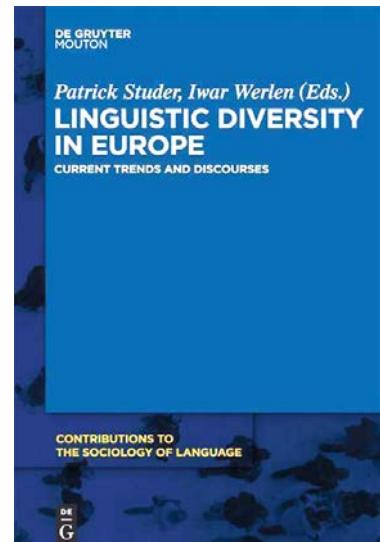


## THE LINGUISTIC MOSAIC OF EUROPE

Studer, P. & Werlen, I. (2012, eds.). *Linguistic Diversity in Europe. Current Trends and Discourses. (Contributions to the Sociology of Language)*. Berlin and Boston: De Gruyter Mouton. 349 pages. ISBN: 978-3110270839

**Martin Henzelmann**  
Dresden University of Technology

The presented book gives an overview on the linguistic complexity in Europe and focusses on current trends in sociolinguistic development. It is structured into 14 chapters, highlighting tendencies in selected regions of the continent. In their introduction the editors, both recognized scientists from Switzerland, point out the multiple backgrounds of the sociolinguistic challenges in the European Union in the context of the LINEE project (*Languages in a Network of European Excellence*). In this international framework they connect linguistic and economic factors and make use of the results for empirical-based studies of the volume, being located all across Europe (p. 6 and p. 8). Rosita Rindler Schjerve and Eva Vetter focus on theoretical (pp. 26 – 39) and methodological (pp. 39 – 42) concepts in which multilingualism is embedded. According to their paper, multilingualism is currently couched into knowledge-based society and scientific discourse (p. 43). It might be interesting to take into consideration Labov's earlier contributions, where he clearly speaks of the interconnection of all these factors when it comes to his US researches (e.g. Labov, 1972) and, in addition, it could be promising to ask which of his results could be useful in today's Europe. Chapter three (Senka Bozic, Mario Vrbancic and Olga Orlic, pp. 49 – 68) is devoted to a case study of cultural contesting identities in Istria, Croatia. Their approach concentrates on options of identification in Croatian–Italian bilingual communities on the peninsula, and the authors describe their field studies with individuals. One of the results is the dominance of a European identity with the local



population, characterising their region as much more European than the rest of the country, and having a strong distance from the Balkans (pp. 57 – 61). The importance of linguistic diversity is significantly underlined by the promotion of regional minority languages. Ladin in Italy is such a case, and Jeroen Darquennes explains the corpus planning issues of that minority in Italy. After a general overview of political discussions around minority languages (pp. 70 – 73), the reader learns about the measurements being taken to standardise Ladin (pp. 73 – 82). When comparing the institutional situation with other very small European languages, which in a Slavonic context are better known as microlanguages (such as Lower Sorbian in Germany or Kashubian in Poland, cf. Duličenko 1981 and 2014), there are still minority languages which do not get enough support from the state (e.g. Macedonian in Greece). This is due to ideological debates, discussed in the paper by Mislava Bertoša and Anita Skelin Horvat, referring to the case of Croatia. The interaction between linguistic purity and national identity is shown against the background of published data, discussing, among other things, the recent influence of Anglicisms (p. 96). According to the authors, the strong historical impact of language purity is visible nowadays and “Croatia still cultivates a modernist approach and uses a German ideology which relies on the nationalist ideal of the state” (p. 104). In this context, it is not surprising that Croatian scientists see a provocation in the attempts of some Bunjevac activists in Serbia, since a part of this community (with a slightly lower number of speakers as Ladin in Italy) tries to establish a genuine literary language different from standard Croatian (cf. Vuković, 2015).

The second part of the book begins with chapter six (Patrick Studer, pp. 115 – 135), where we learn about the contradictions which occur in the discourse of European language policy-makers. Studer provides a theoretical backdrop on social representation and discursive analysis before referring to his case study (pp. 123 – 132). He comments on interviews he took spontaneously and highlights some outstanding conceptual contradictions (especially when encouraging citizens to use lesser-used languages in trade, which is very rare in everyday business, pp. 124 – 125). At the same time, multilingualism is also due to migration all across the continent and in their article, Darren Paffey, Dick Vigers and Clare Mar-Molinero draw attention to the situation in Spain and in the United Kingdom. In the latter state, the City of Southampton is subject to the analysis of how language policy affects language acquisition, while Barcelona and Castelló are the places of investigation in Spain (pp. 140 – 151). The result is that in both countries knowledge of the official language is a key factor for integration, although the motivation for achieving national citizenship differs amongst migrants and it is more important in the United Kingdom (pp. 151 – 152). Daniela Dorner examines a different situation in Lorraine in France, where she concentrates on the German-speaking local population which has been present in the region for several centuries (pp. 157 – 175). After some general remarks on language planning in a minority context (pp. 159

– 165), she investigates the vitality of the local dialect and states that the French language policy is responsible for its decline (p. 167 and p. 170).

In the third part of the volume, the impact of the English language as a lingua franca is discussed. The question whether we should speak about “English and multilingualism or English only in a multilingual Europe?” is posed by Donald W. Peckham, Karolina Kalocsai, Emőke Kovács and Tamah Sherman, and it seems to be a slightly provocative one, *per se*. The key question in their contribution is whether knowledge of English in educational environments in Hungary and in the Czech Republic facilitates multilingualism. Their data originates from interviews with Erasmus students and proves that English is used to gain access to multilingualism and allows individuals to enter new cultures (pp. 179 – 197). It is now obvious that flexibility, social mobility and education are strongly connected to knowledge of English and to the interplay of multicompetences. The paper by Rosamond Mitchell, Silvia DalNegro and Elena Ionannidou is inspired by this phenomenon and compares sociolinguistic and psycholinguistic perspectives (pp. 203 – 232). Based on research conducted in secondary schools in Szeged, Bozen/ Bolzano and South England, the authors explore educational perspectives and describe in a multifaceted way that “students’ attitudes and perceptions of both their own multilingualism and the multilingualism of others mainly derive from other sources than the actual language instruction they receive” (p. 228). Against this background, they suggest changes to be made in language policy (*ibid.*), although language instruction from a very early age is a common feature of many European countries so that different results may be expected. The role of English as a lingua franca is introduced to most students across the continent, while Alessia Cogo points out its function among school students in the London area (pp. 238 – 252). In several groups, she discovered that teenagers are unlikely to be aware of what it means to speak a lingua franca, although discussion with them underlined certain ideologies (p. 239).

Part four begins with an analysis by the Czech linguist Vít Dovalil who considers “language as an impediment to mobility in Europe”, describing language barriers which affect the European market and legal settings (p. 259). He quotes some important studies on languages management, before commenting the various levels of language problems in law in action (pp. 261 – 270), while in the next section, the use of languages in multinational companies in the context of ELAN study is empirically documented by Tamah Sherman, Oliver Engelhardt and Jiří Nekvapil (pp. 287 – 310). According to their research, German is the most significant foreign language in the Czech Republic and the second most in Hungary (i.e. after English) and they observe several trends in international communication. The most notable trend is that “languages such as Czech, Hungarian, German, French or Russian symbolize national identity and their use in multinational companies is no exception to this” (p. 301). The European market is, of course, not only influ-

enced by internal migration, but it also attracts people from all over the world. This is also the case with Vietnamese migrants in the Czech Republic, whose language management finds expression in the paper by Ivo Vasiljev and Jiří Nekvapil (pp. 311 – 338). Since this group is very active in the labour force and in small family businesses, the authors are inspired by the interaction of economy and language among these guest workers and migrants. The town of Cheb, situated near the German border provides an interesting example in respect of language management, as “some of the local Vietnamese business people here are trilingual although their knowledge of both Czech and German is rather limited” (p. 329). The authors conclude that the community in the Czech Republic is nowhere near as isolated as is often assumed in the country, and strong reasons are given for their flexibility in respect of socio-cultural and socio-economic features (pp. 334 – 336).

In summation, the book portrays several case studies in very different communities in a European context, although some specific languages are not discussed (e.g. Polish or Portuguese). On the other hand, the volume highlights case studies and sets out clear ideas how to analyse current trends in a multilingual continent in order to provide base for new innovations and investigations in the field of sociolinguistics.

## REFERENCES

Duličenko, A. D. (1981). *Slavjanskie literaturnye mikrojazyki. Voprosy formirovaniya i razvitiya*. Tallin: Valgus.

Duličenko, A. D. (2014). *Vvedenie v slavjanskiju filologiju. Učebnoe posobie*. Moskva: Nauka, Flinta.

Labov, W. (1972). *Language in the Inner City: Studies in the Black English Vernacular*. Philadelphia: The University of Pennsylvania Press.

Vuković, P. (2015). Buniewcy z Bački – język i tożsamość. *Poznańskie studia slawistyczne*, 8, 239 – 256.

✉ **Mr. Martin Henzelmann, Dr. phil.**  
Faculty of Linguistics, Literature and Cultural Studies  
Institute of Slavonic Studies  
Dresden University of Technology  
48, Wiener St.  
D-01219 Dresden, Germany  
E-mail: Martin.Henzelmann@tu-dresden.de