



Kristīne Kuņicka – Daugpilio universiteto Humanitarinių mokslų fakulteto lingvistikos doktorantė.

Moksliniai interesių: lingvistika.

Adresas: Vienības iela 13, Daugavpils, LV-5417.

Tel. +371 26535494.

El. paštas: kristine.kunicka@e-apollo.lv.

Kristīne Kuņicka: Doctoral student of study programme “Linguistics”, Faculty of Humanities, Daugavpils University. *Research interests:* linguistics.

Address: Vienības str. 13, Daugavpils, LV-5417.

Phone: +371 26535494.

E-mail: kristine.kunicka@e-apollo.lv.

Kristīne Kuņicka

Daugavpils University

VERBS IN PERIPHERAL POLISH SPOKEN IN LATGALE¹

Anotacija

Šiandien Latgaloje lenkų kalba yra viena iš daugelio kalbių, vartojama vietinėje bendruomenėje. Lenkų mažuma sudaro 7 proc. visos populiacijos, o lenkų kalba, kuri paplito per Lenkijos–Lietuvos Respublikos gyvavimą, iš tikrųjų gali patirti išnykimą. Daugiausia įtakos dialektui turi rusų ir latvių kalbos, taigi tame randama kitų kalbų vienetų. Tyrimo tikslas – aprašyti kai kuriuos veiksmažodžių struktūrinius ir semantinius ypatumus, būdingus latgalių lenkų kalbai. Šis tyrimas yra paremtas interviu su 86 lenkais, gimusių nuo 1922 iki 2006 m. ir atstovaujančiais visoms vietinės lenkų mažumos kartoms.

PAGRINDINIAI ŽODŽIAI: dialektas, šiaurinė periferinė lenkų kalba, latgaliai, veiksmažodžiai.

Abstract

Polish language in Latgale today is only one of many languages spoken in the local community. The Polish minority here forms seven per cent of population but Polish language, which extended to the territory during the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, is in fact threatened with extinction. The regiolect in question is mainly exposed to the influence of the Russian and to a smaller extent Latvian language, thus it extensively incorporates

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foreign linguistic units. The report aims at describing some structural and semantic peculiarities of verbs functioning in the spoken variety of Latgalian Polish. Current research is based on interviews with eighty-six Poles born from 1922 till 2006 representing all generations of the local Polish minority.

KEY WORDS: regiolect, northern peripheral polish, latgale, verbs.

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Introduction

The Polish language or rather a regiolect used by Latgalian Poles is a local variety of the Northern Peripheral Polish (in Polish *polszczyzna północnokresowa*) that is spoken on the former territory of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth – today the territory of Lithuania, Belarus and Latvia (Ostrówka 2005, 87). After the First Partition² the Peripheral Polish was under the constant influence of Lithuania and Belorussian, later Russian languages (Grek-Pabisowa 2012, 112), but currently the regiolect spoken in Latgale is also to a small degree influenced by the Latvian language. Latvian is the official language in the country, but in Latgale, especially in its largest city Daugavpils, Russian remains the language of the vast majority of everyday public and private contacts. Belorussian currently has limited influence, since it is known by an insignificant number of Poles, who were born on the territory of Belarus before the Second World War and during the initial phase of the Soviet rule³. Over time under the influence of contact languages the Peripheral Polish has developed a number of phonetic, morphological, lexical, syntactic and semantic peculiarities but also has left some archaic traces that are no longer present in the Standard Polish language. While the Northern Peripheral Polish spoken on the territory of Lithuania and Belarus has been well described by many researchers⁴, the regiolect used by Latgalian Poles has been studied by only a few⁵. Former research encompassed only the language of the old-

² In 1772 the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth was divided between Russian Empire, Austrian Empire and the Kingdom of Prussia.

³ Only three of our informants state that they knew Belorussian because they used to attend Belorussian schools. Still all of them claim that they have forgotten the language, since they have not used it continuously. Two of these idiolects contain numerous peculiarities that can be traced back directly to Belorussian.

⁴ To name only a few: Halina Turska, Iryda Grek-Pabisowa, Valerijus Čekmonas, Barbara Dwilewicz, Krystyna Rutkowska, Janusz Rieger, Zofia Sawaniewska-Mochowa, Ann Zielinska.

⁵ Tomasz Brajerski, Halina Karaś, Małgorzata Ostrówka, Józefa Parszuta, Wjaczesław Werenicz, Iveta Rucka.

est generation of Poles, however, considering any language in a long term perspective, there is a necessity to gain data from all generations of speakers, which in future will allow continuous monitoring of linguistic change.

This research aims at determining the most notable peculiarities on morphological, lexical, syntactic and semantic levels of verbs that function in the Polish regiolect used by Latgalian Poles. The author argues that the long-term isolation from the Standard Polish language and close coexistence with primarily Russian, but also Latvian and Belarusian languages at different times has contributed to certain shifts in verbs, which have deviated from the Standard Polish norms. The research is based on auditory analysis of oral interviews' records with eighty-six Latgalian Poles and field observation at cultural, social and private events of the Latgalian Polish diaspora. The excerpted peculiarities are compared with those earlier recorded by researchers on the territory of Lithuania, Belarus and Latvia.

1. Poles in Latgale

According to the Population Census of 2011 Latvia was inhabited by 44 772 (2,2%) Poles, but Latgale, the region that was incorporated by the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth during 16th–18th centuries, was inhabited by 20 806 Poles (7%)⁶. Still it is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to assess the objective situation of the local Polish diaspora, since the data provided by the authorities and the Latvian Polish Society (LPS) is somewhat different. The chairman of the LPS Ryszard Stankiewicz claims that there are around 60 000 Poles in Latvia and explains the discrepancies in quantitative structure of citizens by the fact that during Soviet regime many Poles changed their nationality from Polish into Russian, Belorussian or Latvian. After 1990 nationality was not an issue that is why today many Poles have not asked for reestablishment of their nationality. The official statistics show that only 858 of Latgalian Poles (4%) use Polish as the main language in the family, but again a possibility that the data is not plausible emerges because a certain number of people use two or three languages in the family (Polish being one of them)⁷. On every day basis Polish is also

⁶ <http://www.csb.gov.lv/statistikas-temas/2011gada-tautas-skaitsana-datubaze-33609.html>.

⁷ First of all, the very notion of the family can be ambiguous, while many Poles use Polish to communicate with their grandparents and/or parents but do not use it with their spouses or children. Also the very question asked at the Population census was

used in educational institutions, in prayer, at various cultural and social events. The author believes that the actual number of Poles, who use the Polish regiolect on everyday basis, is higher but decreases due to the general aging of population and the diminishing language use in the family, especially by the youngest generation.

2. Informants

Our informants were 25 men and 61 women born in Latvia, Belarus, Lithuania and Ukraine from 1922 till 2006 and living in the three largest cities of Latgale (Daugavpils, Rezekne, Kraslava). The vast majority of informants are multilingual (know Polish, Latvian, Russian) or at least bilingual. Sixty-eight informants know Polish, Latvian and Russian languages, three in addition know Lithuanian or Ukrainian, and one knows also Ukrainian and Romany. Fourteen informants speak Polish, Russian languages, one Polish and Latvia languages. Thirty-nine informants use Polish as one of the languages of communication in the family, and only twelve – as the only language of communication within the family. Twenty-eight informants born after 1982 have graduated from or attend Polish educational institutions at the moment, and thirteen informants born before 1938 have completed from 1 to 10 forms at Polish schools⁸. All informants use Polish during social and cultural events organised by various local and foreign Polish organisations. Polish also retains its position as the main language of prayer⁹.

3. Peculiarities of Verbs in the Northern Peripheral Polish Spoken in Latgale

As any language or dialect the studied regiolect is a gathering of separate idiolects with variable traces, nonetheless it contains an abundance of

not formulated to give full linguistic picture. Respondents were asked "Which language do you use at home the most?" which supposes that they use only one language. The common bilingualism was disregarded.

⁸ In Latvia after the Second World War Polish schools were liquidated and were not re-established until 1989.

⁹ Polish is used as the language of individual and if possible also collective prayer. In Daugavpils Polish masses are conducted on every day basis, in Kraslava every other week all masses are in Polish and in Rezekne Polish masses are conducted twice a month.

common peculiarities on all levels of language. Verbs, as an indispensable class of words, in the speech of Latgalian Poles over time have accumulated traces that differentiate them from those functioning in the Standard Polish language. We will further discuss a few of the most frequent selected morphological, word-formational and syntactic peculiarities¹⁰ of verbs recorded in the speech of the studied informants.

3.1. Morphological peculiarities

An unquestionable majority of morphological peculiarities of recorded verbs concern the use of endings. Since interviewed informants spoke mostly of their past activities and events, a considerable amount of the documented verbs are in the past tense. A widespread peculiarity of past tense verbs is the absence of the first, second person singular and third person plural endings, e.g. *jak ty mówił tak i dobrze, nawet była w Częstochowie, w Polsce czuła siebie normalnie, schodziła do łazienki wymyłaś, pracowała ja, my mieli język rosyjski, my w szkole uczyli się, o ile ja zauważała, co my przeżyliśmy Polacy, no i my jeden drugiego pokochali*. Past tense created according to the formula *personal pronoun + verb in the third person singular or plural* is characteristic of the East Slavic languages. It has been recorded in the Peripheral Polish already in the 17th century (its wider usage in the 19th century) and it is also spread in some dialects on the territory of Poland (Kurzowa 1993, 426). The feature was recorded in the speech of thirty-two informants.

Another common trace of past tense verbs that characterises the speech of thirty-nine informants is the use of masculine endings in the past tense plural in combination with masculine and non-masculine nouns or pronouns, for example, *dzieci pomagali, stopnie musieli być dobre, siostry nie zachcieli, wojska stali, z bapcią takie dysputy byli, kwiaty byli sierén, byli kaczki i gęsi, warsztaty taneczne byli*. This peculiarity characteristic of the Peripheral Polish has occurred under the influence of the Russian language, where there is no differentiation between gender endings in plural (Rieger 2006, 29).

¹⁰ Since the discussed peculiarities concern morphology, lexis and syntax, the examples are given using the Standard Polish spelling, disregarding any phonetic changes. Determined peculiarities are highlighted in Bold.

Apart from distinct distribution of endings, another widespread morphological peculiarity of considered verbs is the absence of the reflexive pronoun *się* in reflexive verbs, e.g. *nauczyłam (się) bez problem (języka)*, *uczyła (uczyłam się) zawód, na wieczorki zbieraliśmy (się)*, *urodziłam (się) ja w bywzej Polsce, Polkę czuję (się)*, *zastanowili (się) nad tym, cały tydzień z siostrą staraliśmy (się) muwić tylko w języku polskim*; or addition of the particle *się* to non-reflexive verbs, e.g. *jak ja poznałem się z żoną, to zostało się tam, zostali się żyć w Łotwie, błąt zostaje się błątem, potem wrucił się z powrotem tu*. According to Zofia Kurzowa this feature of Peripheral dialects could stem from the Polish dialects, the Belarusian language and be supported by the Russian language (1993, 438–439)¹¹. Still in some cases the influence of the Latvian language cannot be excluded, for example, compare recorded *poznać się* and Latvian *iepazīties*, which is a reflective verb. This peculiarity was recorded in the speech of thirty-eight informants. Similarly as in the Peripheral Polish spoken in Lithuania, the reflexive pronoun *się* in the speech of all informants is placed after the verb, while in the Standard Polish it usually precedes the verb (Rieger 2006, 29; Kurzowa 1993, 440). Fifteen informants often reduce the reflexive pronoun *się* to formant *ś*, or *sa* and add it to the verb, according to the pattern of the East Slavic Languages: *lękaliś, nie gdzie była uczytsa, będzie bogu modlitsa, ona uczyłaś, okazaliś oni w Dynaburgu*. Still this particular feature may be maintained also by reflective verbs in Latvian that similarly as East Slavonic verbs have merged with the reflexive pronoun, e.g., *mācīties, baidīties*.

3.2. Peculiarities in Word-formation

Considering word-formation the most notorious peculiarity concerns the distribution of verbal prefixes in the regiolect. Changes concern verbs in perfective aspect that manifest completed actions. When creating verbs speakers use combinations of prefixes and verbs that in the Standard Polish language do not function together or have different meaning, thus creating morphological or semantic calques. Consider the following examples of morphological calques¹²: **obuczyć się** (pol. **nauczyć się**; cf.

¹¹ Cf. rus. *выучить*, bel. *выучыць*, pol. *nauczyć się*.

¹² A recorded verb is provided first in bold, than in brackets we give the Standard Polish verb and the calqued verb, which are followed by an example of its usage in italics.

rus. **обучиться**) – ale w Rydze on obuczył się robić masaże; **потracić** (pol. **wytracić**; cf. rus. **потратить**) – potraciłeś wszystkie zapasy; **powiedzieć** (pol. **zobaczyć**; cf. rus. **повидать**) – tak że ja dużo powiedziała w Polskie; **прикупować** (pol. **kupować**; cf. rus. **прикупить**) – oiciec przykupował dużą choinką taka do samego sufitu; **прозмыслиć** (pol. **wymyślić**; cf. rus. **придумать**; LPIV) – jaki nikolek fason przymyśli; **удziwić się** (pol. **zdziwić się**; cf. rus. **удивиться**) – ale kiedy poznaję nas tedy są bardzo zdziwieni że tak dobrze rozmawiamy; **уезджаć** (pol. **wyjeżdżać**; cf. rus. **уезжать**) – dla tego że mnie zdaje się że uczyć ujeżdżają; **запить** (pol. **popiąć**; cf. rus. **запивать**) – nie zapijai kanapkę; **zmoc** (pol. **moc**; cf. rus. **смочь**) – ja nu rzadko smogę jechać do Rezekne; **захcieć** (pol. **zechcieć** cf. rus. **захотеть**) – nie zachcieli pomóc. Morphological calquing of verbs was recorded in the speech of twenty-four informants, but semantic calquing of verbs functioning in the Standard Polish characterises thirty-nine informants, e.g.: **dobierać się** (pol. **docierać**, rus. **добраться**) – jak on tam dobierał się to nie wiem; **dogadywać się** (pol. **domyślać się**; rus. **догадываться**) – to już jak później zaczęłam ja się tam dogadywać gdzieś tam u mamy; **gotować** (pol. **przygotowywać**; rus. **готовить**) – będą tu dzieci gotować do komunii; **naprawić** (pol. **pokierować**; rus. **направить**) – ale potem ona mnie no tak... naprawiła czyli jak to... żeby uczyć polskiego języka; **odebrać** (pol. **zdjąć**; lvs. **noņemt**) – potem zasłonili ten fresk, no i teraz kiedy odebrali obras; **odkryć** (pol. **otworzyć**; rus. **открыть**) – kiedy odkryła się granica; **odznaczać** (pol. **obchodzić**; rus. **отмечать**) – janaw dzień odznaczali; **postać** (pol. **zapisać się do czego**; rus. **поступить**) – postąpiłam do instytutu pedagogicznego; **powieźć** (pol. **poprowadzić**; rus. **повезти**) – i jegu powiedli w tegu w ada... ad; **topić** (pol. **palić**; rus. **топить**) – mężczyźni tam łaźnię idą topić. Majority of recorded verb forms have been morphologically or semantically calqued from the Russian language but there are occasional lexemes that have appeared under the influence of the Latvian language. According to Z. Kurzowa differences in the use of verbal prefixes were recorded in the Peripheral Polish already in the 16th century (Kurzowa 1993, 218–228).

3.3. Syntactic peculiarities

Finally, there are also a few syntactic peculiarities that denote the Northern Peripheral Polish spoken in Latgale. First of all, highly frequent

use of the auxiliary **trzeba** (eng. must) to express the necessity of doing something, which is considered an archaic trace of Peripheral Polish (Karaś 2002, 255–256). Consider the following examples: *trzeba płacić była, mnie trzeba było iść za stolarza, trzeba patrzyć jaki przedmiot, mnie ta trzeba była wyuczyć, czas trzeba chonić, trzeba do kościoła iść, trzeba popatrzyć, jeżeli trzeba domuwitsa, trzeba była wszystko robić*. The construction **Dative** (often a personal pronoun) + auxiliary **trzeba + verb in infinitive** is frequent in Russian and Latvian languages (cf. rus. *мне надо удми домой;* lvs. *man vajag iet uz mājām*). In the recorded material this construction was found in the speech of forty-eight informants.

Even more common is a syntactic construction preposition **u + noun/personal pronoun** to express possession that replaces the Standard Polish verb *mieć*, e.g.: *u niej była możliwość, u mnie był szok, u mojej mamy swój dom, u Loszy też taki robot jest, u niej też była czwórka dzieci, u każdego innego nazwisko, u papy swoje konie były, u mnie też jest wnuk, u mamy nie było wykształcenia, dziadek u mnie był Polakiem*. This construction that was used by sixty-seven informants appeared in the Peripheral Polish under the influence of East Slavic languages (Karaś 2002, 254–255).

Also on syntactic level the studied verbs demonstrate differences in case government. After verbs 31 informant tends to use cases of arguments that are not characteristic for the Standard Polish language, e.g.: *rodzice są Polacy* – Nominative instead of Instrumental, *nie pamiętam imię* – Accusative instead of Genitive, *zrobili nową szkołę* – Nominative instead of Accusative, *on uczestniczył miał krzyża tegu nagroda* – Genitive instead of Accusative, *uczyłam w tej grupie niemiecki* – Nominative instead of Genitive, *grałem i w orkiestra dęta* – Nominative instead of Locative. Along with distinct case government, we have recorded changes in the use of prepositions, which follow verbs and usually influence also case government. Consider the following examples¹³: *mama s tatą modla na (w) języku rosyjskim, często byłam na (w) Polsce latem, napisałem na (w) łotewskim, najlepszy uczeń po (według) stopniem, jeżeli Polak ożenił się na (z) Rosjankie, zakochałam się do (w) tego pana, mama po (na) zakupy jeździ, siedzieliśmy za (przy) stołem, na (do) praca trzeba była wychodzić, i oni poszli w (do) las, chodzą do tej szkoły już z (od) pierwszej klasy, po (przez) skajpu*

¹³ The Standard Polish preposition is given in brackets in bold after the one used by the informant.

rozmawiamy. The peculiarity was recorded in the speech of twenty-eight informants. In general, fluctuations in case government and use of prepositions were characteristic to the Standard Polish language at the time it started functioning in the periphery, thus this peculiarity can be considered archaic (Kurzowa 1993, 309–324).

Conclusion

The article gives an account of the most frequent peculiarities of verbs used by speakers of the Northern Peripheral Polish in Latgale. The presented material allows detecting language contact induced changes. Over time the lack of constant contact with the Standard Polish language and close coexistence with mostly Russian to a lesser degree Latvian (in the past also Belarusian) languages has resulted in morphological, lexical and syntactic, as well as semantic changes in verbs. The Northern Peripheral Polish language shows major variations in the use of: personal endings of past tense verbs, particle *się* in reflexive verbs, verbal prefixes, case government, use of prepositions that follow verbs, auxiliary *trzeba*. The most common peculiarity recorded in the speech of 67 informants (78%) is syntactic construction: preposition ***u*** + **noun/personal pronoun** employed to express possession. Still, in the speech of all Latgalian Poles the described peculiarities are usually recorded along with their standard forms.

Considering former research, it must be mentioned that such peculiarities as the frequent use of the auxiliary *trzeba*, differences in case government and prepositional accommodation have also been recorded in the speech of the oldest generation of Latgalian Poles (Ostrówka 2006, 396–397; Ostrówka 2005, 96–97) and in Polish newspapers published in Latvia in the first half of the 20th century (Rucka 2007, 11). The absence of the first, second person singular and third person plural endings, as well as the reduction of the reflective pronoun *się* was recorded in the speech of Poles from Darvinieki village in Latgale (Паршута 1973, 107–108).

Many of the recorded peculiarities have been characteristic to the Peripheral Polish language since the very beginning of its development and can be considered archaic. Still it appears that in Latgale today Russian remains the most influential of the contact languages, while the influence of Belarusian is only limited to older borrowings. The Latvian language,

which has been strengthening its positions as the official language for the last twenty years, shows limited influence on the discussed levels of language.

List of abbreviations

- pol. – Polish
lvs. – Latvian
rus. – Russian
bel. – Belorussian

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Kristīne Kuņicka

PERIFERINĖS LENKŲ KALBOS VEIKSMAŽODŽIAI, VARTOJAMI LATGALOJE

Lenkų kalba, veikiau dialektas, vartojama Latgalos lenkų, yra vietinės šiaurinės periferinės lenkų kalbos įvairovė (lenk. *polszczyzna północnokresowa*), kuri atskleidžia buvusioje Lenkijos–Lietuvos Respublikos teritorijoje, kur šiuo metu yra Lietuva, Baltarusija ir Latvija (Ostrówka 2005, 87). Po pirmojo padalijimo periferinė lenkų kalba buvo nuolat veikiama

lietuvių ir baltarusių, vėliau rusų kalbos (Grek-Pabisowa 2012, 112), beto, latgalių dialektas taip pat buvo veikiamas latvių kalbos. Bėgant laikui periferinėje lenkų kalboje, veikiamoje tiesioginių kalbų, atsirado nemažai fonetinių, morfologinių, leksinių, sintaksinių ir semantinių ypatumų, taip pat liko archajiškų pėdsakų, kurie nebeegzistuoja standartinėje lenkų kalboje.

Tyrimo tikslas – nustatyti labiausiai pastebimus veiksmažodžių morfologinius, leksinius, sintaksinius ir semantinius ypatumus, kurie būdingi latgalių lenkų kalbos dialektui. Artimas sambūvis su rusų, latvių ir baltarusių kalbomis skirtingais laikais prisdėjo prie tam tikrų veiksmažodžių pokyčių, kurie nukrypo nuo standartinių lenkų kalbos normų. Tyrimas paremtas 86-ių latgalių lenkų žodinės apklausos analize ir Latgalos lenkų diasporos kultūrinių, socialinių ir privačių renginių tyrimų analize. Gauti ypatumai yra palyginti su tyrėjų anksčiau užfiksuotais Lietuvos, Baltarusijos ir Latvijos teritorijoje.

Dažniausiai morfologiniai pakitimai tirtame dialekte yra: 1) pirmojo ir antrojo asmens galūnių trūkumas būtojo laiko veiksmažodžiuose, pvz.: *jak ty muvíł tak i dobże*; 2) vyriškosios giminės galūnės vartojimas būtojo laiko daugiskaitoje kartu su vyriškosios ar ne vyriškosios giminės daiktavardžiais ir įvardžiais, pvz.: *żecí pomagali, varšaty tanečne byli*; 3) parodomuojo įvardžio się trūkumas sangrąžiniuose veiksmažodžiuose, pvz.: *zastanovił i (się) nad tym, arba się dalelēs pridėjimas prie nesangrąžinių veiksmažodžių*, pvz.: *jak ia poznalem s'en z ż'ono*.

Žodžių darybos žinomiausias ypatumas susijęs su žodžių priešdélių pasiskirstymu dialekte. Kalbėtojai, kurdami veiksmažodžius, naudoja priešdélių ir veiksmažodžių kombinacijas, kurios neegzistuoja standartinėje lenkų kalboje, pvz.: *zapijać* (lenk. *popijać*; cf. rus. *занива́мъ*) – *nie zapiął*, arba turi kitą reikšmę, pvz.: *zapuszczać* (lenk. *puszczać* cf. rus. *зану́скать*) – *χoc' pokaże jak zapuśczać*, taigi kuriami morfologiniai ir semantiniai skoliniai.

Naujausi užfiksuoti sintaksiniai veiksmažodžių ypatumai yra: 1) itin dažnas pagalbinio žodžio *trzeba* (angl. *privalēti*) vartojimas, išreiškiant kokio nors veiksmo atlikimo svarbą, pvz.: *čšeba płacić była*, 2) tam tikri argumentuoti atvejai, kurie nėra būdingi standartinei lenkų kalbai, pvz.: *pytałem iq* (lenk. *nie pytałam jej*); 3) prielinksnių, kurie eina po veiksmažodžių, vartojimo pokyčiai, pvz.: *mama s tatą modlą na (w) ięzyku rosyjskim*; 4) veiksmažodžių, po kurių reikia prielinksnio ir kurie reikalauja tam

tikro valdymo, painojimas, pvz.: *przyjexałem na samoxożę* (lenk. *przyjechałem samochodem*).

Straipsnyje apžvelgiami būdingiausi Latgalos šiaurinių periferinių gyventojų lenkų kalbos veiksmažodžių vartojimo ypatumai. Pateikta medžia-
ga leidžia nustatyti kalbos pakitimus. Bėgant laikui silpnėjant nuolatinės standartinės lenkų kalbos įtakai ir esant artimam rusų ir latvių kalbü (prae-
cityje ir baltarusių) sambūviui, pasireiškė morfologiniai, leksiniai, sintaksi-
nių, taip pat semantiniai veiksmažodžių pokyčiai. Atrodo, kad šiuolaikinė
rusų kalba vis dar išlieka didžiausią įtaką kitoms kalboms daranti kalba, o
baltarusių kalbos įtaka aprigojama tik senaisiais skoliniais. Latvių kalba,
kuri stiprino savo poziciją kaip 20 metų gyvuojanti oficiali kalba, turi ri-
botą įtaką aptartiems kalbos lygmenims.