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Michał Głuszkowski: *Code-switching and code-mixing in the conditions of Slavic-Slavic language contact. Vershina – a unique Polish language island in Siberia*. Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika. Toruń 2024, pp. 252

The book has been prepared within the project "Code switching in the conditions of Polish-Russian bilingualism in the Polish language island in Siberia (the village of Vershina near Irkutsk)", funded by the National Science Centre of the Republic of Poland. Michał Głuszkowski is an Associate Professor at the Department of Slavonic Languages, Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń, and the author of many publications on language contacts, bilingualism, language and cultural islands. His works are basing on field research in Polish communities in the former USSR (Russia-Siberia, Ukraine, Estonia) and Russian Old Believers communities in Poland, Latvia and Estonia.

The volume is composed of the Introduction and four chapters: 1. The social history of Vershina; 2. The sociolinguistic situation of Vershina; 3. Interference, code-switching and code-mixing in Vershina; 4. Code-switching and code-mixing in Vershina in macro and microsociolinguistic perspectives. The book is enriched with four appendices: Appendix 1. Rules for the transcription of texts; Appendix 2. The informants; Appendix 3. Transcriptions of selected texts; Appendix 4. Vershina in photographs.

The aim of the book is to discuss the topic of the code-switching with a comprehensive sociolinguistic study based on extensive language material collected during the field research. The author describes bilingualism of a specific linguistic and cultural minority, the descendants of Polish voluntary settlers from the beginning of the 20th century in Siberia.

The chapter 1

The first chapter presents the social history of Vershina, highlighting the reasons behind Polish emigration and the conditions under which settlers established themselves in Siberia. Between 1885 and 1914, approximately 60 Polish villages were founded in the region; however, most gradually lost their distinct Polish identity due to assimilation processes. The author divides this history into three periods:

The years 1910–1939 were marked by ethnic homogeneity, as settlers adapted to local conditions and forged relationships with their neighbours. During this period, a Polish school and church were established. When Poland regained independence in 1918, the settlers suddenly found themselves outside the country's borders. Although they were granted the right to return as repatriates, few chose to make use of this opportunity. The advance of Sovietisation led to the confiscation of their property and compelled them to work on collective farms. In 1934, the teaching of Polish was banned in the local school, and in 1937 the church was closed and desecrated.

The years 1940–1990 marked the end of ethnic homogeneity. Settlers were forced to work on collective farms, stripped of religious practice and the use of the Polish language in schools, and conscripted into the Russian army. Gradually but inexorably, Vershina was transformed from a Polish cultural and linguistic enclave into a Siberian community with Polish roots. At the same time, the new generation born in Siberia began to assimilate, enter mixed marriages, and adopt Russian nationality.

From 1991 to the present, two parallel processes have been at work: on the one hand, a gradual decline in the use of the Polish language and increasing assimilation among younger generations; on the other, a slow revival of Polish identity. Despite the hardships of earlier decades, complete assimilation never occurred, and the village has preserved its distinctive cultural character. In recent years, contacts with Poland have been renewed and are steadily growing, with Polish teachers arriving, summer schools being organised, and similar initiatives strengthening ties with the homeland taking place.

The chapter 2

The second chapter examines the sociolinguistic situation in Vershina. The author introduces key terms used to characterise the village, such as *linguistic and cultural island* and *the Polish community in the East*. He then

discusses the bilingualism and diglossia of the inhabitants. As citizens of the Russian Empire, the founders of Vershina already spoke and wrote in Russian before emigrating. However, their bilingualism was far from complete, as neither language was mastered to perfection; the second language served primarily for basic communication.

In Vershina, the languages in use included standard Polish and the Lesser Poland dialect, alongside standard Russian, the Siberian dialect, and the Buryat language. The main axis of linguistic contact, however, was between the Lesser Poland dialect and standard Russian. Russian functioned as the roofing language for the dialect, with bilingualism accompanied by diglossia forming the basic system.

During the second period, the role of Russian in society steadily grew. For instance, migration to urban areas was linked to abandoning the Polish language, while in mixed marriages children used Polish only when speaking with their grandparents. In the third period, only the oldest inhabitants spoke exclusively Polish. Children often understood Polish, but preferred to communicate in Russian.

Polish and Russian cultures gradually intertwined, giving rise to bi- and multiculturalism as well as di-ethnicity. Descendants often found it impossible to distinguish which cultural elements were Polish, Russian, or Buryat. This process also brought to the fore questions of both group and individual identity.

At the end of the chapter, the author outlines the methodology for collecting linguistic material, which was divided across four generations. The material was transcribed using the system of Slavic transcription employed in Polish dialectology, with certain modifications to reflect the phenomena arising in Polish–Russian language contact. The resulting corpus comprises approximately 275,000 words.

The chapter 3

Chapter three examines the phenomena of interference, code-switching, and code-mixing. The author analyses features characteristic of incomplete or partial bilingualism, treating bilingualism not as a fully achieved state but as a process situated between perfect bilingualism and monolingualism. Code-switching and code-mixing are understood as manifestations of this process. Importantly, this process unfolds not in laboratory conditions but within real social contexts, where it is closely linked to broader patterns of social interaction.

The author also addresses the question of where to draw the boundary between code-switching and borrowing, applying criteria such as frequency, the adoption of Russian words, morphological integration, and acceptability. The discussion then turns to different types of borrowings: loanwords, lexical calques, and grammatical calques (from Russian into the dialect). Finally, the author considers the issue of language awareness among the inhabitants. In most cases, speakers are able to identify the origin of the words they use, though at times they hesitate and blend a Polish word with a Russian one.

The chapter 4

Chapter four analyses phenomena occurring on two levels: macro- and microsociolinguistic. These concern strategies of conscious language choice in communicative situations, as well as the possible use of code-switching and code-mixing.

Young people speak primarily in Russian. For instance, when they want to elaborate on something, they deliberately switch to that language, saying: "I'll say it in Russian." However, when they realise that their interlocutor does not speak Russian, they attempt to express themselves differently, through PAT- and MAT-borrowings or code-mixing. Naturally, individual differences in language proficiency, along with social and historical factors, must also be taken into account. Yet even when a speaker's intention is to use the Lesser Poland dialect, various borrowings and instances of code-switching remain apparent. If one were to identify the ideal code-switchers, it would be the oldest inhabitants of Vershina.

A separate topic addressed in this chapter is writing, or so-called biscriptality. In Vershina, Polish and Russian coexist in both spoken and written forms. For example, Polish hymns in church are written in both Cyrillic and Latin script, while gravestone inscriptions in the cemetery appear in Polish and Russian, likewise in both Cyrillic and Latin.

This naturally raises the question of language shift and language death: is the dialect in Vershina at risk of extinction?

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The conclusion reviews the answers to the key research questions and offers predictions regarding the future development of the linguistic situation in the Polish village. The book is further enhanced by photographs, which evoke the atmosphere of the place, while the transcribed texts create the impression of "hearing" the voices of Vershina's inhabitants.

Vershina for many years has been the subject of various types of research, resulting in numerous publications. Among the most important are the monograph by Władysław Masiarz (2016) and Swietłana Mitrenga-Ulitina (2015), as well as the works of Agata Wiśniewska (e.g. 2000, 2002), devoted to the ethnic and national identity of the local population. Significant contributions have also been made by Michał Głuszkowski through his numerous studies and articles (e.g. 2015, 2022, 2023), addressing different aspects of the community's social and linguisticlife. However, the phenomenon of *code-switching* in Vershina has long required a dedicated and comprehensive study. The term in its current understanding emerged in linguistic research in the 1950s; the author continues the line of thought initiated by Weinreich (1953), Haugen (1953) and Ferguson (1959), who also developed the concepts of language contact, interference, and diglossia. The reviewed monograph draws on a rich body of literature on bilingualism, language contact, and interference phenomena. The work fits within a broad stream of research on bilingualism (Bialystok 2009; Grosjean 1982; Myers-Scotton 1993, 2006), mixed codes and *code-switching* (Gumperz 1977; Poplack 1980; Auer 1984, 1998, 1999; Muysken 2000), as well as on linguistic islands and diasporas (Grek-Pabisowa 2017; Nowicka 2013; Rosenberg 2006).

The study successfully integrates a historical and social account of the village with a linguistic analysis, the two perspectives complementing one another seamlessly. Written in an engaging and accessible style, it allows readers to follow with interest both the history of the village and the transformations it underwent over time. The applied methodology based on long-term field research, corpus analysis, and participant observation deserves particular recognition. The study is distinguished by the precision of description, clarity of classification, and insightful theoretical reflection. The author accurately identifies the boundaries between borrowing, interference, and code-switching, drawing on the latest findings in contact linguistics.

The documentation is also remarkable: extensive appendices, a corpus of transcribed texts, and photographic materials make the book not only a valuable scholarly contribution but also an important source for future comparative research.

This monograph represents not only a valuable contribution to the study of bilingualism and of linguistic and cultural islands, but also an engaging work that may serve scholars across disciplines and inspire further research.

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