

УДК 801.8:[821.162.1-1»19»:81'282:398]

## FOLKLORE IN THE LITERATURE OF WILAMOWICE

**Katarzyna Staniszevska-Kogut**

*Pedagogical University,  
Podchorążych 2, 30-084 Kraków, Poland;  
e-mail: kogut\_sk@poczta.fm*

The subject of this paper is an attempt to embed Wilamowice folklore in the literature of the twentieth century. Analysis and interpretation of selected texts of poetry created in ethnolect tracks typical folklore topics such as God and the liturgy, nature and its functions, economic activities, love and courtship or local tradition. This sketch formulates an answer to the question of whether this ethnolect influenced the image of the world as found in manuscripts or appear to be different from stereotypical topoi.

*Keywords:* Wilamowice, ethnolect, diglossia, bilingualism

Wilamowice is a name of an entire community and the town, which now has 2,948 inhabitants according to data from the Central Statistical Office (GUS-2010). The community of Wilamowice remained a unique ethnolect, which is spoken continuously since the Middle Ages up to the present. The vanishing language is functioning in written forms, hence the presence of typical works of folklore namely songs, poems and legends, in addition to them, there are extensive works such as the epic. Wilamovian language has eight vowels and fourteen diphthongs. A characteristic feature of this language is that the vowels have two or more implementation of sound, which is one of the features of the ancient Upper-German language [1, p. 17]. In addition, in the consonants are typical for the Polish language such as: *ć, ż, ź, ś, ł*. This is the proof of vulnerability of this ethnolect to influences. In study of ethnolect from the linguistic point of view, have been involved, among the others, Kleczkowski [8], Wicherkiewicz and Zieniukowa [10].

The linguistic situation in Wilamowice population can be defined as diglossia. For the first time the term used in 1959 by Charles A. Ferguson and it is “relatively stable language situation in which the next primary dialect is much different, highly codified version superstructure, in which there is a body of written literature, created or at an earlier period, or any other language community” [2, p. 325]. Diglossia as a social phenomenon implies the existence of a language community that uses different languages in complementary functions. One of these variants act as colloquial speech, while the other as written meets cognitive function. Some linguists use this term interchangeably with bilingualism, some believe that bilingualism is individual, psychological phenomenon. It is not socially determined and means to master by someone two unknown languages. According to Janet Holmes – diglossia describes the linguistic community rather than the individual [5]. In Wilamowice, there is a use of two language system in different situations, on one hand Polish language - in the context of contacts with other residents, and on the other hand ethnolect, for example, when

people talk to each other, as confirmed by pilot field research. Ethnolect is mostly used by the oldest part of the population in a situation of mutual contacts and prayers.

A field research carried out among the users of Wilamovian exhibited, that only one started learning the language in recent times. The survey covered about 20% of people declaring some language skills. Two people surveyed reported neighbourhood of Wilamowice as place of birth, i.e. up to 30 km. One stated himself as an immigrant (over 100 km). So, ethnolect is mainly used by those born in Wilamowice. The purpose of the survey was to ascertain, whether a specific level of education affects knowledge of ethnolect. The oldest age group surveyed (i.e. 78–87 yrs) gives the basic education level, what is understandable against the prevailing social relations in Poland. Among the respondents university degree appeared twice, as well as high schools or vocational training. Therefore, in light of this survey - education does not seem to be a significant factor. The theory that education, which is often associated with home leaving and weakens the language skills, does not work in this case. Knowledge of ethnolect is a consequence of origin. Respondents, mostly say they have learned at home, from loved ones. Only of them have learned the language, although no family members use the ethnolect. These are the youngest respondents, giving 11 and 14 years as the duration of residence in Wilamowice. They are also in the youngest age group surveyed (up to 18 yrs). The majority of respondents acquired linguistic knowledge in the course of private lessons, consciously using the assistance of the people, who speak fluently. But only one responded that he or she began to learn the last time and also admits that “both my mother and grandmother use Wilamovian”. Most declares occasional language use, only the two oldest respondents declared that they use Wilamovian in every day life at home situations. Two people (age 19–24) use language, when dealing with friends. In one interview, there is an information, that diglossia was formerly used as a kind of cipher or code known to some, for instance, the parents in the presence of children could speak freely on issues that were to remain among the adults. Respondents say, they can tell jokes and both proverbs and curses - which shows the productivity and the ability of language to illustrate an abstract thinking. In addition, the oldest person (age 87) declares that he also prays and thinks in the ethnolect. The degree of knowledge of ethnolect is evaluated differently: the oldest are the experts, others on a medium, or even a low level. The majority of respondents is able to both read and write in that language. In one case, there is an information that the person just speak, and he or she is neither able to read nor write. It shows a pattern, that people, who speak only occasionally, are not certified users. Besides, the respondents say that they enjoy to use the ethnolect and like to use it. Only one of the oldest respondents (over 60 yrs) admits that he or she does not like to use it and at the same time draws attention to the fact that it is necessary to learn it, in the name of maintaining tradition, “that after 700 years the language should not be lost”. The use of ethnolect distinguished users. In majority they feel that they are better compared to those, who do not know it. Only three surveyed people say that the use of ethnolect does not affect the well-being of users. Among the factors promoting the use of ethnolect are mentioned namely: respect for the traditions of ancestors, preserving the identity and culture and cultural heritage, and maintaining the tradition. One points to the fact that it is “an important part of national culture”. None of the polls indicate mercantile approach to the problem.

Folklore comes from two words of *folk* and *lore* and is a literal translation of knowledge of the people, nowadays referred to as manifestations of traditional folk culture. Glossary of literature states that it is “the culture of a particular social circle, especially the peasantry. The concept consists of both rites, customs and artistic creations such as literature. It develops in a relatively closed circuits and it is associated with archaic forms of cultural life”. Elements of folk permeate the educated classes, as it was the case in Romanticism, when it became a slogan folklore program. Modern folklore has its origins in the nineteenth century, this time began the search for, collect and describe the historical culture [8, p. 16]. This was grounded in the philosophy of the era. J.G. Herder saw in folk culture, a way to save the national spirit. K. Brodziński wrote: “(...) some people are wilder, that is more vibrant, more freely acting (...) that freely (...) are their songs. People sing as they feel” [6, p. 39–40].

Folklore is a separate, stand-alone part of symbolic culture, specific to particular communities, often reproduced without thinking and with traditional elements often modernized [8, p. 7]. Folklore occurs in a social context. It always has cultural character. It may be the source of a sense of identity, language, system of signs and symbols defined by the power of senders and recipients. It plays many roles: aesthetic, ethical – outlining the system of social norms, national – maintains the identity or psychological – when stimulates and soothes the listener. The known feature of folklore is that it is anonymous. It also expresses verbally content that is always rich in expressive communication, explicitness of expression and its impressionistic nature. During the presentation the plurality of impacts on the observer, such as gestures, facial expressions, choreography are shown. Verbal communication defines the relationship between the narrator and the circumstances surrounding the listener. The main feature is the improvisation arising from the simultaneous creation of the text and its transmission. If it is delivered from memory it has a typical exchange of sender-receiver roles and this spontaneity becomes blurred. These are three types of phenomena in contemporary folklore: 1) traditional folklore – which is associated with traditional types, which are based on the sphere of rituals, 2) reconstructed folklore – artificially nourished, where stylized content provide aesthetic experience, 3) folklore as a spontaneous creation satisfying the needs of those, who create and forward it, and the subjects mainly affect the current events of the surroundings. A contemporary author is a man for whom folklore is only a part of the cultural awareness [8, p. 30], has a knowledge of contemporary reality, the function of mass media, so it makes not only the selection of material, but also creatively transforms it.

One of nowadays local authors is Józef Gara, born in Wilamowice in 1929 and still actively operating in the municipality. He is retired miner-electrician from “Brzeszcze” coalmine and one of the last native Wilamovians. He took Wilamovian tradition out of his home. Ethnolect is his first language and he uses it not only speaking but also creatively writing until now. His poetry grows out of the need to consolidate cultural heritage Wilamowice, which dies soon forever. Thus, his work is on one hand a poetic registration of oral tradition but on the other hand it is the effort of his own, referring to the already functioning patterns. It is difficult to identify clearly which texts have been done in a separate act of creation, and which are a record of the memory transferred from the childhood. A clue is the theme. The poems inspired by current events such as the beatification of Archbishop Józef Bilczewski are undoubtedly of his work. Unfortunately, thematic attribution is not always a clear indication,

and sometimes it is impossible to clearly identify the real author. In 2003, he published a volume of poetry about customs and rituals of Wilamowice [3]. In 2007 appeared another collection of *songs* by the same author [1]. I have chosen a few stanzas from mentioned above volumes of poetry to analyze the content of folklore. "Since the sources are superimposed on pre-Christian content. So the folk belief set inseparable oldest content with the new one (...) in the folklore have been living side by side in peaceful symbiosis elements of magical, irrational beliefs with deep Christian religion, the official teaching of the Church" [8, p. 67]. "Man's relationship with the universe (...) was manifested both in daily activities and ceremonial" [8, p. 67]. Meaning of life is sought in three areas of human life: transcendence, nature and the nearest surroundings. All these elements appear in the series: "Spring", "Summer" and "Autumn".

*Der Fiywyt* (Spring) – the text shows the time of year as the awakening of nature after the long (*laong*) and boring (*baong*) – how tells the lyrical, winter. This poetry has a two-part composition. The first part of this two stanzas of a lyric consisting of a description of the nature. Return of birds from the south and their singing, setting the swallows nests and wasps buzzing – all of this are the signals of a new season. The second part of the next four verses is descriptive. Lyrical subject knows the realities of work in the field, lists the necessary spring efforts on the farm, such as grain sowing or potatoes planting. The immediate surroundings are home and neighborhood, well known and safe. Man's relationship with nature has developed a number of archetypal behaviors, highlighting the inseparable relationship with anthropometric space. Ploughing, sowing – conceived in the spirit of M. Eliade – it gives everyone the cycle of birth and death, transience and renewal of life. The presence of the sacred text is achieved by invoking a God whom you should ask for a good weather: *wir müsa a hiergöt byta do a yns siejny cajt gyt* – the form used (*müsa* – must) stresses the prescriptive nature of prayer. Without God's support the farmers can not cope. *Der Zumer* (Summer) – here, like spring, is shown through the prism of typical for this time of year – weather and field work. Lyrical subject also stresses that it is a time of rest, the residents benefit from the proximity to the river – there is mentioned the name of a local Soła river. Harvest requires great effort, but nobody wants to stay at home – *Dy siejny cajt kon zich baold ferenda*, everybody is in a hurry – *zy fydyn zich wi zy kyna ym besta* – to finish work before the weather changes. The work in the field is accompanied by the care taken to sell the food produced. *Der Hiewyst* (Autumn) – Is presented here as a continuation of the summer, as in the previous texts season is shown through the field works, which take a lot of efforts and they are not only harvesting but also the ground preparation for next year's harvest. The anxiety of the host causes concern for the price of coal for the winter. The cycle continues in this part of the folklore, which is understood as a spontaneous work of the poet, responding to the needs of the author. The contemporary nature can provide lexical resources such as – *der traktor štejt siun ufum plon byrat* – a tractor stands on the square ready [3, p. 38] or colloquialism – *ym fald gejt Dy aot snil fur haond* – in the field work goes hand-in-hand.

The theme, which is constantly present in the folk art of everyday life is its description, for example *S kiyta laowa* (Shepherd's life) [3, p. 66]. The poem is a dialog, cow herder – lyrical subject collects herds cows at the behest of the landlady, in the 2nd stanza becomes a speaking subject. Landlady is preparing slush from pears to shepherd, and she hopes that he will relish.

Impressive character of expression is achieved by exclamation points and question marks. "The universe is considered in popular culture as a living being that is born, grows and dies, so the existence of a rule of law and the same rules as human life. Life in space is thus a chain composed of a number of time segments that are separated by periods of qualitative change" [8, p. 79]. The most important is the significance of the annual transition moments between seasons, and the transition between night and day. The winter solstice is combined with the coming of Christ into the world, the Child who has changed the live of nations. The collections of poetry J. Gary contains texts fit within the scope of such *Dy Wajnaochta* (Christmas) or *Ynzer siejny Wymysöjer jew* (Our pretty Wilamovian property). The first text relates to Christmas Eve, and all the traditions associated with the preparation of the dinner. Entry into the sacrum is followed by the symbolic death – cleaning up of the elements of life such as fasting, which becomes a metonymy of death, and the glow of a first star, which indicates the beginning of a new life. The lyrical subject is here an observer, watching the bustle of women preparing food for Christmas Eve meal and decorating the house. According to tradition, Christmas Eve Supper should be fasting, hence the fish as its component here. Among the traditional customs there are described sequentially Christmas Market, Christmas tree, white tablecloth and hay, which is placed under the tablecloth. Household members are united in common prayer. The wishes of happiness and health folding each other and sharing the wafer are an important parts of the evening. Part of the tradition of Christmas is also the custom of sharing food with the animals. The culminating moment is to take part in midnight mass – the solemn mass. Christmas Eve as part of the Christian culture is celebrated in the context of the local tradition. In the text, the habit of listening barking dogs is mentioned. Depending on the direction from which the sound comes people expected the bachelors going to the girls.

Traditional folklore is represented by lyrics titled *Dy Wymysöjer traaj ana fröed* (Wilamovian wedding). The poem is an epic, lyrical subject reflection begins a view from the past weddings "were very modest and lasting no more than three days" [3, p. 34]. Then recounts the various stages of the rite such as waiting for the bride's wreath on her future husband, her anxiety, then formal leave of the bridegroom of the house and the wedding ceremony and party. One of the traditional motifs used by the folklore is a transition. Transition as an idea in the wedding rite is performed in the dramatic action by the movement of the participants between the houses of bride and groom, tavern, or going to church. All the actions taken by the wedding guests ritual: the transition between consecutive points, then cross the borders between the areas of familiarity and strangeness necessitates following the way. Any violation of the space requires the transfer of the gift. Thus, unblocking the road with money and vodka as a currency and then you may move on. M. Eliade indicates water as a symbol of all existence. The role of water in all religions is similar. It disintegrates, destroys but also cleans and regenerates [8, p. 73]. This motif appears in the text *Dy Wymysöjer Šmiergustnika* (Wilamovian Šmiergušnica). The living is a tradition of Šmiergustów – young boys. In Easter Sunday and Easter Monday as well as on the third day of their wedding, they dress in colorful costumes embroidered with flowers with additional fringes and a hat – the hat with flowers. The make-up is an integral part, which looks like a comedy Dell'Arte. Young men are visiting places and sprinkle the maidens with water. The girls are waiting for them and if you skip one of them, then she is unhappy.

Local tradition returns as a theme in the text *Wymysöjer faodyślajsja* (Wilamovian pierzowiec) – it is with the sense of humor, an account of what was formerly the custom of plucking feathers, and, as in other regions, and here, during the preparation of material for the featherbed (a necessary part of the wedding trip) women gossiping and confide in each other and arguing. The poem describes two girls fight, which ended with scratches. [3, p. 26].

Folklore is also presented in the song *Ynzer Wymysöjer traocht* (Our Wilamovian costumes) – the text is a manifesto of pride and admiration for the local tradition. Lyrical subject speaks on behalf of the community, he is aware of the value of heritage and the fact that you must save it from destruction. It points out that the traditional dress is a cultural and identity component was threatened: “In the past, bad people wanted to destroy it, but we protect it”. Traditional Wilamowice dress differs significantly from other costume inhabitants of Silesia (the nearest neighbours). The different parts of the costumes have local names, do not have Polish counterparts and, like a white shirt with yellow embroidery - *yypla*, everyday women dress consisted of, among others, with 6 caps – imposed on themselves, so as not to expose the hair. There were also 20 types of white-coat, each had its own name and served on special occasions. The dress was a feature of social status, a sign easily recognizable, such as marital status, vary depending not only on the time of year or the liturgical calendar but also work in the field at harvest time (not during the field work, but then dressed other scarves). Among the motifs and patterns emerge Scottish bars, and Turkish designs on the scarves. Veil dressed by married women during Christmas, with white fabric, dating back to the mid-thigh, and more associated with Flanders than Poland. Wilamovian cross is very featured – isosceles, worn on a ribbon, decorated with symbols of the Passion. Nowadays, eight out of ten respondents declare knowing the names of individual items of clothing, but with generation gap the knowledge about the traditional use of colors and styles is getting worse and worse. The process of leave from tradition, has already been evident in the words of the 30's of the twentieth century in the text of E. Strzygowski [9, p. 107–108], where appears a statement of Wilamovian woman that “today there is no longer the case” in the sense of loss of consciousness, that some parts of the costumes could be combined and some could not. Nowadays, the traditional costume is used occasionally by folk groups, or old generation on unique religious feasts such as Corpus Christi procession.

The term *folklorism* is incurred in connection with the specific situation of culture. The disappearance of folk traditions in life-equalization of cultural processes and the development of mass culture is the reason for this. Industrialization, urbanization and migration have made the folklore, and dialects regressed. In the twentieth century, identification with popular culture treated pejoratively. It was conceived as a culture less educated people. Global consumer attitude – have a thing with which you can earn, meant that there has been a revitalization of folklore. Unfortunately, this has resulted in more uniformity and reduced creativity. There is a standardized repertoire of motifs and specific mixing tradition. Styling works on folklore is often artificial, and combined with the revitalization of commerce makes the dazzle effect of artificiality. The Wilamovian poets and other artists take care about the heritage and continue traditions. Folklore of Wilamowice is a part of traditional folk culture, retained the same topoi and motifs that are also present in the texts of other cultures. Language has not influenced significantly the picture of the world.

## СПИСОК ВИКОРИСТАНОЇ ЛІТЕРАТУРИ

1. *Danek J.* Wymysöjer stytła – Miasteczko Wilamowice oraz jego osobliwości zawarte w zbiorze piosenek wilamowskich Józefa Gary, M-GOK, Wilamowice, 2007.
2. *Ferguson, Ch. A.* Diglossia, 1959. – P. 325–340.
3. *Gara J.* Zbiór wierszy o wilamowskich obrzędach i obyczajach oraz słownik języka wilamowskiego, Wilamowice, 2003.
4. *Gara J.* Zbiór wierszy o wilamowskich obrzędach i obyczajach oraz słownik języka wilamowskiego, 2nd edition, Wilamowice, 2010.
5. *Holmes J.* An Introduction to Sociolinguistics. Pearson ESL, 2001.
6. *Janion M.* Czas formy otwartej, PIW Warszawa, 1984.
7. *Kleczkowski A.* Dialekt Wilamowic w zachodniej Galicji. Fonetyka i fleksja, PAU, Kraków, 1920.
8. *Kowalski P., Smolińska T.* Folklorystyka, Materiały dla studentów filologii polskiej, cz. I, WSP Opole, (eds) 1992.
9. *Strzygowski E.* Wymysöjer Bowa-Wilmasauer Frauen, Schlesisches Jahrbuch, R.11, Breslau, 1939. P. 107–108.
10. *Zieniukowa J., Wicherkiewicz T.* Do-Pyjter-Jaśka i cym-Hala-Mockija i inne zjawiska z antropimii Wilamowic w dawnym Księstwie Oświęcimskim, Onomastyka i dialektologia. SOW, Warszawa, 1997.

*Стаття надійшла до редколегії 17.10.2013*

*Прийнята до друку 10.01.2014*

## ФОЛЬКЛОР В ЛІТЕРАТУРЕ ВІЛЯМОВИЦЕ

## Катажина Станишевская-Когут

*Краковський педагогічний університет,  
ул. Подхоражих 2, 30-084 Краков, Польща;  
e-mail: kogut\_sk@poczta.fm*

Проведена попытка інтерпретації фольклору Вілямовице в літературі ХХ століття. Аналіз і інтерпретація вибраних текстів поезії етнолекта Вілямовице відслідковує типові теми фольклору, такі як Бог і літургія, природа і її функції, економічна діяльність, любов і ухаживання або місцеві традиції. Це дослідження формулює відповідь на питання, чи є це результатом впливу етнолекта на образ світу, ссылаючись на рукописи або трансформації стереотипних топосів.

*Ключові слова:* Вілямовице, етнолект, диглосія, двязиччя.

**ФОЛЬКЛОР У ЛІТЕРАТУРІ ВІЛЯМОВІЦЕ****Катажина Станішевська-Когут**

*Краківський педагогічний університет,  
вул. Подхоражих 2, 30-084 Краків, Польща;  
e-mail: kogut\_sk@poczta.fm*

Здійснено спробу інтерпретації фольклору Вілямовіце в літературі ХХ ст. Аналіз та інтерпретація обраних текстів поезії етнолекту Вілямовіце відстежує типові фольклорні мотиви та образи, такі як Бог і літургія, природа та її функції, економічна діяльність, любов і залицяння або місцеві традиції. Ця розвідка формулює відповідь на питання, чи це результат впливу етнолекту на образ світу, що підтверджують рукописи, чи трансформація стереотипних топосів.

*Ключові слова:* Вілямовіце, етнолект, диглосія, двомовність.