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REVIEW

Anjali Pandey. 2016. *Monolingualism and Linguistic Exhibitionism in Fiction*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Dorota Brzozowska (University of Opole)

"If there is a knower of tongues/ here, fetch him; /There's a stranger in the city/ And he has many things to say" (Mirza Ghalib quoted in Rushdie 2008, 1). This motto of Salman Rushdie's *The Enchantress of Florence*, one of the four novels analysed in Anjali Pandey's book, illustrates accurately the main subject of the monograph. The book deals with an up-to-date problem of the roles different languages play in the contemporary world by asking the question about monolingualism in fiction.

The book consists of the Introduction, which discusses languages in literature, seven chapters and the Conclusion, which answers the question: What is linguistic exhibitionism good for, followed by references and index. The first three chapters have a theoretical nature and they deal with the following issues: 1. The place of languages in the space of post-globalism: bilingualism, bullhorns, and blunders; 2. Award-cultures in the era of post-globalization: prize-winning in a 'flat'-world; 3. In-'visible' multiligualness: linguistic exhibitionism in the post-global turn. The next chapters are a result of the analysis of four different bestsellers; 4. Outsourcing English: liberty, linguistic lust, and loathing in Aravind Adiga's *The White Tiger*; 5. Curried English: flawed fluency, markedness, and diglossia in *Brick Lane*; 6. Language liquidation versus language appropriation: tracing the trajectory of linguistic death and unease in *Unaccustomed Earth* by Jhumpa Lahiri; 7. Linguistic insecurity and linguistic imperialism: resuscitating Renaissance 're-linguiscism' in Salman Rushdie's *The Enchantress of Florence*.

The author uses many alliterations in the chapter names probably to attract the readers, but it seems that this kind of play, drawing attention to the form, distracts the reader from the actual content and makes the titles rather obscure. There is also inconsistency – writers' names are used in the titles of Chapters 4, 6, 7 but omitted in Chapter 5.

In the first part, Anjali Pandey describes the way the financial world and publishing industry fish for the writers and create bestsellers. Next, she analyses four different

instances of using multilingual strategies by contemporary renowned authors: most of them are rooted in India-related backgrounds. In this sense, the book is very coherent.

The thesis discussed in the book is that novels written by polylingual authors, regarded and even rewarded as promoting multicultural attitudes, on a deeper level only confirm the higher status of English. They may use different languages, pretending that all of them are equal, but in fact they reveal that some languages "are more equal than others" (Pandey 2016, 275). "Multilingualism signals a subverted and, as argued in this book, superficial rather than in-depth spotlighting of true global linguistic diversity […]. Linguistic exhibitionism as used in this study signals the deliberate use of modern multilingualism for cosmetic effect" (Pandey 2016, 83).

In my opinion, the analytic chapters are the most valuable ones: not only do they enable one to glimpse into the world of the novels and their beauty, but they also properly illustrate the main thesis of the monograph by pinpointing the complexity of strategies and various ways of making use of multiple languages, and by showing the strategies used by particular authors. The ways of including different language codes in literature are visualised in a form of a table (p. 92). The types of linguistic exhibitionism are as follows: 1. abrogation – non translational: a) marked or b) unmarked; 2. appropriation – translational: a) anti-translational or b) translated – italicized; 3. Englishing: a) linguistic (lexical/ speech acts) or b) literary (character agency).

A strong point of Pandey's book is that this developed method of analysing linguistic exhibitionism may be applicable in stylistic studies of other works. The book also makes its readers more sensitive to the hidden agendas which concern the respect and status of the specific languages used by authors who want to promote or undermine certain codes. Weak points of the publication include frequent repetitions – as if the author was afraid that the readers would not pay enough attention to the book content. This evokes the opposite effect – too strong a didactic style makes reading the book tiring as it complicates and blurs the message, instead of making it clearer. It is also a pity that the relation between language use and gender issues has not been more thoroughly discussed in the context of the selected novels, where the problems of culture, power and gender are strictly related and interwoven.

Multilingual novels are nothing new; also a stylisation phenomenon, which is related to the subject, is quite common in literature, but the author's observations concerning the power of the exhibited languages and their correlations are worth developing. They are valuable as they can also be extended to the usage of different codes and dialects, not only the ones analysed in the book. These are important issues from the point of view of language policy as the existence of literature in a certain dialect is a strong argument supporting claims for their independent position. The phenomenon is also vital for the Polish readers, who can witness this type of language positioning battle in both the contemporary press, where codes can have various, sometimes even ludic, functions (Wojtak 2010), and in novels that try to include different regional languages, some of which have a questionable status. M. Kuźmińska and M. Kuźmiński, for example, use the Silesian language and the Podhale dialect in their novels (2015, 2016).

In the context of Anjali Pandey's book, it is obvious that leaving some fragments in various codes untranslated can be interpreted as granting them equality to the main code, but does it meet reader's expectations? This is a different question, which is confirmed by Wyderka (2016), an expert on Silesian, commenting on novels with mixed codes.

> *Drach* is a novel about the Silesians and their language, written in their mother tongue. Thereupon a question emerges – whether the Silesian language in the novel does not overwhelm the readers. Some of the critics claim that reading *Drach* is difficult (427).

Perhaps being reader-friendly is not always the issue, but the borderline is very thin if the author wants both to promote the idea of polyglotism and still communicate with the readers.

The pleasure of reading the book also lies in looking at it. The book should not be judged by its cover, as the proverb says, but this might not be the case in this context, since it is an eye-catching edition, with an intriguing, simple but elegant hard cover. It shows a candle flame, burning in a trapezium burgundy pot and leaning to the side in the draught, all against a turquoise background. This creates an impression of exoticism. It is interesting to note that the author works in America, the book publisher is international, the book was typeset in India while the cover image originates from China, which embraces and visualizes the problem of the ethnically and linguistically complicated world where borders can and are crossed on an everyday basis.

We can realize that there are many languages in the world, all of which are worth preserving and giving a chance to flourish, but the question is how to make them exist altogether, without privileging one over another and if it is actually possible. What is the solution for the problem of linguistic imperialism? Even when some authors can use several languages in one novel and can leave them without explanations to the polyglotic audience, then what about the wider audience who would like to have a chance to peep in the unknown world of a foreign language? Why is there a shift from bilingualism to monolingualism in the third generation of potential bilinguals even if "monoligualism is costly both to the monolingual individual and to society"? (Snow and Hakuta 1992, 385). The individual costs comprise time, effort and cognitive costs, while society's expenditures are connected with educational, economic, and national security spending. The problem is related to the lack of expectation that everyone will be bilingual and that bilingualism is associated with the lower classes and the immigrants, not with the educated elite (Snow and Hakuta 1992, 394).

The system of education should take the responsibility for awakening such awareness for the benefit of all. We can be happy that there are many people and institutions promoting multilingualism, e.g. universities, publishers, polylingual writers, readers, and translators, as they have skills to feed our curiosity by explaining the unfamiliar senses, and the power to illuminate the strangeness of the foreign. So let the connotation that the picture on the cover brings to my mind be the conclusion: "No one lights a lamp and then puts it under a basket. Instead, a lamp is placed on a stand, where it gives light to everyone in the house" (Matthew 5, 15).

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AUTHOR'S BIO: Dorota Brzozowska holds a PhD in linguistics and is Associate Professor at the Department of Anglophone Cultures, Institute of English, Opole University. She is the author of publications on the role of humour in international communication and on cultural stereotypes; she is a co-editor of *European Journal of Humour Research, Stylistyka,* and *Tertium Linguistic Journal*. She co-edited the following collections: *Communicational Styles*. *Culture's software* (2015), *Polish Humour* (2012), *Hungarian Humour* (2012) *Termin w językoznawstwie* (2012), and two volumes of *Poland and Estonia. Creativity and tradition in cultural communication* (2012, 2013). She is the author of the following monographs: *O dowcipach polskich i angielskich. Analiza językowo-kulturowa* (2000), *Polski dowcip etniczny. Stereotyp a tożsamość* (2008).

E-MAIL: dbrzozowska(at)uni.opole.pl