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Michał Głuszkowski, *Code-switching and Code-mixing in the Conditions of Slavic-Slavic Language Contact: Vershina, a Unique Polish Language Island in Siberia*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika, 2024.

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The history of Polish-speaking communities in Siberia has often been framed through the experience of exile and deportation. Under Tsarist rule, Siberia became a destination for political exiles, above all participants in the Polish uprisings of 1830 and 1863 who were punished with deportation. Similar measures followed the unrest of 1905–1907. In the Soviet era, mass deportations from Western Ukraine and Belarus reflected state strategies of repression and forced resettlement (Mandrinina & Rykova 2019). Yet, Michał Głuszkowski's monograph highlights the under-explored dimension of voluntary migration with the case study of the Vershina village, established in 1910 by settlers from Lesser Poland. According to Opłakańska (2007), the strong demand in Russia, including Siberia, for skilled professionals such as engineers, teachers, doctors, and civil servants, combined with better opportunities for career advancement, encouraged many Poles to migrate to the east.

Given the specific nature of Vershina, Głuszkowski frames this Polish-speaking community as a unique example of a Polish "cultural and language island" in Siberia. The metaphor of a language island allows the author to frame Vershina as a minority enclave, geographically bounded and surrounded by a Russian-speaking majority. Within this context, the author explores the relative persistence of Polish in the community in the face of cultural and linguistic assimilation processes from the Russian language. Głuszkowski accomplishes this objective by presenting a comprehensive socio-historical background and sociolinguistic account of the dynamics of linguistic contact between Polish and Russian as closely related Slavic languages. In fact, the author devotes significant attention to the socio-historical framing, at times making it seem as prominent as the sociolinguistic analysis.

Most importantly, Głuszkowski provides a novel contribution to the existing sociolinguistic studies on the Vershina community with the under-explored theme of code-switching. The rich and extensive empirical material exposed in the book to explore code-switching builds on the author's previous articles on the Vershina community (Głuszkowski 2011, 2012, 2014, 2023). The long-term exposure and knowledge on the Vershina community positions Głuszkowski as an expert voice on this niche community. One of its major contributions lies in its detailed examination of code-switching and code-mixing, identifying both intentional and unintentional switches and situating them within social variables such as generation, family type (homogeneous or mixed), and domains of use. Building on models of markedness in language choice, Głuszkowski demonstrates that codes carry symbolic as well as communicative value, indexing belonging and group boundaries.

Particularly interesting is the discussion of the "ideal code-switcher", namely, a bilingual individual who flexibly navigates between Polish and Russian, embodying both the vitality and fragility of bilingualism in Vershina. The oldest inhabitants are the segment of the population that can be associated with ideal code-switchers. They have Polish as a primary language and run sociolinguistic processes that could be defined as "fluent disfluency" (Lipski 2009). The book also documents the dialect's retreat among younger generations, although it continues to survive in religious, ritual, and identity-marked contexts. The book illustrates this with detailed tables of language use and domains, showing how Polish has retreated from public to private and religious spheres, and how Russian gradually became the dominant medium in mixed (Polish-Russian) families. The annex section also features transcripts of interviews and images of the Vershina village. As a result, Głuszkowski's work contributes to our understanding of how minority varieties persist or decline in asymmetrical contact settings.

The book is structured on four main chapters containing several subchapters. The first chapter situates Vershina historically. Głuszkowski distinguishes three major periods of development: the pre-war years (1910–1940), the Soviet period (1941–1990), and the post-Soviet revival (after 1991). These phases correspond to the patterns of isolation, repression, and partial revival, where collectivisation, Stalinist terror, and subsequent hybridisation of traditions were shown to shape the community. The second chapter describes the sociolinguistic situation of the village. Here, Głuszkowski uses the concepts of bilingualism, diglossia and diethnia to show how the Polish language in Vershina has been maintained and eroded in different domains. Religion and rituals preserved Polish across generations, even when comprehension of the prayers and hymns was incomplete. Following the same pattern as other territories under the Soviet Union, school education became a powerful agent of Russification in Vershina. After

1940, Polish was no longer a language of instruction, and children increasingly acquired Russian literacy and cultural codes. Cultural practices, such as holiday celebrations or folk songs, functioned as additional carriers (often hybridised with Russian elements) of Polishness. Głuszkowski portrays Vershinian identity as anchored in the shared local history of settlement, distinct from surrounding Russians and contemporary Poles in Poland.

The third chapter examines how Polish and Russian interact in the everyday speech of Vershina's inhabitants. The author first discusses the blurred boundaries between code-switching and borrowing (adopting words or structures), showing that the two often overlap. Loanwords, calques, and structural transfers as borrowings demonstrate how Russian elements have gradually penetrated the local Polish dialect. The criteria for distinguishing borrowings from switches are frequency of use, phonological or grammatical integration, and social acceptability. Through examples from interviews, Głuszkowski illustrates how speakers alternate between Polish and Russian at both sentence and intra-sentence levels. The chapter highlights that the linguistic repertoire of Vershina is shaped by continuous interference, with Russian increasingly providing vocabulary and structures. This process reveals both the creativity of bilingual speakers and the vulnerability of the heritage dialect under dominant language pressure. The fourth chapter examines code-switching from macro- and micro-sociolinguistic lenses. At the macro level, Głuszkowski shows how speakers negotiate language choice, the rise of hybrid codes, and the shift towards Russian, with biscriptality (Polish texts in Cyrillic) symbolising both adaptation and decline. The chapter concludes that Vershina's Lesser Poland dialect, once vital, now functions mainly as a marker of identity under the dominance of Russian, facing the threat of decline.

When placed within the broader scholarly picture of Polish transnational communities, the book adds knowledge and value to recent work on Polish diasporas in Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Germany, the Maghreb, Norway, South Africa, Sweden, Ukraine, the United Kingdom, and the United States (see Romanowski & Seretny 2025). As aforementioned, Głuszkowski's extensive work on the Vershina community can serve to complement and nuance these studies by foregrounding the dynamics of a relatively small, rural, and historically isolated Polish diaspora. His analysis demonstrates how a cultural and language island setting shapes questions of identity, heritage transmission, and intergenerational continuity in ways that differ significantly from large-scale urban Polish diasporas.

Overall, Głuszkowski's work makes a significant contribution to sociolinguistics and Slavic studies. It traces the evolution of a unique cultural and linguistic island under conditions of repression and assimilation, showing how code-switching practices crystallise this history in

everyday interaction. Even if the meticulous analysis is largely qualitative, the long-term fieldwork provides a significant corpus of sociolinguistic knowledge. For specialists in bilingualism, dialectology, minority languages, diaspora communities and immigration, the book provides both theoretical insight and rich empirical documentation. For a broader readership, it offers an engaging account where historical and sociological dynamics intersect with the lived reality of language contact. More interestingly, the book leaves some open questions, particularly regarding the future vitality of Vershina's Polish dialect in light of increasing dominance of the Russian language.

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