

Temat: Parliamentary language of interruptions. Politolinguistic analysis of hecklings in the House of Deputies of the Austrian Imperial Council 1917-1918.

Politics is a global element of social life in every generation. It has influenced human life in various aspects for centuries. It is hard to disagree with the words of Thomas Mann, who said: *Everything is politics*.

Analysis of the message that comes from politicians (e.g. deputies, senators, political activists, etc.) through various media enables a wide-ranging assessment of their motivation and content that is communicated to the public. Studies of the language of politics, including the language used during parliamentary debates, are conducted from different perspectives: linguistics, political science and history. These studies complement each other, but at the same time draw on each other. An example of interdisciplinary research is the research on hecklings, i.e. loud statements of varying length and structure, suddenly interrupting the statement of another person in violation of binding cultural principles or legal regulations, fulfilling a specific function, enabling the achievement of a predetermined political goal (politolinguistic definition of the author of this dissertation).

Although hecklings are not provided in the parliaments' regulations, this does not stop the parliamentary representatives from using them. Regardless of the historical period studied and the country's location on the world map, the hecklings have been and are a permanent element of parliamentary debate and communication. What may differ is: their quantity, frequency, usage, length or form of expression. In the plenary halls you always hear some interruptions that cut in on the speech given from the parliamentary rostrum. The perception of hecklings varies depending on whether the person expresses them or is their addressee. The speaker usually perceives them negatively or even hostile. The interrupting person shouting from the room sees nothing wrong in it, and even perceives it as a necessity and his political duty. With the help of hecklings, parliamentary representatives can basically express anything they think they need to achieve their goal at a given moment. Hecklings can remind of something or bring something into focus. They can be a question or may also contain a proposal, request or demand. They can express amazement, approval or objection.

On the one hand, this dissertation is a contribution to the current research on parliamentary hecklings, and on the other, it is to contribute to expanding the area of research on them. By preparing this thesis, I wanted to show that one should not limit oneself to research on hecklings in modern parliaments. Focusing on earlier periods is also useful. Analyzing parliamentary language, including hecklings, from various historical periods may be an

important contribution to the study of the general history of parliamentarism and the language that was used at a particular time. This gives the opportunity not only to broaden knowledge about the functioning of societies in previous historical eras, but also to draw broader and deeper conclusions for the present and for the future.

In this dissertation I show that hecklings have always been, regardless of the era, an inseparable and important part of parliamentary communication and debate. I would also like to point out that the hecklings in the final period of the existence of the Austro-Hungarian Empire were interruptions that parliamentary representatives used very often, interrupting the statements of other politicians for political reasons. At the same time, I answer the following questions: What was the significance of hecklings in parliamentary debate and communication in the analyzed period? How are they built in terms of language and what emotions did they express? When and for what purpose were they used? I also presented what functions and types of parliamentary hecklings can be distinguished in the analyzed period. At the same time, I analyzed the hecklers. I established who they were as well as attempted to determine their character and motivation in parliamentary activities not covered by the regulations.

The basic research material of this dissertation are the stenographic protocols of the last, 22nd session of the 12th term (lasting from 1911 to 1918) of the House of Deputies of the Austrian Imperial Council in 1917-1918. This material is available in digital form (pdf) on the website of the Austrian National Library. In total, I reviewed 4702 pages of protocols, in which I specified 5531 hecklings, which I subjected to individual linguistic analysis in terms of their semantic meaning and syntactic structure.

An analysis of the hecklings from the analyzed period and listing a large number of typologized examples among them is basically an indisputable argument that hecklings were an important and often used element of communication in the debate in the House of Deputies of the Austrian Imperial Council between 1917 and 1918. The hecklings provided an opportunity to participate in the debate for all parliamentary representatives, and not just for a selected and limited number of representatives who appeared as speakers on the rostrum. Theoretically, every parliamentary representative could be a heckler, although analysis of the research material shows that the reality was different – out of 528 representatives almost half, i.e. 263, at least once decided to use heckling, of which 1922 were identified in person. The number 3615 captures hecklings that were spoken, but the stenographers could not attribute them to any particular parliamentary representative.

Hecklings as part of the parliamentary debate at that time shaped it quite dynamically, both in a positive and negative way. However, it should be clearly stated that the debate at that

time was not based on a quarrel between rival parliamentary factions but was conducted in an atmosphere of political dispute. This dispute was harsh and fierce, but the boundaries dictated by impeccable manners of the parliamentary representatives regarding social skills and language were not crossed. There were cases of calling the opponent a liar or attempts to drown out, but cultured behavior was preferred, according to the saying that *verbal skirmishes are the most peaceful form of dispute*. Hecklings formulated by representatives were content-related or non-content-related interruptings. The large number of analyzed hecklings shows that the debate was lively and the representatives active. Each of the hecklings fulfilled one or more functions: they could be political or completely unrelated to politics, they could support the speaker and the content he delivered or criticize him and reject the content of the speech. Sometimes they were a direct or indirect attack on a speaker or his political environment. They often had an informative function or corrected understatements or omissions of the speaker. There were also hecklings that were meant to simply disturb. The examined hecklings had a different structure and length, as evidenced by the isolation in this dissertation of 113 different combinations of sentences included in the syntactic typology. As it was stated on the occasion of other studies on hecklings in other periods and parliaments, also in the case of research for this dissertation a universal rule was confirmed, stating that the majority of occurred hecklings are short and concise statements, not exceeding 4 words – it is 81% of all hecklings analyzed in this thesis. Both short hecklings and those in a minority – the more elaborate ones, consisting of complex sentences, appear in the form of e.g. reminders, questions, confirmations, denials, requests or demands. All this should be perceived as evidence of the multiformity and multifunctionality of parliamentary hecklings, as well as their universality of use during debates.

The politolinguistic analysis of hecklings in the House of Deputies of the Austrian Imperial Council in 1917-1918 confirms that the hecklings were an inseparable and important component of parliamentary discourse. These underestimated and seemingly unimportant, as well as often overlooked by researchers statements of varying length, structure, different types and functions have become and still become an important and sometimes even the only weapon in the political fight in the plenary hall for many parliamentarians. For these reasons, it should be recognized that the hecklings have been, are and will be of considerable importance in political and parliamentary communication. They are an expression of what people use in all circumstances on a daily basis – they interrupt each other in various ways to achieve their goals.

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