

# A concrete situation of linguistic contact Romanian-Ukrainian

---

Angela ROBU

[angelyk2009@yahoo.com](mailto:angelyk2009@yahoo.com)

Ștefan cel Mare University of Suceava (Romania)

**Резюме:** В об'єднаній Європі, яка підтримує принципи *Єдність у різноманітті*, питання мовного контакту між двома мовами, що належать, генеалогічно, до неспоріднених сім'ям, є надзвичайно актуальним. Проблема полілінгвізму та, загалом, мультикультуралізму на Буковині викликало і викликає особливий інтерес, не тільки серед лінгвістів, а й з точки зору соціології, антропології, етнографії та фольклору.

**Ключові слова:** *білінгвізм, мовний контакт, лінгвістична інтерференція.*

The issues of linguistic contact (bilingualism, diglossia, linguistic interference) are and shall be more and more important in a united Europe that try to find its common origins. In these circumstances, which overlap the ones of a multilingual and multicultural Bukovina, the problem of linguistic contact between two languages belonging genealogically to unrelated families – slavic and romanic – is of utmost novelty.

We have decided to offer a description and an interpretation of the Ukrainian language spoken in a small region of Suceava County, which could be catalogued as: Ukrainian language, South-Western dialect, Bukovinean-Galician subdialect, variety of the Pocutian-Bukovinean type, area Călinești Cuparencu – Șerbăuți.

The studied area (Călinești Cuparencu) neighbours the variety of the type huțulo-bukovinean spoken in the neighbouring vilage, Călinești Enache, with which it differs in phonetical, morphological and syntactical features.

Călinești Cuparencu is originally a Romanian village, the oldest document attesting its existence being dated 15th of March 1490. This village has been sistematically colonized by Ukrainians, who established here in the second half of the 18th century, due to the harsh conditions in Galicia. We must specify that they established here on their will, fleeing from the regime instituted by the Polish feudal lords..

At present the village is inhabited 80% by Ukrainian ethnics and 20% by other ethnic groups. In the lingyistic case of Călinești Cuparencu, almost all the speakers are bilingual. The exception are the persons of different ethnic groups (Romanian, Roma)

recently entered in the community. Romanian and Ukrainian languages interfere without a competition between the two languages. Within families and in usual conversations Ukrainian prevails. The administrative and technical-scientific language appeal to the Romanian terms, the Ukrainian ones being unknown to the speakers that interrupted the contact with the evolution of Ukrainian language.

Following the classification of the *The General Dictionary of Linguistic Sciences*, we have noticed that the linguistic situation of the Ukrainian speakers in the researched area is determined by several factors:

- according to the family environment from which they come (families with both parents Ukrainian or with one Ukrainian and the other of different ethnicity);
- age of the speakers (elderly people prefer communicating in the mother language while children and younger people prefer the Romanian language, though they can speak Ukrainian too);
- area in which they live (those living in the central area speak well both Ukrainian and Romanian. There is also a more isolated area where only the Ukrainian language is used, the speakers here expressing themselves with difficulty in Romanian language, and the children learning Romanian only in school);
- occupation (the persons that work in the city or in the local administration speak more Romanian, using Ukrainian mostly in the community and in family).

Below we will just show you a few elements regarding the history and the dialectal structure of Ukrainian language. We refer here to some linguistic facts that contribute to the individualisation of Ukrainian among slavic languages. Among the most important particularities we mention:

- the existence of a characteristic vowel (*и*) between *i* and *e*: *колыска* “cradle”, *син* “son”, *книга* “book”;
- very many soft consonants (long): *життя* “life”, *обличчя* “chick”, *суддя* “judge”;
- the singular feminine vocative ends in *о*: *жінко*, *Наталко*, and in the masculine ends in *-е*: *Миколо*, *Петре*, *чоловіче*.

Ukrainian has evolved from the Eastern common slavic, obtaining as of the 11th century a regional specificity, known as Southern Russian. The specific features of Ukrainian appear as early as the 12th century (alternation between *y* and *ѣ*, *e* and *o* after a whistling and *j*, endings *-ови*, *-єви* in dative singular, masculine, ending *-и* in the genitive singular of the nouns that end in *-я* (*земля* – *землі*), the apparition of the preterite from ending in *-тъ*), but separates as a distinct language only in the 14th century. The history of Ukrainian language has two stages: *the old age* (up to the 18th century) and *the modern age* (from the 19th century up to the present day). All of the histories of the Ukrainian language mention the decisive contribution of Taras Şevcenko’s work.

In what the dialectal structure of this slavic language is concerned, the quasigeneral classification comprises three dialects: polisian (*поліський*) or northern (*північноукраїнський*), south-western (*південно-західний*), south-eastern (*південно-східний*). The most similarities have been noticed between the south-eastern and south-western dialects, while the polisian (northern) has a specific phonetic system and grammar level (morphology and syntax), and on the lexical level differs obviously from the varieties of the southwestern dialect. It is considered that the base of the Ukrainian literary language is the south-eastern dialect (varieties from from the middle Dnieper).

By studying the varieties of the south-western dialect we came to the conclusion that the investigated area belongs to the south western dialect, Bukovinean-galician subdialect,

variety of the pocuto-bukovinean type. Among the most important features of the pocuto-bukovinean varieties (specific to the variety we researched) we mention the following:

- at the phonetic level: the consonants *c'*, *y'* placed at the end of the word are pronounced hard: *хтос*, *хлопиѣц*, *дес*; the passing of the dentals *д*, *т* into *к*, *г* especially when they are followed by *і* or *и* (this transformation results from the stron palatalization): *к'ишко*, *г'іч'іна*; the palatalization of the vibrant *р* within or at the end of the word: *пор'идок*, *вакар'*, *дохтор'ка*;
- at the morphologic level: the formation of the degrees of comparison of adjectives and adverbs by means of suffixes *-ишч'ь-*, *-иш'ь-*, *-ч-*: *дајун'ишч'ї*, *менче*, also by means of the particle *маї*: *маї добра*, *маї борзо*; there are used forms of infinitive that end in *-чи*, *-чі*: *п'ічи*, *стрич'і*, usage of the forms of the 2<sup>nd</sup> conjugation, 3<sup>rd</sup> person plural omitting the final *т*: *уни хог'е*, *нос'е*, *мус'е*;
- at the lexical level one may notice the preservation of older words that do not correspond to the norms of the literary language any longer: *кн'ігун'а*, *веремн'і*, *дзитарок*, *куча*; as well as terms of Romanian origin: *дзестр'а*, *пагар'*, *сарака*, *дулч'иц'і*, *тав'іца*, *вакар'*.

As all the linguists involved in the problem of the languages in contact have noticed, most of the times, in a natural way, the two languages do not have the same inventory of phonemes and allophones. In this situation an adaptation from the system of the receiving language of the phonemes that exist only in one of them takes place. Usually, in these situations, „the new phoneme is non-articulated and made up of a sequence.” (Sala, 1997: 61)

In what vocalism is concerned, one may notice the preservation of some old phonetical features that do not correspond to the literary language any longer: after palatal consonants *а* coases to *і*, when in non stressed position (*ч'існок* – часник; *памн'ік'* – пам'ять, *м'іс'іц'* – місяць); preservation of the vowel *о* in a series of words where where in the literary language there is *а*: *колач* – калач, *богач* – багач, *ломити* – ламати. A phonetic feature that distinguishes the language variety in Călinești Cuparencu from the Ukrainian varieties in the neighbouring villages (Călinești Enache, Călinești Vasilache, Măriței, Dărmănești), as well as from the hutsul variety, but nears it to the literary language is the usage of *'а*, at the beginning of the word in stressed position whereas in the mentioned varieties is *ѣ*: *јама* – *јѣма*, *јасно* – *јѣсно*, *јаблуко* – *јѣблуко*, *јагода* – *јѣгода*, *јарка* – *јѣрка*. But, when *'а*, at the beginning of the word is in unstressed position we have *'у*: *јуѣ гн'і*.

We may notice that the replacement of *о* with *у* in some word borrowed from Romanian: *кумпаратива* (< rom. *cooperativă*), *кулáтра* (< rom. *colastră*), *бурдѣї* (< rom. *bordei*), *кундуктор* (< rom. *conductor*). In comparison with the Ukrainian literary language in which *и* very rarely at the beginning of the word, in the variety this happens more often, being used in loans from Romanian that begin with *і* or *е*: *узистува́тме* (< rom. *a exista*); *се импакáтме* (< rom. *a se împăca*); *импл'інітме* (< rom. *a împălina*); *инкуркатура* (< rom. *încurcătura*); *инкрѣдур'а* (< rom. *încredere*). Also, the presence in the variety of words containing diphthongs is due to Romanian language, this phenomenon being not characteristic to Ukrainian language: *балáур* (< rom. *balaur*), *кара́уш* (< rom. *cărăuș*), *кулоар'а* (< rom. *culoare*).

In what the consonants are concerned, we have noticed the greater frequency of some consonants in the variety in comparison to the literary Ukrainian. The sound *ф* did not exist in the slavic common language and has entered the variety in Călinești, as well as in the Ukrainian literary language from other languages together with the loans. The higher frequency of *ф* in the variety in comparison to the literary language is due to numerous loans from Romanian, Polish and German: *ф'ін* (< rom. *fin*); *тп'іфѣї* (< rom.

*trifol*), *фр'ізура* (< rom. *frizură*), *флєкєу* (< rom. *flăcău*), *фуркуліу'а* (< rom. *furculiță*), *фацарн'ик* (< rom. *fățarnic*), *ф'іранок* (< pol. *firanka*), *фєумєр* (< germ. *Förster*), *фєст* (< germ. *fest*), *ф'іра* (< germ. dial. *Fubre*). Besides the loans, the consonant *ф* appears in the variety also where in the literary language is the consonant group *хв* and *кв*: *фалітє* (ucr. lit. *хвалити*), *ф'іст* (ucr. lit. *хвіст*), *фасл'а* (ucr. lit. *квасоля*).

Due to numerous loans from Romanian language, the velar *g* is more spread in the variety than in the literary language.: *галаджєја* (< rom. *gălăgiie*), *гарану'їја* (< rom. *garanție*), *гáура* (< rom. *gaură*), *гогошáр* (< rom. *gogoșar*), *гумїї* (rom. *gutui*), *густ* (< rom. *gust*). The sound *g* este is present also in the Ukrainian words, when iot is a variant of the dental *đ* strongly palatalized: *г'ітє* (< ucr. lit. *дїти*), *г'істáтє* (< ucr. lit. *дїстати*).

Similar to other pocuto-bucovinean varieties and unlike in the literary language, the variety under study has the feature of consonant depalatalization *ц*, *с* at the end of the word: *столєц* (< ucr. lit. *стілець*), *хлòнєц* (< ucr. lit. *хлонець*), *дєс* (< ucr. lit. *десь*), *колїс* (< ucr. lit. *колиць*).

### Bibliography

- BIDU-VRĂNCEANU, Angela; CALĂRAȘU, Cristina; IONESCU-RUXĂNDOIU, Liliana; MANCAȘ, Mihaela; PANĂ DINDELEGAN, Gabriela, (1997), *Dicționar general de științe. Științe ale limbii (DȘL)*, Editura Științifică, București.
- COȘERIU, Eugeniu, (2004), *Teoria limbajului și lingvistică generală*, Editura Enciclopedică, București.
- FÎNARU, Dorel, (2015), *Lingvistica limbilor lumii*, Institutul European, Iași.
- HERMAN, K.F., (1995) *Українські говірки Буковини*, în „Збірник наукових праць. Проблеми історії та культури української мови”, Editura Ruta, Cernăuți.
- HERMAN, K.F., (1995), *Українські говірки Північної Буковини в історичному та лінгвогеографічному аспекті. Фонетика, фонологія. Монографія*, Editura Ruta, Cernăuți.
- LOBIUC, Ioan, (2004), *Contacte lingvistice ucraino-române* (pe baza *Atlasului lingvistic român* și a tuturor celorlalte surse), Editura Universității „Alexandru Ioan Cuza”, Iași.
- LOBIUC, Ioan, (1997), *Lingvistică generală*, Institutul European, Iași, 1997 (îndeosebi capitolele: *Etimologia la nivelul limbii literare. Principii și metode, Contactele dintre limbi, Contactul lingvistic ucraino-român*).
- SALA, Marius, (1997), *Limbi în contact*, Editura Enciclopedică, București.