



ABSTRAKTY

**Cyprian Mielczarski*****Sophists and Modern Times***

The sophists of Socrates' times made revolutionary changes in Greek upbringing. They created the fundamentals of practical and prodemocracy education. By effectively challenging the principals of Plato's theory of political absolutism, they laid out the foundation of pluralistic and thus open democratic culture. According to Protagoras, the co-founder of sophistic pedagogy, there is no objective criterion for truth and falsehood. Rather, it is the individual human being that constructs, through their own mentality, such a criterion. This kind of pragmatic individualism became a hallmark of democratic praxis and a standard for personal excellence. Centuries later, it gave rise to the emergence of philosophic utilitarianism and pragmatism; both eventually led to the formation of the school of classical liberal thought. What we have inherited from the Sophists is the big idea of social contract, a negotiation-based procedure of producing consensus through which a democratic state can operate. The Sophists' emphasis on a variety of viewpoints to be considered and their conviction of the fundamentally subjective character of people's approaches to public issues have anticipated the now generally accepted democratic axiom of cultural pluralism. Within this pluralism, as Protagoras and Gorgias, among others, argued, man is understood as a dynamic subject searching for self-realization through social interaction grounded in the multiplicity of attitudes and opinions.

Anna Duszak***Elite, Expert, and „Ordinary” Speakers: a Linguistic Perspective***

The paper discusses the evolution of the concept of „language user” in linguistics. It examines how socially oriented analytical models of both communication experts and elites depart from the traditional accounts of „ideal language users” and homogenous speech communities. In particular, it points to the growing interest in critical discourses studies to focus on elite access to communication and elite power in manufacturing social consent.

Lech M. Nijakowski***Symbolic Elites: Doing Sociological Discourse Analysis***

This essay examines the role of elites in public life after the Internet revolution. To this end, the essay combines two analytical approaches: critical discourse



analysis and historical sociology. The former is mostly synchronic, qualitative, and thus interpretative. The latter includes a diachronic and quantitative inquiry. This methodological blend is especially helpful to study elites as discourse communities. Within such communities, the elites create their rules for language users and players in discursive fields, thus controlling what can and what cannot be said. Likewise, the elites generate cultural myths, or codes of popular culture. They define standards of normality, regulate social roles, establish various forms of the habitus, and discursively produce institutions. Directly or indirectly, they have a great impact on social mobilization. It is through this multilevel analysis that the complex interplay of discourse and power in society can be scrutinized all the more effectively.

Karol Franczak

Media Frames of „Economic Crisis”: Framing Analysis Perspective

Contemporary symbolic elites provide audiences with explications of various aspects of social reality. To accomplish this task, the elites, including journalists and media experts, employ useful frames, or ideologically-charged interpretative schemes, to facilitate understanding of major issues presented in the media. Since 2007, the global financial crisis has been one of the key issues that have preoccupied the framing activity of the symbolic elite. In the Polish press, attempts to account for the crisis took the form of journalistic instruction manuals, or guidebooks helping frame the topic. In this essay, several texts meeting the definition of crisis manual are explored. These texts include a January 2012 supplement to Poland's *Polityka* weekly entitled *Quake of Capitalism: How the Crisis Began and How It Will End*. Crisis manuals are generally a perfect subject matter to study by way of framing analysis. Research in this area helps de-hegemonize the media-diffused arbitrary yet dominant views on the origins of the crisis and the postulated repair policies, together with the relevant ethical responsibilities. A key assumption underlying this kind of analysis is that the mass media do shape popular opinion. Accordingly, it is crucially important to examine the role of media manuals in ideologically framing public discourses into some particular orientations.

**Paweł Tomanek*****Parents vs. Experts: Comparing Discourses about Childrearing***

The paper explores relationships between expert and commonsense discourses about childrearing. The vantage point is Jürgen Habermas's theory of communicative action, and particularly his notion of validity claims. Applying his framework, this essay examines, through quantitative and qualitative analysis, two web parenting fora: one involving contributions from an expert, the other run by parents themselves. Of particular interest are two analytical areas as guided by the following questions: As compared to experts, do parents engage in other/additional forms of discursive practices? And what are the logical relationships, if any, between cognitive and morally-charged statements on childrearing?

Paweł Ciołkiewicz***Instrumentalization of Expert Knowledge: 2010 Polish Air Force Flight Crash and a Television Talk on the Meaning of a Cockpit Transcript***

A public debate about the causes and circumstances of the 2010 Polish presidential plane crash has elicited both strong emotional responses and highly polarized opinions. Such was the case when, in 2010, a transcript of the cockpit conversation from the crashed flight was made public. A variety of the transcript's interpretations that followed oftentimes generated opposite and thereby confusing descriptions of the crash. Accordingly, many experts were called in for assistance to make the transcript understandable in a cohesive way to a general audience. A case in point is a June 7, 2010 television program „Tomasz Lis Live” hosting three pilots. Their verbal exchanges with the host journalist are analyzed here. The analysis zooms in on a collision between a journalistic tendency to present simplified and thus accessible accounts of reality (the transcript) and an expert inclination to develop complex yet eventually more balanced readings. The result of this collision is emblematic: the journalist's instrumental use of expert knowledge to justify his politicized agenda.

Tomasz Bogolebski***Coaching as a Form of Governmentality: Toward a Critical Analysis of the Coaching Phenomenon***

A new discourse combining the ethos of entrepreneurship and the open-ended notion of human agency is quickly saturating the public sphere. An example of



this proliferation is the so-called coaching phenomenon. Discursively, it relies on popular catchwords, such as subjectivity, autonomy, freedom, enterprise, choice, and accountability. Its avowed aim is to empower the up-till-now dependent, passive and thus powerless citizen. Building upon Foucault's concepts of power, subjectivity formation, and governmentality, this essay examines the phenomenon of coaching as a discursive project of the neoliberal government. The key question guiding this inquiry is, thereby, whether the coaching discourse provides a real fight for individual freedom or, to the contrary, is an indirect form of exercising power over a population now made up of nominally free citizens. If the latter is the case, the author argues, this kind of rule may well fall into what Nikolas Rose calls „new technologies of the conduct of conduct”.

Tomasz Krakowiak

Polish Euro-Optimistic Discourse

This essay explores the historical origins and symbolic resources of Poland's contemporary pro-European, Euro-enthusiastic discourse. The author's key assumption is that people's sense of belonging as grounded in their shared generational, historical, and social experiences is made manifest in diverse political practices in today's Poland. Various forms of this pro-European discourse as developed historically function as a set of trans-generational „transmission belts” through which the always-contested yet eventually consensual meanings are preserved and moved forward. What is striking, the author argues, is how much these discursive forms, taken together, draw their energy from the tradition of political thought of the Enlightenment era in general and the Enlightenment's ideas of modernization and emancipation in particular.

Magdalena Nowicka

Public Debate on Jan Tomasz Gross' Books from the Perspective of Post-Foucauldian Discourse Analysis

The essay discusses various power relations regulating public debates on collective memory. In particular, the essay addresses the question of subjectivity formation within a discourse generated by an author who presents a version of the past that contests the socially dominant image of a community's history. This problem is illustrated by the case of a debate prompted by Jan Tomasz Gross's controversial books, including his 2011 *Golden Harvest*, devoted to re-examining



Polish-Jewish relations during WWII. Foucault's concepts of discourse and dispositif, together with post-Foucauldian approaches to discourse analysis, are applied to identify those discursive procedures that permit the control of the discourse. It is in this context that the role of symbolic elites, viewed as a product of dispersed yet anonymous power relations in social, cultural and media settings, is critically explored.

Jacek Paczesny

Hate Speech Confronted by the Symbolic Elites: Dissecting the „Evil Can Grow” Debate

Hate speech, as perceived in some segments of Poland's symbolic elites, is a major social problem. To cope with it, the critics of hate speech have developed a peculiar rhetoric whose aim is to confront promoters of hateful pronouncements. This essay examines dominant discursive strategies that are used in public discussions about hate speech. First, such discussions are strongly patterned. Equally important, the patterned and thus predictable recipes frequently turn out counterproductive, generating not only unexpected but also negative effects. This paper offers arguably more fruitful ways to handle hate speech. One of them is the practice of self-reflectivity on the part of the symbolic elites addressing hate speech. To illustrate this point, a 2010 „Evil Can Grow” panel discussion is scrutinized. Drawing on the traditions of social constructionist critique, ethnomethodology, and conversation analysis, among others, the essay investigates in particular an oftentimes antagonistic exchange between the panel's participants and the invited public.

Kamilla Biskupska

Media Images of Collective Memory: The Case of the Opole Silesian Region

The paper discusses a possibility of applying discourse analysis to visual aspects of mass communication. What can be analytically gained through this kind of application is demonstrated via a case study exploring the visual discourse of the *Nowa Trybuna Opolska* (NTO) daily, a newspaper published in Poland's Opole Silesian region. A multicultural borderland, the Opole Silesia is where a local history of Polish-German relations has been especially complex and oftentimes difficult. Accordingly, it is this realm of mixed-neighborhood collective memory where visual meanings are continuously, and remarkably, contested and



negotiated through the discourse. An important role in such discursive struggles plays the local symbolic elite, including NTO journalists, who exercise their power in constructing the perceptions of the past through the attractiveness/persuasiveness of the visual, among other tools. Of much help in “unpacking” the discourse is the work of Pierre Nora, particularly his concept of *lieux de mémoire*, a symbolic (often visual) element of a community’s memorial heritage.

Tomasz Piekot

Discourse Analysis as Mediation: A Controversy over the Poem Murzynek Bambo (Bambo the Little Negro) by Julian Tuwim

This essay is a step toward discourse analysis understood as a practice of mediation between various conflicted groups. It explores a controversy over Julian Tuwim’s *Murzynek Bambo (Bambo the Little Negro)*, a popular Polish children’s poem about a little black boy named Bambo who lives in Africa. Though written in the 1920s, it was not until recently, from 2009 on, that the poem has become the center of a wide public debate, reflecting an existing ideological polarization in Polish society, with the poem’s critics pointing to its alleged patronizing tone and racial offense. That has revealed not only political divisions, but also the discursive mechanisms through which Poland’s old and new elites are renegotiating shared social knowledge, introspecting their beliefs, and trying to arrive at a broader social consensus. The essay analyses two most common yet distinctly opposite, ideologically motivated interpretations of the poem: one affirmative, the other critical. To get a better understanding of this clash, discursive conflict points are indexed, thus allowing for the examination of those conceptual categories that, while occurring in both interpretations, have opposite values attached to them. The most striking differences are expressed through the following categories: time (historical reading vs. present day evaluation), the arguer’s intention (unintentional racism vs. intentional tolerance), and the level of signification (connotative vs. denotative meaning).

Jerzy Stachowiak

Dualizing Speech in the Climate Change Debate

This paper is concerned with the climate change debate as a specific realm of the discourse of the symbolic elites. Firstly, an overview of the main stances in the controversy is provided. Secondly, the essential characteristics of Josef



Mitterer's concept of the dualizing mode of speaking are presented and subsequently developed in order to introduce a notion of controversies over "absent objects". Thirdly, this paper includes an in-depth analysis of part of a December 2009 television broadcast of the „Bronisław Wildstein Przedstawia” (Bronislaw Wildstein Show). A close analysis of the conversation when three participants (scientist, journalist and activist) define the truth on climate change in a separate yet mutually exclusive manner aims to highlight some of the consequences of dualizing practices in media debates concerning an "absent object". Finally, consideration is given to the broader methodological context in which both the advantages and drawbacks of putting Mitterer's concepts to work in discourse studies are examined.

Marek Czyżewski

Intermediary Work in Public Debates

Instead of defining political culture in terms of attitudes, beliefs, and sentiments, the essay proposes a discursive notion of political culture which itself should be investigated; hence, patterns in public communication as occurring in particular debates need to be identified, described, and evaluated. Another analytical tool to be considered derives from a critical discussion of both Vilfredo Pareto's elite theory and Michel Foucault's perspective on discourse and power. Combined, these tools are of much help especially when diagnosing discourses of high complexity. In contemporary Poland, the discourse of symbolic elites falls into this category. It is characterized by both a multilayered polarization and a complex interrelationship between the polarization of discourse and the discursive practices of debating political parties that ascribe the polarizing intent to each other. To overcome this sort of communication impasse and open up the relevant discursive space for „the next steps”, as Karl Mannheim would say, what is needed is intermediary work in public debates. Accordingly, the essay presents and illustrates empirically a number of symmetrical and asymmetrical variants of this intermediary procedure, as well as the conditions for their successful application.