

SUMMARY OF PROFESSIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

1. **Forename and surname:** Danuta Lech-Kirstein

2. **Held diplomas, scholarly/artistic degrees:**

- **1997** – magister of Polish Philology, the Faculty of Philology at the University of Opole; topic of Master's dissertation: *Nazwiska mieszkańców Gliwic z formantem -k w części sufiksalnej [Surnames of the Inhabitants of Gliwice with the -k- Formant in the Suffix Part]* (academic supervisor – Prof. dr hab. Feliks Pluta, reviewer – dr Krystyna Nowik);
- **2003** – PhD in the humanities in the field of Polish linguistics; the Faculty of Philology at the University of Opole; topic of doctoral dissertation: *Nazwy osobowe mieszkańców Opola z XIX i początku XX wieku (na tle historii i kultury regionu) [Personal Names of the Inhabitants of Opole in the 19th and Early 20th Century (Against the Background of the Region's History and Culture)]* (academic supervisor – dr hab. Stanisława Sochacka, Prof. of the University of Opole, reviewers: Prof. dr hab. Feliks Pluta, Prof. dr hab. Zofia Abramowicz).

3. **History of employment in scholarly institutions:**

- 1 October 1997 – 30 September 2003 - assistant in the Institute of Polish Philology at the University of Opole;
- 1 October 2003 to present - lecturer at the Institute of Polish Studies and Cultural Studies at the University of Opole.

4. **The achievement pursuant to Article 16 Paragraph 2 of the Act of 14 March 2003 concerning scholarly degrees and titles (Journal of Laws no. 65, item 595, as amended):**

d) **title of scholarly achievement:**

a series of articles entitled: *Onimiczny obraz Śląska [An Onimic Image of Silesia]*

e) **(author, title/s of publication, year of publication, name of publisher):**

19. Danuta Lech, *Nazwiska apelatywne a kultura regionu (na przykładzie Śląska Opolskiego)* [*Appellative Surnames and the Region's Culture (as Exemplified by Opole Silesia)*], [in:] *Metodologia badań onomastycznych [Methodology of Onomastic Research]*, ed. M. Biolik, Ośrodek Badań Naukowych im. Wojciecha Kętrzyńskiego, Olsztyn 2003, pp. 217-230.
20. Danuta Lech, *Imiona chrzestne mieszkańców Opolszczyzny w XIX i XX wieku. Analiza językowo-kulturowa* [*Baptismal Names of the Opole Region Inhabitants in the 19th and 20th Centuries. A Linguistic and Cultural Analysis*], "Onomastica Slavogermanica" XXIV, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, 2003, pp. 113-122.
21. Danuta Lech, *Imiona chrześcijańskie w nazwiskach mieszkańców Opola z XIX wieku* [*Christian Names in the Surnames of the Opole Inhabitants of the 19th Century*], [in:] *Onimizacja i apelatywizacja [Onimization and Appellativization]*, ed. Z. Abramowicz, E. Bogdanowicz, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu w Białymstoku, Białystok 2006, pp. 425-434.
22. Danuta Lech-Kirstein, *Nacechowanie dialektalne opolskich nazwisk* [*Dialectal Characteristics of Opole Surnames*], "Studia Śląskie" LXVII (2008), PIN Instytut Śląski, Opole, pp. 143-151.
23. Danuta Lech-Kirstein, *Adaptacje językowe w śląskiej antroponimii (na przykładzie dziewiętnastowiecznych nazwisk opolan)* [*Linguistic Adaptations in Silesian Anthroponymy (as Exemplified by the 19th Century Surnames of the Opole Inhabitants)*], "Onomastica Slavogermanica" XXVII, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, 2008, pp. 167-178.
24. Danuta Lech-Kirstein, *Księgi cechowe miasta Opola jako cenne źródło nazw osobowych* [*The Guild Book of Opole as a Valuable Source of Personal Names*], [in:] *Miasto w perspektywie onomastyki i historii [The City in the Perspective of Onomastics and History]*, ed. I. Sarnowska-Giefing, M. Graf, Poznańskie Towarzystwo Przyjaciół Nauk, Wydział Filologiczno-Filozoficzny, Prace Komisji Językoznawczej, vol. 56, Poznań 2010, Wydawnictwo Poznańskiego Towarzystwa Przyjaciół Nauk, pp. 609-620.
25. Danuta Lech-Kirstein, *Nazwy ptaków w polskiej toponimii (przyczynek do onomastyki kulturowej)* [*The Names of Birds in Polish Toponymy (a Contribution to Cultural Onomastics)*], [in:] *Mnohotvárnost a specifičnost onomastiky. IV. česká*

- onomastická konference 15.–17. září 2009, Ostrava – sborník příspěvků, ed. J. David, M. Čornejová, M. Harvalík, Filozofická fakulta Ostravské univerzity v Ostravě a Ústav pro český AV ČR, v.v.i., Ostrava-Praha 2010, pp. 304-312.
26. Danuta Lech-Kirstein, *Śląsk z perspektywy nazw własnych [Silesia from the Perspective of Proper Names]*, [in:] *Kalejdoskop tematów śląskich. Zbiór studiów filologicznych [A Kaleidoscope of Silesian Themes. A Collection of Philological Studies]*, ed. K. Kossakowska-Jarosz, with the participation of M. Izykowska, Opole 2011, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Opolskiego, pp. 69-78.
27. Danuta Lech-Kirstein, *Nazwy ziól w polskiej toponimii [The Names of Herbs in Polish Toponymy]*, [in:] *Jednotlivé a všeobecné v onomastike. 18. slovenská onomastická konferencia, Prešov 12.–14. septembra 2011*, ed. M. Ološtiak, Filozofická fakulta Prešovskej univerzity v Prešove, Preszów 2012, pp. 156-167.
<http://www.pulib.sk/elpub2/FF/Olostiak3/index.html>.
28. Danuta Lech-Kirstein, *Śląskie nazwy geograficzne jako przedmiot badań lingwistyki kulturowej [Silesian Geographical Names as a Subject of Cultural Linguistics Research]*, "Onomastica" LVII, Wydawnictwo Instytutu Języka Polskiego PAN, 2013, pp. 175-184.
29. Danuta Lech-Kirstein, *Obraz wsi w śląskiej toponimii [The Image of a Village in Silesian Toponymy]*, [in:] *Polonistyka wobec wyzwań współczesności [Polish Studies and the Challenges of Modernity]*, ed. S. Gajda, I. Jokieli, vol. 2, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Opolskiego, Opole 2014, pp. 377-389.
30. Danuta Lech-Kirstein, *Regionalne aspekty onomastyki w dydaktyce szkolnej i akademickiej (na przykładzie Śląska) [Regional Aspects of Onomastics in School and Academic Didactics (in Silesia)]*, [in:] *Kultura mówienia dawniej i dziś [The Culture of Speaking Formerly and Today]*, ed. M. Kułakowska, A. Myszka, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Rzeszowskiego, Rzeszów 2014, pp. 223-232.
31. Danuta Lech-Kirstein, *Історія Силезії крізь призму географічних назв (Historia Śląska z perspektywy nazw geograficznych) [The History of Silesia from the Perspective of Geographical Names]*, „Проблеми слов'язнавства”, 2014, випуск 63, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Lwowskiego, Lwów, pp. 167–175;
<http://lnu.edu.ua/slavistyka/n63/index.html>
32. Danuta Lech-Kirstein, *Zwrot kulturowy w badaniach onomastycznych [A Cultural Turn in Onomastic Research]*, "Poznańskie Spotkania Językoznawcze", vol. 30: *Pogranicza językoznawstwa polonistycznego. Prace dedykowane Profesorom*

- Zygmuntowi Zagórskiemu i Karolowi Zierhofferowi dla uczczenia odnowienia doktoratów po pięćdziesięciu latach [The Borderland of Polish Linguistics. Works Dedicated to Prof. Zygmunt Zagórski and Karol Zierhoffer to Commemorate the 50th Anniversary of their PhD Dissertations], ed. M. Rybka, P. Wiatrowski, Wydział Filologii Polskiej i Klasycznej Uniwersytetu im. Adama Mickiewicza w Poznaniu w koedycji z Wydawnictwem Nauka i Innowacje Sp. z o.o., 2015, pp. 73-83.
33. Danuta Lech-Kirstein, *Nazwy roślin uprawnych w śląskiej toponimii* [The Names of Cultivable Plants in Silesian Toponymy, [in:] *Mikrotoponimy i makrotoponimy w komunikacji i literaturze* [Micro-toponyms and macro-toponyms in Communication and Literature], ed. A. Gałkowski, R. Gliwa, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego, Łódź 2015, pp. 147-158.
34. Danuta Lech-Kirstein, *Nazwy drzew w śląskiej toponimii* [The Names of Trees in Silesian Toponymy], "Onomastica" LIX, 2015, pp. 223-239.
35. Danuta Lech-Kirstein, *Świat wartości w śląskich nazwach geograficznych* [The World of Values in Silesian Geographical Names], "Polonistyka. Innowacje", no. 2, 2015, pp. 103-114; DOI: 10.14746/pi <http://pressto.amu.edu.pl/index.php/pi/article/view/4194/4259>
36. Danuta Lech-Kirstein, *Nazwa własna jako nośnik wartości (na przykładzie śląskich nazw)* [A Proper Name as a Carrier of Values (as Exemplified by Silesian Names)], "Język a Edukacja 4. Wychowanie językowe", ed. J. Nocoń, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Opolskiego, pp. 199-211.

f) Presentation of the scholarly objective of the above mentioned works and the achieved results and their potential application

The main focus of the series of articles entitled *An Onimic Image of Silesia* was on anthroponyms and toponyms, and above all on the local names used in the area for centuries which show how - by means of *proper names* - the inhabitants adjusted to the surrounding world and how they expressed it. In my articles I successively analysed the names referring to various groups of denotations in various aspects: not only from the angle of what they say directly about the objects, but also how they interpret the world, how they inform about the local population's methods of conceptualization, categorization and evaluation. As a result of my research, I acquired an interesting *proprial picture of the Silesian region*, which I am

going to present here. Since no analogical monograph of the *onimic picture of the world* existed, I had to develop the theoretical and methodological basis which subsequently made also a generalization of the results of my work possible.

I published the assumptions, objectives and methodology in the "Onomastica" magazine for onomasts from all over Poland, in an article entitled *Śląskie nazwy geograficzne jako przedmiot badań lingwistyki kulturowej [Silesian Geographical Names as a Subject of Research in Cultural Linguistics]* [2013]. I presented Silesian toponyms in the light of achievements in the field of ethnolinguistics and cognitivism. Making use of the *linguistic picture of the world*, a term well known in these sciences, I presented the name creator's and user's points of view, the folk categorization of the world and man's naive attitude towards reality. I also paid attention to the axiological dimension of onomastic creation and to the fact that names are carriers of values professed by the local population (such as attachment to the land, family, remembrance of the ancestors, religiousness), that they are an expression of the interpretation of the world surrounding us, also that of the past, that they participate in the creation of the picture of the local communities' world and consolidate certain semantic connotations ensuing from the cultural experience of the population, their knowledge or beliefs. Since *nomina propria* present also the close relationship between man and nature and the products of culture, and they are witnesses to numerous historical, political and social facts, they should be taken into account in the study of the *linguistic picture of the world* and become the point of interest of cultural linguistics. Because of my interest in Silesia I decided to choose the proper names of this region for the scholarly analysis.

I presented the details of methodological assumptions as well as a complementation of the state of research on cultural onomastics in my article entitled *Zwrot kulturowy w badaniach onomastycznych [A Cultural Turn in Onomastic Research]* [2015]. I emphasised in the article that while general linguistics was already opening to new methodologies of linguistic phenomena description, in onomastic studies structuralism used to reign for much longer. Post-war onomastics made some attempts to go beyond *strictly* linguistic analyses and to stress the meaning of onomastic material in research on settlement, history of language or dialectology, but it still played an ancillary role in these fields. Very few works would draw on the results of research in other sciences, such as anthropology, ethnology, cultural studies, or cognitivism. Contemporary onomastic studies are more and more open to other fields of studies. After a time of applying the methodology of sociological or psychological studies there is now a time for ethnological and cognitivist studies; works emphasising the importance of extra-linguistic elements, such as the surrounding world and our relations with

it, our manner of perception, conceptualization of reality, profiling of notions and stereotyping, can also be encountered. New proper names require a new approach and setting in a new cultural, social and political reality. Their functioning in the communication and media space requires the consideration of a wide cultural context as well as the usage of a methodology of sciences related to social and media communication. I attempted to follow these rules studying the *onimic picture of Silesia* retained not only in toponyms, but also in other classes of *proper names*.

I collected my material for the reconstruction of the *linguistic picture of the world* on the basis of anthroponymy by excerpting archival materials from the State Archives in Opole (in particular, 19th century register books and guild registers), and on the basis of toponymy and micro-toponymy – from *The Etymological Dictionary of Silesian Geographical Names*³ and from the dictionary card index located in the Silesian Institute in Opole, as well as available monographs and local research results. An important source of micro-toponyms was also *The Card-Index of Toponym Words* belonging to the University of Opole.

Silesia is a borderland, and thus a multi-linguistic and multicultural area. In the course of history it belonged to Poland, Bohemia, Prussia and Germany, therefore its *picture recorded in names* is a mosaic of various influences and cultures. One can find pre-Slavic and Old Polish bases and structures in it, as well as old German lexemes (also dialectal) remaining after the medieval German settlement and subsequent colonizations. Due to the complicated history of Silesia, names are largely bilingual here: Polish and German. All of these contexts render a specific *linguistic picture* of this land.

My monograph, *Nazwy osobowe dziewiętnastowiecznych mieszkańców Opola (ze słownikiem etymologicznym nazwisk)* [*Personal Names of the 19th Century Inhabitants of Opole (with an Etymological Dictionary of Surnames)*] [2004], published on the basis of my doctoral dissertation⁴, was an inspiration for me in my further detailed analyses of Silesian surnames and forenames – carried out in various aspects – which resulted in such articles as *Imiona chrzestne mieszkańców Opolszczyzny w XIX i XX wieku. Analiza językowo-kulturowa* [*Baptismal Names of the Opole Inhabitants of the 19th and 20th Century. A Linguistic and Cultural Analysis*] [2003] and *Imiona chrześcijańskie w nazwiskach mieszkańców Opola z*

³ Cf. *Słownik etymologiczny nazw geograficznych Śląska* [*The Etymological Dictionary of Silesian Geographical Names*], vol. I, ed. S. Rospond, Warszawa–Wrocław 1970; vol. II–III, ed. H. Borek, S. Rospond, Warszawa–Wrocław 1985, 1986; vol. IV, ed. H. Borek, Warszawa–Wrocław 1988; vol. V–XVI, ed. S. Sochacka, Opole 1991–2014.

⁴ My doctoral dissertation was entitled *Nazwy osobowe mieszkańców Opola z XIX wieku* [*Personal Names of the Inhabitants of Opole in the 19th Century*].

XIX wieku [Christian Names in the Surnames of the Opole Inhabitants of the 19th Century] [2006]), and which encouraged me – through the locally used anthroponyms – to observe the world around their holders.

The conclusions ensuing from the publications confirm the opinion that the most popular names of Poles in Opole belong to the common cultural heritage related to Christianity. Until the 18th century the fashionable male forenames were the names of the Evangelists: *Johan* (Polish *Jan*), *Mathias*, *Mathäus* (Polish *Mateusz*), and Apostles: *Andreas* (Polish *Andrzej*), *Thomas* (Polish *Tomasz*), *Peter* (Polish *Piotr*), *Paul* (Polish *Paweł*) and *Jacob* (Polish *Jakub*). Starting in the 19th century, along with the growing influence of particular monastic orders, the most popular names were those called by Jan Stanisław Bystroń “specifically Catholic”: *Franz* (Polish *Franciszek*), *Anton* (Polish *Antoni*) and *Joseph* (Polish *Józef*). Among the female names, until the 19th century the most popular names were: *Anna*, *Marianna* and *Catharina* (Polish *Katarzyna*). Until the end of the 18th century the name *Maria* was reserved for the Blessed Virgin Mary, and therefore it was avoided and substituted with a neutral form *Marianna*. However, in the 19th century *Marie // Maria* was placed on the top position of the frequency list, while the popularity of names rooted in the Christian tradition, such as *Catharina* (Polish *Katarzyna*), *Sophie* (Polish *Zofia*), *Eva* (Polish *Ewa*), *Hedwig* (Polish *Jadwiga*), *Agnes* (Polish *Agnieszka*), *Magdalena* and *Elisabeth* (Polish *Elżbieta*) was declining.

The Silesian people’s strong attachment to the Christian tradition is also visible in surnames, both Polish and German ones. My analysis of the anthroponimic material proved that male names rooted in the Christian tradition, such as: *Jan // Johan*, *Wojciech // Adalbert*, *Paweł // Paul*, *Jakub // Jacob*, *Walenty // Walentin* frequently became the basis for surnames, both nowadays and back in the 19th century.

Due to the multiculturalism and multilingualism of Silesia, in many surnames deriving from so-called Christian names confirmed by me, it is possible to notice distinctive characteristics alien to the Polish language - in particular in the graphy and in structure. The German influences are the strongest, the eastern Slavonic ones are much weaker. For instance, from the name *Jan* (Latin *Joannes*) both typically Polish surnames are derived: *Janek*, *Janik*, *Janiec*, *Janisz*, *Jańczyk*, *Janeczek*, *Janecki*, *Janocha*, *Janowczyk* etc., and many Germanized versions: *Jahn*, *Janaschke*, *Janczik*, *Janetz*, *Janetzka*, *Janetzki*, *Janetzko*, *Janick*, *Janietz*, *Janikulla*, *Janisch*, *Janitza*, *Janke*, *Jantke*, *Januschek*, *Jaschiek*, *Jaschik*, *Jaschiniak*, *Jaschke*, *Jaunich*, *Jennek*, *Jensch*, *Jeschke*, *Joinzik* and *Jona*. There are also surnames based on the German variants of names in the Silesian anthroponymy, such as *Hahn*, *Hanak*, *Hanel*,

Hanisch, Hanke, Hanuschek, Hanusik, Hanzel and *Hointza*. Eastern Slavonic linguistic contacts are rarely confirmed in Silesia, yet some surnames deriving from eastern Slavonic forms also occur here: *Iwan: Iwainiski, Waniäschäfský, Wanjura, Wanke* and *Wanzke*, as may be observed, also in Germanized variants influenced by the German language. Surnames deriving from so-called Christian names in Silesia also have many regional characteristics. *The linguistic picture* of these surnames is a mosaic of various influences.

Similar occurrences can be observed in the appellative anthroponymy, abounding in Silesia, based on common words, usually borrowed from the inhabitants' closest neighbourhood, which were introduced to personal nomenclature along with dialectal characteristics and which present the daily *linguistic world* of their users.

Due to the region's historical and cultural separation from the remaining part of Poland, unique dialectal characteristics were preserved in the proper names, visible at the time of German influences as well as today. These issues are discussed in my article entitled *Nacechowanie dialektalne opolskich nazwisk [Dialectal Characteristics of Opole Surnames]* [2008]. The most frequent phonetic regionalisms in this group of surnames refer both to the vocalism (e.g. vowel inclination: *Garcorz; Gmyrek; Okuń.*; denasalization of nasal vowels: *Otremba, Kampa*), and consonantism (e.g. mazurzenie [substituting dental stops and affricates for alveolar stops and affricates]: *Kocot; Pietruska; Zolondek*; softness anticipation: *Kainka; Komainda*), and they are also clear in the word-formation plane (surname formations with suffixes: *-ok, -orz, -ała, -oń* characteristic for Silesia) and lexical plane (Silesian dialectisms: *Krupa; Kurpierz; Ochlast*). The material analysis proved that despite various historical events the Silesian anthroponymy remained largely unchanged; the dialect became an anchor of Polish culture and an expression of ethnic identity.

Silesia could not, however, stay isolated completely throughout the ages. Native and foreign surnames coexisted here, and adaptation processes accumulated under the influences of both the neighbouring and coexisting languages in the area. I write about it in my article entitled *Adaptacje językowe w śląskiej antroponimii (na przykładzie dziewiętnastowiecznych nazwisk opolan) [Linguistic Adaptations in Silesian Anthroponymy (as Exemplified by the 19th Century Surnames of the Opole Inhabitants)]* [2008] presenting the development of a specific symbiosis of the cultural and linguistic borderland ensuing from population migrations, the constant flow of settlers, officials, soldiers and workers of foreign origin, as well as from business and personal contacts. Therefore, in Silesian surnames one can find traces of previous processes of Latinisation (e.g. *Materna, Perlitius, Petrus*) and Czechisation (e.g. *Homolla, Krotochwil, Prochaska*), and above all, as I have already stated before,

Germanization of Polish names (e.g. *Domke, Fürla, Nedschella*) as well as Polonisation of German names (e.g. *Bruma, Cz Wielung, Hofferek*). These processes occurred at various linguistic levels: from the graphic and phonological stratum, through inflection and word formation, to translations of surnames. Although such adaptations are often difficult to evaluate as they coincide with Silesian dialectal characteristics and German dialectal characteristics on various stages of development, I decided to focus on their characterisation as they constitute the components of the local population's everyday language.

Anthroponyms as the components of the *onimic world of the Silesian population* were the material for my two other texts. In the articles: *Księgi cechowe miasta Opola jako cenne źródło nazw osobowych [The Guild Books of Opole as a Valuable Source of Personal Names]* [2010] and *Nazwiska apelatywne a kultura regionu (na przykładzie Śląska Opolskiego) [Appellative Surnames and the Region's Culture (as Exemplified by Opole Silesia)]*, [2003]) I presented anthroponyms used from the 17th to the 19th century in several aspects: transposing the assumptions of cultural linguistics to the field of onomastics I discussed them as elements of local culture, closely connected with the Silesian everyday reality, and taking into consideration the linguistic forms of craftsmen's names I proved that even at the time of Germanization, in unofficial and official situations the Polish language was used in the area, also in its written form. Research on proper names turned out to be very useful in order to learn more about the national relationships of the Silesian population then.

Appellative surnames and nicknames are the anthroponymes in which the relations of the language and the Silesian folk culture can be most clearly observed. The culture has individual traits distinguishing it from the cultures of the neighbouring areas: it is the co-existence of the peasant culture of rural communities and the working class culture of towns and urban communities. On the basis of appellative surnames one can determine the values professed by the local population, their occupation, and the manner of perceiving, evaluating and naming other people (cf. *Kalemba*: the Silesian dialect *kalemba, kalymba* 'an obese lazy woman, old spinster'; *Mamlök*: the Silesian dialect *mamlök* 'moron'; *Ochlöst*: the Silesian dialect *ochlöst* 'drunkard, boozier'; *Skoluda*: the Silesian dialect *skoluda* 'hoarder, miser'; *Chowanietz*: the Silesian dialect and Old Polish *chowaniec* 'foster child', Czech Chovanec; *Dziewior // Dewor*: Old Polish *dziewierz* 'husband's brother'; *Niemczik // Mimczik*: *Niemczyk* 'German'; *Goniwiecha*: Old Polish *goniwiecha* 'bird catcher, fowler'). People frequently used also their metaphorical and metonymic thinking skills for the purpose of creating names, comparing man to various elements of the surrounding reality (e.g. *Kurpiers // Kurpiersch*: the Silesian dialect *kurpiers* 'a type of fish'; *Kotzot*: Old Polish and dialect *koczot* 'rooster');

Tarnke: Old Polish *tarnka* 'blackthorne'; *Mierswa*: *mierzwa* 'tousled, crumpled straw used for bedding material', 'dung, manure'; *Leja // Lea*: *leja* 'torrential rain, downpour'; *Kolodziej*: *kołodziej* 'a craftsman making cart wheels, wheelwright'; *Kurschniers*: *kuśnierz*). In Silesian onomastics the appellative type constitutes almost 2/3 of the entire onomastic resource. It is an impressive amount as compared to the general Polish onomastics. The Silesian appellative surname is a part of the system of Polish surnames as one which draws on the patterns of national culture and is simultaneously original and unique. Its specificity results from the historical need to be separated from other nations and become closed to the influences of foreign cultures. The attachment to the ancestors' language, to traditional rituals and their persistent cultivation influenced the presence of marks of antiquity and archaisms in the surnames.

As it can be noticed, while studying the *onimic picture of the world* of a region its entire history should be taken into consideration, because all of the proper names have been developing since ancient times. With respect to Silesia, such information was provided in my article published in Lviv, entitled *Історія Сілезії крізь призму географічних назв* (*The History of Silesia from the Perspective of Geographical Names*) in which I presented the complicated history of Silesia and the changes of names taking place here throughout centuries. The history of Silesia justified the existence of pre-Indo-European elements in the names of rivers and mountains, and subsequently the existence of German, Czech and Lusatian characteristics in the local names (and anthroponyms), as I attempted to prove in my publication. The geographical names accompanying the Silesian people became evidence of the region's turbulent history and simultaneously a source of information concerning the region. The changing fortunes caused that ever since the 10th century the linguistic form of the *proper names* had been changing, new names appeared together with new rulers, and sometimes the authorities used them to manipulate the local population. Today, the coexistence of Polish and German names in Silesia arouses many controversies, but it also bears witness to the times when one refers to natural assimilation, finds value in diversity, multi-ethnicity and multilingualism, and defends the rights of national minorities inhabiting the area.

I developed my interest in the *proprial picture of the Silesian people's world* in my subsequent publications analysing oikonyms and anoikonyms, supported by the opinions of researchers studying the *linguistic picture of the world* who consider proper names to be important determinants of the picture of reality.

I analysed the Silesian geographical names basing on their first historical records, the closest to the onimic act. I did not analyse the numerous German baptisms and the subsequent Polish changes of names after WWII, although I realized that they might also enrich the *proprial picture of Silesia*.

I paid much attention to toponyms, in particular to local names referring to fields, meadows, barren lands, ravines, cart-tracks, etc., often functioning in small communities as micro-toponyms. To supplement the information concerning names accompanying the Silesian people I also used oikonyms (names of villages, settlements, colonies) which are frequently old local names, as well as other geographical names, such as hydronyms and oronyms. For the purpose of reconstructing the *onimic picture of Silesia*, however, the most interesting names are the old rural ones, as it is in them that the processes of categorization and the folk (naive) perception of the world are evident.

Analysing the material, on the basis of a known result (name) I attempted to find its probable cause (motif), which was not always possible. *Nomina propria* can be discussed from various points of view and various perspectives. From the creator's point of view, we decide to accept their manner of thinking of the denotation, the selection of characteristics that are to be highlighted in the name. Sometimes, however, it is possible to observe a significant difference between the creator's point of view and the user's point of view, and therefore, with time, names may be carriers of completely different connotations, and they may become semantically empty, as well.

The starting point for my considerations of the *linguistic picture of the world* included in the toponyms was a thesis that contrary to the traditional classifications placing them in the deictic language system, proper names have their own meanings. I assumed that at the time of giving a name to something, the creator had some meaning in mind, which could subsequently be updated by the recipient at the time of its using. This was possible because *proper names* were usually created from a ready "lexical formation material", most frequently an appellative one, which resulted in the existence of a formal relation between the proper name and the common word that became its basis. This relation can be translated into a semantic plane, as the motivational relation between the foundation word and the particular name is strongly felt.

These relations can be especially noticed in micro-toponyms which – due to the fact that they are based on appellatives deriving from the population's closest neighbourhood – carry a lot of information of their life. This group of names served me to develop the next levels of the *onimic picture of the world*. I focused on topographical names referring to the

fauna and flora, and I prepared several publications describing the semantic field of toponymic words (topolexemes) concerning the names of species of birds, trees, herbs and cultivable plants.

The first article in this cycle was presented in Ostrava: *Nazwy ptaków w polskiej toponimii (przyczynek do onomastyki kulturowej) [The Names of Birds in Polish Toponymy (a Contribution to Cultural Onomastics)]* [2010]; I extended my research area to the entire territory of Poland in it. This article was very important for my subsequent cultural studies as it presented the most significant elements of cultural analysis and its scope. The onomastic material proved that the most productive onomastic bases were the following: *kaczka* [duck] (cf. the names: *Kaczka, Kaczawo, Kaczkowo*), *gęś* [goose] (cf. the names: *Gąsawka, Gąsin, Gąsek*), *bocian* [stork] (cf. the names: *Bocian, Bociany, Bocianiec*), *krak* [crow] (cf. the names: *Kruczyna, Kruki Przednie, Kruki Zadnie*), i.e. bird species considered to be prototypes in our community. However, names of species unknown to the average Polish language users were also preserved in the names of rural micro-communities, e.g. *łozówka* / marsh warbler, *kwiczół* / fieldfare, *kulon* / stone curlew, *pluszcz* / water crane, *osetnik* / citril finch and *żołna* / bee-eater. Onomastic bases deriving from the names of bird species show regional diversification: for instance, in the Warmian-Masurian territory, there are more names of aquatic and marsh bird species in the micro-toponymy (*czapla* / heron, *nur* / diver, *gągól* / golden-eye, *kulik* / curlew, *rybitwa* / common tern), while in the mountains of Silesia - names of birds of prey (e.g. *jastrząb* / hawk, *kania* / kite, *sokół* / falcon, *sęp* / vulture, also in the German version, cf. the names: *Geiersberg* 'sępia góra' / 'vulture mountain'; *Habichtshübel* 'jastrzębie wzgórze' / 'hawk hill'; *Kania* (*Kania Berg*); *Falkenhain* 'sokoli gaj' / 'falcon grove').

A study of bird-name-based macro- and micro-toponyms from the territory of Poland led me to the conclusion that for the purpose of onomastic creation man used appellative species names (or according to taxonomy - names of families) rather than generic names considered by scientists to be the basic language level. A primitive society considers *generic taxa* to be the basic level, thus creating a folk biological classification (cf. Berlin studies). The choice of particular toponymic bases depends on man's attitude to a bird (its usefulness, level of sympathy, aesthetics), as well as the semantic connotations connected with a particular bird species. The choice of many bird species as the bases of proper names shows man's attitude towards the surrounding nature, and his identification and close contact with nature. An anthropocentric conceptualization of the world is also evident in such categorization. There is a shift of the analysis of *proper names* towards their creator and interpreter, and the manner of

perceiving a selected fragment of reality in the category of a fixed “mental pattern” is demonstrated. Man perceives the world subjectively, from one’s own perspective, and thus his creations are characterized by latitude and selectivity. To tame the surrounding universe and to make it more friendly, man calls objects using appellatives that are the most important, well known, familiar and native to him. This fragment of the *onimic picture of Poland*, including Silesia, turned out to be an important element of the toponymic analysis.

Other scholars’ interest in my cultural monograph of proper names resulted in the publication of another article in this field in Presov (Slovakia), now focusing on toponyms deriving from the names of medicinal plant species. In the article entitled *Nazwy ziół w polskiej toponimii [The Names of Herbs in Polish Toponymy]* [2012] I argued that the choice of such unnoticeable plants for the purpose of onomastic creation proves that the selection is not only based on the occurrence of certain plant or animal species in a particular area, but also on man’s attitude towards them. For centuries, herbs have been considered to be sacred, having magic and medicinal powers, being an effective remedy against spells, charms, spirits, demons and illnesses as well as misery brought about by the powers of evil. The productivity of bases deriving from herbal names preserved in the toponymy points to the importance of the plants in Polish folk culture. They were perceived in the sphere of their usefulness and practicality, they were consumed on a daily basis, and their unique taste was appreciated (for instance, *horseradish, peppermint, raspberry, blueberry or carrot*), but also, or perhaps above all, they were used in the ritualistic and religious sphere, as they had distinctive medicinal and magic properties. This exceptional valuation was reflected in the onomastic creation; the following bases enjoyed special popularity: *pokrzywa // koprzywa / nettle, bez // chebzie / lilac, jemiola // imiola / mistletoe and chwoszcz // skrzyp / horsetail* (cf. the names: *Koprzywa, Koprzywnica; Bzianka, Chebzie; Imielin, Jamielnik; Choszczak, Skrzypie*). It may be concluded that these plants were particularly valued in magic and medicinal practices of Poles, also among the population of rural Silesia.

Another article in the cultural studies series was entitled *Nazwy roślin uprawnych w śląskiej toponimii [The Names of Cultivable Plants in Silesian Toponymy]* [2015]. I limited the research material to Silesia in it in order to thoroughly present the agricultural character of the land preserved in toponymy. An analysis of the names confirmed the fact that for the inhabitants of the agricultural Silesia cereals were of special importance, as the largest number of *proper names* derived from them (cf. the names: *Jagielnia; Prośniska; Żytno; Haferberg* ‘owsiana góra’ / ‘oats mountain’; *Weizenberg* ‘pszeniczna góra’ / ‘wheat mountain’). Cereals were the fundamental food of the rural population, and subsequently they

were used in industry. The occurrence of names of cultivable plant species in the toponymy is not only connected with their cultivation, but also with their symbolical and magical meaning. In various cultures and times cereals symbolized the gift of life, abundance, fertility, good harvest and wealth. Both ears and grains were the symbols of blessing and resurrection. The people of Silesia, similarly to the pagan Slavic tribes, celebrated holidays connected with the seasons of the year. These were seasonal holidays, emphasising the importance of changes taking place in nature, the objective of which was to influence the successful harvest, ensure good health or protection from drought or hail. Another group of names deriving from cultivable plants are toponyms and micro-toponyms (in particular, mountain names) comprising names of special industrial crop species, which confirm the historical existence of hop and vine plantations in Silesia (cf. the names: *Chmiele*; *Chmielnik*; *Hopfenber* 'chmielna góra'/ 'hop mountain'; *von Wyna*, today *Winów*; *Wein Berg* 'winna góra'/ 'vine mountain'). The productivity of bases comprising the names of fruit tree species and other orchard plants emphasises their importance in everyday life, folk medicine and industry (cf. the names: *Jablonka*; *Gablonwald*; *Birnbäumel*, today *Gruszczeczka*; *Kirschberg*, Polish *Wiśnica*). The use of agricultural terminology in the local names as well as the rich phraseology and paremiology connected with it stress the special relation of man and nature and show the development of the *onimic picture of the world*. Observation of the changing seasons of the year, the growth, ripening and harvesting of particular plants allowed simple men to draw more extensive conclusions concerning human nature. Man explained certain natural phenomena, anthropomorphising them in order to domesticate the surrounding reality.

The cultural studies were continued in my article published in "Onomastica" entitled *Nazwy drzew w śląskiej toponimii [The Names of Trees in Silesian Toponymy]* [2015] in which I presented the methods of describing appellative names and indicated the ways of categorizing reality in the toponyms. As it is proved by research on the *linguistic picture of the world*, trees are of huge importance in the language and culture. Ethnological studies confirm that apart from man's cognitive-interpretative attitude (a tree as an element of landscape) and housekeeping attitude (a tree as a source of raw material) a mythical-religious attitude can be distinguished as well (a tree as an embodiment of the power of the Universe). There is not much evidence for the existence of this attitude in the onomastic material in Silesia, but the thesis concerning the magic function of trees can be confirmed by such names as *Hexen-Eiche*: German *die Hexe* 'witch'; *Sebyneyche*: *Siebeneichen* 'seven oaks'. Many folk beliefs (including the Silesian folk beliefs) concerning oaks are well known; in the provided examples the magic quality is also stressed by the number "7" and by naming the

object *The Witch Oak*, as in the Silesian folk beliefs oaks were used by witches for their evil purposes.

The distinction between scientific and colloquial taxonomy is particularly visible in this field. The most frequent arboreal bases in Silesian toponyms (*oak, birch, alder and beech*) confirm that these sets belong to the basic level of categorization, and simultaneously they are prototype names of trees. Research results prove that the colloquial picture of the world is definitely flattened, deprived of certain levels. What occurs in it is valuation, alien to science, and a subjective anthropocentric picture of the world. Knowledge of the animal and plant world is selective and results above all from personal contacts with nature. John R. Taylor refers to the categories as ordinary (natural) ones - based on prototype examples the foundation of which is the way in which people perceive and usually influence their environment.

A morphological analysis of arboreal names and the appellatives being their bases allowed me to draw more extensive conclusions concerning the categorization and conceptualization of the world. An important category allowing man to grasp the surrounding reality is collectivity: what is numerous is noticeable. Another important thing is also size: in the onimic material we can observe diminutive suffixes (cf. the names *Butschek, Lipka, Dębiec*), which additionally can have an emotional meaning. Frequently, suffixes and entire morphological components refer to the named object: this is particularly characteristic for German onomastics (cf. *Aspen Bererg* 'aspen mountain'; *Buchwalde* 'beech forest'; *Eich Fuhrwerk* 'oak farm'; *Tannenhof* 'fir court'; *Fich Graben* 'spruce ditch'; *Birkenbach* 'birch brook'; hybr. *Olschina wiesen* 'alder meadow'). The use of adjective forms for the characterization of an object is typical for the Polish language (*Brzessowa; Die Dombrawy; Olschowy Dolek; Schwierkowa Poremba*). In both languages tendencies to locate objects in space in prepositional forms are visible (cf. *Pod Bukowinami; Ku Lipie; Za dąbrowem; An der Dambina; Auff dem Brzezowiska; Unter Grabie*).

Names deriving from the names of plant and animal species carry information about the surrounding world in a wider cultural context, based on folklore texts, idiomatic expressions and proverbs in which Silesia is abounding. One can see in them the folk vision of the world the centre of which is man. This unique anthropocentrism is reflected in toponyms deriving from the names of herbs, cultivable plants, animals, etc. On the basis of proper names one can see the *picture of the Silesian people's world*, in which everything is subjected to man. The earth is particularly respected by man since it is the feeder, birds

connect heaven and earth and benefit man, plants help man to recover from illnesses, protecting him from disasters and misery.

A description of a language (including proper names) is thus a description of its users' way of thinking, a reflection of man's emotional and intellectual attitude to particular fragments of extralinguistic reality. The meaning of a word is not a true reflection of reality, but conscious emphasising of these characteristics of an object which seem important to the user - a Silesian - and diminishing or rejecting others.

As I have already mentioned, on the basis of proper names one can reconstruct the system of values professed by the local population and observe its attachment to the "little fatherland". In my article entitled *Nazwa własna jako nośnik wartości (na przykładzie śląskich nazw) [A Proper Name as a Carrier of Values (as Exemplified by Silesian Names)]* [2015] I proved that names were and still are a value in themselves, which can be confirmed by changes of names (e.g. re-naming monks in the rite of passage), surnames (perceiving certain surnames to be humiliating or worse than others) and local names (for instance, in connection with the change of statehood). Furthermore, names can be carriers of values: they may comprise an axiological charge and thus be a reflection of the system of our ancestors' values, which is illustrated by the anthroponyms functioning in Silesia: names, surnames and nicknames (cf. positive valuation in Old Polish and foreign names, e.g. *Sławomir* 'praising peace', *Grzegorz* – from Greek 'ardent, alert', negative valuation in nicknames and nickname-type surnames, e.g. *Frajer, Dubiel, Grzesznik*).

With respect to the axiological aspect, geographical names have so far been the least analysed group of Silesian *proper names*, and therefore I decided to analyse them thoroughly. The analysis proved that toponyms consolidate the following valuation: for the local population of both Polish and German origins 'good' meant "useful, leading to wealth, beautiful, sacred, native" (*Bogata Łąka, Schönberg, Heiligerberg, Polska Nowa Wieś, Piekary Śląskie*), while 'bad' meant 'useless, poor, troublesome, wicked' (*Nędza, Niekarmia, Neusorge, Galgen-Berg, Höllenberg*).

Frequently, proper names demonstrate forgotten values, pushed into the background in the modern world, such as nature, religion, family and work, and although they do not carry directly any positive or negative valuation, they are references to valued elements of the world around which Silesian people used to live and which were used by them for the purpose of onomastic creation. I write about these values in my article entitled *Świat wartości w śląskich nazwach geograficznych [The World of Values in Silesian Geographical Names]* [2015].

My research on onomastics proves that profound religiousness occupies the first place in the hierarchy of the Silesian people's values. Scientists admit that apart from the language religion was the "chief factor of the Silesian community's self-determination in the process of developing an awareness of ethnic distinctiveness and national identity." Religion can be seen in all classes of proper names, starting from the choice of names, in particular saints' names, and ending with toponyms. One can find examples of geographical cultural and commemorative names in Silesia strictly connected with the sphere of *sacrum*: with the cult of saints, places of pilgrimages and personal prayers (e.g. *Góra św. Anny* [St. Anne's Mountain], *Święta Katarzyna* [St. Catherine], *Trójca Święta* [the Holy Trinity], *Krzyże* [Crosses]). Of course, describing religious values, one cannot forget the ancient pre-Slavic religion with its main focus on a cult of the powers of nature. The difficult living conditions of the primaeval people taught them to see a supernatural, divine power in natural phenomena. Man attributed this power to the elements (sun, sky, thunderbolt and fire), as well as certain parts of animated nature such as trees, bushes and animals (particularly birds). A simple man believed that they will help him in his existence, ensure good harvests and successful stock breeding, and lend him all that's good. This was reflected in the regional population's creation of many toponyms deriving from animal and plant bases (e.g. *Falkenheim* 'falcon grove'; hybr. *Kania Berg*; *Gawronki*) (*Sosnowa*; *Lopienica*; *Marzanka*; *Malin*).

Work was also an extremely important value for people in Silesia. It was the foundation of the social ethos and it influenced a dignified honest life, and required reliability, diligence, solidarity and a sense of responsibility for others. The *proper names* tell us about it: important agricultural tools are preserved in the cultural names (e.g. *Pluźnica Mała*: plow), respected professions are mentioned in ancillary and vocational names (e.g. *Oracze*, *Lagiewniki*: originally *lagiewnicy* 'maltsters making beer in vats').

Giving a father's or ancestor's name or surname to a settlement in patronymic and family names pointed directly to the family's value. In fact, all patronymic names inform us about the role of the family's head (cf. *Adamowice*; *Bogdanowice*; *Długomilowice*), and the traces of family settlement point to the founder of the family (cf. *Czarnowąsy*; *Łabędy*; *Pludry*).

A summary of my research is presented in my article entitled *Obraz wsi w śląskiej toponimii* [The Image of a Village in Silesian Toponymy] [2014], in which I concentrated on a reconstruction of the manners of categorization of reality and the folk vision of the Silesian people's world comprised in macro-toponyms and micro-toponyms. A synthetic comparison

of onomastic types showed that apart from the picture of nature described thoroughly in my previous publications toponyms preserve the picture of the region's culture together with facts related to the old material and social life of the inhabitants: the farming methods (*Kwarta, Łazy, Niwki*), the slash-and-burn technique (*Zory, Wędzina, Opaleniec*), animal breeding (*Bykowina, Owczarek, Kobyłno*), former vocations of the population (*Łagiewniki, Psary, Rybnik*), social and legal relations (*Daniec, Ligota, Narok*) and spiritual culture (*Bosacze, Kościelniki, Krzyżula*). An analysis of the onimic material proved the importance of the creator's and user's points of view in the interpretation of names. What is irreverent or offensive for the contemporary recipient of *proper names* might have been neutral for the Silesian people at the time of giving the name to an object (e.g. *Kup* < *kupa* 'hill'), or useful (e.g. *Gnojna*) or referring to actual disasters and misery (e.g. *Biadacz, Głodne, Nędza, Przezchlebie* < *without bread*).

An analysis of oikonims and anoikonims allowed me to reach conclusions concerning the onomastics of the entire region. First of all, Silesia is a place where the sense of regional identity is particularly important. Toponyms and micro-toponyms are special evidence thereof. They preserve many dialectal characteristics (e.g. dialect *jastrząby, damb*) and pre-Slavic and Old Polish relics (e.g. *Grząb* < Old Polish *grzęba* 'elevation, hill', *Bardno* < **bardno* 'hill'). Secondly, although the picture of the Silesian village is a Polish-German one, it is also coherent and assimilated. There are no significant differences in the Poles' and Germans' perception of the world.

My publication entitled *Śląsk z perspektywy nazw własnych [Silesia from the Perspective of Proper Names][2011]* also has a synthetic character; against a wide background I demonstrated how proper names reflect the *linguistic and cultural picture* of the region. I presented the state of onomastic research in the article, with consideration of the Silesian-Czech, Silesian-Lusatian and Silesian-German borderland. My research area was very complicated linguistically, culturally and historically, therefore to understand the processes taking place there information concerning the research of the borderland was essential. Apart from foreign linguistic characteristics, many phonetic and lexical features known from pre-Slavic or Old Polish languages can be found in the research material, for instance in the surnames: *Giemulla* // *Giemula* (: **gom*//**gъm* = Polish *Giem*, cf. Russian *gom* 'hałas'); *Globisch* // *Globisz* (: pers. name *Globa* < Old Polish and Silesian dialect *globić* 'compress, join; take care'); *Kudalle* // *Kudala* (: personal name *Kud(a)* < pre-Slavic **kudjā*, **kuditi*, Polish dialect *przekudzić* 'spoil, destroy') or in oikonims: *Bagrówka* < pre-Slavic **bagrъ*, Polish *bagr* // *bagier* 'purple', 'something bent'; *Bindużka* < *binduga* Old

Polish 'place by the river'; or: *Czukałówka, Czuky* < *pre-Slavic *čukъ, čuka* 'rocky elevation, hill'.

From the perspective of proper names Silesia appears as a borderland area in the polylogue of various cultures and languages. Proper names are evidence for the existence of early medieval Slavic culture in the area, and subsequently – as I have already stated before – foreign influences, in particular Czech and German, lasting for many centuries. The effect of a historical change of national status, migrations and displacements is a mosaic of native and foreign languages not found elsewhere. A specific Silesian sub-culture protecting its own religion, tradition and language becomes a form of defence against foreign influences.

Previous onomastic studies concerning toponyms had a predominantly structural character and did not take into account interdisciplinary studies. I attempted to fill the gap with my series of articles entitled *Onimiczny obraz Śląska [An Onimic Picture of Silesia]*.

The presentation of the *onimic picture of Silesia* constitutes also a part of very important regional and local studies, highlighting the significance of the “little fatherland” and focusing on the national and regional identity. Due to the historical isolation of Silesia many archaic formations, words or their meanings not included in dictionaries, yet important for lexicon supplements of the entire Poland were preserved in the Silesian dialect and onymy.

Finally I would like to add that apart from its purely scientific value Silesian studies may also have a practical application. In my article entitled *Regionalne aspekty onomastyki w dydaktyce szkolnej i akademickiej (na przykładzie Śląska) [Regional Aspects of Onomastics in School and Academic Didactics (in Silesia)]* [2014] I presented numerous didactic problems to be dealt with in Polish language, history, geography and general education classes as well as in tertiary education didactics in order to make the young people familiar with the place in which they live and provide them with information concerning the *onimic picture of the world* of the former inhabitants of the region.

5. Presentation of other scholarly and research achievements

Following my PhD degree I published 30 works, including my own monograph, a co-authored monograph and 28 academic papers (11 of which were published in various magazines and 4 of which were published abroad). Moreover, I published 4 academic conference reports in academic magazines and I was the author of a linguistic expertise for the Supreme Court of the Republic of Lithuania (unpublished).

The articles outside the series refer to the following research areas:

- **Contemporary eponymy and chrematonymy**

Contemporary onomastics is a developing discipline searching for new methodologies of description. I became interested in contemporary chrematonymy and eponymy, rarely described before, set in a specific political and cultural reality. The publication of two texts: „*No to mamy Kaczogród*”. *O wtórnym wykorzystywaniu nazw własnych* [*So We Have Kaczogród. On the Secondary Use of Proper Names*] [2009] and *Rola akronimów w komentarzu politycznym* [*The Role of Acronyms in Political Commentaries*] [2009] was influenced by an interesting political context. The subject of my analysis was the proper names and onomastic derivatives which appeared in the Internet discourse in connection with the presidential elections in November 2005. I was interested in the unofficial discourse as linguistic creativity could be the most distinctly seen in it. The presidential elections offered a variety of linguistic ideas, since the candidates' forenames and surnames called up appellative associations. A formal relation between an appellative building material and the names derived from it was translated to a semantic plane and thus for the Polish language users the names were semantically transparent. The president's and his twin brother's (the leader of the winning party) surname called up associations with the appellative *kaczka*, *kaczor* [*duck*, *drake*] (cf. *kaczki bliźniaczkil twin ducks*). Furthermore, the forename of the second presidential candidate, *Donald Tusk*, was unanimously associated with the name of the protagonist of cartoons for children – *Donald Duck*. Thus, the comparison of both candidates – *Kaczor and Donald*, and consequently naming the country in which they were to rule *Kaczogród* [*Duckburg*] or *Kaczoland* [*Duckland*] seemed quite obvious. The eponyms made use of a stereotypical perception of the world and usually offered negative valuation, cf. *kacze lapki* [*duck legs*], *kaczy kuper* [*duck rump*] (comicality), *kacza grypa* [*duck flu*] (threat), *kaczyzm*, *kaczysta* [*untranslatable words*] (fanatism). The meaning of the analysed names became clear in a specific social and cultural context, within a specific system of values.

The latter article was an analysis of the acronyms of the names of the leading political parties: *PiS* (Prawo i Sprawiedliwość - Law and Justice), *PO* (Platforma Obywatelska - Civic Platform), *LiD* (Lewica i Demokraci - Left and Democrats), *LPR* (Liga Polskich Rodzin - League of Polish Families) and their coalitions *POPiS*, *POLiD*, *LiS* (League of Polish Families and Self-Defence) and it presented their role in the official and unofficial political commentary. An analysis of acronyms in political commentaries allowed the identification of several fundamental functions of using proper names: firstly, it is definitely a form of

linguistic aggression consisting in venting negative feelings, such as frustration, anger, discontent, etc. – and thus reaching *katharsis* (cf. Stop lying to all Poles, MPs! [untranslatable]), trying to do damage to the recipient by diminishing his/her status (cf. *Pic i Szopka* [Bull and Farce]; *Porażka Obywatelska* [Civic Failure]; *Pierdoty i Sieroty* [Old Farts and Wimps]; *Libacja i Degeneraci* [Carousal and Degenerates]), profaning the *sacrum*, provoking and shocking the recipient by means of linguistic expressions which are subject to particularly strong taboo (cf. profanations of clergymen – *Liga Pachółków Rydzyka* [Rydzysk's League of Lackeys], and numerous vulgarisms – *Popieprzeni i Skretyniali* [Screwed up and Brain-Dead]; Little folk cannot accept their defeat, but we piss on them), satisfaction from someone's failure (cf. Well, some truth about these nutties; the flat-footed fellows thought they would win in the reins, and after the elections they woke up with their hand in the chamber pot and irritated, they thrash about feverishly (...) *Freaks*; And that is what you have been looking for so long, *pissoirs*). In a proper context, acronyms may also stimulate one to refute an attack (cf. *Say sorry and Sod off*) and socialize and integrate a group (cf. A plot, people; I'm out of it!!!).

On the other hand, linguistic creation may simply be an artistic expression or it may perform a ludic function involving the opponent and wider recipient in some kind of an intellectual play (e.g. „POLiDowania godne”; „POPiS-owa koalicja”; „chytry LiS”; „i po PO” [untranslatable expressions]). Common complaining and common playing, disturbing the habits or violating taboo areas, wake the society up from some “inertia” and “boredom” and they are an inseparable element of political commentary.

Contemporary *chrematonymy* has become another research area in which proper names are perceived as meaningful. The articles: *Znaczenie konotacyjne i asocjacyjne nazw własnych (na przykładzie nazw drinków)* [The Connotative and Associative Meaning of Proper Names (as Exemplified by the Names of Drinks)] [2011] and *Kreacje nazewnicze w nazwach drinków* [Onomastic Creations in the Names of Drinks] [2011] presented the emotive (*Suffering Fool, Fallen Angel*), metaphorical (*Bloody Mary, Mimosa*), connotative (*Pink Kitty, Black Pearl*) and associative (*The Last Mango in Paris, Not Tonight, Josephine*) meanings of names. I analysed the names of drinks on several planes: their structure, semantics and pragmatics. In my research I reached the conclusion that a *chrematonym*'s semantic transparency influences the marketing function of the product. An effective proper name is a metaphorical name, best of all the most suggestive, ingenious and innovative. The function of the newly created names is to shock; advertising through a scandal. Such names as *Soczek z Foczek* [Seal Juice], *Blue Motherfucker*, *Dzielnicy* [Community Policeman],

Ojciec Dyrektor [Father Director], *Nieszpory* [Vespers], *Maria Panna* [Virgin Mary] may become more fortunate and effective as those names which by violating the linguistic and cultural taboo diverge from the standard and gain the characteristics of linguistic deviations.

Because of my interest in contemporary chrematonymy many licencjat [undergraduate] papers focusing on these aspects have been written under my supervision (e.g. names of tea, holiday resorts, cosmetic, confectionery, alcohol, tobacco products, etc.).

- **Literary onomastics**

Another area of my research is literary onomastics. My interest in proper names in literature for children and adolescents was expressed in the article entitled *Nazwy własne w kreacji światów możliwych (na przykładzie trylogii o Miki Molu Richarda A. Antoniusa)* [Proper Names in the Creation of Possible Worlds (as Exemplified in the Trilogy on Miki Mol by Richard A. Antonius)] [2010]. The world presented in the trilogy *Miki Mol and the Magical Time Machine*, *Miki Mol and the Horrible Monstercoat* and *Miki Mol and the Tooth Fungi* gains its form due to local names, personal names co-create the protagonists and chrematonyms highlight the special importance of certain objects. The author invents neologisms modelled on those invented by children, makes use of various associations, metaphors and connotations, hoping that children's unrestricted imagination will allow them to decipher at least some of the meanings. The writer is aware of the fact that a young reader adopts a veristic attitude first, i.e. treats the presented world as one theoretically possible, introducing a direct, literal and logical knowledge of reality (allegedly) reconstructed, and only later grows up to adopt an open-minded attitude, i.e. one oriented towards the creative qualities of a work. Therefore, he wants to make the world presented in literature a possible world for a child, one that is internally consistent and does not break the principle of excluded middle. In the trilogy, the plot is set in a land similar to a real contemporary city and the world's history is identical with that of the real world. Proper names are an important linguistic element making use of well known vocabulary and grammar rules in order to authenticate the world, to create an illusion that everything is logical and arranged. Then, the fictitious world of *Filobilonia*, the rococo world of *Bifrulandia*, the sympathetic *Konfiturcja* and merry *Kalamburgia* will be a possible world for a child.

My academic contacts with the outstanding creators of the Opole school of stylistics as well as my involvement in the editorial work in the "Stylistics" magazine resulted in my articles in the field of stylistic onomastics: *Onomastyka literacka a onomastyka stylistyczna*

[*Literary Onomastics and Stylistic Onomastics*] (accepted for printing in "Stylistics") and "*Śląska muzyka słów*". *Nazwy własne w „Pierwszej polce” Horsta Bienka* [*Silesian Music of Words. Proper Names in Horst Bienek's "The First Polka"*](accepted for printing in Russian in Moscow).

- **Teaching Polish as a Foreign Language**

A very important experience in my work as a Polish language teacher with foreigners was the monograph entitled *Podstawy gramatyki polskiej wraz z tekstami i ćwiczeniami. Kompendium dla kursów języka i nauki własnej (Grundlagen der polnischen Grammatik mit Texten und Übungen. Ein Kompendium für Sprachkurse und zum Selbststudium)* [*The Rudiments of Polish Grammar with Texts and Exercises. A Compendium for Language Courses and Self-Learning*] [2007], written under the supervision of outstanding Austrian and Polish scholars: Ingeborg Ohnheiser and Stanisław Gajda as the third (after the Czech and Slovak ones) handbook of Polish grammar intended for foreign students learning the cognate Slavic languages. I wrote three chapters of the monograph: *Graphy and pronunciation. Sound alternations*, p. 21–31; *Pronoun*, p. 155–167 and *Word formation*, p. 227–248. Together with the co-author, Marzena Makuchowska, we presented the guidelines of this type of handbooks in the article entitled *Syntezy gramatyk: polskiej, słowackiej i czeskiej dla slawistów niemieckojęzycznych* [*Syntheses of Polish, Slovak and Czech Grammars for German-speaking Slavonic Scholars*] [2010]. The chief objective of the modern concept of language learning (*EuroCom*) is developing the receptive competency which does not teach the skill of speaking a foreign language but allows one to understand texts with the help of dictionaries and making use of the cognation with already known languages from the same linguistic family. Three handbooks synthesising the Polish, Czech and Slovak grammars treated as a series help the adepts in Slavonic studies to get insight into the three languages' structures by making comparisons, finding similarities and observing the specificity of each of them. The method of teaching proposed by the programme distinguishes seven hierarchically ordered levels in which elements known in every newly acquired language belonging to the same typological group can be found. First, there are internationalisms, then vocabulary common for all the Slavic language group, then cognation between the words of particular languages making it possible to identify the counterparts of phonic groups, demonstrating the relations between pronunciation and the spelling of words, basic syntax structures characteristic for Slavic languages, basic morphological and syntax rules, and, finally, word formation rules.

In the second stage of the teaching process the *EuroCom* method allows students to follow their own interest to a larger extent and to focus on one language of the group which has earlier been filtered in the above mentioned manner. The most important part is the description of linguistic characteristics of pronunciation, spelling and word structure, and subsequently the acquisition of a list of so-called lexical minimum of a language.

The Polish grammar compendium intended for the German-speaking recipient was the third handbook in the series that developed the receptive competences of Slavic language users. It combined a systematic and comprehensive presentation of Polish grammar with exercises and texts.

- **Silesian dialectology**

The field in which I was gaining my scholarly experience was my work on the *Dictionary of Silesian Dialects* : ordering the file, complementing and scanning the sources, writing texts in index cards, developing indexes and working on the dictionary entries. My interest in the Silesian language and culture helped me to work on this project as well. Working on dictionary entries required the knowledge of contemporary and historical Silesian linguistic and cultural realities, substantial preparation of dialectal phenomena, and a selection of synonyms and idiomatic expressions in which a particular word appeared. My task consisted also in developing definitions related to the actual meaning, morphological and grammatical, and sometimes also etymological ones. In the part dedicated to forms, the phonetic performance variants and inflectional properties of words had to be discussed. I found a lot of this information in the *Card Index of the Silesian Dialects Dictionary*, but a lot of it had to be complemented or reconstructed as well. Furthermore, all meanings and forms had to be documented and their territorial scope had to be specified. The effect of the work was the two volumes of the dictionary with 742 entries made by me (cf. *Słownik gwar śląskich [The Silesian Dialects Dictionary*, ed. B. Wyderka, vol. IX (Faber–Gadzior), the entries: Ferlag–Forwalter, Opole 2007, pp. 65–118; *Słownik gwar śląskich [The Silesian Dialects Dictionary*, ed. B. Wyderka, group of authors: M. Izykowska, K. Kleszcz, D. Lech-Kirstein, L. Przymuszała, B. Wyderka, vol. X (Gadziora–Gościna), the entries: Głacarz-Gnojenie, Opole 2008, pp. 91–144: in total 116 pages). An analysis of Silesian lexemes allowed me to better understand the cultural and linguistic aspects included in proper names.