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I.A.D.A.
Forum

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RESEARCH ON MEDIA DIALOGUES IN THE CZECH LANGUAGE INSTITUTE OF THE ACADEMY OF SCIENCES IN PRAGUE IN 1999-2002

1. INTRODUCTION

The dialogue analysis research in the Czech Language Institute focuses primarily on the impact of democratic changes in Czech society on public oral discourse. At the beginning of the 1990´s, emerging Eastern European democracies moved toward Western institutions, discourse practices and norms. The model of a monolithic publicly permissible discourse in which a single ideology dominated the mass media and whereby other views of society were illegitimate and difficult to communicate was dismantled. The existing genres of public oratory have been reshaped (e.g. those connected with parliamentary discourse) and media genres have moved from a monological to a dialogical form of talk (manifested in interviews with public figures, discussions, debates and polemics). The communication gap between the public and private spheres has diminished. The research has revealed characteristic features of Czech political culture and argumentation skills in conducting political dissension. More generally, the research has investigated norms of handling confrontational speech situations in arising democratic societies and the gradual progress of the societies toward political consensus.

2. MATERIAL

The research is based on the analysis of audio and video recordings of public speech broadcast by Czech radio and TV. Upon initiating the project, we focused primarily on media debates in a studio; later on, we extended our research interest to include parliamentary debates broadcast by TV. We have collected rich linguistic material (altogether more than 280 hours duration) comprising *video recordings of parliamentary sessions* broadcast by

TV, *audio recordings of radio debates, chats and call-in programmes,* and video recordings of *TV interviews and discussion programmes.* The material was archived and the relevant material was *transcribed* according to the rules accepted in conversational analysis. We have also referred to *stenographic notes of plenary sessions* which are available on the web and have their own norms of transcription (they do not observe e.g. *hesitations, repetitions, false starts, simultaneous speaking,* etc.). The material was stored in a special computer database, *analysed and evaluated* with respect to the following methodological issues.

3. METHODOLOGY

The material collected and its analysis is relevant in several *theoretical respects*:
1. the methodology of dialogue analysis
2. the theory of institutional communication
3. pragmatic linguistics
4. rhetoric
5. stylistics
6. the theory of standard Czech language

1. The projects has contributed to *the general methodology of dialogue analysis*, particularly by investigating the relationship between *authentic face-to-face dialogues* on the one hand and *dialogues designed for public consumption* on the other hand. We questioned the "sincerity" of media dialogues and their location *between real communication and travesty of a real debate.* The main distinction from private conversation consists in the fact that as media dialogue unfolds, it reveals characteristics resulting from its *audience design* (Èmejrková 1999, Weigand 1999), or in other words - its *public oriented drive* (Dascal 1989). The talk between an interviewer and interviewee is managed as talk for overheares so that audience members do not feel that they are hearing an essentially private conversation, but can feel instead that interviews are being conducted with them in mind.

2. The project has supplied evidence of various types of mediated and directed (ruled) dialogues. It has contributed to *the theory of institutional communication*, particularly in two respects: a) public dialogues in parlia-

ment and in the media are analysed from the point of view of their *keeping to the format of institutional communication*, as well as from the point of view of their *departures from this format,* b) the research focuses on the analysis of institutional roles and manifestations of the *symmetry as well as asymmetry of participants'* relations in parliamentary and media debates. In our analyses of interviews, discussions and debates we followed the treatment of this genre of institutional communication in the existing literature on the subject, mostly of Western provenience, and we aimed at establishing certain characteristic features of the manifestations of this genre in the Czech setting. We approached the topic with *two underlying hypotheses* in mind: The genre of political interviews, discussions, and debates that has been cultivated for decades in Western European countries is only finding its shape in Eastern Europe and, as a result, the rules of the genre may be less strict and its format less elaborate and less constrained. The manifestations of the genre may be culture-specific (and in this respect, we compared the situation on the Czech and Slovak scenes).

3. The project is based on the *methodology of pragmatic linguistics,* particularly on those discussions concerning an interplay between handling *conflict* in opposing discourses, strategies of *politeness* and types of *humour. Conflict* - which can be detected in any dialogue conceived as an encounter of two or more individuals - is conspicuously manifested in this kind of institutional communication, with many participants playing different institutional roles, belonging to different political parties, representing different groups, and being controlled by their voters.

4. The material collected has become subject to the *rhetoric analysis* revealing "the art of speaking well", i.e. skilfully and persuasively, with respect to the audience. The beginning of the 1990's saw a *resurgence of rhetoric,* after a long period of its suppression and decline. The research in this area has revealed *techniques of persuasion* and rhetorical skills involving the use of *argument,* the introduction of *new topics* and *loci communes.*

5. One of the contributions of *Prague functional stylistics* is the elaboration of the notion of an objective (supra-individual) style. The project can be seen as a contribution to the treatment of *oratorial style* in its interaction

with traditional *colloquial, bureaucratic, professional* and other styles as well as with the new genres of *marketing and advertising* discourse.

6. Finally, the project's findings based on the investigation of "raw spoken material" are extremely relevant for *the thory of standard and non-standard language* used in spontaneous *oral performances in public settings.*

4. RESULTS

The work on the project resulted in the manuscript of a book entitled *Language, Media, Politics* (Jazyk, média, politika, Èmejrková, S., Hoffmannová, J. eds., Praha: Academia, forthcoming) and articles published in Czech linguistic journals (*Linguistica Pragensia, Slovo a slovesnost, Naπe øeè,* etc.) as well as in conference volumes published abroad. In the book, we have tried to show that in Czech media there has been a significant *shift in communicative practices* away from an earlier formal authoritarian model (with prevailing features of preparedness and dependence on normative documents showing the public the righpt way) towards a more authentic, vivid, and free manner and style. *Discussions about alternatives and the representation of political and social life in dialogical and polemical modes of speech* have regained legitimacy. The new situation in parliament demanded *argumentative and negotiating skills. Interviews, discussions, debates, and polemics* broadcast by TV and radio have become high-profile speech events for politicians, and for public figures in general. The application of linguistic tools revealed characteristic stylistic features (some of them highly individual, others rather general) of oral speech. Uniformity and conformity have been replaced by an *individualised and variegated discourse.* The public oral scene of the 1990's exhibits the features of *competing argumentation practices* and *opposing, duelling discourses.*

The project's methodology and results provide a basis for *consuling services for media workers.* They have been offered to the interviewers and moderators whose discourse is analysed in the respective contributions and they have been utilised in *lectures* for media workers/professionals.

The analysis of public (media) oral speech has also attracted the attention of students and postgraduates. The subject of the project has already inspired topics for *master theses and PhD dissertations* as well as several *students' research papers and conference contributions.*

5. DISCUSSION

The material that has been collected and analysed is heterogeneous in terms of the topic of dialogues and discussions (politics, economy, ecology, social issues, culture, literature, media, etc.), the participatory framework of debates, the professional roles of the speakers, their gender, age, ethnicity, affiliation, territory, etc. The material provides a basis for further analysis and specification of the project findings. The research has been already started, particularly with respect to the categories of *gender, age, and ethnicity.*

The language, style and mode of argumentation in public oral speech in the 1990's reflect the fundamental democratic changes that have occurred in Czech politics since 1989. The situation in the Czech Republic has been partially compared to that in Slovakia. We would appreciate comparison with media talks and parliamentary discourse in other countries.

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Prague, June 7, 2002.

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THE UTRECHT WORKSHOP ABOUT 'DIALOGUES IN AND AROUND MULTICULTURAL SCHOOLS'

A IADA workshop entitled 'Dialogues in and around multicultural schools' was held from 18th to 20th of April 2002 at Utrecht University. The workshop was made possible thanks to the contribution of a number of scholars from different disciplines and countries and thanks to the hospitality and organisation of our colleague Robert Maier. Sorin Stati introduced the workshop and Edda Weingard drew the conclusions.

The variety of disciplines included sociology, anthropology, sociolinguistics, and pedagogy, and the discussions and debates were stimulating. It is obviously impossible to report all the positions and conceptual and empirical achievements of this workshop, and consequently I will try to illustrate the most significant cultural trends which emerged.

The first important remark is that the general theme (dialogues in multicultural schools) is very important for the debate around the concept of "dialogue", as the effort in establishing dialogue in multicultural complex settings is one of the most interesting aspects of our society. This is one of the most important themes also for the more general context of social sciences. This point was accurately posited by Robert Maier (the excellent host and organiser of the workshop) who, in his introductory speech, reviewed the interdisciplinary nature of studies on dialogue, and proposed the need for a theoretical elaboration of possible research frameworks. The general concepts of "context", "identity", "power" and "meaning construction" were introduced as the bases of such frameworks.

Starting from this perspective, Willibrord De Graaf (University of Utrecht) presented a review of the use of the concept of "identity" in a multicultural context by reference to social identity theory and acculturation theory, and so to social psychology and anthropology. His concept of "dialogical identity" was a useful conceptual landmark for the workshop.

Other contributions pointing to the construction of a general framework, at a macro-sociological level, were given by Agnes van Zanten

(CNRS, Paris) and Hendrick Pinxten (University of Ghent), who spoke about the political strategies in the construction of ethnic identity, focusing on multiculturalism and intercultural approaches in European countries, and posing many questions about the treatment of different cultural communities in Europe. Agnes van Zanten also insisted on the necessity for an integration of political global analysis and ethnographic analysis of classrooms, showing in her presentation how this integration can work in practice. Pinxten's theoretical position was complimented by Marc Verlot (University of Ghent) who described the theoretical framework emerging from researches in the Flemish Schools, in which interesting categories about stereotyping, practices engagement, and cultural diversity in intercultural education are used. Still within a theoretical perspective, Claudio Baraldi (University of Modena and Reggio Emilia) started from a sociological version of communication theory in order to introduce some relevant concepts about the forms of intercultural communication in classrooms.

The other contributions described empirically oriented research, though without renouncing theoretical frameworks. Particular attention was given to the complex work of analysis from a comparative perspective undertaken by a Dutch research team (Universities of Utrecht, Groningen, Rotterdam) concerning the teaching of maths in multicultural classrooms. Wolfgang Herrlitz (University of Utrecht) summarised this analysis in the final talk by showing how the complexity of maths teaching is constructed in interactions, and by considering other important dimensions including the intercultural. The general conclusion about the complex relationship that exists between a specific function (like teaching) and a more general problem of dialogue was supported by substantive visual evidence and various disciplinary approaches which together confirmed this research to be analytically rigorous and methodologically rich.

Other very interesting examples of research starting from the same perspective and showing analogous intentions were presented by scholars from the Czech Republic (Pardubice), Germany (Hamburg and Bielefeld), Great Britain (Ulster), Italy (Perugia and Siena), New Zealand (Wellington), Romania (Bucarest), Spain (Sevilla), and the United States (North Eastern Illinois). The most remarkable aspect of almost all of these researches was the displayed rigor and clear documentation of their analyses, showing how each discipline can learn from the other not only new

conceptual tools and forms of empirical evidence but also methodological innovation.

The clear documentation and description of methods and results allowed participants to observe and discuss the empirical evidence of different theoretical frameworks and to discuss the opportunities for an enrichment of single research perspectives. I think that at the end of the workshop all participants were able to return to their Universities and research teams with a more complex set of ideas about the range of possible researches in the field, and having also learned something more about their own projects.

I would like to insist on this remarkable aspect of the workshop: participants avoidance of questions about the nature of single disciplines or of focusing on themes and concepts used to formulate those disciplines and their particular methodologies. A clear outcome of this workshop has been the furthering of an understanding that the general theme of "dialogue in multicultural settings" includes references not only to linguistics, but also to sociology (both for the analysis of the general context and for the rich sociological contribution to the analysis of interaction and communication systems), anthropology (for the analysis of cultures and intercultural encounters), social psychology (for the analysis of social identities) and to pedagogy, given the increasing relevance of intercultural education, both as a direct educational program and as a problem of hidden curriculum in all the educational system, as shown by many presentations of empirical analysis, in particular those by Ingrid Gogolin (Hamburg), Marc Verlot (Ghent), Anna Ciliberti (Perugia) and Rosa Pugliese (Siena), and the Dutch research team.

My only critical remark concerns the scarcity of the scientific consequences of these kinds of meetings. In fact, they risk being episodic events rather than occasions for the creation of research networks or of fruitful exchanges that might help the present international scientific community to initiate a reformulation of the rigid and static boundaries that currently exist among scientific disciplines.

During the conference the need for longer and more detailed discussions following individual presentations also became evident. The realization of the need for improved opportunities for the discussion and exchange of ideas within the international scientific community is the last, but not least, important outcome of this unusually productive workshop.

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL MEETING OF THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR DIALOGUE ANALYSIS, Lugano, July 3rd 2002

CHAIR: S. Stati, President of IADA
SECRETARY: Marina Bondi
MEMBERS PRESENT: 24

The Meeting was held on July 3rd at 2.15 pm at the Faculty of Humanities, University of Lugano (Università della Svizzera Italiana).

AGENDA: 1. Report on Publications; 2. The Salzburg Conference; 3. Future Activities; 4. Other business.

1. Report on Publications

The President reported on recent publications. He reported that the Proceedings of the Bologna conference (M. Bondi and S. Stati eds.), celebrating the ten years of the Association, have finally been completed and are expected to be published in the Niemeyer series Beiträge zur Dialogforschung in 2003.

2. The Salzburg Conference

The President informed the assembly that the next conference - "Dialogue in Literature and the Media" - will be held in Salzburg in 2003 and asked Anne Betten to report on progress to date.

Anne Betten announced that the 9th Biennial Conference of the International Association for Dialogue Analysis will take place in Salzburg from Thursday April 24th to Saturday April 26th, and will be organized by Anne Betten and Monika Dannerer. The conference will concentrate on two main topics: "Dialogue in literature" to include analyses of concrete dialogues in drama and prose as well as dialogic aspects of literature in general; and "Dialogue in the media" to include specific types of dialogic genres such as discussions, interviews, talk shows in the "traditional" media, new forms of electronic media, as well as theoretical reflections on the state of the art and future developments. The plenary lectures and the

majority of the session papers will be dedicated to these themes. But, as is traditional for IADA meetings, other contributions to dialogue-analysis will also be considered.

In addition to the plenary lectures of 45 minutes length, each of the various sessions will be opened by special lectures of 30 minutes by invited speakers. The normal session papers will be limited to 20 minutes of presentation time plus 10 minutes discussion. Colleagues who would like to organize a workshop or symposium of linked papers are invited to plan these in units of either 1fi or 2fi hours. Within these time blocks they will be free to allocate times as they think best.

Anne Betten then invited the assembly to discuss the possibility of organizing a workshop for MA- and PhD-students in which they would present papers on their "work in progress" (10-20 minutes). The proposal was welcomed by most participants.

She also informed the meeting that the conference will be held in the beautiful and recently restored buildings of Salzburg University, originally part of the residence of the prince-archbishops in the very heart of the old city.

The closing date for abstracts is October 1st. Abstracts will be reviewed by the local organizing committee and by some members of the secretariat. A confirmation of acceptance will be sent out by early December to give participants time to seek support and funding from their institutions. Abstracts should be 100-150 words in length for papers and 150-250 words for workshops and symposia. Conference languages will be English, German, French, and Italian. The abstracts must be in English, and should indicate the language in which the paper will be given. The preferred languages for the publication of the Conference Proceedings, with Niemeyer (Tübingen), will be English and German.

3. Future Activities

The President then reported on other proposals for future activities he had received during the year. He reported that he had received a proposal from Catherine Kerbrat-Orecchioni (Lyon) for a small conference in 2004 and another proposal from Liliana Jonescu-Ruxandoiu (Bucharest), also for a small conference in Romania in 2004. He invited both colleagues to elaborate on their proposals.

Catherine Kerbrat-Orecchioni proposed a small conference - some 30-50 participants - on "La confidence dans le dialogue / Self-disclosure in dialogue" in spring 2004, to be held in Lyon over three days. Although the topic would be limited to self disclosure in dialogue, it would be rich in implications and perspectives, involving ethos and pathos in argumentation studies, cross-cultural studies, genre analysis, and intersemiotic/transsemiotic perspectives. The object of study would range from spontaneous to planned discourse, including broadcasts, personal communication, professional communication (e.g. doctor-patient interaction) and fictional dialogue.

Liliana Jonescu-Ruxamndoiu reported on the proposal from the Romanian section of the Association. She offered to organize a conference in Bucharest/Sibiu on "Cooperation and Conflict in verbal interaction". This would be another small conference and would be best organized roughly in the same period as the Lyon conference proposal (spring 2004). Both colleagues offered to study the possibility for other dates. The final decision about dates and places will be taken in Salzburg next year.

4.Other business

The Secretary reminded members that the membership fee for 2002 is 30 Euros.
The business of the day being concluded the chair closed the meeting.

THE SECRETARY, Marina Bondi.

International Association
for the study of controversies

Controversies are a major and extremely significant phenomenon in human life. Whether public or private, political, intellectual or cultural, controversies focus attention on key issues, stimulate criticism, and affect decisively the evolution of ideas, institutions and social practices.

The INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE STUDY OF CONTROVERSIES, founded in 1996, is devoted to the scientific investigation of this phenomenon in all its shapes, fields and historical periods. It fosters interdisciplinary cooperation, organizes workshops, maintains a web-site, distributes information to members and obtains for them discounts on journals and books, and strives to support research.

IASC has so far a membership of nearly one hundred members. Its current officials are Marcelo Dascal (President), Adelino Cattani (Treasurer) and Cristina Marras (Secretary).

IASC has held five international workshops, in Tel Aviv (1996), Madrid (1997), Paris (1998), Jerusalem (1999), Vercelli (2000). It has also been a co-sponsor or organizer of special sessions in other events: the International Pragmatics Conference (Tel Aviv, 1999), the International Congress on Subjectivity (Pisa, 2001), the colloquium "The practice of reason: Leibniz and his controversies" (Paris, 2002) and the International Congress on "Argumentation in Dialogic Interaction" (Lugano, 2002).

If you are interested in the study of controversies, join IASC!!
All you have to do is to send an email to: iasc_post@hotmail.com, with your name, email and mail addresses, institutional affiliation, and areas of interest. You are also kindly requested to contribute a small annual fee of 10 Euro to cover expenses (contact adelino.cattani@unipd.it). We expect you to be an active member of IASC, and we wait for your suggestions and cooperation!
Welcome!
For more information and curiosity visit our Web-Site http://spinoza.tau.ac.il/dep/philos/iasc/ and contact us at ASC_post@hotmail.com