

I. ROZPRAWY I ANALIZY

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Henryk Kardela

ORCID: 0000-0003-0145-5659

(Lublin, UMCS)

Anna Kędra-Kardela

ORCID: 0000-0002-5534-8691

(Lublin, UMCS)

THE *SPEAKING SUBJECT* IN JERZY BARTMIŃSKI'S
LINGUISTIC WORLDVIEW PROGRAM:
A COGNITIVE GRAMMAR PERSPECTIVE

The paper examines the concept of the *speaking subject*, the key term of Jerzy Bartmiński's *Linguistic Worldview Program* (LWP), from the point of view of Ronald Langacker's theory of Cognitive Grammar. We propose to characterize the dynamic, open nature of Bartmiński's speaking subject in terms of Langacker's notion of *conceptualizer*, a hybrid category consisting of the *speaker and the hearer*, between whom the discursive negotiation of meaning takes place. It is assumed that the model applies to all types of discursive interaction involving all kinds of spoken and written discourse, including literary works. In order to be able to account for the meaning negotiation process in discourse, we propose to use Ronald Langacker's theory of the *Current Discourse Space* (CDS) combined with the *Storyworld Possible Self* model (SPS) as developed by María-Ángeles Martínez in her analysis of literary texts.

KEY WORDS: linguistic worldview; speaking subject; author; reader meaning negotiation; current discourse space; storyworld possible self

1. Introduction

In his book *Aspects of Cognitive Ethnolinguistics*, Jerzy Bartmiński (2009; henceforth Bartmiński), defines *linguistic worldview*¹ as “a language-entrenched interpretation of reality, which can be expressed in the form of

¹ In Bartmiński's *Linguistic Worldview Program* (LWP) as presented in his *Aspects*, texts are held to constitute one of the three sources relevant for the reconstruction of the worldview, the other two being the linguistic system and the use of questionnaires by the researcher. In this paper we are primarily interested in the author-reader relationship

judgements about the world, people, things or events” (p. 2).² In contrast to those linguists who, as he notes, define linguistic worldview as “a conceptual structure fossilized in the system of a given language” (cf. Grzegorzczkova 1990: 43) or as a “‘set of regularities’ in grammatical and lexical structures, manifesting various ways of perceiving the world” (Tokarski 1998: 10), Bartmiński’s definition, in his own words (p. 24)

reveals [the linguistic worldview’s] epistemological (interpretive) nature, does not limit it to what is ‘fossilised’ or closed as a ‘structure’, makes room for the dynamic, open nature of the worldview, and does not favour the abstract regularity in grammar and vocabulary.

On Bartmiński’s analysis, the dynamicity of the worldview involves

- (i) “the interplay between different viewpoints” which the subjects of SEEING assume in texts and discourse” (pp. 110–111);
- (ii) “the co-occurrence, crisscrossing or overlap of viewpoints within the same text” (p. 113); and
- (iii) “an empathetic encounter of two subjects, as in genuine dialogue” (p. 113).

In this paper we primarily focus on point (iii) – on the “dialogue of two subjects” – as a *sine qua non* of a successful meaning negotiation process. The dialogue, we hold, takes place in the *Current Discourse Space* (Langacker 2008) between the speaker and the hearer or, in the case of a literary text, between the author and the reader (cf. Note 1). In the case of the author-reader discursive exchange, it is assumed that the reader “enters” a literary work by constructing a *Storyworld Possible Self* model, or an SPS. According to Martinez (2018: 19–20), the SPS is a mental construct “which emerges from the conceptual integration of two mental spaces [one of which] is the mental representation [built] by the readers for the intradiegetic perspectivizing entity,” while the other is “the mental representation that

involved in text reading. We claim that the author-reader relationship, although distinct from the speaker-hearer interaction in linguistic discourse, is based on the same cognitive principle as the latter – namely on the meaning negotiation process. Seen from our perspective, the author/reader negotiation process is just a special case of the more general speaker-hearer interaction obtaining in discourse. There is a fundamental difference, however, between Bartmiński’s and our views as to what constitutes the objective of the speaker-hearer meaning negotiation, or – differently put – what the object of inquiry of either approach is. Whereas the aim of LWP is to *reconstruct* the linguistic worldview, the aim of our analysis is to *construct* – via the CDS-based speaker-hearer negotiation process – a cognitive model of reality, including the storyworld of a literary work. In contrast to LWP, we thus embrace an *emergentist* conception of categorization (and “reality”).

² But see the discussion in Głaz (2017) for his conception of worldview as “cultural cognition.”

the readers entertain of themselves, which in social-psychology is known as the *self-concept*.”³ The paper proposes a unified CDS-SPS model which can, in our view, provide a viable account of the “empathetic encounter of two subjects, as in genuine dialogue.”

2. The author and the reader

In her book-length study *Anty-teoria literatury (Anti-theory of Literature)*, Burzyńska (2006: 175) quotes Malcolm Bradbury, who in his novel *Doctor Criminale* (1992) describes the author-reader relation in the following way:

In short, *Criminale* was the text; and I was the decoder. He was an author, and I was a reader. Now I belong – as I’ve already said, to the age of the Death of the Author. According to the rules of my excellent education, writers don’t write; they are written by language, by the world outside, but above all by the sharp-eyed readers. (1992: 20–21)

Indeed, as Burzyńska notes, over the past several decades the emphasis in literary analysis has shifted from the analysis of a literary work as a self-contained, fully autonomous creation, to the reader him/herself (2006: 178). As famously argued by Barthes in his paper “The death of the author,” a text consists of multiple writings, issuing from several cultures and entering into dialogue with each other, into parody, into contestation; but there is one place where this multiplicity is collected, united, *and this place is not the author, as we have hitherto said it was, but the reader*: the reader is the very space in which are inscribed, without any being lost, all the citations a writing consists of; the unity of a text is not in its origin, it is in its destination; but this destination can no longer be personal: the reader is a man without history, without biography, without psychology; he is only that someone who holds gathered into a single field all the paths of which the text is constituted. [...] We know that to restore to writing its future, we must reverse its myth: the birth of *the reader must be ransomed by the death of the author*. (1986: 55, italics added)

But who is the reader? – one might ask. In their discussion of the identity and changeability of the so-called *virtual reader*⁴ in his/her role in text interpretation, Kalaga and Prower note that

³ One can conceive of an SPS as a special case of what Van Dijk calls a *context model*, i.e. “a mental representation of a situation. [Context models] are subjective, they represent personal experiences, namely the experience of the current communicative episode, and they also feature instantiations of sociocultural knowledge we share about social and communicative situations and their participants” (2009: 6–7).

⁴ There exist a number of terms used in literary scholarship to refer to the addressee. Kalaga and Prower, who in their paper use the term *virtual reader*, enumerate several other related terms, including *implied reader*, *mock reader*, *informed reader* and *Model Reader* employed by other researchers (cf. Kalaga and Prower 1990: 31–32).

every text presupposes an anthropocentric “self” behind the interpretive task it determines through its lexical and syntactic organization. This SELF is qualified in both its behavioural and its personal constitution. The virtual reader is a character beyond the possible world of the work, yet he or she owes their “existence” to the same text to which the possible world owes its own. To conceive of the virtual reader as character, or self, or person, means to raise the question of the identity and changeability of that person. (1990: 38)

The problem of identity and changeability of the reader is discussed by Kalaga in yet another paper with the suggestive title “The reader’s throat: To cut or not to cut.” Adopting the Peircean theory of sign, Kalaga comments on the nature of the so-called *implied reader*, i.e. a subject of cognition that confronts the text and is “entangled in a permanent dialogue which is of two kinds” (Kalaga 1990: 125):

the external dialogue – the dialogue with other signs, other texts – which begins with the entrance into the symbolic realm of the Other; and the internal dialogue, the permanent interpretation and reinterpretation of thought (as Peirce says: “thinking always precedes in the form of a dialogue – a dialogue between different phases of the ego” [...]).⁵

An echo of “a dialogue between different phases of the ego” can be found in Mikhail Bakhtin’s (1986) theory of dialogism, a theory Bartmiński refers to when he discusses the value judgments residing in “the worldview projected in a given style” (Bartmiński, p. 14), or when he stresses the “polyphonic nature” of the speaking subject. The polyphonic nature of the latter, Bartmiński claims, makes it possible for him to “enter into dialogue with himself” as when, for instance, he wishes to be ironical, to show “empathetic feelings to others,” to “put on different masks,” or to “multiply worldviews that can be hidden in a given text” (cf. Bartmiński 2008: 161–162).

Although a dialogue with oneself has undeniable merits, we believe that a genuine, speaker-hearer dialogue is to be preferred to a dialogue held with one’s own self. Our proposal then is to enable Bartmiński’s speaking subject to enter into a genuine dialogue with the hearing/speaking addressee. Before we do so, however, we have to mention, if only in passing, an important strand in literary research which hails the “return of the author” in recent Western literary scholarship.

⁵ Clearly, the implied reader, although to a great extent determined by the text, is not a static category; it can hardly be such, given that he/she “emerges from the interaction between text and [the] system [of signs in which the text functions]” (Kalaga 1990: 125–126). As a consequence, another crucial attribute of the implied reader becomes clear: the evolutionary nature of this category, its changeability, which is exactly the effect of the interaction between the text and the evolutionary system. As much as the system changes in a relevant way, so does change the interpretability of the text, its interpretant, or the implied reader (Kalaga 1990: 126).

This renewed interest in the category of the author can be clearly seen in Eefje Claassen's (2012) book *Author Representations in Literary Reading*. Claassen rejects the view that "the author is considered irrelevant to the interpretation of a literary text" (p. 2). The objective of her study, she says, is to fill the gap between literary theory and other areas of literary field by shedding some light on what happens during the reading of literary fiction. Is the author indeed irrelevant to the interpretation of a text? Do readers follow this prescription? Or is the author as present during the process of reading as he is in the different areas of the literary field? In order to answer these questions I investigate empirically the role of readers' assumptions about an author's identity, attitude, and communicative intentions during the reading of literary texts [...]. (p. 2)

It is precisely for this reason, Claassen declares – in order to gain a better understanding of the cognitive processes taking place in text reading – that "the readers' assumptions about the author's identity, attitude and communicative intentions" (p. 2) should be seriously contemplated. For Claassen, the reading process involves some kind of agreement between the author and the reader, whereby the latter joins the former "in a game of make believe," a game which is subject to the so-called *default of good behaviour* principle (p. 227). In what follows we propose a theoretical framework which can account for the author-reader "make believe game" in the meaning negotiation process.

3. The *Storyworld Possible Self* and the *Current Discourse Space*

The negotiation of meaning is an intersubjective process; it takes place in discourse and involves two of its participants: the speaker and the hearer. In literary studies, the idea of *intersubjectivity* has been promoted, *inter alia*, by Rembowska-Pluciennik (2012: 107), who defines intersubjectivity as "the ability to think about the reasoning of others as well as the ability to mentally represent the current, recollected as well as a fictitious state of someone else's mind." "Thinking about reasoning of others" requires, she notes, *mind-reading*, i.e. "human ability to ascribe to others the mental states relating to their knowledge of the world, the causality of their actions." Importantly, because intersubjectivity involves the "simulation of behavioral patterns" which enables "intersensory communication, empathy and identification with others" (p. 102; trans. ours), it has, according to her, direct bearing on the process of reading. Indeed, the most important reason why we read is because literature "simulates behavioral patterns" which respond to "the multiplicity

of points of view and the multiplicity of ways the world is perceived by the individual” (p. 102). One of the forms of simulation, Rembowska-Płuciennik concludes, is “the creation of a literary character by the *author*, the narrator and by other characters and the *reader’s* construction of the character’s mental representation” (p. 106; italics added).

If *both* the author *and* the reader should be seen as being involved in the reading process, then the question arises how to incorporate this observation into a viable cognitive theory of text-reading. In what follows we will claim that the meaning negotiation process takes place in the *Current Discourse Space* as proposed in Langacker (2008) and crucially involves what María-Ángeles Martínez (2018) calls a *storyworld possible self*, a mental construct which enables a reader to be “mentally transported” into the world of a narrative.⁶

According to María-Ángeles Martínez (2018) the process of reading requires, on the part of the reader, the so-called *narrative engagement*, that is, “the phenomenological experience of transportation into a narrative world [which] mediates between reading a story and the acceptance of beliefs implied by the story. The more a reader is transported into a narrative world, the more the story will influence the reader’s beliefs” (de Graaf et al. 2009: 386). During the reader’s narrative engagement, a *storyworld possible self* (SPS) is created. As already mentioned, an SPS is a mental construct which is an outcome of the conceptual integration of two mental spaces: the reader’s mental representation of him/herself (or his/her *self-concept*) and the mental representation space constructed by the reader on the basis of the focalizer’s or narrator’s perspectives on a particular entity appearing within the narrating situation (cf. Martínez 2018: 19–20). In particular, in Martínez’s theory, the so-called *character input space* is, as she puts it, “conceptually integrated with one of an individual reader’s self-schemas or possible selves when this is activated by the narrative discourse, setting off linking matches across certain features in the two inputs which get projected into the newly emergent space, or SPS blend” (p. 21). The SPS model can be presented as follows (Martínez 2018: 22):

⁶ It is worth noting that Ronald Langacker’s theory has already been successfully applied to the analysis of literary texts (cf. Harrison et al. 2014; Harrison 2017).

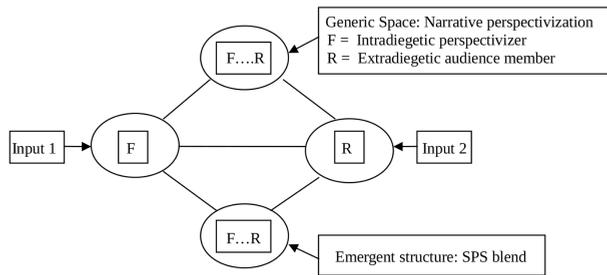


Fig. 1. The SPS model

The generic space involves so-called *narrative perspectivization*, common to both an *intradiegetic perspectivizer* (*focalizer* or *narrator* (F)) and an *extradiegetic audience*, the reader (R). The integration of Input Space 1 and Input Space 2 yields a blend, an emergent structure, an outcome of the “reader’s transportation” into the story. As such, an SPS can be seen as the reader’s “intersubjective means of transportation,” an ability, to quote Rembowska-Płuciennik again (2012: 102), “to think about the reasoning of others as well as the ability to mentally represent the current, recollected as well as a fictitious state of someone else’s mind,” thereby enabling “intersensory communication, empathy and identification with others.” For Martínez (p. 23),

[...] storyworld possible selves complement existing approaches to narrative engagement by providing a theoretical framework within which to better understand certain elusive phenomena such as idiosyncratic appeal, feelings of self-relevance and self-transformation, attention priming, and the generation of emotion.

And she continues:

Using SPSs as a tool for narrative analysis has far reaching implications. First of all, blends are linguistically and/or multimodally triggered, which means that it is possible to identify and analyse the specific mechanisms that trigger SPS blends. Likewise, since projection from the input spaces into the blend is selective, involving only those features which may be relevant to meaning construction, it is also easier to identify and decompress those aspects in readers’ self-concept that are activated by a literary text. This, in turn, contributes to enlightening the slippery study of emotion and empathy in narrative engagement by making explicit reference to the kind of emotion aroused, as well as to those features in the fictional world, and in the discourse through which it is represented, which can be related to specific emotions in individual audience members.

Let us assume now that the construction of an SPS model takes place in the so-called *Current Discourse Space* (CDS), defined by Langacker (2008: 466) as “a common basis for interpretation [which] comprises everything presumed to be shared by the speaker and hearer as the basis for communication at a given moment.” The proposed combined CDS-SPS model might then look as follows:

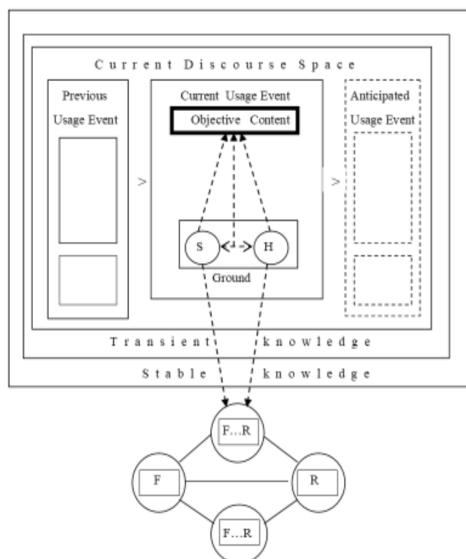


Fig. 2. Meaning negotiation in text: CDS and SPS

The meaning negotiation process between the speaker and the hearer (or the text/author and the reader), shown in Fig. 2, involves the Current Discourse Space and, based on it, the on-line construction of an SPS model.⁷ The CDS itself is formed on the basis of both stable and transient knowledge;⁸ it consists of three basic elements: the *current usage event*, the *previous usage event*, and a usage event that can be *anticipated*. This arrangement holds at all levels of conceptual and linguistic organization, including the level of a sentence or a sequence of sentences (a paragraph) which describe a particular episode. The central element of the current usage event is the so-called *objective content* (OC), i.e. the conceptualization of a situation or a thing that is in the centre of attention⁹ and is communicated between the speaker (S) and the hearer (H). S and H form what is called the *ground*, i.e. persons and circumstances accompanying the production and understanding of utterances.

As already intimated, in the theory we propose, the CDS provides a broader conceptual basis for the creation of an SPS model. Being the result

⁷ The meaning negotiation process in the CDS is based on what Langacker (2007: 182) calls “the apprehension other minds,” known elsewhere as “mind reading” (cf. Rembowska-Pluciennik 2012).

⁸ Stable knowledge is the world knowledge, structured by cognitive domains and frames, while transient knowledge is the immediate contextual knowledge made use of by the speaker and hearer “here and now,” on the basis of which the Current Discourse Space and the SPS models develop.

⁹ On our analysis, texts, or, to be exact, their conceptualizations, are also “things.”

of the meaning negotiation process between S and H, the SPS incorporates, in the case of a literary work, two perspectives on the fictional world: the reader's (extradiegetic) point of view and the focalizer's and narrator's (intradiegetic) perspective. The emergent structure, the SPS blend, is the outcome of the "reader's intersubjective transportation" into the story, of his/her ability to mentally access the focalizer's and narrator's "states of the mind." Owing to the human ability "to ascribe to others the mental states relating to their knowledge of the world [and] the causality of their actions," to quote Rembowska-Płuciennik once again (2012: 107), the combined CDS-SPS theory can also offer the addressee access to Bartmiński's speaking subject's mind.

4. In lieu of a conclusion

With Fig. 2 in mind, we can now address the following questions about the nature and role of Bartmiński's speaking subject.

1. *What is the ontological status of the speaking subject?*

As already mentioned, for Bartmiński (2008), the speaking subject has a "polyphonic nature;" he often "enters into dialogue with himself;" he shows "empathetic feelings to others," or "puts on different masks." The question is: How many masks can the speaking subject assume? The likely answer is: an infinite number, given the infinite number of possibilities for interpretations of his texts, parts of his texts, the behaviour of his characters, settings, etc. If so, why not take the interpretational possibilities as a natural consequence of the author/text-addressee/reader meaning negotiation process rather than being the result of the speaking subject's dialogue with him/herself.¹⁰

2. *When entering into dialogue with him/herself, how could the speaking subject know what kind of "readerly profile" his/her addressee might have?*

Working with the notion of *virtual addressee* (or *virtual reader*) as a theoretical construct, albeit one with "anthropomorphic qualities or faculties" that are "projected by the text," Kalaga and Prower (1990: 38) mention the following features of the virtual reader's personality: *age* (e.g., books for children), *sex* (e.g., books for boys or girls, men's or women's magazines), *social status* (e.g., advertising), *intellectual level* (e.g., Mann's *The Magic Mountain* as compared to Thackeray's *Vanity Fair*), *emotional profile* (e.g., melodrama), *interests* (e.g., maritime literature), *general or professional knowledge* (e.g., an advanced course in plumbing), *ideological and/or value*

¹⁰ For a discussion of the framework of literary communication and on the role of the author in literary communication, see Okopień-Sławińska 1985.

commitments (e.g., political and/or historical literature, propagandistic texts), *active or passive reading* (e.g., open texts such as Joyce's *Ulysses* or Kafka's *Trial*, closed texts such as soap operas, comic strips, propaganda, etc.), and others. This being the case, the rather nebulous form of addressee could be seen as taking shape if the personality traits mentioned by Kalaga and Prower were to some extent "transferred" from the speaking subject to the hearing/speaking addressee.¹¹

3. *What does it mean for "the worldview to be really open"?*

Recall that for Bartmiński, it is the speaking subject who is the single prime source of the text's coherence. Certainly, one could hardly expect the speaking subject who is in dialogue with himself to produce an *incoherent* text. And yet, it does not take a great deal of imagination to conceive of an incoherent text which when embedded by the author in a larger text such as, say, a modernist play, *can be given* a perfectly meaningful interpretation by the reader/viewer. Nor can one be oblivious to the fact that a given text can be read anew, reinterpreted or adapted to serve current needs. A case in point could be, for example Juliusz Słowacki's nineteenth-century play

¹¹ Adopting the conception of the *context model* in the sense of Van Dijk (2009), which gives rise to Martinez's more specific, literary SPS model, Kövecses lists, in the form of questions, several components of the context model. These questions, it seems to us, could be thought of as elements of the background knowledge on the basis of which the speaker-addressee negotiation process is expected to take place. The questions include (Kövecses 2017: 21):

- (i) What do I know about the speaker, the topic, and the hearer? *Knowledge about the main elements of the discourse*;
- (ii) What was said in the present discourse so far? *Surrounding discourse*;
- (iii) What was said about the topic on previous occasions? *Previous discourses on the same topic*;
- (iv) What are the major discourse types that dominate public discourse? *Dominant forms of discourse and intertextuality*;
- (v) What are the systems of thought that govern public discourse? *Ideology underlying discourse*;
- (vi) What are the properties of the physical situation where something is conceptualized? *Physical environment*;
- (vii) What are the properties of the social situation in which something is conceptualized? *Social situation*;
- (viii) What are the properties of the cultural situation in which something is conceptualized? *Cultural situation*;
- (ix) What has happened preceding the discourse? *History*;
- (x) What are the people participating in the discourse interested in and concerned with? *Interests and concerns*;
- (xi) What are the properties of the conceptualizers' body? *The body as context*;
- (xii) What is the content of the participant's conceptual system? *The metaphorical conceptual system as context*.

Balladyna directed by Adam Hanuszkiewicz, where motorcycles appear on the stage. Who but the spectator/reader, one might ask, is to make sense of what he or she can see on the stage and thus provide an interpretation for him/herself?

4. *How would the parameters of valuation and seeing that underlie a particular genre, as discussed in Bartmiński, change if, for instance, the following poetic text of Marian Karczmarczyk's written peasant poetry (Bartmiński, p. 131) were to appear in a theatre script of Samuel Beckett's play Waiting for Godot and be expected to be recited on the stage by Estragon or Vladimir?*

The ceiling,
 the dome of the sky,
 the walls
 are the four quarters of the globe.
 The moon at night
 and the sun during the day
 is a bulb to me:
 such is my hut.

The answer is rather obvious: the augmenting aura of the absurd, leading perhaps to the perlocutionary effect of an uncontrollable roar of laughter from the audience, can only be acknowledged by the spectator or reader through the speaker/author-addressee/spectator meaning negotiation process.

5. *Are the questions concerning the author really as negligible as Foucault (and Barthes) would like them to be?*

According to Foucault (and Barthes), the demise of the author obviates the need to ask questions such as "Who really spoke? Is it really he/she and not someone else? With what authenticity or originality? And what part of his/her deepest self did he express in his discourse?" (cf. Foucault 1984: 119).¹² Yet, *contra* Foucault, and being in full agreement with Bartmiński, we have claimed, in the spirit of Claassen, that questions of this sort *can* throw a great deal of light on (one) of the many interpretations a particular text might have. In our view, the author/reader negotiation process involving the creation of an SPS model, which takes place when an author meets his/her audience, *can* provide (partial) answers to these and other questions and thus prompt the reader to seek alternative interpretations for a literary work.

¹² For Foucault, the following questions are by far more important (pp. 119–120): What are the modes of existence of this discourse? Where has it been used, how can it circulate, and who can appropriate it for himself? What are the places in it where there is room for possible subjects? Who can assume these various subject functions? And behind all these questions, we would hear hardly anything but the stirring of an indifference: What difference does it make who is speaking?

A final question: *Why not allow the hearer/reader – through the SPS-based meaning negotiation process taking place in CDS – to join in the “make-believe game” as discussed by Claassen, and thus take some of the burden of the worldview (re)construction off the speaking subject’s shoulder?*

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PODMIOT MÓWIĄCY W PROGRAMIE REKONSTRUKCJI JOS JERZEGO BARTMIŃSKIEGO –
PRÓBA NOWEGO UJĘCIA

W artykule omawiamy (z punktu widzenia gramatyki kognitywnej Ronalda Langackera) kategorię podmiotu mówiącego – kluczowego pojęcia w programie rekonstrukcji językowego obrazu świata (JOS) w wersji przedstawionej przez Jerzego Bartmińskiego. Proponujemy, by dynamiczne, otwarte ujęcie podmiotu wewnątrz dialogującego z sobą samym (w propozycji Bartmińskiego) scharakteryzować w kategoriach langackerowskiego konceptualizatora jako hybrydową kategorię złożoną z nadawcy i odbiorcy, między którymi zachodzi negocjowanie znaczeń w dyskursie. Zakłada się, iż model ten można zastosować do wszystkich typów interakcji dyskursywnych, pisanych i mówionych, w tym dyskursu literackiego. Aby opisać proces negocjowania znaczenia w dyskursie, proponujemy połączenie langackerowskiej koncepcji bieżącej przestrzeni dyskursu (*Current Discourse Space*, CDS) z modelem możliwego „ja” w świecie literackim (*Storyworld Possible Self*, SPS) rozwijanym przez Marię-Ángeles Martínez w jej analizie tekstów literackich.

SŁOWA KLUCZOWE: językowy obraz świata; podmiot mówiący; podmiot wewnątrznie zdialogizowany (dialogujący z sobą samym); negocjowanie znaczeń przez czytelnika; bieżąca przestrzeń dyskursu; możliwe „ja” w tekście literackim