

The Melting Pot revisited

Historical sociolinguistic perspectives on migration and language contact in Vienna

During the second half of the 19th century flourishing Vienna grew to become the seventh biggest city worldwide, counting more than 2 million people in 1910. In comparison, by 1850 it had only counted slightly more than 500.000 inhabitants, which means that it quadrupled its population within 60 years. Demographically, both a positive rate of national increase and a positive migration rate are being held responsible for that increase. Historically and culturally, Vienna's role as the centre of the Habsburg monarchy and its urban renewal in the second half of the 19th century as well as industrialization in general have to be taken into account.

By 1890 28% of all migrants to Vienna originated from the Moravia, Bohemia and Silesia, i. e. the lands of the Bohemian crown (see Glettl 1972: 32), which nowadays form the Czech Republic, leading to a proportion of up to 20% of inhabitants speaking Czech as their colloquial language in certain Viennese districts by 1900. Of course, we have to consider that the lands mentioned above were highly bilingual and that therefore migrants originating from them did not only speak Czech, but to a high percentage also German.

Migration led to a specific language contact scenario that has both left its traces in the local registers of German as well as in linguistics. Ernst (2008: 99) considers the influence of Czech migrants on the development of the Viennese urban dialect as one of the "most popular 'dogmas'" proposed by the Viennese Dialectological School. He thereby refers to papers like Kranzmayer (1953), Seidelmann (1971) and Wiesinger (2003), which mainly focus on a row of developments on the phonological level that they date to have evolved in the last decades of the 19th and the first of the 20th century. Other publications list phenomena on the morphological, syntactical and lexical level (e. g. Steinhauser 1978), mainly referring to them as *infiltrations*. Already the fact that Ernst (2008) refers to the contact explanation of these phenomena as a dogma indicates that in the cited article, he opposes this opinion, claiming that Czech as the language with little to no prestige couldn't have influenced the German dialects spoken in Vienna to such a degree. From his point of view this would have been a singular process in the history of German (ibid. 104ff.).

Similarly to Berger's (2009) revision of the historical contact scenarios of Czech and German in the lands of the Bohemian crown, the proposed paper intends to revise the contact situation that arose during the 19th century migration flows to Vienna according to recent contact linguistic theories (e. g. Hickey 2010). Thereby, it will show that the contact explanations may need to be adapted terminologically, but that they should not only be considered but studied in depth. It does not only take into account Czech varieties and the varieties of German spoken in Vienna, but also German varieties spoken in Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia and varieties of Czech natives learning German in Vienna around 1900 (see Glück/Morcinek 2016).

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