

Communicative Citizenship – Social Positioning and its Dynamics in the Discourse around the Deliberate Release of GMOs in Hungary

Thesis for the doctor's degree (PhD) *Summary*

My dissertation and the research it rests on root in the PARADYS¹ international project, which - applying linguistic and sociological concepts and tools – tried to find answers to how and in what extent citizens can get opportunities to participate in decision making processes.

The communicative citizenship is regarded in my conception as a social position in some administrative conditioning process– in our case the licensing of a gene technological procedure. Its essence is a determined social role, that is to say the perception of being a citizen. This role is evolving during a particular progress and includes the participants' views about others and themselves. In other words, the category of citizenship is interpreted in this participative process as an activated social role showing up in the social positioning of the interested participants and the parties concerned.

The aim of my dissertation is the reconstruction of the social positions and of their correlation to each other within the communication around the deliberate release of genetically modified organisms in Hungary, and hereby the demonstration of the realisation of the 'communicative citizenship' in Hungarian conditions.

I am trying to answer this question with the help of the analysis of the sociological background of the decision making process, on the other hand, with the analysis of the available linguistic corpus and their possible conclusions.

The first phase of the research consisted of the data collection. Part of the examined 'Hungarian GMO Discourse' is written material (articles, dissertations and last but not least the regulations and laws in the procedure of licensing the deliberate release of genetically modified organisms). On the other hand recordings of conversations in this topic were made (lectures, debates, interviews), then these were committed to writing according to the conventions of conversation analysis. In the next step the exhaustive linguistic analysis of the available materials was accomplished; afterwards, on the basis of them, I reconstructed the significant social positions. The last step in my research was the

¹*Participation and the Dynamics of Social Positioning – the Case of Biotechnology. Images of the Self and Others in Decision-making Procedures.*

analysis of the dynamics of social positioning, the relation of the reconstructed positions to each other within a conversation and in the whole discourse.

The legal regulation plays a determinant role in the formation of the possibilities for public participation; the text of the relevant law² outlines the social positions which prospectively can be realized in the given conditioning process, in our case in the procedure of licensing the deliberate release of GMOs.

On the basis of the analysis of the oral data it can be stated that within the Hungarian decision making process, more exactly in the discourse around the licensing procedure of deliberate release of genetically modified organisms, these positions are evolving, filling up with content.

As far as concerning the dynamics of the social positions, that is, their relations to each other, I examined it in more approaches: on the one hand within a text according to the traditions of conversation analysis (intratextual analysis), on the other hand in the whole discourse and its coherence (transtextual analysis).

My researches have proved that the participants of the licensing procedure during communication clearly use the social categories, the above mentioned communicative tasks, tools and forms can be reconstructed.

As for the relation of the positions to each other, beside correspondences several contradictions can be traced. The most outstanding positioning conflict is perhaps the one between the citizens and the other positions.

The results of my researches lead to the conclusion that this positioning conflict which is rooted in the law itself, is one of the most severe difficulties for developing communicative citizenship in Hungary, for the public participation in the decision making process.

² Law XXVII, 1998, gene technological actions and its modifications.