



RHODE ISLAND COLLEGE

M.Ed. In TESL Program Country Informational Reports

Produced by Graduate Students in the M.Ed. In TESL Program
In the Feinstein School of Education and Human Development

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Slovene



Popa, 2011



Popa, 2011

Official Language of Slovenia

By Lisa Salisbury
February 2012

+ Slovenia

A country in Central Europe touching the Alps and bordering the Mediterranean, Italy, Croatia, Hungary, Austria, and the Adriatic Sea.



Slovene Language

Native language of about 88% of Slovenia's population

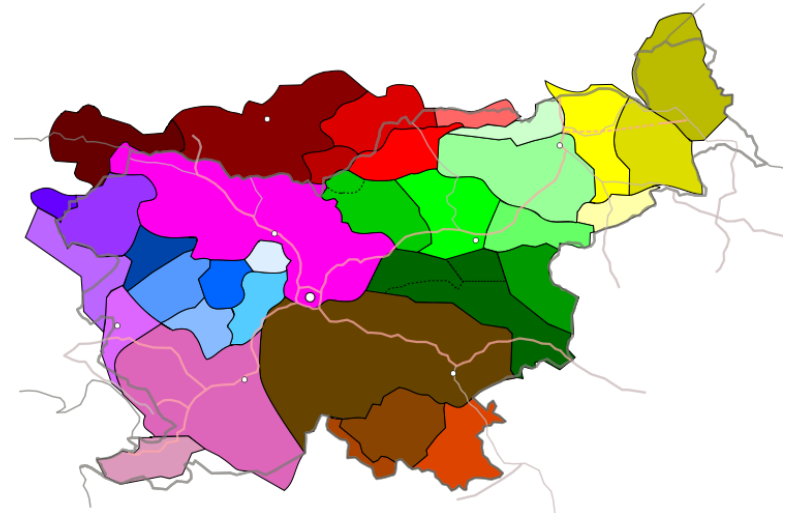
5 dialect bases incorporating 50 varying dialects

Also spoken in parts of Italy, Austria, Hungary, and Croatia



Dialects

- ❖ Slovene is an Indo-European language from South Slavic branch of the Slavic languages, like Serbian and Croatian.
- ❖ The spoken and written language is uniform and standardized.
- ❖ Dialects' differ considerably in phonology, vocabulary and grammar
- ❖ 46 clearly defined dialects, divided into six regional groups: Carinthian, Upper Carniolan, Lower Carniolan, Littoral, Rovte, Styrian and Pannonian



Dialect Regions in Slovenia

Dnik, 2009



Characteristics of Slovene



- ❖ Dual grammatical number
- ❖ 2 accentual norms: Pitch accent, Abundant inflection
- ❖ Tense-Verb distinction
- ❖ Flexible word order-adjusted for emphasis/stylistic reasons
- ❖ Stress can fall on any syllable of a word
- ❖ Pronounce every letter in words
- ❖ Second-person plural forms used for individuals as sign of respect
- ❖ Word endings express number, gender, and relationship between different words in sentence

+ Written Alphabet & Pronunciation

Letter	Name	IPA	Letter	Name	IPA
A, a	a	/a/	M, m	em	/m/
B, b	be	/b/	N, n	en	/n/
C, c	ce	/ts/	O, o	o	/ɔ/, /o/
Č, č	če	/tʃ/	P, p	pe	/p/
D, d	de	/d/	R, r	er	/r/
E, e	e	/ɛ/, /e/, /ə/	S, s	es	/s/
F, f	ef	/f/	Š, š	eš	/ʃ/
G, g	ge	/g/	T, t	te	/t/
H, h	ha	/x/	U, u	u	/u/
I, i	i	/i/	V, v	ve	/v/, /w/
J, j	je	/j/	Z, z	ze	/z/
K, k	ka	/k/	Ž, ž	že	/ʒ/
L, l	el	/l/, /w/			



Phonology



- ❖ h pronounced /x/ save before voiceless consonants and after i when /h/
- ❖ lj pronounced /lj/ save before consonants, i and at the end of a word when /λ/
- ❖ l is pronounced as /u/ in past participles and sometimes in other words
- ❖ m is pronounced /m̥/ before f and v
- ❖ n is pronounced /n̥/ before g and k
- ❖ nj are pronounced /nj/ save before consonants, i and at the end of a word when /ɲ/
- ❖ Slovenian r is always rolled like in Spanish or Italian
- ❖ g and k are aspirated in short imperatives and interrogatives
- ❖ /w/ is pronounced before vowels as well as j, l and r, while /ʍ/ before consonants
- ❖ /ə/ is always pronounced before syllabic l, m, n, and r
- ❖ /:/ denotes long vowel

+ Difficulties with English



Mispronunciations of English words due to:

Distinction between /ɪ/ and /i:/ is neutralized and instead of two individual sounds, a variant of the Slovene /i/ is pronounced, similar to schwa.

When /i:/ is followed by a voiceless consonant, vowel is reduced in length: <beat> to <bit>

Difference between the two vowels /æ/ and /e/ is neutralized and both end up sounding like the Slovene /ɛ/: <bed> to <bad> and <bet> to <bat>

/ɑ:/, /ʌ/ tend to be neutralized to one sound, the Slovene /a/

No Standard Slovene counterpart for English /ʊ/, pronounced as /u:/



Difficulties with English



- ❖ Slovene does not have the allophones [tr] or [ts]: <tree>, <cats>; thus producing these sounds in English might be difficult.
- ❖ When 3 consonants occur in a sequence and central one is /t/ or /d/, latter is likely to disappear: <left wing> to /lef 'wɪŋ/
- ❖ /h/ disappears in the normal forms of pronouns and in the auxiliary verb *have*: <him> to /ɪm/
- ❖ /v/ disappears in normal form of the word “of” before / /:
<lots of them> to /'lɒts ə ðəm/
- ❖ English sounds difficult to make due to tongue position:
/æ/, /ŋ/, /h/, /ɔ/, /ð/

+ Slovene vs. English

Slovene	English
Language uses inflections to mark cases, therefore word order is liable to change	Word order is predominantly fixed (S-P-O)
Nucleus need not fall on a lexical item, may also fall on a function word	Nucleus falls on last lexical item in word group
3 basic tone groups: fall, rise, level tone	5 basic tone groups: fall, fall-rise, rise, rise-fall, level tone

+ Culture Notes



- ❖ It is important to ask how a person is doing and really listen to their answer before moving on to the purpose of the conversation, if there is one.
- ❖ Slovenes are neither overly direct nor indirect in their communication style. The norm is somewhere in between.
- ❖ An arm's length of personal space during conversation is usually the norm.
- ❖ To stay on the safe side, it's best not to touch too much until you have established a good relationship.

+ Culture Notes cont'd

- ❖ Normally it's appropriate and expected to have some eye contact with the person you're talking to in order to show that you're listening to her/him. However, constantly staring at someone's eyes could be offensive.
- ❖ When interacting with good friends and family a normal amount of touching is usually acceptable, regardless of sex.
- ❖ Punctuality is in most cases valued and people normally do covet their time.

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+ Resources continued



Images

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