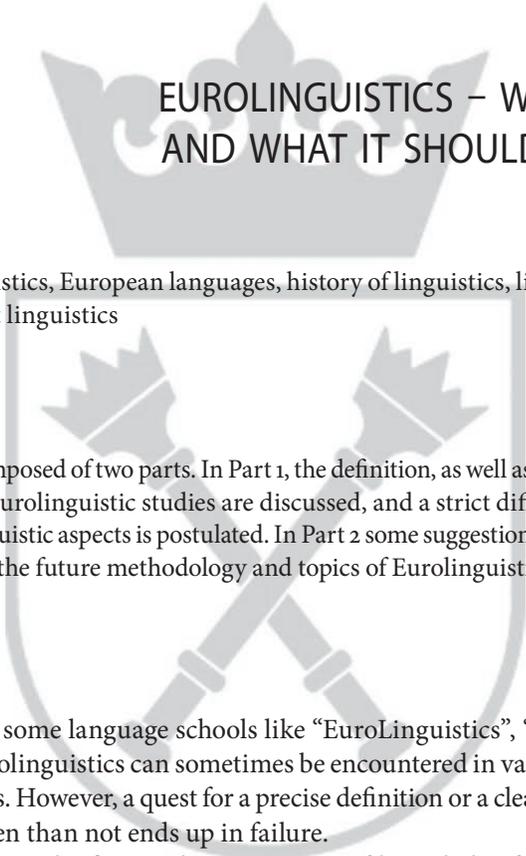


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EUROLINGUISTICS – WHAT IT IS AND WHAT IT SHOULD NOT BE

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Abstract

The present study is composed of two parts. In Part 1, the definition, as well as the actual and the desired profile of Eurolinguistic studies are discussed, and a strict differentiation between cultural and linguistic aspects is postulated. In Part 2 some suggestions of this author are made, concerning the future methodology and topics of Eurolinguistic research.

Part 1.

Apart from names of some language schools like “EuroLinguistics”, “Euro-Lingua” or alike, the term Eurolinguistics can sometimes be encountered in various, more or less academic contexts. However, a quest for a precise definition or a clear explanation of this term more often than not ends up in failure.

Since the Internet is the first and main source of knowledge for millions of people today let us see what a search for the term “Eurolinguistics” reveals there. One of the results of such a query is a website called “EuroLinguistiX an internet venue founded and edited by Joachim Grzega”. It has several subpages, one of them being a “Journal for EuroLinguistiX”, abbreviated JELiX.¹ The first volume of JELiX was published in 2004 and it contained only one article: “Why we need an Internet venue for studying European language culture” by J. Grzega. The reader immediately feels amazed – the term “Eurolinguistics” suggests the study of languages rather than that of culture. Is, then, Eurolinguistics not interesting for enthusiasts of grammar or etymology?

¹ See: www1.ku-eichstaett.de/SLF/EngluVglSW/ELiX/journal.htm.

In volume 3 (2006) one article by Grzega and two reviews of Grzega's book (2006) are published. One of the reviews, written by Norbert Reiter, begins with the following statement:

Die Eurolinguistik ist der jüngste Zweig der Sprachwissenschaft. Sie hat eine helle Zukunft; denn sie ist auf ein außerhalb von ihr liegendes Ziel gerichtet, nämlich die Stärkung, wenn nicht gar überhaupt erst die Erweckung eines *Gemeinschaftsgefühls*.
(Reiter 2006: 14)

Indeed, a scholarly minded person cannot possibly accept such a credo. *Per definitionem*, no branch of science can (or at least should) be the vehicle of ideological convictions. The less so, when these convictions are of a dubious character. What is or what should be a "European community spirit"? Does it comprise Turks (born and) living in Germany, as well as Tatars and Kalmucks from Russia? Or is it limited to some selected nations and languages only? This question is absolutely legitimate if one bears in mind how differently the term "Europe" can be, and sometimes indeed is, defined (see [1] below).

This opinion of Reiter's is the more amazing as the name "Eurolinguistics" was for the first time introduced in the title of a volume of collected papers edited by this very N. Reiter (1999). We might expect a more sober and scholarly informative, rather than an emotionally loaded statement from this author, I should say.

The other review comes from Uwe Hinrichs (2006) and it is definitely more useful for students of linguistics. Besides, Hinrichs also discusses a book by Heine and Kuteva (2006) that is clearly a linguistic and professional study. We shall return to this monograph shortly.

But first, we should have a closer look at another subpage of JELiX, namely "Materials & Varia".² Beside some links to Wikipedia and various political institutions one finds here a lot of different materials which are, however, of cultural rather than of linguistic character (apart from teaching materials like "German on-line lab for English, French, Italian, Spanish"). Here are some examples:

- Greeting and addressing in Europe and other cultures.
- Non-verbal communication in Europe.³
- Brief comparative language history: Europe and other civilizations.⁴
- Civilizational languages around the world.⁵
- Politeness in Europe.
- European Day of Languages: Celebrating linguistic diversity...

² See: <http://www.grzega.de>.

³ To my (probably, a bit conservative) mind language is, as a linguistic notion, exclusively a *verbal* device of communication.

⁴ Despite the linguistic-sounding title of this subpage, the material presented there is not linguistic at all. First, the paper is extremely short and superficial. Second, it pivots around "Kulturkreise", that is 'cultural spheres' with their characteristic traits like script or religion. Linguistic observations, if mentioned at all, are quite banal like the great importance of Latin in Europe. Linguistic evolution in the grammatical sense is not mentioned at all.

⁵ I wonder how a study of "languages around the world" should enhance the European community spirit.

Taken together, the examination of what is offered under the name “EuroLinguistiX” yields a disappointing picture of non-linguistic cultural studies with some penchant for certain ideological convictions. Unfortunately, the same observations can be made in the recently published *Handbuch* (Hinrichs 2010). In fact, I do not at all intend to struggle against cultural and communication studies or social activities (although, again, I do dislike the idea of a science or scholarship in the service of ideological tasks). Politeness in language can be compared to limericks – both are expressed by means of language and both are, at the same time, a part of culture, rather than of grammar or lexis. Politeness and greetings should be ranked as *parole*, not as *langue*. I, for my part, like to be sure that anything called “linguistics” really is a sort of linguistics, i.e. the study of *langue*. It is true that this is not always the case. For instance, “psycholinguistics” is a branch of psychology, and “sociolinguistics” is a subfield of sociology. Now, if we already have two such misleading terms do we actually need another one like “Eurolinguistics”?

Those who are interested in the European world of languages and feel that there should be a separate branch of linguistics, one revolving around phonology, grammar and lexicology, can be solaced: this is readily possible.

The above-mentioned book by Heine and Kuteva (2006) is very different from what we saw under the headline “EuroLinguistiX” or (in German publications) “Eurolinguistik”. One glance at its contents suffices to explain this. Chapter 1 is devoted to “Europe as a linguistic area”, and one will find explicitly linguistic topics in other chapters, too, e.g. “The rise of articles”, “The rise of possessive perfects”, “From comitative to instrumental forms”, “From question to subordination”. And, what is absolutely substantial here, the authors enumerate the main topics of interest for Eurolinguists:

- (i) Is there something like a European area that can be defined linguistically and, if so, how can it be delimited?
- (ii) Is there anything that could be defined as the areal centre of European languages?
- (iii) Are there any linguistic properties setting European languages off from languages in other parts of the world?
- (iv) If Europe really is a linguistic area, what are the motivating forces underlying areal relationship?
- (v) Is it possible to divide the languages of Europe into significant, smaller units independent of genetic relationship?

(Heine, Kuteva 2006: 2 sq.).

Interestingly enough, these authors do not use the term ‘Eurolinguistics’. It does not occur in another study by them, either, one in which they define their position as follows:

The approach that we propose here [...] has a more modest goal. It is meant to understand the kind of sociolinguistic forces and linguistic processes that were instrumental in creating areal relationship in Europe, and rather than being restricted to a synchronic perspective, it uses diachronic observations to determine why areal relationship is structured the way it is. (Heine, Kuteva 2009: 146).

There can be no doubt that this framework deserves to be called a truly linguistic one. We should follow the purely linguistic path as long as possible and let experts in cultural and communication studies inquire into the areal phenomena in the cultures of European nations. If “Eurolinguistics” is to be of any interest for linguists it should consist of:

material-oriented, both diachronic and synchronic
comparative-contrastive areal research on European languages.

Part 2.

In the remainder of this article I would like to present some specific views and suggestions. These are intended as material for discussion, rather than as complete and decisively final theses:

1. The notion of Europe is anything but unambiguous. We usually use it by intuition rather than by applying any rational principles. Avoiding political threads in our research means that we are free of the problem of reducing Europe to the territory of the European Union which would compel us to exclude, for instance, Icelandic and Norwegian (at least in the year 2014). Besides, diachronically founded studies would be confronted with the problem whether Icelandic and Norwegian should also be excluded when talking of 19th century Europe, and so on.

The geographical approach is very wide-spread. On the other hand, nobody views Kazakh as a European language, although the International Geographical Union classifies western Kazakhstan as a part of Europe. Similarly, Armenian is not, as a rule, perceived as a European language. On the other hand, it exists in two variants today. So called Western Armenian is used in Turkey (which is accepted as a part of Europe) and at some other places, e.g. on the island of San Lazzaro and in the Mekhitarist monastery in Vienna. Should we rate Western Armenian as a European language and Eastern Armenian not?

In the geographical sense, Europe is merely a peninsula at the western end of Asia. For this reason, Europe’s eastern border is difficult to determine, especially to the south of the Ural mountains. The Christian religion is probably the most important distinction between nations that can intuitively be considered European and those that cannot.

In this situation I would rather suggest another limitation: “A European language is one used in Europe as defined by the International Geographical Union and, at the same time, having permanent and natural (i.e., conversation-based) contact with at least two languages used in Christian Europe”.⁶

⁶ To be quite frank, I am not absolutely happy with this definition but I could not find a better one. The problem of Armenian actually still remains unsolved. Does it make sense to differentiate between “European languages” and “languages in Europe” or “para-European languages”? cf. [10] and fn. 9 below.

2. Not every study on the languages of Europe directly pertains to Eurolinguistics. For instance, a monograph by J. Sławomirski (1992) concerns the European part of the Indo-European languages, rather than just European languages and seems, thus, to remain outside of the scope of Eurolinguistic research. However, this book calls our attention to an areal phenomenon that concerns a number of European languages and can therefore be used as a typological hallmark in Eurolinguistics, as well.
3. It is easily understandable that most researchers have focused on the Indo-European languages in their studies because most of them are based in Europe or North America and are, as far as the European languages are concerned,⁷ best acquainted exactly with the Indo-European languages. However, I think, the time is ripe to change this situation. Not only because we need more balance in the level of our knowledge of various languages but also because extending our field to non-Indo-European languages makes our picture deeper and more interesting. One example will suffice:

Karaim belongs to the Turkic linguistic family whose hallmark is the phonological feature of vowel harmony. And, originally, Karaim was also characterized by this phenomenon. However, a series of phonetic changes triggered by its intensive contact with the Slavic linguistic environment led to a complete restructuring of Karaim phonology, and the most important result of these changes was the replacement of vowel harmony by consonant harmony. This observation was first made by T. Kowalski in 1925 and could be confirmed by detailed *phonetic* research by A. I. Nevins and B. Vaux in 2004 (for a comprehensive report and discussion see K. Stachowski 2009; for those who are not interested in all the details the acquaintance with Section 1 “What happened to Northwestern Karaim” [p. 159–161] and Section 3 “Conclusions” [p. 187–189] will suffice).

As far as sound harmony is concerned, the European languages are usually divided into those with vowel harmony (e.g. Turkish, Hungarian, Finnish, Võro-Estonian) and those without it. The consideration of Karaim allows us to introduce a new type of (contact-induced) sound harmonic system into the typological picture of the languages of Europe.

4. It is absolutely natural that West European scholars generally know West European languages better than East European ones. For this reason, they usually focus their research largely on West European languages. However, the linguistic situation in Eastern Europe is certainly equally interesting and attractive. The consideration of the structure and the characteristic traits of the so-called Volga (or Volga-Kama) league of languages triggers further comparisons with Siberian languages. A Eurolinguist might wonder why he should know and use Siberian data at all. The reason is that these data make us see European features, which are sometimes considered as self-explanatory and natural features of the “human” mind, in a somewhat different light. Heine and Kuteva (2006: 102 sq.)

⁷ In *this* context, we can disregard Bernd Heine’s studies in African linguistics.

correctly inform us that definite articles evolved from demonstrative pronouns. One could hardly imagine a completely different source for definite articles, and consequently Heine and Kuteva's presentation and explanation appears natural or, even, as the only possible pathway of this grammatical category. Nevertheless, in Samoyedic languages this function is fulfilled by the possessive suffix of the 2nd person singular, and this method was borrowed from there into Dolgan, a Turkic language on the Taimyr Peninsula. The logic behind this structure is: 'the book' = ('the book I am telling you about' >) 'your book' (for an areal interpretation of this phenomenon see M. Stachowski 2010). Where should we draw the border-line between the European and the Samoyedic way of expressing definiteness, in Europe or in Asia?

5. When speaking of genetic and areal factors (= comparative and contrastive aspects of Euro linguistics) the problem arises which of the two types of factors is more substantial in the life of a language. The problem is still unsettled although the discussion goes back to the times of the Neogrammarians and their opponents, like e.g. Hugo Schuchardt (see first of all Schuchardt 1885). Today, a reformulation of this question seems more promising: To what extent and in what way is areal influence compatible with (or contradictory to) the genetic structure and inherited evolutionary tendencies of a specific language? In this respect, Euro linguistics has a lesson to learn from psychology which changed the way of asking questions about heredity vs. environment about 55 years ago:

The traditional questions about heredity and environment may be intrinsically unanswerable. Psychologists began by asking *which* type of factor, hereditary or environmental, is responsible for individual differences in a given trait. Later, they tried to discover *how much* of the variance was attributable to heredity and how much to environment. It is the primary contention of this paper that a more fruitful approach is to be found in the question "How?". There is still much to be learned about the specific *modus operandi* of hereditary and environmental factors in the development of behavioral differences. (Anastasi 1958: 197).

An interesting example is offered by Hungarian. Why did this language, after having reached Europe, develop dependent clauses modelled on those in Indo-European languages, but failed to change its phonetic characteristics (e.g. vowel harmony) or to lose the compound verbal suffix *-lak* 'I ... you' (as in *lát* 'to see' → *látlak* 'I see you', *szeret* 'love' → *szeretlek* 'I love you')? Indeed, J. Puszta's (1998: 100) dictum "Hungarian is a Central European language with a Siberian grammar and a Uralic/Fenno-Ugric core vocabulary" is more than merely a witty catchphrase.

6. Lexical borrowings are a wide-spread and well-established research topic. However, the focus on onomasiological isoglosses seems to offer good promises for the future. W. Veenker (1975) attempted at such a presentation in form of a dictionary of Uralic languages, V. Levickij published a few editions of his onomasiological-etymological dictionary⁸ of Germanic (the last one in 2010, with two supplements:

⁸ Unfortunately, the onomasiological aspect of this dictionary, even though actually present in the main body of the work, cannot be deduced from its title.

2011, 2012). A very important publication of this type is the *Atlas Linguarum Europae* (= ALE)⁹ (see e.g. Viereck 2006 and <http://www.lingv.ro/ALE.html>). These instruments should definitely be put to use in Eurolinguistic studies.

7. Nobody will deny the massive influence Latin exerted on the lexis of the European languages. But, then, we need a comparative-contrastive dictionary of Latinisms in Europe, accompanied by chronological and semantic data. This also holds, e.g., for Ottoman Turkish and Tatar loanwords.¹⁰
8. B. Heine and T. Kuteva (2009: 146) define their approach as “concerned not with languages as a whole but rather with specific linguistic phenomena”. It seems, thus, understandable that “unlike previous approaches, it therefore contributes little to areal language taxonomy”. This is, of course, an absolutely legitimate approach. And I would not say that it contributes little to areal linguistics. Possibly, it is a good way of finding unambiguous criteria for the distinction between “linguistic leagues” and the so-called “Sprechergemeinschaften” which I would like to call “linguistic conglomerates”¹¹ or “linguistic circles” rather than “linguistic communities” since a group of persons speaking the same language is a “linguistic community”, too, whereas the notion “conglomerate” highlights the possibly non-genetic character of the group of speakers and “circle” is actually free of such connotations. Finding a clear definition of the notion a “linguistic league” has generated a lot of questions (for an overview see Urban 2007). A distinction between a linguistic league and a linguistic conglomerate, the latter being a looser variant of a league (e.g. two languages¹² spoken in one town), is still only made in an intuitive way. Research conducted by experts interested in phenomena rather than in specific languages and who, thus, feel free of prestige-induced

⁹ The ALE understands Europe according to its geographical definition and enumerates the following “six families of languages on the European territory: Altaic, Basque, Indo-European, Caucasian, Semitic and Uralic” (<http://www.lingv.ro/ALE.html>). Nevertheless, there exists no Armenian and no Georgian national committee in the ALE (<http://www.lingv.ro/ALE%20Committees.pdf>). Cf. [1] above.

¹⁰ An attempt at such a dictionary for the Balkan languages, although praiseworthy in and of itself, was totally misplanned and, consequently, a failure (see Stachowski M. 2012). Euro-linguistics cannot be seriously pursued without Balkan linguistics, and Balkan linguistics is and remains futile without Turkology.

¹¹ I owe this terminological suggestion to Robert Woodhouse (Brisbane), private communication of October 30, 2013.

¹² One could also say “two different languages”, however, the use of the adjective *different* enables us to ask how it should be understood, that is whether English and French are different if they are both Indo-European, and how English and Mongolian compare if they are both Nostratic. I suggest the following terminological chain: microfamily (e.g. Germanic) – family (e.g. Indo-European) – macrofamily (Nostratic). The existence of a macrofamily like Nostratic (regardless of its scholarly validity) need not concern us at all in the Eurolinguistic context. The importance of Indo-European reconstructions does not appear substantial in the Eurolinguistic framework either. Thus, only microfamilies really go a long way in Eurolinguistics. That being the case, English and German are genetically related (e.g. no different), whereas English and French are genetically different in this terminological convention. On the other hand, there is no essential difference between an English-German conglomerate and an English-French one so that it is better to speak of “two languages” rather than of “two different languages”.

reasoning¹³ can contribute quite a lot to the establishment of clear criteria for the differentiation of the two terms. If this should not work we will probably need to agree upon an artificial criterion, for instance: a “linguistic conglomerate” requires personal contact (that is, speaking and regular linguistic interactions) of *all* its members *with each other* whereas a “league” does not.

9. Gy. Décsy (1973) distinguishes eight linguistic leagues in Europe. Today, forty years after this publication the time has come to see *in detail* whether he was right.

Karaim was rated by Décsy as a diaspora languages. One is, however, tempted to ask whether it could possibly better be understood as a member of a North Carpathian conglomerate. This question certainly deserves more attention in the future (some information concerning Karaim among the North Carpathian languages can be found in Németh 2012).

T. Mikola (2002: 52 sq.) has doubts whether Celtic can actually be united with Finnish, Lappish and Vepsian into a “Viking league,” as suggested by Décsy (1973: 43 sq.). Mikola thinks instead of the possibility of establishing a Scandinavian-Finnish-Lappish league.

Doubts and opinions of this kind can easily be multiplied. Research and discussion should definitely be continued.

10. Some readers might be puzzled by the distinction I am making between Balkan and Carpathian linguistics. This is another topic which still needs discussion, although numerous linguistic publications with the adjective *Carpathian* in their titles can be found. As a matter of fact, the two areas are only sometimes similar to each other. Here, I would like to emphasize one feature only: in both groupings we find a language with a special status, one that is not in essence (i.e., in grammatical terms) a member of the convergence area itself, but which did influence the lexicon of all member-languages in the past: Turkish in the Balkans and Hungarian in the Carpathians are cases in point. Thus, both groupings display a structural similarity (one “special language” among some “standard languages”), which is, in each grouping, effected by different languages (Turkish and Hungarian, respectively). This could be regarded as a material (or specific) distinction. We are, thus, entitled to view Turkish as a “language of the Balkans” rather than a “Balkan language”, as well as Hungarian is a “language of the Carpathians” rather than a “Carpathian language” (see M. Stachowski 2006 [with a discussion of some methodological questions] and 2007). Because terms like “language of the Balkans/Carpathians” are not really convenient, this distinction could possibly be expressed by the terminological pair “(full) Balkan/Carpathian language” vs. “half- (or: para)-Balkan/Carpathian language”. In Eurolinguistics, a parallel solution would then mean to call Western Armenian a half- (or: para)-European language (see fn. 6).

¹³ Examples of some adverse impact of prestige, ideology and (dis)inclinations can easily be found in the discussion on what languages belong to “Core European” or the so-called SAE, i.e. “Standard Average European”; for a concise report see Heine, Kuteva (2006: 5–7).

11. My last remark will deal with the history of linguistics. The idea of combining the research on the history of linguistics with Eurolinguistics proper might appear somewhat strange and possibly even fruitless. It should, however, be borne in mind that changing descriptions of grammatical categories can substantially impact our understanding of the essence and the criteria of these categories themselves.

The problem of the number of grammatical gender classes or categories in Polish can serve as an example. The traditional version is that there are three such classes: masculine, feminine and neuter. This is, however, only valid for the singular whereas merely two gender categories are present in the plural, the crux here is that the plural categories are different from the singular ones, namely: masculine-personal and non-masculine-personal.¹⁴ A somewhat peculiar presentation is offered by two researchers from Poznań: Gabriela Koniuszaniec and Hanka Błaszowska (2003) who, in a specialist collection of studies on grammatical gender, open their article with the following statement: “The three grammatical genders of Polish are: masculine, feminine and neuter.” (ibidem 260). One can, on this basis, view Polish as an ordinary link in the chain of languages with three gender categories, beginning in Eastern Europe and stretching westwards till the western boarder of the Germanic language area where the chain of Romance languages with two gender categories begins. However, two paragraphs further down and still on the same page Koniuszaniec and Błaszowska add the following information:

In addition, supremacy of the masculine in the Polish language is found in the plural, where a division is drawn between the masculine personal gender with declensional forms of its own, and the non-masculine personal gender, also called feminine-object gender. The non-masculine personal gender comprises animate and inanimate words that are feminine and neuter in the singular, as well as masculine non-personal words. (Koniuszaniec, Błaszowska 2003: 260).

I can only admire those non-native speakers of Polish who did manage to correctly understand this explanation, and particularly the difference between “non-masculine personal” and “masculine non-personal” (i.e., “The non-masculine personal gender comprises [...] masculine non-personal words”), especially in view of the first sentence in this fragment, in which no division between “personal” and “non-personal” masculine nouns in the singular is made. Indeed, deep gratitude should be expressed to the editors who accepted this passage. Nevertheless, from the Eurolinguistic point of view it can still, as it seems, be accepted that Polish principally has three gender classes, with some (Eurolinguistically unimportant) subdivisions in the plural.

¹⁴ The term “personal” is, as a matter of fact, a literal rendering of the Polish word *osobowy*. I think it is, in view of its polysemy in English, an infelicitous translation and I will use the term “human” in my own parts of this article instead (but retain “personal” in citations and when discussing them) because this is the appropriate semantic equivalent of what the Polish term is actually saying.

Unfortunately, Koniuszaniec and Błaszowska's presentation, even though relatively popular, due to the wide circulation of publications from the John Benjamins Publishing Company, was, at the time it saw the light of the day, already obsolete by a margin of no less than fifty years.

It was as early as 1956 that W. Mańczak published his important study on the number and, indeed, first of all on the structure of Polish gender categories. His idea was the classification of Polish gender forms not merely according to their associations with adjectives and demonstrative pronouns in the nominative but, instead, according to association rules in both the nominative and the accusative case. The latter can assume three shapes in Polish: it can be expressed by a special suffix, or it can be formally equal with either the nominative or the genitive case. The result of Mańczak's classification can be presented in form of five classes which are always defined by their singular and plural form:

Adjectives and demonstrative pronouns		
	acc.sing.	acc.pl.
masculine animate human	= gen.	= gen.
masculine animate non-human	= gen.	= nom.
masculine inanimate	= nom.	= nom.
neuter	= nom.	= nom.
feminine	= nom. or a special acc. suff. ¹⁵	= nom.

The use of the notion of a "supremacy of the masculine" points to rather a biased position of the authors from Poznań – here, inanimate masculines actually behave like neuters, and feminine nouns are the only class with its own special accusative suffix.

Worse still, Mańczak's classification was accepted in the modern standard academic grammar of Polish (Grzegorzczkowska 1984) and it inspired Z. Saloni to add pluralia tantum and singularia tantum to Mańczak's scheme which led to a system of no less than nine classes. Saloni's system has not, it is true, been accepted as such (for the wider context of this discussion see Skarżyński 2001: 144 sq.), but his attempt clearly shows that the simple notion of "three grammatical genders in Polish" should be regarded as obsolete.

The most important fact for our studies is the observation that no group in Mańczak's system is clearly connected only with the singular or the plural, as well as that there are five genders in Polish. Thus, Polish appears to be a special case among the gender systems of the European languages (unless it could be shown that similar classifications are also possible for other Slavic languages).

¹⁵ The feminine accusative equals the nominative with words ending in consonants (like nom. = acc. *krew* 'blood') whereas nouns with final vowels receive a special accusative suffix (like nom. *kra* 'drift ice' – acc. *krę*).

The difference between the traditional approach and that of Mańczak's is the number of criteria used. The traditional approach has only one criterion: a phonotactic rule connecting a noun with its attribute (expressed by an adjective or demonstrative pronoun or both), whereas Mańczak adds a further one: the declensional characteristics of the nouns. If we are going to use Mańczak's classification in Eurolinguistic comparisons we should first construct parallel classifications for other languages with three genders in the singular. The following table for German might probably well suit our purposes:

Adjectives and demonstrative pronouns		
	acc.sing.	acc.pl.
masculine (der -e)	acc.	= nom.
neuter (das -e)	= nom.	= nom.
feminine (die -e)	= nom.	= nom.

The differences between the Polish and the German are quite clear. They concern: (1) the number of gender classes; (2) the position of the specialized accusative marker; (3) the presence/absence of semantic criteria like “animate” or “human”.

If we compare Scandinavian Germanic with Romance languages this way, our picture of grammatical gender categories will certainly become deeper and more informative in Eurolinguistic terms than it was ever before.

All this could have been done directly after Mańczak's article had been published, that is in the late 1950s. If it was not done in those times we should *now* make use of our knowledge of the history of linguistics. The importance of such an approach can better be understood if the model of an “analytic etymological dictionary”, presented by Liberman (2008, cf. also Liberman 1998, 2014), is taken as an example for grammatical studies.

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