
Mikołaj Rudnicki: A forgotten linguistic legacy

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The linguistic contribution of Mikołaj Rudnicki (1881-1978), fairly diversified in its contents, is still today of relevance to general, Indo-European, and Slavic linguistics, in particular, to Slavic onomastics and etymology. The primary concern of this paper focuses on his general linguistic ideas. However, the faithful presentation of these ideas presupposes an adequate translation of the metalanguage he used into the metalanguage with which we are familiar today. And this is not always an easy task.

The most transparent presentation of Rudnicki's linguistic legacy seems to be in terms of the theories which emerge from his works. The theories briefly outlined in this paper concern the following domains:

- (i) the ontological status of language,
- (ii) the reproductive/reproduced aspect of language entities,
- (iii) the foundations of psychophonetics,
- (iv) diacrisis and phonology,
- (v) the diachronic mutability of language,
- (vi) principles of phone assimilation, fusion, and metathesis.

However, the most exact and demanding presentation of Rudnicki's theories would be their logical reconstruction, which in consequence could lead to their axiomatic formulation. Such an enterprise would in turn require us not only to use a formal language but also to accomplish certain modifications of these theories, in order to make them susceptible to formulation in terms of this language. But the performed modifications should not distort their original message.