

## REGIONAL: A LOST DIMENSION?

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**Abstract.** Globalization is commonly discussed in terms of how it enforces language and culture monopoly in transnational social structures and practices. It is also linked to deterritorialization of contacts among individuals, groups and institutions. With the exhaustion of the nation-state, the core-periphery metaphor is used to designate new distributions of power. This view obscures, however, the complex, polyphonic and heterogeneous nature of many peripheral contexts. It is argued that the *regional* element needs revisiting its capacities to serve as an interface between the global and the local (often national). The paper construes regionalism as a valid dimension of language studies in a foreign language macro culture of the Central and Eastern European countries. Some discussion follows the ongoing marketization of universities and technologization of language and translation teaching for the pressing needs of global and local markets. A counter-balanced engagement is proposed. Alongside some flashes of the region's academic cooperation in the past, an argument is made for the development of Critical Discourse Studies, with a checklist of topics being suggested and profiled on social and linguistic issues sensitive for this region.

**Key words:** critical discourse studies, regionalism, globalization, Central and Eastern European countries

### BETWEEN GLOBAL AND LOCAL IN LANGUAGE STUDIES: CONNECTION BETWEEN THE CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

It is common today to talk of globalization and link it to the ideologies sweeping across various domains and practices of social life: politics, business, the media, as well as research and education, information technologies and life styles. Even though the actual meanings of globalization vary and fluctuate, they are generally linked with the similarity of values that drive individuals, collectivities and entire nations to construe their goals and pursue them in the way they do it. This includes the resources that are striven for, as well as action scenarios that are found desirable for successful functioning in one's social spaces. Human beliefs and performance strategies are largely controlled by the market regime with its lures of competitiveness and self-promotion. Deterritorialization of human contacts and growth of information technologies partake significantly in the ongoing redefinitions of what socially valuable skills, commodities, goals and achievements are. Against all that global thinking, academic domains of research and education are not an island. On the contrary, they often tend to reproduce such ideologies, if not help to promulgate them, as it will be suggested throughout this paper.

Yet, global thinking about the modern world has many lacunas. Globalization is meaningful only in its situated readings as an outcome of the interactions of the global with the local. This is sometimes acknowledged with the use of the term *glocalization* (after Phillipson, 1992). Still, it seems any delineation of locality remains arbitrary in that we have to deal with layers of contextual and discursive meanings that are always osmotic, so that flows cannot be prevented. Truly, however, these are more easily observed and controlled in a narrower field of vision. A question remains if the global-local continuum can be divided into fuzzy in-between spaces of regionally defined orientations to globalization. It concerns not only the sweeping divide between Western and Oriental spheres, all too often invoked in debating cultural issues. Other alliances and divisions are worthwhile examining especially from the position of less powerful constellations of countries, traditions and languages.

In this paper I focus on the Central and Eastern European Countries (CEEC), a peripheral-language macro-context, a region of potentially congruent acquisitions and adaptations of global ideologies. These are all foreign-language-teaching cultures, of late under a strong impact of English, and amidst of similar political, social and cultural transformations. With some reference to the situation in Poland, I make claims on analogies in the region considering the past and the current conditions as regards language research and education. Launching a postulate for a new agenda of regional cooperation, I underscore two issues. Firstly, down at its bottom, globalization is all about identification, which only explains the socially sensitive nature of global processes across national contexts. This means that ideologies of globalization (or glocalization) need to be approached first of all in terms of identity construction among individuals, groups or entire nations. Here we invoke variation in human social positioning as nationals, research partners, scholars in an institution, or teachers of particular skills. Choices are linked to situated definitions of power. Secondly, given the present focus on the discursive construction of identities, I plead for an extension of agenda in applied linguistics so as to rank higher, if not to initiate, critical discourse analysis (CDA), i.e., interdisciplinary critical studies based on social and linguistic principles of analysis.

The historical contacts between the Central and Eastern European countries, including the Baltic States, are strong and meaningful in the context how sameness or disparity may be judged in individual nation states and how they respond to global politics and worldwide social change. The longstanding record of neighborhood is meaningful, as is the trauma of World War II, or the experience of Soviet-based communism and its contestation, not to mention the post-communist concerns coming with the economic transformations and the upheavals of the new democratic orders.

Even though we may reject globalization as a unified model of value formation, it does not mean that many globally spreading tendencies are negligible, irrelevant, or impracticable in local environs. They all have a share in construing new social and communicative values. Some signposts for orientation

have been established for general reference: a commodity view on social life in general, language as symbolic capital and the development of expert systems and technologization of communication. Crucial is the differential of symbolic power, which controls much of how the actual functioning of globalization is taking shape across territories, delimiting centers of dominance and peripherality. All such issues are of interest as far as they contribute to the evolution of academic values, and, in our context, the status of and the prospects for language studies in general and with respect to English, in particular.

The purpose of this discussion is to briefly overview the impact of globalization on the socioeconomic, cultural and linguistic change in the CEEC region, with special reference to foreign language research and education. Even though such influences are likely to vary across national contexts, similar 'globalizing effects' are predictable across national and linguistic territories considering the powerful pressures of market ideologies and promotional culture, not to mention the historical cognates in research and teaching models in the region. Elitist attitudes to research and education are possible candidates as emblematic of traditional tendencies in much of continental Europe, largely due to the German ('Teutonic') model of the university and its style of intellectual exposition. Furthermore, we need to consider the general invasion of English as a global language, strongly undermining the powers of the dominant languages of the past, specifically German or Russian.

Discussion of the topic in the present paper is based on my understanding of the changing condition of Polish (neo-) philological studies (e.g. Duszak, 2009). Even though my perception may be only partly and indirectly relevant for the understanding of the situation in the whole area, I suggest similarities, and argue for an integrative research and education agenda in the area.

## MARKET IDEOLOGIES AND (FOREIGN) LANGUAGE STUDIES

It leaves no doubt that the consequences of global ideologies in language departments and related academic institutions are best analyzed through the local lens. Still, some assumptions can be made as to the general course of action and the feedback it gets in academia. In response to the processes of globalization, whether economic, cultural or social, we can talk about commodification of (language) education and, in part at least, of language research. In this view, foreign language education has to meet the pragmatic demands of a knowledge-based society (KBS), especially when it comes to the teaching of linguistic skills that are valued for professional success. In the context of foreign language teaching (FLT), this means a redefinition of educational policies, tasks and tools for (foreign) language departments. It leads to special demands being laid on the teaching of English.

The situation has consequences for educators and educational policy makers as education becomes to be viewed as a commodity, capital for investment and

profit. In many countries in the region such a commodified view of scholarship is likely to replace the traditional model of higher education: the *ivory tower* perception of an academic institution, a shrine of knowledge, for which economy or profit making are abstract qualities. As a result, schools of higher education are expected to function almost like enterprises or business, opposing the traditional concept of academia as a site of intellectual reflection and growth. In language studies, it also means a shift away from the neo-*philological* or cultural-studies tradition that was pervasive in the past. Actually, as I will venture later, applied linguistics gains, but in the long run it may lose in this race for vocation-based educational programs.

Namely, in many countries in the region, the recent escalation of the new, pragmatic or instrumental attitudes to language education became most evident with the rise of *translation studies* and *interdisciplinary specialist language programs*. Such educational profiles invite in particular a market attitude to education: academic institutions should equip the learner with a handy 'linguistic toolkit', often a 'translation kit', for future performance in various specialist professional settings. In Poland at least, this ideology encourages a *come-and-go* policy (or *pay and go*), with the university acting as an in-between landing place on the road to future career. Importantly, translation (or production) of texts in specialist domains, say, law and administration, business and management, requires the development of specialist discursive skills. This, in turn, calls for the introduction of some technical expertise from fields other than linguistics (e.g. law, business, political sciences). Often, this other domain is seen as more valuable for future career or professional identity of the learner. So, for instance, mastering the technical terminology is seen as more important than safeguarding text cohesion or style coherence under recommendations coming from text linguistics. Educational policies may enhance this view, as is the case with governmental recommendations and financial incentives for students choosing hard sciences rather than humanities or social sciences.

There are tasks for academics to solve. These are largely matters about identity, whether defined in terms of individual choices, structural decisions in institutions, or considering the future of the field, language studies on the principles of linguistics. One of them relates to securing more balance between the intellectual-theoretical and the vocational-practical element in language education. This is an issue I address briefly in the final section of this paper.

## NATIONAL ARGUMENTS IN ACADEMIA UNDER GLOBALIZATION

Globalization coincides with a gradual exhaustion of the concept of nation-state, emblematic for the whole of the 19<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In the European context, such tendencies receive a special meaning, given the complex and troubled history of the continent. The economic and democratic changes

in many Central and Eastern European countries were possible with the fall of communism in the 1980s, initiated by the Polish *Solidarity* movement in 1980. Building of a supranational European space is taking place against the memories of World War II and its traumatic legacy. With the ongoing enlargement of the European Union, many post-War divisions have been leveled, some are redefined and new ones emerge as a result of new alliances, contacts, interests and pressures. The redefinition of nation-states under globalization and Europeanization is part and parcel of heteroglot national discourses, resonating with liberal, conservative, as well as populist or even nationalist voices.

It leaves no doubt whatsoever that European unification processes engage matters directly relevant to research, education and academic policies, to mention the academic staff and students mobility, the construction of joint international (research and teaching) projects, and last but not least the spread of English as a leader language for disseminating and publishing research. In foreign language studies in CEEC new priorities develop, generating boom in translation, with bilingual specialists needed in European institutions and transnational businesses. Such an instrumental, if not vocational skewing of foreign language education seems to overshadow other concerns of interlingual studies and may, in the long run, critically influence their disciplinary position as well as the overall social status of meta-linguistic competence.

To raise a national argument in discussions of scholarship is a delicate matter. If educational policies are more readily accepted as sites of competing national interests, then the construction of scholarly knowledge is more likely to be seen as immune to any national ideologies, or as being *acultural* to start with. The imperative of methodological fairness is prioritized as the main evaluation criterion of scientific knowledge. Claims that there are culturally distinct cognitive styles rest on thin ice, even though ample research has shown that there are cultural patterns *for speaking* in the sense of Slobin (1996), or as amply evidenced for academic writing in a variety of research projects in the tradition of Kaplan (1972). Rather than with cognitive aspects of reasoning, we are dealing here with rhetorical variation, building up a meta-linguistic argument: there are cultural styles of research narration, as regards for instance the flow of argumentation, a global research text organization, or writer-reader interaction. Furthermore, such generalizations have been applied to abstractly construed cultural and linguistic spaces, invoking affinities between linguistic systems and intellectual styles. In principle, they are *regional* in that they presuppose linguistic and cultural proximity, or shared value orientations whether social, cultural or communicative. This applies, for instance, to the concept of Teutonic academic style postulated for much of continental Europe and Scandinavia which for long remained under the influence of the German intellectual tradition (cf. e.g. Clyne, 1981). Historically we are talking then about German, Czech, Russian, Polish, Finnish, or Ukrainian, no matter what idiosyncratic difference we could actually establish for any of those languages, at a particular point of time, for a particular genre or a specific field of research.

The choice of style or a language for scholarly ideation could be interpreted though as sensitive for a national academic community. So, for instance, the growing use of English by Polish scientists at the turn of the century went on a par with general transformations in conventions of research writing: the so called Teutonic patterns were replaced by a more relaxed mode style of communication, linked to English and described also as Saxonian (in the traditional style nomenclature, Galtung, 1971). Debating the changes in research narration at that time, Gajda (1999: 20-21) wonders whether the new style does not pose a threat to the integrity of Polish academic values because of its dependence on English as academic *lingua franca*. While entering the supranational academic community, he argues, Polish researchers may in fact alienate themselves from the Polish academic tradition.

Here, however, other arguments are to be considered, too. The new style was deemed *pathological* by some in that it should indicate a lowering of standards in how scientific knowledge was accrued and transmitted (for some discussion see esp. Gajda, 1999: 30; 2001: 194). Such judgment could not be divorced from a traditional demarcation of styles in Polish scientific writing into scientific, scientific-didactic and scientific-popular, suggesting difference of approaches, goals and audiences. Yet, there are stylistic transformations on the way. In place of the historical division between the scientific style *sensu stricto* (designating research) we were witnessing the emergence of a new scientific style *sensu largo*, a less ‘*intellectualized*’ variant, exploiting communication patterns more appropriate for popular and didactic functions (e.g. growth of orality, interactiveness or visuality of expression).

Against such stylistic-rhetorical accounts, a topical element should not be bypassed in discussing style dynamics under globalization, Europeanization or Englishization in the last decade or so. For Polish linguistics, the income of English writing patterns was also a sign of a slow change of research paradigms in science. In language studies, the structuralist tradition was slowly combated, counter-balanced, if not replaced by the escalation of (mainly) English-based cognitive, functional and discursive approaches to language and communication. It needs to be noted, for instance, that style change went on a par with a slow removal of skepticism among Polish linguists to accept discourse analysis as a leading approach to language (and communication) studies. A part of the problem was the methodological novelty of such approaches linked to English and English-medium studies in language.

## POSITIONING ON ENGLISH (AS GLOBAL LINGUA FRANCA)

English is an unquestionable “leader language” today, a tool of communication in all walks of transnational contacts, whether political, economic, scientific or cultural. Commonly linked to globalization, it has been “hailed” by many,



and denounced by others as a symbol of global monoculture and linguistic domination. There is no need or space here to recall the vast and heterogeneous literature of the topic (for some discussion, with focus on global English in CEEC and further references see, e.g. Duszak and Okulska (eds.), 2004). The tenor of such discussions may be important to recall though. As a rule, local (or national) disputes wavered between purist and liberal attitudes to Englishization of minor languages, not to mention radical attempts to control the situation by administrative measures. Against the *killer* or the *donor* metaphors popular especially in the mid-1990s, attempts were also undertaken to take off the heat of the discussions, and rationalize the position of English demonstrating its relative impact on other grammars or on selected domains of social practices. And additional perspective was emphasized with the distinction between *language for communication* and *language for identification* (esp. e.g. Joseph, 2004), suggesting that, as with any other language, in using English people may focus on its various capacities and functions. In turn, Crystal drew attention to the issue of language ownership, claiming that with *any* global language, 'no one can now claim 'sole ownership' of English' (Crystal, 1997: 130). Today, it seems, the heydays of such controversies are over, with many English loans stabilized in the receiving languages, some being adapted or replaced by local equivalents, and still others having disappeared altogether. New ideologies, styles of being, and discursive values are coming to the forefront of attention across disciplines.

The role of English today is not to be linked to any unique process, considering similar positions of other languages in the past, most notably of Latin. In the European context, for instance, linguistic asymmetry is nothing unusual with some languages being more powerful than others, to mention French, German or Russian at various stages and over various geopolitical territories. Still, a majority of the languages have always had a peripheral status, which limited, if not made impossible for their speakers, communication outside of the local communities. This applies also to the languages in the CEEC region, many of them having histories of dependence on some *lingua franca*, whether Latin, French or German. There are clearly many caveats to bilingualism (or multilingualism) of the past, as there are to its current variants. Linguistic aspirations and skills characterized only some social groups, commonly as a result of power distribution in the respective society. Selected discursive domains were more likely than others to become sites of language shifting, as with politics, scholarship, art or tourism. Traditionally, these have always been foreign language learning (and teaching) cultures (FLL/FLT).

In academia in this region some form of multilingualism was a rule, perhaps comparable to *new multilingualism* (cf. Clyne, e.g. 2003) under globalization today. It meant selective competence in a foreign language and its strategic use, as for reading and writing specialist texts. Such multilingualism manifested itself in academic networking, conferencing and publishing. In my own linguistic work starting in the 1970s, I came across a number of collections published in Poland and featuring papers written in various languages. Next to Polish, there was

Russian, Czech, German, and less often English. This linguistic pluralism was a matter of fact even though the actual comprehensibility of all texts for individual readers is hard to judge. Probably such collections were meant for selective reading only, but they served a pluralistic ideology in academic communication in the region. It needs to be remembered though that foreign-medium academic writing showed a quantitative skewing towards Russian, whose teaching was obligatory in schools, no matter how reluctantly it was received by many of the learners.

What is of interest was the thematically integrative function of such localized multilingualism. Regionally valid research foci were established and explored nationally and internationally. Among them first of all were elaborations of the Czech school of Functional Sentence Perspective, which led to the birth of text linguistics in this region. In Poland, the work here owes a lot to Warsaw-based research team headed by Maria Renata Maynowa (cf., e.g. a multilingual collection edited by Dobrzyńska and Janus, 1983). There were also explorations in Slavic stylistics, as well dialectology and ethnolinguistics, charting other micro territories for cross-cultural and cross-linguistic comparison (esp. at the inspiration of, respectively, Stanisław Gajda in Opole and Jerzy Bartmiński in Lublin).

Against all that, contacts with English and English-medium linguistic publications were limited and difficult for field external reasons, namely the Soviet politics in the region. Still, the development of English studies in the late 1970s slowly paved the way for making English into a popular foreign language, a tendency boosted up by strong anti-communist and pro-Western sentiments among wide sections of society, and then by a similar orientation of post-communist governments. This gradual opening to English is to be linked to the introduction of contrastive grammars and contrastive linguistics in general, based on a much wider spectrum of languages and methodologies. This was only followed by cross-cultural pragmatics and ultimately by the cognitive and discursive approaches to language. In that process, at least initially, the role of Poznań English Studies under Jacek Fisiak is not to be overestimated for how it eased exchange of ideas between linguists from the West and the CEE countries.

This is also where and when English academic “mono-culture” started in Poland, and possibly also in some of the CEEC region. Characteristically, the new linguistic publications, collections and journals were written in English (cf. *Papers and Studies in Contrastive Linguistics; Studia Anglicana Posnaniensa*). To some extent this was a practical solution, considering a wide variety of languages involved for which English provided a common denominator. Yet, this may have been a well-calculated choice. For some authors at least writing in English was a way of manifestation of their Western orientation, a subversion of the privileged status of Russian. Furthermore, English would ease contact with world knowledge in many domains of academic expertise. Even periodicals with a spectrum linguistically and topically exceeding English (studies) would turn to



foreign-medium publications, the majority of which were written in English (e.g. *Kwartalnik Neofilologiczny* [*Neophilological Quarterly*] of the Polish Academy of Sciences).

Almost three decades later, English ranks still higher in academic demand. Yet, its situation is different in that it tends to be treated as an instrument for communication, inexpedient for getting competence in other fields and skills, and less as an object of study for its own sake or part of humanistic reflection over the social nature of language. In addition, in some FLT environments the dominance of English is received as a threat to the condition of other foreign-language programs, especially in the light of a demographic slump in student population. There are pressures to publish internationally in English, endorsed by government policies of evaluation of scholars and institutions. This is however contested on various grounds. A national argument is sometimes made, as when a senior Polish historian argues that we should not only care to communicate with other scholars, but also with cultural elites of the country, for which we need to write and publish in Polish. Other constraints are also raised especially among the older generation of scholars, seeing less reason why they should publish in English on matters involving other languages and cultural environments (cf. Duszak and Lewkowicz, 2008).

What language to choose for reporting research and where to publish may be a problem, considering a variety of topics, tasks and audiences. In contrast to mathematics or physics, research in the humanities and social sciences may need the local lens to locate issues and formulate interpretations. In any case, however, what really matters is the ability to dialogize local (national) and global (international) discourses.

## REGIONAL REVISITED

In the construction of scientific knowledge the epistemic criterion is crucial, hence research is often seen as transnational or, as some would argue, *acultural*. The national element may not be totally negligible though, since scholarship and education are social practices, and building up a canon of knowledge in a national language is important for the prestige and integrity of a given community. Yet regional arguments may be found superfluous or ill-conceived, considering the regime of globalization, the European unification, or even more importantly, the syndrome of deterritorialization of social spaces and human contacts due to the development of information technologies, transnational flows of capital, or the hegemonic power of English as a global medium of communication. I would argue though that regionalism should play a role regarding the issues addressed in language research and education. Viewed as an identity issue, regional thinking could provide interesting interfaces between the global and the local, the national and the transnational, the market and the ethos in approaching the university.

I shall use the term *regionalism* with reference to the territory of CEEC, allowing for historical extensions of this region in the nearby past. Some form of regional thinking is pervasive in much of the work on cross-cultural linguistic similarity and difference. Relevant here might be typologies of intellectual (academic) styles, where divisions were drawn largely between territorially established spheres of dominance, say of the Anglo-Saxon and the German (Teutonic) traditions. These were, and remain, sweeping generalizations that open themselves to scrutiny, with assumed style value distributions begging for updating in empirical studies. For instance, Kowalski (2011) documents changes that took place between 1980 and 2000 in the way Polish linguists narrated research in English and in Polish.

On the other hand, a regional argument is connoted by the division into *core* and *peripheral* countries. This metaphor uses English as an explicit point of reference, even though it goes beyond language policies and reflects inequalities in the global distribution of power as a result of the political and economic hegemony of the Western Anglophone sphere. Phillipson (1992: 17), for example, speaks about the ‘core English-speaking countries’ (Britain, US) and the ‘periphery-English countries’ where English either has the status of a second language, as in India, or is a foreign and ‘international link language’, which pertains for many countries today. In applied linguistics, in turn, we have the Kachruvian paradigm for modeling English worldwide (“Three Circles of English”), based on the distinction between ‘genetic’ versus ‘functional nativeness’ in that language (Kachru, 1985; c.f. Bolton, 2006). There is the Inner Circle, where English is the ‘primary’ language (US, UK, Australia, New Zealand), the Outer Circle, stretching over postcolonial Anglophonic contexts (e.g. Nigeria, India or Singapore), and the Expanding Circle covering those areas where English is an ‘international’ and a ‘foreign’ language, to mention here China, Korea, Israel, Greece, Poland, Latvia or Russia. It is obvious that the final circle extends over territories that differ largely in their geopolitical, social, cultural and linguistic situation. Better localized visions of ‘the periphery’ (‘regionalized’ views) seem inexpedient for researching the territories. Regionally established models may show a center-and-periphery structure in how powers are distributed.

In case of CEEC we are dealing with a territory of a ‘foreign-language culture’ or perhaps ‘cultures’ to leave space for diversity in (some) unity. Only fine-grained and clear-focused analyses can demonstrate the extent of similarity and difference, in how the global monoculture of English is received across academic environments in this region. The demand for and interest in (specialist) translation (studies) charts only one academic path, no matter how salient it may be for its strong marketing position. Still, the current emphasis in language education should not overshadow other disciplinary needs and topical fields that are relevant to linguistics and communication studies in general. Some areas of scholarly involvement remain traditionally marked for regionalism, as is the case with much of ethnolinguistic, dialectological or stylistic research that often engages pairs or groups of languages in the area and across its territorial

adjacencies. Allowing for some redefinition of the CEEC region, we can build up on the historical traditions going back to the Prague Circle, Moscow-Tartu semiotics of culture, or the Czech school of Functional Sentence Perspective. If regional multilingualism was an incentive for the growth of many of the ideas, then the peripheral status of the languages became a handicap (not to mention language external obstacles) for the dissemination of that work for wider international readership (cf. Dorodnych, 2006 for some discussion of the situation of the peripheral scholar in the past). Internationalization of many of the ideas became possible only with their mediation in English. The impact of Bakhtin on Western philosophy of language cannot be overestimated, with the number of citations, references and re-contextualizations of his ideas being enormous and still growing.

It is the Bakhtinian legacy (e.g. 1981, 1984 [65]), with its core concepts of *heteroglossia* and *dialogism*, that already supplies a solid frame of reference in international discussions over the role of language in social life. It also eases interdisciplinary connections across humanities and social sciences, readily allowing for dialogic exchanges over socially sensitive aspects of language use, such as dominance, power or social change. For linguists, Bakhtin offers ways to accommodate various sub-disciplinary voices in approaching a language, coming from the realms of semantics, grammar or textology. These are dialogized today in socio-cognitive models of discourse and genre intertextuality. Among them are critical discourse studies (CDS), a new interdisciplinary strand of research in social communication (e.g. Fairclough, 1995, 2003; Wodak and Chilton eds., 2005; van Dijk, 2009). With its programmatic eclecticism, linking methodologies of linguistics and social sciences (e.g. Wodak and Meyer eds., 2001; Wodak and Krzyżanowski eds., 2008), CDS addresses many pressing issues across diverse geopolitical, cultural and linguistic territories.

In my opinion, CDS carries means and tools for revisiting regionalism today as a potential dimension of identity building under the new conditions of globalization and Europeanization on the one hand, and national thinking, on the other. For the CEE countries, the following checklist of topics lends itself to elaboration in critical discursive terms: World War II memories and its legacy; discourses of communism and post-communist transformations; national identification and the enlargement of the European Union (EU); border discourses; new multiculturalism and global English across the professions; generational change; global and national media; standards in public communication (for some discussion see, e.g. Duszak and Okulska eds., 2004, 2011; Duszak et al. eds., 2010, Galasińska and Krzyżanowski eds., 2008; Kowalski, 2011; Krzyżanowski, 2010). I realize that it is rather unconventional to self-reference a lot in proposing a research program, but my intention was to signal my own involvement, as well as the engagement of my colleagues, in particular domains of CDS. This also explains why the cited literature privileges discussions of the Polish context. I am also aware that the references given, as well as CDS publications in general, add to the English monoculture in academic publishing. Here, however, I firmly

believe that we cannot mediate our ideas internationally otherwise than with the use of a global instrument. In turn, mediation is necessary should we want to have our voices heard and *dialogized* in a truly *polyphonic* debate, to recall Bakhtin again. It is also to be expected that the development of CDS should create new incentives for the study of communication on linguistic principles, functioning as counter-balance to the heavy weight of translation studies. Last but not least, by their very nature CDS programs not only address socially relevant issues, globally and locally, but they also highlight applied concerns of communication research. Namely, one of the tasks of CDS is to contribute to language (discourse) awareness and thus to enhance critical participation in social life. I also venture that it is in the best interest of CDS to encourage regional lacunas in critical linguistic analyses. As regards the question asked in the title, the regional element *in* (and *for*) language studies is certainly not *lost*, even though it remains covert, if not silenced, under the polarized view on the *local Self* or else on the *global Other*.

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