Language as a Friend-or-Foe Marker: the Case of "Еднооки"*

It is well-known that in multilingual/multiethnic societies the usage of any language is culturally significant. The linguistic situation in the Balkan countries provides many examples supporting this statement. In my report I am going to describe the roles of different languages in a Macedonian satirical animated show called "Еднооки" ("The One-Eyed"), depicting politicians and ordinary people representing different national characters (Albanian, Bulgarian, Greek, Macedonian, Serbian and some other).

My report is structured as follows: first I would like to briefly dwell upon the linguistic situation in the Republic of Macedonia, then I shall describe the languages used in "Еднооки" and their characteristic features represented by the speakers voicing the show. After that I shall give some consideration to their marked usage.

The South Slavic dialects in former Yugoslavia amd Bulgaria as well as in some neighboring countries make up a continuum withiin which a speaker of any dialect can understand a speaker of any other dialect (Friedman 1993: 75). That is why the question of literary norm becomes of high importance for modern South Slavic states — language is understood as a *conditio sine qua non* for a nation to exist. As was pointed out by Ranko Bugarski (1992: 21): "Disputes over language often serve as a mere cover for economic, political, national and other conflicts, which makes rational solutions to evem fairly simple problems unduly complicated or impossible to reach". A prominent Russian Balkanist, Tatiana Civjan, looks at the problem from another angle: according to her, these disputes over language are evidence of a very special attitude towards language

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as one of the most valuable objects the people possess: "A special, 'biased' attitude towards a language enables speakers to examine it with more attention to sense its unique features, to attempt to protect it, that is to say, it makes possible the elaboration of a distanced stance toward the language, compared to when the language is perceived as a given, as an inalieable possession that is not remarked upon" (Цивьян 1990: 87: "[О]собое, »пристрастное« отношение к языку позволяло рассмотреть его пристальнее, ощутить его неповторимые особенности, стараться их оберегать, т.е. способствовало выработке остраненного отношения к языку, ухода от того аморфного состояния, когда язык воспринимается как данность, как неотчуждаемая собственность, которая не замечается"). At the same time, the situation of multilingual contact always throws together the community of speakers with other communities who speak other languages. It evokes an attitude towards the languages of others as a value, a possession by which speakers can profit, which gives grounding to the following statement: "A Balkan person is the one who speaks many languages" (ibidem, 98). Tatjana Civjan proposes the following model of language contact:

- 1) both communicators (suppose that they speak different mother languages) speak lingua franca, a language which is not mother tongue for any of them;
- 2) one of the communicators speaks his/her mother language and the second communicator uses the same language;
 - 3) both communicators use their own languages (ibidem, 154).

The choice between these three options happens due to several factors, and it is doubtful that efficiency of communication occupies the most significant place among them. Referring to the political situation in Macedonia, Victor Friedman says, that "[f]or all parties language has become the symbol through which a variety of conflicts are played out" (Friedman 2004: 86).

I would like to begin with the linguistic situation in the Republic of Macedonia. Here, much work has been done by Victor Friedman (Friedman 1993, 2003; 2004, 2006), so I use some of his data to give a general, brief overview. The official state language of the Republic of Macedonia is Macedonian, belonging to the eastern subgroup of South Slavic languages. It is mutually comprehensible with the languages of two neighboring countries: Bulgaria and Serbia. According to the census of 2002, it is a mother tongue for 66,5% of the population. Albanian is a mother tongue for 25,1%. These two groups are the most significant in Macedonia. There are other minorities as well (those having Turkish as their mother tongue with 3,5% of the whole population; Romani with 1,9%; Serbian with 1,2%, Bosnian with 0,4% and Balkan Romance with 0,3%),

but their number is not very significant (Герасимовски 2002: 197).

By the SFRJU Constitution of 1974 "the languages of the Yugoslav nations and nationalities [were] equal, regardless of number of speakers or other considerations" (Bugarski 1992: 19), but the most widely used language on the federal level was Serbo-Croatian, serving as lingua franca. Here I do not want to discuss the relationships to Serbo-Croatian, Croatian, Bosnian, and Montenegrin, because in Macedonia "the former Serbo-Croatian <...> has generally meant *cpncκu* 'Serbian'" (Friedman 2004: 210). Up until the break-up of Socialist Yugoslavia, Macedonian has been under its strong influence (cf. Lunt 1986). In Macedonia even nowadays in the speech of some older generations communicating with foreigners who speak Macedonian with an accent, codeswitching to Serbo-Croatian takes place. It appears that some native Macedonian speakers tend to identify their own language in use by a foreigner as an outer language.

Albanian is primarily the language of the Albanian population, but after Ohrid agreements in 2001 it began to take new positions in society as a language of administration in municipalities with significant numbers of Albanian speakers. Some Albanian politicians speak Albanian even with Macedonian media (and it does not matter if they are fluent in Macedonian as well – as I stated above, efficiency is only one of the factors for the choice of language of communication).

It is worth noting that some international languages are now widely known in Macedonia: first of all, English. The use of English throughout modern Balkans even gave the opportunity to Victor Freidman to compare its role with that of Turkish several centuries ago (a note Friedman made in a discussion during the 10th Congress of AIESEE in 2009).

The weekly animated show "Еднооки" ("The One-eyed"), which is my primary interest in this paper, is made by Kontrabanda group and has been broadcast on Kanal 5 in Macedonia for several years. It depicts modern Macedonian politicians in humorous sketches describing some current political, economical and social issues. Unfortunately the show does not have any official site for now. The data I use in this report is collected from YouTube. Com, where some of the episodes were uploaded by some fans of the show. It is not systematical and the number of episodes available is relatively small in Comparison with the time period the show is being broadcasted (since 2006). The episodes from 20.09.2009 are available on the official site of Kanal 5. The total length of the episodes used as data for this report is about 8 hours.

I would like to start with a very characteristic sketch, dealing with so-called

Macedonian issue, which nowadays continues to be political. In the fragment (see Appendix 1) representatives of several Balkan nations are discussing the nationality of Alexander the Macedonian. First I am going briefly to introduce its content in English and then discuss the symbolic usage of different languages in the show using the data of this sketch and other sketches as well.

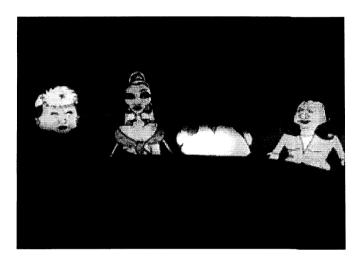


Table 1. Who is Alexander the Macedonian?

The sketch represents a round table with a Macedonian Albanian ("Ali"), a Bulgarian, a Serb and a Greek sitting at it (from left to right). Some of them are so-called 'spitting images' of some modern politicians; however, it is not my aim to say who is represented by which of the animated 'puppets'. The discussion is started by the Macedonian Albanian, who says that Alexander is Albanian, because he was a child of two Albanians: Philip and Olympiad. The Serb opposes him and says that it is well-known, that Serbia covers the land up to Tokyo, and Philip and Alexander are Serbian names. The Albanian argues that at least Philip is an Albanian name. The Greek says that surely Alexander was neither Albanian, nor Serbian, because his father was Greek and he killed Greeks, too. The Bulgarian girl says that first of all, Alexander was sexy. And if anyone is sexy, then he is Bulgarian, like a modern Bulgarian popular singer Azis.

The choice and usage of the languages in the quoted sketch is quite remarkable. Let us describe the languages used by different characters.

Albanians and Albanian

In the show they mainly use some sort of mixed Macedonian-Albanian, which is most obvious on the level of phonetics: the use of Albanian consonants q IPA: [te] and gj IPA: [dz] in place of the Macedonian κ IPA: [c] and r IPA: [J]. The consonant l (which in literary Macedonian should sound like [l]) is palatalized to something in between Albanian l IPA: [l] and Macedonian r IPA: [r] instead of the Macedonian r IPA: [r] (like in [protest] instead of [protest]). The other characteristic Albanian consonant used in the speech of Albanians in the show is r0 IPA: [r0]: "Господине Красничи?" — "Dha?" ("Mister Krasnici?" — "How can I help you?"). The combination like r1 in his speech very often turns into r2 in the r3 in the speech of Albanian trait of regressive voiced assimilation.

On the level of morphology and word-formation there are also some interesting features. Very often sentences he builds are not concord, like Филип и он... Ољим-пљи-пљи-пљи-љада се Албанец _{Sg} instead of Албанци _{Pl}. Sometimes he uses Albanian suffixes like -ish(t) (maqedonish(t) instead of македонски), or even Albanian case forms, like "Udruženje četnika Kosoves" (in another sketch: instead of Serbian "Udruženje četnika Kosova"). In yet another sketch (Appendix 2) the same Albanian starts to conjugate the verb пукам 'shoot', but he does it correctly only in 1sg-3sg and 1pl, while 2pl and 3pl are the same as 1pl (jac пукам, ти пукаш, он пука, ми пукаме, ви пукаме, они пукаме). In the Macedonian words with the Slavic suffix -ica, which was loaned into Albanian as -icë (e.g., rrugicë 'street Deminutive') the suffix gains its Albanised form, like bolnic 'hospital' (Macedonian болница, lit. Alb. spital).

This very sort of accent is used even if Albanians speak English: [The Psychiatrist:] "Now could you tell me, what are you?" [The Albanian:] "Aljbanac be, from Iliridha! Born in Kosovës! Mein country is Dardhanija! My grandgrand-grand-fethar Alexander from Makedonija! I am myself." (Here Kosovës 'Kosovo _{Gen}' is mistakenly used instead of Kosovë _{Acc}, cf. the right Albanian variant *lindur në Kosovë* 'born in Kosovo').

Many features of the Albanian speech in the show, which might be considered Serbisms (personal pronouns 1sg ja, 3sg oh, oha, oho; and 1pl hu, 3pl ohu (instead of 1sg jac, 3sg moj, maa, moa; and 1pl hu, 2pl hu, 3pl hu); the verbal ending of 1pl hu0 instead of hu2 instead of hu3 instead of hu4 instead of hu6 instead of hu6 instead of hu7 instead of hu8 are a reflex of Proto-Slavic hu9 are actually characteristic for Tetovo dialect, where many Albanians, living nowadays in Skopje, come from.

The Albanian speech in the show varies. In the very first episodes, broadcasted in 2007, the intonation of the Albanian Macedonian speech is poorer, and sometimes glossolalia is used as a technique to imitate it. Besides that, different Albanian characters speak differently. The most frequent Albanian character in the show is Ali. All the listed features can be applied to his manner of speaking. There is also another remarcable character, whose name unfortunately is ommitted (but who looks like a spitting image of Menduh Taçi). His speech pattern does not differ from literary Macedonian but in intonation. I assume that it is because of the fact, that in the real political life of Macedonia the politician Ali depicts insists on speaking only Albanian with the media, while Menduh Taçi uses the most proper language in every situtation.

In the episode broadcasted on 15.11.2009 one of the rare cases when the Albanian language (and not Macedonian language with an Albanian accent) is used in the show takes place. A Macedonian Albanian representative is being sent to the European Parliament and a Macedonian politician sees him off. To mark the specialness of the moment, the Macedonian politician pronounces a speech in Albanian. Unfortunately, the speaker voicing the politician does not speak Albanian, so he is just reading the text without proper intonating and with a strong Macedonian accent. Besides that, the character he is voicing has several speech defects (exaggerated in the show), so it is practically impossible to understand what the speech is about. Only some words frequent in Albanian (political) discourse can be heard, among them: besën 'oath Definite.Acc', Çlirim 'liberation', pabashkuara 'ununited Pl', shpëtim 'saving'. But the Albanian representative answers: "Zare! I'm European now, bre! I don't understand now these Balkan barbarian languages, eh!"

Other Former Yugoslav Nations and BCS

The Serbs in the show speak Serbian. It is slightly different from the language used in Serbia, mainly in its phonetics and can be described as Serbian, spoken by Macedonians. It is remarkable however, that it is mostly provided with subtitles, even if it is absolutely clear for any Macedonian, cf.: *Ma ko se raspada bre!/A бе, кој се pacnaѓa!* or *Spašavaj, brate!/Cnacyвaj, брат!* (Еднооки, 06.06.09).

At the same time, Serbian is spoken by Macedonian characters as well. It happens, when the action recalls some historical events and phenomena (for example, when communicating with the Yugoslavian security agency UDBA (*Uprava državne bezbednosti* 'Department of State Security') or some current trends coming to Macedonia from former Yugoslav republics, first of all turbo-

folk music).

As was stated before, in Macedonia Serbo-Croatian meant first and foremost Serbian. But another variety of former Serbo-Croatian is used in the show as well: the Bosnian. In the episode broadcasted on 04.10.2009 there is a sketch with a Bošnjak, extrapolating the situation in Macedonia onto that in Bosnia and Herzegovina. His speech is remarkable because of the jekavian accent, with which Bosnian is generally associated (though the accent is spoken in Croatia and parts of Serbia as well): *vijesti* 'news _{Pl}', *su…nasijeli* _{3Pl.Praet} 'settle', *namješteni* 'placed _{Pl.Part}'.

Greeks and the language they use

The Greeks speak English with a Greek accent, sometimes using some internationally known Greek words and suffixes, like in the quoted sketch about Alexander the Macedonian: *Ohi Servia*, *ohi Albania! Alexandros is Greek*. In one of the episodes there is Demosthenes, who also speaks English, but without a clear Greek accent. He excuses his speaking English, not Greek, like this: "You must excuse me that I speak on English. But the authors of this gag do not speak Hellenic".

Bulgarians and Bulgarian

Bulgarians in the show are very rare. In the quoted sketch the Bulgarian speaks what could be referred to as 'Bulgarian in the eyes of Macedonian'. The markers of this 'Bulgarian' are the use of the specific Bulgarian phoneme $\mathfrak{F}[\mathfrak{F}]$ and also $\mathfrak{F}[\mathfrak{F}]$ on the place of Proto-Slavic **e 'jat' (where Macedonian got [e]). So these features become markers of 'Bulgarianness' of the text for Macedonians, even if the text itself wouldn't be considered Bulgarian: cf. the Russian word κOPD instead of the Bulgarian κOPD and the word ∂PPD ∂PPD which does not even exist in Bulgarian (see Appendix 1). Bulgarian speech can be found in some other episodes:

Аз не влагам. Аз съм тука. Ела си при мене кај браќата Българи ('I do not enter. I am always here. Come with me to Bulgarian brothers' – 08.03.2008). Strictly speaking this piece of text could be taken as an example of some mixed Macedonian-Bulgarian speech. But at the same time it contains certain markers of 'bulgarianness': the phoneme \mathfrak{b} [\mathfrak{d}] on the places of Macedonian \mathfrak{d} (съм instead of *cym*) and - \mathfrak{b} - \mathfrak{d} - in the word Българи 'Bulgarians' instead of - \mathfrak{g} -; the Bulgarian (etymologically a loan from Greek, but this is not recalled in the show) word *ena* instead of the Macedonian \mathfrak{d} 0 \mathfrak{g} 0 \mathfrak{d} 0.

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Също. Everything is Bulgarian. Macedonia също е Bulgaria. God is Bulgarian! ('Also. Everything is Bulgarian, Macedonia is also Bulgaria. God is Bulgarian' – 2009.11.22). Here we deal with a mixture of Bulgarian and English, but the "bulgarianness" of the speech is marked by the adverb също 'also', containing ъ [ә].

Other nations and languages

There are other characters in the show as well. It can be concluded, that the default language for any character from the West is English (sometimes with a considerable degree of Macedonian phonetic accent and even lexical calques. but they do not bear any additional meaning and are caused by the specifics of the speakers' English). It is the language of anything marked as foreign in a positive or neutral way. As a means of communication, it is of high value. For example in the episode aired on 02.08.2007 there is an advertisement for intimate service in English, with a short remark in Macedonian at the end: Koj разбра – разбра. Кој не разбрал, нека учи англиски на време! ('It's good for those, who understood it; let those, who didn't, learn English on time!'). For the makers of the show English is a language symbolising American culture. Whenever an allusion to American films is made, the characters use English: in sketches based on "The Godfather" or different American action films the characters use English as well. Maybe it is due to the fact, that the foreign films (with the majority of them made in the USA) in Macedonia are always projected with subtitles and the original sound. Other languages (sometimes only as elements) can be used as well.

In the episode broadcasted on 31.05.09 in a sketch "President Jorje at the Pope's" there is a discussion between the character depicting the President of Macedonia and the character depicting the Pope. First, the Macedonian tries to speak some Latin, but it does not make any sense: *Omnia mea mecum portum validatum*. When the Pope asks the Macedonian in German, what he is talking about, the latter switches to German for a while, but can not even finish the sentence and switch to other languages as well: *Das ist keine grosse corpus hermeticum pour mois* <unidentifiable murmur>. This sentence begins in German, then continues in Latin, then French follows. Then the character tries some Italian unlinked phrases. The Pope switches to English but it can not help the situation – the discussion can not proceed. In this sketch the idea is clear: to make joke of the Macedonian politician, because he does not speak foreign languages.

In the episode broadcasted on 24.05.09 there is a conversation between

some other Macedonian politician and the president of France. It consists of a list of different wines and dishes from French cuisine, but here the idea is to imitate a French small-talk, with the main point expressed by the Macedonian character in Macedonian at the very end of the sketch: it turned out, that he had put a dollar into the basket with fruit he gave to the French president, so now it is a sort of bribery and the French president must take Macedonian side in the Macedonian issue.

Some foreign languages in the show can play a different role. As the audience is well aware of the Macedonian political agenda and the characters after some time have inevitably lost the attractiveness of being new, the authors of the show started to experiment with different time and place settings. The characters are brought to various epochs and countries and language is used as a marker. For example in the episode aired on 25.10.2010 the characters are brought to Spain and are given names of some characters from Spanish literature. At the same time they speak Spanish with Macedonian subtitles. The episode aired on 18.04.2010 is remarkable due to the fact that all the characters speak Swedish. It sets in an alternative world, where there is a significant Swedish minority in Macedonia and it disagrees with the fact that it is renamed as Northern Macedonia. And the subtitles are provided only for some significant parts of the episode, essential for understanding the idea of the authors. The remaining part is in Swedish, and it is noting like glossolalia - the text had been given to a translator and only than sounded. It does not contradict the fact that the speakers do not speak any Swedish and just read the text they are given, so the understanding of the episode is difficult even for a native speaker of Swedish.

Surely there is some place for playing a fool: the Arab terrorists, African indigenous people and many other characters the authors did not want to specify speak a sort of glossolalia, which has nothing to do with any language at all.

It is now clear that use of any language except Macedonian in the show is marked. We have seen how the languages are attested: from languages represented and functioning as systems (which is the case of English) through languages attested only as fragments (like French or German) to cases where languages are reduced to accent (the case of Albanian) or represented as antisystems on the basis of Macedonian (the case of Bulgarian) and to cases of mere 'barbarized' languages (if we consider the etymology of the word $\beta \alpha \rho \beta \alpha \rho \sigma$ 0 'people who do not speak an intelligible language, so it looks like bar-bar-bar'). But it is only a means aiming to mark any character in the show as friend or foe.

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Appendix

The sketch about Alexander the Macedonian

Macedonian Albanian: (speaks Macedonian with an Види сега, ќе ти... ќе го кажам сви да го чуев. Александар Мачедоништ е наш, свакаш? Он се викал Александар Аљбаништ! Пошто су мачедоништ биле словени! А и Фил-

Now look, I'll tell everybody to hear. Alexander the Macedonian is ours, got it? He was called Alexander the Albanian! Because Macedonians were Slavs! And Philip and that woman

Alban	ian
accen	t)

ип, и он... Ољим-пљи-пљи-љада се Аљбанец. И го раѓали на Александар, и он го освојал свет! И свето го правел за Аљба-ба-нија бе! called Olympiad were Albanians. And they born Alexander and he got the world! And he made the world for Albania!

Serbian: (speaks Serbian)

E kako to klipane, ceo svet je Albanija, kad se zna da je Srbija do Tokije. Znači ceo svet je Srbija! Slušaj malo sebe! Filip i Aleksandar! Kakva su to imena?

How is this, the whole world is Albania, when we know, that Serbia is up to Tokyo. So the whole world is Serbia! Just listen what you are talking about! Philip and Alexander! What kind of names are those?

Subs: Како тоа, цел свет Албанија, кога се знае дека Србија е до Токио. Значи цел свет е Србија! Слушни малку. Какви имиња се Филип и Александар?

Look! Do you know how many Albanians there are who are called Philip?!

Macedonian Albanian: (speaks Macedonian with an Albanian accent)

Види вака! Знаеш ли ти колу Аљбанци има што се викаат Филип?

(speaks English with a Greek accent)

Greek:

Ohi Servia, ohi Albania! Alexandros is Greek, because his father is Greek and he killed Greeks. because he is Greek.

Neither Serbia, nor Albania! Alexander is Greek, because his father is Greek and he killed Greeks, because he is Greek.

Bulgarian: (speaks broken Bulgarian) На какви са тези дендупки? Александър е секси! А къгда е некой секси, он е бъл-га-рин! И цял свят е България! Като Азис! What stupid things you are saying! Alexander is sexy! And when someone is sexy, he is Bul-ga-rian! And the whole world is Bulgaria! Like Azis!

<u>Subs</u>: Какви се овие глупости? Александар е секси, а кога некој е секси, тој е Бугарин. И цел свет е Бугарија, како Азис.

A Macedonian Albanian about culture (Еднооки, 02.03.2008)

За АВНОЈ, тој што го биљ, на пготест пгед Амбасада на Чеверија, то... то је једна некуљтурни куљтуга, пошто он некуљтугно погаџал со камен на Ггк. Мачедонис е некуљтурни народ и ја мислим да треби да го нема. Ми, ми колко када го правиме имена сљава и на пготест, па то се зна: ја го пукам со бомба, ти го пукаш со "Зоља", он го пука на калашнигков, ми го пукаме со тенк, ви го пукаме со хаубица, они го пукаме со базук, то ти е култуга, е?

For AVNOJ (Anti-Fascist Council of the People's Liberation of Yugoslavia), he that stroke him near the Embassy of the Authority, it is not a cultural culture, because he hit the Greek with a stone in a non-cutural way. Macedonians are not a cultural people and I think it must happen that they disappear. We, when we fest the day of the person's name, or when we protest against anything, it is known: I shoot with a bomb, you shoot with a M80 Rocket Launcher, he shoots with Kalashnikov, we shoot from a tank, you shoot from a howitzer, they shoot from a bazooka, that's what we call culture, eh?

Случај на "едноок"

Се знае, дека во мултилингвални/мултиетнички заедници употребата на секој јазик е културолошки значајна. Во рефератов се опишуваат улогите на различни јазици во сатиричкото македонско шоу "Еднооки", во кое се покажуваат политичари и обични луѓе (кои претставуваат различни народности: Албанци, Бугари, Грци, Срби и некои други). Бидејќи аудиториумот на шоуто е во главно македонски, материјалот сведочи однесување на овој дел на македонското општество кон другите, кое е одразено во јазикот на ликовите. Јазиците на "другите" во рамките на шоуто функционираат различно: како системи (англиски), како фрагменти (француски или немски), како јазици, сведени кон акцент (албански), како антисистеми на базата на македонскиот (бугарски) и како "варваризирани" јазици, претставени како глосолалија. Ама секој јазик во шоуто се јавува како еден од основните белези, кои ги карактеризираат ликовите како свои, односно, туѓи.

Poznać Bałkany

HISTORIA – POLITYKA – KULTURA – JĘZYKI

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