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Przegląd Wschodnioeuropejski 7/1, 163-170

2016

Artykuł został opracowany do udostępnienia w internecie przez Muzeum Historii Polski w ramach prac podejmowanych na rzecz zapewnienia otwartego, powszechnego i trwałego dostępu do polskiego dorobku naukowego i kulturalnego. Artykuł jest umieszczony w kolekcji cyfrowej bazhum.muzhp.pl, gromadzącej zawartość polskich czasopism humanistycznych i społecznych.

Tekst jest udostępniony do wykorzystania w ramach dozwolonego użytku.

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EUROPEANNESS AS AN AXIOLOGICAL COMPONENT OF THE WORD *STATE*

KEYWORDS: the concept of state, media discourse, socio-political vocabulary, historical semantics

ABSTRACT: This paper is an attempt to describe the functioning of the term ‘state’ (Polish: ‘państwo’) in the European context in Polish media discourse. The analysis is based on the linguistic data excerpted from Polish weekly news magazines „Polityka” and „Wprost”. The results of the analysis reveal that Poland is described either as a European state or as a country aiming to be European.

The concept of the state is widely used in Polish media discourse. The study of the semantic structure of the lexeme and its evolution throughout history makes it possible to specify the socio-political information coded in the word. Separating it enables a pragmatic analysis, which is an analysis of forms and means of using this sign in communication. The aim of the paper presented is to describe the impact of a frequent collocate – the adjective *europejski* (European) – on the meaning scope of the word *państwo* (state). The analysis was based on selected articles by Magdalena Środa, Janina Paradowska and Jacek Żakowski – authors who have clear liberal and democratic views.

The starting point for the description of the historical volatility of the content creating the concept of the state in Polish is a presentation of the etymology of the concept of the state (Polish *państwo*). A separate lexical unit excluded from the analysis is the word *państwo* referring to “ladies and gentlemen” or “a man and his wife”. Analysis of the etymology of the word was performed based on *Słownik etymologiczny języka polskiego* by A. Bańkowski. In the old Polish literature the word state was a translation for Latin “dominium” and “imperium”, whilst in *Psalterz Floriański* it substitutes Latin “dominatio”. The word “państwo” (state) has been used in a political sense since the second half of the 15th century. Its equivalents in European languages are such words as *state* in English and *Staat* in German. In the 15th and 16th centuries the word state was used in reference to domination. Bańkowski notes that the word was also used in the 16th and 17th centuries referring to manors or wealth (2000, 494-495).

Investigating volatility of the historical semantic structure of the concept of the state seems necessary to analyze this concept in Polish media discourse. It allows to determine the relationship between the historically established semantic sphere of the concept and its functioning in the media.

Słownik języka polskiego released at the beginning of the 19th century by S. B. Linde includes the following definition of the state: „2/ Państwo, panowanie, rządzenie, rząd, władza rządząca 3/ państwo nad którym kto ma państwo albo panuje, kraj, kraina, włość, majątność”. According to this entry the contents included in the scope of the concept of the state are rulership and area. However, it should be noted that the state as rulership and the state as a territory are considered separately. To exemplify the first meaning mentioned Linde gives the following sentences: „Skromne państwo nad niemi bez krwi rozpościerał”, „Kto nieludzko na państwie sobie postępuje, Boi się swoich poddanych, Strach nad nim panuje”, „Od pokory Ś. Dominika przenieśmy się do państwa, którego używał przeciw diabłom samym”, „Wszystko sprawował, jakby się mógł na państwo postawić”, „Państwo z przyrodzenia należy się ludziom baczny i mądrym”. The state conceived in this way can be referred to any type of reign – reign of a king as well as rule of a lord of the manor. The examples given by Linde point to the way of wielding power. It seems that the selection of examples reflects an essential problem of abusing power by a privileged layer of society. The state is a force that can be used against enemies but you can also use it to hurt the subject.

The other meaning mentioned is illustrated with the following linguistic examples: „Wielkie państwo, wielki kłopot”, „Nieszczęśliwe to państwo, w którym zbytek stolicę swą obrał”, „Kleopatra w państwach Nilu królowała”, „Król Szydłowieckiemu państwo Krakowskie, a Tarnowskiemu województwo Ruskie dał”. The examples above prove that the concept of the state included any administrative unit. According to this definition, the state is not a completely independent unit subject to international politics. It can be a component of a bigger body („Kleopatra w państwach Nilu królowała”).

Słownik języka polskiego released in Vilnius in 1861 describes the state as follows: „1/ kraj jakikolwiek w całości wzięty, szczególnie kraj będący pod zarządem monarchicznym 3/ panowanie, rządzenie, rząd, władza rządząca”.

The second meaning coincides with the meaning described by Linde, whilst the first one broadens the scope of the concept of the state significantly. It is illustrated with the following examples: „Państwa północne i państwa zachodnie”, „Państwo rosyjskie, francuskie, tureckie”, „Państwo papieskie”, „Rozszerzyć granice państwa”, „Minister, kanclerz państwa”, „Sprawy państwa, „Interesa, dobro państwa”. The definitions and examples given show the state conceived as a territory having clear boundaries and governed by a single ruler – the monarch. This is the first definition which, through the examples referring to public

servants, includes administration as the content contained in the concept of the state. *Słownik języka polskiego* edited by J. Karłowicz/A. Kryński/W. Niedźwiedzki and published in 1900–1927 gives the following definition of the state:

- 1) panowanie, rządy, berło, rząd, władza najwyższa, władza rządząca, królestwo, stolica, tron
- 2) posiadanie, władanie, rozporządzanie się na prawach właściciela
- 3) kraj, ziemia, królestwo, cesarstwo a. księstwo udzielne, monarchja, mocarstwo
- 4) prowincja, kraina, obwód, okrąg
- 5/majątek, dobra, prow. dominjum, klucz, dobra ziemskie, posiadłość ziemska, majątek ziemski
- 6/ kasztelanja, kasztelaństwo.

The meanings above lead to the conclusion that in accordance with the definition the content included in the concept of the state is as follows: wielding power (in the kingdom or specified territory), territory subject to governance, administratively separated areas which are part of a larger body and property.

Socialist rhetoric is manifested in the definition of the state published in *Słownik języka polskiego* edited by W. Doroszewski in 1958–1969: „trwały związek ludzi osiadłych na pewnym terytorium, podlegających jednej władzy zwierzchniej, stanowiącej organ klasowego panowania”.

According to the definition above, the concept of the state includes citizens (this content is not present in the definitions discussed before), territory and the only power in hands of a specific group, social class.

Słownik języka polskiego PWN released in 1995 and edited by M. Szymczak includes the following definition of the state: „zorganizowana politycznie społeczność zamieszkująca określone granicami terytorium, mająca niepodległą formę rządów; forma organizacji politycznej tego społeczeństwa” (cf. Dubisz 2008).

This definition highlights the following content included in the concept of the state: citizens, territory, independent authority. Significant differences between the said definition and the one published in Doroszewski's *Słownik* need to be noted. „Trwały związek ludzi” in the newer dictionary is equivalent to „zorganizowana politycznie społeczność”. According to the older definition, citizens share only the fact they settled in a specific territory. The new definition specifies that the foundation of the organization of citizens in a society is a political organization of the state. According to *Słownik* edited by Mieczysław Szymczak, the state „ma niepodległą formę rządów”. This element was not included in Doroszewski's *Słownik*. The concept of independence may be subject to the same analysis as the concept of the state. If independence should be understood as total political independence from other states, many countries would not fit in such a definition of the state.

A dictionary-based analysis leads to the conclusion that the way Poles understood the concept of the state was subject to significant changes over the centuries. The oldest dictionaries depicted a state as a territory or rulership.

Then the concept of the state included such content as administration, system, citizens, culture and the content that was present before was extended: territory requires defined boundaries and it has to be inhabited by citizens who share a community founded on the basis of political relations. The evolution of the concept is connected with social and historical events. Evidence to support this thesis can be the difference we note between the definitions in the dictionaries issued before 1989, and those published after the transformation. However, it should be noted that a dictionary definition is not possible to include the whole content of a concept. A concept, as it has been said, is more than a word. Ambiguity makes it impossible to formulate a complete definition. Broader knowledge of a concept and its content can be obtained by analyzing linguistic pragmatics. In this case, the area of interest is presence of the concept of the state in a European context in Polish media discourse. The object of the analysis presented in this paper are texts from Polish opinion-forming weekly magazines. For this purpose, selected articles of three authors were analyzed: Magdalena Środa in „Wprost” and Janina Paradowska and Jacek Żakowski in „Polityka”. In the material analyzed the collocation *państwo europejskie* (*an European state*) appeared only once. For this reason, the analysis also involved the use of the adjective *europejski* (*European*) and noun *europejskość* (*Europeanness*) in relation to the content specified on the basis of dictionary definitions and included in the concept of the state.

The investigated articles by Magdalena Środa were published in “Wprost” over the past two years. The collocation *państwo europejskie* (*an European state*) appeared in her article in relation to the Polish state.

Znakiem nowoczesności i przetasowania elit politycznych jest los posła Węgrzyna. „Temu panu już dziękujemy”. Parlament w państwie europejskim nie jest miejscem dla ksenofobów i seksistów. (1)

A European state is here a state where citizens, especially politicians, follow specified cultural norms that result from tolerance for distinctness. A member of parliament in a European state cannot make comments that might be considered xenophobic or sexist, even if the statement is supposed to be a joke. The example discussed is the only case where the collocation *państwo europejskie* (*an European state*) was used in the context of Poland.

The adjective European appears in Środa’s articles most often in the context of the European Union (EU institutions and people employed there as well as the Community legislation). For the purpose of this paper the examples that correspond to the content included in the concept of the state and relate to the Polish state were selected.

Europeanness or anti-Europeanness is mostly considered a feature of a particular group of Polish citizens (according to the dictionary definitions given, citizens are part of the state): „Trzeba pamiętać, że silnie antyeuropejska Liga Polskich Rodzin zajęła drugie miejsce w pierwszych wyborach do Parlamentu Europejskiego.” (2)

In the context of the whole article “Zadyma na wykładzie” which the passage comes from, it can be concluded that the author treated anti-Europeanness as disapproval of values widely accepted in the so-called *western world*, namely tolerance and equality. Anti-Europeanness refers to the party organization which can be considered content which is another component of the concept of the state.

In another article the adjective European also refers to the citizens of our country:

Coraz bardziej nowocześni, europejscy i „zachodni”. Tak w każdym razie wynika z badań zamieszczonych w książce o przemianach postaw Polaków pod red. Aleksandry Jasińskiej-Kani. Światopogląd nam się liberalizuje, kobiety się emancypują, dzieci upodmiotowiają, pojawiają się postawy otwartości na obcych. Polacy i Polki idą – nieuchronnie, choć nie jednoliniowo i nie w takim samym tempie (zwolennicy PiS stanowią w tyle) – w kierunku sekularyzacji, indywidualizacji i modernizacji. Konserwatystów to nie ucieszy, obrońców tradycji sfrustruje, postępców uspokoi. (3)

Europeanness of citizens is treated as openness, equality and progressiveness. It should be noted that in this text the adjective *europejski* (*European*) is synonymous with the words modern and western. These concepts are linked to the liberal worldview, which involves emancipation of women and respecting the child's subjectivity. Europeanness in this sense is also associated with the concepts of “secularization, individualization and modernization”. Thus, it can be said that another feature of European societies is moving away from the traditional perception of the place of religion in the state and emphasis on individualization of citizens who create a society.

In the analyzed articles Europeanness of Polish cities is also discussed. Środa criticizes an advertising newsletter for the city of Poznań:

O gejach można mieć różne prywatne opinie, można holdować rozmaitym stereotypom i przesądom, ale z pewnością nie powinno się ich wyrażać na łamach biuletynu urzędu miasta, które jawi się jako „europejskie” i „open”. (4)

In Środa's texts the adjective *europejski* (*European*) is positive and it is related to such concepts as tolerance and equality. It is considered a synonym for the

words modern, progressive and western. Europeanness is a value Polish society aims at. However, this journey is not the same for all social groups.

Another group of analyzed texts are articles by Janina Paradowska published in „Polityka” between June 2012 and April 2013.

In Paradowska’s articles most instances of the adjective *europejski* (*European*) refer to the EU institutions (in relation to European budget, European elections and European negotiations). In other cases the adjective European is used in a way similar to the articles by Środa. Europeanness is of a positive nature and it is associated with openness, tolerance and equality.

Europeanness of the state is understood as tolerance of the citizens, readiness to respect diversity:

Będzie test z tolerancji, z europejskości, poszanowania dla odmienności i praw człowieka – tak Palikot i Grodzka ustawiają poprzeczkę. (5)

Paradowska also draws attention to different understanding of Europeanness by extreme conservatives:

Nie jest pewne, czy wzburzenie w sprawie Radia Maryja i zagrożonej rzekomo Telewizji Trwam da się długo utrzymywać, bo KRRiT ogłosiła właśnie, że są cztery miejsca na drugim multipleksie, w tym miejsce dla nadawcy religijnego i społecznego zarazem, w której to kategorii zmieści się Telewizja Trwam. Jeśli wreszcie pokaże źródła finansowania. Jednak wsłuchując się w świąteczne homilie, można uznać, że trzeba będzie bronić bardzo wielu sponiewieranych wartości przed „wielkim europejskim kłamstwem”, a więc jakiś ważny czynnik mobilizacyjny zawsze się znajdzie. (6)

Wielkie europejskie kłamstwo (*a great European lie*) is treated here as a factor undermining the traditional value system associated with Polish society by conservatives. Europeanness in this context is axiologically negative, it is a menace to Polish society, tradition and culture.

Further, the articles by Jacek Żakowski published in „Polityka” between June 2012 and April 2013 were analyzed. Most uses of the adjective *europejski* (*European*), as in previous cases, referred to the European Community.

The example below contrasts Europeanness of our state in the context of geographical location to Europeanness of the citizens:

Różnica jest tak duża, że próbując usystematyzować postawy społeczne w różnych krajach, hiszpańscy badacze stworzyli cztery kategorie – bardzo aktywnych Nordyków (Szwecja, Dania, Holandia), dość aktywne europejskie jądro (Francja, Niemcy), niezbyt aktywny obwarzanek (Hiszpania, Włochy, Wielka Brytania, Czechy) i czwartą kategorię, do której należy Polska. Tylko Polska. Politycznie i geogra-

ficznie niewątpliwie jesteśmy częścią Europy. Ale społecznie i kulturowo raczej tylko z nią sąsiadujemy. I to przez gruby mur albo – jak kto woli – przez głęboki rów. (7)

Europeanness of the Polish state is challenged here, it remains only a designation of a geographical location and not mentality of Polish society. Lack of Europeanness in the attitudes of Poles is manifested by a certain degree of passivity, insufficient level of interest in political affairs, aversion to joining different types of organizations. In this case, as in the articles by Środa and Paradowska, Europeanness of the state is considered positive.

Żakowski sees Europeanness in a similar way in another article:

PO wciąż mówi o europeizacji i modernizacji, ale na myśli ma tylko europejskie pieniądze i zalewanie Polski europejskim betonem, a nie modernizację kultury, europejski model społeczny i europejską ideę zrównoważonego rozwoju, które od dziesiątek lat są motorami rozwoju Europy. (8)

The columnist distinguishes Europeanness in the context of economic cooperation of European countries within the community structures and Europeanness or Europeanisation of society and culture. According to him, a real challenge is a change in the mindset of Poles, which would allow for real Europeanisation of the country. Europeanisation understood as use of the EU funds for renovation or construction of different facilities is only a superficial action.

The semantic content included in the concept of the state in a liberal and democratic discourse are characterized by similar axiological nature when it comes to the European context. The examples selected for analysis allow to conclude that Magdalena Środa, Janina Paradowska and Jacek Żakowski give the adjective *europejski* (*European*) a positive value. In any of the articles the adjective was not used in a negative context. After analyzing the texts it appears that Europeanness of the Polish state is what should be aimed at. Europeanness is a value with the surface layer of the infrastructure of the country and it is determined by specific social attitudes. The value is inextricably linked to respect for democracy, equality, tolerance for distinctness and civic engagement. In any of the analyzed articles Polish Europeanness was not negated, however, it was often stressed that Poland is moving towards Europe. In the texts investigated a number of contents included in the concept of the state and distinguished on the basis of dictionary definitions were identified. Therefore, they refer to Europeanness of the citizens of our country, Europeanness of politicians and public administration representatives. On the basis of the articles selected for the purpose of this analysis it can be concluded that Poland is "at the periphery of Europeanness" – our country is not denied to belong to Europe but factors and attitudes which make Poland drift away from Europe are indicated. We conclude

that Polish society strives for Europeaness or it is tested in Europeaness. Nonetheless, some political organizations epitomize anti-European tendencies. The presumption is that publicists' understanding of Europeaness is partially conditioned by their world-view (or world-view widely expressed in the magazines they represent). A similar study could be carried out using right-wing or radically right-wing journalism. It can be assumed that the results of such an analysis would be in opposition to the results obtained on the basis of an analysis of texts published in „Wprost” or „Polityka”.

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Sources of linguistic examples

- (1) <http://www.wprost.pl/ar/238432/Partia-seksistow/?pg=1> [dostęp: 01.07.2015]
- (2) <http://www.wprost.pl/ar/389461/Zadyma-na-wykladzie/?pg=2> [dostęp: 01.07.2015]
- (3) <http://www.wprost.pl/ar/333762/Jacy-jestesmy/> [dostęp: 01.07.2015]
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- (5) <http://www.polityka.pl/kraj/opinie/1535379,1,o-co-chodzilo-w-sporze-o-nowicka.read> [dostęp: 01.07.2015]
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