

Karina Melnytska

Language and Identity: The Case of Montenegro

Introduction

Let us remember the Tower of Babel. It remained forever uncompleted, because God condemned the human race to everlasting linguistic conflict.

Eric Hobsbawm¹

In all the matters concerning the relation between the language and identity, an issue of the language – national identity relation has an especially important position. The formula *one nation – one state – one language*, which is the essence of the concept of a nation state, rendered the language a specific demiurge of national identity, a link holding a nation together in one organic whole. The source of this concept was the conviction of a virtually mystical relation between a nation and its national language, so characteristic of German Romanticism (Herder and Fichte), which had a considerable impact on national movements in Europe (Edwards, 2009, pp. 170, 211). This view was reflected, inter alia, in the Vienna Literary Agreement of 1850 which resulted in the creation of the literary Serbo-Croatian language. The agreement began with the statement: “One nation should have one literature” (in: Greenberg, 2008, pp. 9, 183–186). Less than one and a half centuries later, during the breakup of Yugoslavia, the idea of the need for a separate language as a *sine qua non*

¹ The citation comes from: Hobsbawm (1996, p. 1079).

condition of a nation turned up like a bad penny, this time manifesting itself in the disintegration of this language.

Eric Hobsbawm in his essay entitled *Language, Culture, and National Identity* stated categorically that "all languages have elements of such political self-assertion, for in an era of national or regional secessionism there is a natural tendency to complement political independence by linguistic separatism" (Hobsbawm, 1996, p. 1078). So as to illustrate this thesis, he gave an example of, inter alia, Croats, seeing a precedent for the future in Croatian actions related to making their language independent². When Hobsbawm wrote his essay, the disintegration of the Serbo-Croatian language had already been a fait accompli. The language identity was proclaimed not only by Croats, but also by Bosniaks during peace negotiations taking place in Dayton, aimed at ending the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina. All three parties – Serbs, Croats and Bosniaks – demanded interpreters, as it turned out that they no longer understood one another (Greenberg, 2008, p. 136). Slightly later than ten years after the Dayton Agreement in 1995 – apart from English, in the Serbian, Croatian and Bosnian languages, thus symbolically consolidating, inter alia, the new linguistic reality in the territory of the former Yugoslavia – the language identity was also proclaimed by Montenegrins.

The fact that in the states of the former Yugoslavia the language started to play the role of "a fortress guarding the independence and the statehood of the nation"³ (Čolović, 2007, p. 99), became a characteristic phenomenon of the post-Yugoslav reality. The Croatian linguist Snježana Kordić, analysing critically this state of affairs, noted: "When Balkan intellectuals at the beginning of the 21st century consider a nation and a language equivalent, it means that they have slept through at least the last half of the century of science, since this view was rejected" (Kordić, 2010, p. 171).

No matter how we look, in the area in question the language was "neither an objective factor, nor an immutable one" against the identity (see: Greenberg, 2008, p. 8), but it became an important plane for the reconstruction of this identity. The article analyses the situation of Montenegro on the basis of the above mentioned assumption.

Before we get down to the analysis, the specificity of the Montenegrin situation of identity should be presented to the reader at least very briefly. The complexity of the issue of the Montenegrin identity seems to be inversely proportional to the size of this former

² "If the Croats can create a separate language for themselves out of the unified Serbocroat which their forefathers constructed to unify the southern Slavs – not with much success – then anybody can". (Hobsbawm, 1996, p. 1079).

³ If not stated otherwise, all the translations are done by the translator (Joanna Modzelewska-Jankowiak).

Yugoslav republic, which was the smallest one. In the literature on the subject we can frequently encounter a term coined by the Montenegrin political scientist Srđan Darmanović – a national *homo duplex*, which is quoted by researchers (Roberts, 2007; Morrison, 2009; Džankić, 2014). It concerns a phenomenon of double identity characteristic of the Orthodox population living in Montenegro, which is the majority in this country⁴. This dualism shows in the fact that – as Darmanović presented it – “many of those who nationally declare themselves Montenegrins have besides their ‘Montenegrin-ness’ a strong Serbian ethnic feeling, based on sharing the same language and religion” (in: Roberts, 2007, p. 5). This leads to the fundamental question: who Montenegrins are? Are they – using the language of mythology – “the essence of Serbianness”, “salt of Serbs”, while Montenegro – “Serbian Sparta”? Or are they simply Serbs of regional specificity? Or perhaps are they a separate nation, even not really Slavic, but of mixed, Slavic-Albanian-Vlach origin? Of course, this analysis is not even an attempt to give answers to such complex questions; putting these questions is only going to show how ambiguous this phenomenon is.

Contemporary dilemmas of the Montenegrin identity are connected to a large extent with the complex process of building the Montenegrin state which historically oscillated between two national ideas – independent Montenegro *versus* Montenegro as a part of a larger state object – Serbian or Yugoslav. Moreover, during various stages of the evolution of the Montenegrin identity we observed a strong sense of tribal membership of Montenegrins, their primary religious identification conditioned by the affiliation to the Orthodox church, building the strong regional identity and their increasing awareness of the own national identity. In the last quarter of the century Montenegro experienced significant transformations of identity which we should see through the prism of different perceptions of Montenegrinness, different visions of the future of the country, the impact of events and processes occurring both in Montenegro itself and in its closer and farther environment (Andrijašević & Rastoder, 2006, p. 465). In the centre of attention of this work there are linguistic issues in their relationship with the processes of identity occurring in Montenegro after the breakup of socialist Yugoslavia. The text is an attempt to answer the question of what role the language played in the process of reconstruction and reinterpretation of the Montenegrin national identity.

⁴ About the phenomenon of double identity of Montenegrins see also: Wrocławski (2002, pp. 131–136, 2005, p. 163). Basically, some Montenegrins describe themselves exclusively as Montenegrins, others tend to identify with Serbianness, like Serbs who according to the latest census accounted for 28.7 per cent of the population – but earlier a part of them described themselves as Montenegrins. I wrote about this in: Melnytska (2016, pp. 277–289).

The language(s) in Montenegro

The Novi Sad Agreement of 1954, specifying the principles of using the Serbo-Croatian language in the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, began with the statement: "The national language of the Serbs, Croats and Montenegrins is a single language". The agreement provided two variants of the common language: Western (Croatian) and Eastern (Serbian), and at the same time the statuses of the Latin and Cyrillic alphabets were recognised as equal, as well as two pronunciations – ijekavian and ekavian. Although the agreement contained a mention about the Montenegrin nation (which was in accordance with the previous granting such a status to Montenegrins), this nation was not provided with its own variant of the language. It should be noted that at the end of the 1960s some Montenegrin intellectuals following Croats started to question the existing linguistic model (Greenberg, 2008, p. 89). The constitution of socialist Montenegro of 1974 contained the first clear wording about the official language – "the Serbo-Croatian language in the ijekavian pronunciation", stressing at the same time an equal status of the Cyrillic and Latin alphabets (in: Glušica, 2009, p. 26). Importantly, on the background of decentralist tendencies in the Serbo-Croatian linguistic community, Montenegrins gained their (sub)variant of this language (*crnogorski književnojezički izraz*) (Greenberg, 2008, pp. 40–41).

But after the breakup of Yugoslavia, Montenegrins did not elevate their (sub)variant of the Serbian-Croatian language to the status of an independent standard language. The constitution of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia⁵ of 1992 acknowledged that the official language of the Serbian-Montenegrin state was the Serbian language in both pronunciations (ijekavian and ekavian), the main alphabet was Cyrillic and the auxiliary one was Latin ("Ustav Savezne Republike Jugoslavije", 1992). In turn, the republican constitution of Montenegro granted the status of the official language to the Serbian language in ijekavian pronunciation, on condition that both writing systems are equal ("Ustav Republike Crne Gore", 1992).

When discussing the language realities in the so-called "third Yugoslavia", we should pay attention to a few important moments. Firstly, the language policy in the FRY obviously favoured Cyrillic, the primacy of which over the Latin alphabet resulted from the federal basic law. In practice it manifested in, inter alia, printing banknotes using the Cyrillic

⁵ In the years 1992–2003 Montenegro together with Serbia formed the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) – the so-called "third Yugoslavia", then – the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro (2003–2006).

alphabet (Greenberg, 2008, p. 61). In turn, Montenegrins cared about the preservation of equality of both alphabets, since, on the one hand, it was the way to emphasise their autonomy from the Serbian neighbours, and, on the other – an individual gesture toward the Muslims/Bosniaks and Albanians living in Montenegro, which were reluctant to use Cyrillic. Secondly, the question of pronunciation became controversial. When in September 1993 the leader of the Bosnian Serbs, Radovan Karadžić, by means of a special decree granted the status of official pronunciation on the territories of Bosnia and Herzegovina inhabited by Serbs to the ekavian pronunciation⁶, Montenegro remained the only administrative unit within the Serbian language territory with the ijekavian pronunciation as the official one. Moreover, Karadžić's decision was supported by many influential Serbian linguists⁷, and this in turn aroused among Montenegrins serious concerns about supplanting the ijekavian pronunciation by the ekavian pronunciation dialectally foreign to them (Greenberg, 2008, p. 106).

For the Montenegrin opposition circles it was the alarming signal of a risk of the Serbian linguistic and cultural hegemony. *The Declaration on the Endangerment of Montenegrin Culture, People and State* issued by the Montenegrin PEN Centre in 1994 stated explicitly that the Montenegrin language had its own history and confirmation in literature, in the same degree as the Serbian, Croatian and Bosnian languages had ("Resolution", 1994). Intellectuals gathered around *Matica crnogorska* started to promote the idea of the Montenegrin language identity. These voices, initially marginal, were intensifying when the political discord between the Serbian and Montenegrin elites was deepening in the late 1990s. After Milo Đukanović won in the Montenegrin presidential election in 1997 and the aspirations to broaden the space of sovereignty grew fast, the subject of the separate Montenegrin language was raised more and more frequently in the public discourse. Together with the transformation of the FRY into the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro in 2003, the Democratic Party of Socialists (*Demokratska Partija Socijalista*, DPS) ruling in Montenegro proposed to name the official national language "Serbian-Montenegrin or Montenegrin-Serbian" (as in the case of Serbo-Croatian) (Greenberg, 2008, p. 89). This idea can be an illustration of the various attitudes of the Montenegrin society to the language and – more broadly – the divisions

⁶ It was a purely political move, as Bosnian Serbs used the ijekavian pronunciation, but Karadžić wanted to emphasise their distinctiveness from Croats and Bosniaks as well as to bring them closer, as regards of the language, to their compatriots from Serbia.

⁷ Pavle Ivić was also among them, a well-known Serbian linguist, dialectologist, a member of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts (*Srpska akademija nauka i umetnosti*, SANU).

concerning the questions of identity deepening at that time. It was repeated many times in public discourse – as an attempt to find a compromise between the supporters and the opponents of the Montenegrin language – in the context of the disputes on the name of the official language, but finally it has never gone beyond the discussion.

In the new political reality which appeared after the Montenegrin referendum of 2006 and, as a result, the establishment of the independent Montenegrin state, the ruling elites of Montenegro were in favour of the official legitimisation of the Montenegrin language. As a consequence, the constitution of independent Montenegro adopted in October 2007 said: “The Montenegrin language is the official language in Montenegro” (“Ustav Crne Gore”, 2007). Thus the Montenegrin language was finally legally sanctioned – as the last of the four “successors” of the previously common Serbo-Croatian language.

“The Montenegrin nation has its own language”⁸

At the beginning of the 1990s the idea of a separate statehood of Montenegro was a marginal issue, raised mainly by political and intellectual opposition circles without strong social support. The same applied to the idea of the language independence that in Montenegro was supported by neither political elites nor local cultural-scientific institutions as, for instance, the Montenegrin Academy of Sciences and Arts (*Crnogorska akademija nauka i umjetnosti*, CANU), or even by the majority of Montenegrins. Nevertheless, at the close of the 20th century Montenegrin pro-independence intellectuals, aiming at the reconstruction of the separate Montenegrin identity in all its aspects, turned to, inter alia, the idea of the language identity of Montenegrins. This environment, mainly gathered around such institutions as the Montenegrin PEN Centre already mentioned, *Matica crnogorska*, and the Doclean Academy of Sciences and Arts (*Dukljanska akademija nauka i umjetnosti*, DANU), founded in 1999 as a specific alternative to CANU, organised conferences, symposia and seminars on the Montenegrin language. As in other similar cases, it was not only about changing the way of defining the language – they wanted to both determine its characteristics and indicate how it is different from the languages of their neighbours (cf. Fishman, 1993): Serbian, Croatian and Bosnian.

⁸ The statement by Vojislav Nikčević, the main promoter of the idea of the Montenegrin language identity, the fragment of the conversation with Mihailo Šćepanović, the linguist of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, “Does the Montenegrin language exist”, 5 April 1998.

In the case of the Montenegrin language, while seeking differences an accent was quite naturally put on how to distinguish it from Serbian (Greenberg, 2008, p. 90). For Montenegrin intellectuals had to reconstruct the distinct Montenegrin identity which to a large extent was in opposition to the Serbian identity, taking into account at least the widespread conviction of the affiliation of Serbs and Montenegrins to one nation – both among the former and the latter, willing to identify with Serbianness. To justify the linguistic distinctiveness of Montenegrins, it was found, inter alia, that dialects used in Montenegro were genuinely Montenegrin and not Serbian⁹, and that the legacy of the 19th century Montenegrin writers belonged to a separate Montenegrin – and not Serbian – literary tradition (Greenberg, 2008, p. 91).

Among the artists of literature who were invoked in this context there were writers living and working in Montenegro in the 19th century: Stjepan Mitrov Ljubiša (1824–1878), Marko Miljanov Popović (1833–1901), and – above all – the Montenegrin ruler, eminent poet and thinker, Petar II Petrović Njegoš (1813–1851). The famous *Mountain Wreath* (*Gorski vijenac*, 1847) by Njegoš was in fact written entirely in living folk language of Montenegrins, which at the same time is a characteristic feature of this work. Similarly, the other two mentioned authors used in their works the specific variant of ijekavica, spoken in the Montenegrin territory (Greenberg, 2008, p. 97). This could therefore prove the linguistic distinctness of Montenegrins. However, “nationalising” the 19th century Montenegrin authors turned out to be quite a difficult task – because of the attachment to the Serbian tradition or, more broadly, to the South Slavic tradition, which is clearly seen in their works. The fate of *The Mountain Wreath* illustrates well the complexity of the cultural-literary aspect of the discussions on the Montenegrin identity and the Montenegrin language. Because here we have the work which for Montenegrins is the greatest achievement of native literature, “in previous generations known almost by heart, their national Bible” (Wrocławski, 2005, p. 166), and at the same time it is a part of the canon of Serbian literature and culture. Indeed, Njegoš dedicated his poem to “the father of Serbia” – the 19th century hero of Serbian anti-Turkish

⁹ In respect to dialectal situation, Montenegro is divided into two areas – north-western and south-eastern. In the north-western area there is the Neo-Štokavian dialect and the East Herzegovina dialect, while in the south-eastern area (including the historic capital of Cetinje and the present capital of Podgorica) the Old-Štokavian Zeta dialect is used. The scope of these dialects goes beyond the borders of Montenegro. The area of the Zeta dialect includes also the Serbian part of Sandžak and the patches of north Albania inhabited by the Slavic population (Greenberg, 2008, p. 92). In turn, in the case of the East Herzegovina dialect it is “the area stretching from Cape Oštro, lying at the entrance of the Bay of Kotor, to Bjelovar in the north of Croatia, and from Čačak in the south of Serbia to the settlement of Moravice, lying to the west of Karlovac” (Jaroszewicz, 2010–2011, p. 106).

uprisings, Black George (Karađorđe). The content of the work refers to the Orthodox fights between Montenegrins and poturices (the myth of the extermination of infidels), referring to the entire Serbian history, in particular to the battle on the Kosovo Field and its consequences (the myth of Kosovo); in the poem Njegoš predicts the national rebirth of Serbs. In this way the Montenegrin ruler, called by Ivo Andrić “a tragic hero of the idea of Kosovo”¹⁰, through his work he played an important role in the codification of the myth of Kosovo as a central point of the Serbian national ideology (Gil, 2005, pp. 116–123). In this context the controversy of the 1970s over the construction of Njegoš’s Mausoleum on the Lovćen mountain was an illustrative example. The debate on the mausoleum immediately became a debate about Njegoš’s nationality – was he Serbian or Montenegrin?¹¹ A decade later another stage adaptation of *The Mountain Wreath* by the Montenegrin director Blagota Eraković came in for criticism – as it was raised that he intentionally omitted the words *a Serb, Serbs, Serbianness* (Wrocławski, 2005, p. 166). Thus the dispute over the identity of Njegoš became a dispute about the national and cultural identity of Montenegrins.

Vojislav P. Nikčević (1935–2007), a Montenegrin researcher, a literary scholar by education, and a professor of Montenegrin literature at the Faculty of Philosophy in Nikšić, concluded that *The Mountain Wreath* was a work written in the Montenegrin literary language. This researcher in the 1990s became the leading exponent of the idea of Montenegrin language identity. Wishing to prove the existence of the Montenegrin language, Nikčević quoted the theses of the borderline between the research on the ethnogenesis of Montenegrins and their linguistic past, thus causing consternation in the scientific circles. For he claimed that the Montenegrin language derived directly from the Polabian language extinct in the 18th century. According to the researcher, Montenegrins’ ancestors were Polabian Slavs who came from the territories of present Eastern Germany, bringing ijekavica. In accordance with the above concept, Serbs until the 16th century used only ekavica similar to that used by Belarusians. It was to prove that Montenegrins were the only authentic carriers of ijekavica, while in the Serbian, Croatian and Bosnian languages it was a secondary element. The Polabian origin of the Montenegrin language was proved, among others, by three phonemes occurring in it: /š/, /ž/ and /ʒ/, which also occur in the Polish language – “because both languages were once in the vicinity” (Karabeg, Nikčević & Šćepanović, 1998).

¹⁰ Here I mean the famous essay by Ivo Andrić *Njegoš, the Tragic Hero of Kosovo Thought*. See: Andrić (1977, pp. 218–238).

¹¹ More about the debate, as well as about Njegoš, the role of his person and his works in the politics of identity of the first and the second Yugoslavia and in the Serbian and Montenegrin disputes over identity, see: Wachtel (2004, pp. 131–153).

Basing on such evidence, Nikčević took the first attempt to codify the Montenegrin language. The concept developed by the researcher assumed the restoration of the Montenegrin language's lost authenticity which found its fullest expression the literary works of the 19th century. And therefore it was necessary to recover the language for Montenegrins, clearing the current speech of "destructive" influences of the Serbian language standards, which constantly affected this language from the mid-nineteenth century, i.e. from the time of the introduction of the language reform by Vuk Karadžić. This process, characterised by Nikčević as "dismontenegrinisation" (*rascrnogorčivanje*) of Montenegrins and their language, allegedly became stronger after losing the political independence by Montenegro in 1918 and lasts up to now (Jaroszewicz, 2010–2011, p. 96).

The Montenegrin language reconstructed by Nikčević combined two dialects occurring in the territory of Montenegro. The Montenegrin language was distinguished by, inter alia, the consonants ś, ź and ʒ. The over dialectal composition constructed in such a manner was complemented with the linguistic elements of the 19th century literary works. In this way the scholar created an artificial model of the Montenegrin language for Montenegrins, and this language was extremely different from the spoken language and thus had little chance of acceptance by the majority of the population. The project of the Montenegrin language elaborated by Nikčević, containing numerous archaisms and dialectal terms, significantly different from not only the current linguistic norm but also from the Montenegrin communication reality, was rejected by Montenegrins (Jaroszewicz, 2010–2011, p. 108)¹². Nikčević's experiments on the reconstruction of the Montenegrin language may however be a spectacular example of how far the apologists for the language and national identity may go in their actions.

In independent Montenegro linguists, writers and columnists were entrusted with the development of the linguistic standard of Montenegrin. So as to do this, in January 2008 the Montenegrin authorities appointed the Council for the Codification of the Montenegrin Language (*Savjet za standardizaciju crnogorskog jezika*) – a body consisting of thirteen people whose task was to develop the spelling principles, grammar and dictionary of the Montenegrin language. Shortly after the start-up, the members of the Council were divided by the dispute over the shape of language reforms, as it turned out that their visions of standardisation were completely different. For some persons represented a moderate

¹² More about an attempt of the codification of the Montenegrin language taken by Nikčević see: Jaroszewicz (2010–2011, pp. 91–110).

stand, proposing the introduction of only minor changes to the current linguistic norm in Montenegro. This position came in for harsh criticism of supporters of more radical reforms of the Montenegrin norm, very similar to Nikčević's concepts of codification. One of the representatives of this stand was the linguist Adnan Čirgić, a later co-author of the grammar of Montenegrin. Čirgić took over a large part of Nikčević's views, including a demand for following the model of the 19th century literary works and a reluctant attitude to the Montenegrin norm inherited from the Serbo-Croatian language. Opponents were accused of traditionalism, and, moreover, their stance on the issues of standardisation was treated as almost deliberate sabotage, aiming at "establishing a situation harmful to the Montenegrin national interest and national identity, where Montenegrins would continue to use other people's language, only named as Montenegrin" (Jaroszewicz, 2012, p. 64).

Ceaseless disputes and polarisation of research opinions of the members forced the Council to finish its activity. The final versions of spelling and grammar of the Montenegrin language were not elaborated. At the beginning of 2009 the Ministry of Education and Science of Montenegro, aiming at terminating the codification works, formed a body – this time a three-person Expert Commission for the Standardisation of the Montenegrin Language (*Ekspertska komisija za standardizaciju crnogorskog jezika*). Using the studies prepared by their predecessors, in the summer of 2009 the new commission published the spelling principles of the Montenegrin language (*Pravopis crnogorskog jezika*), in compliance with which the Montenegrin alphabet received two new letters – *ž* and *š*. One year later also *Gramatika crnogorskog jezika* was published, which together with *Pravopis* determined the standard framework of the Montenegrin language (Jaroszewicz, 2012, pp. 76, 80). Both works met with criticism of the Montenegrin public opinion, media and scientific circles. Both the credibility of their authors and the legitimacy of the language reforms described in them were questioned. The composition of the Commission, in which there were two foreigners and one philosopher by education¹³, aroused reservations as to their competence in the field of reforming the Montenegrin language. The developed norm of the Montenegrin language was criticised because of its archaism and diverging from the Montenegrin linguistic practice. Apart from the introduction of two additional letters,

¹³ The commission comprised: the Ukrainian linguist Lyudmila Vasilieva, a professor at Lviv University, the Croatian normativist, Josip Silić – a professor emeritus of the University of Zagreb, and a Montenegrin, Milenko A. Perović (the chairman of the commission), a professor of philosophy at the University of Novi Sad. Later the composition of the commission was extended to include three persons more, among which there was another Croatian linguist, a professor of Zagreb, Ivon Pranjeković. More about this see: Jaroszewicz (2012, pp. 75–77).

the new linguistic model was also an implementation of other ideas of Nikčević, which was stressed in *Pravopis* of 2009 (Perović, Silić & Vasiljeva, 2009, pp. 5–6).

At the same time the Montenegrin authorities took steps to strengthen the institutional dimension of the language policy. In 2008 The Law on Matica crnogorska was introduced, which defined the official status of this organisation acting in favour of “the affirmation of culture and national identity of the Montenegrin nation and the promotion and development of the multi-ethnic character of Montenegro” (“Ukaz o proglašenju Zakona o Matici crnogorskoj”, 2008). In July 2010 the Montenegrin authorities also established the Institute for the Montenegrin Language and Literature, four years later transformed into the Department of the Montenegrin Language and Literature with its seat in Cetinje. Adnan Čirgić became the head of this institution. The institute described its mission as “the constant concern for the Montenegrin language, the development of linguistic awareness in Montenegro and the examination of the Montenegrin literary and linguistic trends in the past and at present”¹⁴.

In the context of the discussed subject matter the unrecognised Montenegrin Orthodox Church (*Crnogorska Pravoslavna Crkva*, CPC) and its position on the linguistic changes are also worth mentioning. It is against the dominant position of the Serbian Orthodox Church (*Srpska pravoslavna crkva*, SPC) in Montenegro, and in terms of the language it represents a stand different than the SPC, opting for the affirmation of the Montenegrin language as an important pillar of identity. On the CPC's official website in the announcement on the language it was stressed, inter alia, that the Orthodox Church “since the day of its restoration¹⁵ [31 October 1993 – *K.M.*] has been using the Montenegrin language in liturgy” (“Oglašavanje”, 2009). According to Mihailo, the metropolitan bishop of the Montenegrin Orthodox Church, “the Montenegrin nation and the Montenegrin state will have no future without the autocephalous CPC, the Montenegrin language and other institutions, academies, associations which defend our native values” (“Oglašavanje”, 2009). In such an approach the refusal to recognise both the Montenegrin Orthodox Church and the Montenegrin language means denying the existence of the Montenegrin nation.

¹⁴ See on the official website of the Department: <http://www.fcjk.me/institut-za-crnogorski-jezik-i-knjizevnost> (“Institut za crnogorski jezik i književnost – Fakultet za crnogorski jezik i književnost”, n/a)

¹⁵ The word “restoration” is intentionally used here, as the unrecognised Montenegrin Orthodox Church refers to the independent Montenegrin Orthodox Church (the Metropolitanate of Cetinje) existing in the past, which went into liquidation after the Serbian army began to occupy Montenegro in 1918. Pursuant to the agreement of 1920, concluded between the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, and the Patriarchate of Constantinople, the united Serbian Orthodox Church was established, the jurisdiction of which also spread over the area of Montenegro. The movement for the restoration of the Autocephalous Montenegrin Orthodox Church got a new impetus after the breakup of Yugoslavia. A pro-independence faction initiated the restoration of the CPC, which took place in 1993.

The narrativisation of the language

In the Montenegrin discourse, thematising the name and identity of the language, we can distinguish several key threads forming the narrative of the Montenegrin language, which is a part of a wider Montenegrin narrative of identity. Firstly, the importance of language issues for the Montenegrin identity is emphasised – the Montenegrin language is considered “one of the key issues of the Montenegrin state identity” (Čirgić, 2010, p. 7). A language does not only “decide about the identity of a nation”¹⁶, but it is often associated with this nation – citing here the words of the chairman of the Council for the Codification, Branko Banjević – *jezik je cio narod* (in: Jaroszewicz, 2012, p. 63). According to Banjević “neither the Montenegrin nation nor the state of Montenegro can exist without the Montenegrin language” (in: Jaroszewicz, 2012, p. 63). Such close association of the fate of the Montenegrin nation with the fate of the Montenegrin language can also be found in the earlier deliberations of Nikčević (cf. Karabeg et al., 1998).

Another theme in the narrative on the Montenegrin language concerns stressing its uniqueness. For instance, Banjević was proving that “the literary language and the national language of Montenegrins are identical, which is a real sensation in the world” (in: Jaroszewicz, 2012, p. 63). The thesis of the sameness of the Montenegrin literary and national languages, which is to be “the only such case in Europe”, was earlier proposed by Nikčević (Glušica, 2010, p. 35). The codifiers of the Montenegrin language accepted his view that Montenegro was an organic whole in linguistic terms. In this perspective the dialectal divisions of Montenegro were artificial – constructed by the Serbian linguists questioning the fact of existence of “the Montenegrin spoken language” (*crnogorski govorni jezik*) as a common language of the majority of Montenegrins (Greenberg, 2008, p. 94). Therefore the Serbian linguists negating the existence of the all-Montenegrin linguistic specificity intentionally avoided the term “Montenegrin” while analysing the dialects used in Montenegro, because it would mean that they accept the Montenegrin language identity (Čirgić, 2011, pp. 10, 56).

Here another important narrative thread appears, namely the theme of the Serbian Other against which “our” language should be defended. In the narrative about the Montenegrin language, “Serbia”, “Belgrade”, “(great) Serbian linguists” play the role of the main enemies of the Montenegrin linguistic distinctness, throughout the 20th century they conducted

¹⁶ The reference to the statement of Zekerija Dugopoljac, director of education of the Bosniak National Council, on the Bosnian language. The statement taken from: Zalewski (2010, p. 211).

continually the language policy of unification, which had anti-Montenegrin effects. And its aim is unmasked in a following manner: “Creating such false images of the Montenegrin language [...] was a part of a wider political strategy, which assumed the imposition of the Serbian linguistic and national identities on Montenegrins so as to – on the basis of these identities – realise the political doctrine of the annexation of Montenegro to Serbia” (Čirgić, 2011, p. 7). In this narrative pattern the motif of the fight taken by the supporters of the Montenegrin linguistic distinctness against “the great-Serbian offensive” becomes important¹⁷, as this fight, like the fight between good and evil, lasts forever.

In order to disparage the Other and validate the legitimacy of “our” actions, it had to be indicated that there was a historical continuity between the Montenegrin nation and the Montenegrin language, and that the Montenegrin language had lasted as organic and natural for centuries¹⁸. And therefore the developed periodisation of the history of the Montenegrin language coincides precisely with the history of the Montenegrin territories and refers to the tradition of mediaeval statehood. Because in this interpretation the “historical”¹⁹ period of the Montenegrin language begins in the middle of the 9th century, i.e. at the time of the establishment of the first Slavic state of Duklja/Zeta in the territories of today's Montenegro, and lasts to this day.

* * *

The narrative about the Montenegrin language, the introduction of two new letters making the Montenegrin alphabet distinctive of other “successors” of the Serbo-Croatian language, emphasising the differences in pronunciation, lexis and grammar – all these elements were to justify the distinctiveness of the language of Montenegrins and at the same time to manifest their national identity. However, the identity of the Montenegrin language still arouses controversy among linguists. Let us give the floor to the linguist of Montenegro, the historian of the Serbian language at the Faculty of Philosophy in Nikšić, Professor Jelica

¹⁷ More about the theme of the fight against “the great-Serbian offensive” present in the Montenegrin discourse in: Felberg & Šarić (2013, pp. 18–22). The authors also analyse the Croatian discourse.

¹⁸ The 19th century Montenegrin rulers were accused of a lack of appropriate measures in the field of the language policy and therefore in Montenegro the name “the Serbian language” established well (Čirgić, 2011, pp. 172–175). For example, the Montenegrin prince (from 1910 – the king) Nikola (1840–1921) came in for criticism, because he “did not take any actions on the creation and strengthening of the language policy, respecting the specificity of the language in Montenegro”. See: Čirgić (2011, p. 177).

¹⁹ The history of the Montenegrin language was divided into two periods: prehistoric and historic. The author of this concept was Vojislav P. Nikčević.

Stojanović. The researcher claims that the linguistic area of Montenegro “in structural-genetic and typological terms” became an element of “a wider area of the Serbian language, being its inherent part” (Stojanović, 2011, p. 163). According to her, “the language policy in Montenegro [...] has become completely different from the language itself and its substance [...], and thus it has begun to create the virtual linguistic reality” (Stojanović, 2011, p. 8).

Apart from the linguistic dimension of the debates on the distinctness of the Montenegrin language, which came to a standstill as a result of uncompromising attitudes of the polemicising parties, it should be stressed that this dispute from the very beginning has been a part of the current disputes of political-identity nature: between Serbia and Montenegro on the axis of Belgrade – Podgorica, between Serbia and Montenegro at the intra-Montenegrin level, and, finally, between Montenegrins themselves. Thus the language started to play an important role in creating political divisions. Among the most significant examples we can present the several months’ disputes in the Montenegrin parliament in 2007 on the draft of the basic law and the issues of the official language related to it. A compromise solution, in accordance with which apart from the official Montenegrin language also the Serbian, Bosnian, Albanian and Croatian languages were granted the statuses of the ones “in the official use” (*u službenoj upotrebi*)²⁰, was not satisfactory for Serbs. Another such example are the events of 2011, when the issue of introducing “the Montenegrin language”²¹ to schools divided the Montenegrin parliament again for a long time. In accordance with the agreement of 2011, achieved as a result of a few months’ negotiations with the Serbian opposition, the present name of the school subject is “the Montenegrin-Serbian, Bosnian, Croatian language”. Another question which is brought quite often is an issue of replacing Cyrillic with Latin. Although the constitution guarantees the equivalence of both alphabets, in practice in Montenegro the Latin alphabet is dominant (see: Stojanović, 2011, pp. 88–92; Janković, 2015).

Like the Montenegrin definition of a national identity, also the Montenegrin definition of a language is difficult to accept for the part of the Montenegrin society. The Serbian Orthodox Church with its leading Montenegrin metropolitan bishop Amfilohije, one of the key figures of the Montenegrin public life, many times has taken the floor as regards the issues of the language and identity. Metropolitan bishop Amfilohije, as a fierce oppo-

²⁰ Pursuant to Article 13 of the constitution: *Službeni jezik u Crnoj Gori je crnogorski jezik. Čirilično i latinično pismo su ravnopravni. U službenoj upotrebi su i srpski, bosanski, albański i hrvatski jezik.*

²¹ From 2004 in Montenegro the official name of the school subject was “the native language and literature” (*maternji jezik i književnost*). The intention of the Montenegrin authorities was to change the names of the school subject to “the Montenegrin language and literature” in the school year 2011/2012.

ment of the idea of the Montenegrin distinctness, during the period before the referendum became a real leader of the anti-independence fraction in Montenegro. Here his statements are worth quoting as an example of an extreme variant of the counter-narration against the separate Montenegrin language: "Today in Montenegro Cyrillic is replaced with 'ćirilica', the Serbian language is being destroyed and changed into a non-existent language of this nation, into the so-called Montenegrin language, and I would rather say the *Montenegrinian* (*montenegrijski*) language", because "a *Dukljan-Montenegrinian* man (*dukljansko-montenegrijski čovjek*) is created and he has never existed, even in the communist era. This hybrid, combined of different components, presently becomes reality and we should talk about it" (cf. "Amfilohije", 2014; "Amfilohije", 2015). It should be noted that this type of statements – emphasising the "artificiality" of a separate identity of Montenegrins – are not something new and appear in the Montenegrin public discourse for years. They make up a wider narrative pattern in which Montenegro is presented as the cradle of the Serbianness. This narrative lost in the referendum in 2006. The Montenegrin political and intellectual elites did not want or were not able to define the language of the independent state as the Serbian language, as they had chosen a different concept of Montenegro.

The identity and language changes in Montenegro

The results of the census of 2003 showed that more than 63 per cent of inhabitants of Montenegro recognised themselves as the users of the Serbian language, while less than 22 per cent declared that their native language was Montenegrin. It should be stressed that the census was carried out when Montenegro still formed the common state with Serbia, however, the Montenegrin governing elites had already set a course for independence. The question of the future of Montenegro – *pro/contra* independence – polarised then the society to such an extent that the self-determination and other issues of identity got a strong political tinge (Morrison, 2009, p. 12). Therefore people supporting the independence of Montenegro were preferably in favour of Montenegrin as their mother tongue, while those opting for remaining in the common state with Serbia declared that their mother tongue was Serbian (Greenberg, 2008, p. 9). The census data show clear disproportion between a declared nationality ("Serbian" / "Montenegrin") and a declared native language ("Serbian" / "Montenegrin"), as it can be estimated that out of 43 per cent of declared Montenegrins actually a half remained with Serbian as their native language.

The ethnic and linguistic situation in Montenegro in 2003²²

Nationality	Number	%	Native language	Number	%
Montenegrins	267,669	43.16	Montenegrin	136,208	21.96
Serbs	198,414	31.99	Serbian	393,740	63.49
Muslims	24,625	3.97	Bosnian	14,172	2.29
Bosniaks	48,184	7.77	Bosniak*	19,906	3.21
Albanians	31,163	5.03	Albanian	32,603	5.26
Croats	6,811	1.10	Croatian	2,791	0.45
Others	43,279	6.98	Other	20,725	3.34
Total	620,145	100	Total	620,145	100

* Although Bosniaks defined their language as "Bosnian", not all of them adopted this name. In Montenegro, Bosniaks or Muslims gave both Bosnian and Bosniak as the name of the language, although the latter term was in contradiction with the stand of the leaders of this national minority..

The results of the census of 2011 showed a slightly different situation. Despite noticeable changes in the ethnic structure, characterised by the increase of the number of declared Montenegrins relative to declared Serbs – nearly 45 per cent *versus* nearly 29 per cent – there is also an upward trend in the identification with the Montenegrin language. With approximately 37 per cent of declared users of Montenegrin we can therefore talk about a relative success of the Montenegrin language policy, at least as regards the determination of the own language. The number of persons who said that Serbian was their language decreased by more than 20 per cent and accounted for less than 43 per cent. Probably some part of these persons redefined their language for Bosnian, the number of declared users of this language increased compared to 2003. Since the number of users of the Serbian language was still greater than the number of people who declared the Serbian national identity, it can be assumed that the part of Bosniaks/Muslims, like Montenegrins, defined their language as Serbian²³. It is possible that in the future a tendency to decrease the number of declared users of Serbian will continue.

²² Prepared on the basis of: Zavod za statistiku Republike Crne Gore (2004): Popis stanovništva, domaćinstava i stanova u 2003. Stanovništvo: Vjeroispovjest, maternji jezik i nacionalna ili etnička pripadnost prema starosti i polu. Podaci poopštinama.

²³ It also seems likely that some of the people who declared that they were Muslims called their language Montenegrin. Matica muslimanska of Montenegro on its website described the language of Montenegrin Muslims as Montenegrin. See: "Muslimani Crne Gore" (n/a).

The ethnic and linguistic situation in Montenegro in 2011²⁴

Nationality	Number	%	Native language	Number	%
Montenegrins	278,865	44.98	Montenegrin	229,251	36.97
Serbs	178,110	28.73	Serbian	265,895	42.88
Muslims	20,537	3.31	Bosnian	33,077	5.33
Bosniaks	53,605	8.65	Bosniak	3,662	0.59
Albanians	30,439	4.91	Albanian	32,671	5.27
Croats	6,021	0.97	Croatian	2,791	0.45
Others	52,452	8.45	Other*	52,798	8.51
Total	620,029	100	Total	620,145	100

* The part of the population called their language Montenegrin-Serbian or Serbian-Montenegrin – 0.06 per cent and 0.1 per cent respectively. (Zavod za statistiku Republike Crne Gore, 2011). In Montenegro also 2.03 per cent declared the Serbo-Croatian language as their mother tongue, while 0.04 per cent chose the Croatian-Serbian language.

On the basis of this analysis it should be noted that the idea of the Montenegrin language neither was commonly accepted in Montenegro nor suffered defeat. It is adopted rather gradually, and at least it is not completely rejected. But the situation is different in the case of actual language reforms that usually are not accepted with enthusiasm. The public opinion poll of 2013 showed that almost half of the society (48.3 per cent) does not support language innovations, and this proportion increased by a few per cent in comparison with the year 2011 (“Stavovi”, 2013, p. 30). Due to this state of affairs the researchers of the poll concluded: “Time will tell whether the language reform – and in particular the standardisation and the introduction of new letters – will be adopted [by the society – *K.M.*] in its current version or will require appropriate adjustments” (“Stavovi”, 2013, p. 31).

²⁴ Prepared on the basis of: Zavod za statistiku Republike Crne Gore (2011): Popis stanovništva, domaćinstava i stanova u Crnoj Gori 2011. godine: Stanovništvo Crne Gore prema polu, tipu naselja, nacionalnoj, odnosno etničkoj pripadnosti, vjeroispovijesti i maternjem jeziku po opštinama u Crnoj Gori.

* * *

The Montenegrin ethnic and linguistic situation shows significantly that neither a language as a criterion of identity nor an identity *per se* are by no means constant. Because looking only at the census data concerning the native language it cannot be finally decided how many Montenegrins, Serbs, Bosniaks or Muslims are in fact in Montenegro. It will also be difficult to identify the identity of this small yet existing percentage of the population who called their language Montenegrin-Serbian or Serbian-Montenegrin. In conclusion, it should be noted that in the case of Montenegro not only the language itself but the dispute over the language has become an important component of Montenegrinness. “Everlasting linguistic conflict” – as in the epigraph of the article taken from Hobsbawm – proved largely to be the dispute about identity.

Translated by Joanna Modzelewska-Jankowiak

Bibliography

- Amfilohije: U Crnoj Gori se pokušava stvoriti novi jezik i neki novi čovjek–hibrid. (2014). Retrieved from: <http://www.vijesti.me/vijesti/amfilohije-u-crnoj-gori-se-pokusava-stvoriti-novi-jezik-i-neki-novi-covjekhibrid-177721>
- Amfilohije: U Crnoj Gori se uništava srpski i pretvara u nepostojeći crnogorski jezik. (2015). Retrieved from: <http://www.srbijadanas.com/clanak/amfilohije-u-crnoj-gori-se-unistava-srpski-i-pretvara-u-nepostojeci-crnogorski-jezik-28-01>
- Andrić, I. (1977). Njegoš jako tragiczny bohater kosowskiej idei. (J. Kornhauser, Trans.). In: H. Janaszek-Ivaničková (Ed.), *We własnych oczach: XX-wieczny esej zachodnio- i południowo-słowiański* (pp. 218–238). Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy.
- Andrijašević, Ž., & Rastoder, Š. (2006). *Istorija Crne Gore: Od najstarijih vremena do 2003*. Podgorica: Centar za iseljenike.
- Banac, I. (1984). *The national question in Yugoslavia: Origins, history, politics*. London: Cornell University Press.
- Čirgić, A. (2010). Povodom standardizacije crnogorskog jezika. *Matica*, (1), 7–48.
- Čirgić, A. (2011). *Crnogorski jezik u prošlosti i sadašnjosti*. Podgorica: Institut za crnogorski jezik i književnost, Matica crnogorska.
- Čirgić, A. (2016). Crnogorski jezik: Jedan od činilaca crnogorskoga identiteta. In: R. Vojvodić & J. Ljumović (Eds.), *Crnogorske studije culture i identiteta: Zbornik*. Cetinje: Fakultet dramskih umjetnosti.

- Čirgić, A., Pranjković, I., & Silić, J. (2010). *Gramatika crnogorskog jezika*. Podgorica: Ministarstvo prosvjete i nauke. Retrieved from: <https://crnogorskapitanja.files.wordpress.com/2012/08/gramatika-crnogorskoga-jezika.pdf>
- Čolović, I. (2007). *Balkany – terror kulture: Wybór eseju*. (M. Petryńska, Trans.). Wołowiec: Czarne.
- Džankić, J. (2014). Reconstructing the meaning of being “Montenegrin”. *Slavic Review*, 73(2), 347–371. <https://doi.org/10.5612/slavicreview.73.2.347>
- Edwards, J. (2009). *Language and identity*. New York: Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511809842>
- Felberg, T., & Šarić, L. (2013). Discursive construction of language identity through disputes in Croatian and Montenegrin Media. *Scando-Slavica*, 59(1), 7–31. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00806765.2012.740255>
- Fishman, J. (1993). *The earliest stage of language planning: The “First Congress” phenomenon*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110848984>
- Gil, D. (2005). *Prawosławie, historia, naród: Miejsce kultury duchowej w serbskiej tradycji i współczesności*. Kraków: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego.
- Glušica, R. (2009). Jezička politika u Crnoj Gori. *Riječ*, 1, 15–30.
- Glušica, R. (2010). Crnogorski jezik u čeljustima nacionalizma. *Riječ*, 4, 25–45.
- Greenberg, R. (2008). *Language and identity in the Balkans*. New York: Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199208753.001.0001>
- Hobsbawm, E. (1996). Language, culture, and national identity. *Social Research*, 63(4), 1065–1080.
- Institut za crnogorski jezik i književnost – Fakultet za crnogorski jezik i književnost. (n.d.). Retrieved from: <http://www.fcjk.me/institut-za-crnogorski-jezik-i-knjizevnost>
- Janković, S. (2015). *Crna Gora: Ćirilica neće biti 'ravnopravnija' od latinice*. Retrieved from: <http://www.slobodnaevropa.org/a/crna-gora-cirilica-nece-biti-ravnopravnija-od-latinice/26961486.html>
- Jaroszewicz, H. (2010–2011). Vojislava Nikčevića koncepcje rekonstrukcije jezika crnogorskog. *Socjolingwistyka*, 24–25, 91–110.
- Jaroszewicz, H. (2012). Najnowsze tendencje kodyfikacyjne w języku czarnogórskim (2006–2010). *Socjolingwistyka*, 26, 57–87.
- Karabeg, O., Nikčević, V., & Šćepanović, M. (1998). Da li postoji crnogorski jezik?. *Montenet, South Slavic service*. Retrieved from: <http://www.montenet.org/language/karabeg.html>
- Kordić, S. (2010). *Jezik i nacionalizam*. Zagreb: Durieux.
- Melnytska, K. (2016). Przeobrażenia tożsamościowe w Czarnogórze po rozpadzie Jugosławii. In: J. Wojnicki (Ed.), *Europa Środkowa a Bałkany: Determinanty i ograniczenia przemian* (pp. 277–289). Warszawa: ASPRA.
- Morrison, K. (2009). *Montenegro: A modern history*. London: IB Tauris.
- Muslimani Crne Gore. (n.d.). *Matica Muslimanska Crne Gore*. Retrieved from: <https://web.archive.org/web/20151102101253/http://www.maticamuslimanska.me/mcg/>

Nakazawa, T. (2015). The making of “Montenegrin Language”: Nationalism, language planning, and language ideology after the collapse of Yugoslavia (1992–2011). *Südosteuropäische Hefte*, 4(1), 127–141.

Oglašavanje povodom negiranja prirodnog prava Crnogoraca da u svojoj domovini koriste crnogorski jezik. (2009). Retrieved from: <http://www.cpc.org.me/mne/saopstenja.php?id=4>

Pavlović, S. (2003). Who are Montenegrins? Statehood, identity, and civic society. In: F. Bieber (Ed.), *Montenegro in transition: Problems of identity and statehood* (pp. 83–106). Baden-Baden: Nomos.

Perović, M., Silić, J., & Vasiljeva, L. (2009). *Pravopis crnogorskog jezika i rječnik crnogorskog jezika (pravopisni rječnik)*. Podgorica: Ministarstvo prosvjete i nauke. Retrieved from: <http://www.gov.me/files/1248442673.pdf>

Resolution of the Montenegrin P.E.N. Center on the Endangerment of Montenegrin Culture, People and State. (1994). Retrieved from: <http://www.montenegro.org/endanger.html>

Roberts, E. (2007). *Realm of the Black Mountain: A history of Montenegro*. London: Hurst & Company.

Stavovi crnogorskih gradana o identitetu u 2013: Istraživanje CEDEM-a sa komentarom. (2013). *Matica*, (1), 49–82. Retrieved from: <http://www.maticacrnogorska.me/files/54/04%20crnogorski%20gradjani%20o%20identitetu.pdf>

Stojanović, J. (2011). *Putevima srpskog jezika i ćirilice*. Nikšić: Izdavački centar Matice srpske.

Ukaz o proglašenju Zakona o Matici crnogorskoj. (2008). *Službeni list Crne Gore*, 21(08). Retrieved from: <http://www.ministarstvokulture.gov.me/>

Ustav Crne Gore. (2007). Retrieved from: <http://www.skupstina.me/images/dokumenti/ustav-crne-gore.pdf>

Ustav Republike Crne Gore. (1992). *Službeni list RCG*, (48(92)). Retrieved from: http://www.uniset.ca/microstates/montenegro_1055251939.pdf

Ustav Savezne Republike Jugoslavije. (1992). *Službeni list SRJ*, (1(92)). Retrieved from: <http://eudo-citizenship.eu/NationalDB/docs/MON%20FRY%20ustav%20srj%201992.pdf>

Wachtel, A. (2004). How to use a classic: Petar Petrović Njegoš in the twentieth century. In: J. Lampe & M. Mazower (Eds.), *Ideologies and national identities the case of twentieth-century Southeastern Europe* (pp. 131–153). Budapest: Central European University Press.

Wrocławski, K. (2002). Czarnogóra – Czarnogórcy. *Lithuania*, (1/2(42/43)), 131–136.

Wrocławski, K. (2005). Mniejszość we własnym kraju? — rzecz o Czarnogórcach. In: M. Dąbrowski (Ed.), *Literatury słowiańskie po roku 1989: Nowe zjawiska, tendencje, perspektywy* (Vol. 4, *Mniejszości*, pp. 158–167). Warszawa: Kolor.

Zalewski, K. (2010). *Naród, religia, rasa: Muzułmańskie ideologie i ruchy narodowe pogranicza w Południowo-Wschodniej Europie*. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo TRIO.

Zavod za statistiku Republike Crne Gore. (2004). *Popis stanovništva, domaćinstava i stanova u 2003. Stanovništvo prema vjeroispovjesti, maternjim jeziku i nacionalna ili etnička pripadnost*

prema starosti i polu. Podgorica: Zavod za statistiku Republike Crne Gore. Retrieved from: <http://www.monstat.org/userfiles/file/popis03/saopstenje60.pdf>

Zavod za statistiku Republike Crne Gore. (2011). *Popis stanovništva, domaćinstava i stanova u Crnoj Gori 2011. godine: Stanovništvo Crne Gore prema polu, tipu naselja, nacionalnoj, odnosno etničkoj pripadnosti, vjeroispovijesti i maternjem jeziku po opštinama u Crnoj Gori*. Podgorica: Zavod za statistiku Crne Gore. Retrieved from: [http://www.monstat.org/userfiles/file/popis2011/saopstenje/saopstenje\(1\).pdf](http://www.monstat.org/userfiles/file/popis2011/saopstenje/saopstenje(1).pdf)

Language and Identity: The Case of Montenegro

Abstract

The Montenegrin language was established as the official language of newly independent Montenegro in 2007. However, the idea of a separate Montenegrin language remained dormant until the mid-1990s, when a small group of Montenegrin pro-independence intellectuals, aiming to reconstruct all the trappings of a separate Montenegrin identity, started to emphasize the distinctiveness of the language of Montenegrins. How did it happen that once being a marginal idea, Montenegrin became the native language for almost 37 percent of the Montenegrin population in 2011? This article is an attempt to answer this question. It provides a brief overview of the language situation in Montenegro from the time of socialist Yugoslavia to the independence era, paying attention to the changes in the political elites' attitudes towards the language issue. The standardization process of the Montenegrin language is described by focusing on the aspects, which are considered most significant from the perspective of identity. The paper also describes how the Montenegrin language is being narratized so that the language narrative is being produced as a part of the broader narrative about the Montenegrin identity. Finally, an analysis of the last two censuses' data reveals changes in the population structure in Montenegro according to nationality and mother tongue between 2003 and 2011, i.e. the period when the issues of identity and language became extremely politicized.

Keywords:

language, identity, Montenegro, Montenegrin identity, Montenegrin language

Język a tożsamość: przypadek Czarnogóry

Abstrakt

Język czarnogórski został uznany za język urzędowy niepodległej Czarnogóry w 2007 roku. Temat odrębnego języka w Czarnogórze został nagłośniony dopiero w połowie lat 90. ubiegłego wieku przez niewielką grupę zorientowanych niepodległościowo intelektualistów, dążących do rekonstrukcji wszystkich aspektów odrębnej tożsamości czarnogórskiej. Podstawowe pytanie, na które artykuł odpowiada, brzmi: jak to się stało, że choć idea odrębności językowej była początkowo marginalna, język czarnogórski był w 2011 roku językiem ojczystym dla prawie 37 proc. ludności Czarnogóry? Artykuł przedstawia krótki zarys sytuacji językowej w Czarnogórze od czasów socjalistycznej Jugosławii do czasów niepodległości, z uwzględnieniem ewolucji w podejściu elit politycznych do kwestii języka czarnogórskiego. Omawia też przebieg i kluczowe aspekty procesu standaryzacji języka czarnogórskiego, uznane za istotne z punktu widzenia tożsamości. Kolejnym aspektem jest narratyzowanie języka czarnogórskiego i będąca jego wynikiem narracja o języku czarnogórskim jako części szerszej czarnogórskiej narracji tożsamościowej. Wreszcie – analiza danych spisów ludności z lat 2003 i 2011 ukazuje przemiany, które zaszły w strukturze narodowościowej i językowej w Czarnogórze w omawianym okresie, kiedy kwestie tożsamości i języka uległy silnej polityzacji.

Słowa kluczowe:

język, tożsamość, Czarnogóra, tożsamość czarnogórska, język czarnogórski