

## II. REVIEWS

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LANGUAGE-SITUATEDNESS OF CULTURE AND  
CULTURE-SITUATEDNESS OF LANGUAGE\*

Review of Waldemar Czachur (ed.), *Lingwistyka kulturowa i międzykulturowa. Antologia*, Warszawa: Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, 2017, pp. 337. ISBN: 978-83-235-2730-5. Paperback.

Ever since Edward Sapir and Bronislaw Malinowski offered their insights, the language-culture interface has been recognised as a specific point of interest for linguists. Indeed, how language and culture relate to each other, how they connect and influence each other, can be found at the heart of several linguistic subdisciplines, such as ethnolinguistics, or – to use the Polish terms – *językoznawstwo kulturowe* and, most recently, *lingwistyka kulturowa*, the latter two being kinds of cultural linguistics. The very term of and the concept behind *lingwistyka kulturowa* was first introduced in Poland by Janusz Anusiewicz (1994). In his understanding, what one studies in *lingwistyka kulturowa* is a four element relation: language – culture – humans (society) – reality, which brings it close to anthropological linguistics, cultural anthropology, and cognitive linguistics. The volume under consideration here, *Lingwistyka kulturowa i międzykulturowa. Antologia* [Cultural and Intercultural Linguistics: An Anthology] is precisely a contribution to the on-going debate on the scope of cultural linguistics.

Yet, the book projects another understanding of the term. Moreover, the editor's selection of chapters clearly reflects his own conception of cultural and intercultural linguistics. Although they may relate to cognitive linguistics, the specific contributions set the language-culture relation generally in a communicative-discursive context. The main body of the anthology consists of eight chapters. They are preceded by the editor's extensive introduction that presents his assessment of both the current issues in cultural linguistics and its prospects for the future. As the number and the variety of the problems examined in the volume are vast, I will

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only focus on those attempts that aim at (re)defining both of the two sub-branches of cultural linguistics mentioned in the title.

In his "Introduction", Waldemar Czachur presents the state of research in cultural and intercultural linguistics, offers a historical sketch of their origin (especially in reference to the Polish and German research traditions), and comments on the role of language in selected structural, pragma-linguistic, cognitive, semiotic, and constructivist paradigms, so that the subsequent stages in the chronological development of the notions of, respectively, language-situatedness of culture and culture-situatedness of language can be delimited. In this respect, special focus is placed on the Lublin school of ethnolinguistics and Wrocław school of cultural linguistics. As Czachur concludes, "what brings all of these approaches together is the belief that language is not only a 'seismograph' of culture, but, first of all, a means of shaping culture in interaction, including interaction in the media" (p. 20). So, the research objective that Czachur ascribes to cultural linguistics amounts to "identifying cultural regularities and correspondences by means of examining linguistic behaviours that typically find their expression in more or less conventionalised patterns and schemas" (p. 16). What seems to be indispensable for the further development of cultural linguistics is a "more profound discussion – whose aim would be to integrate otherwise distinct culture-oriented subdisciplines – of the notions such as semioticity, meaning, mediatedness, dialogue, culture, emergence, schematisation of communicative actions and practices, knowledge, and discourse" (p. 21). This gives us a broad definition of cultural linguistics which also proves interesting for investigating problems of language-situatedness in collective memory. If so, the volume seems to be an excellent introduction to the discussion on cultural linguistics, as envisaged by Waldemar Czachur in his selection of the authors and topics.

And so, in "Wzorce językowe a analiza kulturowa. Ujęcie teoretyczne i metodyczne" [Linguistic patterns in cultural analysis. Theoretical and methodological approach], Susanne Tienken defines cultural linguistics as "an independent discipline with nondeterminate possibilities", where language is understood as "a space in which culture cannot be simply reduced to a given context, but manifests itself by means of its unique representations and functions in its unique ways, where the typicality and schematisation [and stereotyping] are of paramount importance" (p. 47). This latter topic is developed by Ruth Amossy in her analysis of cultural models of self-presentation understood in terms of social stereotyped expectations. Language remains closely related to culture in Andreas Mussolff's contribution "Analiza scenariuszy metaforycznych w ramach lingwistyki kulturowej" [Metaphorical scenarios in cultural linguistics], with culture being defined as "a dynamic and changeable form of communicative activity" (p. 69).

This generalisation seems to be taken to its logical extreme by Csaba Földes in "Czarna skrzynka 'Międzykulturowość'. O niewiadomej wiadomej (nie tylko) dla niemieckiego jako języka obcego/języka drugiego" [The black box of "interculturalism". On the unknown known in the (non-exclusive) context of German as a foreign/second language]. As noticed by the author, "because of their complexities, cultures hardly ever allow for any categorisation", which is exemplified with two models of culture: as an iceberg or as an onion. The former makes us realise that

“*per analogiam*, the tangible forms of our culture are only the tiny part of what otherwise remains invisible under the surface” (p. 133). So, what can be subjected to research is both manifestations of the surface layer of culture, visible and deliberate forms (customs, rituals, clothes), as well as manifestations of the subsurface layer (values, assumptions, mentalities, cultural scripts, language patterns, as in Susanne Tienken’s analysis) that are invisible for us that lie beyond our awareness. Culture as an onion is, in turn, an anthropological one. It embraces four different layers, each including some peculiarities of a given culture. These four are, respectively, values, rituals, protagonists (i.e. individuals that others may identify with), and symbols. The four layers may be regarded as significant elements (forms?) of the language-situatedness of collective memory, and, as such, may constitute the focus of linguistically-oriented research in collective memory.

Yet, the editor’s selected representatives of what he considers to be cultural and intercultural linguistics go beyond pure linguistic considerations and reach out for sociological literature (e.g. by Geert Hofstede, George H. Mead, or Georg Simmel), anthropological works (Clifford Geertz, Anthony Giddens), and literary studies (Aleida Assmann), which considerably extends the scope of the two sub-disciplines in the book’s title. While cultural linguistics seems to exist as a well-established field of research (at least in the Polish context, thanks to the works of Janusz Anusiewicz, Jerzy Bartmiński (2006a,b, 2008, 2017), Anna Dąbrowska (2005), Wojciech Chlebda (2010, 2012, 2013), in English thanks to the works by Gary B. Palmer (1996) and Farzad Sharifian (2011, 2014), and in German through the studies by Angelika Linke, Susanne Tienkien, Juliane Schröter, Noah Bubenhofer, or Joachim Scharloth), the concept of *intercultural linguistics* appears to be relatively novel in Polish-language linguistic research. The very term was first introduced by Hannes Kniffk in 1995 and popularised by Csaba Földes in 2003. Földes says in the volume here reviewed:

Interculturality is above all a phenomenon on the level of the subject itself, involving relations that lead to some “third entity/value”; on the meta-(reflection) level, interculturality [...] has to do with identifying conditions, possibilities, and consequences of interaction between cultures [...]. The notion of “interaction” (or, more precisely, the dynamic system of interactions), embraces both the congruity of exchange between distinct cultural horizons. (from Földes’s chapter, pp. 142–143)

In his Introduction to the volume, Waldemar Czachur takes intercultural linguistics to be “a research space for inquiry into the crisscrossing of different languages and their uses, that inquiry being based on a broad cultural theory of language, i.e. one that is both semiotically and culturally motivated” (p. 8). If so, intercultural linguistics embraces the following: the comparison of languages and cultural conceptualisation found in several cultural communities, analysis and the description of language contact between two communities in order to identify the mechanisms in which grammatical structures, meanings, and conceptualisation mutually interpenetrate these languages, plus an examination of linguistic activities in intercultural communicative contexts in order to detect sources of misunderstandings and conflicts (p. 23). This scheme of intercultural linguistics is, in the

anthology, reflected in Yaron Matras' chapter "Przekraczanie granic: przełączanie kodów jako zjawisko konwersacyjne [Crossing the boundaries: codeswitching in conversation] and Susanne Gönthner's "Doing culture – kulturowa samoidentyfikacja i identyfikacja innych w rozmowie" [Doing culture: cultural self-identification and identification of others in conversation]. Linguistically-oriented approaches to interculturalism are represented by Gerd Antos and Anna Lewandowska.

Even this cursory overview of the volume contents allows one to identify the main problems, issues, key notions, and research tools of cultural and intercultural linguistics that the anthology introduces and discusses. This includes attempts to define the notions of interculturality and language patterns, as well as to sketch both a linguistic approach to interculturality and a cultural approach to language patterns and "metaphorical scenarios". The reader will find here tentative answers to the questions of the culture-communication interface, of the transculturality – hyperculturality – transdifferentiation relation, or of the distinction between image and social imagination. One should also mention problems of self-presentation and its cultural-linguistic models, self-identification and identifying others in/through conversation, code-switching in conversation, diagnosing communicative problems in multicultural communities, each of which operates by distinct cultural scripts.

In a nutshell, the volume systematises the state of research on (inter)cultural linguistics, brings the Polish reader closer to Western research in the area – this will certainly prove inspiring for Polish linguists, especially ethnolinguists and anthropologists, as well as culture researchers, anthropologists, ethnologists, and sociologists. The anthology brings together known and typically linguistic problems and those that very seldom, if at all, have been subjected to linguistic reflection, such as self-presentation and ethos. This will perhaps (and hopefully) bolster intercultural linguistic research, which deserves greater recognition in Poland. The volume prompts the topics that are certainly worth considering and researching; in this sense, its readership will include linguists and culture specialists, as well as sociologists, psychologists, and communication researchers.

*Translated by Przemysław Łozowski*

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