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*Linguistic Analysis of the Presidential Discourse as Seen in the Public Appearances
of Aleksander Kwaśniewski, Lech Kaczyński and Bronisław Komorowski*

Summary of the PhD Thesis

The doctoral thesis is an analysis of the presidential discourse of three former presidents of the Republic of Poland – Aleksander Kwaśniewski, Lech Kaczyński and Bronisław Komorowski. The main research goal of the dissertation is to present and characterize the linguistic, ideological and interactive dimensions of the discourse proposed by the Dutch researcher – Teun van Dijk, on the basis of the collected presidential statements. The specific aim of the dissertation is to situate the presidential discourse against the background of other types of discourse and to analyze some key concepts in the presidents' discourses. The conducted research covers the period of twenty years, namely two terms of office of A. Kwaśniewski (1995–2000 and 2000–2005), the term of office of L. Kaczyński (2005–2010) and the presidency of B. Komorowski (2010–2015).

One of the most important issues of this work is the cultural concept. In my dissertation, I present the ways of understanding it and present various methods of description in the field of cultural linguistics. I reconstruct the key concepts of the analysed presidential discourses (*DEMOCRACY* and *COOPERATION* in the discourse of Aleksander Kwaśniewski, *HOMELAND* and *PATRIOTISM* with Lech Kaczyński and *FREEDOM* and *SOLIDARITY* in the discourse of Bronisław Komorowski).

In the dissertation I adopt the methodological assumptions of Jerzy Bartmiński, who edited them fully in his *Dictionary of Folk Stereotypes and Symbols* and in the *Axiological Lexicon of Slavs and Their Neighbours*. In my dissertation, I combine both of the approaches. The description of the analysed concepts (similar to *Dictionary of Folk Stereotypes and Symbols*) consists of two numerically related parts: the explication and documentation ones. The concept explication tool (as in *Axiological Lexicon of Slavs and Their Neighbours*) is the subjectivist cognitive definition.

The materials for the PhD work constitute the selected public appearances of three Polish presidents issued by the Chancellery of the President of the Republic of Poland: fourteen volumes containing speeches, letters and interviews by the President of the Republic

of Poland, Aleksander Kwaśniewski, a four-volume publication with the texts of speeches, letters and interviews of the President of the Republic of Poland, Lech Kaczyński and a five-volume collection entitled *The President of the Republic of Poland, Bronisław Komorowski. Speeches. Letters. Interviews*. From the above-mentioned publications, I use the following texts: messages, presentations, speeches, statements, announcements, declarations, wishes, toasts, lessons, lectures, and memories.

The dissertation consists of seven chapters (preceded by an introduction) and the conclusion, bibliography and a list of abbreviations. An annex was attached to the CD (containing the speeches of each of the presidents), which, due to the volume of the material, cannot be included directly in the work.

In the first chapter, I present the state of research on the concept of discourse. First, I present the word *discourse* in the light of the linguistic data. In turn, I discuss the research on this concept in European linguistics: French, German, English and Russian. I also recall the most important research on discourse in contemporary Polish linguistics. A separate place in the chapter is devoted to the discussion of Teun van Dijk's approach and the levels of discourse description distinguished by him: the use of language, the transmission of ideas and interaction in social situations. In the second chapter, I situate the presidential discourse within the framework of public discourse (as well as institutional, political, socio-cultural and media discourse). The third chapter is devoted to the analysis of the basic genres of the presidential discourse types, namely messages, presentations and speeches. I also discuss other genres of this discourse, such as, inter alia, statement, statement, and declaration.

Chapters four, five and six provide analyses of the presidential discourse of Aleksander Kwaśniewski, Lech Kaczyński and Bronisław Komorowski. In each of these chapters, I first present the profile of the president, and then analyze the three basic dimensions of discourse, i.e. linguistic, ideological and interactive ones. Certain exponents are revealed at each of the levels mentioned. Stylistic elements become apparent at the language level (for example epithets, pictorial comparisons and metaphors) and prosodic (for example pauses, and rhetorical questions). There are also conceptual metaphors, e.g. *a strong Union is a deck of cards composed only of aces*, as metaphorically expressed by A. Kwaśniewski. On the ideological level, on the other hand, the evaluative vocabulary (for example adjectives and evaluative adverbs) can be depicted. In this area, the presidents refer to people, texts of culture and events that are important to them. In the interactive dimension I include, among others, metatextual operators at the interpersonal level, initial and address formulas and delimitation signals and I present the conversational strategies used by presidents (information

and verification, axiological-emotive, behavioural, meta discursive) and structural (related to extra-linguistic reality).

In chapter seven, I discuss the idea of a concept and the methods of its description in terms of cultural linguistics. I also present terms close to the concept, such as: culturemes, keywords, words-values, and flagship words. In this part of the dissertation, I reconstruct the key concepts in the investigated presidential discourses: *DEMOCRACY* and *COOPERATION* in the discourse of Aleksander Kwaśniewski, *HOMELAND* and *PATRIOTISM* in the public speeches of L. Kaczyński, as well as *FREEDOM* and *SOLIDARITY* concepts important for B. Komorowski. These chapters are symmetrical, which means that each subsection comprises some explication and documentation. The former includes an introduction, analysis of system data and contexts taken from the president's statements, and conclusion with a synthetic definition of each concept.

In the end, I present the axiological differentiation of the concepts discussed. I confront the presidential visions, namely, the left-wing vision of *DEMOCRACY* and *COOPERATION* with the liberal-democratic and national-right vision; a national-right vision of the *HOMELAND* and *PATRIOTISM* with a left-wing and liberal-democratic vision; the liberal-democratic vision of *FREEDOM* and *SOLIDARITY* with the left-wing and national-right one. I connect the concept of vision with the subjective point of view represented by each president of the Republic of Poland. It turns out that the three analysed presidential discourse types in the axiological sphere have a lot in common. And despite the fact that other concepts play a leading role in some individual discourses, e.g. *DEMOCRACY* and *COOPERATION* in the discourse of Aleksander Kwaśniewski, *HOMELAND* and *PATRIOTISM* in the statements of Lech Kaczyński, *FREEDOM* and *SOLIDARITY* in the discourse of Bronisław Komorowski, they constantly enter the network of mutual connections and dependencies.

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