

ITALIAN INTERJECTIONS *BAH*, *BEH* & *BOH* AND THEIR TRANSLATIONAL EQUIVALENTS IN SERBIAN

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Abstract

Interjections are frequently used in everyday communication across nearly all languages (Zamora & Alessandro, 2015, p. 1). The role of interjections is embodied in conveying the speaker's attitude, mental state, emotions, or other reactions in a communicative situation. Although relevant for linguistic analyses, it seems that this category of linguistic elements has not received adequate attention in linguistic studies, often being viewed as a separate and frequently isolated category of words. The idea of this paper is to examine the basic semantic-pragmatic aspects of the interjections *bah*, *beh*, and *boh* in the Italian language, as well as to identify their possible translational equivalents in the Serbian language. Therefore, the primary aim of this research is based on analysing the range of their pragmatic functions and demonstrating their role in context. In this regard, the secondary aim of this analysis pertains to examining the possible translational equivalents of the interjections in the Serbian language, and the issue of preserving these functions in translational solutions. The results of this analysis, conducted on examples extracted from a literary corpus, have illuminated numerous pragmatic functions of Italian interjections whose role is contextually conditioned. The heterogeneous nature of the translational equivalents in the selected corpus testifies to the fact that the translational solution is directly conditioned by the pragmatic function of the interjections and that this range of functions can be transferred through numerous equivalents in the target language.

Key words: *bah*, *beh*, *boh*, pragmatics, Italian language, Serbian language.

ИТАЛИЈАНСКИ УЗВИЦИ *ВАН*, *ВЕН* И *ВОН* И ПРЕВОДНИ ЕКВИВАЛЕНТИ У СРПСКОМ ЈЕЗИКУ

Апстракт

Свакодневна комуникација праћена је учесталом употребом узвика у готово свим језицима (Zamora & Alessandro, 2015, p. 1). Њихова улога оличена је у пре-ношењу говорничког става, менталног стања, емоција или других реакција у ко-

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муникативној ситуацији. Иако су релевантни за језичке анализе, чини се да ова категорија језичких елемената није задобила адекватну пажњу у лингвистичким студијама, већ је посматрана као одвојена и, неретко, изолована категорија речи. Идеја овог рада јесте да се сагледају основни семантичко-прагматички аспекти узвика *bah*, *beh* и *boh* у италијанском језику и да се маркирају њихови могући преводни еквиваленти у српском језику. Стога, примарни циљ овог истраживања базира се на анализи распона њихових прагматичких функција и на манифестовању њихове улоге у контексту. С тим у вези, секундарни циљ ове анализе односи се на испитивање могућих преводних еквивалената узвика у српском језику, као и на питање очувања датих функција у преводилачким решењима. Резултати ове анализе спроведене на примерима екстрахованим из књижевног корпуса расветлили су бројне прагматичке функције италијанских узвика чија је улога контекстуално условљена. Хетерогена природа преводних еквивалената у одабраном корпусу сведочи о чињеници да је преводилачко решење директно условљено прагматичком функцијом узвика, као и да је тај распон функција могуће пренети бројним еквивалентима на циљном језику.

Кључне речи: *bah*, *beh*, *boh*, прагматика, италијански језик, српски језик.

INTRODUCTION

In the available literature, interjections have primarily been discussed in morphosyntactic studies, which aim to describe and present this complex linguistic phenomenon within the frameworks of morphology and syntax. Within the morphosyntactic system, the interjections *bah*, *beh*, and *boh* are categorised as immutable word forms used to express emotions, reactions, or the speaker's state (Serianni & Castelvechi, 2003, p. 258). The functions of interjections, like other linguistic categories, have been recognised mainly later, with the development of pragmatics in the 20th century, often within the category of pragmatic markers. When interjections are observed through contextual use, it is noted that their functional characteristics vary depending on the specific context. Thus, they can be used to express: negation, which is inherent to all languages (Grubor & Halitovic, 2023, p. 841), doubt, politeness, disbelief, resignation, uncertainty, and surprise, as well as to diminish the characteristics of the proposition's content or the entire illocutionary act, and conversely, to emphasise the illocutionary force of the act and the speaker's conviction. This research will uncover a range of different functions of the selected interjections, as well as numerous translational solutions established in context.

The role of exponents of the speaker's attitude or emotions, attributed to interjections, is projected onto the system of pragmatic markers (Schiffrin, 1987; Bazzanella, 2006; Norrick, 2009; Sansò, 2020; Ceković, 2022). The primary task of this analysis is to uncover the numerous characteristics of the interjections *bah*, *beh*, and *boh* within the written corpus of the Italian language from a semantic-pragmatic perspective. Additionally, the analysis is directed towards examining possible translational equivalents in the Serbian language. Considering that such a scope is com-

plex and conditioned by the functional parameters of interjections, we will ultimately discover whether these functions are preserved in translations into the target language. Given that interjections are highly frequent elements in spoken language (Dingemanse, 2024), and consequently in literary texts, they can be a significant indicator of the level of knowledge of a second language and culture.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Interjections

Interjections, in the form of immutable words with various functions, such as expressing emotions, states, attitudes, intentions, or specific reactions, are present in all languages. Although the formal and functional parameters of interjections in the Italian language have been analysed in certain studies, these analyses seem insufficient for a complete understanding of this complex and peripheral linguistic system, which is not a primary grammatical category (Cuenca, 2006, p. 20), especially when compared to the corresponding category in other languages. Therefore, there arises a need to investigate them in more detail from a pragmatic perspective, and to highlight their significance in the light of linguistic studies, given that recent studies emphasise the relevance of interjections in everyday communication and highlight that interjections are “the core of every language” (Dingemanse, 2024).

Common definitions emphasise that interjections are expressions with independent meanings that do not combine with other word types (Ameka, 1992, p. 105), correspond to complete speech acts, and represent holophrastic elements *per se* (Poggi, 1981, p. 45). Although initially considered to convey only the speaker’s emotional status¹ and to play a role in opening discussions or initiating conversations (Quirk et al., 1972, pp. 358–359), recent research discusses other functional aspects of interjections from a semantic-pragmatic perspective. Namely, the role of interjections in recent literature is often equated with the functional and formal parameters of pragmatic markers (Norrick, 2009) or pragmatic phraseologisms (Cuenca, 2006; Zamora & Alessandro, 2015). The heterogeneous group of interjections is divided into *primary* and *secondary* (Ameka, 1992; Serianni & Castelvechi, 2003; Norrick, 2009; Marabini, 2013; Zamora & Alessandro, 2015). In Italian, we find equivalent terms such as *interiezioni proprie* and *interiezioni improprie* (Dardano & Trifone, 1995, p. 433) or *interiezioni univoche* and *interiezioni plurivoche*² (Poggi, 1981, p. 54). Pri-

¹ The concept of emotive and emotional communication is explained in more detail in Caffi, 2007, p. 138.

² The terms can be translated into English as *proper & improper interjections* or *univocal & multivocal interjections*;

mary interjections are not syntactically integrated into the text, do not belong to other word types, constitute an entire speech act, and reflect the speaker's mental state, emotions, or spontaneous reactions, while secondary interjections reflect other word types, stand alone, and form a speech act (Ameka, 1992, p. 105). They are also subject to semantic changes through contextual use (Cuenca, 2006, pp. 21-22). Exponents of primary interjections in Italian can include: *ahi, bah, beh*³, *boh, deh, eh, ehi, ehm, ih, mah, ma, ohi, uh, veh*, and others (Serianni & Castelvechi, 2003, pp. 259-262). Secondary interjections include the following lexemes: *basta, permesso, però, calma, anzi, dai, diavolo, silenzio*, etc. (Poggi, 1981, pp. 54-65). Thus, the examined literature emphasises that the interjections *bah, beh*, and *boh* are highly prevalent in the Italian language, encompass a wide range of semantic-pragmatic functions, and can be equated with *pragmatic markers* or *pragmatic phraseologisms*⁴. In the following section, we will present the existing interpretations of the selected interjections from different perspectives.

BAH, BEH & BOH

Interjections are defined in eminent Italian dictionaries and subsequently analysed within the framework of morphosyntax, with certain notes on possible semantic variations. The interjections *bah, beh*, and *boh* were selected due to their phonological similarity, and the main criterion guiding this selection was their prevalence in everyday communication, as well as within the chosen literary corpus. The interjection *bah* conveys nuances of uncertainty, disbelief, or resignation (De Mauro, 2000), but also unease or agitation (Serianni & Castelvechi, 2003, p. 260). Its synonymous pairs can include *mah, sarà vero, forse, chissà, boh*, and *vada come vuole* (Pittano, 2013), while the proposed translational equivalents in Serbian are *tja* and *ko bi ga znao* (Klajn, 2014). The use of the interjection *bah* is illustrated in the following example excerpted from the corpus, which will be further discussed in the methodology section dedicated to the corpus⁵:

1. "Ma chi può essere che chiama?" chiese il bambino Nardo.
"Bah!" rispose Rosario, riflettendo. (Ali ko je mogao zvati? -

³ The interjection *beh* in Italian can also appear in the shortened form *be'*. This form derives from the Italian adverb *bene* (*well*) however, semantic overlap is excluded since the interjection *beh* is an independent sentence element and cannot be considered a synonym of the adverb *bene* (Poggi, 1981, p. 59);

⁴ In this research, *pragmatic markers* are considered as particles that influence the interlocutor's perception of the communicative situation (Aijmer & Simon-Vandenberg, 2006, p. 2), while *pragmatic phraseologisms* represent conventional expressions of certain speech acts that can be analysed within the domain of pragmatics (Burger, 1982, p. 110);

⁵ Due to the length of the paper, it is not possible to list all the extracted examples from the corpus (968), but the corpus can be obtained by contacting the author at the previously indicated email address or at <https://noske.jerteh.rs>;

pitao je dječak Nardo. - Hm! - odgovori Rosario razmišljajući).
[Elio Vittorini, *Le città del Mondo*]

The interjection *beh* has multiple meanings. Possible synonyms include *bene*, *dunque*, *allora*, *ebbene*, and *proprio così* (De Mauro, 2000; Pittano, 2013)⁶, while in Serbian, the following translations can be used: *pa*, *dobro*, *hajde*, and *dakle* (Klajn, 2014). In the following example, the use of the interjection *beh* is illustrated in the corpus:

2. “Beh, cos’hai?” mi chiese Sergio Pavani, dandomi un colpetto gentile sulla schiena. („Ma dai, šta ti je?” upitao me je Serđo Pavani, prijateljski me potapšavši po ramenu). [Giorgio Bassani, *Il Giardino dei Finzi*]

The interjection *boh* expresses doubt or uncertainty (De Mauro, 2000), and its synonymous pairs include: *chi lo sa*, *bah*, *chissà*, and *mah* (Pittano, 2013). The interjection can carry a nuance of disdain, and its translations can be: *tja*, *ama*, and *hm* (Klajn, 2014). Translating the interjection *boh* into the target language is challenging due to the nuances of emotions and the function of the social context (Serianni & Castelveccchi, 2003, p. 260). One example of the use of the interjection *boh* is the following sentence taken from the corpus:

3. Boh: è un nome da muratore. (Uh: pravo zidarsko ime). [Lidia Ravera, Marco Lombardo-Radice, *Rocco e Antonia*]

The development of pragmatics has contributed to illuminating other functions of interjections at the level of speech acts within a given context. In this regard, Poggi has elaborated on the nature of the interjection *beh*, noting that in certain contexts, depending on intonation, it can be paraphrased with expressions such as: *perché*, *come mai*, *e con ciò*, and *e allora* (Poggi, 1981, p. 91). Furthermore, it can stand alone without the previously mentioned context if a certain situation is known to both the speaker and the interlocutor, meaning that the use of the interjection *beh* also depends on their shared knowledge (Poggi, 1981, p. 97). It can also indicate disappointment or indecision, and is attributed a social function, as it maintains the continuity of conversation and interaction (Poggi, 1981, pp. 102-103). This study appears to be the main driver of the analysis of interjections from a pragmatic perspective in subsequent literature. The intersection of the formal and functional parameters of interjections and pragmatic markers⁷ becomes explicit when considering the interpretations of

⁶ De Mauro and Pittano are monolingual dictionaries, while Klajn is a bilingual dictionary;

⁷ The terminology in the literature related to the phenomenon of pragmatic markers is diverse, both in English, Italian, and Serbian, and presumably in other languages as well, given that their polyfunctional nature often calls into question certain taxonomies and definitions (for details see Ceković Rakonjac, 2011, p. 136 and Ceković, 2022, pp. 143-145);

authors who classify interjections as discourse or pragmatic markers⁸ (Schiffrin, 1987; Bazzanella, 2006; Sansò, 2020; Ceković, 2011, 2022). Conversely, Fraser argues that discourse markers are not interjections but derive from them (Fraser, 1990, p. 391). He views interjections as single words that convey the entire message of a speech act, usually related to the speaker's mental or emotional state. Interjections do not function to organise discourse nor mark the relationship of discourse as a whole, as pragmatic markers do (Fraser, 1990, p. 392). In the continuation of our research, we will present the goals and hypotheses on which the study of the functions of interjections at the macro and micro levels is based.

THE METHODOLOGY OF RESEARCH

Considering the relevance of examining this linguistic phenomenon in linguistics, we decided to use a corpus of Italian literary works⁹ translated into Serbian *SerbItaCor3*, available on the *NoSketchEngine*¹⁰ platform. The corpus contains 267 translated literary works¹¹, with more than 21 million words (Moderc et al., 2023, p. 89). The frequency of interjections in the corpus is accessible through the platform, and the following frequency data per million words were recorded: *bah* – 2.66%; *beh* – 13.06%; *be'* 54.07%, and *boh* – 3.72%. Based on the presented theoretical framework, we outline several objectives of our research: the first objective is to examine the functions of interjections on the semantic-pragmatic line; the second objective is to elucidate their translation equivalents in the Serbian language; and the third objective, based on contrastive analysis, is aimed at examining the preservation of the pragmatic functions of the interjections in question. In line with the set objectives, we will briefly address several hypotheses from which we start in this paper: the first hypothesis relates to the assumption that the range of semantic-pragmatic functions of interjections is significantly more diverse compared to those presented in the available literature; the second hypothesis concerns the translation equivalents in the Serbian language, which are assumed to be more numerous compared to those processed in dictionaries so far; and the third

⁸ The terms *pragmatic markers* and *discourse markers* will be used as synonymous pairs;

⁹ Although almost all authors emphasize that interjections are highly frequent in spoken language, due to the lack of parallel corpora of spoken Italian and Serbian (see Ceković, 2022, p. 43), we did not opt for examining everyday informal or formal conversations, but rather literary works of parallel texts, which allows for simpler searches and a more detailed elucidation of the characteristics of the selected interjections.

¹⁰ <https://noske.jerteh.rs>;

¹¹ We will mention several literary works and their authors, whose text excerpts have been extracted for illustrative examples in this paper, including E. Vittorini (*Le città del Mondo*), G. Bassani (*Il Giardino dei Finzi*), G. Arpino (*Il buio e il miele*), Pier Paolo Pasolini (*Una vita violenta*; *Ragazzi di vita*) and other authors indicated alongside the extracted sentences from (1) to (13);

hypothesis focuses on the assumption that certain pragmatic functions of interjections are lost in translations, given that translations are omitted. Based on previous descriptions of interjections within the framework of pragmatic markers (Bazzanella, 2006; Sansò, 2020; Ceković, 2011, 2022), this paper identifies two primary categories of interjection functions: (1.) interactional, pertaining to the speaker-interlocutor relationship, and (2.) cognitive, related to the speaker's speech act level.

DATA ANALYSIS

This section presents the diversity of functions of the interjections *bah*, *beh*, and *boh*, as well as their translation equivalents in the Serbian language. Due to the length of the paper, it is not possible to display all of the examples, but we strived to summarise all confirmed characteristics and occurrences in the corpus.

The interjection bah

In addition to the aforementioned characteristics of the interjection *bah*, we have also identified its functions within the strategies of intensification, indirectness, politeness, and mitigation, through which nuances of surprise, effort, doubt, denial, resignation, emphasis on comments, explanations, interference, contempt or disgust, rejection, dissatisfaction, reconsideration, or discomfort caused by ignorance are projected. The following example¹² is an indicator of emphasising the speaker's attitude towards the expressed proposition in the service of expressing surprise, disbelief, or doubt, as well as an ironic comment:

4. "Football a parte, ti trovi bene col sottoscritto? Sì o no". "Ma sì. Davvero". "Bah' ebbe una smorfia", crediamoci. („Fudbal na stranu, je li ti dobro sa nižepotpisanim? Da ili ne?". „Ali, da. Zaista“. „Eto ti ga na“, namršti se,“ da poverujemo)¹³. [Giovanni Arpino, *Il buoio e il miele*]

The interjection *bah* can also be used for mitigation or hesitation, carrying nuances of reconsideration, ignorance, uncertainty, or lack of knowledge. The following example illustrates the speaker's lack of knowledge, uncertainty, and hesitation, which manifests through the speaker's intention not to cause discomfort to the interlocutor. This very caution of the speaker implies the speaker-interlocutor relationship, and thus the use of this interjection is projected on an interactional level:

5. Finì col raccontargli anche l'incontro con la baronessa Santasilvia. - Bah, da lei è inutile che tu vada. (Završio je time što mu je ispričao

¹² Examples are given according to the order of occurrence in the corpus;

¹³ Quotation marks are provided only if they exist in the original text;

i susret s baronicom di Santasilia. - Hm, k njoj je uzaludno da ideš).
[Francesco Jovine, *Le terre del Sacramento*]

Characteristic of the interjection *bah* is also the expression of resignation in certain contexts. The nuance of the speaker's emotional state shapes the further course of the interaction, as the speaker shows indifference to a certain topic, which is further emphasised by the description of his long, exhausted sigh. By using the interjection *bah*, the speaker achieves an intense emotional reaction, making the interlocutor feel the weight of his emotions and resignation:

6. Sulla strada, lo zio portò al massimo quell'espressione di amarezza e sfiducia che lo aveva fatto somigliare, nel salotto di Bonaccorsi, a una povera mucca affollata di mosche e, nel corso di un lungo faticosissimo sospiro, disse lentissimamente: "Bah!...". (Na ulicu je ujak izneo onaj izraz gorčine i nepoverenja zbog koga je u Bonakorsijevom salonu ličio na kravu koju su napale muve i, uzdahnuvši iznemoglo i duboko, reče sasvim tiho: "Pa!..."). [Vitaliano Brancati, *Il bell'Antonio*]

In addition to these examples, the corpus also includes other translation equivalents, such as: *uh, eh, tja, jest, da, ph, pa, hm, a, pih*, or *dodavola*. In a certain number of cases (13%), the interjection *bah* is not translated, which in some cases can result in the loss of its semantic properties and pragmatic functions in the target language. Therefore, translators should pay special attention to preserving the pragmatic functions of linguistic units such as interjections, as they not only reflect the speaker's emotional state but also his attitude towards the speech act and the interlocutor as a participant in the interaction.

The Interjection Beh

The complex and most frequent interjection *beh* in the examined corpus carries multiple functions on the semantic-pragmatic level¹⁴. Although partially explored in the available literature (Poggi, 1981; Ceković, 2022), its nature and characteristics require a more detailed analysis. The macro-function of intensification, politeness, indirectness, or mitigation is expressed through nuances of indecision, politeness, interference, surprise, resignation, hesitation, denial, disagreement, admiration, questioning indirectness, topic rounding, interruption of interaction flow, optativity, affirmation, agreement, surprise, yielding the floor, softening negative comments, explanation, topic change, enthusiasm, softening warnings, softening categorical statements or comments, reflection, introducing comments,

¹⁴ The interjection *be'* has also been examined, and analysis has shown that its semantic-pragmatic properties overlap with the characteristics of the interjection *beh* since they are considered to be one word. In sentence (9), we will show one of the examples of the usage of the interjection *be'*;

or attracting attention. The translation equivalents used in the target language correspond to the functional aspect of the interjection *beh* in the source language, although there is a certain number of untranslated examples (13.37%), which leads to the loss of semantic-pragmatic nuances in the target language and affects the translation style. The functions of the interjection are heterogeneous, and in the corpus, we identified the following translation equivalents: *no, šta kao, tja, ma, e, ovaj, dobro, eh, pa da, gle, ah, ali, e, nego, ma da, onda, je li u redu, hm, vidite, al' dobro, šta je tu je, ništa*, and *eto*. The variety of equivalent types is a consequence of the different functions of the interjection *beh* in a given context. In two examples, we encounter verbs of visual perception in the Serbian language *gledati* and *videti*¹⁵. Example (7) illustrates the function of intensification and surprise on the cognitive level, while the interactional level is achieved by attracting the interlocutor's attention, and the interjection is mirrored by the use of the verb *gledati*:

7. D'un tratto si interrompe. "Beh, perché resti là impalato?", esclamò. "Santo Dio benedetto, sei proprio peggio di un bimbo piccolo!". (Odjednom se prekine. Gle, a što si se tu ustobočio? - povikne. - Gospode Bože, gori si od malog djeteta). [Giorgio Bassani, *Il giardino dei Finzi*]

In the following example (8), the interjection *beh* functions within the framework of mitigation, as the speaker primarily aims to prepare the interlocutor for the further course of interaction, thus creating a kind of pause, while simultaneously reducing the strength of the entire speech act:

8. Beh, cominciò Pereira, è una teoria di due filosofi francesi che sono anche psicologi, sostengono che noi non abbiamo un'anima sola. (Vidite, započeo je Pereira, to je teorija dva francuska filozofa koji su istovremeno i psiholozi, tvrde da mi nemamo samo jednu dušu). [Antonio Tabucchi, *Sostiene Pereira*]

In example (9), the speaker politely introduces his comment on a certain topic, and softens disagreement and criticism, while simultaneously attracting the interlocutor's attention. The translation with the interjection *e*, which has a range of different nuances in the Serbian language, is adequate in this sense and illustrates the semantic-pragmatic nuances of the interjection *be'*¹⁶:

9. "Del resto, se a te piace!..." "Be'", disse lui, "io la trovo molto carina" (Uostalom, najvažnije je da se tebi sviđa! - E, pa šta ćeš - reče on - mislim da je zaista ljupka). [Dino Buzzati, *Un amore*]

¹⁵ In the study of discourse markers, verbs related to visual perception often play a significant role. Specifically, in the Serbian language, the verbs *gledati* and *videti* can be considered equivalents of the interjection *beh* on the semantic-pragmatic level (Ceković & Janićijević, 2018; Ceković, 2022);

¹⁶ The normalised frequency of untranslated examples for the interjection *be'* is 15.45%;

The strategy of politeness is also found in examples of agreement with previously stated points, i.e., agreement with the interlocutor, which represents an interactional function, while mitigation occurs on the cognitive level, as in example (10):

10. “Io devo finire il pane”. “Beh, noi andiamo. Poi lei ci raggiunge”. („Ja moram da završim hleb“. „Dobro, mi idemo, a vi dodite kasnije“). [Dacia Maraini, *Il treno dell'ultima notte*]

The functions of the interjection *beh* vary depending on the context, and they can compress multiple nuances within a given speech act. The use of this interjection involves three levels of communication in the speaker-speech act-interlocutor relationship, thus simultaneously covering functions on multiple pragmatic levels.

The Interjection boh

The previously mentioned nuances of the interjection *boh*, which operate within the field of mitigation, expressing uncertainty, doubt, disbelief, or ignorance, have been shown in the corpus to be just one of many functions. All macro-functions, such as intensification, mitigation, politeness, and indirectness, are also evident in this case. On the other hand, micro-functions represent different nuances, such as surprise, denial, dissatisfaction, rejection, ignorance, unawareness, as well as emphasising effort or exertion. The spectrum of the cognitive characteristics of the functions of the interjection *boh* is also projected onto the interactional level, as it is used in certain examples when yielding the floor to the interlocutor, maintaining the flow of conversation, and rounding off a particular topic. The translation equivalents in Serbian are diverse and result from careful consideration of the functions of the mentioned interjection, leading to an adequate transfer of the contextual use of the interjection *boh* into the target language. A certain number of untranslated examples (12.24%) should be specifically considered in subsequent studies. The proposed solutions for translated examples in the corpus are: *uh, ko će ga znati, ph, pa, valjda, šta znam, šta je tu je, pojma nemam*, and *otkud znam*. The nuances of hesitation, uncertainty, or ignorance, translated with the interjection *hm*, are more prevalent and have the role of taking the floor and maintaining the flow of communication on the interactional level, as in the sentence:

11. È ‘na donna casereccia... “Boh”, fece Settimio, continuando a pensarci e frugando in tutti gli angoletti del cervello, per vedere se ci sbucava questa Irene. (Ona je domaćica...- „Hm“, - reče Settimio i nastavi razmišljati kopajući po svim uglovima u mozgu, da vidi da li će se pojaviti ova Irene). [Pier Paolo Pasolini, *Una vita violenta*]

Different semantic-pragmatic variations of functions on the cognitive level appear in the form of interference with traces of the speaker’s resignation towards a particular communicative situation. The interactional

level is projected through the confirmation of agreement, as well as in the form of markers of attention confirmation:

12. ...Boh, si vede ch'era rimasto un po' sonato per le botte che gli avevano dato prima in camera di sicurezza e poi a bottega... (...
Šta je tu je, ali jasno je da je malo pobenavio od batina koje je dobio, najpre u pritvoru, a onda u buvari...). [Pier Paolo Pasolini, *Ragazzi di vita*]

The intensification of the speech act is noticeable when emphasising the lack of information on a certain topic. In this regard, the speaker aims to highlight the lack of awareness and information about the topic of communication. On the interactional level, the interjection *boh* reflects the confirmation of attention, as well as the continuation of the conversation:

13. "Che sta a dì?" - chiese il Caciotta. "-Boh", - fece il Tirillo con una certa impressione. („Šta kaže?", upita Kačota. „Pojma nemam“, uzvratil Tirilo važno). [Pier Paolo Pasolini, *Ragazzi di vita*]

Translators have, to a large extent, successfully transferred the semantic-pragmatic functions of interjections into the target language. However, attention should be paid to a certain number of untranslated examples. The interjections *bah*, *beh*, and *boh* have potential functional similarities in the semantic-pragmatic sense, leading to overlaps on the cognitive and interactional levels. Therefore, their translation equivalents in Serbian may coincide.

DISCUSSION

The idea of our research is based on elucidating the potential functions of the interjections *bah*, *beh*, and *boh*, in addition to those already defined in the existing literature. Considering the fact that the nature of interjections has been neglected in the available literature, we aimed to analyse interjections in the Italian language and their translations into Serbian, thereby gaining insight into the contrastive aspects of Italian and Serbian. By analysing the given corpus, we presented a range of macro-functions of the interjections in the fields of intensification, mitigation, indirectness, or politeness, which express various micro-functions on the cognitive and interactional levels. Since we have shown that the functional spectrum of interjections also includes the interactional level, it can be concluded that these linguistic elements reveal not only the speaker's emotional state but also their intentions and the relationship between the speaker, the speech act, and the interlocutor. By contrasting the extracted examples, we found that the translation equivalents reflect the functions of the interjections in the original, although more detailed attention should be directed towards untranslated parts whose semantic-pragmatic value sometimes disappears in the translation into the target language. Therefore, the results obtained from the analysis in our research confirm the previously

stated objectives and hypotheses, primarily focused on pragmatic analysis with semantic elements. Additionally, we highlighted the relevance of examining this phenomenon in linguistic disciplines.

CONCLUSION

Starting from the available definitions of interjections and relevant literature in this paper, we aimed to establish potential macro-functions within which a set of micro-functions exists in the semantic-pragmatic framework. Focusing on the functional parameters of the Italian interjections *bah*, *beh*, and *boh*, we aimed to observe the complex range of translation solutions in the Serbian language and concluded that the semantic-pragmatic characteristics of interjections are preserved in translations. This is of utmost importance since their contextual use pertains to both the cognitive and interactional levels, i.e., the entire discourse flow. The limitations of this research can be seen in the limited number of presented examples, although the selected corpus can be obtained by querying the indicated email address of the author or at: <https://noske.jerteh.rs>. Moreover, this data testifies that interjections are a complex linguistic system that requires careful approach in research. In this paper, we attempted to determine possible translation equivalents in the Serbian language through a contrastive approach; however, the research needs to be further broken down into more segments. Furthermore, future analyses can focus on examining the use of this type of exclamation among students of Italian as a second language, through the prism of glottodidactics and contrastive pragmatics. Therefore, this research represents a reference point from which further analysis of interjections in the Italian language should be directed, comparing them with corresponding linguistic elements in other languages.

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ИТАЛИЈАНСКИ УЗВИЦИ *ВАН, ВЕН & ВОНИ* ПРЕВОДНИ ЕКВИВАЛЕНТИ У СРПСКОМ ЈЕЗИКУ

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Резиме

Узвици представљају посебан језички феномен, комплексан и разнолик, а често занемарен у лингвистичким студијама. Имајући у виду да су узвици примарно сагледани као периферна морфосинтаксичка структура са одређеним описима у постојећим речницима, настојали смо да укажемо на новије прагматичке студије од којих смо истраживање усмерили ка семантичко-прагматичкој перспективи. Наиме, узев у обзир постојеће дефиниције и таксономије, као и предочене варијације у погледу макро и микрофункција интерјекција, испитали смо на који начин интерјекције оперишу унутар књижевног корпуса који у извесној мери подражава свакодневну комуникацију.

Како смо и претпоставили на почетку, функционални параметри показали су вишеструке нијансе које се прилично поклапају у одређеним сегментима. Такође, преводилачка решења одговарају датим функционалним особеностима. Сем тога, у овом истраживању назначен је и број непреведених примера управо зато да бисмо скренули пажњу на значај овог појма и на његову улогу у многим лингвистичким дисциплинама. Релевантност овог истраживања огледа се у откривању функција које до сада нису забележене у доступној литератури, а које сведоче о богатству и шароликости предметних језика. Мишљења смо да у литератури није детаљно истражено питање италијанских интерјекција, а посебно су недостајуће контрастивне студије италијанског и српског језика, као и у оквирима истраживања италијанског као другог језика (L2). Сматрамо да би у будућим истраживањима требало анализирати заступљеност и употребу узвика код студената на вишим нивоима, с обзиром на то да је познавање интерјекција важан показатељ познавања неког језика и културе. Иако је број рецентнијих контрастивних студија између италијанског и српског језика миноран и усмерен углавном ка процесима граматикализације и синтаксичких структура (Milićev & Vianello, 2024, p. 371), неопходно је усмерити пажњу на истраживање ових језичких елемената савременог језика. Поред тога, студије превођења треба да осветле питања превођења и примене различитих стратегија, као и ниво преводне еквиваленције постигнуте у преводима. Такође, потребно је детаљније истражити да ли постоји функционална сличност између италијанских интерјекција и прагматичких фразеологизма у другим језицима, или начин на који се италијанске интерјекције преводе у фразе или идиоме у другим језицима. Наше истраживање отвара многа питања која обухватају различите лингвистичке дисциплине и представља почетну тачку за разумевање значаја интерјекција у језику.