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## **SLAVIC REFERENCE WORKS AND THE REPRESENTATION OF SLOVENE: A CASE STUDY**

The present paper uses the example of the Cambridge Handbook of Slavic Linguistics to elucidate the process of documenting Slavic languages in reference works: the rationale for the project and its contextualization amid other reference works for Slavic languages; the execution of the project, from the selection of the topics and authors to providing editors' feedback to refereeing the submissions using external reviewers, and the content of the volume. Special attention is devoted to how the Slovene language is represented in this volume.

**KEYWORDS:** reference works, Slavic studies, Slovene language, Slavic linguistics, Slavic languages

Avtorja se na primeru projekta Cambridge Handbook of Slavic Linguistics ukvarjata s procesom dokumentiranja slovanskih jezikov v referenčnih delih: utemeljitvijo projekta in njegovo umeščenostjo med druga referenčna dela s področja slovanskih jezikov; izbiro tem in avtorjev, posredovanjem povratnih informacij urednikov in recenziranjem prispevkov z uporabo zunanjih recenzentov in vsebino zvezka. Posebna pozornost je namenjena predstavitvi zastopanosti slovenskega jezika v tem zvezku.

**KLJUČNE BESEDE:** referenčna dela, slavistika, slovenski jezik, slovansko jezikoslovje, slovanski jeziki

### **INTRODUCTION**

The present paper discusses the process of documenting Slavic linguistics in reference works with special emphasis on the representation of the Slovene language in that process. The case study used here is the *Cambridge Handbook*

of *Slavic Linguistics* (Šipka, Browne 2024). We will first address the rationale for the project and contextualize it amid other reference works for Slavic languages. We will then proceed to discuss the execution of the project, from the selection of the topics and authors, to providing editors' feedback, to refereeing the submissions using external reviewers. Next, we will address the content of the volume. Finally, we will show how the Slovene language is represented in this volume and more broadly in similar reference works.

## CONTEXTUALIZATION

At the time this volume (Šipka, Browne 2024) was conceived, there were various other general surveys of Slavic languages or linguistics, but a handbook of Slavic linguistics, a compact book that could be used in various scenarios in teaching and research, was conspicuously absent. An account of those related resources that are still most relevant and useful looks as follows. First, there are two general introductions to Slavic languages: Sussex and Cubberley (2006) and Comrie and Corbett (1993). However, these are introductions to the languages per se, not to linguistic research about them. Second, there is an unfolding online *Encyclopedia of Slavic Languages and Linguistics* (Greenberg 2022), which is a large encyclopedic work rather than a handbook. Then, there are collected volumes that offer a much narrower list of topics in Slavic linguistics, for example: *Aspects of Slavic Linguistics: Formal Grammar, Lexicon and Communication* (Mueller-Reichau, Guhl 2017), which actually contains papers by University of Leipzig linguists and their friends, reflecting just their own interests, or *New Insights into Slavic Linguistics* (Witkoś, Jaworski 2014), which is a conference volume. There is, furthermore, *Die slavischen Sprachen: ein internationales Handbuch zu ihrer Struktur, ihrer Geschichte und ihrer Erforschung* (Kempgen et al. 2009) which is very thorough, but most texts are in German, and, as such, not accessible to most English speakers. It is furthermore encyclopedic in its nature, so it is meant to be a library resource, rather than something used in classes and as a handbook. The present handbook thus complements existing resources. It is worth noting that the time of its publication roughly coincides with two related complementary offerings – *The Balkan Languages* (Friedman, Joseph 2025), a survey of Slavic and non-Slavic languages of the Balkan Sprachbund ('Linguistic League'), and *Water, Whiskey, and Vodka: A Story of Slavic Languages* (Šipka 2023), an introduction to Slavic languages for a general audience.

The present volume is a handbook. The Oxford English Dictionary (OUP 2023: s.v.) defines handbook as follows:

Originally: a book small enough to be easily portable and intended to be kept close to hand, typically one containing a collection of passages important for reference or a compendium of information on a particular subject, esp. a book of religious instruction (now historical). Later also more generally: any book (usually but not necessarily concise) giving information such as facts on a particular subject, guidance in some art or occupation, instructions for operating a machine, or information for tourists.

In our case, the relevant part of the definition is that it is a book giving information such as facts on a particular subject, a book that is concise. The concise nature is apparent even from the term, calqued from Latin, *manuāle* with the same meaning, ultimately from *manuālis* ‘suitable to be held by hand’. The subject at hand was Slavic linguistics. The intention then was to provide a succinct compendium of main topics in Slavic linguistics. This orientation is what differentiates the present volume from all aforementioned compendia, which focus on Slavic languages rather than linguistics or strive for comprehensiveness rather than succinctness. With that in mind, we will now proceed to discussing the process of compiling this volume.

## EXECUTION

*The Cambridge Handbook of Slavic Linguistics* sailed through the turbulent waters of global events, between the Scylla of COVID-19 and the Charybdis of the War in Ukraine. It now reaches its destination primarily due to the resilience and collegiality of all its collaborators, starting from the authors of its 35 chapters, through the graduate and undergraduate student researchers who helped with various aspects of the project, to the colleagues who served as reviewers for each chapter, selflessly contributing their time and expertise.

*The Cambridge Handbook of Slavic Linguistics* seeks to provide a systematic review of relevant topics and research about them in Slavic linguistics. The review is approach-neutral and involves synchronic and diachronic perspectives. The goal of each chapter is to identify and review the following: (a) the linguistic features pertinent to Slavic languages, (b) the development of these features from Proto-Slavic to the present-day Slavic languages (to the degree

appropriate for the topic of the chapter), (c) the main findings in historical and ongoing research devoted to these features, and (d) a summary of what the state of the art in the field is and what the directions of further research will be.

While remaining accessible to a broad circle of scholars and students in the fields of linguistics and Slavic studies, the present volume caters in particular to the following three readerships. First, it offers a review of main areas of inquiry in Slavic studies to the current and prospective students of Slavic linguistics. The brisk introductions to the field provided in each chapter are thus meant to be teasers that would help these students to select the field or fields of their specialization. Second, nowadays Slavic linguists typically specialize in one or several rather narrow areas of inquiry. The chapters discussing the fields other than one's own offer to these scholars an accessible introduction and a chance to broaden their horizons in Slavic studies. Finally, in contrast to the previous group, non-Slavic linguists may be interested in the chapters of their specialization. For example, a scholar of inflection in Baltic or Germanic languages may want to get some introductory information about that field in Slavic languages.

Given its intent and target readership, chapters are approach-neutral. Similarly, they deploy broadly known terminology. This makes the text accessible to every student of Slavic studies and linguistics, no matter what theoretical background they may have. Just like any field of human inquiry, the field of Slavic linguistics is multifaceted, with lines of investigation meandering through countless problems and topics. This made the task of selecting the topics to be included in a volume of a limited length difficult if not impossible. Cognizant of the aforementioned complexity of the problem, we attempted to include the most prominent problems and topics that are of relevance for the intended readership of this volume. Needless to say, other editors might have selected a different set of topics.

Authors for each chapter have been selected, without fear or favor, as established experts in their particular fields. It is important that in addition to inclusivity in the subject matter (which comes with the territory) the volume proves to be temporally and geographically inclusive. Thus it includes early, mid, and late career scholars of Slavic studies. In a way, it gives insight into the past, present, and future of Slavic linguistics. The range of places from which the authors come testifies to the latter. While, as is usual in publications in English, authors from countries like the United States, Canada, and

the United Kingdom constitute the core of the contributors, there are authors from Germany and Austria, where Slavic studies are exceptionally strong, but also from other European countries, such as Belgium and Spain, and from Japan. Last, but definitely not least, there are authors from the Slavic-speaking countries – from Croatia, Czech Republic, Montenegro, Poland, Russia, Slovenia, and Serbia. This is particularly valuable given that, despite recent rapprochement processes, research traditions in English-speaking countries and those around the Slavic world still seem to live separate lives with some notable exceptions. For example, there is a prominent research group at Tromsø, Norway, led by an American, Laura Janda, and a Norwegian, Tore Nessel. Various exchange programs, most notably Fulbright, and more recently Erasmus Plus, have also been instrumental in cross-pollination of research. One should furthermore mention regular meetings that have brought together scholars internationally on a regular basis, e.g., the Biennial Balkan and South Slavic Linguistics, Literature and Folklore; the annual meetings of the Slavic Linguistics Society, which alternate between sides of the Atlantic, as well as the smaller, but influential SCLA conferences (Slavic Cognitive Linguistics Association). There were also individual scholars, such as Joseph Schallert, one author in this volume, who collaborated with the Moscow Accentological School. All that being said, mainstream research still remains largely divided by the Atlantic Ocean.

The writing and production process looked as follows. First, the authors for the chapters were selected and confirmed. The next step involved soliciting 500-word abstracts from the authors. The authors were asked to address main issues of their respective topics, provide relevant research in the field, and, where relevant outline historical developments. Both editors provided feedback to the authors and asked them to commence with designing chapters with that feedback in mind.

Once the first draft of each chapter had been received, the two editors provided their feedback, and asked the authors to incorporate it in a second draft. The new draft was then distributed to at least two external reviewers (many chapters received three and even four external reviews). The resulting feedback was reviewed by the editors and *mutatis mutandis* forwarded to the authors, who then produced the third draft. Finally, a professional editor from Cambridge University Press provided her feedback, which was reviewed by the editors. The editors then shared this feedback. The fourth and final draft

was reviewed by the authors in the production process. One can see that each chapter has undergone a most rigorous procedure of multiple checks and balances between the authors' and editors' visions. One should also note the most collegial atmosphere around this project and the reviewers' selfless contribution of time and expertise. Indeed, professional courtesy and friendliness within this project was exemplary and we hope for such an atmosphere in all further projects of this kind.

It is particularly worth noting that in this intricate and time-consuming process we have enjoyed support of various institutions – from multiple undergraduate student research grants of the Melikian Center at Arizona State University, to funds from Cornell University, to an advance from Cambridge University Press. A hallmark of this project, perhaps a formula to be replicated in similar undertakings, was inclusion of undergraduate and graduate students in the project activities at various stages. McKenna Kellar, an undergraduate student at the time, was instrumental in corresponding with the authors in the initial stages when they were selected. Mary Murphy, another undergraduate, was in charge of corresponding with reviewers and authors after they had been selected. Gina Scarpete Walters, a graduate student, created the index for the volume. This was a win-win solution. The students were included in the research process as a kind of service learning, and became acquainted with both the landscape of Slavic linguistics and with important stages in preparing linguistic publications. The editors received tangible help with some time-consuming activities in the process of producing this manual. The process we have outlined has led to the volume of the content that will be discussed next.

## STRUCTURE

The volume has the following structure. The first six chapters are devoted to phonology. Draga Zec, Cornell University, discusses *Word Stress*. Irena Sawicka (Copernicus University, Toruń) presents *Vocalism*, and Peter Jurgec (University of Toronto) discusses *Consonantism*. Alexei Kochetov of the same University is next with his analysis of the *Syllable Structure*. Next, Darya Kavitskaya, of University of California Berkeley, addresses *Phonologically Conditioned Alternations*. The final chapter in this section, penned by Radek Šimík (Charles University, Prague), is devoted to *Prosodic Reflexes of Information Structure*.

The next section comprises four chapters focusing on inflectional morphology and two exploring lexical morphology. Marek Majer (University of Łódź) discusses *Declensions*, while Ian Press (University of St. Andrews) presents *Conjugations*. Hagen Pitsch (Leipzig) writes about *Tense and Mood Forms*. In a final chapter, Stephen Dickey (University of Kansas) explores *Aspect in Verbs*. In the first chapter devoted to lexical morphology, Frank Y. Gladney (University of Illinois Champaign-Urbana) discusses *Lexical Derivation*. The section on morphology is concluded by the chapter on *Lexical Composition* written by Mate Kapović (University of Zagreb).

A cohort of chapters treating syntax is next. Jana Willer-Gold (University College London) discusses *Agreement*. In the next chapter, Barbara Citko (University of Washington) analyses *Wh-Dependencies*. Milan Mihaljević (University of Zagreb) is next with his presentation of *Coordination and Subordination*. In the following chapter, Steven Franks (Indiana University) discusses *Numerals and Quantity Expressions*. Then, there is a chapter by Franc Lanko Marušič, Petra Mišmaš, and Rok Žaucer (University of Nova Gorica) about the *Placement and Ordering of the Enclitics*. Nerea Madariaga (University of the Basque Country) analyses *Secondary Predication* in the next chapter. Luka Szucsich (Humboldt University, Berlin) is next with his discussion of *Polarity*. Then Alina Israeli (American University) presents *Null Subjects*. Jasmina Milićević (Dalhousie University) presents *Voice* in the next chapter. Finally, Elena Titov (University College London) discusses *Morphosyntactic Reflexes of Information Structure*.

The next section presents three chapters devoted to the lexicon. Valentina Apresjan (Nazarbaev University/Dartmouth College) and Alexei Shmelev (Moscow State Pedagogical University) discuss the *Structure of the Lexicon*. Rajna Dragičević (University of Belgrade) and Milan Ivanović (University of Montenegro) analyze *Lexical Semantics*. Dragičević and Danko Šipka (Arizona State University) are next with the presentation of *Lexical Borrowing*.

The next section includes chapters addressing sociolinguistics, broadly understood, and geographical approaches. Serge Sharoff (University of Leeds) and Nenad Ivanović (Institute for the Serbian Language of SASA) discuss *Sociolinguistic Variation*. Danko Šipka (Arizona State University) and Mladen Uhlik (University of Ljubljana, ZRC SAZU) consider *False Cognates*. Joseph Schallert (University of Toronto) is next with his presentation of *Dialectal Fragmentation*. In the following chapter Dieter Stern (Ghent University)

discusses *Language Contacts*. Next, Motoki Nomachi (Hokkaido University, Sapporo) addresses *Slavic Micro-Languages*. Oksana Laleko (State University of New York, New Paltz) takes up *Heritage Language Forms*. There follow two chapters on epilinguistic issues of relevance in Slavic languages, both penned by Daniel Bunčić (University of Cologne). The first discusses *Scripts*, the second *Orthographies*.

The final section is devoted to prominent applied linguistic fields in Slavic linguistics. In the first chapter, Tania Ivanova-Sullivan (University of California, Los Angeles) and Irina A. Sekerina (City University of New York) discuss *Psycholinguistics and Language Acquisition*. In the second, Tomaž Erjavec (Jožef Štefan Institute, Ljubljana) addresses *Natural Language Processing*.

It is of particular importance that the coverage of the topics features a balance between various fields of Slavic linguistics. Thus, for example, there are syntactic and phonological topics that, since the Chomskian turn, have dominated Slavic linguistics in North America, but there are also topics in lexicology and morphology, which is traditionally strong on the other side of the Pond. Furthermore, in addition to more theoretically-minded topics (for example those addressing information structure or psycholinguistics), there are those that tackle more applied issues (e.g., computational linguistics). One can say that the choice of topics represented in this volume displays the rich variety of topics and approaches in current Slavic linguistics.

The volume with the contents as outlined above has already received accolades from many notable colleagues in the field. As the editors of this volume, we can only hope that the following words by Lenore Grenoble of the University of Chicago, featured on the publisher's web page of this Handbook, will become prophetic: "This monumental volume brings together cutting-edge research in the field of Slavic linguistics by a collection of leading scholars, tracing both the historical foundations and providing state-of-the art theoretical contributions to the field. More than a handbook, it sets the stage for future directions in Slavic linguistics."

## SLOVENE REPRESENTATION

The Slovene language is represented very well in this and various other complementary publications. In the two volumes devoted to Slavic languages, Sussex and Cubberley (2006) and Comrie and Corbett (1993), Slovene is considered



one of 13 major Slavic languages, and is covered quite well. Similarly, in Šipka (2023), Slovene is mentioned on 31 (out of 200 pages), there is a section about the development of literacy in Slovenia and the index testifies to references to various Slovene men of letters, from Trubar to Prešeren to Ahačič. The coverage is equally strong in the Brill encyclopedia (Greenberg 2022-), which comes as no surprise given that the editor-in-chief is a Slovenianist.

The present volume continues the tradition. Slovene is amply represented. The index mentions the name of the language 153 times. The abbreviation Sln. (used for examples from Slovene) has a frequency of 150. In addition, some topics that are exemplified primarily using Slovene data are well represented. For example, “number, dual” is mentioned 12 times. The representation of Slovene is also well-documented in the appropriate article in Greenberg (2022-): <https://bibliographies.brill.com/BSLO/>. One should not understate the role of the Seminar of the Slovene Language, Literature, and Culture (Seminar slovenskega jezika, literature in kulture, annual since 1965) in making Slovene linguistic issues prominent in a broader research community. Multiple authors of this volume and its editors have participated in this seminar.

Last but not least, Slovenia is embodied by Slovene authors. There are five authors from Slovenia (Erjavec, Marušič, Mišmaš, Uhlik, and Žaucer) and one Slovene from Canada (Jurgec).

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## SUMMARY

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### SLAVISTIČNA REFERENČNA DELA IN ZASTOPANOST SLOVENŠČINE: ŠTUDIJA PRIMERA

Avtorja se na primeru projekta *Cambridge Handbook of Slavic Linguistics* ukvarjata s procesom dokumentiranja slovanskih jezikov v referenčnih delih. Prvi del obravnava utemeljitev projekta in ga umešča med druga referenčna dela slovanskih jezikov. Drugi del je posvečen izvedbi projekta: izbiri tem in avtorjev, posredovanju povratnih informacij urednikov in recenziranju prispevkov z uporabo zunanjih recenzentov. Tretji del obravnava vsebino zvezka, pri čemer je posebna pozornost je namenjena temu, kako je v tem zvezku zastopan slovenski jezik in širše v podobnih referenčnih delih.