

## II. BOOK REVIEWS

**Przemysław E. Gębal.** *Krakowska szkoła glottodydaktyki porównawczej na tle rozwoju glottodydaktyki ogólnej i polonistycznej* [= The Krakow School of Comparative Glottodidactics within the Context of the Development of General and Polish Glottodidactics]. Kraków: Księgarnia Akademicka. 2014, 167 pp.

The first indicators of Gębal's interest in a comparative approach to foreign language teaching appeared in 2010 in his two publications of that year: in the monograph *Dydaktyka kultury polskiej w kształceniu językowym cudzoziemców* [*Didactics of Polish culture in teaching Polish to foreigners. A comparative approach*] and in the article *Beyond the borders of traditional didactics. Towards comparative didactics* published in a post-conference volume *Polonistyka bez granic* [*Polish studies without limits*] edited by Nycz, Miodunka and Kunz (2010: 67-79). However, Gębal presents comparative didactics in the most comprehensive manner in the monograph *Modele kształcenia nauczycieli języków obcych w Polsce i w Niemczech. W stronę glottodydaktyki porównawczej* [*Models of foreign language teacher education in Poland and in Germany. Towards a comparative didactics*] published three years later. It includes the chapter: *Zarys koncepcji glottodydaktyki porównawczej* [*An outline of comparative didactics*] (2013: 91-108), which is preceded by the chapter *Badania porównawcze w glottodydaktyce europejskiej na przykładzie glottodydaktyki francuskiej, niemieckiej i polskiej* [*Comparative studies in European didactics. The case of French, German and Polish didactics*] (2013: 61-90). In this work, after presenting the concepts of comparative didactics as described by Puren, Porcher, Abendroth-Timmer, Wegner, Komorowska and Miodunka, the author proceeds to define comparative didactics as "the subdiscipline of didactics which deals, both theoretically and empirically, with the comparative analysis of language teaching as organized and implemented within the framework of different educational systems as they are shaped by historical, socio-economic, political and cultural conditions" (2013: 95).

The reviewed monograph develops an overview of the comparative approach in Polish didactics, which was presented in Gębal's (2013) publication. In chapter one, Gębal presents his view on the development of general didactics of foreign languages in Poland and also describes the development of didactics of Polish as a foreign language which he considers to be a specialized field/subfield of didactics. The institutions which had the greatest influence on the development of general didactics of foreign languages in Poland are the Institutes of Applied Linguistics at Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań and at the University of Warsaw.

Two main trends may be observed in the development of didactics of Polish as a foreign language. The first of these is the trend toward teaching Polish as a foreign lan-

guage. What proves the importance of this is the fact that as many as 318 universities in 58 countries all over the world organized such courses in 2011. In Poland, Polish has been taught as a foreign language to foreigners since the 1950s, first at the University of Łódź and then also at the University of Warsaw. Nowadays Polish courses are offered at seventeen Polish universities. The second trend is teaching Polish as a second language, which after 2000 has been a fact in a growing number of cities in Poland, particularly in Warsaw. On the basis of the historical ruminations, in the conclusion to Chapter One, Gębal suggests possible developments in the didactics of Polish in the 21<sup>st</sup> century: action-oriented didactics, intercultural teaching and multilingual didactics.

A substantial part of Chapter Two is devoted to a detailed analysis of the research conducted on the methodology of teaching Polish as a foreign language from the Jagiellonian University, whose work concerned the methodology of teaching such foreign languages as English, French, German or Russian as well as the research on the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR). The analysis is preceded by the presentation of the conception of teaching Polish as a foreign language as posited by Miodunka in 1977 and consistently developed ever since. This conception is based on three key assumptions: 1) reliance on research in applied linguistics that may be used in Foreign Language Teaching (FLT) (especially on teaching English, French and German); 2) close cooperation among researchers of the methodology of teaching world languages in Poland; and 3) application of theoretical research and concomitant development of teaching materials for teaching Polish as a foreign language.

The growth of the research conducted by the Krakow centre is divided by Gębal into three periods. During the first one, from 1980 to 1996, six monographs and one edited volume were published. The author regards this period as the time when foreign approaches were adopted into teaching Polish in order to modernize the ways in which it was taught. During this period, two distinct trends can be distinguished: on the one hand, lexical studies appeared on Polish thematic vocabulary conducted by Miodunka and Cygal-Krupa, based on French research, and, on the other hand, the introduction of the communicative approach to teaching Polish as a foreign language, which was a research avenue pursued by Czarnecka, Martyniuk, Miodunka, Zgólkowa, Dębski and others, based on the English, American, French, and German methodology of teaching foreign languages.

In the second period that lasted between 1997–2010, five monographs and four edited volumes were published. Gębal distinguishes a few trends that emerged during that time. The first is represented by the works of Seretny, who initially conducted semantic and lexicographic comparative research, comparing English didactic lexicography (American and British dictionaries) with the Polish dictionaries for foreigners. In 2011 Seretny went on to publish *Kompetencja leksykalna w badaniach ilościowych na przykładzie języka polskiego jako obcego* [*Lexical competence of learners of Polish as a foreign language in light of quantitative studies*], in which she analysed the knowledge of vocabulary of foreigners studying Polish at six language fluency levels. In her work, Seretny made use of outstanding British and American research in this field.

Another research trend was related to teaching Polish culture within the process of teaching Polish as a foreign language. The most important example of this subfield was the above mentioned book: *Dydaktyka kultury polskiej w kształceniu językowym cudzoziemców* [*Didactics of Polish culture in Polish language teaching to foreigners*] (2010) by Gębal, in

which the author proposes different ways of teaching Polish culture to foreigners depending on their language proficiency level, relying on German and French research, as well as European standards.

The third trend was connected with the methodology of teaching Polish as a foreign language and lesson planning. The most important publication was *ABC metodyki nauczania języka polskiego jako obcego* [ABC of the methodology of teaching Polish as a foreign language] by Seretny and Lipińska (2005), in which the authors divide the title skill/competence into teaching elements of the linguistic systems and teaching skills, and present how these can be developed by means of different teaching methods. Another important work is also *Planowanie lekcji języka obcego* [Foreign Language Lesson Planning] by Janowska (2010), in which the author used similar materials in different languages to show the basics of lesson design with reference to teaching various languages.

A separate trend was research on teaching Polish as a/the second language. This includes analysis of teaching Polish to Polish children and children of Polish origin who live abroad, to children of ethnic minorities and to children of foreign origin living in Poland.

The third period of research done by the Krakow centre started in 2011 and has continued until the present day. It is exemplified by publications which take into account both the European standards and also the practice of teaching such languages as English, French, German, Italian or Spanish. The most significant work of this period is *Podejście zadaniowe do nauczania i uczenia się języków obcych* [The task based approach in foreign language teaching and learning] by Janowska (2011), in which the author characterises the task-based approach as one of the stages of the development of the communicative approach in Europe, also stating that the approach based on actions is the natural consequence of such an advancement. Also worth mentioning is *Programy nauczania języka polskiego jako obcego. Poziomy A1-C2* [Curricula of teaching Polish as a foreign language. Levels A1-C2] by Janowska, Lipińska, Rabiej, Seretny and Turek (2011), in which the research conducted by the Krakow centre was used to prepare modern and well-rounded curricula. The curricula have been very successful as shown by the fact that in 2016 the second revised edition of the curricula was published.

Gębał devoted the major part of his book to the work of researchers representing the Kraków centre considering them to be a part of the Kraków school of comparative didactics. He did not fail to mention, however, that similar research is also conducted in other Polish academic centres. He presents the research of other academic centres in the field of teaching Polish as a foreign language in the conclusion to his book.

Gębał's monograph is significant for two reasons. The first is the fact that it is one of the key publications which presents the existence and functioning of comparative didactics in Poland. Secondly, it is the only summary of the research in comparative didactics at the Jagiellonian University which has had a significant influence on the development of the general didactics of Polish as a foreign language.

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