

## **Lexical Heritage as a Sign of Identity of the Lublin Region**

This study, *Lexical Heritage as a Sign of Identity of the Lublin Region*, is the final part of the project *The Regional Ethnolinguistic Heritage of the Lublin Region: A Dialect Dictionary of the Lublin Region*, Vols. 6-12, realized in the framework of the *National Heritage* module, with the priority research area *The Ethnic and Regional Character of Cultural, Linguistic and Historical Heritage*. The study contains lexicological, cartographic, iconographic and sound documentation; it is based on the Ministry of Science and Higher Education Agreement No 0125/NPRH7/H11/86/2018. The aim of the project is to save and preserve the vanishing linguistic and cultural patrimony of the Lublin region, an important part of the Polish national heritage, by way of establishing a unique regional and ethnic source of reference, important not only for the Lublin region but also for the Polish cultural heritage, to be preserved, disseminated and included into the fabric of the living national tradition. Accordingly, the twelve thematic volumes of *A Dialect Dictionary of the Lublin Region* have been devoted to the description of the various aspects of material and spiritual culture of the Lublin region.

*Lexical Heritage as a Sign of Identity of the Lublin Region* consists of five chapters, each containing a detailed lexicographic and iconographic description. Seen from a methodological standpoint, the study proposes a consistent dialectal and ethnolinguistic image of the Lublin region reflecting its past and preserved in the lexis and in the region's cultural exponents. The study concentrates on dialectal lexis as seen against the background of the wide body of all-Poland-, regional- and local research as well as through the prism of the many recent lexical studies conducted in Poland. The entries, found in the twelve volumes of *A Dialect Dictionary of the Lublin Region*, testify to the cultural heritage of the region; they underscore the patrimonial continuity of the region in which the wealth of the lexis shows the linguistic sensitivity of the rural populace, of their wisdom, their observing skills and their disposition to name even the smallest elements of the rural environment.

The chapters, titled I. *The dialect dictionary of the Lublin region as a source of knowledge about the region*, II. *Ways of presenting the lexis in a dialect dictionary*, III. *The wealth of the regional lexis in The Dialect Dictionary of the Lublin Region*, IV. *A dialectal utterance as a linguistic and cultural message* and V. *The patrimony hidden in words and in their cultural exponents*, are based on methodologically consistent principles; they contain

analyses of entries pertaining to the material and spiritual rural culture of the region. A separate, representative bibliography appears at the end of each chapter.

*A Dialect Dictionary of the Lublin region* covers the eastern part Poland. In particular, the semanto-onomasiological representation of the names and the wealth of their meanings presented in *The Dictionary* define the area that spreads between the Podlasie region, the (ancient) Slav territories (Słowianszczyzna), Mazovia and Lesser Poland.

As already mentioned, this twelve volume dictionary is devoted to the lexical heritage of the Lublin region. It contains 23360 entries supported by theoretical considerations and linguistic analyses of the names and their designata. The majority of the entries point to the multi-segmental nature of the linguistic landscape of the region grounded in the multicultural environment, in its history and customs. Based on the wealth of vocabulary, semantically and geographically defined, the dialectal diversity involving the relationship between the name and its designatum shows not only a close interdependence between these two elements but also their time- and space-dependent variability.

*A Dialect Dictionary of the Lublin Region* has a thematically organized layout: each volume constitutes an integrated whole based on similar methodological principles involving the use of atlas-related techniques and iconography and sharing a common descriptive base. The volumes have an alphabetically-organised order of entries extrapolated from the utterances of the oldest villagers from over 600 villages and from 2500 informers of the Lublin region area. Each entry has a composite structure consisting of seven basic elements:

- (i) the entry and its meaning, given in the form of a definition;
- (ii) illustrative material;
- (iii) contexts in which the word is used;
- (iv) sources;
- (v) the geography of the word with a linguistic map;
- (vi) irregular inflectional processes as well as the most frequent phonetic variants, presented in the *Pronunciation* section;
- (vii) references to the synonyms (variants of names used in a particular village) and to the heteronyms (name variants appearing in a wider area).

The cultural dimension of the dialectal vocabulary, associated with a particular place and time, residing in a particular word and in the memory and imagination of the villagers, finds its full reflection in the region's lexical richness, in the villagers' valuation and linguistic awareness, in the name-designatum relationship and in the regional boundaries of the word and its place in the language user's lexical repertory.

The study *Lexical Heritage as a Sign of Identity of the Lublin Region* consists of five chapters devoted to the word and its cultural value, inscribed in the lexical heritage of the Lublin region. Chapter 1 provides an introduction to lexical research and delineates the thematic scope of the subsequent volumes of *A Dialect Dictionary of the Lublin Region*. Chapter 2 offers a discussion of the ways the vocabulary has been presented; it provides a characterisation of each dictionary entry which includes seven segments linking text and image as two complementary aspects of the village space. The chapter stresses the importance of qualifiers used in the dictionary, functioning as time and space determinants, and their role in the villagers' interpretation of the world. Chapter 3 is devoted to the wealth of the region's vocabulary; it contains the place name associated with a particular designatum which appears in the cultural and linguistic space. The second part of the chapter deals with the naming mechanisms of the folk picture of the world which resides in dialectal names. Varying semantically, onomasiologically, geographically, culturally and in many customs-related ways, the names point to the importance of the region's dialectal lexis with its identificational, identifying and structuring role of the linguistic space.

The next two chapters: *The wealth of the regional lexis in A Dialect Dictionary of the Lublin Region* and *A dialectal utterance as a linguistic and cultural message* concentrate on a dialect text as a carrier of cultural content (Chapter 4) and the patrimony hidden in words (Chapter 5). The discussion revolves around dialect vocabulary as a value inscribed in the villagers' cultural and customs-related linguistic awareness and in the past petrified in dialect utterances grounded in the regional identity. The utterances point to the importance of the word-designatum dyad in the Polish village customs-related structure, closely connected with activities pertaining to agricultural, ludic, religious, symbolic, belief- and superstition-related customs. They are a memory record, an interpreter of the correspondence between the past and present as mirrored in the name-designatum relationship functioning in the regional space. A dialect text testifies not only to the life of the village community but also functions as a time-bound communicative phenomenon linking tradition with the present.

A special interpreter of the past-present relationship is the memories that are passed between generations. The memory is a stimulator of time, a carrier of customs-related symbolic values of words, their meanings and of the folk wisdom treatment of names and their designata. The traditional values extrapolated from the utterances follow a timeline, where the past is often evaluated through the prism of the present time, but is also filtered through the subjective experiences of the villagers. The past determines other values, including religiosity and work and associated with them, modesty, humbleness, honesty,

hospitality, respect for the elderly, the ability to behave in public places and avoid bad situations, interpersonal skills and social solidarity. Labour and religion in the rural areas are seen to be intimately linked to the linguistic and ritual and customs-related nature of extralinguistic behaviour. Labour is closely associated with land and nature; it is part of the divine order, determined by the agrarian time, which determines the cyclic nature of field works and the rhythms of nature, the feeling of community and the solidarity of the villagers.

The essence of the multicultural nature of the Lublin region finds its reflection in both the semantic mechanisms underlying folk-related naming as well as in the villagers' linguistic awareness mirrored in their utterances and in the remembrance of old words and images petrified in the form of cultural memory signs.

Translated by Henryk Kardela