Language and Identity: Vignettes on Language Use among Members of the Slovenian Minority in Austrian Carinthia

Language has been a crucial element in constituting national identity throughout Slovenian history. The study of communication is therefore of key importance in estimating the vitality of the ethnic group. Because of the language policies and the asymmetry in the relationship between minority and majority languages, the decision to use the mother tongue among the Slovenian minority in Austria nowadays becomes an affirmation of Slovenian identity. This paper, based on two case studies in Austrian Carinthia, presents the use of language in everyday private and public situations.

Introduction

Language and communication are among the most important and tangible elements of identity. The study of communication is therefore of key importance for identifying the necessary conditions for the maintenance of national or ethnic identity (Zupančič 1999, 73). The history of the West European countries teaches us that a long-term maintenance of a minority language is the exception rather than the rule when there is a contact with a majority language (Busch 2001, 135), and many researchers claim that sociocultural circumstances in the bilingual area of south Carinthia have strongly influenced the existence of Slovene as a minority language. The general colloquial language in the area is German and possibilities for the use of the socially inferior Slovene language are limited. Even more distinctive to this region is the inferior position of Slovene in states with Slovenian immigrant societies.

According to census data, the number of speakers of Slovene in Carinthia is in constant decline. In 2001, the Austrian statistical office registered 12,554 Slovene speakers in this region (Volkszählung 2003, 17) while other organizations (such as the local Roman Catholic Church) and researchers estimate their number to
be between 40,000 and 60,000. Using examples of everyday communication situations, this article will attempt to show that this gap in numbers can be explained by linking public affirmation of the use of Slovene or its actual use in the public sphere to the expression of national identity. Thus, the meaning of language for the ethnic minority is increasingly symbolic and decreasingly pragmatic. The loss of communicative functions of a language also influences the gradual loss of identity, which opens up a question of ethnic survival. Such questions have long attracted the attention of numerous researchers from social sciences and humanities; the area in question has been in this regard thoroughly researched by Brigitta Busch (2001, 2008), Herta Maurer-Lausegger (1993a, 1993b), Robert Minnich (1989, 1998), Tom Priestly (1988, 1990, 1994, 1999, 2003, with Ruxandra Comanaru 2009); Albert Reiterer (2003), Jernej Župančič (1999) and others. These studies are mainly quantitative (based on questionnaires etc.) and summarize data gained by qualitative research (participant observation, interviews etc.). However, they do not include in their research a focus on opinions of informants regarding their or others’ use of language. The attempt of this article is therefore to explore this particular issue by analysing statements made by bilingual informants responding to my questions about the use of language in different private and public situations.¹

Minority language in primary socialization

For the language and ethnolinguistic identity of a minority to be maintained, members of any given minority must be competent in their language, must use their language in several important domains, and must have positive attitudes to their language and their identity (Priestly 2003). Language competence and attitude towards language are primarily gained through the process of socialization. Primary socialization takes part within the family, among relatives, in the surroundings, in kindergarten and in the obligatory education system; its “goal” is to bring up a new member of a community, ethnic group, minority or nation.

In the past, nearly all children from Slovene speaking families in Austrian Carinthia were raised speaking Slovene exclusively and only learned to speak German after they entered primary school. Today, as a result of various factors and external pressures, families like this are becoming rare. German is used in most public situations, which is “a bad example to children.” “When I spoke Slovene with my children, people often asked me, what is this, what are you speaking of? If a child at, let’s say, 9 years of age came to a hospital [in the past], he didn’t know any German. People in the hospital didn’t know if he’s a mute or there’s something wrong with him … Mothers who had faced similar situations as the one with a child in a hospital, stopped teaching their children Slovene. That’s why we have families where two children still speak Slovene and the youngest not any more. They

¹ Both case-studies in Carinthia (Libuče/Loibach 2002 and Bilčovs/Ludmannsdorf 2003) were done during ethnological summer workshops with young people from Slovenia and Austria, organized by Zveza prijateljev mladine Slovenije and Slovenska prosvetna zveza from Celovec/Klagenfurt.
[mothers] said, if I ever have another child, I’ll speak exclusively German to him, so he won’t have such problems.” (inf. 1)

A Slovene speaking couple usually agrees to speak to their children in Slovene. In mixed marriages German language prevails and many children are gradually losing their language group affiliation and along with it their personal, cultural and ethnic identity (Maurer-Lausegger 1993b, 89). The key to preserving Slovene language and identity in such families is a non-hostile attitude on the part of the partner speaking a different language: “Today, I understand it like this: if you are a member of a minority, language is more important than if you are part of the majority. It is a problem for a minority member when searching for a partner, because it opens up the question of whether children will still speak Slovene. He [future husband] explained to me that his partner would also have to speak Slovene. I didn't understand it that way at the time, but looking back I find it very important. And so I started to learn Slovene immediately.” (inf. 2)

In any case, the use of Slovene in mixed marriages is increasingly rare. German speaking wives are more likely to start speaking Slovene than German speaking husbands, while no significant difference in speaking competence was noticed between children with a German speaking mother or father. In families where children still have a sense of Slovene identity, one of the parents usually speaks to them in Slovene more or less consistently even though the couple speak German among themselves.

The second problem associated with raising Slovene speaking children is that parents teach their children a local Slovene dialect but do not use standard Slovene, either due to a lack of self-confidence or a lack of institutions or situations where they could use it. Given their insufficient competence in standard, children speak German in situations in which they cannot use a local Slovene dialect.

Children who receive bilingual education in kindergarten are more often in contact with standard Slovene. Contrary to the decline in the number of professed Slovene speakers, enrolment in bilingual preschool programmes is on the rise, allegedly because “it is not as obvious at that stage who is bilingual and who is not. Therefore, parents have no problem with it. They have to decide in school and bilingualism becomes visible with one class being bilingual and the other monolingual.” (inf. 3) In addition, the competence in languages, including Slovene, is now becoming both a necessity as well as a matter of prestige, at least from the teachers’ point of view. However, some say that a bilingual kindergarten as such “doesn't mean anything”; what really matters is the attitude of teachers towards language (inf. 4). They use several methods to increase speaking Slovene in kindergartens: “If a child speaks Slovene, he or she speaks with me only in Slovene. If they speak German, I don't understand. ... Our method is also to answer in Slovene even though the question was in German. You do it until the child understands what you meant. ... If there is a group of Slovene speaking children who want to play and a German speaking child wants to join in, I direct him to another group. I let them play in the Slovene language. I also try to encourage children to form Slovene speaking groups on other occasions, such as during meals. Because this rarely happens. A German speaking child almost always joins the group and then everybody is considerate towards him.” (inf. 3)
In general, preschool teachers believe that bilingual kindergartens contribute to higher enrolment figures in bilingual primary school programmes (the downward trend reversed in 2001): “The kindergarten affects coexistence, showing that this is not a language that could cause a disturbance.” (inf. 3) While from 1945 to 1958 Slovene lessons in Volksschulen were obligatory for all children in the bilingual area, including the German speaking ones, since 1958 parents have only had the right to enrol their children in a bilingual programme. It is in this system that experts see a reason for the decline in the competence in and use of Slovene, as enrolment is also an outward expression of belonging to the Slovene ethnic community.

Nowadays, the right of enrolment is also exercised by German speakers, which strengthens awareness of the presence of Slovenes in the area but also causes big problems for teachers who have to adapt their lessons to wide-ranging levels of linguistic competence. Due to poor or even non-existent knowledge of Slovene, parents of Slovene speaking children find this “a disaster for the school. How can a Slovene speaking child learn anything if others don't speak Slovene at all?” (inf. 1) This is why some parents enrol their children in bilingual programmes for better statistics more than they do for any real progress in Slovene, and seek alternative ways for their children to use the language such as holidays and trips to Slovenia, Slovenian friends, activities in associations, etc.

Slovene and German languages in the bilingual programmes of Volksschulen have to be used approximately to the same extent in all subjects. What testifies to a subordinate position of Slovene is the fact that in some cases, children only get a school report in German unless parents explicitly ask for a bilingual one. Nevertheless, if parents choose to use this opportunity, the education system enables education in Slovene until a child turns 18 or graduates from secondary school. In 2010, 43.96% of all children in southern Carinthia enrolled in Volksschulen were attending bilingual programmes. There were 68 Volksschulen and three AHS with bilingual programmes in Carinthia at the time (Sandrieser, Domej and Schönherr 2011, 77). Even monolingual Hauptschulen report that schools’ image improved with bilingual projects. In the 2001/2002 school year, for example, 40% of the students enrolled in Pliberk/Bleiburg Hauptschule chose Slovene as an optional subject (inf. 5). Some bilingual teachers in such schools use Slovene at least for greetings or private conversations. One of them stated that even children from German speaking families greet her and occasionally speak with her in Slovene, which is “the consequence of a good atmosphere for languages in school”. They have tried to create opinion that speaking more languages is modern and that a multicultural society is better. (inf. 5)

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2 Children in Austria are required to complete four years of primary school (Volksschule), then the majority continue schooling in the vocational preparatory schools (Hauptschule) for another four years whereas gifted students who want to go to university have the option to visit higher learning institutions (Allgemeinbildende Höhere Schule or AHS, also known as a Gymnasium) for another eight years. Graduates of Hauptschule also have the opportunity to cross over into certain branches of the AHS or to attend a series of different higher vocational-technical schools.
Regardless of the enrolment in schools with Slovene teaching language, young adults develop similar habits in language use. Those who have parents speaking Slovene to them at home also use this language in their communications with friends, but only with those who speak the same dialect. They speak German with peers from other Carinthian valleys in which a different dialect is used even though they can understand each other. They feel “weird” about using standard Slovene even though most of them cannot provide a concrete reason, saying “This is what we are used to” (inf. 6) or “Not because I would be embarrassed to speak Slovene, but because I simply don’t think about which language I use.” (inf. 7) They address people who they know speak Slovene in Slovene, whereas with strangers they always use German.

“I know from my own experience that when we started the Slovene secondary school thirty years ago and we met people from Podjuna, for example, they used such a dialect that we spoke German with them. I don’t do this anymore, of course. I only do it with people I have always been using German with. In cases like this I only use German out of habit, so at a formal occasion I would speak Slovene. There are a number of people with whom I used to speak German in the past and with whom I now speak Slovene.” (inf. 8)

Young people notice that they are being treated differently when speaking Slovene. In situations like this they feel uncomfortable as they do not wish to attract attention, which they do when using Slovene. Adults, whose experiences were no different in their younger days, can relate. “If you try to speak Slovene amongst your friends, you are a kind of an evangelist for the Slovene language. And it is not easy. This is why we have to understand young people.” (inf. 1)

**Minority language in secondary socialization**

Secondary socialization happens in educational institutions after the obligatory education system, in religious life, police, army and other official authorities, in the media and in one’s working environment. Especially secondary schools with Slovene teaching language have significant effect on the feelings of belonging; Slovenska gimnazija in Celovec/Klagenfurt even proved to be “a bulwark of language maintenance” (Priestly and Comanaru 2009, 18). Among the most important factors of secondary socialization for the Slovenian minority besides schools are Slovenian associations. Slovene speaking parents try to include their children in various cultural activities since their early age. Activities in Slovenian associations range from programmes for toddlers, in which children listen to stories and songs and play in Slovene, to theatre, puppetry and singing. Associations strive for all their activities to be carried out in Slovene. “We instruct mentors to see that children speak Slovene amongst themselves.” (inf. 8) Naturally, parents also register their children with German associations when Slovenian ones do not have certain programmes. Occasionally, German speaking children enrolled in bilingual school programmes wish to join Slovenian associations as well, but due to a lack of financial resources and mentors associations try to avoid it, and offer Slovene language classes instead.
Religious life is also an extremely important factor for using Slovene and preserving Slovene identity. In Carinthia, a priest is “automatically a bastion of Slovene identity in public” (inf. 9) and is therefore regarded as a synonym for Slovene-ness. The Diocese of Krka/Gurk has a different attitude towards the minority than politicians: Slovenes are usually sent to work as priests in bilingual parishes in order to approach people in their mother tongue. In the 68 bilingual parishes in South Carinthia, priests use Slovene to various degrees – some to a minimal extent and others also outside the church. The priests who served in Pliberk/Bleiburg and Biličevs/Ludmannsdorf during my fieldwork mainly conducted services in Slovene on weekdays and bilingual services or alternate ones at weekends. Priests strive to encourage social life and harmony between Slovene and German speakers but notice that Slovene speakers find it difficult to profess themselves as members of the Slovene ethnic community in the presence of German speakers. “You have to be very careful with words around here. If I say: 'Slovenes to one side, Germans to the other,' they are bound to misunderstand it. I have to say that Slovene will be spoken on one side and German on the other.” (inf. 10) Despite occasional restraint in expressing identity people “feel Slovene” in church, with younger generation feeling even significantly "more Slovene" than their elders (Priestly 2003, 105).

Priests have noticed that some German speaking couples coming from the bilingual area have a Slovene religious ideology and attend Slovene services. Slovene is also still a liturgical language for many Slovene families that otherwise communicate in German. On the other hand, an increasing number of families attend German services “for the children's sake” (inf. 9). In religious education, priests strive to use Slovene as much as possible and teach German speaking children at least the basic prayers in Slovene. When preparing for Confirmation or First Communion, they try to separate children by their ethnic background. Church announcements, bulletins and notifications are bilingual, with the German text (literal translation of a Slovene version) coming second.

Many persons when going to confession – including professed German speakers – still mostly use Slovene because, as the then priest in Biličevs/Ludmannsdorf believes, the confessional secrecy of priests enables them to avoid regarding confession as an outward expression of belonging to the Slovene ethnic community. Confessions in German are rarer. But according to the priest in Pliberk/Bleiburg, the use of German may also be a “trick” employed by penitents not to be recognised. “When making a confession, Franca is Franca and Pepca is Pepca. It goes like this: I may speak many languages, but if I hit my thumb with a hammer I’ll swear in Slovene. By saying »mea culpa« in Slovene, you reveal your identity.” (inf. 10)

A couple with different ethnic backgrounds rarely ask for a wedding ceremony in Slovene. “It takes a lot of self-confidence on the part of the Slovene partner for the ceremony to be bilingual.” (inf. 9) The Slovene partner usually succumbs, and in such ceremonies use of Slovene is limited to a priest's greeting or perhaps the Lord's Prayer. However, there has recently been an improvement regarding tolerance for bilingual wedding ceremonies, and a number of German
speakers have made their vows in Slovene, the then priest in Bilčovs/Ludmannsdorf said.

"Count the tombstones in the cemetery," one of the priests instructed me in the spirit of a Carinthian rule saying: if you find three tombstones in Slovene, it is a bilingual parish. Tombstones are usually the most apparent sign of Germanization, and tombstones in German are increasingly erected by people for their Slovene speaking parents: "There are many tombstones in the graveyard which are now in German, although the elders were firm Slovenes. It all depends on the children. I don't understand it, I can't understand it. Once you're dead, you suddenly have to be something else than what you really are?"  (inf. 11) "It hurts me to see sometimes that some mum or dad who never spoke German gets a tombstone in German. There are many cases like this. I would never give a tombstone in Slovene to a German speaker. They deserve our respect. But sons and daughters of Slovene speaking parents do erect tombstones in German. I consider it a lie." (inf. 10)

Outside church, Slovene is rarely used for formal communication. In 2006, a working group “Slovensko na uradih/Slovene in offices” was established to encourage members of the Slovenian minority in Carinthia and also citizens of the Republic of Slovenia to confidently use Slovene in offices because, as stated by one politician during my fieldwork, "in practice, offices are actually German and Slovenes are bilingual, when it is the offices that should be bilingual." (inf. 12) According to the website of the working group, it is possible to use Slovene at 16 municipal offices, three district courts, three district boards, regional and district school boards, bilingual schools, the Office of the Carinthian Government, the Financial Office Celovec/Klagenfurt, customs offices, some police inspections and the federal court. The actual influence of offices on the use of Slovene depends above all on the administration. If employees in municipal offices are bilingual, people have a possibility to use Slovene; in practice, however, it is only used by those who know the clerks and know they speak Slovene. If clerks are not fluent in Slovene, people rarely decide to use this language, and since knowledge of Slovene language is not obligatory when applying for a position at the municipality, the prevalent language stays German: "It often happens that a clerk is a costumer's relative or acquaintance, and they don't wish to provoke him, but clerks anyway behave as though you provoke them and say, 'But you do speak German, too.'" (inf. 12) "Maybe I'm too inconsistent. The problem is that the clerks who work there are your acquaintances, you meet them daily, or we were all members of a German association, or we used to play football or tennis together. But I know that some of them can speak Slovene, at least in theory. Why would I bother with Slovene there, even though this would be a consistent thing to do, of course?" (inf. 8)

In addition, employees in the local administration are usually only fluent in a dialect, not the formal standard Slovene. The biggest problem is filling the official forms. If people want to have their applications recorded as Slovene, they must fill in the Slovene version of the form alone, because as soon as they sign the German version, the office records the application as German. The same applies to bilingual applications. Filling Slovene forms and writing official applications also requires a fair knowledge of formal standard Slovene plus administrative procedures for
applications and forms written in Slovene are longer: “If you want a quick response, you have to do everything in German. I had problems with this. The dispute ended in the Constitutional Court, and it was about a deadline: is it set from when you receive a German or a Slovene letter? The Constitutional Court decided that a deadline is set according to the date of receipt of the Slovene letter. Interpretations must always be to the benefit of the Slovene language. But in practice this is different. You can't file a complaint in court for everything. I'd consider myself stupid if I always complicated things so much, because you don't always get letters in Slovene.” (inf. 12) “I also fill in German forms. I don't know why. It doesn't happen often. If I had an application to make, I probably could say that I want Slovene forms. This is how it should be, and people keep emphasizing again and again that too few people ask for Slovene forms. Mea culpa, mea maxima culpa.” (inf. 8)

According to the district judge in Bleiburg/Pliberk (inf. 13), the biggest challenge in using Slovene in court is a deficient knowledge of legal terminology. Therefore, they only see a 10 %, perhaps 20 % use of Slovene in cases in which at least one of the parties is a Slovene speaker. Court judgements are issued in German unless a judge is specifically requested to issue a bilingual one.

In general, people complain about the subordinate position of Slovene in the local administration: “The municipality has many more opportunities and possibilities to pay more attention to Slovene. People should not be satisfied with having a mayor who holds speeches with 125 sentences in German and two in Slovene. You ask yourself whether Slovene has an equal status at all. She should act differently. But she doesn't. And because it is about taking the use of Slovene for granted, such conduct is wrong. Why should anyone learn Slovene if what we hear is three or four fifths German and one fifth Slovene? By hearing less Slovene we are affected subconsciously. This is where I see a fault on the part of the local administration; otherwise they are doing their best and they say ours [Bilčovs/Ludmannsdorf] is the only municipality where everything is written down in both languages, which is true. It is consistently bilingual.” (inf. 8) However, they also admit the situation is gradually improving: “A German speaking policeman stops me and after my demand to use Slovene speaks in perfect Slovene and encourages me why we don’t practice this in greater extent! At the district board in Velikovec [Völkermarkt] they are very favourable, frank, besides there is an excellent Slovene officer. Recently I got “odločbo za napravo za črpalko zemeljske toplote z globinsko sondo/provision for a device for the earth heat pump with deep probe”. 3 We all learn, I master using Slovene; the officer is proud to master both languages and gets his bonus. Friendships are formed.” (inf. 14, written at: http://www.slovenskonauradih.at/izkusnje/7/)

Websites of municipalities differ in using Slovene. The Bilčovs/Ludmannsdorf municipal web site is fully bilingual, while the web site of the Pliberk/Bleiburg municipality is in German, with the exception of a tourism presentation of the community. Bilingualism as a tourist opportunity has been

3 Although the sentence is not stylistically correct, it reflects considerable knowledge of Slovene terminology. (I have translated it in English word for word.)
recognized only recently; the presentation of Austrian Carinthia on the trilingual website presenting “zamejstvo” (area just over the border) begins with the title “Dvojezično? Enkratno!/Bilingual? Unique!” and presents bilingualism “not through the political prism, but from cultural and culinary aspects,” stating that “bilingualism and the proximity of the border are our great advantages” (http://www.tusmodoma.eu/kaernten_sl/detail/zweisprachig_einmalig/). If in 2003 an ex-innkeeper in Bilčovs/Ludmannsdorf established that a multilingual menu is not necessarily a positive contribution to an inn’s tourist strategy (inf. 1), today that same menu is interpreted as an opportunity to attract more visitors, especially from the so-called Alpe-Adria region.

Using Slovene in post offices is similar to the situation in municipal offices: most staff in post offices I have visited speaks Slovene, but responds in the language used by the customer. Customers who speak Slovene in a post office mostly do so if they know the clerk. Those who use Slovene consistently are the exception, not the rule. “The priest is one of the customers who speak Slovene with all the clerks, even if I’m not here. The priest is the only one who uses the Slovene language here consistently.” (inf. 15) All documents used by post office clerks are in German exclusively.

In contrast to job requirements in bilingual municipal offices, competence in Slovene is a must in all offices of the Slovenian bank Posojilnica. The management and staff communicate in Slovene while forms, contracts, letters etc., are mostly bilingual. Communication with customers takes place in either language, depending on the customer. According to staff estimates, Slovene is used in banking services by two thirds of their customers. In the municipalities where it is present, Posojilnica mostly supports Slovenian associations, which are privileged in winning its sponsorships.

Another area influencing the confident use of Slovene is the media. In recent years, several websites in Slovene have appeared that present information concerning the Slovenian minority not only in Austria (and not only in Carinthia), but also in Hungary and Italy. In addition, there are two weekly newspapers published in Slovene (Novice, Nedelja), two radio stations broadcast multilingual all-day radio programme together with a Slovene programme of national radio-television (ÖRF), and the latter prepares half an hour’s TV-broadcast in Slovene a week. Many people claim that they at least occasionally read newspapers, listen to and/or watch broadcasts in Slovene (for more information see Busch 1999, Poljak Istenič 2002, 2003a, 2003b).

Conclusion

While discussing the gap in numbers of professed and estimated (i.e. hidden) Slovene speakers, my oldest informant (inf. 11) commented: “If Slovenians were black, half of Celovec [Klagenfurt] would be black,” expressing her regret that speaking the mother tongue is the most visible sign of one’s identity. The social communicative function of Slovene has decreased sharply, leading to a massive decline in linguistic competence among adolescents and children in particular. In south Carinthia, owing to the existence of different dialects and the low level of
familiarity with the standard language, members of the minority communicate in the majority language, German, more often than in Slovene. Slovene is therefore mostly spoken in private spheres, e.g. in families or among friends who speak the same dialect – and even that when they can't be heard by German speakers. In the public sphere, Slovene in one of its forms – dialectical, colloquial, and standard – is used mostly only in Slovenian organizations and associations, in Slovenian banks and businesses, in bilingual kindergartens and schools during Slovene lessons and in the liturgy. The choice of language at other public places and institutions mainly depends on acquaintance with the interlocutor and his mother tongue. We can conclude that the mother tongue gains more symbolic and less pragmatic meaning for the minority – the phenomenon Albert Reiterer (2003) describes as symbolic bilingualism – since using it publicly principally means directly expressing ethnic identity. The main reason for such a situation is the language policies and the asymmetry in the relationship between minority and majority languages. This in turn affects self-affirmation of the minority members, decreases respect for their own language and identity and competence in communicating in Slovene.

The use of language is even more drastically decreasing in generations among Slovene immigrants. Among Slovenes in Serbia, for example, the use of Slovene is mostly limited to rare families in which both parents still speak Slovene, gatherings in some churches, in language school and during events organized by Slovene associations. The latter nowadays create most situations in which Slovene is used in public. Slovene has become a means for keeping in contact with the homeland of the ancestors, gaining Slovene citizenship, travelling with ease and immigrating to Slovenia and increasing chances to find work; however, Slovene has lost its meaning to express identity. Identity is mainly expressed through other cultural items such as traditional food and music. For example, people can become members of the Sava Slovenian Association in Belgrade if they prove Slovenian ancestry regardless of knowledge of Slovene; most of them don't speak it anymore. During my visit, most people at weekly meetings of the Sava Association also spoke Serbian, although some of them tried to speak Slovene with me. On the other hand, I heard older women, members of the choir who had come to practice, singing in Slovene. They also make traditional food and bring it along or serve it at events organized by Slovenian associations. Maintaining contact with the Slovene, with Slovene culture and the (home)land is so mostly a merit of Slovenian associations that stimulate cultural and artistic creativity as well as socializing, communicating, and receiving education in Slovene. Through them the descendants of Slovenes in Serbia – as everywhere around the world – are also finding it easier to familiarize themselves with Slovene language and culture, which is slowing down the assimilation of future generations.
Informants

1. Hanzi Ogris, 1928, retired shopkeeper, innkeeper and ex-mayor of the bilingual municipality of Bilčovs/Ludmannsdorf
2. Ingrid Zablatnik, 1955, peasant, politician, Austrian (with no Slovenian ancestors), wife of a nationally conscious Slovenian politician from Austrian Carinthia, Bilnjovs/Fellersdorf
3. Rezi Kolter, 1964, governess in a bilingual kindergarten, Bilčovs/Ludmannsdorf
4. Avguštin Malle, 1944, PhD, historian, Celovec/Klagenfurt
5. Rosina Katz Logar, 1953, teacher in school with German teaching language, Nonča vas/ Einersdorf
6. Miha Grilc, 1988, secondary school pupil, Libuče/Loibach
7. Mirjam Kap, 1981, student, Dvor pri Šmihelu/Hof, Sankt Michael ob Bleiburg
8. Rupert Gasser, 1959, teacher of religion, president of the local Slovenian association, Potok/Bach
9. Ivan Olip, 1950, priest, Pliberk/Bleiburg
10. Leopold Kassl, 1932, priest, Bilčovs/Ludmannsdorf
11. Apolonija Schellander, 1919, peasant, Moščenica/Moschenitzen
12. Mihi Zablatnik, 1949, peasant, municipal councilior, president of the local committee of the political party of Carinthian Slovenes, Bilnjovs/Fellersdorf
13. Franz Boschitz, 1961, district judge, Pliberk/Bleiburg
14. Martin Pandel, member of the working group “Slovensko na uradih/Slovene in offices”, other data unknown
15. Franz Schaunig, head of the post-office in Bilčovs/Ludmannsdorf, other data unknown

Sources and literature


http://www.slovenskonauradih.at/izkusne/7/, 30. 5. 2012.

The article is also based on the opinions of informants not cited explicitly. If not stated otherwise, all informants on the list are of Slovene origin and declare themselves as a member of Slovene minority. Other data (occupation, function, place of residence) are stated as they were at the time of the interview.


