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The analysis of discursive constructions of national identity in Polish literature textbooks

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Abstract

The aim of my paper is to investigate the process of discursive construction of national identity in Polish literature textbooks. In my research project I have specified the dominating types of identities of Poles and the points of exclusion - the spaces that relate to particular social and cultural groups that are excluded from the discourse of Polishness. This research utilizes critical discourse analysis and deals with particular advantages and limitations of this approach in the context of textbook research.

Keywords: critical discourse analysis, European identity, nationalism, Polish national identity, textbooks research

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Introduction

The point of departure for my analysis is the assumption that along with the processes of post-1989 system transformation one can notice changes in the discourse on Polishness, and that there emerged many new reference points, which can influence the identification and understanding of the notion of Polishness[1]

Furthermore, I place Poland at the threshold of interculturality. The structure of Polish society, albeit still very monolithic, undergoes changes due to shifts in the political sphere (accession to the EU). These changes take place also as a result of the growing influence of mass culture, and thanks to the increasing visibility of groups which until now had been marginalised or neglected, e.g. migrants.
Changes occur also in the education sector. Polish schooling is currently going through one of the greatest changes it its modern history, starting in 1989.

Textbooks are considered as one of the most important tools in educational practice. As such, textbooks are under pressure of utility: starting from local communities, parents, and politicians, and non-governmental organizations (Lerner et al. 1995:2). In 2008 a new core curriculum, which had been prepared for quite a long time, was implemented. This formal educational change involved development of new textbooks.

New core curriculum and new textbooks are listed as one of the key tools for economic and civilizational development (Ministry of Education 2011:1). The main goal of the new curriculum is to improve learning outcomes. As far as literature classes in grammar schools are concerned, the new curriculum specifies in brief the following aims: upbringing of awareness to users of culture, introduction into the culture of the XXI century, moral reflection, and developing language skills (Ibid).

Generally, in Poland textbooks are perceived as students' main source of knowledge, providing basic compulsory readings. It is worth noting that the role of textbooks has been increasing since 2002 due to introduction of a curriculum-

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based final examination system. Nowadays most of students and teachers perceive textbooks as tools facilitating exams preparation. Publishers, advertise their textbooks as containing all knowledge needed to pass the exams. Although it is said that textbooks should merely support the process of learning, in practice, they are basic teaching tools. Most textbooks are accompanied with teaching programs, helping teachers to define purposes and goals of the educational process, and offering tools to measure student's progress.

Although some researches have paid attention to particular constructions of reality and knowledge contained by textbooks (see: Apple & Christian-Smith 1991; Hein & Selden 2000; Vogrincic & Cepcic 2009; Pankowska 2009; Zamojska 2010), little is known about how a processes of discursive construction of national identity in textbooks occurs. Past research on textbooks has concentrated mainly on textbook content, analysing representations or misrepresentations of particular groups. The literature on textbooks analysis is rich, but this literature does not capture discursive processes underpinning the development of discourses. The study of discursive practices occurring in textbooks may allow us to gain an insight into identity processes in formal education.

The purpose of this research is to contribute to the theoretical understanding of discursive construction of Polish national discourse in textbooks. I assume that "Polishness" is essentially a politically and culturally constructed category. I focus on presentation of Polishness, on discourses involved in creating the representation of it, and, also, on the rhetoric strategies involved.

In particular, I will focus on key discursive strategies and their role in "producing" identities in political and educational practice. Furthermore, I will be asking how the totality of the national identity is structured. What kinds of symbols are involved? Who and in way is excluded through these practices?

The paper has four parts. First, it reviews the extant literature, relevant to studies on discursive construction of national identity. Next theoretical and methodological implications of critical discourse analysis for textbooks studies are presented. Then the findings are presented and discussed. The paper concludes with a discussion of implication of the study findings in a broad socio-cultural context.

Discursive construction of national identity

Although it is often pointed out that the idea of nation is in crisis, nation is still one

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of the chief components of identity construction. This has not changed with globalization processes, liberalisation of societies, or neo-liberalisation of economies. On the contrary – in Western culture we experience a kind of a revival of patriotic ideas, local or mass in scope, reinforced by popular culture.

Together with social changes, the language used in social sciences to describe the processes of nation and national identity construction has changed as well. This was connected with a turn in the humanities, caused first by poststructuralism, and subsequently by critical social theories, including postcolonial theory. Postcolonialism ended a Western monopoly for creating the language of the description of reality. Postcolonial theoreticians, coming from extra-European cultural backgrounds, re-evaluated the way in which the nation had been spoken about, showing how complex relations of domination, power and resistance are inscribed in its formation. Nations are considered "imagined communities" (Anderson 1997), hybrid and liminal figures: "The representation of difference must not be hastily read as the reflection of pre-given ethnic or cultural traits set in the fixed tablet of tradition. The social articulation of difference, from the minority perspective, is a complex, on-going negotiation that seeks to authorize cultural hybridities that emerge in moments of historical transformation" (Bhabha, www.postcolonialweb.org/poldiscourse/bhabha/bhabha2.html).

Stuart Hall describes nations as "systems of cultural representations", which means that nations are discursively constructed communities (Hall 1994:201). According to Hall a national culture is a discourse, where identities are created through identification with particular meanings of "the nation". The meanings are contained in stories, memories and perceptions of a nation constructed through the discourse (Ibidem).

In Hall's view, a nation as discursive construction may serve as a good introduction for discursive nation theory. Against the "classical" notions of nation, discursive idea understands a nation as social construction. As de Cillia, Reisigl and Wodak put it, identities as well as knowledge, situations, social roles and interpersonal relations are constructed through discourse (de Cillia et al. 1999:157). Discourse may reproduce, justify or transform social status quo and national identities related to it. Instead of asking what is the nation?, the discursive perspective asks what kind of meanings are given to it. According to this view, division into national cultures is arbitrary and may be modified.

The discursive perspective may be useful in overcoming the power relations, which are hidden behind some concepts of nation, particularly those that claim that national identity is the main determinant of human identity. That kind of

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concepts may result in creation of divisions into "us" and "them", "us" and "the others" and so on, and may be evaluative.

Critical textbooks discourse analysis, from this perspective, is about revealing dominant power relations by focusing on the ideologies being used in texts. As Henry Giroux puts it: "Texts must be de-centred and understood as historical and social constructions marked by the weight of a range of inherited and specified readings". Hence, texts can be read by focusing on how different audiences might respond to them, thus highlighting the possibilities of reading against, within, and outside their established boundaries" (Giroux 1992:30).

Critical discourse analysis in textbooks research

Existing textbook analysis contributes mainly to pedagogical, linguistic and historical studies. Jan van Wiele has distinguished several types of textbooks analysis, due to the objectives of an analysis, such as investigations devoted to peace and greater understanding among peoples and population groups, focusing on chauvinism, emotional prejudices, cliches, stereotypes and intentional and unintentional misrepresentations (van Wiele 2008:1). Other types of textbook analysis involves studying certain social, cultural economic, religious and political aspects of given historical period or society. Textbooks may be also analyzed as a product of particular politics or expression of particular ideologies. Also pedagogical and subject didactical quality of a textbook may be investigated. The last form of analysis focuses on effectiveness of the process of teaching (Ibid:2-7).

In my research project, I am guided by the fifth type of analysis, devoted to revealing hidden ideologies in textbook discourse. I use Critical Discourse Analysis, whose overall objective is to investigate the relation between texts, discourses and social structures, in order to explain the ideological dominance of some suppressed discourses in society.

Discourse analysis in my project is understood following Norman Fairclough and Phil Graham characterization of discourse as social practices and identities. According to them, discursive artefacts are of importance in discourse-based economy and society. As they put it: "more or less valuable knowledge are inevitably produced, exchanged and consumed as discourses. Put more plainly, more or less valuable knowledge presuppose more and less valued ways of knowing, which are always institutionally defined as such in discourse" (Fairclough and Graham 2002).

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Textbooks as part of educational discourse are particularly important subject of critical discourse analysis. As students main source of knowledge about cultural traditions in their country, textbooks are considered to be one of the most important tools in transmitting "official" images of nation. As Michael W. Apple and Linda K. Christian-Smith put it: "textbooks are really messages from to and about the future. As part of a curriculum, they participate in no less than the organized knowledge system of society. They participate in creating what a society has recognized as legitimate and truthful. They help set the canons of truthfulness and, as such, also help re-create a major reference point for what knowledge, culture, belief, and morality really *are"* (Apple and Christian-Smith 1991:3-4)*.*

According to Ana Vogrincic and Mitja Cepic textbooks may serve as tool through which the status quo of inequality is maintained and dominant position of elites is held (Vogrincic and Cepic 2009:1). Providing compulsory literature, textbooks constitute obligatory and possible knowledge, supported by lack of choice and the authority of a teacher (Ibid:2). Polish literature textbooks can be thus analyzed at the level of discourse and social practices. Hence, they are not just an instrument for the transportation of information on Polish culture. Textbooks are constituted by social reality, and constitute an education reality at the same time. They reflect changes in educational policy and practice.

Methodology

I am going to conduct my analyses following the method proposed by Gee. He has introduced an integrated approach, considering how language, written and spoken, enacts social and cultural identities.

Gee claims that we continually and actively build and rebuild our worlds through language and through language in action, which is an active building process. According to Gee, while using language, we always and simultaneously build seven things (or seven areas of reality). He calls it "seven building tasks":

1. "**Significance:** How is this piece of language being used to make certain things significant or not and what ways?

2. **Activities:** What activity or activities is this piece of language being used to enact (get others to recognise as going on)?

3. **Identities:** What identities or identity is this piece of language being used to enact? (get others to recognise as operative)?

4. **Relationships**: What sort of relationship or relationship is this piece of language seeking to enact with others (present or not)?

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5. **Politics (or distribution of social goods):** What perspective on social goods is this piece of language communicating (what is being communicated as to what is taken to be normal, right, good, correct, proper, appropriate, valuable, the ways thing are, the way thing ought to be, high status or low status, like me or not like me, and so forth)?

6. **Connections**: How does this piece of language connect or disconnect things; how does it make one thing relevant or irrelevant to another?

7. **Sign systems and knowledge:** How does this piece of language privilege or dis-privilege specific sign systems (e.g., Spanish vs. English, technical language vs. everyday language, words vs. images, words vs. equations) or different ways of knowing or believing or claims to knowledge or belief?" (Gee 2005:11-13)

Textbooks analyzed in my research were chosen on the basis of quantitative research (random sample) conducted among Polish teachers in grammar schools in Gdansk, Poland. The teachers were asked to indicate textbooks they were working with. Four most popular textbooks were selected. I conduct analysis of three titles used in grades from 1 to 3 (9 textbooks altogether):

1. Chmiel M.,Wilga H., Pomirska Z., Doroszewski P. (2009-2010), *Słowa na czasie*, Warszawa, Wydawnictwo Nowa Era (grade form 1-3)

2. Bobiński W., (2009-2011), *Świat w słowach i obrazach*, Warszawa, Wydawnictwa Szkolne i Pedagogiczne (grade from 1-3)

3. Łuczak A., Prylińska E., Maszka R. (2010-2011), *Między Nami*, Gdańsk, Gdańskie Wydawnictwo Oświatowe (grade from 1-3)

Following abbreviations are used in the paper:

SnC – *Słowa na czasie* [Words for our time]

ŚwSiO – *Świat w słowach i obrazach* [World in words and images]

MN – *Między Nami* [Between Us]

Results

The following part of the paper summarizes the results of my critical discourse analysis of school textbooks, indicating the types of discourses articulated in the analyzed material, as well as listing identities and exclusions which appear in the textbooks.

Discourses shaping the discourse of Polishness

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On the basis of the analysis presented so far, two dominant discourses constituting the meaning of Polishness can be distinguished. The first one is the discourse of ethnic nation, the second – the civic nation discourse.

According to Stephen Shulman, distinction between civic and ethnic nation is widespread and fundamental in the study of ethnic relations and nationalism. The concept of ethnic nation, which gave rise to the first kind of discourse, has a rich tradition and is founded on the understanding of nation as based on the continuity of culture (Shulman 2002:544). Alter characterizes ethnic (cultural) nation as based on common heritage, language, distinct area of settlement, religion, customs and history (Alter 1994:9). In the analyzed material, the ethnic nation discourse is connected with motifs regarding Polish history, history of Polish culture, and passing down of the national tradition.

The discourse of ethnic nationalism in analyzed textbooks is characterized by sense of community and relationship between all Poles. Inhabitants of Poland are presented as having not only common origins, history and tradition, but also feelings toward their country. All the Polish people are seen to have the same responsibilities, which are called the greatest one, or the sacred one.

In the ethnic nation discourse, parallels are created between Polish history and the present. The problem of the necessity to create patriotic attitudes is addressed. The relationship towards Poland is presented also in terms of a feeling:

Ignacy Krasicki wrote his poem ("O scared love of the beloved Country") after the first partition of Poland. Consider which of the poet's words lost their relevance to the present time, and which preserved it (ŚwSiO 1, 169)

> What can love of the fatherland consist in today? (ŚwSiO 1, 169)

> Do we come across manifestations of love of the fatherland in present-day Poland? (MN 2, 192)

According to Gee's method, referring to feelings and personal responsibility is an activity. Another distinguished activity is presenting the history of Poland from the perspective of the individual fate of protagonists of patriotic texts, soldiers, insurgents, knights, who sacrifice their happiness and life for the good of the Polish fatherland.

An important activity in the ethnic nation discourse is the mythologisation and sacralisation of Polishness. This is connected with constructing Polish nation as

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created by people who share the same origin, history, but also fate. Poles are also subject a patriotic duty ("the most sacred duty", "the great collective duty"). Like Polish fate, Polish history has a purposive character and leads to national revival. Equally purposive are the sacrifice and suffering which Poles must bear ("the suffering Polish nation", MN 3, 349). The textbooks illustrate this with the examples of young participants in Warsaw uprising, the Romantics: Adam Mickiewicz, Juliusz Słowacki, Fryderyk Chopin suffering in emigration, as well as exiles struggling with the inhuman reality of Siberian lagers. Their features are ascribed to the whole nation:

> "For Poles, the most attractive role models are still those stemming from the Romantic tradition. With them we associate the most valued qualities, such as rebellion in the name of freedom and truth, enthusiasm, sincerity of feelings, faith in ideals, willingness to sacrifice" (SnC2, 137).

> much-missed country of true values, or a country to fight, suffer, and die for (MN 1, 262)

Applying analytical tools provided by James Paul Gee's method, one can assert that in the ethnic nation discourse relationships of subordination to the fatherland can be distinguished.

Alongside the ethnic nation discourse, another discourse can be identified in the analyzed material, namely the discourse of civic nation. This concept also has a long tradition. It is commonly identified with the "French" concept. A civic nation is one whose shaping was conditioned by the state. It constitutes a community defined by public institutions and values represented in the policy of the state. Unlike the ethnic concept, the civic nation is a political concept.

Thus, in the analyzed material, the civic nation discourse will articulate the concept of a nation based on adopted values and political assumptions, values shared by the members of the nation. Polishness is presented as part of republican tradition, similar to allegiance to ideals of democracy and social responsibility. As Andrew Dobson puts it, the idea of the contribution to the community formed the republican theory of citizenship virtue. "Traditionally these virtues are thought of in 'masculine' terms - courage, strength, sacrifice – although it turns out these are better understood as masculinist interpretations of what these virtues might entail" (Dobson 2004:3). The idea of responsibility towards the country links civic nation discourse and ethnic nation discourse.

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Poland is presented also as a part of a globalized world, namely one of a various cultures that mix in "the global village". Creation of Poland as part of western culture tradition is supported by number of activities, such as is presenting Polishness in the context of European culture and presenting Polishness in the context of modernity – Internet, new technologies, television commercials.

That vision influences the model of citizenship presented in the textbooks, indicating mobility and trans-nationality. This vision is close to one presented in works of Zygmunt Bauman and Anthony Giddens, who described globalization as „the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa" (Giddens 1990:64). The textbooks use the term "globalization" mostly to describe the spreading of information, that affects culture. Also global market appears here and a vision of labour connected to communication, networking and freedom.

The civic nation discourse presents Polishness in the context of the globalising world and European integration. An example is offered by the discussion of Maria Konopnicka's poem "Rota" ("The Oath") in *Między Nami 2* [Between Us 2] textbook:

> Discuss whether the ideas expressed in "Rota" are relevant today. You can use the following arguments: Today the world is integrating; Patriotism can be understood in a number of ways; We live in a united Europe; In every situation we have to remember that we are Poles; National traditions have to be preserved; One should look at the world critically and change one's old views. Note that these arguments are not mutually exclusive (MN 2, 161)

The quoted passage illustrates the way in which traditional patriotic values can be adapted to present conditions. Both traditional patriotism and Europeanness are mentioned here, and the exercise suggests that one can find a balance between the two.

The civic nation discourse is shaped through several activities, one of which is the presenting of Poland in the context of European culture. The textbooks under analysis emphasise parallels between the development of Polish and Western-European culture, for example:

> Writing in the national language was an all-European tendency, which was reflected also in Polish literature (MN 2, 343)

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> Polish historiography took over from European historical writing all major forms and kinds, including the chronicle (MN 3, 101)

> Spread by religious orders and secular clergy, the new Christian culture, ever since its introduction to Poland in the 10th century, began to exhibit strong links with countries lying west of Rhine, i.e. present-day France and Belgium (MN 3, 157)

This can take place also through the presentation of events and figures of Polish history in juxtaposition with their Western European counterparts. The textbook *Słowa na czasie 1* [„Words for our time 1"] creates such a parallel between Charlemagne and Boleslaus I the Brave, who is presented as the Polish equivalent of the emperor.

Another activity present in this discourse is the associating of national discourse with entrepreneurship discourse. This phenomenon will be discussed in more detail in the section on identities.

Both in the case of the ethnic nation discourse and the civic nation discourse, we witness a connection being drawn between Polishness and masculinity and patriarchy, manifested through the salience of dominant male identity models and the linking of Polish culture with values identified with masculine culture. It is identified by identity models of a knight and entrepreneur, which will be presented in the next section of the paper. Both discourses feature also a relationship of alienation from Slavic culture, including East Slavic culture. The alienation from Slavic culture is manifested predominantly in the lack of references to the culture of Slavic people, as well as the lack of references to Poland's Eastern neighbours. The only exception is Russia, presented as a political enemy.

As far as connections are concerned, in both discourses Polishness is connected to centre-periphery relationships, which are manifested in the fact that areas which can be described as centre of Polish culture are created as dominant. These are predominantly representations of urban areas, especially big cities, e.g. Warsaw and Kraków. The role of other parts of the country, such as little towns and villages, is marginalised. Only country mansions, with their ascribed value of centres of Polish culture, are exceptional here. Although geographically they belong to rural areas, they are excluded from these areas on the semantic level.

Centre-periphery relationships are transposed also into relationships between the

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dominant culture and foreign cultures. The textbooks present an image of Polish culture identified with the culture of the upper or middle class, which, in historical terms, can be translated into representations of nobility and intelligentsia and middle and upper class in terms of modernity.

The ethnic nation discourse employs the language of the upper class, identified with the Catholic Church, nobility, and intelligentsia. Poland is spoken about in the language of literary works, often using various forms of linguistic stylisation and archaisms. The language employed in the civic nation discourse can be categorised as one connected with the domain of economy and new technologies, as well as contemporary civil discourses.

Identities

The following identity types have been distinguished as expressed in the discourse of Polishness: chivalric identity, citizen's identity and entrepreneur's identity.

The chivalric identity appears in the analyzed textbooks in the ethnic nation discourse and is founded on symbols referring to the traditionally understood Polish patriotism.

> Prepare an interesting presentation of a person who showed great sacrifice, e.g. abandoned his or her career for somebody's sake or gave his or her life for someone (SnC 1, 42)

> Each person in the group writes down a story which he or she knows and which confirms the proverb that "Every cloud has a silver lining" (SnC 1, 56)

> ordeal is necessary for the salvation of Poland (ŚwSiO 2, 142)

> These reminders of a grand past nourish national pride and awareness, awaken the strength to sacrifice and act for the common good (SnC 1, 192)

> The Fatherland calls us to arms (SnC 3, 76)

This model refers to the chivalric ethos, with a particular attention to the necessity of obedience and subordination to the senior, in this case – the fatherland. Hence, a knight will be obliged to deem his fatherland as the highest value, for which he will be ready to sacrifice his professional and personal life.

Another distinguished identity model is the identity of a citizen. It is created in civic nation discourse and contains elements of the republican model of citizenship, in which the citizen takes responsibility for fulfilling his or her function,

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acting for the common good. In this case, this is carried out by emphasizing social activity, tolerance, and helping the weaker, for example:

> Give examples of texts (musical works, literary texts, paintings, commercials) which appeal to or call for respect for human rights, peace, freedom or safety (MN2, 222)

> The third distinguished identity is the identity of an entrepreneur. The following passages are most characteristic for the entrepreneurial attitude:

> Basing on the story of the protagonists of the documentary feature, write down a list of points indicating what one should do in order to find a rewarding and well-paid job in the future (SnC2, 189)

> Which persons are satisfied with their job and earnings? Indicate the causes of their professional success (SnC2, 189)

> Discuss your attitude to work. In order to do so, answer the following questions: Which kind of work are you most eager to take up, and which do you avoid? What helps and what makes it difficult for you to undertake a long-lasting effort connected with working? What values do you associate with work, which serves as a means to achieve certain aims? (MN 2, 238)

This identity model emphasises the role of success on the job market. Speaking about success which results from an individual's personal, special capacities is characteristic of the entrepreneurial discourse. High economic status becomes associated with individuality; desired objectives are met exclusively thanks to individual talent (Jones 2004)

It has to be pointed out that all above-mentioned identities refer to male identities, and, as such, are exclusive towards women. They presuppose above all a leadership-oriented socialisation of boys. Women's identity models which can be found in the analyzed material are the identities of a passive observer, mother, and romantic lover. The masculinisation of national discourse is symbolically highlighted by using of a word "fatherland" (*ojczyzna*), which semantically links national discourse with male types of identities.

Exclusions

Areas of exclusion in the discourse of Polishness can be identified on the basis of an analysis of relationships. Several types of relationships can be discerned in the analyzed material. These are relationships between the group whose members can identify themselves as Poles on the basis of textbook representations, and other groups. Such relationships can be called alienation

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relationships. They manifest themselves through the exclusion of particular groups of social actors.

The first category of exclusion in the material under analysis is gender; this mechanism pertains to both women and men.

In the case of women, this is signified mainly by their absence from descriptions of the history of the country, literature, and culture. Polish history is presented exclusively through battles and wars, in which women did not participate. In this way, the history of everyday life, with which women for ages had been usually connected, is also excluded.

Gender becomes not only a reason for exclusion, but also for stereotypisation, especially as regards socialisation matters. Gender stereotypes are often reinforced here, which creates divisions between the genders, presenting them as different by nature.

> Perhaps my father is a bit harder to please, or I simply like him less. Gender solidarity, I subconsciously stick with mom and it will always be so. Simple as that (MN 3, 8)

In the analyzed material, not only women but also men are subject to stereotypisation. This regards especially the social roles ascribed to them. Images of masculinity presented in the analyzed textbooks can be categorised as traditional; they are associated with strength, decisiveness, and activeness. These are mostly the roles of rulers, knights, defenders of the country, insurgents, political émigrés, and similar.

Another category of exclusion is ethnic origin. In the world presented in the textbooks, Poles are regarded as a closed, ethnically homogenous group, characterised by white skin, a shared language, faith and traditions. This is especially apparent in the ethnic nation discourse. In this way, the discourse of Polishness excludes for example the Jewish community, which has lived on Polish land for centuries. Jews are presented as a group separate from the Poles, with their own history, customs and traditions, different than the Polish ones.

Even though the textbooks cover the themes of tolerance and human rights, they feature also racist and orientalist motifs. People whose skin colour is other than white appear in the descriptions of exotic, oriental countries. In one case, the discriminating term "negro" (*Murzyn*) was used.

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In the analyzed textbooks one can also observe exclusion based on social class. The vast majority of persons presented there are highly born – from royal or noble families. They are kings, noblemen, knights. Figures representing other social groups are practically absent.

The motif of socio-economic status appears in the context of social advancement and financial success. With reference to modern times, Polish society is described as one of city dwellers. Residents of the countryside are mentioned infrequently, for example in the discussion of Sławomir Mrożek's satirical story *The Wedding in Atomice*, which refers to the problem of alcoholism in rural communities. Thus, it is a pathologising image.

Furthermore, one can also distinguish exclusion according to the degree of physical ability. The textbooks show predominantly people who possess strength and advanced physical ability, e.g. soldiers. Disabled persons appear only in the role of beneficiaries of assistance and support, as is the case in the civic nation discourse.

Conclusion

The aim of my study was to present the discursive process of constructing the image of the nation and national identity in Polish literature textbooks. This study can be classified among other critical studies of school textbooks. It focuses on the analysis of ideology and discursive construction of national identity. It can also serve as an example of employing the method of critical discourse analysis in studies of school textbooks.

Similarly to other studies of this type conducted so far, my analysis demonstrates that textbooks play an active part in transferring a particular vision of the world (see: Apple & Christian-Smith 1991; Hein&Selden 2000; Vogrincic & Cepcic 2009; Pankowska 2009; Zamojska 2010). As regards the employment of the method of critical discourse analysis in studying school textbooks, one should point out its good applicability to identity research.

Critical discourse analysis certainly has its limitations as far as studying textbooks is concerned. They result predominantly from the subjective character of this method, as well as from a limited research sample. In my analysis critical discourse approach focused on the selected textbooks. Neither curriculum, educational goals and objectives, nor dominating approaches to teaching, were included. This limitation is often pointed out. As Vogrincic and Cepic showed in their study (Vogrincic&Cepcic 2009), the results of critical discourse analysis are

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limited and strictly dependent on its context. Another limitation of critical discourse approach is inability to include possible modifications and mediations of the textbook discourse performed in teaching practice.

The results of the analysis show that the analyzed textbooks present two separate discourses concerning nation. The first one, i.e. the ethnic nation discourse, is rooted in the traditional understanding of Polishness as a community of values, blood, and traditions. It is a conservative and traditionalist discourse. The second discourse evokes values associated with citizenship, understood as a duty towards the society, as well as with Europeanness and globalization.

Both discourses present exclusive models of identity, favouring male upper and middle class values and excluding particular social and cultural groups such as women, persons of other ethnic origins, rural residents, disabled persons and others.

The examined textbooks promote gender roles based on the traditional image, limiting possibilities to mediate between different types of gender identities. Femininity and masculinity are limited to a set of particular features. As far as sexuality is concerned, the textbooks promote normative heterosexuality.

As textbooks are actively involved in the process of socialization, particular gender roles presented in textbooks considerably influence the models of identity transmitted in the process of education. Their influence become crucial, taking into consideration the age of students at this stage of education. As Erik Erikson puts it, an adolescent is faced with the necessity to re-integrate his or her identity, yet at the same time undergoes a deep crisis, resulting from his or her insecurity and physical changes taking place in the period of adolescence. According to Erikson, this phase is characterized by searching for values and trying out various identity models (Tillman 1996:197-198). Adolescents are easily influenced by their peers, popular media, Internet and school. Undoubtedly, textbooks play important role in this process, shaping students' understanding of social norms, sexuality and self-acceptance.

One can conclude that the analyzed textbooks fit in with the debate on the role and place of Poland in the world, and particularly in Europe. After all, the presence of two divergent discourses is discernible not only in the textbooks under analysis, but also in the public sphere. A combination of the discourses of ethnic and civic nation has been typical of Poland since the 19th century (Burszta et al 2002:17-18). It seems that today, albeit in a different ethnic and economic

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context, these two discourses still interplay with each other, acquiring new meanings. Relating to a broader social context, it is worthwhile to mention the debates over whether Poland should join the European Union, and the accompanying concerns about losing the national identity, countered by the desire for civilizational development and confirmation of Poland's fully-fledged membership in Europe. In the textbooks, which were written already after the accession of Poland to the EU, these two worlds of Euro-sceptics and Euro-enthusiasts mix with each other, finding expression in two different national discourses.

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