

## Preface to the Second Edition

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The second edition of *Bosnian, Croatian, Serbian, A Textbook with Exercises and Basic Grammar* contains several new features. These include

- specific assignments and guidelines for self-study students
- commentary on Montenegrin culture and the status of the Montenegrin language (see p. 87)
- updated maps reflecting border changes in Serbia and Montenegro
- a new Appendix 9, listing all verbs introduced in *Textbook* by verb and accentual type
- expanded glossaries, including new vocabulary and more extensive referencing
- revisions and additions both in the grammar and exercise sections

Despite these changes the A exercises have remained unchanged, allowing one to continue to use the existing audio recordings (the only change is in the ordering of Lessons 16-19). Two sets of answer keys, one for the first edition and one for the second edition, are available at

[www.bcsgrammarandtextbook.org](http://www.bcsgrammarandtextbook.org).

Students: please read the *Guide for Students* on p. xiii ! Self-study learners should also read the *Guide for Teachers* p. xiv.

## Preface to the First Edition

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When Yugoslavia broke up into smaller successor states, the language called Serbo-Croatian was replaced by Bosnian, Croatian, and Serbian. Accordingly, those who used to study Serbo-Croatian must now choose which of the three successor languages they wish to learn. Often they have no choice, and must simply study whichever of the three is being taught where they happen to be studying, and trust in the assurance that learning one will allow them to “get by” in either of the others. This book solves the problem by presenting all three together in a way that gives equal weight to each one. It demonstrates by example that although the three languages are very similar they are not identical: each has its own characteristic features. In particular, each expresses a unique historical and cultural identity. At the same time they are similar enough in grammar and vocabulary that they can be taught together in a single classroom.

The advantages of this method are numerous. Students are able to choose which of the three languages they want to focus on, and are able at the same time to learn as much (or as little) as they wish about each of the other two. Teachers are able to work in a single class with students who choose to learn one or more than one of the three languages. Universities in a quandary about which of the three languages to offer may rest assured that all are covered. In short, this book restores a sense of balance to the study of the region. It is dedicated both to the practicality of learning that which is similar as a unit, and to teaching the recognition of that which is unique and separate in the cultures of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Serbia, and Montenegro. Among the reading selections are three short stories written especially for this book, one each from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, and Serbia. Reading selections also include letters composed by natives of the three languages, and poems by poets representing the several cultural traditions throughout the region covered by BCS.

We give basic dialogues in three versions, one each for Bosnian, Croatian and Serbian. Reading selections and illustrations also represent the three different languages and cultures. As the title of the book suggests, the ordering is always alphabetical: all three are given equal weight. In the construction of the dialogues and the choice of readings selections, we have attempted to strike a balance between that which is common to the three and that which is characteristic of each one’s unique identity. Whenever we speak of grammar or vocabulary common to all three

we use the acronym BCS, and whenever we speak of one of the three separate languages we use the initials B, C, or S. In the lesson vocabularies and in both glossaries, we have indicated words which are markedly B, C, or S by means of these abbreviations. It has not always been possible to make these identifications unambiguously, since the degree to which certain words are shared varies from word to word and speaker to speaker. In each instance we have made the most reasoned judgment on the basis of reference manuals and the advice of native language professionals.

This book has been designed to complement *Bosnian, Croatian, Serbian: A Grammar with Sociolinguistic Commentary*, and should if possible be used in conjunction with it. The *Grammar* provides more thorough grammar explanations than does the *Textbook*; it also contains a detailed outline of the social, political and historical circumstances which allow BCS to be viewed as one system utilized by three different languages. All language material in both books is accented according to a simpler marking system than found in native manuals, a system developed specifically for these books. We took as authoritative in assigning accents the following manuals: Vladimir Anić, *Veliki rječnik hrvatskoga jezika* (Zagreb, 2003); Lana Hudeček, Milica Mihaljević, Luka Vukojević, *Hrvatski jezični savjetnik* (Zagreb, 1999); Morton Benson (with the collaboration of Biljana Šljivić-Šimšić), *Serbocroatian-English Dictionary* (Belgrade and Philadelphia, 1971), and the six-volume *Rečnik srpskohrvatskog književnog jezika* (published by Matica srpska between 1967 and 1976).

Our intent in producing this book has been to bring some measure of unification to the fragmentation of language teaching which came about as a result of the wars accompanying the breakup of Yugoslavia. On a more personal level, we also both wish to give back (or forward) to students of generations to come something of what each of us has gained through many years of interaction with wonderful people, their cultures and their languages. The dialogues and exercises are an outgrowth of those developed by Ellen Elias-Bursać over a ten-year period teaching at Harvard University, and the underlying principle of the book (that of combining the unity of BCS and the separateness of B, C and S in a single volume) was devised by Ronelle Alexander, who also wrote all the grammar sections and devised the system of accentual marking.

We realize that not everyone will agree with all the choices we have made in our attempt to find a balance among the many different facets of usage, both official and colloquial, in the three languages. Our intent has been to give as true a picture as possible of existing usage within a framework that is accessible to students and usable in the classroom. We welcome reactions, comments, and errata via: <http://www.bcsgrammarandtextbook.org>.

## Acknowledgments

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We extend special thanks to David Albahari and Muharem Bazdulj for writing stories especially for the *Textbook*, to Ferida Duraković for the use of her poem and to Miro Gavran for the use of his story. Thanks are also due to Dušan Radović's son, Desanka Maksimović's heirs, and the Vasko Popa Archive, for allowing the use of their poems and other writings; to the Milman Parry Collection of Oral Literature at Harvard University for the use of the transcribed excerpt from Stanko Pižurica's oral epic; and to Zrinka Babić-Jelaska for her delightful review exercises which inspired parts of Lesson 8.

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## Guide for students

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Welcome to the study of BCS. You will find that the cultures of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro, and Serbia have a great deal to offer. There are movies, music, poetry and fiction, a compelling history, and political issues that have shaped not only the Balkans but also the world. This book will help you gain access to them.

Students, whether enrolled in a course or working on their own, who choose to study these languages generally have a clear sense of why they are doing so – whether for reasons of intellectual curiosity, employment, family, scholarship or research – and often they know in advance which of the three languages they are interested in learning. Other students may be intrigued by the general area, and wish to acquire an overall knowledge of its languages. This textbook furnishes the tools students need to master any one of the three (Bosnian, Croatian, or Serbian) while at the same time allowing them familiarity with the other two.

The first eight lessons introduce the cases and the past and present tenses, and the next two give full treatment of the future and the past tenses. Lessons 11-15 deal with more advanced grammatical issues such as comparatives, numbers, conditional and participial usage, and aspect, while Lessons 16-20 provide practice in reading. Brief grammar explanations accompany most lessons; more detailed explanations on all topics are available in the book's companion volume, *Bosnian, Croatian, Serbian: A Grammar with Sociolinguistic Commentary*. Recordings of the exercises in Lessons 1-14 and of the poems and the stories are available on CD as a separate unit called *Bosnian, Croatian, Serbian Audio Supplement*. Poetry is the focus of Lessons 17-19 because poems by their nature exploit the mechanics of language and will help reinforce your mastery of the grammar. There are photographs all through the *Textbook*: use these both as examples of the language in action and as material for discussion. And, of course, enjoy *Profesor Baltazar!*

The Appendices provide many useful resources. In them you will find a 24-page section of paradigms, a guide to conjugation listing all the verbs which are used in the *Textbook*, a list of the recordings in the audio supplement, a BCS-English glossary with about 5000 entries and an English-BCS glossary with 3700 entries.

Surround yourself with the language as much as you can while you study it. If you can find a subtitled film, watch it at least twice. Get a recording of the kind of music you like from the BCS region and listen to a song until you can sing it. Visit [www.bcsgrammarandtextbook.org](http://www.bcsgrammarandtextbook.org) for useful internet links, reading lists and information about films and music.

## Guide for teachers

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In courses designed for the study of Bosnian, Croatian, Serbian (referred to throughout this book as BCS), there are bound to be some students intent on the study of Bosnian, some on the study of Croatian and some on the study of Serbian. This course is designed to meet the needs of all these students. Most students will decide during the first week of class which of the three [B, C, or S] to focus on in spoken and written work. If they stay with that choice for at least one semester, they can not only gain a coherent spoken and written mastery of their chosen language, but also learn about the other two from their classmates.

Although the in-class exercises and drills may be used by the class as a group, they are best suited for work in smaller groups of two or three students each. You will find that a student speaking Croatian can easily go through an exercise paired with a student speaking Bosnian, each of them using their version as a guide; the same is true of Serbian / Bosnian or Serbian / Croatian pairs. Each student should choose a name from among those listed in the Appendix on page 317 and use it throughout the semester as his or her in-class name, substituting this name for the numbers 1 or 2 which identify the speakers in each exercise.

## Optimum use of the exercises and drills

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The teacher should first introduce a new exercise or drill by reading it aloud and then having the students repeat it as a group. After this the teacher should assign each student a partner. Even in a class of only four or five, students benefit from working in pairs or threes, as this gives them the chance to speak more, and to try things they might be reluctant to try in front of a larger group. Once each student has tried all the roles, they should then go through the exercises again, replacing the italicized words and expressions with the suggestions listed in the section marked with the symbol .

The early lessons refer to props to be used in the classroom. These are listed under the heading called *rekviziti*. For instance, the props for Lesson 1 are: *pas* (dog), *mačka* (cat), *bilježnica* [C] *sveska* [S] *teka* [B] (notebook), *knjiga* (book), *papir* (paper), *cipela* (shoe), *auto* (car). The more of the *rekviziti* the teacher can supply in the classroom for each lesson, either as real objects or as paper cut-outs, the easier it will be for students to master vocabulary and grammar. While students are working in pairs or threes, the instructor should circulate around the classroom, visiting each pair of students to respond to questions that may arise and to make corrections and suggestions. Whenever possible, students should use props, and go through exercises on their feet, with their partner or partners. Ideally, class time should be punctuated by several sessions in partner pairs, interspersed with grammar and other explanations addressed to the class as a whole.

## Organization of the lessons

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Each lesson has three sections of material. The “A” section includes demonstration exercises. If a course meets three or more times a week for an hour, an A section exercise might be used to start a class, while courses organized in one or two longer sessions can use the A sections to punctuate segments of the session. After the class works through an A section, students may be assigned to perform it as a skit, or to use it as a model on which they base an

exchange of their own design.

The “B” section includes drills for further in-class practice on the grammar set forth in the A section exercises, and the “C” section includes homework assignments. Vocabulary lists give words new to that lesson in alphabetical order; the Glossaries at the back of the book list all words from the lessons plus some additional vocabulary. Grammar explanations in this textbook are brief, since much fuller information is given in the companion volume *Bosnian, Croatian, Serbian: A Grammar with Sociolinguistic Commentary*, whose first fifteen chapters are designed to complement Lessons 1-15 of this *Textbook*. Boldfaced numbers in brackets direct the student to the section in *Grammar* which contains a more extensive discussion of any one grammar point.

## Designation of differing forms

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The symbols B, C, and S identify words which are used predominantly (or exclusively) in the corresponding country or countries and less so (or not at all) in the others. The symbols E and J identify words that belong to the *ekavian* and *ijekavian* pronunciation areas, respectively. The B, C, S symbols are used throughout the book, while the E, J symbols appear in the prompts below exercises and in the glossary (but not in vocabulary boxes, since the words in question usually occur next to one another and the differences are easy to spot). Croatian and Bosnian use *ijekavian* pronunciation exclusively, while Serbian usage includes speakers of both *ekavian* and *ijekavian*. For the most part the Serbian exercises use *ekavian* examples but there are a few examples of Serbian *ijekavian* usage; these are identified as such.

Titles and exercises throughout the book are given in Bosnian, Croatian and Serbian versions when there are differences. The order in which these are given always corresponds to the order “B,C,S”. Thus, *ijekavian* forms (marked [J]) precede *ekavian* ones (marked [E]), and B forms are always listed first. For example: *Vježbe* [J] *Vežbe* [E] and *Domaći zadatak* [B,S] *Domaća zadaća* [C]. The only exception concerns titles of published works which are given in the original form only, for example: *Pingvin Charlie* or *Ljepotica i zvijer*.

If a word in the vocabulary lists is NOT followed by one of these bracketed designations, this means that it is used in the same way by all speakers of Bosnian, Croatian and Serbian. If a word is used with the same meaning in both Bosnian and Croatian, it is marked [B,C], and if it is used with the same meaning in both Bosnian and Serbian it is marked [B,S]. In the few instances when a word is marked [B,C,S], this means that the word in question is used in all three, but that one of the three also uses another word in this meaning. For example: *avion* [B,C,S] *zrakoplov* [C] “airplane”; or *stric* [B,C,S] *amidža* [B] “[paternal] uncle.”

When the prompts listed in the instructions below exercises include replacement vocabulary options, these are given in alphabetical order. If any one replacement option has differing forms, the set of forms is given as a single unit comprising the B, C, and S words, also in alphabetical order. Here is an example, taken from Lesson 4, exercise A3. Note the sequencing for “orange,” “bread,” “cheese” within the larger list.

✳ **For other snacks use:** jabuka, nàranča [C] nàrandža [B] pomòrandža [S], kòmāđ hljeba [B,S] kòmāđ kruha [C] pàrče hleba [S], kòmāđ sira [B,C] pàrče sira [B,S], kreker, kruška, orah, slatkiš, šljiva, voće.

## Organization of vocabulary boxes within lessons

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In the vocabulary lists of all lessons, **nouns** are given in the nominative singular form; when the form of the stem is different in other cases, the genitive singular is given as well. Up through Lesson 7, **adjectives** are given in masculine, neuter and feminine forms, and both the infinitive and 1st person singular are given for every **verb**. Starting from Lesson 8, only the dictionary form (masculine singular short form) is given for adjectives, except in those instances where the stem of the masculine form is different from that of other forms: for these adjectives the feminine

singular is also given. After this point, the 1st singular form of verbs is given only when it is not directly predictable from the infinitive form. Since the form of an **adverb** is equivalent to the neuter singular adjective form, it is assumed by Lesson 3 that students will be able to derive adverbs from the corresponding adjective.

## Accent

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In BCS, as in most other languages, only one syllable per word is accented. All vowels are either *long* or *short*, and accented vowels carry either *falling* or *rising* tone. It is not necessary to teach all elements of this complex accentual system, either at the outset or at all, since one can communicate perfectly well by simply knowing the place of accent and a few important instances of vowel length. It is recommended that students mark the accent-bearing syllable in each word in their written work. It is not necessary for them to specifically learn other components of the accent markings unless they or their teachers desire it. For those who do want (now or eventually) to learn the full system, all examples in this book are marked for all components of the accent.

Most books which mark BCS accent use a system of five marks. This book uses a simpler system while still managing to convey the same information. Only two marks are used. The underscore (a) means that a vowel is long, and the grave accent (*à*), means that a vowel bears rising accent. A long rising vowel, therefore, is one which has both these marks, as in the word (*glàva*), and a short rising vowel is one which has only the grave accent, as in (*vo*à*da*). If no grave mark is present, then the assumption is that the word has falling accent on the first (or only) syllable, either long, as in (*ja*), or short, as in (*mačka*).

The "accent" of each word, therefore, is a complex of several factors. These include place of accent, presence or absence of length, and rising or falling tone. In certain instances, the form of the accent will change in different grammatical forms of the word; these changes follow recognizable patterns and are identified in vocabulary lists. For more on the nature of rising and falling accent, and on accentual shifts conditioned by grammatical form, see Chapter 19 of *Bosnian, Croatian, Serbian: A Grammar with Sociolinguistic Commentary*.

## Unaccented words and clitics

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A small number of words are *unaccented*. This means that they do not carry any accent at all, but rather are pronounced together with a neighboring word, sharing its accent. This group of words includes all prepositions, the negative particle (*ne*) when used before a verb form, and a set of words called clitics. Clitics are object pronouns (*ju, je, ga, ih, joj, mu, im, nas, vas, nam, vam*), auxiliary verbs (*sam, si, je, smo, ste, su; ću, ćeš, će, ćete, će*), the question particle *li*, and the particle *se*. Clitics are never accented, although two of them do contain long vowels (the object pronoun *joj* and the 3rd person plural clitic *će*).

When a present tense verb form has falling accent (necessarily on the first syllable) and is preceded by the negative particle, this particle will always draw the accent to itself, as short rising (for instance, *kažem* vs. *nè kažem*). Similarly, the accent can shift to the preposition from a pronoun or noun object; this occurs most frequently in Bosnian. When the grave mark appears on the negative particle or the preposition, the word following does *not* have an accent, but is rather pronounced together with the preceding preposition or negative particle, as a single unit.