

עיונים בשפה וחברה

כתב עת אלקטרוני בין תחומי

של האגודה הישראלית לחקר שפה וחברה

גיליון מיוחד בנושא

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העורכת

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ראש מרכז שח"ק לחקר שפה, חברה ותקשורת, מכללת לוינסקי לחינוך

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תוכן העניינים

19-8	דבר העורכת האורחת [עברית ואנגלית]	זהר לבנת
מאמרים		
28-20	נתניהו בקונגרס האמריקאי	יהושע גתי
51-29	'כמו כל העם, גם אני התרגשתי': אסטרטגיות לחיזוק הסולידריות עם הקהל בנאומי נתניהו	בברלי לוין וזהר לבנת
70-52	מרחב הפרשנות העיתונאית: הדיווח על גינויים בישראל כמקרה בוחן	מיה שרייבר
97-71	מדובר בקומץ פורעים – שיח נרמול השליטה בשטחים, 1967	דליה גבריאלי נורי
115-98	"נדמה לי שצריך לומר": דפוסי מיצוב בשיח מטא-תקשורתי בחדשות הטלוויזיה בישראל	מיכל חמו
141-116	מאיגרא רמא לבירא עמיקתא: ההפלה הפוליפונית של אהוד אולמרט	איילת כהן
163-142	החזון הקולקטיבי: תפקיד שיח המדיה בעיצוב עתיד חברתי משותף	מוטי נייגר
183-164	הטוקבק כמילת מפתח: הפוטנציאל לדמוקרטיה קרנבלית והמציאות הדמוקרטית המוגבלת	גונן דורי-הכהן
208-184	תגובות אירוניות בעיתונות המקוונת: דפוס פוגעני מעכב דיון	אלדעה ויצמן
232-209	הבניית אמת כללית כאמצעי ארגומנטטיבי בפוסטים פוליטיים	פנינה שוקרון-נגר
ספרים ועוד		
234-233	משולחנה של עורכת המדור [עברית אנגלית]	איילת כהן
239-235	כולם מדברים על שלום – אבל כיצד ולאילו מטרה? על ספרה של דליה גבריאלי נורי: <i>Israeli Peace Discourse</i>	אלי פרידמן
247-240	עידן המשבר: עיונים ביקורתיים בקשר שבין שיח למשברים. על ספרם של De Rycker & Don: <i>Discourse and Crisis: Critical Perspectives</i>	יאיר אור
תקצירים		
253-248	תקצירים באנגלית למאמרים בעברית	

Table of Contents

Zohar Livnat	The guest editor's introduction [Hebrew and English]	8-19
Articles		
Yehoshua Gitay	Netanyahu in the USA Congress [Hebrew]	20-28
Beverly Lewin and Zohar Livnat	'Like everyone else in the nation, I was also moved': Reinforcing solidarity in PM Netanyahu's Hebrew speeches [Hebrew]	29-51
Mia Schreiber	The act of journalistic interpretation: Reporting the condemnation of Israel as a case study [Hebrew]	52-70
Dalia Gavriely-Nuri	The Normalization of Occupation: The Israeli West Bank Political Discourse in 1967 [Hebrew]	71-97
Michal Hamo	Positioning in meta-communicative discourse on Israeli television news [Hebrew]	98-115
Ayelet Kohn	The polyphonic framing of Ehud Olmert [Hebrew]	116-141
Motti Neiger	The Collective Vision: The media and the construction of a shared social future [Hebrew]	142-163
Gonen Dori-Hacohen	The "Tokbek" as an Israeli term for talk: The potential for democratic carnival and defective democratic reality [Hebrew]	164-183
Elda Weizman	Ironic commenting on op-eds [Hebrew]	184-208
Pnina Shukrun-Nagar	The construction of general truths as an argumentative means in political posts [Hebrew]	209-232
Books and More		
Ayelet Kohn	From the desk of the section editor [Hebrew and English]	233-234
Eli Friedman	Everyone's Talking about Peace - But How and for What Purpose? on Dalia Gavriely Nuri's book: Israeli Peace Discourse [Hebrew]	235-239
Iair G. Or	The Age of Crisis: Critical Discussions of the Links between Crisis and Discourse. On De Rycker & Don's book: Discourse and Crisis: Critical Perspectives [Hebrew]	240-247
Abstracts		
	English abstracts of Hebrew articles	248-253

Abstracts

Netanyahu in the USA Congress

Yehoshua Gitay

Benjamin Netanyahu's address to the American congress in which he focused on the agreement with Iran concerning the issue of nuclear weapon constitutes the principal motivation of the present study. Given the hostile attitude of the U.S administration toward Netanyahu, this article demonstrates how the Israeli premier succeeded in constructing his speech in a manner that minimized the administration's opposition to his presence in congress. The article foregrounds the consistent American support to Israel thus establishing the argumentative point of departure of the address, namely, American commitment to Israel security. In light of his previous unsuccessful attempts to convince the administration to reject the agreement, Netanyahu employed a specific rhetorical tactic: dramatization through a symbolic act, namely, comparing Iran's intentions to the Holocaust. Furthermore, Netanyahu opted for a prosaic, factual style whose goal was to present his ideas in the guise of reality.

'Like everyone else in the nation, I was also moved':

Reinforcing solidarity in PM Netanyahu's Hebrew speeches

Beverly Lewin and Zohar Livnat

The present study examines Hebrew speeches of PM Netanyahu to various domestic audiences, in order to understand how the speaker creates the connection with his audience. Our model, (Livnat & Lewin, in press), based on the interpersonal level of meaning, as developed in Systemic Functional Linguistics Theory, highlights strategies for establishing solidarity with the audience. These strategies in turn foster three purposes: the forming of social bonds, the building of a consensus, and the revealing of the speaker's position.

The present study adds another perspective based on the interpersonal level, namely, Politeness Theory. We included speech acts and lexical expressions which realize 3 categories of positive politeness: a) expressing praise, thanks and appreciation; b)

strategies for creating various kinds of common ground; c) expressions that reflect close familiarity). The analysis presents the various rhetorical strategies by which Netanyahu creates solidarity with the audience by stressing their shared values, interests, and characteristics.

The act of journalistic interpretation: Reporting the condemnation of Israel as a case study

Mia Schreiber

This study examines the act of journalistic interpretation when reporting instances of condemnation of Israel. Reporting political and public speech acts is a central tool in the journalistic mediation process. Therefore, examining the range of journalistic interpretation may shed light on the role of journalists in constructing the social and political reality. This study analyzes reports of condemnation of Israel in the *Yedioth Ahronoth* newspaper during the period 2010-2014, and compares them to the original quoted statements. The findings reveal an interpretative scale for reports of such condemnation. On the one hand, some of the reports are extremely faithful to the original statements containing an explicit condemnation, while on the other, some of them are highly interpretative, that is, an original statement that does not contain explicit condemnation is transformed into explicit condemnation as a consequence of journalistic interpretation. This study discusses the journalistic interpretative scale while suggesting several possible motivations underlying these interpretative choices and their social role as intention mediators.

The Normalization of Occupation: The Israeli West Bank Political Discourse in 1967

Dalia Gavriely-Nuri

This article presents an analysis of the Israeli political discourse concerning the West Bank directly after the 1967 Six-Day War. Israel's occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip in 1967 created the rhetorical challenge of bridging the gap between Israel's traditional image as a small, peace-seeking nation and its new image as a powerful, victorious nation with an uncompromising security policy. In response to

this challenge, a new rhetoric was born, namely, the normalization of occupation. This rhetoric engendered new cultural codes based on historical and biblical precedents and legal arguments in an attempt to provide an ideological basis for Israel's presence in the occupied territories.

Positioning in meta-communicative discourse on Israeli television news

Michal Hamo

A major task of positioning processes in television news is constructing authority and trust. The present study examines these processes in meta-communicative discourse in a 2008 Israeli television news database. A detailed analysis of explicit references to knowledge, expressions of self-reflection, and patterns of use of deontic modality and pronouns reveals that the generic instability of television news leads to a mixture of traditional and contemporary positioning strategies. This results in multiple contradictions and inner tensions: between professional-institutional and personal positioning, between solidarity on the one hand and authoritativeness and celebrity on the other, between undermining textual transparency and securing the seemingly taken-for-granted authority of the speaker, and between an appearance of sincerity and a strategically limited self-exposure, which entails discrepancies between rhetoric and practice. These findings furnish further evidence of the complexity of positioning in public and media discourse and may have detrimental consequences for the social and democratic functions of the news.

The polyphonic framing of Ehud Olmert

Ayelet Kohn

The present article explores the coverage of the sentencing of former Israeli Prime Minister, Ehud Olmert, on Channel 10's main news broadcast on May 13, 2014. The event was covered by a series of media frames such as short commentaries, interviews, and confrontations in the studio, all of which contributed to the framing of Olmert.

This paper seeks to examine the creators' usage of multimodality – the terminology of the verdict, spoken language and written language, graphic design, soundtrack and editing– in order to construct this negative framing. These narrative patterns reflect both the criticism leveled at the politician and the journalists' reflections concerning the moral and public dangers inherent in their own coverage. The polyphonic framing was allegedly contradicted by two interviews, which served as patterns of contra-frames. A thorough examination demonstrates that these patterns actually contributed to the framing of Ehud Olmert.

The Collective Vision: The media and the construction of a shared social future

Motti Neiger

The goal of this paper is to provide a theoretical framework for media discourse that refers to the future. The paper contends that the well-established concept of “collective memory” has a parallel, mirror-image concept, that concerns the ways in which society looks at and into the future, prospecting events and conditions that will or are likely to occur at a later time. This new concept, dubbed the “Collective Vision”, contains societal fantasies, fears, aspirations, dreams, concerns, and expectations. Thus, it is constructed in a multi-directional process of concretizing a narrative about the future into a functional, socio-political construct as an outcome of shared ideology. The paper elaborates on the mechanisms of the mediated “Collective Vision” and their linguistic aspects. Israel's Channel 2 newscasts serve to illustrate the pragmatic uses of the “Collective Vision” discourse and reveal the hegemonic role of the media in the construction of a shared future.

The "Tokbek" as an Israeli term for talk: The potential for democratic carnival and defective democratic reality

Gonen Dori-Hacohen

This article focuses on the "tokbek", that is, the comments Israelis write on journalistic websites and the term used for this communicative arena. Following Based on an analysis of comments posted over the last decade, the article begins by describing the carnivalesque potential of the tokbeks: they emphasize the low, they

are open and equal, and they are contemptuous of power. These features could have made the tokbek a fully democratic arena, particularly when compared to the *bourgeois* public sphere –except for the fact that two elements are missing: laughter and social action.

The second part of the article describes the term for talk – "tokbek" – within its speech economy. "Tokbek" describes an arena whose participants present a political identity by vilifying the other side, usually without expressing or grounding a political opinion; it is a bashing ritual performed by anti-freier, griping actors. Therefore, the Israeli speech economy reflects a defective democratic culture, one that produces vibrant political discussions but is devoid of transformative ability or social actions – elements that are central to democracy.

Ironic commenting on op-eds

Elda Weizman

Readers' comments on op-eds have been analyzed by researchers primarily as cases of disagreement; in the Israeli context, they are further described as aggressive and abusive. These insights derive from the use of offensive vocabulary and unmitigated directness. The present contribution, on the other hand, focuses on the use of indirectness in its pure manifestation – irony. Based on readers' meta-pragmatic comments, I first show that readers conceive of the use of irony in op-eds as undesirable in terms of efficiency, ethics, and morality. I then examine ironic comments and posit that they constitute threats not only to the columnist's positive face as a result of the criticism inherent in them, but also to his or her negative face due to the fact that in the genre in question, ironic comments limit the range of potentially acceptable responses in a manner that undermines the columnist's freedom and consequently invades his or her territory. Thus, ironic comments impose limits on potential debating between commenters and journalists, thereby rendering their contribution to democratic discourse highly questionable.

The construction of general truths as an argumentative means in political posts

Pnina Shukrun-Nagar

The paper focuses on the linguistic and argumentative characteristics of constructed general truths (gnóme, maxim). According to Aristotle, general truths are generalizing, non-scientific claims concerning human behavior. The paper explores the political posts written by Yair Lapid, head of the "Yesh Atid" party, since 2012. First, I discuss the characteristics of general truths and the role of Facebook as an arena of political propaganda. I then examine various strategies employed to construct general truths and incorporate them into arguments.

Linguistically, it has been shown that various semantic, syntactic, pragmatic, and grammatical means are used to construct general truths, including a-temporal grammatical forms and words, generalizing nouns and quantifiers, indefinite pronouns, givenness markers, meta-linguistic comments, and so on. Rhetorically, it has been shown that similar to "real" general truths, constructed general truths are also used as conclusions in inductive arguments (demonstrations) or accepted premises in deductive arguments (enthymemes).