

## **The Ukraine conflict as a battlefield of competing legitimisation discourses**

### **Summary / Zusammenfassung**

This project focuses on the ongoing Ukraine conflict and describes it as a clash of different legitimisation discourses, including the Russian and Ukrainian official view, statements of the East Ukrainian separatist movements and the impact of these discourses on Polish and Czech discourses. It builds upon the preceding project entitled “Implicit communicative strategies of political discourse in today’s Russia, Poland and Czechia”, financed by the Swiss National Scientific Foundation from 2012 to 2015. To the three genres that were then under examination (parliamentary and televised debates, interviews) are now added governmental statements (presidential speeches, press releases, addresses to the Security Council and the UNO general assembly, etc.). Moreover, the current project includes one more language (Ukrainian, mainly for the analysis of parliamentary debates). The intended international cooperation with three partners (Prof. C. Ilie / Abu Dhabi, Prof. P. Cap / Łódź, Prof. R. Anderson / Los Angeles) will enable us to incorporate the official British and American views on the Ukraine issue into the overall picture and guarantee a solid backing of the whole project by a political scientist.

The focus on the Ukrainian crisis also calls for a diversification of both linguistic objects and methods. The specialisation in implicit strategies which characterises the current project will be supplemented by a selective scrutiny of explicit discourse to be conducted by means of proximation theory in its latest version (Cap 2013). This allows us to combine our fundamentally pragmatic approach with a cognitive linguistic and critical discourse analytical orientation. Moreover, by capturing the interaction of different national legitimisation discourses, our objective goes far beyond Cap’s case study which merely explored the (monological) US War on terror rhetoric. Our ultimate goal is to contribute to a new in-depth understanding of the interplay of explicit and implicit political communication in critical situations where war and peace are at stake. On the other hand, since counts of lexical expressions and grammatical constructions in a given sample of texts are an indispensable prerequisite for proximation theory, the latter offers a valuable theoretical component which enables us to introduce quantitative methods into our research and thus make its findings better founded empirically. The main lexicometric tool used for this purpose is the program AntConc which will allow us to establish a contrastive ranking of relevant keywords and their collocations in the different national discourses, their different genres and their evolution over different periods of time.

### **Keywords / Suchbegriffe**

Ukraine crisis, legitimisation discourse, Proximation theory, implicit political communication

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### **In Collaboration with / In Zusammenarbeit mit**

Prof. Cornelia Ilie, Zayed University, Abu Dhabi  
Prof. Richard Anderson, University of California, Los Angeles  
Prof. Piotr Cap, University of Łódź

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**Duration of Project / Projektdauer**

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