The Intelligibility of Power.
An Explicit Anthropological and Semantic Approach to Discourse Analysis

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1. Introduction

The present paper presents a new and innovative approach to the most discussed issue of discourse analysis. Current studies on discourse analysis mostly revolve around the widespread and acknowledged approach of CDA, as developed by Fairclough, Wodak, and Van Dijk (e.g. Van Dijk 1993, Kovács, Wodak 2003). An alternative approach to that of CDA has been developed by Metzeltin (e.g. Metzeltin, Thir 2004) along the last two decades and applied not only to written and oral texts but also to a variety of semiotic products (from ballet to film).

The principal differences between CDA and the present approach to discourses concern both the focus of the investigation and the methodology. CDA aims at studying single concepts (such as neutrality, nation, etc.), at analysing how they are made use of in certain texts and what concrete influence they may have in the reception. Thus, whereas CDA is mostly concerned with the concrete outcomes of text production, as revealed by the reactions of the people, our approach focuses on the production of texts rather than on their reception. Furthermore, whereas CDA studies power as abuse of power, that is as a matter of social dominance of a group over the others which results in social inequality and moves from neatly identifiable political and ideological matters (cf. Van Dijk 1993:249-250), in the present paper power is viewed from an evolutionary perspective as an anthropological phenomenon which is coded as semantic structures. Structures of power are thus analysed in respect with the way they are semantically (and pragmatically) coded in the text. As texts constitute units, we investigate texts as such rather than single segments or concepts. Therefore, our approach is characterised through a more philological orientation and more neutral attitude against texts (power may be also viewed as a chance).

We view Discourse Analysis as a method, a field of research and a perspectivization. As a method it is based on analysis and interpretation and moves from the more general to the more specific. The method is a semantic one and twofold, in the sense of cognitive or logical semantics (question: how may facts be thought of and transposed into language?), on the one hand, and of referential semantics (question: what do semiotic products refer to?), on the other hand. The field of research consists of semiotic products which express power relations in a deliberate (also secondarily unconscious) and direct (also secondarily indirect) way. Perspectivization means looking at the objects to investigate from the angle of theoretical and real power relations. Further sorts of perspectivizations would be e.g. the aesthetic, the jurisprudential, and the

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theological one. As a rule, the same semiotic product may be observed from different angles and analysed and interpreted according to the respective perspective.

2. What is perspectivization?

Perspectivization means choosing an angle from which an object may be observed. From the standpoint of science, in general, and, more specifically, from the standpoint of the pragmatics of communication, perspectivization may be understood by the explicit indication and description (or construction) of the point of view from which something is observed. If perspectivization refers to power relations, also a concept of the phenomenon 'power' is to be represented explicitly. The phenomenon of power displays a psychological and sociological component and its cognitive conception can be made explicit due to an explicit semantic analysis. Power is based on two factors, namely on:

1) men's urge for maintenance of vitality and acceptance of life. Repeatedly displaying power makes one feel vivid in an extraordinarily lasting manner (psychological component; cf. Marañón 1945);

2) the necessity of human communities to distribute the resources being at their disposal so as to ensure the community's and thus the individual's survival (social and economic component; cf. Keesing 1958: 198, Hurd et alii. 1973: 8, 26-27, Ember, Ember 1997: 111-112, 297).

Therefore, we may assume that striving for power is a substantial anthropological phenomenon.

3. Power as an anthropological phenomenon

In the very beginning mankind might have been organised in small groups which lived in non-organisation, non-culture and chaos (cf. Thir 1997). In order to survive and to live men need a form of organization, order, the so called culture, a cosmos. Order might be the outcome of the regulation of interpersonal relations. Particularly the relations between the powerful and the powerless, adults and not adults, man and woman, the living and the dead, and the contact with foreigners are to be regulated as well as the behaviour when establishing contact, requesting something, gathering information, and exchanging goods. Moreover, it has to be pinned down who belongs to which subgroup. The network of these regulations gives rise to the power relations or to the structures of power which bring order into the respective group.

Order may grant the life (as the real life of individuals) and the survival (as the continuity of life over one's own life) of the respective group only if the group succeeds to fill up its principal functions: securing food and resources and securing fertility. We assume that human communities can arise and continue to exist only when they possess resources and thus have to distribute them. The distribution of the resources requires a mechanism of distribution within the respective community. This necessarily leads to a differentiation of the members of the community. These differentiations determine who may be given what. Thus, they are an abstract system of the positionings of the community's members. The correlation of these positionings builds up the societal architecture of the group. The architecture is prototypically hierarchically organised. Furthermore, it tends to restrict the individual's freedom, i.e. the possibility to freely select alternatives. Actually, absolute individual freedom probably does not exist. The hierarchies may come about between groups (men vs. women, adults vs. children, literate

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vs. illiterate, clan A vs. clan B, etc.) or inter-individually (priest vs. parishioner, master vs. assistant, teacher vs. pupil, patriarch vs. family). Those in power may legitimate the mechanisms of distribution and the development of hierarchies by the use of ideologies. The rules to determine the status of the community's member and their correlations lead to structures of power. Someone has to decide how these structures are to be configured. Those who take these decisions are those in power.

The sources of power are force (physical force, virility), particular skills (body control, craftiness), property (estates, herds, precious metals, and money), organization (infrastructure, enterprise, corporate group), information (ordered knowledge, insider knowledge, networked knowledge) (cf. Galbraith 1984; see also Czempiel 1999: 96). Therefore, from a symbolic perspective, the prince in the fairytales is meant to be strong, i.e. potent, and the princess to be beautiful, i.e. fertile. The access to these sources is restricted.

Power may be given (through vote) and achieved (through strategies, fight, craftiness, corruption, and inheritance) in many diverse ways. Power may be exercised and realised basically either due to force – physical power and weapon – or due to symbolic systems, especially through language. Linguistically, power may be expressed by the modus (cf. Bally 1932). Power may lead to an acceptable distribution of resources, but also to repression. Those who have achieved power tend to eliminate other powers. In economics, this may be viewed in the attempt of monopolies to eliminate concurrence. Those who have achieved power tend to legitimate their power or let it legitimate through vote, through ancestry, through the representation of their power, through entanglement in public institutions.

Power is symbolised in organisations through emblematic characters who are requested to guarantee the commonwealth and the continuity of the group. Those in power have got dues (to endow and maintain the rules of the society). Power tends to give security although it leads to inequality. Furthermore, power requires concretely acting people for it to be executed. The emblematic character in national communities is the king or the president whose power is realised through the executive authority. A ruler who has no executive authority (e.g. the army) at his disposal does not dispose of actual power (short time before his fall, president Salvador Allende drew the attention of his party members to what follows: „Algunos compañeros olvidan que una cosa es el Gobierno y otra, bien diferente, es el poder. Cuando la derecha gobierna, poder y gobierno coinciden. Pero la izquierda puede tener el gobierno, pero no tiene el poder", quoted by Enrique Curiel in *La Razón* from 12.9.1999). A fundamental component of power is loyalty on the part of the supporters of those in power.

Power may be made visible, be medialised, particularly through symbols and rituals (munificence is a symbol of power whereas avarice is counterproductive). Power as the structure of the societal organisation is constitutive for the existence of the group, that is it needs continuity which in turn implies the transmission of power. Power may be perceived as positive or negative (as Good and Evil) or be critically evaluated (criticism of the government) and may, thus, be questioned. The power of the rulers (those in power) is by all means questioned when they do not minimally guarantee the common wealth either, i.e. the common access to resources and the continuity of the group, that is

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their fertility. Then the powerless withdraw those in power from their consent which usually leads to acute conflicts.

Although power is necessary for the endowment and structuring of communities, it is often used destructively against others. Its corrective, i.e. control and constraint, is the constitutionalism. In the western world the idea of this kind of control and constraint arose through the antagonism between the king and the gentry: the representatives of the gentry tried firstly in England as a parliament to bring the financial behaviour of the king under control.

4. Power as a concept

Power as defined above is one of the main problems or issues of the men. The European languages can synthesize issues by means of abstract nouns. In order to cognitively grasp their complex structure and the interplay of the factors issues may be analysed moving from the development of the valency grammar and of actant models. The first step is the transformation of the abstract noun into a predicative structure and listing up all synonyms, chronotopies, implications, antonymies, narrativisations. Power as an abstract noun may be broken down into several clusters, either into a static, a modal, or a dynamic predicate.

• The static aspect of power:

<A + powerful>

A may be a single person or a group whereby in the second case the coherence of the group is prerequisite for the exercise of power. This structure is more or less equivalent to <A + strong>, <A + rich>, <A + knowledgeable / wise / clever / astute>, <A + having authority> (cf. section 3 above). The latter structure may imply: <A + patient / self-controlled / calm / cautious> (possible synonymic variations). These attributes might be thought of as limited, constrained: one is not always strong, wise (embedding of these attribute into time). Those who once had become powerful try to maintain the power (consequences of power). Those who are in power will always have opponents (the opponents may build antonymies due to their attributes. Antonymic abstract nouns may be jealousy, envy, hate, distrust). The most common antonym for 'powerful' is 'weak'. Power is gained through learning and practicing and it is confirmed through tests. Learning, practicing and testing may be told as stories (narrations).

• The modal aspect of power:

<A + being able>

<A being allowed / permitted>

<A + liking / wanting>

These are modal expressions, i.e. they modalise other predicates (e.g. A may do something). They lack the denomination of what one is actually able, allowed, and willing to do. As a result, such analyses show that power strongly pertains to the domain of the modus of talking. Talking may be thought of as a sort of acting, therefore it may belong to the dynamic aspect of power.

• The dynamic aspect of power:

<A + ruling + over B>

This can be specified as: <A + imposing his own way>, <A + ordering>, <A + commissioning>, <A + conducting>, <A + leading>, <A + influencing> and so on

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(synonyms). A possible implication might be (A + protecting), as the ruler also has to take on protection functions (cf. feudalism, mafia). One can be a ruler only when the ruled are loyal (implication). Ruling implies a relationship of dependence: <B + executing>, <B + obeying>, <B + serving>. B may tend to revolt (antonym). Ruling is usually attached to a certain place and territory (topographic enactment). The consequences of ruling are ordered structures, hierarchies as well as repressions. Ruling, i.e. the exercise of power, may easily be narrativised through the narration of a sequel of acts of power. Modern democratic systems of power, stipulated and described in the respective constitution, cover several possibilities and tasks of acting destined to the representatives and represented. Differently, the insurrection, the opposition against the established power may be modelled as a scenario with a beginning and an end, whereby one state of affaires is transformed into another one (transformative textoid):

<B + living under intolerable circumstances C1>
<A + being responsible + for B living under circumstances C1>
<B + wishing + that B live under satisfactory circumstances C2>
<B + demanding + from A + that A take measures to achieve C2 for B>
<A + giving in>
<B + achieving C2>

or

<A + resisting>
<B + fighting + against A>
<B + achieving C2>

From the point of view of those who are in opposition to a given system of power the circumstances C1 are perceived as undesirable. C1 may then be viewed as a despised regime whereas its prospective abolition and replacement by a different form of government constitute C2. From the point of view of those in power C1 is to be defended and preserved whereas C2 is to be avoided.

The analysis of power and its numerous factors based on semantic principles (such as actants model, synonymies, narrativizations, etc.) allows us to explicitly understand discourses on/of power and to find out the signs of power and of no-power. Complex power relationships may be built especially in texts and rituals. These semiotic products serve the purpose of stage-managing, maintaining, institutionalising power relationships, as well as guaranteeing or questioning a specific societal order. Thus, only those who are endowed with the skill to discoursivation and its medialisation can exert power. In stable societal conditions exerting power usually means indirectly asserting certain models of behaviour which base on values and points of view (ideologies). The powerless individual is not directly ordered to perform these models of behaviour. (S)he is rather repeatedly suggested to do that by dint of texts and other semiotic products for him to internalise them and make them their own. Suggestions proceed from the elites and are mostly fought by ongoing elites.

5. Possibilities of medialising power

Relationships of power can be effective only when they are concretely expressed. The most impressive expression of such relationships of power are regularly repeated visualisations in form of performances in which the representatives of the single subgroups prototypically

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perform their membership or functions. These performances are semiotically and dynamically realised rituals which endow necessary artificial orders. They consist of operational structures requiring protagonists of these actions. Operational structures are set up in the easiest manner by displaying transitions (rites of passage). The most important transition for the continuity of a well-functioning society are the consecration of adolescents (rites of initiation) and the ritual inauguration of the sovereign.

Power is maintained especially by constituting and analysing both positively and negatively evaluated kinds of demeanour, inter alia in the form of texts and other semiotic products which carry out certain themes. Typical positive themes are inter alia work, nation, education, equality, whereas negative themes may be barbarianism, insanity, or black magic. Institutions such as schools, town halls, hospitals, and prisons serve the purpose of moulding our conduct, also. From this perspective, discourse means speeches of potentates or their opponents about themes to which the power relations pertain in order that they may be retained or altered.

Societies cannot be in existence without certain structures of lordship. In most societies a consideration of the phenomenon of power, how it comes into existence, how it works, takes place rather early. These considerations may assume shape of definitions, of argumentative treatises, or, in most cases, of fictive, differently medialised stories (fairytales, epics, tragedies, novels, movies, etc).

An approach, according to definition, towards the phenomenon of power is found, for instance, in Thomas Hobbes's *Leviathan* (1651), in which the view is hold that mankind in its natural state is determined by its striving for self-preservation – and interconnected with this – by an insatiable striving for power. The inescapable consequences would be a war between everyone unless all of their power were conferred upon the sovereign by unconfined renunciation of the natural right. In this context, Hobbes attempts to circumscribe the term 'power' ("The Power of a Man, (to take it universally) is his present means, to obtain some future apparent good. And is either Originall, or Instrumentall", I, 10).

Argumentative treatises may establish general theories about or may focus upon a specific power relations. Niccolò Machiavelli, e.g., compiles specific considerations regarding the government of sovereigns in *Il Principe* (1513/1532), where he dares "discorrere e regolare e' governi de' principi", as he states in the preface. In Machiavelli's view the fundamentals of a realm consist in good laws and the efficiency of arms, whereas the power of the prince rests upon strategy.

Narrative fictions which examine the obtainment or maintenance of power are found, inter alia, in many magic fairytales, in the great Kings' tragedies of Shakespeare's, and in many modern movies like *Broken Lance* by Edward Dmytryk (1954), several James Bond movies (starting with *Dr. NO* by Terrence Young in 1962), *The Godfather* by Francis Ford Coppola (1972), *The Lion King* by Rogers Allers and Robert Minkoff (1994) or *An Ideal Husband* by Oliver Parker (1999). By watching *The Godfather* without knowing anything in advance about the film one is reminded of a magic fairytale which narrates of a king who puts his three sons to the test by ordering them to bring a particularly beautiful and precious object. The one who finds the most beautiful item passes the test and will inherit the realm, i.e. the power. Hereby, the youngest is chosen

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(ultimogeniture). The story of the movie is constructed similarly. Don Vito has got three sons. Santino is too irascible and impatient, he is slain by his opponents. Fredo, elder than Michael, too, is incapable of acting whereas Michael takes chances, is not afraid of death, and keeps calm; he proves to be his father's saviour and takes vengeance upon those who are evil-minded towards his family. He is the true hero who gradually substitutes the patriarch after having passed all proves of initiation, also the one of higher knowledge. There are various obvious allusions that the theme of this film is power, that the film displays a story of the power relations. The opus is based upon the novel *The Godfather* by Mario Puzo (1969). Coppola's first impression of this novel was, as he states in an interview, that "it is for sure a literary study of power". How the narrativisation of power as a theme with the main agents 'members of a family' should or could be effected is commented by Coppola, as follows: "I found that the film would have to mirror authentically this part of the book in which the father and his three sons are focussed upon. I regard it as a story of a king and his three sons". The narrativisation of power in Coppola's film is carried out by introducing a kind of king with a particular conduct. The basic structure of this narration is the story of an initiation and an inter-familial, hence endogam, substitution of a king; in this narration the aging "king" (Don Vito) – being wise and prepared – bestows his power upon his best and youngest son (Michael). The successor, Michael Corleone, must prove that he is initiated and thus worthy. The initiated one, who wants to be king, must show that he is in the position of killing, but later he will merely command as before him Don Vito used to.

6. The object of the analysis

The object of the analysis we propose here are all semiotic products which directly or indirectly express relationships of power, such as performances, events, theatre, opera, many text types (such as epics, panegyric, specula regis) and certain buildings (seats of government, parliaments, palaces). The research may be put towards single objects or groups of objects (like public buildings of a certain state at a certain time, for instance of the Danube Monarchy). Certain texts, we assume, stand out against others and make it easy to put one's finger on the special relationship between discourse and power, so the first *Petition of the Inhabitants of Prague* (*Petition der Bürgerschaft* / *Prvi petice Pražká* in German and Czech), that marks the beginning of the Bohemian revolutionary movement of 1848 in word and deed.

As we have seen above, the relations of power may be carried out through several themes (cf. section 5). This can be recognised by the explicit analysis of positive and negative structures of behaviour in distinct semiotic products. The themes touched upon have to be defined preliminarily so as to understand that they can act as the bearer of a discourse of power and as such, for instance, occur in concrete texts. It must be said that also other texts in which this theme is terminologically not explicitly mentioned may belong to the chosen discourse. Hence, it is necessary to recognise which intentions are pursued by the discourse analysis of a certain theme: Resistance against an existing political power relations is, for instance, an intention which may be conveyed by discussing national equal rights or by civil rights.

In principle, themes of discourse can be transmitted – more or less efficiently – by means of various media and sorts of text, but they are not bound to certain sorts of text.

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Problems of nationality can be communicated in speeches, lyrical poems, dramas, newspaper articles and the like. A lyrical text such as the *Oda a Roosevelt* (1905) by the Nicaraguan poet Rubén Darío can be perceived as a phenomenon of modernist lyrics, but it makes sense only if it is understood as an attempt to communicate the discourse of resistance against North-American interference in Latin-American affairs. Sweeping media such as pamphlets, newspapers, broadcast, or films seem to be more appropriate to establish firmly, foster, or modify a certain discourse and thus a power relations.

7. The method

Discourse analysis thus deals with texts (and other semiotic products) by considering the power relations in the respective society. It begins with the analysis of single texts, but correlates even texts which are – not always directly – interconnected (Intertextuality, Intermediality). Every text can always and independently of its immediate purpose be explained by reason of the general constellation of power within a certain society. A family saga can portray instantaneously certain psychological problems of the family members, and at the same time – even if not intended by the author – it can give a description of the pre-dominant concept of family life within the respective society. The principle of determining the quality of research by means of quantification is a principle of discourses of power, as it is used in many texts about university in order to enforce and/or maintain the power of those who operate in private enterprise over those who do not or do so indirectly only. These principles can be so much internalised so that the instantaneous sender of these arguments of power does not recognise them as such any more.

The examination method consists of the explicit implementation of particular steps of examination in a certain order: general contextualisation of the chosen object, intrinsic analysis of this object, elicitation of the evaluation, instantaneous referentialisation, interpretation according to intrinsic text analysis. These steps may be described, above all, by means of the example of text analyses.

8. The general contextualization of the chosen object

General contextualization stands for embedding chosen objects and their type into the corresponding historical space. In most cases contextualization can be reconstructed when using encyclopaedias, especially historical-geographical books. Also works such as old travel guides should be looked up. Considerably, the authors of these works very often try to rebuild history inter-subjectively. Nevertheless, we always deal with a selected construction of narrations.

Furthermore, contextualization tries to find out where a semiotic product of a chosen type (prototypically a text) has arisen (that is, has been written or spoken up). The place can be of more or less institutional nature, which gives to the text a more or less official character (value). The occasion on which the text has been drafted (political meeting, festivity etc.) can be a key to the function and the value of the text. The place also determines which text types (more general: which medias) are at disposal in a real situation. The specification of the text type is an additional aspect of the contextualization which reveals to the reader what kind of communication conventions of his/her society the author is following or not.

To find out a text's relevance there is the need to identify the degree of expectation from the addressees as well as the actual recipient who has read or listened to the text.

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Then hypotheses may be put forward to discover whether the expectations of the recipients have been met or not and also which effect the text might have had. This leads to the necessity of a more precise definition of the complex producer – mediatic channel – receptor. The producer or sender of a text is primarily a real person (or people), who has directly laid the text. In general these people may be named and also their social, cultural, political and character features be described. This may reveal the perspective from which the text has been laid. The direct real writer of a text may talk on behalf of a group or of a fictional or a real person. Authors of petitions may talk on behalf of a built up group. A fictional "other" person is e. g. the narrator, who has reported a story to the real author, who in turn is presenting the story, thereafter modifying and perspectivating it. The function of the definition of narrator eventually consists of warning the reader to refer fictional and non-fictional texts directly to their language-external reality. Texts do not build up a "one-to-one" reality. Furthermore, different people or groups of people may have taken part in the creation of a text not at the same time but at different points of time. A constitution for instance is at first drafted by one or a group of lawyers and/or politicians, then presented to a commission and finally discussed with the plenum. The members of the commission and of the plenum herald suggestions to amend it which find possible entry into the final draft of the constitution. In order to understand these correctly it is very helpful to consider the processing of the changes. This is eventually valid for each text.

We have already pointed to the relevance of the type and broad effect of the medium. Additionally, the attitude of the owner or the driver of the medium has to be considered, so for example the publisher of a newspaper or the producer of a film who may influence the perspectivation of the contents.

Eventually one has to clearly define the recipients of the analysed texts. The recipient of the text can be explicitly mentioned in the text as the addressee. (S)he can be simultaneously prefigured in a prominent part of the used media, such as the intended readership in the title of a newspaper (by the publisher). Of course, the addressee of a text is different from the real text receptor. The latter can be found out under certain circumstances when gathering information on the quantitative, geographical or social distribution of the text and medium. Knowing both the intended addressee and the real receptor may give clue about why the author of the text has modified or perspectivised the context or why the text was received in a certain way. This helps to ascertain the power plays in a text.

9. The intrinsic analysis of a text

At the beginning of each real text analysis there is such a reading of the text, which guarantees the basic understanding of all words and sentences. To understand better more complex texts, and above all texts in a foreign language, it is recommended to use dictionaries or grammar books. This is important especially in order to understand people's names, names of places and concepts, which had had a usage in a different historic context differing from the specific meaning in today use. Also explicit references and allusions to other works have to be deciphered. There are specific dictionaries and general encyclopaedias available.

After the semantic and referential definition of words and names we may now undertake the proper text analysis. This encloses the global deconstruction of the text's

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content on the most superficial level, the state of the text topic and its macrostructural development with its predicates and actants and the detection of semantic fields (or isosemies) with its recurring elements and possible antonyms.

The global deconstruction of the text's content on the surface may follow the typical division of the chosen text type (e.g. chapter or strophe division), but in any case it is semantic functional (change of the chronotopy, change of the people's constellation, change of topic) in order to ease the disclosure of the topic. This division generally shows which segments (also quantitative ones) build the core of the text in which the topic has been condensed. This may be presented in a propositional way. For example, the definition of "equality of rights" used in the *Petition of the Inhabitants of Prague* from 13th to 16th March 1848 to the Austrian Emperor Ferdinand cited above (cf. section 6) may be reformulated in a propositional way (modi and dicta with their actants) as follows:

<X + claims from Y + that Y guarantee + X dispose of the rights R>

and

<X + claims from Y + that Y guarantee + Z dispose of the rights R>

X stands for "We", "Prague's faithful population" and the "people". Y stands for the Emperor and indirectly for the Viennese government and Z designates the "Germans" in Bohemia.

The predicates are the basis of macropropositions which are narratively or argumentatively developed, whereas the actants are developed in a descriptive way. Especially the predicates are also amplified into semantic fields. The topic of Prague's "Petition of Citizens" may have been macropropositionally developed with the following argumentation:

X does not have the same rights as R or Z.

Thus, Bohemia does not have the same power and development which should have.

X thinks that Y is interested in the power of Bohemia.

So X suggests to Y that X and Z should have the same rights R.

If Y gives X and Z the same new rights, then Bohemia will become big and strong.

In argumentations ideologies are often implicitly used as premises (cf. Fellerer, Metzeltin 2003: 17-56).

10. The elicitation of the evaluation

Assessments are abstract semantic constructions by which the sender of a text attempts to stimulate the receptor's opinion and behaviour in order to achieve either a positive or negative response. Depending on the degree of explicitness assessments may become manifest in the following means:

- by nouns which are per se associated either positively or negatively ('*hero*', '*villain*'),
- by particular adjectives being mostly grouped with antonymic pairs ('*comfortable*/*uncomfortable*', '*good*/*bad*', '*beautiful*/*ugly*', '*strong*/*weak*', '*diligent*/*lazy*', '*right*/*wrong*', '*venerable*/*abhorrent*'),
- by comparisons (or metaphors) with nouns being associated negatively ('*Achilles is a lion*'),

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• by especially performing and modalising expressions (‘*I am in favour of…*’, ‘*I approve that…*’, ‘*I criticise that…*’, ‘*I contest that…*’, ‘*It seems to be generally accepted that…*’),

• by formal argumentations that an object or a matter is suggested as advantageous/disadvantageous, or as simply inapplicable/inept because of certain features (‘*The tasks of universities are supposed to be lesson and research; ethics ought to be the task of two/three institutes; ethics is not to be occupied with at universities*’. Counter-argument according to discourse analysis: especially universities are in charge of training responsible teachers and scientists rather than value-free ones.),

• by stereotypical expressions (‘*according to our deeds we are to be measured*’ for ‘*we are good*’. Criticism pursuant to discourse analysis: one can only measure because of measures; deeds may well be compared with other deeds, but judgements can only be undertaken by reason of a tertium comparationis, for instance: *The General Declaration of Human Rights*).

Probably all judgements can be generally led back to the two modi ‘*I / Society want that…*’ and ‘*I / Society do not want that…*’ . On the other hand values can be graduated. The most precious or most important is declared ‘*holy*’. The positive or negative can even be accentuated by syntactic or semantic figures. The assertion of a certain value and its graduation may be justified, but they mainly serve the purpose of implementing the interests of a certain group of potentates.

In the already mentioned *Petition der Bürgerschaft* of Prague, agent X is described as loyal, allegiant, and tributary on the one hand (hence the conspicuous use of words such as *Loyalität, Unterthanentreue, Treue, Unterthänigkeit, in treuer Ergebenheit, unsere treuen Herzen, treu*), on the other hand, his (newly gained) self-confidence can be detected in various formulations (*‘aus voller, freier Brust’, ‘im Vertrauen auf Gott und unser Bewusstsein’, ‘scheinen wir unbescheiden im Maß unserer Bitte’, ‘von Patriotismus …uns eingegebene Wünsche’, ‘in gläubigem Kindesvertrauen sprechen wir es aus: Wir konnten nicht anders!!’*). A further indication of this self-esteem is the more frequent use of ‘*wir*’ (‘we’) in the position of the grammatical subject. The demonstration of this assertiveness seems to endow identity and might be addressed indirectly to the township of Prague. Contrary to X, counterpart Z is mentioned again and again (German nationality, the German) but not characterised in detail. The reconstructed argumentation alludes to the emperor, who may be lenient towards the senders because of the straightforwardness of the style of the petition, but who shall also be indoctrinated by means of an argumentation. However, he is again and again referred to as the highest authority (‘*Euer kais. königl. Majestät!*’). The afore-mentioned (cf. section 9) macro-propositional re-formulation of the theme clarifies that Y, the emperor, does not control the events. The primary linguistic activities of X, i.e. the citizens of Prague (‘X + postulating from Y’) are at the core, whereas linguistic activities of Y have become secondary (‘Y + guaranteeing’).

The postulations of X towards Y are expressed explicitly. The systematic compilation of their contents resembles the form of a statute. As these contents cannot call upon tradition, they are embedded in a petition. The postulations ‘*aus voller, freier Brust*’ presented to an absolutistic emperor were relatively strong. Therefore, ‘*wir*’ is

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modalised with evening modi: *hoffen, Bitte, Wünsche, Wünsche und Bitten.* At the same time, the contents of the postulations are declared almost sacrosanct by being embedded in an ecclesiastical aura: "*Diese in treuer Ergebenheit Euer k. k. Majestät unterbreiteten Wünsche und Bitten werden, so hoffen wir*, so beten wir zu Gott, der die Geschicke der Welten leitet, *das* heilige *Band befestigen zwischen Fürst und Volk* […]".

11. The search for textual reference

The search for immediate reference of texts is in close connection with their contextualisation (cf. 8). Whilst contextualisation is to be understood more generally, referentialisation deals with eliciting extra-semiotic events, activities (including linguistic activities), circumstances, and situations, to which the text refers more or less explicitly or to which the text can be related. On the basis of these specific references, one may undertake the attempt to link the text with more general and typologically similar circumstances, and not only with the circumstances due to the specific historical situation.

Petitions such as *Petition der Bürgerschaft* are enclosed in an immediate, historical net of relationships. Contemporaneously, the petition illustrates general principles how – by means of an especial sort of text – constituted lordship can be questioned and fought, in particular if it is based upon inequality. Consequently, texts can be dissociated from their specific reference and may thus be understood as discoursivisations of more general principles. The contrary approach is possible, also. For instance, the afore-quoted *Ode* by Rubén Darío refers to the relationship between South America and the USA, but can also be related to the Panama Crisis of 1903.

The immediate inducement of the *Petition der Bürgerschaft* was the revolutionary occurrences (as stated at the beginning of this text) in the Western parts of Europe, especially in Germany, with whom Austria had 'allied' itself within the "Deutscher Bund", in February and March 1848. On March 11th of 1848, "Prague's allegiant population" gathered at Saint Wenzelsbad in order to protest – as the first within the Austrian Empire – before the emperor and the court against the authoritarian and unjust 'System Metternich' and against the supremacy of the Germans in Bohemia. Hereby, two crucial referents of the text are stated, which evoked a complex – and from every individual distinctly apprehended – genre picture of the previous decades in the Czech population of Prague, being the indirect addressee. Elements of this view were, for instance, the draconic censorship under superintendent Joseph Graf Sedlnitzky, arbitrary detention and punishment of critics of the regime, socage, and migration from rural areas to the industrialising/-ed parts of Northern Bohemia (which were dominated by the Germans), prerogatives for the Bohemian upper-class, German as the official language at Bohemian authorities, Courts of Justice and Grammar Schools, the predominance of German-speaking Austrians in all spheres of the executive branch. The lack in equal opportunities for the Czech Bohemians as well as the withholding of civil rights were arguments set in contrast to the principle of equality and a range of liberal basic principles by the editors of the petition. Thereby, further important references of the text are mentioned. In fact, it deals with intertextualisation. The postulations of the petition can be subsumed under two textual traditions. It deals with the catalogue of the liberal and civil basic rights and with constitutions. Since the Enlightenment and the French

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Revolution, both traditions formed the general centre of reference for the European liberalism, in the tradition of which the editors of the *Petition der Bürgerschaft* saw their determination. The Czech liberals, as the authors of the petition, for instance, were loyal and civil liberals. They crossed liberal principles such as constitutionalism and liberal civil basic rights with the postulation for equalisation of ethnic groups. This crossing can also be perceived in the *Petition der Bürgerschaft*, whereby this text refers to a discussion, which originated in Austria from 1848 onwards, about national (in the sense of the former nationalities) and linguistic equality as a political, constitutional base right principle. This principle is proclaimed as a part of the first Austrian constitution, the so-called *Pillersdorf Verfassung*, dated April 23rd of 1848, and thereby the juridical special discourse of that time is left. Equality, as is known, was to become one of the central problematic issues crucial to the history of the Austrian Monarchy.

12. Interpretation according to discourse analysis

Interpretations following discourse analysis in our sense aim at comparing textual structures revealed by semantic, pragmatic, and syntactic analyses with a general and special context in order to clarify the possible function of the text. Function is to be understood in a broader sense. Partly, it deals with the role of the text as a representative of a larger group of texts serving the maintenance, challenge, and alteration of the historical hierarchy of power; partly, it is examined how this effect shall be accomplished. So, we are confronted with two interpretative steps. As regards content, the constitutive questions (from the point of view of power relations) by which the function of a text can be ascertained are:

- Which hierarchy of power/regime offer those who are in power at the respective time? (View of the powerful)
- Which new hierarchies of power/regimes are suggested/offered by the emerging elite? (View of the powerless or those who are not yet in power)
- Who are the addressed powerful? What shall they do/how shall they act/which position shall they take?
- Who are the addressed powerless? What shall they do/how shall they act/which position shall they take?

The repeatedly mentioned *Petition der Bürgerschaft* contains three agents, whom we named X, Y, and Z (X = '*we*', '*the allegiant population of Prague*' and the '*people*'. Y = the emperor and indirectly the Viennese government, and Z = the '*German nationality in Bohemia*'). The text characterises the three agents differently with regard to their power. Y is presented as the technically most powerful agent. His power is twofold limited, though. On the one hand he must be instructed so as to conceive the European occurrences of the time and their relevance for Austria; on the other hand he does not appear as a real agent. This is the task of X, who bears the responsibility of linguistic activities, which summon Y to guarantee something. Thus, Y is subject of circumstantial, requested linguistic activities. X is textually shaped as a technically powerless agent. Again, the first impression is to be revoked doubly. As already pointed out, X is represented as bearer of primary linguistic activities and is thus "in power". Additionally, X appears quite self-confident. Z remains more unspecific than X and Y,

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but is textually vested with the power of institutions and prerogatives. It is apparent that the status of power of all agents remains rather unclear and ambiguous.

This fuzziness can be observed regarding the extension and applies especially for X. Once it is the citizens of Prague, once the people of Bohemia, and once, as may be assumed, the editors of the petition. The text forms a contribution to the finding and constituting of X's identity. Both is necessary in order to claim and wield power. Finding and constituting X's identity is a process already created in the petition, which will bring along two further differentiations specific to groups. X is in so far exposed to an internal differentiation as a self-declared part, an elite encourages others to confess to X, to combat together with X. Exactly this constellation implements this sort of text, a petition, which was ultimately composed by one or at best by a few persons, but which is submitted for signature to many potential like-minded people. Further, an opposition between X and Z is initiated by X. Thus, X proposes a repositioning of X and Z concerning the distribution of resources.

As for the linguistic and rhetorical structure of the text, the most significant questions (in the context of historical hierarchy of power) by which the function of a text can be ascertained are:

- Which themes/thematic relations focus upon the hierarchy of power?
- Which basal argumentation creates the connecting factor relating this theme to the hierarchy of power?
- How does this basal argumentation evolve with respect to advantages and disadvantages for particular groups, how are claims to power legitimated argumentatively?
- Which arguments – and thus their bearers – are questioned?
- Which groups are assessed in which way? (Possibly one might want to assess the respective groups by considering stereotypes so as to accentuate or relativate the groups' significance within the hierarchies of power)
- What is pointed out by certain pragmatic strategies (for instance metaphors, similes, symbols, allegories, repetitions, sacralizations), and how is thereby power or powerlessness shaped?
- Which conclusions of the method how hierarchies of power shall be textually maintained, questioned, or transformed justify the peculiarities of the text (such as certain affirming-strategies, semantic fields, use of technical terminology etc.)?

The dissatisfactory positioning of the Czech Bohemians is referred to when equality is focussed upon. This theme is subdivided into individual, collective, civil, and linguistic-national rights in the form of a catalogue. This catalogue contains the claim for partly concurrent, partly diverging titles (individual vs. collective and civil vs. linguistic-national rights) and thus for partly concurrent, partly diverging claims for power.

As we have already got to know in the *Petition der Bürgerschaft*, the status of power of the three agents remains equally ambiguous. Equality as the central proposition of the text needs reinforcing, and, finally, this proposition results in the implementation of corresponding (juridical) claims. This proposition is endorsed by the utterance that the bestowal of equal rights on the Bohemian population would contribute to fostering Bohemia's and thus the monarchy's magnitude and strength. The terms "magnitude" and

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"strength", greatly extended by isosemy, allow two different ways of interpretation. The "magnitude" and "strength" of Bohemia can be advantageous for Austria on the one hand and hence for the emperor. This interpretation is based on the approach towards the basic argumentation regarding the emperor as the addressee. On the other hand, Bohemia's "magnitude" and "strength" can also be advantageous for the opaque "we" and thereby possibly disadvantageous for the emperor. The latter interpretation of the basic argumentation is intended for this "we". These group's claims for power are legitimated by the argument of the Czechs' nativeness in Bohemia, whereby these claims are estimated positively.

The way X expresses the claims for power displays an appealing character by means of utterances such as: "*Möge es Anklang, möge es gerechte Würdigung finden! Wir hoffen (...) – es wird!*" or "*Alles mit Gott, unserem Kaiser und König! Rufen wir aus in heiliger Begeisterung*". This appeal is addressed to the amorphous "we", to which is suggested to form a group in order to achieve the aspired magnitude. The isosemy of culture, together with all its facets of refinement, fecundation, and indoctrination, provides the information how to accomplish such magnitude, i.e. power. The already stated commingling of two sorts of text (petition and statute) and thus of two linguistic styles gives to the indirect addressee the impression as though the self declared leaders were competent and had the power to determine the social order.

13. Further research perspectives

Discourse analysis as conceived of in this paper deals with anthropological and semantic conceptions of human relationships, with constructions and deconstructions of these in the form of macro-structural semantics, and with the various medial realisations of such macro-structures. Discourse analysis reveals the constructions of hierarchies of power by means of text analysis and text interpretation (and more general: by means of analysis and interpretation of semiotic products) and serves the purpose of explicitating power, which is wielded via texts and other semiotic products. Concerning texts, the basic question according to discourse analysis is: How do I as the receptor of a text perceive power which shall be wielded over me? Discourse analysis intends to enable the "analyst" not only to detect power which is wielded over him or her, but also to interfere in the discourse of power as a responsible citizen.

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Die Intelligibilität der Macht. Ein expliziter anthropologischer und semantischer Ansatz zur Diskursanalyse

Unter Diskursanalyse verstehen wir hauptsächlich eine Methode und zugleich auch einen Anwendungsbereich und eine Perspektivierung. Perspektivierung setzt die Konstruktion eines Blickwinkels voraus, der Blickwinkel der Diskursanalyse ist die Macht. Macht ist ein Geflecht von Beziehungen und dient der Verteilung von Ressourcen: Der Verteilungsmechanismus innerhalb der jeweiligen menschlichen Gemeinschaft führt zu einer Kategorisierung der Mitglieder der Gruppe. Ihrerseits bestimmen solche Kategorisierungen, wer was erhalten darf, sie bilden daher ein abstraktes System von Positionierungen der Mitglieder der Gemeinschaft.

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Macht gründet auf dem Drang des Menschen zur Vitalitätsbehauptung und auf der Notwendigkeit, eine Verteilung der verfügbaren Ressourcen vorzunehmen, und ist daher ein grundsätzlich anthropologisches Phänomen. Macht wird tendenziell gesamtmedial und rituell medialisiert, und Machtaspekte kommen in den meisten semiotischen Produkten vor. In Texten wird Macht i.A. argumentativ oder narrativ diskursiviert. Für ihr Verständnis müssen semiotische Produkte allgemein kontextualisiert werden (Eruierung der Chronotopie, des Texttyps, des Komplexes Sender–medialer Kanal–Rezipient). Texte müssen für ihr Verständnis analysiert werden (Eruierung der Thematischen Propositionen mit ihren Modi und Dicta, der Prädikate und Aktanten, der Makrostrukturen, der Semantischen Felder) und nach Möglichkeit auf ihre intendierte außertextuelle Referenz bezogen werden. Die Interpretation der Texte kann durch den Vergleich der Gestaltung ihrer semantischen Substanz mit ihrem allgemeinen und referentiellen Kontext vonstatten gehen. Diskursanalytisch können Texte genauer interpretiert werden, wenn explizit gefragt wird, welche Machtverhältnisse über welche Themen wie vermittelt werden. Diskursanalyse ist eine Befähigung, selbst in Machtdiskurse einzugreifen.

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