

Dwie szkoły językoznawstwa polonistycznego XX w. – konflikty i współpraca

Two schools of Polish Language studies in the 20th century – rivalry and cooperation

SUMMARY

Differences between two schools of Polish Language studies, which developed respectively in Cracow (Kraków) and in Warsaw, were already conspicuous in the second half of the 19th century, especially during the debate on the spelling reform. The rivalry between the two centres continued even after Poland regained independence in 1918, and grew even more acrimonious after the Chair of Polish Language studies in Warsaw was given to Professor Witold Doroszewski. Doroszewski's approach to dialectology and studies on word-formation was different from that espoused by the linguists from Cracow, and as he based on the philosophical tenets of monism, this also led him to a conflict with structuralists. Generally speaking, whereas historicism was for a long time predominant among the Cracow based linguists, this was much less the case in Warsaw, where linguists were much more strongly engaged in research on the contemporary state of the language, as well as in extensive studies of correct Polish usage, which can be attributed to the 19th century tradition of positivism. The substantive differences between the two schools were exacerbated by conflicts of personal nature, and as a result by the middle of the 20th century the two schools were in quite strong opposition to each other. However, as time went by, the two schools began to show signs of some rapprochement and started to cooperate, the historicism of the Cracow school began to weaken, word-formation studies of the Warsaw-type began to spread, and structuralism found its way into Warsaw. The staff of the two centres began to intermingle, and a variety of joint research projects allowed members of the two schools to get to know each other better and to abandon some of the previous prejudice. However, even today the Warsaw school has preserved some of its distinct characteristics, which are manifest in its focus on the study of contemporary Polish language, its orientation towards studies of word-formation and lexical-semantic research, as well as its sensitivity to issues of correct Polish usage. As for the school of Polish Language studies in Cracow, this no longer exists.

The history of those two linguistic schools allows us to draw some more general conclusions on the history of science and research: it exemplifies the typical ways in which scholarly disciplines develop, it points to the role of a school's leader, the importance of contacts between scholars, etc.