

Piotr Mamet | Anna Majer

**The Discourse of M.
Managing British Intelligence in
JAMES BOND Movies**



UNIWERSYTET ŚLĄSKI
WYDAWNICTWO

Piotr Mameł – doktor habilitowany, profesor Politechniki Śląskiej, zajmuje się badaniem języka specjalistycznego, szczególnie języka biznesu, prawa, ekonomii, marketingu i reklamy, a także języka postaci filmowych. Badania te wiążą się z analizą gatunku, rejestru i językowego aspektu nazwy produktu. Zajmuje się także problematyką tłumaczenia języka specjalistycznego. Jest autorem następujących monografii: Język negocjacji handlowych (Katowice, 2004), Język z służbie menedżerów - deklaracja misji przedsiębiorstwa (Katowice, 2005) i Licence to Speak: The Language of James Bond (Częstochowa, 2014) oraz głównym edytorem monografii Języki specjalistyczne. Zagadnienia dydaktyki i przekładu (Katowice, 2003), a także autorem artykułów naukowych i referatów konferencyjnych. W latach 1985-1991 Piotr Mameł pracował w sektorze handlu zagranicznego, w tym w Polskiej Izbie Handlu Zagranicznego. Zgromadzone w tym sektorze doświadczenie umożliwia i ułatwia badanie języków specjalistycznych oraz prowadzenie zajęć z przedmiotów ekonomiczno-prawnych.

Anna Majer – doktor nauk humanistycznych w zakresie językoznawstwa, adiunkt w Instytucie Językoznawstwa Wydziału Humanistycznego Uniwersytetu Śląskiego. Autorka referatów oraz prac naukowych z zakresu analizy dyskursu, mitu i stereotypów, języka wartości, studiów związanych z zagadnieniem „język a płeć”, jak również dyskursu specjalistycznego. W swych socjolingwistycznie zorientowanych badaniach zazwyczaj przyjmuje krytyczne stanowisko. Takie też przyjęła w swej dysertacji doktorskiej zatytułowanej The Identity of Cosmopolitan Women – the Beauty Myth in Horoscopolical Discourse (Katowice, 2017). Autorka posiada wieloletnie doświadczenie w pracy naukowo-dydaktycznej.

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Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego • Katowice 2021

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Reviewer
Anna Bączkowska

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Introduction

The discourse of M, a fictional character from the James Bond film series, who originally appeared in Ian Fleming's series of books about a famous spy on Her Majesty's secret service, has turned out to be intriguing and multifaceted enough to merit a study from a linguistic perspective. Among various publications devoted to the main character and the series of books and films as such, this approach, scientific in its nature, is intended to depict the well-known stories from a different, sociolinguistic angle. Surprising though it may seem, it is not James Bond to whom attention is drawn in this book. It is primarily directed towards M, James Bond's supervisor, who is in charge of MI6.

Therefore, the fundamental aim of the research is a linguistic investigation of M's discourse throughout decades, in relation to James Bond as one of M's operatives on the one hand, and to M's supervisors on the other. The study substantially views M as a manager, and thus directs the scientific enquiry towards the linguistic manifestations of M's managerial responsibilities and competencies. It examines M's discourse as part of institutional discourse, embracing the issues indissolubly attributable to it, including power relations characteristic for organisational hierarchies or pragmatic aspects such as the specificity of interactional frameworks and procedures within the institutional context.

Although, to some extent, the fictional stories are interpreted or retold once again here, the scientific approach is manifested by the composition of the book and by its content. Chapter 1 constitutes both a theoretical introduction and background for the considerations which follow. The theoretical part elaborates on the issues strictly connected with further analyses. It encompasses the concept of institutional discourse because M is a manager who operates in the MI6 organisational context. The research assumes a paradigm of discourse analysis, and consequently the aspects the authors have decided to focus on, such as the pragmatic dimension of discourse, or the matter of

gender-related and context-related language differences, are mentioned as well.

The theoretical background allows to establish a methodological framework for the further discussed analysis. It is described in the last section of Chapter 1 which focuses on the research material and the methodology applied for the investigation of M-Bond encounters.

Chapter 2 discusses the results of the analysis of M's discourse, primarily of the character's interactions with Bond, but also with others. The discourse of M is presented diachronically, which has two underlying advantages. Firstly, adopting such a paradigm allows to analyse whether and how the discourse of M evolves, and how the M-007 interactions change over time within the context of the fictional stories. Secondly, it makes it possible to observe the tendencies resulting from the changing socio-cultural reality, external to the stories, within which the movies are produced. And vice versa, to some extent, it also makes it possible to presume about the evolution of the image of contemporary social and cultural reality.

The analytical part is subdivided into two. The first subchapter discusses the changing position of M in the MI6 institution. The other one presents M's discourse in terms of his/her managerial duties and responsibilities, and it arranges the considerations according to three categories: M orders, M criticizes, and M cares.

M's discourse is multidimensional, and so may be its analyses. To their surprise, the sociolinguistically oriented authors of the present book have found it an inspiring research source. Hopefully, the reader, whether a researcher or a Bond stories fan, will find the results of this work inspiring as well.

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The Discourse of M różni się od książek, które do tej pory napisano na temat serii filmów o agencji 007. To nie główny bohater – James Bond – jest przedmiotem zainteresowania autorów, lecz M – osoba będąca szefem brytyjskiego wywiadu (MI6) i zwierzchnikiem Bonda. W postać M wciela się trzech aktorów (Bernard Lee, Robert Brown i Ralph Fiennes) i jedna aktorka (Judith Dench), a każda z tych osób stwarza wyjątkową kreację szefa MI6, reprezentując różne style zarządzania, co ma odzwierciedlenie w języku. To właśnie stało się przedmiotem dociekań badaczy – dyskurs M. Książka ma charakter pracy naukowej. Socjolingwistyczną i pragmatyczną analizę materiału badawczego (wypowiedzi M) poprzedza teoretyczna podbudowa dotycząca dyskursu instytucjonalnego, krytycznej analizy dyskursu, koncepcji władzy i aspektów pragmatycznych – aktów mowy i uprzejmości. Część badawczą rozpoczyna analiza pozycji M jako szefa wywiadu na przestrzeni lat, na podstawie wypowiedzi bohaterów w różnych konfiguracjach – M-Bond, M-zwierzchnicy czy M o sobie. Dalej obserwujemy, jak zmienia się dyskurs M w poszczególnych odcinkach serii. Jako manager, M wydaje rozkazy, dokonuje oceny i dba o zachowanie najwyższych standardów i swych podwładnych. Książka przedstawia, w jaki sposób każdy z czterech M realizuje swoje managerskie zadania, jaka jest specyfika języka każdego z nich i w jaki sposób za pomocą języka realizują oni swoje cele, a tym samym cele MI6.

The Discourse of M differs from the books written about the 007 series so far. It is not the main character – James Bond – who is the matter of concern for the authors, but M – the head of MI6 and Bond's supervisor. Three actors (Bernard Lee, Robert Brown, Ralph Fiennes) and one actress (Judith Dench) impersonate M, and each of them makes a unique creation of the MI6 head, representing different management styles, which are reflected in language. This becomes the subject for investigation – the discourse of M. The book is of scientific character. A sociolinguistic and pragmatic analysis of the corpus (M's utterances) is preceded by theoretical background concerning institutional discourse, critical discourse analysis, the concept of power and selected pragmatic aspects – speech acts and politeness. The research part begins with an analysis of M's position in MI6 throughout years based on the characters' encounters in various configurations – M-Bond, M-supervisors or M about him/herself. Then, one can observe how the discourse of M changes in particular episodes of the series. As a manager, M orders, assesses and cares for the highest standards and the operatives. The book presents how each of Ms realises their managerial duties, what the specificity of their language is, and how they pursue their goals and the goals of MI6 by means of language.

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