

This dissertation employs the principles of linguistic discourse analysis. Discourse as a social praxis is examined in an historical context. The thesis falls in the domain of external language evolution and is based particularly on the erudition of historical sociolinguistics and pragmatics. The language behavior of Germans and Czechs is documented and comparatively analyzed against the backdrop of a governmental language policy decree which caused a political crisis in Bohemia in 1897. The research draws upon the persuasive political discourse in the daily press from both nationally-minded Germans and Czechs. The whole of the research is the examination of three specific types of content distilled thereof: autostereotypes, heterostereotypes, and perspectives on the "Bohemia issue". Catchwords contained therein are identified and assessed from a perspective of semasiological and onomaseological competition. Further examinations are conducted based upon argumentation strategies through which suggested topoi patterns are analyzed to elucidate their group specification and function, a key aspect of which is the semantic analysis of the values and norms of involved parties (the principles of New Rhetoric). The supporting matter is further subjected to analysis of the linguistic devices used in the expression of content and arguments. The results derived from semiotic analysis and argumentative analysis offer insights into the convictions, feelings and goals of the two national groups during a time of precarious political language conflict. The dominant patterns of language behavior seen in the examined texts are argumentative and persuasive. The research proves that although both parties are driven by opposite extra-language interests and goals, they acknowledge similar values and use equivalent linguistic devices and strategies of behavior.