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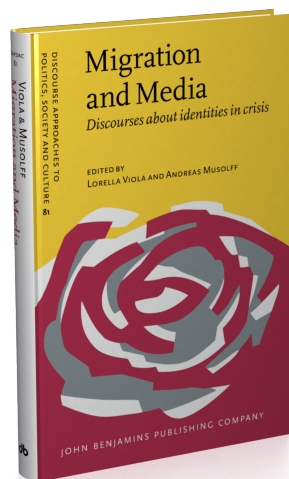
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Aspects of threat construction in the Polish anti-immigration discourse

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Proximization Theory (PT) (Cap 2008, 2010, 2013, 2017; among others) is a cognitive-critical model that accounts for the ways in which the discursive construction of closeness and remoteness can be manipulated in the political sphere and bound up with fear, security and conflict. This article applies PT in the domain of state political discourse in today's Poland, outlining strategies whereby anti-immigration stance and policies are legitimized by discursively constructed fear appeals and other coercion patterns. It demonstrates how the 'emerging', 'growing', 'gathering' threats – physical as well as ideological – are construed by the Polish right-wing government, who thus claim their right to oppose EU immigration agreements and pursue strict anti-immigration measures.

Keywords: anti-immigration discourse, Poland, Law & Justice Party, threat construction, legitimization, proximization

1. Introduction

October 2015 saw a major political change in Poland, marked by a landslide victory in parliamentary elections of the strongly conservative Law & Justice (L&J) party, which took over the legislative and executive powers after the eight-year-long rule of liberal government. The resulting policy changes have been enormous, including a dramatic growth of economic interventionism and central planning, serious constraints on the constitutional freedoms and independence of the judicial sector, as well as state control over the public media, among many others. No less radical have been the changes in foreign policy, reflecting the essentially anti-European disposition of the new government, whose nationalistic stance has been provoking continual tensions between Warsaw and Brussels (such as the recent vote over the renewal of Donald Tusk's presidency of the Council of Europe).

Alongside with these changes, L&J's government has been redefining Poland's position with respect to the most critical issues surrounding Europe and the EU, such as the Eurozone crisis, Brexit and, of course, the ever-growing problem of refugee migration into Europe. Regarding the latter, L&J and the new government have refused to implement the refugee distribution arrangement agreed on by the former cabinet, arguing that it realizes a 'German plan' at the cost of Poland's national interests. As of today, L&J's government not only challenges that arrangement, but openly refuses to participate in virtually all EU initiatives to manage the immigration crisis. While this kind of policy finds little understanding with most European partners, it enjoys relatively high popularity on the home front, among Polish people. This is due to a skillful rhetorical campaign, which not only legitimizes that policy, but also, and consequently, plays a key role in legitimizing the new government as a whole.

This paper is a critical-linguistic study of Polish government's discursive management of the refugee and immigration crisis, pinpointing the main strategies whereby L&J and their cabinet justify not only Poland's lack of political involvement but in fact their essentially negative attitude to the issue of immigration and even immigrants as such. The analysis demonstrates that migration of refugee groups into Europe, from mainly Syria, but also other countries of the Middle East as well as East Africa, is consistently conceptualized as a growing threat to Poland's national security. The threat is construed in ideological as well as physical terms, involving a strategic interplay of abstract and material fear appeals.¹ The construal of the threat rests on forced conceptualizations of a destructive impact of the apparently distant entities (immigrant groups from external territories – a symbolic 'THEM') on the home entities (Poland, and other European countries – a symbolic 'US'). The ominous vision of such an impact serves as a pre-requisite for legitimization of the anti-immigrant stance on the European arena as well as anti-immigrant policies at home.

The paper is structured in three main parts (Sections 2–4). Section 2 discusses the main theories – cognitive-linguistic, evolutionary, psychological – of threat construction and threat communication in political discourse and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). I start from general issues of dichotomous (US vs. THEM) representations in political discourse, and go on to focus on how the external (THEM) parties are discursively constructed as threat elements endangering the central, or home (US), entities. In this vein, I present Proximity Theory (Cap 2013, etc.) as arguably the most viable model to capture the US vs. THEM opposition and conflict. In Section 3 I apply the proximity framework to analyze fragments of

1. Cf. Schröter et al. (this volume) for analysis of threat patterns implicit in the abstract term *multiculturalism*.

2015–2017 speeches by top politicians of the Polish ruling government and the L&J party. The data include public addresses and comments made by Jarosław Kaczyński (the L&J party leader), Beata Szydło (the Prime Minister in the L&J government), Witold Waszczykowski (the Minister of Foreign Affairs) and Mariusz Błaszczak (the Minister of the Interior). In the final Section 4 I synthetically summarize findings from the analysis. It is argued that the threat construction pattern pursued in the speeches draws upon a unique combination of ideological and material elements, whereby the initially abstract threat turns gradually into a tangible, physical danger. The account of this regularity possesses not only empirical, but also theoretical value, adding to the explanatory potential of Proximization Theory and CDA as a whole.

2. Discourse space: Cognitive representations and the forcing of worldviews

Issues of threat construction based on discursive representation of conflict between the home group (US) and the antagonistic or enemy group (THEM) are among the most popular themes of today's CDA. This seems a direct consequence of CDA's growing interest in mechanisms of spatial cognition and conceptualization, underlying numerous interdisciplinary studies of ideologically motivated construals of meaning within different discourse domains (Cienki, Kaal & Maks 2010; Hart 2010, 2014; Dunmire 2011; Kaal 2012; Filardo Llamas 2010, 2013; Filardo Llamas et al. 2015; etc.). The cognitive-linguistic approach to CDA offers a disciplined theoretical perspective on the conceptual import of linguistic choices identified as potentially ideological. It thus affords a new and promising lens on persuasive, manipulative and coercive properties of discourse, worldview and conceptualization which have hitherto been beyond the radar of CDA (Hart 2014; Hart & Cap 2014).

Crucially, the cognitive-linguistic approach in CDA presupposes the fundamental role of spatial cognition in *relativization* and *subjective representation* of processes/attitudes that involve a deictic point of view to 'anchor' ideas (Werth 1999; Gavins 2007; Kaal 2012). All language use, and therefore also discourse, involves the (re-)construction of a mental space which functions as a conceptual frame for the representation of geographically, culturally and ideologically bounded social realities. These assumptions are operationalized in CDA in models which link thought patterns in the mind to their linguistic and discursive representations, revealing ideological meanings. Such models fall, roughly, into two groups. On the one hand, there are (cf. 2.1) theories which account for the US/THEM relation in the basic, 'center-periphery' arrangement of the Discourse Space (DS) (Levinson 2003; Chilton 2004, 2005; Gavins 2007). These theories can be regarded as 'formative' in the development of the cognitive approach to CDA. On the other hand, there are (cf. 2.2) more recent models such as Cap (2013) and Hart (2014), whose

focus is not just the basic, or initial, DS arrangement, but crucially, the dynamic re-arrangement of the Space, involving a discursively construed movement of the THEM-peripheral entity toward the US-center entity. As is claimed below, the latter seem to be better equipped to capture the threatening nature of such a movement.

2.1 Deictic Space Theory (DST)

Among the ‘formative’ cognitive-linguistic approaches to CDA, the Deictic Space Theory (DST) of Paul Chilton (2004, 2005) is arguably the most elaborate model, paving the way for later developments. In Chilton (2004: 57) a central claim is made that in processing any discourse people ‘position’ other entities in their ‘world’ by ‘positioning’ these entities in relation to themselves along three axes in three dimensions, ‘spatial’, ‘temporal’, and ‘modal’. This arrangement presupposes the primacy of the spatial dimension as the remaining dimensions involve conceptualizations in spatial terms. Specifically, time is conceptualized in terms of motion through space (‘the time to act has arrived’) and modality is conceptualized in terms of distance (‘remotely possible’) or (deontic modality) as a metaphoric extension of the binary opposition between the close of the remote. The origin of the three dimensions is at the deictic center, which includes the symbolic Self, i.e. *I*, *we*, etc. All other entities and processes exist relative to ontological spaces defined by their coordinates on the space (*s*), time (*t*) and modality (*m*) axes (Figure 1). This makes it possible, Chilton argues, to conceptualize the ongoing kaleidoscope of ontological configurations activated by text.

Figure 1 represents the basic interface of cognition and language shared by most of the cognitive models trying to account for the construal of discourse. At

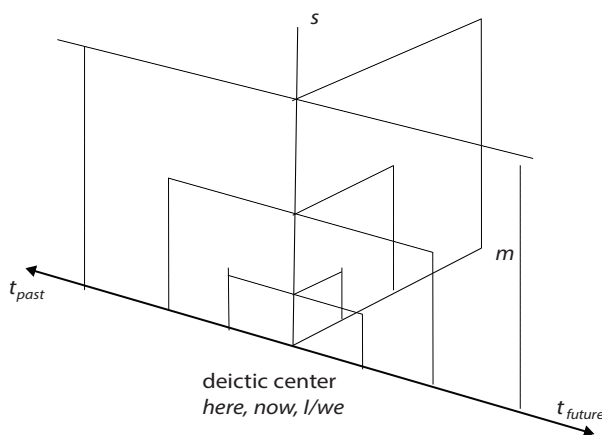


Figure 1. Dimensions of deixis (adapted from Chilton 2004: 58)

the heart of the account is the concept of deixis and, what follows, deictic markers. The spatial markers, such as *I/we* and *they*, 'located' on the *s* axis are the core of the linguistic representation, which is a representation in terms of binary oppositions extending into all three dimensions. Typically, entities and processes construed as 'close' in the spatio-temporal dimension are assigned positive values within the deontic modal dimension, while those construed as 'distant' are at the same time (or as a result) assigned negative values. In models other than Chilton's, the central status of the spatial deixis is reflected at theoretical and terminological levels, where 'US-good/THEM-bad' is more of a conceptual than linguistic dichotomy (cf. Text World Theory in Werth 1999 and Gavins 2007; see also Boyd's TWT-inspired study in the present volume).

How do models such as DST work in studies of threat construction and fear generation?² In his study of discourse of the Kosovo war, Chilton (2004: 142) analyzes the following text, an excerpt from President Clinton's TV address to the American nation on March 24, 1999:^{3,4}

(25) Ending this tragedy is a moral imperative. (26) It is also important to America's national interest. (27) Take a look at this map. (28) Kosovo is a small place, but it sits on a major fault line between Europe, Asia and the Middle East, at the meeting place of Islam and both the Western and Orthodox branches of Christianity. (29) To the south are our allies, Greece and Turkey; to the north, our new democratic allies in Central Europe. (30) And all around Kosovo there are other small countries, struggling with their own economic and political challenges – countries that could be overwhelmed by a large, new wave of refugees from Kosovo. (31) All the ingredients for a major war are there: ancient grievances, struggling democracies, and in the center of it all a dictator in Serbia who has done nothing since the Cold War ended but start new wars and pour gasoline on the flames of ethnic and religious division. (32) Sarajevo, the capital of neighboring Bosnia, is where World War I began. (33) World War II and the Holocaust engulfed this region. (34) In both wars Europe was slow to recognize the dangers, and the United States waited even longer to enter the conflicts. (35) Just imagine if leaders back then had acted wisely and early enough, how many lives could have been saved, how many Americans would not have had to die. (36) We learned some of the same lessons in Bosnia just a few years ago. (37) The world did not act early enough to stop that war, either.

Chilton's DST analysis can be summarized as follows. At the intersection point (the origin) of the three axes (see Figure 2 below; numbers refer to the sentences

2. Cf. Boyd (this volume) to see how threat-based discourse can be explored through the lens of another cognitive model, Text World Theory.

3. The day the NATO intervention in Kosovo began.

4. I have saved the original numbering of the sentences (25)–(37).

or [30'–31'] sentence parts responsible for a particular conceptual operation) is 'this map' (President Clinton is seen pointing to a visual aid). The map itself does not represent an objective reality; its task is to launch a reality space to be specified by the verbal commentary. A presupposition obtains: addressees must, in order to interpret the unfolding text as coherent, infer that (27) and the following sentences are intended to motivate (26) (that national interests are at stake) and (25) (that action is a moral imperative). On that presupposition, sentences (28), (29) and (30) can be regarded as setting up a 'map representation' space. This construal involves a conventional pragmatic function, by which cartographic images are taken to represent objective reality spaces (Fauconnier & Turner 2002). 'This map' in the studio (or 'in' the viewer's area) represents a conceptual space that is mutually understood as remote (viz. 'there' in [31]), but which the map presented 'here' and 'now' makes conceptually close. In the process of defining the map's conceptual projection space the use of 'could' ([30'] in 'countries that could be overwhelmed by a large new wave of refugees from Kosovo'), prompts the viewer/addressee to launch a space at the possibility point of *m* and in the near future zone of *t*. This is *not* part of the televised map picture; it is part of the conceptual 'picture' produced by the discourse, which conflates the apparently remote Kosovo space and the viewer/addressee space. The resulting proximity of the Kosovo space and its negatively charged entities (as opposed to the positively charged entities [President Clinton, his audience, allies in Europe] in the deictic center) allows transition to (31), which expresses a generalized likelihood of a major military conflict and thus threat to American interests. In (31), the positioning of the (31') embedded clause ('... who has done nothing since the Cold War but start new wars and pour gasoline on the flames of ethnic and religious divisions') as syntactic and intonational focus furthers this likelihood by a metaphoric phrase: the 'flames of divisions' (refugees fleeing from Kosovo) will cause a major 'fire' in the region as they 'meet' with (more) 'gasoline'.

On the *t* axis, the geopolitical and historical space is extended 'backwards', metonymically, by reference to the spatial location 'Sarajevo' (32). Kosovo is linked to Sarajevo, and Sarajevo is linked metonymically to World War I, and World War I to World War II and the Holocaust. The links can be considered metonymic since the relation between Kosovo, Sarajevo and WWI is one of conceptual 'contiguity' in a geopolitical frame which holds events progressing from the remote past toward the present. 'Sarajevo' is used to evoke the whole WWI frame, and 'this region' (33) is used in the same metonymic fashion to evoke the WWII and the Holocaust frames. These discursively linked frames constitute the groundwork for two sets of generalizations: (31) relating to the geographical space conceptualized 'around' Kosovo, and (34)–(35) relating to a flashback historical space conceptualized in connection with Sarajevo. These generalizations are used in turn to wrap up the entire representation (36)–(37) and justify its initial point (25), that is a moral imperative to act.

initial, 'fixed' organization of entities in political discourse space. Its aim is to show how people's mental representations are generally positioned with respect to three cognitive dimensions. It is clearly *not* to show how *people are made to establish representations* that would suit the accomplishment of specific discourse goals pursued by political speaker. The reason is that DST does not offer a systematic account of quantifiable lexico-grammatical items responsible for locating entities and events at different distances from the deictic center marking the intensity of pragmatic powers of these entities/events. While it recognizes ideological, legitimizing, coercive, etc. discourse roles of certain words and expressions, it arbitrarily assigns them a static position on one of the three axes, in fixed distance to/from the deictic center, as in Figure 2. Consequently, conceptual shifts from the DS periphery to the center, crucial for triggering threat effects, are hardly accounted for. There is little systematic way to determine which linguistic choices, in what numbers, and within which dimension, are the most effective in forcing a worldview upon the addressee. This deficit follows from DST's conventional arrangement of the Discourse Space, which indexes entities and events by primarily nominal phrases and pronouns. At the same time, the role of verbal forms, a core element in the conceptual shifts between the remote THEM and the US central camp, is clearly underappreciated. This is of course a huge disadvantage when it comes to analysis of the threat element emerging from these shifts.

2.2 Proximization Theory (PT)

Paul Chilton's (2004, 2005) DST can be considered the most important reference model for several later works (Cap 2008, 2010, 2013; Hart 2010, 2014) trying to revise and redefine the original account of DS conceptual operations in strictly linguistic (lexical and grammatical) terms. Most of these works employ the concept of *proximization* to determine specific linguistic items construing conceptual shifts in the service of forcing worldviews.

In its broadest sense, proximization is a discursive strategy of presenting physically and temporally distant entities, events and states of affairs (including 'distant' i.e. adversarial ideologies) – a symbolic THEM – as increasingly and negatively consequential to the speaker and her addressee (US). Projecting the THEM entities as gradually encroaching upon the US territory (both physical and ideological), the speaker seeks legitimization of actions and/or policies which she proposes to neutralize the growing impact of the negative, 'foreign', 'alien', 'antagonistic', entities (see Figure 3).

The term 'proximization' was first proposed by Cap to analyze coercion patterns in the US anti-terrorist rhetoric following 9/11 (Cap 2006, 2008, 2010). Since then it has been used within different discourse domains, though most commonly in studies of state political discourses: crisis construction and war rhetoric (Chovanec

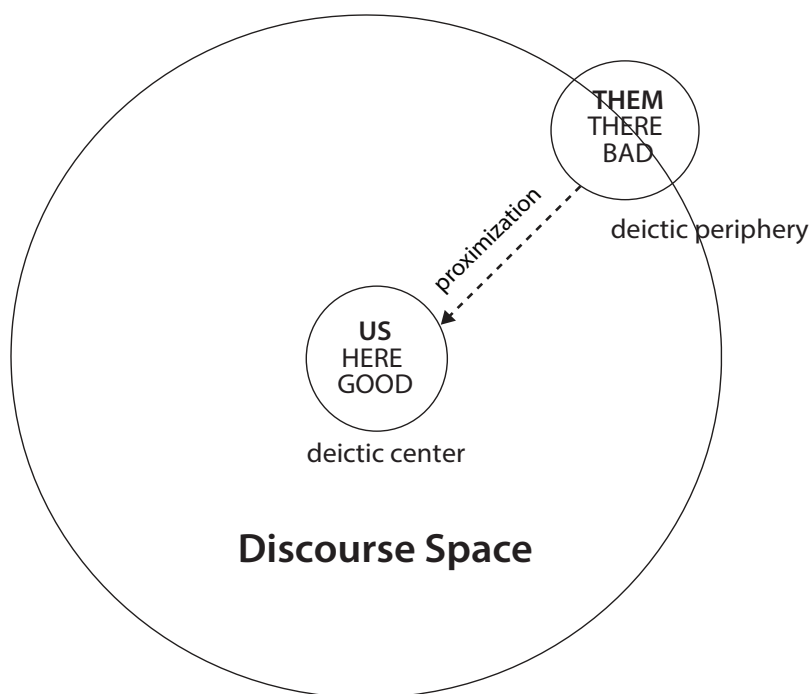


Figure 3. Proximization in Discourse Space (DS)

2010), anti-migration discourse (Hart 2010), political party representation (Cienki, Kaal and Maks 2010), construction of national memory (Filardo Llamas 2010), and design of foreign policy documents (Dunmire 2011). Findings from these studies have been integrated in Proximization Theory (PT) proposed in Cap (2013). PT follows the original concept of proximization, which is defined as a forced construal operation meant to evoke closeness of the external threat, to solicit legitimization of preventive means. The threat comes from DS-peripheral entities, THEM, which are conceptualized to be crossing the Space to invade the US entities, the speaker and her addressee. The threat possesses a spatio-temporal as well as ideological nature, which breaks the proximization model down into three parts. ‘Spatial proximiza-tion’ is a forced construal of THEM entities encroaching *physically* upon US entities (speaker, addressee). Analogously to DST, the spatial aspect of proximization is primary as the remaining aspects/strategies involve conceptualizations in spatial terms. ‘Temporal proximization’ is a construal of the envisaged conflict as not only imminent, but also momentous, historic and thus needing an immediate response and unique preventive measures. Spatial and temporal proximization involve fear appeals and typically use analogies to conflate the growing threat with an actual dis-astrous event in the past, to endorse the current scenario. Lastly, ‘axiological prox-imization’ involves construal of a gathering ideological clash between the ‘home

values’ of the DS central entities (US) and the alien and antagonistic THEM values. As will be shown, the THEM values are not merely abstract entities; they possess a crucial potential to eventually materialize within the US territory.

Compared to DST, Proximization Theory makes a new contribution at two levels, cognitive-pragmatic and linguistic, or more precisely, lexico-grammatical. At the cognitive-pragmatic conceptual level, PT revisits the ontological status and pragmatic function of deixis and deictic markers. Traditionally, deixis has been viewed as a merely technical necessity for the possible interpretability of all communication (Levinson 1983; Levelt 1989). Within the proximization approach deixis goes beyond this ‘primary’ status and becomes, eventually, an instrument for legitimization, persuasion and social coercion. The concept of deixis is not reduced to a finite set of ‘deictic expressions’, but rather expanded to cover bigger lexico-grammatical phrases and discourse expressions. As a result, all proximization operations, spatial, temporal and axiological, their intensity as well as their changes, can be described linguistically in terms of the interplay of various lexico-grammatical items drawn from these three domains. To abstract the items, PT uses three distinct frameworks – spatial, temporal, axiological – which classify the items in conceptual categories reflecting the US-THEM arrangement of the Discourse Space (cf. Table 1 depicting the spatial framework). This allows a quantitative analysis yielding the intensity of a specific kind of proximization (and thus the intensity with which a worldview is forced) in a specific discourse timeframe.

Table 1. Spatial proximization framework in the proximization model
(abridged – cf. Cap 2013 for a full version)

Category	Lexico-grammatical items and phrases
1. Elements of the deictic center of the DS (US)	Noun phrases (NPs) marking US
2. Elements on the periphery of the DS (THEM)	Noun phrases (NPs) marking THEM
3. Conceptualizers of movement of THEM toward US	Verb phrases (VPs) of motion and directionality (<i>head, come, move, arrive, get close...</i>)
4. Conceptualizers of the anticipated impact of THEM on US	Abstract nouns and noun phrases (NPs) (<i>threat, danger...</i>)
5. Conceptualizers of the actual impact of THEM on US	Verb phrases (VPs) of action (<i>hit, flood, destroy...</i>)
6. Conceptualizers of the anticipated effects of the THEM impact on US	Abstract nouns and noun phrases (NPs) (<i>catastrophe, tragedy...</i>)

The general function of the three frameworks of proximization – spatial, temporal, and axiological – is to provide a linguistic representation of both the initial arrangement of the Discourse Space and its dynamic re-arrangement, following the impact of the THEM peripheral entities on the US central entities. Thus, for instance, the spatial framework above is supposed to capture not only the default architecture of

the DS (categories 1, 2), but also (and crucially) the shift leading to the THEM vs. US clash (3, 5) and the (anticipated) effects of the clash (4, 6). The third category, central to the entire design of the framework, sets the ‘traditional’ deictic expressions such as nouns and pronouns to work *pragmatically* together with the other elements of the superordinate VP. As a result, the VP acquires a deictic status, in the sense that on top of conventionally denoting the default DS entities (marked by (pro-)nominals), it also indexes their movement, which establishes the target perspective construed by the speaker. As a result, one can account for discursive sequences which represent both the THEM entity in its initial static position and, later, its growing encroachment on the US camp. For example, Cap (2013: 86) analyzes G.W. Bush’s (2003) warnings about the global terrorist danger in the aftermath of 9/11, such as: ‘Al-Qaeda and other terrorist networks have set their course to confront us and our civilization’ (<https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-and-releases/02142003>). The analysis shows that the nominal deixis ‘Al-Qaeda and other terrorist networks’ combines with the following verb phrase to form a complex deictic structure marking both the antagonistic entity and its movement toward home entities in the deictic center.

3. Threat construction in the L&J discourse: From ‘cultural unbelonging’ to ‘terrorist risk’

The part of the proximization model that is the most relevant to today’s anti-immigration discourse in Poland is PT’s handle on ideological rhetoric. Specifically, PT contains the ‘axiological proximization framework’ (Cap 2013), whose task is to account for ideological discourse choices and, crucially, the relation between the lexical items marking abstract entities versus those marking physical entities (see Table 2).

Table 2. Axiological proximization framework in the proximization model (Cap 2013)

Category	Lexico-grammatical items and phrases
1. Values of elements of the DS deictic center (US)	Noun phrases (NPs) marking US values
2. Values of elements on the DS periphery (THEM)	Noun phrases (NPs) marking THEM values
3. Linear logico-rhetorical patterns construing materialization of the antagonistic ideology of THEM in the form of THEM’s physical impact on US:	Discourse sequences comprising:
(a) <i>remote possibility</i> scenario	VP1 containing category 2 NP followed by
followed by	VP2 containing an NP marking THEM’s
(b) <i>actual occurrence</i> scenario	impact on US

As can be imagined, the key part of the axiological framework is its third category. Its main value is the ability to describe, in lexical as well as grammatical terms, a subtle transformation of the nature of threat posed to US entities by THEM entities. Initially remote and abstract in its conceptual appeal, the threat is gradually construed as imminent and, most crucially, material. This change is captured, at the linguistic level, in a specific sequence of verbal and nominal elements included in the category. That way, the third category of the axiological framework can successfully isolate and account for some of the most important language items and formulas which make up the L&J anti-immigration discourse.

3.1 The corpus for analysis

The data for this study come from a corpus of 124 addresses, statements and comments by the most prominent L&J politicians: Jarosław Kaczyński (the L&J leader), Beata Szydło (the Prime Minister in the L&J government), Witold Waszczykowski (the Minister of Foreign Affairs) and Mariusz Błaszczak (the Minister of the Interior). Their timeframe is the 17-month period between November 1, 2015 (a week after the L&J electoral victory) and March 31, 2017. The speeches have been made at various public appearances of the politicians, such as parliamentary sessions, press conferences, media debates and interviews.⁵ Importantly, I have included only the addresses/statements/comments devoted solely to the issue of immigration and not dealing with any other issues at the same time. This has been done to make sure that all discourse items present in these speeches can be analyzed as integral elements of the (anti-)immigration narrative. The focus of analysis has been consistent with the idea and design of the PT model and, in particular, its axiological framework. Accordingly, my first goal was to account for elements of the US-central camp, then elements of the THEM-remote camp, and finally (and most importantly) for the threat construction patterns involving a symbolic invasion of entities of the latter camp on the former.

3.2 The US

A substantial part of L&J's anti-immigration discourse includes the description of US – Poland, Polish people, current Polish government – in deeply conservative, ideological-religious terms. References to traditional Polish values are plentiful, and they are construed as warrants of personal and economic well-being, as well as personal and national security. The discursive segments carrying such construals,

5. For the analysis of online debates on immigration, see the chapters in Part IV of the present volume.

seemingly unrelated at places to the main immigration theme, are vital for conceptual consolidation of the US camp and instilling a sense of social belonging and solidarity in the face of an outside threat. In addition, they reinforce trust and credibility of the rhetoric and its authors, by addressing commonly accepted, uncontroversial issues:

- (1) The safety of Polish families is this government's priority. Polish people deserve it. They deserve equal rights and social justice. They deserve to feel masters of their own house. They deserve to feel secure. They deserve peace, stability and economic progress. This is the true meaning of freedom and independence. We derive it from our Christian heritage, the values to which our nation has been committed for centuries and to which we are committed today. We stand firm by these values and our national sovereignty. We do not take foreign orders.
(Jarosław Kaczyński, May 9, 2016)
- (2) We refuse to sacrifice our freedom and security for political correctness. From the very beginning we have said that this issue [of immigration] should be resolved by assisting refugees outside the EU. We are staunchly against the European Commission proposal, which would force EU member states to pay millions of euros⁶ per refused refugee. Such a decision would abolish the sovereignty of EU member states. We do not agree to that, we have to oppose that, because we are and we will be in charge in our own country.
(Witold Waszczykowski, June 12, 2016)
- (3) As Christians, we are raised to be tolerant and respectful of other cultures. But we ask the same kind of respect from others. It is our right to decide whom we welcome to our own house. Because there are cultures, there are values, which simply cannot coexist.
(Beata Szydło, September 5, 2016)
- (4) We must reject the cheap slogans of 'multiculturalism' and 'enrichment'. We must reject political correctness and call things by their true names. Rather than shedding tears like [Federica] Mogherini or organizing marches that solve nothing, authorities should ensure the safety of citizens. Here in Poland, our predecessors⁷ were on track to commit the same mistakes as other Western countries. But the new government sets the priorities right. Our main responsibility is to uphold the freedom and security of our people. This has been our election promise and we will keep it. (Mariusz Błaszczak, July 20, 2016)^{8,9}

6. In fact, the EC proposal included the figure '€250,000'.

7. The Civic Platform party, ruling Poland between 2007 and 2015.

8. This statement was made 6 days after an Islamic terrorist attack, in which a truck was deliberately driven into crowds celebrating Bastille Day on the Promenade des Anglais in Nice, France, killing 84 people and injuring 434.

9. These and forthcoming translations by P.C.

The claims in (1)–(4) consolidate the US camp in the common commitment of its members to some universally shared values – such as ‘freedom’, ‘peace’, and ‘security’ – which stem from a common cultural and religious background. At the heart of this rhetoric lies a strong appeal to the sense of ‘independence’, which serves to invoke core elements of the national heritage in order to define and legitimize the current and future responsibilities. As suggested in Kaczyński’s argument in (1), Poland’s ‘national sovereignty’ is and has always been dependent on the commitment of its people, whose dedication now calls for further active involvement and, possibly, sacrifice. While apparently posing an obligation, such an argument also fosters the spirit of exceptionalism, sanctioning claims of national uniqueness and the particular rights that go with it (‘they deserve...’). Overall, Kaczyński’s argument, as well as claims in the other examples, reflect the rhetorical principle of consistency in belief. The consistency principle (Festinger 1957, etc.; Jowett & O’Donnell 1992) says that the best credibility and thus legitimization effects can be expected if the speaker produces her message in line with the psychological, social, political, cultural, predispositions of the addressee (Jowett & O’Donnell 1992). However, since a full compliance is almost never possible, it is essential that the novel message is at least tentatively or partly acceptable – then, its acceptability and the speaker’s credibility are going to increase over time. In L&J’s rhetoric, the consistency principle lies implicit in the calls to, on the one hand, remain loyal to Poland’s legacy and thus actively partake in protecting the ‘own house’, and on the other, accept state policies which are meant to protect it institutionally. Both obligations are shown to follow directly from the ideals, values, and norms which have been found largely unquestionable throughout the Polish history, especially the commitment to national independence and sovereignty.

As can be seen from Examples (1) and (3), L&J’s discourse benefits a lot, at lexical level, from non-literal construals of the concept of HOUSE, especially the STATE IS HOUSE conceptual metaphor. The most direct benefits are of course the ability to assign the ‘inhabitants’ of the HOUSE, i.e. the nation, family values (Musolff 2016), and thus discursively strengthen the bond of solidarity and common belonging.¹⁰ But there are also less direct yet equally important conceptual advantages. In addition to connoting positive values and triggering positive, bond-tightening emotions, HOUSE is readily conceptualizable in terms of a ‘container’, and even more particularly, as a ‘rupturable container’ (Hart 2010, 2014). This means that the construal of state in terms of a house involves also a presupposition of damage, or destruction, from an external impact. The existence of such a presupposition is indeed crucial to the conceptual setup of the US camp, as it

10. See also this volume’s Introduction, in which Musolff and Viola discuss the legitimization potential of the ‘home-invading migrant’ scenario.

helps instill the aura of threat from a possible invasion of the THEM camp in the discursive process of proximization. Thus, even though the L&J's rhetoric in the examples above is mainly focused on the US group and mobilization of that group to accept the L&J leadership and the communicated policies, it simultaneously contains important technical elements, conceptual and linguistic, for the buildup of the threatening proximization scenario.

Finally, from the perspective of Rhetorical Structure Theory (Mann & Thompson 1988), the discourse in (1)–(4) can be considered a macro-structural thesis in a thesis-antithesis macro-discursive sequence, aiming to pave the way for the negative interpretation of the 'antithesis' based on the enhanced appreciation of the preceding 'thesis' (Mann & Thompson 1988: 11). In less technical words, the more is accomplished by the speaker with regard to acceptance of her messages as well as her visions of the functioning of the US group, the more probable, later, an automatic rejection of any alternative visions. In this vein, by reinforcing the common principles and values, and recalling even those elements of life which have come to be taken for granted (as in '[Polish people] deserve peace, stability and economic progress'), the speakers in (1)–(4) seek to arrange for the later visions and scenarios to get immediately abhorred.

3.3 The THEM

In L&J's anti-immigration discourse THEM is construed as culturally, socio-politically and ideologically alien and potentially antagonistic to the US party. Specifically, immigrants are construed to possess socio-cultural, religious, and even biological characteristics which preclude their inclusion in Poland and Europe as a whole, thus generating frustration and anger (cf. Fuller, this volume). Many of these characteristics stand in sharp contrast to conservative values of the US camp, particularly the traditional family values as discussed in Examples (1)–(4) above. Importantly, the incompatibility of the THEM values is endorsed discursively in analogies to previous events and previous or current states of affairs in Europe, which are construed as costly 'lessons'. The events recalled in these 'lessons' serve to make explicit the link between mass immigration, especially Muslim, and terrorist or other criminal acts:

- (5) We say no to those young healthy men who selfishly leave behind their wives and children to improve their own lives. We say no to those who choose to escape rather than fight for their country. (Beata Szydło, January 14, 2016)
- (6) We are not going to have the problems that Brussels or Stockholm have. We are not going to have districts where sharia law or any law other than Polish law reigns. Where there are no-go zones for police. And where every few weeks something explodes. (Mariusz Błaszczak, March 2, 2017)

- (7) Can someone tell me why, after 1000 women were assaulted in Cologne on New Year's Eve, Mrs. Merkel is still supporting the Muslim immigration in Germany? Didn't they have enough to see that Muslims do not integrate because they don't want to? (Witold Waszczykowski, April 23, 2016)
- (8) Have we forgotten that, in the past, migrants brought diseases like cholera and dysentery to Europe, as well as all sorts of parasites and protozoa, which while not dangerous in the organisms of these people, could be dangerous here. (Jarosław Kaczyński, December 19, 2015)

While these voices may differ in their radicalism, as well as plain rationality, they all contribute to a simple and consistent picture of immigrants and their values. Contrary to the Poles, they are selfish, unpatriotic, and guided by their individual economic interest. The areas they colonize quickly turn into lawless 'no-go zones' breeding crime and terror, as in 'Brussels or Stockholm' (Example 6). They refuse to *integrate*, sometimes for ideological and cultural reasons, and sometimes out of sheer calculation (cf. Fuller, this volume). Finally, it is their different physical, or rather biological, constitution that poses a threat, as Kaczyński's (in)famous words in Example (8) suggest.

Construed in these terms, immigrants make up a compact out-group, whose physical characteristics and ideological predispositions contribute some excellent conceptual premises for the construction of threat in the mechanism of proximization. There is, first of all, a massive and potentially growing THEM entity, whose outlines are unclear and movement unpredictable. The entity is inherently antagonistic and its antagonism had provoked confrontation and conflict (and often destruction) before. Finally, the THEM entity reveals determination to develop and progress. We have seen in Example (6), above, that such a characterization efficiently supports construals of an emerging threat which only grows if undealt with. There are two more examples to follow, which we take a closer look at.

3.4 The THEM against US proximization scenario

As has been mentioned, the discourse sequences construing proximization of the THEM impact on the US entities belong to the third category of the axiological proximization framework, which serves as an analytic handle on the interplay between discursive constructions of a potential threat and the actual materialization of that threat. Qualification in this category of the particular discourse items is subject to rigorous linguistic criteria, such as a specific order of verb phrase elements and the presence of nominal phrases marking respectively the US and THEM entities (cf. Table 2 above). That said, it is quite amazing to see in the L&J rhetoric so many discursive sequences that indeed qualify. The following

two excerpts have been taken from a pool of 79 discourse structures which belong in the category. The particular noun and verb phrases responsible for the transition from the 'remote possibility scenario' to the 'actual occurrence scenario' (cf. Table 2) are marked in bold:

- (9) Our position has been clear from the beginning. The issue of immigration from the Middle East should be resolved where it has originated. By advancing freedom and democracy in Syria and Iraq, we help end a cycle of **dictatorship and radicalism that brings millions of people to misery and frustration, and brings danger** and, one day, **tragedy, to our own people.**

(Beata Szydło, 3 October 2016)

- (10) To those who are happy to welcome immigrants at our doors, I have a suggestion: go and see the Suruç camp.¹¹ See the gangs and the riots. See the young Muslim criminals. See the **anger, violence, and terror**. It is there and is **ready for export**. This evil might not have reached us yet, but it is **well in sight**. And there is **no-one in Brussels who can protect us when it comes.**

(Mariusz Błaszczak, 13 February 2017)

In Example (9) Poland's Prime Minister Beata Szydło sets up an explicit link between the social and political conditions which underlie lives of potential immigrants in their home countries ('Syria and Iraq'), and the socio-psychological effects ('misery and frustration') which may bring about disastrous consequences later on, after the immigrants' arrival in Poland ('one day, tragedy, to our own people'). This argument helps Szydło legitimize the anti-immigration stance and policies of the L&J government, by strengthening the rationale for handling the immigration issue far away from EU/Polish borders. The argument unfolds in a linear manner, connecting the apparently remote visions with, eventually, closely happening events. At the lexico-grammatical level, nominal phrases are used to denote the US vs. THEM (ideological) opposition ('our people' vs. people living in 'dictatorship and radicalism'), and verbal phrases ('brings millions of people', 'brings danger') are applied to proximize THEM's anticipated impact. Altogether, the argument and the discursive transition from the 'remote possibility scenario' to the 'actual occurrence scenario' involve two nominal chunks and two verbal ones, as the axiological framework in Table 2 has it.

The same arrangement holds in Example (10), where transition between the two scenarios involves a change in modality of the text. While the first verbal chunk (VP1, in terms of the axiological framework) construes conditions for a possible/probable impact ('is ready for export'), the second chunk (VP2) construes this

11. A refugee camp in Turkey, run by the UN Refugee Agency.

impact as under way and already visible from the US camp ('is well in sight'). Otherwise, in comparison with Example (9), the argument in (10) reveals some differences. Specifically, the origin, or source, of the threat is markedly different, in geographical and geopolitical terms. The (Muslim) immigrants are geographically closer, and they are construed as inherently evil, rather than negatively affected. The US/THEM opposition is thus more acute, the conflict more ominous ('anger, violence, and terror [are there] ready for export'), and the envisaged effects more destructive, partly because of the characteristics of the invader, and partly because of the vulnerability of the home camp ('no-one in Brussels who can protect us when it [evil] comes'). Such a radical stance can be seen in multiple speeches and statements of L&J politicians, and is often reinforced by examples of Western countries' negligence leading to tragic events. Błaszczak's comments in (10) come from a parliamentary debate on immigration and are a direct follow-up on a comment from another L&J MP, about identifying the perpetrator of the Nice terrorist attack (cf. note #8) as a Muslim refugee. This rhetorical strategy, concentrating upon the apparent lack of political responsibility of Poland's opponents in the European Union, complements the simple fear appeals that rest in descriptions of previous criminal acts committed by immigrants, such as in (6).

As has been mentioned, the analyzed corpus includes as many as 79 such complex discourse structures, in which specific lexico-grammatical items occur in a linear order to construe, within the space of 1, 2 or maximally 3 sentences, a subtle conceptual transformation of initially remote and largely abstract danger, into a concrete threat involving tangible consequences. This means that, in the entire corpus (124 texts), the structures in question occur in 1.56 per every two texts. This ratio may be staggering already, but there are further striking observations. In the L&J's anti-immigration discourse, threat element is construed only partly in micro-discursive structures, such as (9) or (10). In many cases it emerges from much longer, macro-discursive narratives, involving entire texts or even sequences of texts. There, far more space is devoted, first, to characterization of the home group (as in Examples (1)–(4)), then the antagonistic group (as in (5)–(8)), and only finally to conceptualization of the emerging conflict and clash.

Finally, it can be observed that threat construals in L&J's discourse differ in intensity over time, perhaps relative to the party's popularity with voters. This can be seen from analysis of the monthly occurrences of the above micro-discursive proximization scenario (Table 3).¹²

Apparently, the intensity of threat construals rises steadily in response to L&J's losses in opinion polls. While the L&J government used to enjoy a record-high

12. The corpus (124 speeches) includes between 6 and 8 speeches per month.

Table 3. Monthly occurrences of discourse sequences included in category 3 of the axiological framework

Month	Number
November 2015	1
December 2015	0
January 2016	2
February 2016	4
March 2016	2
April 2016	3
May 2016	3
June 2016	3
July 2016	5
August 2016	3
September 2016	5
October 2016	5
November 2016	9
December 2016	7
January 2017	9
February 2017	8
March 2017	10
Total in corpus	79

support of 47% at the beginning of their rule in November 2015, its current (March 2017) popularity is at the level of 29%.¹³ This results in a continual radicalization of the L&J anti-immigration discourse. It seems that L&J leaders are trying harder and harder to play the immigration card to avert negative trends at the polls and restore public trust and support.

4. Conclusion

L&J's anti-immigration discourse does not pose peculiar analytic challenges – it is far from subtle and its strategies are quite straightforward to identify. Technically, they involve recurring patterns of threat construction which link negatively-charged characterizations of the out-group, to possibilities of the out-group's growth and migration, and then to physically disastrous consequences for the in-group, that is Poland and Polish citizens. This scenario relies on the discursive narrowing of the conceptual distance between the two camps, which occurs in the process of

13. According to *Centrum Badań Opinii Społecznej – Public Opinion Research Center (CBOS)*.

proximization. Most frequently used is the strategy of axiological proximization, since it allows for a unique combination of ideological and material elements of coercion, due to which the initially abstract danger turns gradually into a tangible, physical threat. The construal of the threat constitutes a pre-requisite for enacting strong, legitimate leadership.

Discourses such as L&J's anti-immigration discourse endorse the explanatory power of Proximization as a theory. Compared to earlier models, such as the DST model which we have looked at in Section 2, Proximization elucidates better the dynamics of the THEM entity in the bipolar, US vs. THEM discourse configuration. This is due to its linguistic underpinnings, such as the axiological framework, which make possible the abstraction of specific lexical as well as grammatical choices responsible for different conceptual projections. Such a possibility naturally benefits CDA research, as most of it involves issues of conceptual arrangement, as well as discursive re-arrangement, of dichotomous Discourse Space. This pertains to research in not only political discourse, but virtually all discourse studies – in identity, race, religion, gender, etc. – which take as their starting point the existence of physically, ideologically, culturally, biologically or otherwise opposite or just different social camps and entities.

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