

Changes in the Polish address practices after the Second World War

After the Second World War, as a result of the Yalta and Potsdam conferences, Poland fell into the Soviet sphere of influence. The new political reality had a great impact on social life. The sociocultural changes involved radical changes in discourse practices, and in the national discourse system in general (Duszak, 2006; cf. Fairclough, 1992). They also affected Polish politeness: a transition from 'traditional Polish' politeness to 'more egalitarian' politeness (cf. Huszcza, 2005). There were changes in address practices (cf. Betsch, 2019). The aim of the study is to conduct an analysis of the changes in the Polish address practices which occurred within the four decades after the Second World War.

The theoretical framework used in the analysis is a combination of historical sociopragmatics and the Discourse-Historical Approach. Historical sociopragmatics, focusing on the interaction between specific aspects of social context and particular historical language use (Culpeper, 2011: 4), can account for the role of address forms in relation to the discourse in which they appear and the context of situation. The Discourse-Historical Approach (Wodak, 2002; Wodak et al., 2009), which is one of the main approaches to Critical Discourse Studies, is an interdisciplinary, problem-oriented approach which goes beyond the linguistic dimension and includes the historical, political and sociological dimensions in the analysis and interpretation of a specific discursive event (Wodak and Reisigl, 2015: 583; Reisigl, 2018). As such, the DHA could greatly contribute to historical sociopragmatics (Culpeper, 2010: 87).

The data used in the analysis come from Polish films depicting the then reality in Poland, produced in the years 1945-1989.

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