



Silesia

Annotated bibliography

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Key words	Upper Silesia, identification, ethnic group, Silesian ethnolect, stereotype	
Abstract	<p>This publication focuses on the current state of the Silesian dialect. It offers a description of the socio-political landscape of Upper Silesia, exploring both its historical roots and contemporary dynamics. Special emphasis is placed on the use of the Silesian dialect in educational settings and within family dynamics, including situations involving mixed- marriage couples. Drawing from area research, which includes recordings of interviews and conversations, the publication aims to highlight the most enduring and transient features of the Silesian ethnolect, while considering its interaction with dominant languages like German and Polish. The final chapter is dedicated to exploring Silesian stereotypes and auto-stereotypes.</p>	

<p>Content and main findings</p>	<p>The fundamental aim of this monograph was to present an up to date state of the Silesian ethnolect through empirical research. This was deemed a pressing task due to the absence of language descriptions focusing on the urban areas of Upper Silesia, which had been overlooked by Polish dialectology for many years. The research was conducted against a backdrop of detailed socio-political context, spanning both historical and contemporary perspectives. Special emphasis was placed on clarifying terminology, particularly in distinguishing between various language phenomena such as local dialects, dialects and languages.</p> <p>Ultimately, it was acknowledged that these terms do not always refer to the same domain. The term "regional language," commonly used in legal and political contexts for languages like Kashubian, differs from the linguistic terms "dialect" and "regional dialect." The distinctive characteristics of the Silesian ethnolect were gathered from recordings and compared with existing general knowledge about this dialect. Special attention was given to expressive features, incorporating Trudgill's theory on salience, which includes those characteristics most recognisable in speech, as well as those least recognisable, which may persist due to their difficulty in being eliminated.</p> <p>The final chapter, dedicated to heterostereotypes and autostereotypes concerning Silesia, highlighted that while ethnic identification is highly developed in Upper Silesia, language awareness is comparatively low and relies on conventional wisdom. This combination of factors, including low language awareness and the standardization of the Silesian ethnolect, along with the disappearance of many traditional features (such as numerous German borrowings), poses a significant threat to the resilience of the Silesian ethnolect.</p>
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