Croatian originates from both Hungarian and German. In contrast, the more recent layer of loanwords since the incorporation of Burgenland into Austria has had practically only varieties of German as their source of borrowing. Whereas originally it was mainly everyday vocabulary that was borrowed, in more recent times borrowings increasingly concern the modern world of employment and its techniques, while older terms partly fall into disuse or are covered up by new borrowings.⁵ In the PANGLOSS corpus, borrowings can be recognised very easily, as they are italicised at the phonetic level and their German translation (usually the corresponding source word) is printed between asterisks.

As for German nouns, their integration occurs frequently, though not consistently, according to their word-final sound, which in the case of word-final consonants (in the nominative case) usually results in masculines, e.g. in the corpus Germ. *Frosch* ‘frog’ M → BLC *fruoš* M versus *Flasche* ‘bottle’ F → *fluoša* F, but, as an exception, *Zettel* ‘slip of paper’ M → *ciedulja* F. On the other hand, a neuter like *Auto* ‘car’ N → *auto* M also appears as a masculine. The declension of borrowed nouns sometimes shows special stem alternations, cf. *autorom* INS.SG.M (NOM *auto*) or *teha* GEN.SG.M, NOM *te* ← *Tee* ‘tea’.

In verbs, the German infinitive ending *-en* is mostly replaced by *-at*, more rarely by *-it* e.g. *brauchen* ‘to need’ → *prauhat* vs. *treffen* ‘to meet’ → *(s)treffit*.

⁴ Cf. the description of the change in language use outside and inside the family in the text “Le croate du Burgenland et l’école” in the Oslip sub-corpus, where the speaker expresses her hope that the linguistic situation would improve again with the adolescence of the younger generation.

⁵ On the stratification of the BLC vocabulary, cf. for example NEWEKLOWSKY (1978: 258–263), TORNOW (1992: 250–252), SZUCSICH (2000: 860–861), PAWISCHITZ (2014: 63), etc.

As a secondary effect, the traditional German integration suffix *-ier* [ir], interpreted as part of the stem, entered BLC, e.g. *filtrieren* ‘to filter’ → *filtrirat*.

The Burgenland Croatian corpus has an average of 6.25% foreign words (tokens) in the four villages. Among the loanwords proper, i.e. without considering code-switching, it is 4.83%. The proportion of borrowed nouns is relatively high at 25.3%.⁶ For all three frequencies, however, the foreign share is considerably behind the PANGLOSS data for the Molise Slavic (*Na-Našu*) corpus, which averages 24.8% for foreign elements overall, 22.2% for loanwords and 45.7% for nouns; cf. BREU (2017: 71). In the PANGLOSS sub-corpus for Upper Sorbian, its values sum up to 4% both for foreign elements on the whole and loanwords and to 14.1% for nouns. In a comparison of all varieties in the “EuroSlav 2010” project, which also includes *Nashta* (Balkan Slavic in Greece), Burgenland Croatian occupies a middle position; cf. ADAMOU et al. (2016: 526–539) with detailed statistics according to various factors, based on only insignificantly different primary data.

As far as the Burgenland Croatian sub-corpora are concerned, the large variation between 2.0% of foreign elements for Trausdorf and 12.5% in nearby Wulkaprodersdorf (Oslip 4.6%, Nikitsch 7.7%) is more due to the respective text types and individual narration strategies than to real differences between the individual dialects.

6.2 Phonetics und Phonology

All our texts from central and northern Burgenland originate from Ikavian-Ekavian Čakavian dialects with partial accent retraction. The indication of their, in principle, Čakavian tonal accent was omitted in the phonetic transcription, due to considerable uncertainties.

The three northern dialects in our selection (Oslip, Trausdorf, Wulkaprodersdorf) are by and large uniform, the Central Burgenland dialect of Nikitsch, on the other hand, shows some deviations, such as the conservative pronunciation of the diphthong /uo/, which in the north is realised as a lowered [o̯a] in most contexts. As for the consonants, the phonetic realisation of *ć* as a palatal plosive [c] is conspicuous in all dialects, at least, as far as it does not coincide with *č* [tʃ], which is observed in the north, especially in Wulkaprodersdorf.

In contrast to Upper Sorbian, which is also under German influence, the historically rounded front vowels *ö* and *ü* play a subordinate role in BLC, since they have been de-labialised in the regional pronunciation of German, except before (historical) *l*, e.g. *sötsom* ‘strange’ (standard Germ. *seltsam*) or *küšronk* ‘refrigerator’ (*Kühlschrank*), and in borrowings from standard German (NEWKLOWSKY 1978: 28–29, SZUCSICH 2000: 860).

⁶ In this respect, the assumption that borrowing in BLC takes place to a particularly high degree in the domain of uninflected parts of speech (sentence adverbials, particles), see, for example SZUCSICH (2000: 860), must be put into perspective. However, it remains undisputed that borrowings in these domains close to grammar are particularly significant for the intensity of language contact.

Syllabic /r/ is largely preserved, although occasional realisation as [ər] can be noted, especially in Nikitsch. The replacement of dental [r] with a uvular [ʁ] by one of the Oslip speakers can probably be interpreted as an individualism.

6.3 Morphology and syntax (conservative characteristics)

The influence of the contact languages is noticeable not only in the vocabulary but also in grammar. In comparison with Molise Slavic in southern Italy, however, a high proportion of conservative structures is evident, which is due to the fact that the systems of the German contact language differ less from Slavic than the Romance ones. This applies in particular to the nominal categories. As an example, in BLC, in contrast to Molise Slavic, the neuter in nouns remained intact in the contact situation without significant reductions. The same is true for the synthetic type of comparison of adjectives and adverbs.

The formal differentiation in German – but not in Italian – between the static localisation at a place (LOC) and the movement towards a place (ACC) is certainly responsible for the preservation of the case opposition of locative vs. accusative in BLC, just as in Upper Sorbian and in contrast to Molise Slavic. A parallel development of all three minority languages can be seen in the obligatory connection of the agentive instrumental with a preposition and thus the loss of the contrast with the comitative instrumental.

Among the characteristics of BLC noun morphology, the dominant ending *-i* in the masculine and neutral LOC.SG may be named, compared with the less frequent (and standard-Croatian) ending *-u*, e.g. *va lozi* M ‘in the forest’, *na jednon drivi* N ‘on a tree’ (less frequently *na jednom laptu* M ‘in a field’). The same applies to *m*-less forms in INS.SG.F, such as *ziz dušu* ‘with the soul’ (Oslip), in contrast to *pred stieljom* ‘in front of the bed’ (Nikitsch). They go both back to inherited, regional structures just like the deviations from standard Croatian in the plural. In particular, the use of the ending *ou* (*-ov*) in the genitive, such as *orihou* ‘Nuß’ GEN.PL.M, even in feminines like *piet kravou* ‘five cows’ GEN.PL.F, or zero ending as in *par danØ* ‘a couple of days’ GEN.PL.M, and correspondingly the absence of the ending *-ā*, newly formed in the standard Štokavian languages only after the emigration, cf. standard Croatian *orahā*, *kravā*, *danā*. The preservation of the differentiation of the case endings of dative, instrumental and locative in the plural is also very characteristic, while standard Croatian shows complete syncretism here, for example *pauzama* ‘pause’ DAT=INS=LOC.PL.F.⁷

As for the declension category, in contrast to Molise Slavic (BREU 2017: 22–34), gender inflection has not developed in Burgenland Croatian, insofar as gender and declension class still remain largely separate. So, the feminines still belong to two declensions (*a*- and *i*-), just like the masculines (*o*- and *a*-), while, on the other hand, the *o*-declension contains both masculines and neuters.

⁷ In the corpus, these plural cases are very rarely attested, for example *(va) pauza* LOC.PL.F < **pausah* ‘(in the) pauses’. For the assumed contrasting forms *pauzam* DAT.PL.F and *pauzami* INS.PL.F cf. the paradigms in KOSCHAT (1978: 90–91).

In the verb system, the formation of the future tense is conservative, in contrast to Molise Slavic, which, though equally preserving the analytic construction with the auxiliary *tit* ‘to want’ + INF, uses it in a modal opposition with the de-obligative future, developed on a Romance basis (BREU 2017: 57).

Some other peculiarities can also be assigned to the areas of origin, such as the very frequent *d*-extension in verb forms like *gliedadu* PRS.3PL ‘to look’ and, especially in Nikitsch, a word final *-n* instead of historical *-m*, cf. the verb form *vidin* PRS.1SG ‘to see’ or the case form *fruošuoŋ* INS.SG.M ‘frog’.

In the verb system, the high frequency of the perfective present in iterative/habitual function, also in the main clause, is striking in comparison with standard Croatian. The same is true for the expression of habituality by means of modal periphrases in the preterite, in our corpus with *tit* ‘want’ as an auxiliary + *l*-participle, e.g. *mladina je tila pomoć* ‘the youth used to help’. For this and many other examples, cf. especially the texts from Trausdorf, which refer to traditional agriculture. In southern Burgenland, which is not included in our texts, the same construction occurs with the modal verb ‘can’. Both possibilities of expressing habituality, deviating from standard Croatian, probably go back to the area of emigration and can thus be regarded as traditional features of Čakavian dialects (VULIĆ 2014), which possibly became even more widespread after immigration.

The expression of habitual actions belongs to the functional-semantic field of actionality with the grammatical category of aspect (perfective vs. imperfective) in its core. In Slavic, the latter is traditionally expressed by couples of lexically identical verbs, formally distinguished by prefixes and suffixes, more rarely by suppletion. As is evident from the corpus, these formation types have been preserved in BLC, too, just like the exclusive expression of progressive states of affairs by means of the imperfective aspect. This contrasts with the Upper Sorbian colloquial language, equally influenced by German.⁸ The tendencies towards a decline of the aspect category especially among younger speakers, indicated in PAWISCHITZ (2014), need to be investigated in more detail. For an overall description of the BLC aspect system see BERGHAUS (in preparation).

In the domain of BLC syntax, the possibility of positioning clitics also sentence-initially, contrasting with the standard-Croatian Wackernagel rule (2nd position in the sentence), equally seems to go back, in principle, to the Čakavian emigration areas.

6.4 Contact-induced change in Burgenland Croatian grammar

In the category of definiteness, there is a contact-induced innovation in Burgenland Croatian, namely the increasing formation of an indefinite article by means of an adaptation of the Slavic semantic structure to the German model. More precisely, the polysemy of German *ein* ‘one’, which serves not only as a number

⁸ On the characteristic differences in the development of the opposition of perfectivity in Burgenland Croatian, Molise Slavic and Upper Sorbian, cf. for example BREU et al. (2016).

but also as an article, was transferred to BLC *jedan*, e.g. *na jednon drivi* ‘on a tree’, *na jedan velik kamen* ‘on a big stone’. It still remains to be examined when an indefinite article is actually used and when it is only optional or even excluded. In any case, in BLC it has not reached the high degree of grammaticalisation as in colloquial Upper Sorbian under German and in Molise Slavic under Italian influence; cf. BAYER (2006: 137, 164), BREU (2012).

As for the development of a definite article (from demonstratives), again only first steps have been recorded; cf. HADROVICS (1974: 280), NEWEKLOVSKY (1978: 43), and especially BAYER (2006: 135–143), who points out dialectal differences. So, this “article” in *statu nascendi* has not yet acquired the degree of grammaticalisation of the pragmatic definite article in colloquial Upper Sorbian. Nevertheless, the article-like use of demonstratives is more frequent in Burgenland Croatian than in Molise Slavic, where the complete separation of the definite article from demonstratives in Italian provides precisely a counter model against the formation of the definite article via the adaptation of the semantic structure (BREU 2012: 301–309).

The greater conservatism of BLC with regard to the development of the category of definiteness in comparison with colloquial Upper Sorbian, in spite of a similar pressure of adaptation exerted by the German contact language, may simply be due to the everlasting contact with Croatian varieties since the times of emigration, at least in the case of the indefinite article. In the case of the definite article, the traditional differentiation between definite and indefinite adjectives (attributes) may also play a role. The extent, however, to which this opposition is still relevant today, requires further research.

As already mentioned, there seems to have been hardly any contact-conditioned change in the morphological differentiations (in the narrower sense) of the BLC verb system. The respective characteristics are inherited throughout. This is probably also true for the grammatical categories, including the loss of the synthetic preterite forms of imperfect and aorist. It is probably due to a general tendency found throughout in North-Slavic and in Slovenian, as well as in the northern dialects of the Serbo-Croatian continuum. The pressure to adapt, emanating from German, can at most have had a supporting effect here.

The contrasting preservation of the imperfect in Molise Slavic can, however, clearly be traced back to Romance influence, combined with its emigration zone, located somewhat further south and possibly closer to the coast than the BLC one. The more complete dominance of the analytical *l*-perfect to the detriment of the synthetic past tense in BLC compared with some remaining imperfects in colloquial Upper Sorbian (not to mention standard Upper Sorbian with its clear preservation of imperfect and aorist) can probably be attributed to regional differences within the German contact language itself (SCHOLZE 2008: 213–214). Actually, Upper Sorbian, located much further north, had contact with varieties of German in which a synthetic preterite still exists, while the Bavarian dialect varieties in Austria and beyond, including the Burgenland-German vernacular and the Viennese colloquial language, only use the analytical perfect.

Across all texts, there is a dominance of preverbs over prefixes in the expression of spatial relations by means of “particle verbs”. These constructions are a typical result of language contact with German (earlier also with Hungarian), normally calqued, but in part also with borrowed preverbs, just like in the Sorbian languages or in Carinthian Slovene; cf. TORNOW (1992: 248–249), SZUCSICH (2000: 856–860), BAYER (2006: 171–245).⁹

Let us have a look at some details in the frog story (*L’histoire de la grenouille*) in the Nikitsch sub-corpus as an example. We find here, for instance, *nutr glieda* ‘looks inside’ s2 (cf. standard Croatian *zagledati* ‘to look inside’) and *plazni zis stakla van* ‘climbs out of the jar’ s4, *duojde van* ‘comes out’ s15. Another case is *van spas* ‘fall out (downwards)’ s7, where both the preverb *van* ‘out’ and the prefix *s-* ‘down’ show up. In *je spal s driva duoli* ‘he fell down from the tree’ s16 the adverb (preverb, particle) *duoli* ‘downward’ is even used pleonastically with the prefix (and preposition) *s-*, resulting in a relatively complex “particle verb” *spas duoli* ‘to fall down’.

In addition, it must be considered that the perfective verb *spas* ‘fall down’, due to the redundant meaning ‘down’ of the prefix *s-* in interaction with the meaning ‘fall (down)’ of the simplex verb, could be the aspectual partner of an imperfective simplex with the same lexical meaning. In other words, on the linguistic surface, an aspectual pair *pas/spas* ‘fall (down)’ of the prefix type could result. However, the simplex *pas(ti)* already is a perfective verb, to which, according to BENCSICS et al. (1991), an imperfective *padat(i)* corresponds, not present in our texts. Actually, a prefixed (and suffixed) imperfective *spadat* is attested in the corpus (for Osip), so that we may assume an aspectual pair *spas/spadat* of the suffix type, with the redundant prefix *s-* occurring in both verbs of which the lexeme ‘fall (down)’ consists. We thus could claim the following diachronic sequence of the aspectual pair formation: *pasti* PFV : *padati* IPFV => *spasti* PFV (pleonastic lexical prefixation of the perfective) => *spadati* IPFV (suffixation with consonant alternation).

Examples with the borrowed Bavarian directional adverb *nochi* ‘after’ are attested in the Osip frog story, e.g. in s23: *su kucku bižali nohi* ‘they ran after the dog’.

In the domain of word order NEWEKLOWSKY (1978: 132) sees far-reaching correspondence between BLC and the Serbo-Croatian standards. On the other hand, a probably conservative Čakavian-based position of clitics, deviating from the Croatian standard, has already been pointed out above. In any case, in spite

⁹ Terminology in this area is relatively problematic. In German, where formations like *hineingehen* ‘to enter, go into’ are usually written as single compound words, with the preverb preceding the simplex, at least in the infinitive and in the participles (*hineingegangen*), their attribution to verb formation seems to be justified, even if most finite forms of the simplex are separated from the adverb (or particle) postponed to it, e.g. *geht hinein* PRS.3SG. The partial anteposition of the adverbial constituent justifies the term „preverb“ for it in Burgenland Croatian, too, by analogy with the „prefixes“ derived from prepositions. Here, the resulting morphosyntactic constructions, the so-called „particle verbs“, can, however, hardly be assigned to morphology in the narrower sense.

of all possibly existing conservatism, the phenomenon of the sentence bracket, resulting from the sentence final position of the *l*-participle in the perfect or of the infinitive in modal constructions seems to go back to German interference, in spite of being used more rarely than in Upper Sorbian (BAYER 2006: 285–286, PAWISCHITZ 2014: 64).

7 Written and literary use of Burgenland Croatian

7.1 The Question of a Burgenland Croatian standard language

The Burgenland Croats had their own written language already in the 18th/19th century, in parts even going back to the 16th century, with a varying, predominantly Hungarian orthography. It was mainly characterised by religious writings, especially in earlier times, as the bearers of this written language were clergymen in the first place. Formally, we are dealing with archaising, mostly Čakavian-based varieties (with a strong influence of the earlier Kajkavian written language). The BLC dialects, i.e. the vernacular of ordinary people, had only a comparatively minor influence, apart from the (often borrowed) vocabulary and certain morphological peculiarities.¹⁰

According to the classification of Slavic literary micro-languages in DULIČENKO (2018: 62) Burgenland Croatian is a “среднеразвивающаяся микрофилология” (weakly developing micro-philology), with a codification since 1919.

In fact, the real standardisation process began only in the 1920s, in connection with the incorporation of today’s Burgenland into Austria. From the very beginning, there was a controversy between supporters of an adaptation to the Štokavian (I)jekavian norm of (Serbo-)Croatian and the promoters of a Burgenland Croatian (linguistic) independence. The resulting conflict became apparent after World War II, when it assumed a strongly political dimension in the struggle between the supporters of the assimilation of the Burgenland Croats, by means of their transition to the German majority language, and those in favour of an approximation of written BLC to the (Serbo)Croatian standard. As far as the use of a language form different from German was not rejected altogether, a tendency to fully adopt the Zagreb Croatian standard initially gained the upper hand. However, since the 1970s at the latest, this changed into the opposite, with efforts to work out Burgenland Croatian written standard of its own (SZUCISCH 2000: 861–874, TYRAN 2006, KINDA-BERLAKOVICH 2011).

Such a norm was created in the following years by the publication of two bi-/trilingual dictionaries (BENČIĆ et al. 1982; 1991) and the Burgenland Croatian grammar (SUČIĆ 2003),¹¹ in the form of a compromise between a mainly standard-Croatian orthography, a Čakavian basis of certain BLC dialect charac-

¹⁰ Cf. BENČIĆ (1998b) and HADROVIĆ (1974) for documents written until the beginning of the 20th century, and BENČIĆ (2010) for the subsequent period.

¹¹ They were joined by the *Pravopis* (2010) and an online version of the bilingual dictionaries, allowing for an expansion: <https://www.rjecnik.at/> (Accessed 27/01/2021).

teristics and a reslavisation of the lexicon. On the whole, it is a balancing prescriptive norm with which, in the end, neither side could fully identify. Nevertheless, this Burgenland Croatian written variety achieved a certain degree of dissemination in the print media and in the public sphere (signposts, announcements).

Criticism of the new BLC norm was addressed from the beginning to this procedure of mixing the Čakavian base with a Štokavian-standard superstructure, foreign to the region. It is also the main reason for the lack of acceptance of this linguistic form among the broad population, which, however, was hard to achieve anyway, given the strong dialectal differences. As a consequence, in some cases several variants were allowed in the norm, such as *ča* and *što* ‘was’ as interrogative pronouns, as well as certain Germanisms alongside standard Croatianisms.

Some decisions in the formation of the norm are indeed difficult to understand, for example, when, in the case of the perfect-forming *l*-participle in the masculine singular, the spelling with the standard Croatian final *-o* was chosen, which does not correspond to the pronunciation of any single BLC dialect at all.¹² The mixing of the (I)jekavian standard orthography with the actual realisations of **ě* in the vernacular, i.e. *i*, *ie*, *e*, is not unproblematic either.¹³ The diphthongs so typical in the BLC PANGLOSS corpus are completely ignored in the written norm, despite their phonemic character, so that, for example, no distinction can be made in writing between anaphoric-deictic *tuo* ‘this, the’ NOM.SG.N as in *tuo cielo žito* ‘all the grain’ and impersonal *to* ‘it’ as in *na to* ‘thereupon’.

In view of the real life circumstances (German-dominated environment), a standard Croatian technical-economic terminology was hardly enforceable by nature. Occasionally, however, standard Croatian interferences even penetrate into the everyday vernacular. Where they show up in the Burgenland Croatian PANGLOSS corpus, they are marked as such.

Due to its lack of comprehensive usage possibilities (polyfunctionality), the written BLC norm cannot be termed a real “standard language”, nor can we speak of an actual “roofing” over of the Burgenland Croatian dialects in the sense of an umbrella language, since this function clearly remains with German (foreign roof); see SZUCSICH (2000: 872–874). The lack of identification of non-intellectual dialect speakers with this norm also hardly leads to the formation of a colloquial language on this basis. PAWISCHITZ (2014: 77) sees a kind of diglossia in the relationship between the vernacular and the written language in Burgenland and complains with respect to the written language that nobody speaks

¹² In our Nikitsch sub-corpus, historical *-l* is preserved, e.g. *bil* ‘(has) been’, while in the three villages of the northern sub-corpus it developed into *-u*, here *biu*, and in part of the southern dialects we find *-a*: *bija*. But the BLC norm wants *bio*, following the Zagreb standard.

¹³ On the problem of the discrepancy between the vernacular and the new standard, cf. already HAMM (1974). For a detailed description of the special features of the Burgenland Croatian norm in its position between dialect and Zagreb standard, see KINDA-BERLAKOVIĆ (2003), who also gives an overview of its historical development.

like this. As far as a complete language change to German does not happen anyway, local dialects thus remain the only everyday basis for the continued existence of BLC.

7.2 Visibility of Burgenland Croatian in public life

In the villages with a BLC sub-population of at least 10%, bilingual place-name signs are allowed. The majority of the municipalities have made use of this possibility. Other signs are also frequently written bilingually, as a rule in High German and in the BLC norm. However, this labelling does not seem to have contributed significantly to raising the prestige of the minority language, even if it is considered useful by the informally interviewed residents. Here are some examples of bilingual labelling:



Bilingual signage of streets and squares (W. Breu)



Bilingual labelling of school facilities (W. Breu)



A bilingual place-name sign at the end of a village (W. Breu)

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