

the present time. When approximately half of Prekmurje was returned under the Roman Catholic Church and when in 1732 Reformation church organization was finally abolished in Prekmurje, only the so-called “designated” places in Hungary allowed the people of Prekmurje to have Lutheran church services and school education until the Patent of Toleration, and consequently the role of books in the local language was even more important in preserving and deepening their faith. The article particularly emphasizes the fact that Küzmič’s translation of the New Testament was a powerful and valuable linguistic achievement and a cultural action of the first order.

UDC 811.163.6(497.4Prekmurje)

*Darja Markoja*

**The language situation in Prekmurje in the period  
from the Reformation to the beginning of the 20th century**

The Prekmurje standard language (PSL) began its formation with the first book of local Slovene Protestants in their native language (1715) and had not only a nationally representative role but also a (religious) distinguishing one, since the Croatian dialect of standard Kajkavian was then used among Prekmurje Catholics. The article gives a survey of the use of PSL in Protestant and then also Catholic religious literature in churches and schools and from the beginning of the 20th century also in journalism. The Hungarian state, to which Slovenes in Prekmurje and Porabje belonged administratively, gave PSL - until the beginning of the Hungarian national awakening movement (1790-1848) - only an informal status as the confessional and teaching language within the Protestant and Catholic Churches, while its use in all other situations involving public speaking was impossible, and later on was even forbidden by law. In the good 200 years of its existence PSL was never codified, but the basic regularities of the standard language of the Protestant Štefan Küzmič and the Catholic Mikloš Küzmič were preserved by the so-called hidden codification, i.e. codification with the help of texts. After the political annexation of Prekmurje (but not Porabje) to Yugoslavia (1919), the Slovene standard language (SSL) was introduced as the common official language of the Slovene part of the state, thus PSL could no longer fulfil its function of the official and standard language, but it was preserved in some journalism and in churches. The specific character of this transfer also defines the historical status which PSL has in relation to SSL - namely, the relative lack of conflict over replacing PSL with SSL means that PSL in the consciousness of Prekmurje people as well as of researchers is considered a positive, nation-forming linguistic fact and not as a phenomenon of linguistic localism or separatism.