

New-dialect formation: The non-inevitability of colonial languages.

The case of Poland

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The title of the paper refers to the book by Peter Trudgill (2004) on new-dialect formation, in which he claims that the emergence of new dialects is deterministic, affected only by the initial dialects (languages) spoken by the resettled population. While he discusses English dialects above all, he supports his arguments also by data from other languages, so one can assume that the hypothesis holds also for other languages as well. In the paper I will look at the situation in Poland, in the so-called regained territories (chiefly Silesia and Pomerania), in which the dialectal mix can bear comparison to the linguistic situation in the USA: in both cases there were large populations of speaker of various dialects that were transferred to new areas. One can claim that there was the tabula rasa situation in many areas in the region, e.g., in the largest city in the region, Wrocław. Given the deterministic nature of new-dialect formation the results should be similar: new dialects.

The paper will have three parts. In the first part I will review the literature on linguistic change in Poland on the regained territories (e.g., Nieckula 1990, Wyderka 2001, Thum 2006). In the second part I will apply Trudgill's model of new-dialect formation to the findings, specifically, using the demographic data, I will establish the chronology of change (for the first time in Poland). In the third part I will discuss the results. In short, the model fits the data admirably, however, the outcome of the change was not a new dialect (or dialects) but koineization, adoption of the koine (cf. Kreswill 2002), i.e. standard Polish. Referring to the demographic data again I will interpret this result.

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- Thum, Gregor. 2006. *Obce miasto. Wrocław 1945 i potem*. Wrocław: Via Nova [*Die fremde Stadt. Breslau 1945*. Berlin: Siedler 2003]
- Trudgill, Peter. 2004. *New-Dialect Formation: The Inevitability of Colonial Englishes*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press
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