

The Polish Catholic Church on IVF. Corpus Assisted Critical Discourse Analysis

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The aim of the study is to analyze the discourse about the In Vitro Fertilization (IVF) in the official statements of the Polish Catholic Church. IVF has been a publicly discussed subject in Poland due to the parliamentary debate (April 2012) concerning different projects connected with bioethics bills. One of the important voices in this public debate was the one of the Polish Catholic Church expressed by both individual priests and the Commission of Polish Episcopate (CPE) in its official statements. The latter is subjected to the analysis in the study to be presented. The analysis is conducted in the Critical Discourse Analysis paradigm (Duszak & Fairclough, op. 2008; van Dijk, 1993; Wodak, Krzyżanowski, 2011; Wodak & Meyer, 2001) with the use of both quantitative and qualitative methods.

The study aims at answering three questions:

- How is IVF constructed in the discourse of CPE?
- What is characteristic for the discourse of CPE about IVF when compared to other discourses about IVF?
- What is characteristic for the discourse of CPE about IVF when compared to other discourses of CPE?

The first question is concerned with the overall attitude of the Polish Catholic Church towards IVF, whereas the other two questions seek for revealing some characteristics of this discourse.

To answer these questions three corpora were built for this particular study: one main corpus and two reference corpora. The first one contained all statements of CPE with words *in vitro*. The second one (RC1) was composed of official documents from the same website as the main corpus. The documents were chosen by criteria of being the same type as those in the main corpus. The second reference corpus (RC2) was built from texts containing words *in vitro* while the same principle of type-accordance was applied during the choice of the texts.

The first question was answered through the analysis of names used to talk about IVF and the context they appeared in with following methods: analysis of semantic preference (Salama, 2011) and of semantic prosody (Louw, 1993) conducted for components of those names and qualitative analysis of concordance. To establish semantic prosody and semantic preference the resources of Polish National Corpus were used. To discover other aspects characteristic for the discourse in question, key words approach was used (Baker, 2006; Bondi & Scott, 2010) and the key words being a result of comparison to above mentioned corpora were subjected to further qualitative concordance analysis.

The combination of quantitative and qualitative corpus methods allowed to reveal different aspects of the discourse in question. The most important one seems to be the overall negative attitude of the Polish Catholic Church against IVF and its different shades and nuances. This attitude can be seen in the analyzed texts through, for example, concentration on the technical part of the procedure or pointing to negative consequences of IVF. As for the characteristic features of the discourse in question, pointing at the constant state of endangerment and talking about laboratory aspects of different phenomena can be mentioned.

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