

TOLERANCE AS A SILENT PRESUPPOSITION OF XENOPHOBIA: EXAMPLES OF BAD PRACTICE IN INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

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Abstract:

*In 1998, Marjeta Doupona Horvat, Jef Verschueren, and myself published a booklet *The pragmatics of legitimation: The rhetoric of refugee policies in Slovenia*. The book discusses an episode in Slovene public rhetoric, historically situated roughly as a one-year timespan from April 1992 to March 1993 (war in Bosnia-Herzegovina), and topically defined in terms of “refugee policies”. The approach was a pragmatic text analysis in a tradition of empirical ideology research (CDA), paying special attention to implicit aspects of meaning construction, in interaction or in contrast with explicitly voiced perspectives and with rhetorical goals and constraints. In the present paper, I would like to re-examine and re-interpret some of these fifteen years old data in the light of the “refugee crisis” that culminated in the first months of 2001. This time the “problem” weren’t the Bosnians refugees who chose Slovenia as their final destination, but refugees from the former Soviet Union, Asia, Middle East and Africa, mostly seeking refuge and asylum in the West, and therefore using Slovenia only as a transit state. The aim of this paper threefold. 1) using roughly the same methodology as in 1998, I would like to show, how the “identity” of the refugees was (re)constructed in Slovenian media, and to uncover different mechanisms (and techniques) behind these constructions; 2) paying special attention to the (so called) “tolerant” approach to intercultural communication, I intend to show how tolerance is just the other side of xenophobia; and 3) concentrating on supposedly scientific approaches to intercultural communication that were developed during the year of “intercultural dialogue”, I will conclude my presentation by demonstrating how political clichés can not and must not be used in place of scientific analysis.*

Keywords: *Xenophobia; (In)tolerance; Migration; Intercultural communication; Intercultural education.*