Review of *Cultures, Narratives, and Concepts* edited by Barbara Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk and Marcin Trojszczak (Cham, Switzerland: Springer Nature Switzerland, 2025, pp. 298, ISBN: 9783031861581).

The collective volume *Cultures, Narratives and Concepts* is compiled under the direction of two reputed Polish linguists currently working at the University of Applied Sciences in Konin: Professors Barbara Lewnadowska-Tomaszczyk and Marcin Trojszczak. Additionally, the volume is a part of the book series *Second Language Learning and Teaching* (SLLT) edited by Professor Miroslaw Pawlak.

Regarding its contents, the book masterfully covers a wide range of specialized topics, all of them in relation to literary studies or cognitive and cultural linguistics. Furthermore, several chapters are concerned with online and media discourse, as well as Artificial Intelligence.

The volume is divided into two parts: Cultures and Conceptualizations and Cultures and Narratives. In total, it is composed of 16 chapters, which are classified according to their specialization. The first one contains 6 chapters. The first three focus on different facets of conceptualization, while the last 3 research cultural conceptualization in health discourse. Most of these chapters build their studies by utilizing conceptual metaphors and Critical Discourse Analysis as their theoretical frameworks. The second part of the volume is composed of 10 chapters dealing with the issues of cultures in various types of narratives. Several chapters aim to explore multiple aspects of cultures and how they are portrayed in literary works. Others revolve around translation studies and the use of Artificial Intelligence.

The volume begins with an introduction written by both editors, Barbara Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk and Marcin Trojszczak, where they explain how the chapters are organized and their content.

The opening paper by Boryana Bratanova studies a myriad of national mottos of world countries within the framework of cultural linguistics. Through an in-depth analysis, the author provides an insightful perspective into the cultural relations between national mottos and nationals, as well as demonstrates that this specific type of political discourse reflects the way in which people conceptualize the notion of statehood and the emotions tied to it. Similarly, in the following chapter, Nina Shtok uses the method of Critical Discourse Analysis to explore the concept of the national "We" constructed in the official "addresses to the nation" by Russian President Vladimir Putin during the first year of the Ukrainian war. At the same time, it delineates who the Russian government considers its enemy, the "Other," namely, the United States, the Ukrainian government, and NATO.

The third chapter adopts a similar line of thought, as it revolves around the political discourses of Albanian Prime Minister Edi Rama. By applying the methodology of Critical Metaphor Analysis to dissect his speeches, the author is able to explore the complicated relationship between the European Union and Albania, where the

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former is described as a proud bride, a building, a parent, or even a fortress.

The final three chapters in the section Cultures and Conceptualizations study cultural concepts in health discourse. In the first of these three contributions, Joseph Jaoko Ochieng applies the methodology of Conceptual Metaphor Theory to the numerous metaphors that Dholuo speakers employ to refer to HIV/AIDS patients. The second chapter, authored by Kamila Ciepiela, aims to demonstrate that patients use metaphors to describe their medical conditions. In order to do this, interviews held by the author with Polish patients who suffer from Turner syndrome are analyzed thoroughly. The final chapter of this section discusses the contemporary online phenomena of the Sick Style Community. Ramona Teresa Plitt uses a corpus of German and English Instagram posts to study and compare the language used by these communities and tries to explain how their culture and preconceptions may influence it.

The second part of the volume, Cultures and Narratives, begins with a paper by Kathryn M. Hudson. The chapter studies the cultural contact between the multiracial Indigenous communities in the Southeast of the United States, Euro-American and Afro-American communities by researching the stories of snake and water turkey.

The eighth chapter sheds light into a new, contemporary form of communication: memes. Lucia La Causa analyzes a corpus of memes made by Egyptian users during the dictatorship of Hosni Mubarak and the government of Mohamed Morsi. The author brilliantly illustrates how Internet users are able to denounce social and political acts through memes, even in a highly surveyed society like Egypt's.

In the ninth chapter, Monika Tosik surveys 100 East African journalists. The results show the struggles journalists face when choosing between a local and a global view on journalism. The paper encourages a more local-based approach to journalism, especially in African countries, as opposed to the Western approach that is currently promoted around the world due to their cultural distinctions.

By analyzing two American books, *Hillbilly Elegy* by J.D. Vance and *Educated* by Tara Westover, Karl Wood highlights the differences and similarities between the two memoirs. To do this, the author contrasts them with the American Dream and its narrative of upward class mobility.

Ewa Urbaniak-Rybicka focuses on the novel *What Strange Paradise* by Omar Ell Akkad in the eleventh chapter. The paper wisely discusses "the plight of the displaced" (p. 207) through the themes of displacement, transgression, performativity, and transcendence. Furthermore, it reflects on the concept of Canadianness and its relationship with transculturality.

María Jesús Lorenzo-Modia analyzes the 2019 novel *Girl, Woman, Other* by Bernardine Evaristo through a transcultural feminist perspective. The author demonstrates that the novel deconstructs the concepts of culture, gender, civilization, and nation. The multiple narratives and characters, mostly Anglo-Nigerian women, show the hardships experienced by people who come from different nations of the former English Empire, even if their family has been living in England for generations.

Two chapters are concerned with the issues that might arise when translating a literary text. The first paper compares the French translation of the novel *Zoqaq Al Midaq* by Naguib Mahfuz with the original and expounds on how the strategy of rationalization allows translators to produce a more natural and fluent version for the French speakers by erasing the multiplicity and rhythmic difference of the Arabic language. On the other hand, the paper also demonstrates that employing this strategy can be dangerous because it distorts the nature of original text. In a further effort to emphasize how translators can deform the original intent behind literary works, the second chapter examines how religious phrases are translated into Polish. For this, the author analyzes several translations of Charles Dickens' books in the nineteenth century. Theoretical distinctions like salience and mediation, among others, allow the author to conclude that Polish translators would adjust the text to exaggerate religious overtones while translating other fragments in a more literal way.

The final two chapters study the interplay of concepts, narratives, and cultures more generally. Ghaleh et al. use the Hofstede approach and a

questionnaire to analyze the cultural indicators of respondents from both Germany and Iran. Consequently, they are able to compile and outline these countries' tourism cultures. The final chapter in the book researches the trustworthiness of AI in the cultural and social context. Lewandowska and Sousa, too, use a questionnaire to realize their study with the intent of asking interviewees their opinion on AI applications. Their research shows that age and gender are important factors contributing to the user's willingness to use AI technology.

The bipartite structure of this study allows for a neat organization of the contents within the volume. Each contribution poses a multifaceted and rich approach to the themes of cultures, narratives, and concepts. Another important aspect to note is the book's cohesiveness. Chapters follow similar methodologies and conduct studies on related subjects. All in all, the volume provides insightful and in-depth perspectives on contemporary issues such as AI.

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