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Vít Boček
(Czech Language Institute of the Czech Academy of Sciences, Brno)

George Y. Shevelov's Contribution to Slavic Historical-Comparative Linguistics with a Focus on Language Contact: Remarks on *A Prehistory of Slavic*

1. Introduction

George Y. Shevelov's legacy in Slavic historical linguistics has already been a subject of several papers. Quite understandably, scholars are mainly interested in establishing his contribution to the Ukrainian language question and the issue of the historical development of East Slavic languages (cf. Danylenko, 2000a, 2000b; Karunyk, 2013). As far as I know, only one paper has been devoted to the significance of Shevelov's work for understanding the historical development of Slavic in general (Zyla, 1976). However, the paper was published in a periodical with a broad field of interest and might have perhaps escaped the attention of linguistic historiographers.

In my paper, I wish to offer a new perspective to complement the mentioned papers, focused on Shevelov's relation to the topic of language contact in general

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and language contact of Slavic in particular. Empirically, the study deals with Shevelov's main contribution to Slavic historical linguistics (Shevelov, 1964/1965), whereas methodologically it is based on my distinction of several paradigms of historical-comparative linguistics.

2. The paradigms of historical-comparative linguistics[1]

In my recent works (Boček, 2014, 2019), I introduce the concept of paradigms of historical-comparative linguistics. Inspired by a paper by Juha Janhunen (2001) – written in the milieu of Uralic comparative studies at the time of sharp polemics on the nature of the basic principles to be followed in this discipline (for a thorough overview of the polemics, see Boček, 2012) – I further develop this line of thinking. Janhunen distinguished four different paradigms in Uralic comparative studies. According to him, the first, called the conventional paradigm, is based on four assumptions: (1) the Uralic languages are related in the context of a *language family*; (2) the internal relations within the Uralic family are the result of diachronic divergence, which can be described in terms of a *family tree*; (3) the diachronic divergence presupposes a more or less uniform prehistorical *protolanguage*; and (4) the protolanguage, although only fragmentarily known, must have been a natural language with limited geographical distribution, i.e. a *homeland* (Janhunen, 2001, pp. 30–31). The second paradigm is called revisionist by Janhunen, and it consists of assumptions that consider the Uralic homeland to be wider (diffuse), or limited, but situated elsewhere (i.e. more to the west) than traditionally thought. A logical consequence of these approaches is the rejection of the binary model of the Uralic family tree diagram and its replacement by other models, above all the "bush" model and the "comb" or "rake" model of the Uralic languages, with more parallel branches at one and the same level. The third, revolutionary paradigm grows from the revisionist one and further radicalizes its premises, which eventually leads to the rebuttal of all four abovementioned conventional principles. Encouraged by the rejection of the family tree, the "revolutionaries" claim that the whole concept of Uralic genetic affinity is wrong. Instead, they assume that the similarities shared by individual Uralic languages are

[1] This section is a slightly modified part of one of my previous papers on the topic (cf. Boček, 2019, pp. 67–73).

the result of various areal influences among originally unrelated languages. The comparative method as the main tool of historical-comparative linguistics is repudiated. Finally, the counter-revolutionary paradigm is a reaction to the revolutionary one, showing the implausibility and unacceptability of the latter. Essentially, the "counterrevolutionary" paradigm is constituted by works of the present-day conventionalists, in which revolutionary claims are explicitly discussed and criticized.

Elaborating on Janhunen's delimitation, I show that the paradigms can be generalized and, subsequently, applied to the historical-comparative research tradition of essentially any language or group of languages. In addition, I also propose certain methodological improvements to the original concept. Janhunen used the notion "paradigm" in a Kuhnian sense, i.e. as a shared model, something that is commonly adhered to or something which the scientific community – at a given period – agrees with (Kuhn, 1962). Thus, in Janhunen's theory, the paradigm means a specific period of the development of a chosen scientific field (Uralic studies) in which specific methodological principles are advocated more or less uniformly. By contrast, I claim that the paradigm is an abstract (deduced) set of inter-connected principles that are, in fact, not advocated all together, but only partially (by a group of scholars, a number of studies, or even only parts of studies) and variably in different periods. A paradigm as a bundle of related ideas is essentially a construct that is not entirely manifest in specifc texts (meaning that all the principles from a particular paradigm would be sustained in the text). On the contrary, the same text can represent and often does represent a combination of ideas belonging to more – usually two – paradigms. As a rule, a "dominant" of the text can be identified, i.e. a paradigm that is manifested in the examined text to the greatest extent. Apart from this, a subordinate, often much less visible tendency to take into consideration some thoughts from another paradigm is detectable. Typically, a predominantly conventional approach can be accompanied by a tendency to revisionism, or a predominantly revisionist text can reveal a revolutionary undertone.

As far as the delimitation of individual paradigms of historical-comparative linguistics is concerned, I propose the role of language contact in the development of languages to be the main parameter. Accordingly, the paradigms can be described as follows: (1) the conventional paradigm: in the development of languages, the main role is played by language divergence, whereas only a minor role – or even none – is played by language convergence; (2) the revisionist

paradigm: in language development, there is a balanced role of divergence and convergence; (3) the revolutionary paradigm: the main force in language development is language convergence. Counter-revolutionism is no longer considered one of the basic paradigms, since its set of maintained principles is the same as that of one of the basic paradigms, i.e. either the revisionist or the conventional one. Thus, a trichotomy of the conventional, the revisionist, and the revolutionary opinions is established.

From the fundamental parameter, others can be derived, such as, above all, the degree of trust in the comparative method (absolute × reserved × no), the way of explaining language change (exclusively or at least predominantly by internal factors × by a balanced interplay of internal and external factors × exclusively or predominantly by external factors), the way of envisaging the notion of homeland (a geographically restricted area of the presence of a proto-language × a broader area more connected with other homelands × the total rejection of the very notion of the homeland), or the way of constructing the notion of genetic affiliation of languages (every language has only one parent language × some kinds of languages – i.e. pidgins and creoles – cannot be classified genetically × a language can have more proto-languages). Into the grid of the established parameters of the paradigms, individual texts of historical-comparative linguistics can be placed. This study aims to analyze Shevelov's 1964/1965 work from this viewpoint.

3. Shevelov's book in the context of paradigms of historical-comparative linguistics

3.1. The book

With its more than six hundred and fifty pages, Shevelov's book *A Prehistory of Slavic: The Historical Phonology of Common Slavic* (Shevelov, 1964/1965) is the most extensive synthesis of Slavic historical phonology so far created. A detailed description of all Slavic sound changes is given, covering the long period from the split of Balto-Slavic to the disintegration of Common Slavic, i.e. – in the author's delimitation – roughly from 2000 BC to 1000 AD.

The chapters devoted to individual changes are built up according to a consistent tenet: the text proceeds from a simple description of a phenomenon to attempts at its more detailed analysis and, above all, its explanation, that is, essentially, from

the certain to the less certain, the unclear, or the constantly problematic (typically, motives and chronology of the changes). The methodological background is presented in the introductory and final chapters of the book, in which the author describes his approach to Slavic historical phonology in particular and historical-comparative linguistics in general. In the introduction, he sets himself the main task of outlining the inner development of the Slavic phonological system, i.e. uncovering the fundamental tendencies which led to the individual sound changes and thus explaining the changes through these tendencies. Besides, the author wants to observe the relations of Slavic to other languages, be they genetically related or unrelated to Slavic, and thus to consider possible external factors that might have influenced the development of Slavic.

3.2. The conventional dominant

At first glance, Shevelov's book can be easily attributed to the conventional paradigm of historical-comparative linguistics. In the introductory chapter (cf. above all Shevelov, 1964/1965, pp. 4–9), Shevelov declares his opinions on the comparative method as follows. He claims that the traditional comparative method provides insight only into the development of individual investigated elements, thus being, in its essence, atomistic. It projects the attested data into the past, but does not draw a picture of the whole language and does not make it possible to embed the language in a real historical time. This stage of the development of the comparative method is represented by most of the Neo-grammarians. Nevertheless, the comparative method also makes it possible to observe syntagmatic environments of each particular change. Using this, it is possible to establish a relative chronology of sound changes. Thus, the traditional comparative method becomes something that Shevelov calls the "integrated comparative method" (ICM). This method "gives one the possibility to reconstruct the entire phonemic system of the reconstructed language in its essential features for the period between any two sound changes" (Shevelov, 1964/1965, p. 6). Shevelov also discusses the famous difference between the algebraic (formulist) and the realistic approach to reconstructions (cf. Boček, 2014, pp. 38–41 on this dichotomy) and himself prefers the more self-confident realistic approach:

> […] the use of ICM, when verified against all the historical evidence we possess, still makes possible the reconstruction of the essential and typical features of the language at a particular point in its development. The variety of dialects is

> lost and so are many transitional stages in the developments; but the reality of the types, i.e. phonemes and even great many allophones, is obtainable. One must not be too skeptical. (Shevelov, 1964/1965, p. 9)

Let us add that Shevelov's book also belongs to the conventional paradigm in terms of its adherence to the traditional localization of the original Slavic homeland to the northeast of the Carpathian Mountains (cf. Shevelov, 1964/1965, pp. 11–12).

It is obvious that Shevelov's "integrated comparative method" is nothing more than a kind of enrichment of the Neo-grammarian doctrine with certain principles of modern approaches, which consider systemic relations among linguistic elements. Shevelov's inclination to Prague School structuralism, mediated to him by Vasyl Simovyč, was already recognized (cf. Danylenko, 2000a, p. 200, 2000b, p. 271; Horbach, 1971, p. 5). This reliance on structuralist approaches that he exhibited is also reflected in the central topic of our concern, namely the question of motivations of language change and the relationship between different types of motivations. Shevelov prefers the explanation of language change by internal causes of language. This position is not meant as aprioristic and generally valid: in the introduction to the book, Shevelov declares that he will examine all the factors which could have contributed to each particular change, and only after the analyses will it be clear which of the factors played a more significant role in the development of Slavic, and which played only a marginal one (Shevelov, 1964/1965, p. 14). Nevertheless, in his partial analyses, the author always first seeks the internal motivations for the examined change, and only then, secondarily, considers possible external factors.

This practice is constantly followed throughout the book. Let us illustrate it with specific examples. According to Shevelov, the external motivations, i.e. contact with other languages, are always secondary. They can influence only the following three accessory aspects of the upcoming change:

1–2) Time of the manifestation of the change and its form:

> […] it seems plausible that the rise of a trend toward intrasyllabic harmony in C[ommon] S[lavic] during the fifth – eighth centuries could have been favored by the Sl[avic]-Alt[aic] contacts. If this assumption is to be accepted, however, it is necessary to emphasize once more that the whole development was prepared by the internal evolution of Sl[avic]. The external influence at best determined the time when the slumbering, latent tendency was to be unleashed, and contributed to the particular form in which the tendency was implemented. (Shevelov, 1964/1965, pp. 255–256)

3) Place from which the change will spread:

> The area from which the third palatalization spread is that where the Slavs were in closest contact with Alt[aic] speaking peoples: Avars in the case of Cz[ech], Avars and Bulgars on the Balkan peninsula. Sl[avic] contacts with Alt[aic] speaking peoples could have been an additional factor in promoting the third palatalization. (Shevelov, 1964/1965, p. 347)

In the final chapter of his book, Shevelov summarizes, explaining that internal factors were the most important force in the development of Slavic, whereas external factors could only intensify or speed up the changes):

> […] it follows from the presentation of Sl[avic] sound changes examined in this book that it was internal factors which played the most important part both in causing changes of certain features of Sl[avic] and in determining the direction of these changes. External factors, first of all contacts with other peoples, especially under the conditions of bilinguality, could have exerted a strong influence but invariably only enhanced or accelerated what was prepared for by internal development. (Shevelov, 1964/1965, p. 624)

Finally, at the very end of his book, he introduces a kind of net of factors influencing the development of Slavic. He distinguishes the "main factors" and the "subordinate and subsidiary factors", the latter also subsuming the subcategory of external factors:

I. Main factors:
   1. Interplay of the system of vocalic and consonantal phonemes and elimination of imbalance between them;
   2. Elimination of vacancies in the phonemic system;
   3. Interplay of basic and suprasegmental (prosodic) features of vocalic phonemes;
   4. Interplay of the system of phonemes and the system of alternations.

II. Subordinate and subsidiary factors:
   1. External factors: impact of other languages;
   2. Phonetic factors: elimination of more complex articulations insofar as this was not impeded by the structure of the phonemic system;
   3. Affective factors: extraphonemic shifts in individual words. (Shevelov, 1964/1965, pp. 628–629)

According to Shevelov, the most important factors were the first two of the main ones. He sees as the central force of the Slavic development the constant tendency to the systematic character and the incapability to reach it (cf. Shevelov, 1964/1965, p. 629): "All in all, the history of C[ommon]S[lavic] and early Sl[avic] was shaped primarily, in its phonological aspect, by trends leading

to a thoroughly balanced system and by inability to attain such a perfect system. The language was constantly a system in the making, never a system made […]".

Having introduced Shevelov's approach and having established that the dominant of the text is conventional, we can attempt – after a brief excursus – to analyze its relationships to present-day language contact models.

3.3. An excursus: The reception of the book

Somewhat surprisingly, the work was judged both very negatively by some scholars and very positively by others. The former group includes three American reviews, namely by Theodore M. Lightner (1966), Joseph A. van Campen (1966), and Horace G. Lunt (1966). In these reviews an unusual degree of attacks is present. According to the reviewers, Shevelov's book is incompetent both methodologically and empirically. Lunt even says that "Shevelov offers nothing of value which has not been better said elsewhere" (Lunt, 1966, p. 85).[2] Several European (and one American) reviewers were also unsatisfied with many of Shevelov's analyses; nevertheless, they at least refrained from denouncement (cf. Aitzetmüller, 1965; Schmalstieg, 1967; Vaillant, 1965; Weiher, 1967). Others even reported largely positively (cf. Kiparsky, 1969; Stieber, 1967).[3] At any rate, a certain turning point can be discerned after these early reactions. Shevelov's book became a much-quoted publication, and eventually, a classic work that is mentioned as a commonplace source in most of the contributions to Slavic historical phonology. Probably the most positive evaluation of the work can be found in Henrik Birnbaum, who labeled it as "the best overall treatment of C[ommon]Sl[avic] phonology available to date" (Birnbaum, 1975, p. 94).

In my opinion, these profoundly contradictory evaluations of Shevelov's work can be reconciled by taking up a position somewhere in between. In Shevelov's approach, one can certainly find very problematic points (cf. 3.4 below). At the same time, however, there are also other very interesting passages with inspiring thoughts (cf. 3.5 below). It is also worth noting that in all the mentioned reviews there are absolutely no remarks on Shevelov's approach to language contact.

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[2] Here, I will not go into details concerning the personal controversy between Lunt and Shevelov, related also to Roman Jakobson. Shevelov was even convinced that the review was commissioned by Jakobson. Cf. Shevel'ov, 1994 and Lunt's manuscript reaction to it, published in the Ukrainian translation as Lant (2010).

[3] Later, Shevelov discussed the suggestions of all the reviewers in the final chapter of his new book (cf. Shevelov, 1971, pp. 297–326).

3.4. Weaknesses

One must agree with the critics that Shevelov offers no strictly defined set of notions and terms, so it is not always clear what he actually means when using them. I have already mentioned the affinity that Shevelov's work has to structuralism, but the link is very weak. Notions like "phoneme" or "system" are not used terminologically. One of the main thoughts in his work is the teleological explanation of the language change; however, this Prague School concept is not discussed in detail anywhere in the book. In many places Shevelov's analyses give the impression of presenting the data without apparent inter-connections, i.e. they seem to be atomistic, despite the author's aforementioned declaration of distance from this approach. The thought about the inability of language to attain the full systematic character quoted above (cf. 3.2) also does not sound very structuralistic.

This terminological vagueness also concerns the contact phenomena. For instance, Shevelov presupposes a relatively strong Iranian influence upon Slavic but eventually states that "the tendencies of development in C[ommon] S[lavic] and O[ld]Ir[ania]n were too different to permit a real convergence in their phonological evolution" (Shevelov, 1964/1965, p. 617). The very notion of convergence is not specified here in any way. However, it seems as if the author is referring to a kind of very intense contact, characterized by a rapprochement of phonological subsystems of the two languages in contact to an unusual degree. Also unclear is the term "interpenetration", used here and there, but not defined anywhere in the book, and suggesting not a contact influence in a specific direction, but rather a mutual permeation of two languages.

3.5. Strengths

Inspiring thoughts can be found in those passages of Shevelov's book where he transcends the conventional approach and gets closer to the revisionist paradigm. In what follows I will mention and discuss two of these.

3.5.1. Trees, waves, or clouds

Though an advocate of the comparative method, Shevelov rejects the exaggerative constructing of tree diagrams, a practice that, he argues, could obscure the real state of things. To be specific, Shevelov does not agree with the concept of the simple ternary splitting of Slavic into the western, eastern, and southern

branches. At the same time, however, he does not want to be very radical, and also declares against the wave model of language evolution.

Instead, he presents an idea based on another metaphor, that of clouds in the sky: "If a metaphor is appropriate, the most suitable would be the image of clouds in the sky on a stormy day, with their constant changes in shape, their building up, overlapping, merging, separating and their ability to vanish in an instant" (Shevelov, 1964/1965, p. 612). This comparison certainly deserves attention and further rethinking. It is important to note that this passage is quoted by some revolutionaries among language contact researchers, namely Alexandra Y. Aikhenvald and R. M. W. Dixon (see Aikhenvald & Dixon, 2001, p. 5). However, these authors do not develop this concept any further, mentioning it only as an instance of metaphors for language development other than the traditional two – the tree and the wave. Apart from that, Shevelov's idea is discussed in more detail by Robert Orr (1999, 2005) in the context of other contributions that attempt to improve or modify the traditional tree diagram.

3.5.2. Periodization of Slavic

Another of Shevelov's original contributions to research on Common Slavic is his periodization of this language (Shevelov, 1964/1965, pp. 606–608). The author distinguishes five periods of development of Slavic and assumes the relative speed of the development to be the main parameter that discriminates any two immediately successive periods from each other. The assumed sequence of the five periods is as follows:

1) The first period of (major) mutations and rise of Common Slavic, ca 2000–1500 BC;
2) The first period of stability, ca 1500–600 BC;
3) The second period of (minor) mutations, sixth–fifth centuries BC;
4) The second period of stability, ca fifth century BC – fifth century AD;
5) The third period of (major) mutations and, at the same time, the disintegration of Common Slavic, ca fifth–tenth centuries AD.

The assumption of the rotation of periods with speed development and periods with slow development resembles the model developed by Dixon (1997), recently applied to Slavic by Noel C. Brackney (2007). The similarity of the two models was already recognized by Andriy Danylenko (2002a, pp. 268–269, 2002b, p. 126),

and I would only like to add some refining remarks. Although the similarity of the approaches is striking, there are still some considerable differences. Whereas Dixon's model is built deductively (the long period of equilibrium is followed by a shorter period of punctuation on the basis of the general external conditions of the life of languages), Shevelov's view represents only an inductively based generalization of the development of a single language. Dixon correlates the periods of equilibrium with convergence and the periods of punctuation with divergence, which is not the case with Shevelov. Seen through the lens of my three-paradigm model of historical-comparative linguistics, Dixon's model falls into the revolutionary paradigm, since it strongly prefers convergence to divergence; it is not even free of dilettantish points (for details, see Boček, 2014, pp. 248–263).

Thus, if we compare Dixon's and Shevelov's approaches more profoundly, it follows that the latter makes a more persuasive impression. It is not as general as Dixon's dichotomy of equilibrium vs. punctuation and seems to render the developmental tendencies of Slavic in a balanced central position between an unsuitable concreteness and an unsuitable abstractness. Shevelov also dares to correlate the delimited periods with the non-linguistic development when he notes that the fifth period of the development of Slavic coincides with the time of the stormy development of Slavic peoples, exposed to the continuous disintegration and reintegration and contact with other peoples. Something that seems attractive to him is the possibility of correlating the first two early periods of the speed development (periods 1 and 3) with historical turbulences, but he eventually rejects it due to our lack of knowledge about the living conditions of Slavs during these early periods (Shevelov, 1964/1965, pp. 607–608). In this, we can see a certain modesty, as opposed to the straightforward and sometimes oversimplifying interpretations by Dixon and Brackney.

3.6. Contact of Slavs with other peoples

Although Shevelov repeatedly mentions the decisive role of language-internal factors for language development, he still pays considerable attention to possible external influences. Thoughts of this kind can be found scattered throughout the analyses of individual Slavic sound changes throughout the book, and above all in the long section of the final chapter that sums up the author's opinions about the character of contacts between Slavs and their neighbours.

First, the contacts of Slavs with Balts and their language are considered. According to the author, these contacts were very variable. Four periods

can be distinguished (Shevelov, 1964/1965, pp. 613–614): (1) 2000–1500 BC, the period of identical developments: Baltic and Slavic are already two independent branches, but they still share several developmental processes (e.g. loss of aspirated stops and labiovelars, some prosodic changes, etc.; (2) 1500–500 BC, the period of loose contacts: only a few Slavic developments are reflected in Baltic, and only in a greatly weakened form (*ruki*-rule, etc.); (3) 600 BC – 600 AD, the period of no established contacts; (4) the period of weak (East-) Slavic-Latvian contacts in the Pskov area. In general, the contacts between Slavs and Balts were rather limited.

By contrast, the contacts of Slavs with Iranian people were, according to Shevelov (1964/1965, pp. 128–129, 158, 614–617), very intense, lasting almost a millennium (700 BC – 200 AD). The Slavs' southern neighbours were first Scythians, then Sarmatians, and later on, Iranian people could have participated in the migrations of Slavs under the Gothic or Hunnic hegemony. In language, the contact manifested itself in vocabulary, where correspondences in religious and spiritual terms can be found, as well as in word-formation of certain proper names and even in grammatical words (e.g. the preposition *къ*, prefix *raz-*). Shevelov also assumes an intense Iranian influence on Slavic in phonology. To be specific, both branches shared several sound changes from the third period of Slavic development (sixth–fifth centuries BC), like the change *k* > *x*, retraction of *s* before *r*, *u*, *k*, *i*, satemization, and the loss of geminated consonants.

Shevelov also presupposes a very intense contact of Slavs with Germanic peoples, above all with Goths, first in the north at the Vistula River, then in the south at the littorals of the Black Sea (third–fourth centuries AD) (Shevelov, 1964/1965, pp. 617–619). However, he admits Germanic linguistic influence only on the lexical level. He explains the lack of influence in phonology by the fact that at the time of the contact, both languages strongly differed in their internal developmental tendencies (e.g. Slavic was a language of weak stress and was eliminating consonant clusters, whereas Germanic was a language of strong stress and retained a wide range of geminated consonants).

Shevelov also pays attention to the relation of Slavic to languages with which it bordered, in the early period of its existence, in the west, i.e. the languages of Illyrians, Dacians, and Thracians (Shevelov, 1964/1965, pp. 620–621). However, for the lack of our knowledge about the character, motivations, and dating of specific linguistic changes in these languages, the author does not see the uncovering of their eventual external influences on Slavic as possible. Similarly, he does not admit Romance influence on Slavic. He assumes only

the opposite direction of influence, from Slavic to Romanian, in the lexicon as well as in phonology (Shevelov, 1964/1965, p. 621).

Shevelov presupposes a strong Altaic impact on Slavic, starting in the second half of the fourth century AD with a contact of Slavs with Hunnic people, and continuing with close contacts with Avars, Bulgars (Proto-Bulgarians), and Khazars (Shevelov, 1964/1965, pp. 254–257, 279, 347, 360–362, 382–383, 462, 622). The most striking developmental similarities are changes leading to intra-syllabic harmony (the first palatalization of velars, the delabialization of rounded vowels) and, eventually, to word vowel harmony (the third palatalization of velars, assimilations of vowels within a word in specific words or word groups). Apart from this, Shevelov also considers possible Altaic influence in other changes, like the change of *dž* to *ž*, the monophthongization of *u*-diphthongs, the delabialization of *ū* to *y*, and the rise of the so-called jers from *ĭ* and *ŭ*. The Altaic influence, he argues, is indicated by the fact that most of these changes began to spread from the South Slavic area.

Finally, Shevelov also considers possible contacts of Slavs with Finno-Ugric peoples, starting, he claims, in the seventh century AD, when Slavs began to expand to the north (the author presupposes assimilation of some Finnic people by Slavs). Thus, the linguistic influence could only manifest itself in the East Slavic area, and was only lexical (Shevelov, 1964/1965, pp. 623–624).

Slightly surprisingly, there is no room in Shevelov's approach for the contact of Slavs with Celts. He assumes that it was excluded by the presence of Illyrians in the area between the two peoples (Shevelov, 1964/1965, p. 12).

3.7. Language contact in general

Shevelov's thoughts on the contact influence of neighbouring languages upon Slavic are not always accurately specified. In my view, this corresponds to a general problem of most of the conventionalist works, namely that they do not clearly distinguish between the primary (genetic) and the secondary (areal) isoglosses. Curiously, when Shevelov analyses a similarity of Slavic with another language, he is occupied above all with the question of whether a given feature came into existence in both languages roughly at the same time, and only if the answer is yes is he inclined to admit the external influence. This mainly holds for the contact of Slavic with other Indo-European languages. For instance, when considering an Iranian impact on monophthongization of diphthongs in Slavic, Shevelov eventually argues against it by claiming that

the monophthongization in Ossetic is attested already in Greek inscriptions from the second and the third centuries AD, whereas in Slavic the development occurred about a half a millennium later (Shevelov, 1964/1965, p. 616). Thus, it seems that by the contact influence Shevelov understands rather something like common, shared, simultaneous innovations. By contrast, in considering the contact of Slavic with Altaic and Finno-Ugric, i.e. with languages genetically unrelated to Slavic, no such reflections on the identical dating of the examined phenomena can be found.

Thus, Shevelov's twofold approach represents a certain diversion from the present-day language contact models because it corresponds with them only in the case of contact of genetically unrelated languages. In Sarah G. Thomason's model, for example, only one chronological condition has to be fulfilled, namely that the phenomenon under consideration has arisen earlier in the source language than in the recipient language; it could be a long time before the proper contact. The main task of a researcher is to show that in the recipient language, the phenomenon appeared at the time of the contact of its speakers with speakers of the putative source language (Thomason, 2001, pp. 93–94).

As mentioned above, Shevelov always prefers internal factors to external ones. From some of his claims, it is obvious that under internal factors he subsumes not only the present state or the tendencies of the system of the examined language but also its relations to the system of a possible source language. Let me mention the aforementioned explanation of Slavic-Germanic contact which, according to Shevelov, did not take effect because of different tendencies present in the two languages. Here, the author clearly considers one of the basic linguistic factors taken into account in recent language contact models, namely the so-called typological distance (cf. Boček, 2021; Thomason, 2001, pp. 76–77; Thomason & Kaufman, 1988, pp. 52–57).

Let me also recall that Shevelov does not treat the language development induced by internal factors as a cross-linguistically deduced valid rule, but only as an empirically ascertained instance of the development of a specific language, Slavic. In a passage about the eventually unrealized Germanic influence on Slavic we can even read about a possibly decisive role of external factors in contact-induced language change:

> Of course, such differences in language structure do not absolutely prevent common developments […], but they are unfavorable to such developments unless resistance in language is broken by strong extra-linguistic factors such as constant association over a common territory. This was obviously not the case between Sl[avic]

> and Go[thic], and that is why Sl[avic], which was open to Go[thic] influences in its vocabulary, was so closed to them in its phonology. (Shevelov, 1964/1965, p. 619)

This statement roughly corresponds with Thomason's heatedly and long-debated thesis that "it is the sociolinguistic history of the speakers, and not the structure of their language, that is the primary determinant of the linguistic outcome of language contact" (Thomason & Kaufman, 1988, p. 35).

4. Conclusion

A Prehistory of Slavic is an intricate book, perhaps not free of internal contradictions. At the centre of its author's approach, conventional principles are clearly present (the confidence in the comparative method and language-internal factors), whereas at the periphery, interesting revisionist thoughts can be found (the metaphor of clouds in the sky, the periodization of language development, etc.). Thus, the book remains open for rethinking, which is always a mark of good scholarly work.

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George Y. Shevelov's Contribution to Slavic Historical-Comparative Linguistics with a Focus on Language Contact: Remarks on *A Prehistory of Slavic*

Summary

On the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the death of the Ukrainian linguist G. Y. Shevelov, this article attempts to evaluate his contribution to historical-comparative linguistics. Commenting on his pivotal work *A Prehistory of Slavic: The Historical Phonology of Common Slavic* (1964/1965), we mainly focus on how Shevelov understood the role of language contact in the development of languages in general and in the phonological development of Common Slavic in particular. His approach is analyzed with the help of our concept of paradigms of historical-comparative linguistics, working with the conventionalist, revisionist, and revolutionary paradigms.

Wkład Jurija Szewelowa w językoznawstwo historyczno-porównawcze języków słowiańskich ze szczególnym uwzględnieniem kontaktu językowego. Uwagi na temat dzieła *A Prehistory of Slavic*

Streszczenie

Z okazji 20. rocznicy śmierci ukraińskiego językoznawcy Jurija Szewelowa niniejszy artykuł podejmuje próbę oceny jego wkładu w językoznawstwo historyczno-porównawcze. Komentując jego kluczowe dzieło *A Prehistory of Slavic: The Historical Phonology of Common Slavic* (1964/1965), skupiamy się głównie na tym, jak Szewelow rozumiał rolę kontaktu językowego w rozwoju języków w ogóle, a w rozwoju fonologicznym języka prasłowiańskiego w szczególności. Jego podejście jest analizowane za pomocą naszej koncepcji paradygmatów językoznawstwa historyczno-porównawczego, obejmującej paradygmat konwencjonalistyczny, rewizjonistyczny i rewolucyjny w języku.

Keywords: George Y. Shevelov; historical phonology; Common Slavic; language contact; Slavic studies; historiography of linguistics

Słowa kluczowe: Jurij Szewelow; fonologia historyczna; język prasłowiański; kontakt językowy; slawistyka; historiografia językoznawstwa

Vít Boček, Czech Language Institute of the Czech Academy of Sciences, Brno, Czech Republic
ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5940-2010
Correspondence: vitbocek@gmail.com

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