

A comparative study on interlingual strategies: Insights from the German-Polish border

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Linguistics

Research Projects

A comparative study on interlingual strategies: Insights from the German-Polish border

Eine vergleichende Studie zu interlingualen Strategien an der deutsch-polnischen Grenzregion

Porównanie strategii komunikacji językowej na polsko-niemieckim pograniczu

This research project, sponsored by the Canon Foundation in Europe, started from the hypothesis that for interlingual communication a mix of different strategies would provide a more solid basis than to rely merely on a single means of communication. It aimed to get insights into the characteristics and functioning of various interlingual strategies, in order to develop a theoretical framework which can provide orientation to individuals, institutions and policy makers involved in or concerned with transnational communication. The German-Polish border region, which is now rapidly evolving from "the hardest language boundary in Europe" to a zone of intensive cross-border encounters, was elected as a test case.

Methodologically, the data was mainly collected by way of participant observation of German-Polish contact situations, supplemented with interviews and questionnaires. The main site of the fieldwork was Frankfurt/Oder and the neighbouring Polish town Słubice, which have developed intensive reciprocal contacts in recent years. Here, various communicative strategies using mainly German, Polish and English were investigated. As it was part of the claim of my research to get an overview of *all* possible types of interlingual strategies to be found in the German-Polish border region, I conducted fieldwork also at other parts of the (wider) border region on the use of the Slavic minority language Sorbian and the planned language Esperanto.

Although detailed analysis of the data is still in progress, the data clearly shows that while German (and in limited few occasions English) is generally dominant, alternative strategies — including the use of Polish, such as 'receptive bilingualism', 'symbolic use of Polish', 'language exchange' and 'language mixing' — have

facilitating and enriching effects on communication. These effects are not available through the current main strategies of using one dominant language or relying on language mediation. This also applies to the quantitatively marginal but qualitatively unique communication modes using Sorbian and Esperanto. Each of these various strategies can contribute to deepening and extending German-Polish contacts in its own way and should be encouraged appropriately.

The preliminary results were presented to academic as well as wider audiences/readers in the region and beyond through lectures and talks, interviews in the media as well as articles (see some examples below; state: August 2014). Further presentations and publications are planned.

Articles

Kimura, Goro Christoph (2013): Polnisch im Kontext der Arbeitnehmerfreizügigkeit in der deutsch-polnischen Grenzregion, *Polnisch in Deutschland - Zeitschrift der Bundesvereinigung der Polnischlehrkräfte* 1/2013,37-45.

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Kimura, Goro Christoph (2014): Strategie komunikacji językowej na polsko-niemieckim pograniczu, *Język, Komunikacja, Informacja* 8, 109-124.

<http://jki.amu.edu.pl/files/JKI%20-%20tom%208%20-%...>

Kimura, Goro Christoph (2014): Arbeitnehmerfreizügigkeit und Sprache - mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der deutsch-polnischen Grenzregion / Swoboda przepływu pracowników a znajomość języka - ze szczególnym uwzględnieniem polsko-niemieckiego regionu przygranicznego, in/w: Dagmara Jajeśniak-Quast, Laura Kiel, Marek Kłodnicki (Hg./red.): *Swobodny przepływ pracowników między Polską i Niemcami - próba bilansu z różnych perspektyw / Arbeitnehmerfreizügigkeit zwischen Deutschland und Polen - eine Zwischenbilanz aus unterschiedlichen Perspektiven*, Berlin: epubli, 103-122, 249-267.

<https://opus4.kobv.de/opus4-euv/frontdoor/index/index/docId/169>

<http://www.epubli.de/shop/buch/Arbeitnehmerfrei%C3%BCgigkeit-zwischen-Deutschland-und-Polen-Swobodny-przep%C5%82yw-pracownik%C3%B3w-mi%C4%99dzy-Polsk%C4%85-a-Niemcami-Dagmara-Jaje%C5%9Bniak-Quast-9783844298635/40129#beschreibung>

Kimura, Goro Christoph (2015): Grundzüge interlingualer Kommunikationsstrategien – dargestellt am Beispiel der deutsch-polnischen Grenzregion, *Sophia Journal of European Studies* 7, 59-88.

<http://repository.cc.sophia.ac.jp/dspace/handle/123456789/36456>

Interviews and presentations in the media

26.3.2013 „Tür zu einer neuen Welt. Ein japanischer Professor erforscht, wie Deutsche und Polen miteinander sprechen“, *Märkische Oderzeitung*.

6.7.2013 „Es lohnt sich, Polnisch zu lernen“- Was ein japanischer Wissenschaftler über den deutsch-polnischen Sprachgebrauch im Grenzgebiet erforscht hat“, *Lausitzer Rundschau*. [dpa]

<http://www.lr-online.de/nachrichten/brandenburg/Es...>

8.7.2013 „Sprachbarrieren im Kindesalter abbauen“, *Nordkurier*. [dpa]

15.7.2013 10:45- „Prof. Dr. Goro Christoph Kimura - Deutsch-polnische Verständigung an der Grenze“, *rbb Inforadio*.

<http://mediathek.rbb-online.de/inforadio/vis-a-vis...>

6.2014 Reden über die Doppelstadt X: Goro Christoph Kimura/ Wypowiedzi o Dwumieście X: Goro Christoph Kimura, Newsletter 06/2014, Frankfurt-Słubicer Kooperationszentrum • Słubicko-Frankfurckie Centrum Kooperacji, 4-6

<http://www.frankfurt-slubice.eu/Files/files/newsle...>

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