

***Slovenian and the approach of plurilingual geolinguistics:
the research project VerbaAlpina***

Eva Jezovnik | Prof. Jožica Škofic

VerbaAlpina is a research project based at Munich University. Within the project, the linguistic and cultural area of the Alps is described and examined. Characteristic terms of three conceptual domains are systematically collected and portrayed using different computational methods. The focus of the research is on the three large language families, namely Romance, Germanic and Slavic, to which the languages in the Alpine region belong. They are in very close language contact and each of them consists of many local idioms.

In this talk we will take a closer look at the Slovenian language which is part of the Slavic language family. The primary focus is on the Slovenian varieties in the Alpine region which are different from the other ones present in the rest of the country. The question here is: Why are they different and in what way? An important role in this respect certainly plays the specific natural – mountainous – environment that affects both life and language of the people living there.

Research frequently shows the similarity of individual Slovenian dialect words with the other two language families in the Alps. Since all those varieties coexist in this relatively small space for centuries it is quite simple for them to have an impact on each other. As a result, the spoken language – not only but obviously also – in the Slovenian part of the Alps reflects a complex system of mutual borrowing and lending, which is very special also because of the specific natural, historical and economic environment. A deeper look into this complex system can disclose at least some interesting connections and processes.