

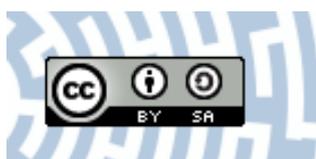


You have downloaded a document from
RE-BUŚ
repository of the **University of Silesia in Katowice**

Title: Politeness and friendliness in public spaces and transport

Author: Ewa Bogdanowska-Jakubowska

Citation style: Bogdanowska-Jakubowska Ewa. (2018). Politeness and friendliness in public spaces and transport. W: P. Biały, B. Cetnarowska (red.), "Studies in contrastive semantics, pragmatics, and morphology" (S. 103-125). Katowice : Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego



Uznanie autorstwa - Na tych samych warunkach - Licencja ta pozwala na kopiowanie, zmienianie, rozprowadzanie, przedstawianie i wykonywanie utworu tak długo, jak tylko na utwory zależne będzie udzielana taka sama licencja.



UNIWERSYTET ŚLĄSKI
W KATOWICACH



Biblioteka
Uniwersytetu Śląskiego



Ministerstwo Nauki
i Szkolnictwa Wyższego

Politeness and friendliness in public spaces and transport

Ewa Bogdanowska-Jakubowska

UNIVERSITY OF SILESIA IN KATOWICE, POLAND

Abstract

Public spaces and transport play a very important role in the life of the society. They act as a “self-organising public service,” a shared resource in which experiences and values are created (Mean and Tims 2005). These are places where people are in the presence of other people. The success of a particular public space is not only in the hands of the architect and the urban planner, but it also depends on the people using it.

In public spaces and transport, one can read notices which provide their users with instructions how to behave and interact with others, what is acceptable in a particular place and what is not, constituting the so-called traffic rules of social interactions (Goffman 1967). Others are expressions of friendliness, intended to make passers-by and customers feel good.

The aim of the study is to analyze this type of inscriptions present in American and Polish urban public spaces and transport. Due to the specificity of the discourse, I decided to employ Critical Discourse Analysis to analyze it.

1. Introduction

Public spaces (e.g., high streets, street markets, shopping malls, community centers, parks, playgrounds, and neighborhood spaces in residential areas) and public transport (subway stations, trains, and buses) play a very important role in the life of the society. They act as a “self-organising public service,” a shared resource in which experiences and values are created (Mean and Tims 2005). These are places where people are in the presence of other people and interact with them. The success of a particular public space is not only in the hands of the architect and the urban planner, but it also depends on the people using it: “people make places.”

In public spaces and transport, one can read notices which provide their users with instructions how to behave and interact with others, what is acceptable in a particular place and what is not, constituting the so-called traffic rules of social interactions (Goffman 1967). Others are expressions of friendliness, intended to make passers-by feel good. They are examples of discourse which is both socially conditioned and socially constitutive; their forms and content

depend on the social context, and they constitute situations, objects, people's social identities, and relationships between individuals and groups.

The aim of the study is to analyze regulatory and commercial discourses present in American and Polish urban public spaces and transport. Due to the specificity of this discourse type, I decided to employ Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to analyze it. The data for the study have been collected in American urban public spaces in Albany, NY, and New York City, as well as in Polish urban public spaces in Kraków, Katowice, Sosnowiec, and Warszawa.

2. Nations as families

In many cultures and languages, nations are metaphorically seen in terms of families (Lakoff et al. 2006). The metaphor NATION IS A FAMILY functions in American as well as in Polish culture.

fatherland, motherland

Founding fathers

Daughters of the American Revolution

Uncle Sam

Americans sent their sons and daughters to war.

Big Brother

ojczyzna ('fatherland')

ojcowizna ('patrimony')

matka-ojczyzna ('mother-homeland'), *matka Polska* ('mother Poland')

Bracia Rodacy! ('Brother [Fellow] Countrymen!')

dzieci tej ziemi ('children of the land')

synowie tej ziemi ('sons of the land')

George Lakoff (2002) writes about the nation-as-family metaphor in his book *Moral Politics*, in which he claims that the metaphor, constituting a mapping between the nation and the family, structures our worldviews and political beliefs. The government is a parent and the citizens are siblings. The government, like parents, has a duty to citizens; it is to protect them, tell them what they can and cannot do, that is, it makes laws, runs the economy, and educates them.

Lakoff et al. (2006) claim that in American culture, there are two idealized models of the family, a "strict father" family and a "nurturant parent" family, which are related to two opposed moral systems and ideologies specifying how the nation should be governed and how people should live their lives. The two models organize the way people think, but they are mutually contradictory and cannot be applied in the same situation at the same time.

In *the nurturant parent model*, parents are equally responsible for the moral development of their children and for making them happy. Nurturing is based

on empathy and responsibility, both for oneself and for others. There is no contradiction between acting to take care for oneself and acting to help others. The common good is necessary for the individual's well-being. Like good parents, the government/authorities provide protection, create opportunities and freedoms for the common good, and promote fairness and equality (Lakoff et al. 2006).

In *the strict father model*, the family is supported and protected by a strong father. Morality implies here the division into absolute rights and wrongs, and requires obedience to the father. It is based on authority and control, both self-control and control over others.

The operation of the models can be observed also in other cultures. However, what makes one culture different from others is how the models are applied, and which of them prevails.

3. Urban public spaces

The term *public space* refers to “all the spaces accessible to and used by the public.” Carmona et al. (2003: 111) distinguish between:

- *External public spaces*: pieces of land that lie between private landholdings. In urban areas, these are public squares, streets, highways, parks, parking lots, etc., and in rural areas, these are stretches of coastline, forests, lakes, rivers, etc. Accessible to all, these spaces constitute public space in its purest form.
- *Internal public spaces*: public institutions, such as libraries, museums, town halls, etc., plus public transport facilities, such as train or bus stations, airports, etc.

Many of these spaces can be characterized by their casual, daily, functional use, and as such, they are called “everyday spaces” (Mean and Tims 2005). Everyday they are crowded with people who, irrespective of their preferences, spend some time in the same place (e.g., commuting to work and back home).

Erving Goffman, in *Behavior in Public Places* (1963), describes the situation in the following way:

Copresence renders persons uniquely accessible, available, and subject to one another. Public order, in its face-to-face aspects, has to do with the normative regulation of this accessibility. (Goffman 1963: 22)

Public order is a part of *social order*, which is defined as “the consequence of any set of moral norms that regulates the way in which persons pursue their objectives” (Goffman 1963: 8). These norms require that every individual should be perceptive and considerate, have pride, honour and dignity, and should behave tactfully, and have feelings and some amount of poise.

One of the most important aspects of public order is *public safety*, whose rules, reinforced by police authority, clearly describe what individuals may and, especially, what they may not do in public.

In American society, it appears that the individual is expected to exert a kind of discipline or tension in regard to his body, showing that he has his faculties in readiness for any face-to-face interaction that might come his way in the situation. Often this kind of controlled alertness in the situation will mean suppressing or concealing many of the capacities and roles the individual might be expected to display in other settings. [...] In short, a kind of “interaction tonus” must be maintained. (Goffman 1963: 25)

Apart from maintaining “interaction tonus,” when in public places, individuals have to manage their “personal front,” that is, personal appearance (clothing, hairdo, and make-up), and present themselves neatly dressed, clean, with their hair combed, and in full control of their body.

Human behavior is inherently “situational,” and as such, it is embedded in physical, social, and cultural settings (Carmona et al. 2003: 106). Individuals’ behavior in the presence of others depends on their individual situation and characteristics (personality, goals and values, past experiences, and state of mind), their social position, and culture they belong to.

Culture is conceived of as “the *context* in which people derive a sense of who they are, how they should behave, possibly where they are pointed in the future” (Fitzgerald 1993: 59). Their identity, functioning as a link between intention and action, guides their behavior “through complex rules that connect culture and communication” (p. 59). Culture is understood in a similar fashion by Ting-Toomey and Chung:

a meaning system that is shared by a majority of individuals in a particular community. On a general level, it refers to a patterned way of living by a group of interacting individuals who share similar sets of traditions, beliefs, values, norms, and behaviors. On a specific level, cultural values and norms influence the expectations that we hold in the development of personal relationship. (Ting-Toomey and Chung 1996: 237–238)

For the aims of the present study, the definitions formulated by Fitzgerald and Ting-Toomey and Chung will constitute the most useful interpretation of the concept of culture.

The state and its executive organs – the government and place authorities – regulate the ways people can use public spaces and behave there, putting emphasis especially on crime and safety. According to Jacobs (1961: 40), a prerequisite of a successful public space is that “a person must feel personally safe and secure on the street among all these strangers.” She claims that this can be

achieved only with the help of people using the space as “active participants” in the “drama of civilisation versus barbarism.”

In current popular usage the idea of “civil society” is most often associated with the idea of “civility” in interpersonal behavior, its antonym being “rudeness,” at times bordering on hostility, aggression, and violence. The erosion of civility in modern life, increasing public “incivility,” is often seen to be the result of a hyperindividualism and legitimation of egocentric behavior leading to a disregard and lack of concern for the welfare of others. Such behaviors bespeak a lack of etiquette, manners, tact, and in a word “civility” (Hunter and Milofsky 2007 :xii).

A civil society has a certain form of government, a system of law and “deep cultural frames defining the collective good” (Shils 1997: 321). All of them contribute to the maintenance of the state of security and mutual respect. To prevent and counteract uncivil and antisocial behavior, people who inhabit an area tend to make “rules” governing their use of public space (cf. Lawson 2001: 2–3).

Public space constitutes “a ‘neutral’ or common ground for social interaction, intermingling, and communication; it is a stage for social learning, personal development, and information exchange” (Loukaitou-Sideris and Banerjee 1998: 175; cf. Ellin 1999; Carmona et al. 2003). Discourses we can see in different public places “shape and are constrained by the built environment as well as the interaction order that governs the people who use urban spaces” (Scollon and Wong Scollon 2003: 166). The study of the social meaning of the material placement of signs and discourses in the material world is called *geosemiotics*. According to Ron Scollon and Suzie Wong Scollon (2003), there are four factors to be considered in geosemiotics:

- the social actors;
- the interaction order;
- visual semiotics (the discourses of images and texts which they encounter);
- place semiotics.

Place semiotics involves the discourses of images and texts, together with their location in time and space in the material world. The discourses on display in public spaces can be divided into (Scollon and Wong Scollon 2003: 167):

- regulatory (e.g., municipal), concerning vehicle traffic (cars, buses, trucks, and bicycles) and pedestrian traffic, and including public notices;
- infrastructural (e.g., municipal), including public functional notices and public labels;
- commercial (e.g., advertising);
- transgressive (e.g., graffiti).

Regulatory and infrastructural discourses are put on display by the space authorities and provide its users with the information concerning the space function, and the rules and regulations that have to be followed within the space. Thus,

public spaces are not only the place in which people interact with other people, they also serve as the place in which the authorities give them instructions how to behave and what to do for their mutual good (*the nurturant parent*), as well as tell them what is prohibited (*the strict father*). Turning public spaces into a stage for social teaching and learning is indispensable for good functioning of the civil society, but it is especially important in cities inhabited by members of different cultures, or different ethnic and racial groups, and/or visited by tourists from all over the world (e.g., New York City, Kraków).

Commercial discourses, whose functions are mainly advertising and providing information, express positive attitude to potential customers. Politeness and friendliness are among the main means of persuasion used in this type of discourse.

4. Critical Discourse Analysis

Critical Discourse Analysis defines *discourse* as “a form of ‘social practice’” which implies a dialectical relationship between a particular discursive event and the situation, institution, and social structure which frame it (Fairclough and Wodak [1997]2009: 258). Understood in this way, discourse is both socially constitutive and socially conditioned. In the context of public spaces, the messages addressed by space authorities to space users are conditioned by social rules existing in a given society (i.e., the mainstream culture); the messages are also socially constitutive; they are aimed at:

- creating a public space in which people would feel safe and secure among strangers;
- increasing public “civility”;
- establishing and maintaining the atmosphere of mutual friendliness and respect;
- promoting positive thinking;
- solving (potential) problems arising in social interaction and resulting from cultural/ethnic/racial differences.

A study of inscriptions providing instructions how to behave and interact with others, what is acceptable in a particular place and what is not, constituting the so-called traffic rules of social interactions in public spaces, will be conducted within an interdisciplinary framework – *the integrative pragmatic and discourse-analytic approach*, presented by Ruth Wodak ([2007]2014), which incorporates into discourse analysis important features of the immediate context (speakers, hearers, time, settings, expectations, and intentions) and implicit meanings (e.g., presuppositions, implicatures, allusions, and insinuations).

5. An analysis of inscriptions in American and Polish urban public spaces

Expression of emotions is an integral element of social interaction. The presence of other people, what they do, and what they say evoke various emotions, both positive and negative. In American culture, expression of negative emotions should be avoided, while expression of positive emotions should be controlled. According to Anna Wierzbicka (1999), American culture promotes certain types of the latter, namely, friendliness, cheerfulness, and happiness. The three emotions are related to a generally understood positive attitude to everything and everyone.

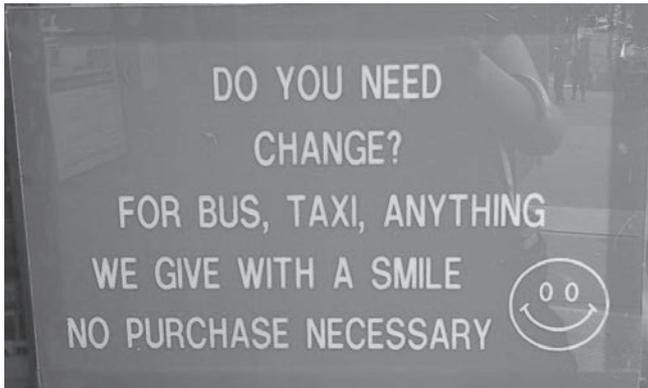
Friendliness, or expressing kindness to others, is the main principle of social interaction in American culture. This is reflected in the common use of how-are-you type of questions, frequently expressed good wishes, compliments, and various positive comments and exclamations. Friendliness is also expressed by showing willingness to get in contact in future; this purpose is most often served by invitation-like forms and “statements of good intention” (Wolfson 1993; Jakubowska 1999; Bogdanowska-Jakubowska 2010).

- (1) 
- (2) 

In Example (1), an expression specific for a popular social network is displayed in the shopping mall, where it is addressed to customers. It is used to express friendliness, with the intention to make them behave in an expected way, that is, visit the mall again. In Example (2), space users are treated by the owners of the renovated building with due respect and courtesy: the owners apologize for inconvenience, provide reasons for the current state of the building, and express gratitude for patience.

Cheerfulness, or being in good spirits, is a social requirement in American culture. Expressing their cheerfulness, Americans smile. A broad smile is part of a positive self-image: by smiling a person makes others think “something good” about him/her. Individuals that look happy are perceived in American culture as competent and successful, and as such, they are more often trusted and respected. Those who look cheerful and happy are accepted and liked by others (Wierzbicka 1999). This is connected with the principle of positive thinking: people that are cheerful often smile, are friendly, and feel good.

(3)



(4)



(5)



Examples (3)–(5) have been found in shops and restaurants. Their main aim is to express friendliness and evoke positive feelings in the customers and make them feel good. In Example (3), the virtual addresser wants to help the addressee satisfy his/her potential needs. In fact, friendliness and good intentions are offered not only to the customers, but to anybody in need. The intended impression is reinforced by the mention of smile and the use of a smiley. A person who is smiling is perceived as one who controls the situation. Example (4) is an invitation to enter a restaurant. Smile, as an expression of friendliness and contentment, is to make the act more felicitous. In Example (5), the inscription functions as a ritual of decreased access (i.e., goodbye), which is usually performed at the end of a conversational exchange; it signals the addresser's intention to terminate the contact with the other (Goffman 1967). In this particular case, it consists of an expression of gratitude for visiting the restaurant and an invitation-like form, which is a signal of willingness to get in contact with the customer sometime in future.

Cheerfulness is expressed in many sayings, such as *Keep smiling*, *Look on the bright side of life*, or *Cheer up!* Americans strongly believe in positive thinking and the power of optimism, which are considered to be vital for achieving success and becoming happy (Bogdanowska-Jakubowska 2010).



Example (6) is the poster on display by the exit from the NYC subway, in the vicinity of a university campus, a place frequented by many young people who find themselves in a strange city, crowded with strange people, and what is more, who often live in a small room with no street view. The virtual addresser's intention is to console those people by merely stating the truth: the negative (and highly depressing) fact of living in a room with a window facing a wall is counterbalanced by the positive fact of living in New York City. The city is presented here as a positive value: a place in which people feel good. The message is not explicitly stated, but implied; the word *but*, due to its meaning of contrast, functions as a conventional implicature trigger.



In the slogan *I ♥ NY* (see Example 7), which was commissioned by the State authorities in 1977 as an element of the campaign to promote tourism (<http://www.gothamgazette.com>), the State of New York is a place in which people feel good. The use of the symbol ♥, meaning “love,” points to the intensity of positive feelings New York evokes in people visiting it. In both (6) and (7), there is a simple message: being in the place can make you happy.

Apart from the well-being of its citizens, the main objective of civil society is promotion of mutual help and solidarity among them. Using the nation-as-family metaphor, one may say that to create opportunities for the common good and to provide protection for all, for the elderly and the disabled in particular, the parent-state provides the children-citizens with the instruction how to behave properly while in the presence of others. Depending on the situation, the parent-state shows to the children-citizens one of the two faces, the nurturant parent face or the strict father face. They are reflected in the forms of instructions displayed in public transport.



(8c)



Examples (8a) and (8b), intended as orders, express obligation (the use of the modal verb *must*) to behave in a certain way and require obedience to the parent-state. Example (8c) is a polite request, whose politeness effect is reinforced by the use of the politeness marker *please* and the negative interrogative form signalling polite pessimism typical of Anglo-Saxon culture (cf. Wierzbicka [1991]2003). Apart from being polite, the request is also intended to be friendly: the “friendly” effect is achieved by the use of the symbol ♥. The three inscriptions are displayed on the bus together to increase their persuasive force; in the order gradating from the unconditional obligation to give up the seat when in the presence of a disabled person (8a), through the obligation conditioned by the disabled person’s request (8b), to the last one (8c), which is to mitigate the impositions of (8a) and (8b).

(9)



Like a good parent (the nurturant parent model), the place authorities provide protection, create opportunities and freedoms for the common good, and promote fairness and equality. To protect their children-citizens from danger, they issue warnings (see Example 9). To justify issuing the warning, the authorities provide the explanation: *Some surfaces may be hot*. To mitigate the imposition, the imperative form of the warning is preceded by the politeness marker *please*.

(10)



(11)



As has been mentioned, nurturing is based on empathy and responsibility, both for oneself and for others. In the posters shown in Examples (10) and (11), two vital problems are discussed, namely, smoking and trash. To make citizens

understand the problems and improve the situation, a simple description of the problems is provided and steps to solve them are suggested. In both cases, citizens are expected to show understanding of the common problems and feel considerate and responsible for the well-being of others. For Americans, equality is one of the most important values, which means equal opportunities for all people (Naylor 1998) (e.g., *Everyone deserves to breathe clean, smoke-free air in their homes*). They are to actively participate in the creation of the civil society (e.g., *Be part of the solution*).

(12)



In Example (12), the main aim of the message is also protection of the children-citizens; however, the approach taken by the authorities is more strict: the father-state (the strict father model) requires absolute obedience and threatens the children-citizens with punishment in case of disobedience.

(13)



(14)



One of the foundations of the civil society is civility, or courtesy (both mean “politeness and good manners”). It is important in all areas of social life; it has to be employed by representatives of the parent-state (e.g., the police), by various professionals (e.g., professional drivers), as well as by ordinary people in everyday life (e.g., subway or bus users). Example (13) can be considered a declaration of values: the law enforcers can be expected to show courtesy in contacts with citizens, professionalism in every action, and respect towards everyone. Example (14) is a badge of achievement which attests to the truck drivers’ driving safely and behaving politely towards others, their customers in particular.

(15)



In 2015, the Metropolitan Transportation Authority launched a campaign in the NYC Subway aimed at curbing bad subway behavior. Example (15) is one of its slogans telling subway users that being polite may be useful when one is in the presence of others.

(16)



(17)



The Metropolitan Transportation Authority rarely acts as a strict father (e.g., the yellow line at the edge of the platform in the New York Subway). Mostly, it acts as a nurturant parent, expressing general truths concerning “the traffic rules of social interaction” (Examples 15–17) and telling the children-citizens how they should behave (Examples 18–23). In Example (16), the expression of general truth is reinforced by the mention of the social gratification resulting from appropriate behavior. In Example (17), the general truth is reinforced by means of the direct request (an imperative form) addressed individually to public transport users.

(18)



(19)



(20)



(21)



(22)



(23)



(24) *It's A Subway Car, Not A Dining Car. It may be take-out but please, don't eat here.*

(25) *Dude...Stop The Spread, Please. It's a space issue.*

The nurturant parent not only says what one should do, but also gives explanation why this is a better course of action, providing good reasons (Examples 18–19). The main aim of every contact with other public transport users should be mutual well-being (Examples 18, 19, 21, 23). The nurturant parent draws the line between the public and the private, or, using Goffman's (1959) terminology, between *frontstage* and *backstage*. Certain actions are said to belong to the backstage and as such, should be avoided in the frontstage (Example 20, 22 and 24). In other words, people's behavior is regionally variable. It is requested that certain groups of users get special help and, in addition, be treated with friendliness (*a smile*) (Example 23; see also Example 8). Subway trains and buses,

like other public spaces, are *public*, that is, “for the use of everyone” (LDCE); therefore, all citizens have equal rights to use them and are under the obligation to share their space with others (Examples 19, 21, and 25). The slogans and other inscriptions, part of the campaign launched in the NYC Subway, are written in plain language. Although imperative forms are often used, the tone of the messages is not authoritative but friendly. This is achieved by the use of informal style, colloquial expressions (e.g., *pole hog, dude*), positively marked expressions (e.g., *a better ride, a nice thing to do, even better*), polite verbs (*thank*), and politeness markers (*please*). Like many inscriptions of that type on display in public spaces, they are supported by pictograms, which ensures that they can be understood by everyone.

(26) *Wstęp wzbroniony.* (‘Entry prohibited’)

Przejscia nie ma. (‘No passage’)

Zakaz wnoszenia napojów i pożywienia do biblioteki. (‘Ban on bringing food and drinks to the library’)

Zakaz wnoszenia napojów w szklanych pojemnikach. (‘Ban on bringing drinks in glass containers’)

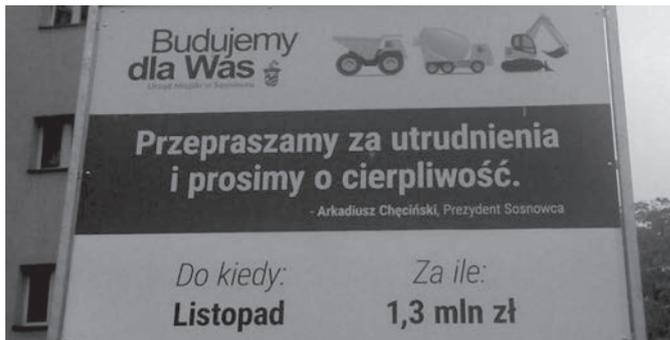
In comparison to a great variety of inscriptions in American urban public space, inscriptions in Polish urban public space are scarce and different in tone, although some changes in this respect can be noticed. Before the political and economic transformation in 1989, the communist government acted as a strict father, controlling the public and requiring absolute obedience. Polish urban public space and transport were dominated by inscriptions written in an authoritative tone and an impersonal, imperative form. They usually prohibited space users from doing something, providing no reasons. Notices of that type can still be found in many public spaces (Example 26).

(27)



(‘From the 3rd of October, Kopernik street between Westerplatte and Strzelecka streets will be under repair. At that time the fragment of the street will be closed. We request [your] understanding’)

(28)



(‘We are building [it] for you. We apologize for any inconvenience and request [your] patience’)

After 1989, the opening of Poland to Western culture, American culture in particular, resulted in significant sociocultural changes. Westernization, or Americanization, also had an impact on urban public space. The changes, among others, involved the transition from the strict father model to the nurturant parent model. This change is visible in Examples (27) and (28), in which the city authorities express a friendly attitude towards the users of the public space in question. The positive attitude is signalled, first of all, by mere displaying of such inscriptions and by providing the information of the repairs in advance. The friendly character of the messages is reinforced by the use of polite expressions (e.g., *Prosimy o wyrozumiałość/cierpliwość* ‘We request [your] understanding/patience’; *Przepraszamy za...* ‘We apologize for...’).

(29)

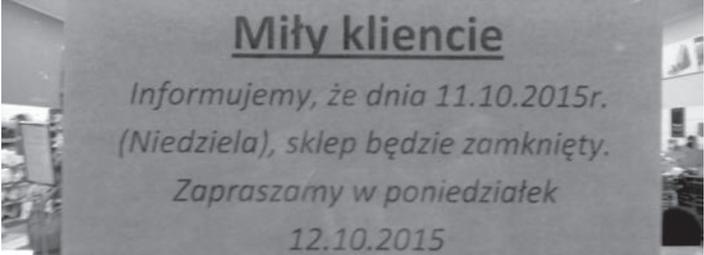


(‘Failure. Notice. We heartily apologize for the inconvenience’)

The notice of the automatic door failure (Example 29) was on display in the Kraków Railway Station, which is visited by people from all over the world; that is why it was both in Polish and in English (or, rather, partly in Polish and partly in English). In the Polish version, the verb form *przepraszamy* (‘we apologize’) is modified by the adverb *serdecznie* (‘heartily’). The adverb, meaning “with great affection, sincerely and kindly” and “very much, truly” (SJP), has recently become very popular and is commonly used even in exchanges between strangers and in formal contexts.

- (30) *Nie rozmieniamy na drobne do parkomatu.* ('We do not change money for the parking meter')

Example (30) stands in stark contrast to Example (3). The notice is a remnant of the communist era, in which the availability of goods and services was limited, and those who sold them did not have to be friendly to seek the customers' acceptance. Although the situation has changed, the old habits (where customers are treated as supplicants) are still powerful, especially among the older generation. It is hard to imagine a notice like the one in Example (3) to be displayed in a shop in Poland.

- (31) 

('Dear customer, we would like to inform you that on the 11th of October 2015 (Sunday) our shop will be closed. We invite [you] on Monday, the 12th of October 2015')

- (32) 

('You will look fantastic in it')

However, the new approach to customers (typical of open market economies) starts to prevail, or more appropriately, the old tradition of taking good care of customers existing in Poland before the Second World War is coming back. The positive attitude towards customers is becoming a rule again. Customers are treated as welcome guests, with respect and courtesy; the main aim is to make them feel good. In Example (31), the address form *drogi kliencie* ('dear customer') is used in the notice providing information when the shop will be closed. Example (32) is a notice displayed in a shop of a popular retail-clothing company. It is partly in Polish, partly in English. In Polish, it is a promise made

to the potential customer: if you buy our product, you will feel good. In English, it is a communication concept by means of which the company expresses what they stand for and what they have on offer. The English language is used for two reasons: first, the sentence is used as an advertising slogan in many countries; second, Poles are attracted to products of foreign origin.

(33)



(‘Respect others. Step aside!’)

Proszę odejść od drzwi! (‘Please, step aside to let others in/off!’)

Ściągnij ten plecak! (‘Take your backpack of your back!’)

Przepraszam, przepraszam. (‘Excuse me, excuse me’)

Tyle miejsca z tyłu, czasem nie rozumiem tych ludzi! (‘There is so much [free] space in the back, sometimes I do not understand those people!’)

To taka tradycja stać przy drzwiach. (‘It is a tradition to stay by the door’)

(34) *Weźże gadaj ciszej!* (‘Don’t chat loud!’)

Nie chcę słyszeć, co będzie na obiad! (‘I don’t want to hear what you will have for lunch!’)

Nie chcę słyszeć o Twoich chorobach! (‘I don’t want to hear about your illness!’)

Nie chcę słyszeć Twoich kłótni! (‘I don’t want to listen to your quarrel!’)

Szanuj innych. (‘Respect others’)

The Authority of Public Infrastructure and Transport, the Kraków counterpart of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, has assumed a similar approach to public transport users (a nurturant parent). In 2016, the Authority launched a campaign in the Kraków trams and buses aimed at curbing bad behavior, entitled *Weźże... zachowaj kulturę w komunikacji miejskiej* (‘Behave culturally in the municipal transport’). The main elements of the campaign are 30-second films shown on trams and buses. They mention most vital problems of social interaction in such places. The film *Weźże się przesun!* (‘Step aside!’) presents people’s usual comments on troublesome behavior on the bus or tram; the film *Weźże gadaj ciszej!* (‘Don’t chat loud!’) gives reasons why people should

avoid chatting loud in public, that is, suggests keeping private things private (see Examples 33 and 34). In the films, individual public transport users are addressed with second person singular forms, in the mode parents address their children. The inscriptions are written in a plain language. Imperative forms predominate, which are traditionally used to express requests in Polish; the majority of them start with *weźże...* ('get down [to doing something]'); the particle *że* expresses annoyance). The comments on troublesome behavior are to illustrate and support the requests. In each film, respect to others is given as the main reason for curbing bad behavior in public transport.

6. Conclusions

In the paper, two types of discourse present in American and Polish urban public spaces and transport have been analyzed: regulatory and infrastructural on the one hand, issued and displayed by space authorities; and commercial, on the other, issued and displayed by other public space users, owners of commercial property.

Having analyzed the inscriptions, I have come to the following conclusions. Both types of discourse express culture-specific values and follow the moral code. Inscriptions in commercial spaces, such as shopping malls, shops, restaurants, cafés, and medical centers, are intended to establish a good relationship with customers and create a positive self-image of commercial space owners; they follow culture-specific norms of politeness, express a culture-specific way of thinking, and promote values cherished by members of the culture. Due to their persuasive character, they can be treated as advertisements.

Inscriptions in public spaces displayed by space authorities (THE STATE IS THE AUTHOR) are messages either from THE STATE AS A NURTURANT PARENT or from THE STATE AS A STRICT FATHER. Nurturant parent messages perform educating functions and promote fairness, empathy, and responsibility for others. Strict father messages perform protective and controlling functions.

Inscriptions issued and displayed by space authorities in American culture can be divided into:

- those which express nurturant parent messages, instructing public space users how to behave while in the presence of other people, what they should do, and what they should not; providing them with the rules of "relations in public spaces";
- those which express strict father messages, providing public space users with rules of public space use and safety regulations.

Inscriptions in commercial spaces are much more numerous in American culture than in Polish culture. Although in both cultures they have a self-pre-

sentational function, American inscriptions carry more positive messages, showing a friendly attitude towards others, while Polish inscriptions of that type are less frequent, and messages they carry are less cheerful and friendly; some of them are even negative – discouraging customers from contact. However, this situation has been changing: the old Polish tradition of taking good care of customers, existing in Poland before the Second World War, is coming back, supported by the positive attitude towards customers borrowed from the West.

Inscriptions in public spaces issued and displayed by Polish authorities express mainly strict father messages and communicate rules and regulations in which safety rules prevail. This can be explained by Poland's totalitarian history; in the years 1945–1989 in Poland, the state had control over all areas of life, and the totalitarian government represented the strict father model. The remnants of the period are still visible in the attitude of the state towards citizens in public discourse.

However, changes in Polish political, economic, and social life after the year 1989 have influenced the relationship between the state and citizens. Due to the Westernization/Americanization of Polish culture, a new model of government has emerged, and now the nurturant parent model is getting more and more popular.

Bibliography

- Bogdanowska-Jakubowska, E. 2010. *FACE. An Interdisciplinary Perspective*. Katowice: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego.
- Carmona, M., T. Heath, T. Oc, and S. Tiesdell. 2003. *Public Places – Urban Spaces. The Dimensions of Urban Design*. Oxford: Architectural Press. An imprint of Elsevier.
- Ellin, N. 1999. *Postmodern Urbanism*. Revised edition. Oxford: Blackwells.
- Fairclough, N., and R. Wodak. [1997]2009. Critical Discourse Analysis. In T. A. van Dijk (ed.), *Discourse as Social Interaction*, 258–284. London: SAGE Publications.
- Fitzgerald, T. K. 1993. *Metaphors of Identity. A Culture-Communication Dialogue*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Goffman, E. 1959. *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. New York: Doubleday.
- Goffman, E. 1963. *Behavior in Public Places. Notes on the Social Organization of Gatherings*. New York: Free Press of Glencoe.
- Goffman, E. 1967. *Interaction Ritual: Essays in Face-to-Face Behavior*. Chicago: Aldine Publishing Company.
- <http://www.gothamgazette.com/index.php/government/1751-i-sell-new-york>
- Hunter, A., and C. Milofsky. 2007. *Pragmatic Liberalism Constructing a Civil Society*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Jacobs, J. [1961]1984. *The Death and Life of Great American Cities: The Failure of Modern Town Planning*. London: Peregrine Books.

- Jakubowska, E. 1999. *Cross-Cultural Dimensions of Politeness in the Case of Polish and English*. Katowice: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego.
- Lakoff, G. 2002. *Moral Politics: How Liberals and Conservatives Think*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Lakoff, G., and The Rockridge Institute. 2006. *Thinking Points. A Progressive Handbook. Communicating Our American Values and Vision*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.
- Lawson, B. 2001. *The Language of Space*. London: Architectural Press.
- Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*. 1987. Harlow: Longman. (LDCE)
- Loukaitou-Sideris, A., and T. Banerjee. 1998. *Urban Design Downtown: Poetics and Politics of Form*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Mean, M., and Ch. Tims. 2005. *People Make Places: Growing the Public Life of Cities*. Published by Demos. Available at: <http://www.demos.co.uk>.
- Naylor, L. L. 1998. *American Culture: Myth and Reality of a Culture of Diversity*. Westport, CT: Bergin & Garvey.
- Scollon, R., and S. Wong Scollon. 2003. *Discourses in Place. Language in the Material World*. London: Routledge.
- Shils, E. 1997. *The Virtue of Civility*. Indianapolis, IN: The Liberty Fund, Inc.
- Słownik Języka Polskiego*. 1978–1981. Warszawa: PWN. (SJP)
- The Social Value of Public Spaces*. Joseph Rowntree Foundation. Available at: <http://www.jrf.org.uk>.
- Ting-Toomey, S., and S. Chung. 1996. Cross-cultural interpersonal communication: Theoretical trends and research directions. In W. B. Gudykunst, S. Ting-Toomey, and T. Nishida (eds.), *Communication in Personal Relationships Across Cultures*, 237–261. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications.
- Wierzbicka, A. [1991]2003. *Cross-Cultural Pragmatics. The Semantics of Human Interaction*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Wierzbicka, A. 1999. *Język–Umysł–Kultura*. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN.
- Wodak, R. 2007. Pragmatics and Critical Discourse Analysis. A cross-disciplinary analysis. *Pragmatics and Cognition* 15 (1): 203–225, selected 203–207, 215–218. Reprinted in: J. Angermüller, D. Maingueneau and Ruth Wodak (eds.). 2014. *The Discourse Studies Reader. Main Currents in Theory and Analysis*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Wolfson, N. 1993. Rules of speaking. In J.C. Richards and R.W. Schmidt (eds.), *Language and Communication*, 61–87. London: Longman.