

The dialect and the standard – preservation and abandonment of grammatical features of the dialect of Spisz

Most speakers of Polish both in urban as well as rural environments speak the standard variety of the language. The social and territorial diversification – if occurs at all - is restricted to subtle phonetic features. The use of dialect is restricted to elderly people, who do not switch the codes.

Still, there are a number of regions where the dialect is transmitted to young generations and where it is the first code which they acquire. One of these regions is Spisz in the mountains of southern Poland. Of course, this dialect it is under massive influence of Standard Polish.

The aim of this talk is to examine, whether diverse grammatical features of the dialect are preserved to the same extent or rather some of them die out quicker than others.

The data are drawn from the Spisz Corpus (Grochola-Szczepanek et al. 2019). Eight features were chosen, six of them pertaining inflection (cf. Dejna 1993, Urbańczyk 1962):

- (1) *-e* as a marker of genitive singular instead of standard *-i*
- (2) Different distribution of markers of genitive plural *-ów* instead of standard \emptyset or *-i* (eg. *babów* instead of *bab* ‘woman, biddy’)
- (3) *-eŃ-ek* as a marker of 1 pers. past tense instead of standard *-em*
- (4) *-ym* as a marker of 1 pers. non-past tense instead of standard *-ę*
- (5) word-forming morpheme *-uwa-* instead of standard *-owa-*
- (6) reduced forms of the future tense of *być* ‘to be’

as well as two syntactic features

- (7) position of clitic marker of the person in past tense
- (8) pronoun as (a single) marker of person of past tense

These features need some comments. The person of the verb of the past tense in Polish is marked by a clitic. Whereas in standard Polish it is almost exclusively attached to the verb (with a precisely defined exception of subordinate clauses) in the Spisz dialect there is a strong tendency to place this clitic left to the verb, though the rules governing the positioning of the clitic are still unclear. Alternatively the first person can be marked (instead of the clitic) by a personal pronoun. Thus there are three alternative means of marking the grammatical category of person, one of which is compatible with standard Polish, other two specific for the dialect.

(1) is found only in the speech of persons above 60, (3)-(6) are all common in the speech of younger generations. This however is not true in case of (7) and (8). The amount of the two constructions rapidly drops, and there are virtually no occurrences in the speech of youngest generations. In case of (1) we traced an end of diachronic process, since even in the oldest generation it is not used consistently; moreover this feature is actually an archaism, therefore its disappearance can be treated as a same process as in standard Polish but protracted. A more interesting question however is why the features (7) and (8), of syntactic rather than inflectional character disappeared. The answer to this question requires further studies on the syntax of clitics in the dialect of Spisz.

Importantly however the data show that the picture of the shift from dialect towards standard variety is more complicated than simply abandonment of the former. It is also disintegration of the system, which is gradually assimilating some of its grammatical features to the standard variety.

Dejna, K. 1993. *Dialekty polskie*. wyd. 2 rozsz. Wrocław: Ossolineum.

Grochola-Szczepanek, H., R.L. Górski, R. von Waldenfels, i M. Woźniak. 2019. „Korpus języka mówionego mieszkańców Spisza”. *LingVaria* XIV, nr 1 (27): 165-180. DOI: 10.12797/LV.14.2019.27.11.

Urbańczyk, S. 1962. *Zarys dialektologii polskiej*. wyd. 2 rozsz. Warszawa: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe.