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Discursive Transformations of Sex in the Polish Online Sphere

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Abstract

Social media have seen an increase in their use for the purpose of campaigning, the spreading of ideas, as well as the propagation of movements. Such media additionally work as a site in which the visibility of rapid social change may be seen, including the well-known online sex-positive movement in various cultural contexts. The Polish context is no different and within the frame of a the widespread expression of anti-gender diversity and anti-sex education attitudes, the sex positive movement online takes on greater force. The presented paper investigates the multimodal discursive realizations of the sex-positive movement in Poland, which go against leading, conservative discourses on sexuality, investigating the linguistic and discursive strategies, via which sex-positive expression is instigated. Through the countering of the culturally dominant discourse of compulsory sexuality, heterosexuality, and taboo nature of sexuality and discussions about sex, the sex-positive movement has begun its work as an educational site of raising awareness through various linguistic and extralinguistic strategies to demonstrate that non-normativity is, in fact, normal. This takes place mostly in online, public space. Through the investigation of semiotic resources, including text, image, and color, the analysis aims to show how indirect and direct allusions or references are made to the countering of sex-negative discourse and specific linguistic strategies adopted in order to remove the taboo from sexuality and bring about national change of the leading discourses on sex.

Keywords: critical discourse analysis, language, sexuality, social construction, counter movements