

# LIQUID PROSPERITY: THE CZECH STATE AND LG.PHILIPS DISPLAYS

**Jakub Macek**

VŠB – Technical University of Ostrava  
Masaryk University, Brno

**Kateřina Škařupová**

Masaryk University, Brno

**Vít Kouřil**

Masaryk University, Brno

## ABSTRACT

*The article presents a discourse analysis of media coverage of an unsuccessful foreign investor, the case of LG.Philips Displays Holding v. the Czech state. We analyze media coverage of the case from 2000 when the investor decided to start production in the Czech Republic until 2006 when the investor went bankrupt. Our method of analysis is based on Foucault's understanding of discourse and his theoretical conceptualization of discourse analysis. It emphasizes the structural rather than the linguistic level of discourse and also draws on Gerbner's message system analysis and de Gruyter's method of tracking discourse. We analyzed almost 700 articles published in two Czech print dailies and two weeklies and found a significant bias in the Czech print media since a very strong politicization of the case was typical of its media coverage. The discourse of party politics emerged in connection with the government's investment incentive policy. The arrival of Philips was presented as a result of successful government policy while other important factors were underestimated. Moreover, media uncritically replicated the government's official discourse. This applies particularly to the first years when party political themes and an uncritical view of the investor forced out the economic/analytical discourse. The media rarely took into account risks associated with foreign investment or the decline of the traditional (CRT) TV screen market. In addition, the media stereotypically labelled actors involved in disputes with LG.Philips Displays.*

## KEYWORDS

*Czech press – foreign investments – discourse analysis – tracking discourse – discursive formation – thematic structure*

Our study deals with the nation state, however, not in its role of the regulator of economic activities on its territory, but as one of the many players that attempt to maintain rather than lose their position in the competition for foreign investment. The nation state attempts to negotiate conditions that would be profitable for the investor and at the same time acceptable for the state itself while the negotiations do not take into account critical prognoses proposed by economists and social scientists. Since the second half of the 1990s this description applies to the case of the Czech Republic. In this article we concentrate on how this state of affairs (unsettling for the nation and its political elites)

is/is not questioned in selected Czech print media. We also explore how the media reflect upon the risky, unstable – to use Zygmunt Bauman’s (2000) words – liquid relationship between the nation state and the foreign investor.

This article is based on research conducted within the Dioscuri<sup>1</sup> project and explores the media construction of the case surrounding LG.Philips Displays. The state supported this foreign investor in its launch of TV screen production (using investment incentives) amidst heightened media attention. However, despite the incentives the company went bankrupt and thus did not fulfil the expectations it once gave rise to.

In line with the project objectives our general aim in analyzing the media coverage of the Philips/LG.Philips Displays<sup>2</sup> case is to map the way in which selected Czech print media represent an (in the end) “unsuccessful” foreign investor. We thus attempt to explore how Czech media construct the image of those foreign or supranational economic actors who enter our “domestic” space from “outside” and in the end do not fulfil expectations they gave rise to.<sup>3</sup> In this article we show that the initial very positive image later turned to a rather negative one. Due to this we modified the original criteria of the Dioscuri project and decided to work with qualitative as well as quantitative methods of data collection and analysis. When analyzing the sample of texts dealing with the Philips/LG.Philips Displays case during six years (2000–2006) we opted for a qualitative discourse analysis in order to reconstruct the development of the case in the selected media and identify the thematic structure that characterizes them. We propose a critically oriented discourse analysis,<sup>4</sup> critical in the sense that we explicitly concentrate on the strategy of control and delimitation of discourse (strategies of legitimization, silencing of themes and labelling/stereotyping of actors).

We devote a large part of our text to a diachronic analysis of developments in the media construction of the case from the first news about the possible launch of a Philips factory in the Czech Republic in 2000 to news about the stabilization of the plant in Hranice after it was abandoned when LG.Philips Displays went bankrupt at the beginning of 2006 (see table 2 for a summary of events). Before moving on to the analysis which runs along a temporal as well as a thematic line of the evolving discourse we briefly discuss our theoretical framework as well as concepts and terms which are crucial for our analysis. We rely mostly on the work of Michel Foucault, George Gerbner, Aldin de Gruyter, Norman Fairclough, Teun A. van Dijk and others.

## 1. Theoretical and methodological framework

As already mentioned we selected qualitative methods for data (texts) collection and opted for a critically oriented discourse analysis. The term discourse analysis denotes a whole

---

1 Dioscuri Project (Eastern Enlargement – Western Enlargement: Cultural Encounters in the European Economy and Society after the Accession) – is a research project under the 6th framework programme of the European Commission. For further details see <http://dioscuriproject.net/>.

2 As we will see the investor’s identity has changed in time. The government’s investment incentives were awarded to the Dutch company Philips which also embarked on the building of the factory. However, later it founded the holding LG.Philips Displays together with the Korean company LG.

3 Other examples of “unfulfilled expectations” include, for example, the cases of Flextronics (a Singaporean investor that closed its factory in Brno in 2002 and had to hand the investment incentives back) and Aero Vodochody (a Czech aircraft manufacturer which was joined by Boeing as a strategic partner yet after a few years its share had to be bought up by the Czech state).

4 I.e. not critical discourse analysis as understood e.g. by Fairclough (1992, 1995, 2003) and van Dijk (1985). We explore the issue further in the latter sections of the article.

range of critical as well as non-critical analytical approaches that use various theoretical and methodological frameworks and vary from linguistic methods through ethno-methodological and sociolinguistic conversation analysis and discourse analysis to sociological, political and economic and generally theoretical approaches. From this wide range of possible approaches to discourse analysis that tend to differ mainly in the degree to which they stress the role of detailed linguistic analysis of texts and language we selected a method that is concerned primarily with the structural level of discourse as opposed to the linguistic one though the latter is probably the most frequent approach, characteristic of conversation analysis as well as of critical discourse analysis as understood by Fairclough (cf. Fairclough 1992, 1995, 2003).<sup>5</sup>

Following Altheide and Grimes (2005) as well as de Gruyter (2002) we use the method of *tracking discourse* which can be characterized as “following certain issues, words, themes, and frames over a period of time, across different issues, and across different news media” (Altheide – Grimes 2005: 625). We intended this method primarily as a tool for the preliminary mapping of the subject of research and for sample selection. However, the method of tracking discourse has proved to be a reliable method of analysis as well as of the interpretation of findings already in previous research on the accession of the Czech Republic to the European Union conducted under the Dioscuri project.

We considered it desirable to supplement the method of tracking discourse with other analytical approaches based on a more detailed definition of discourse and its characteristics, drawing upon Foucault’s understanding of discourse. Our discourse analysis is very close to what Gerbner (1985) terms *message system analysis*, a method stressing thematic/ structural characteristics rather than the linguistic level of discourse. Gerbner describes message system analysis as follows:

The analysis extracts from the discourse its basic presentation of elements of existence, importance, value, and relationship, and then re-aggregates these elements into larger patterns along lines of investigative purpose. The analysis pivots on the reliable determination of these elements and is limited to clearly perceived and reliably coded items. That limitation does not mean that message system analysis pays attention only to surface structure cues (words, etc.) of discourses. Nor does it leave out the semantic, pragmatic, and other systematically accessible dimensions of messages. It only means that, unlike artistic and literary criticism of a traditional kind, useful for the purpose of revealing personal interpretation and unique insight, message system analysis deals with the common elements of discourse such as thematic distribution, propositional context, characterization

---

5 Clearly, Fairclough does not reduce discourse to a linguistic phenomenon. He builds his *textually oriented discourse analysis* (TODA) as a method that synthesizes features of ethno-methodological conversation analysis (which, however, in his view omits the power dimension of conversation; cf. Fairclough 1992: 19), critical linguistics (yet according to him it is text-centred and disregards the active character of interpretation and reduces analysis to a grammatical one; cf. *ibid.*: 25–29), Michel P cheux’s discourse analysis (influenced by Althusser) (cf. *ibid.*: 30–34) and Foucault’s theory of discourse (according to Fairclough it lacks an interest in the text itself and in language as such and tends to exaggerate the power of discourse; cf. *ibid.*: 37, 56–59). Taking into account these three sources of inspiration Fairclough proposes a three-dimensional model of discourse (*ibid.*: 73–96), according to him discourse has a textual dimension, a dimension of discursive praxis (production, distribution and consumption) and a dimension of social praxis (the power and ideological dimension of discourse). TODA, however, understands discourse primarily as a linguistic entity.

and action structure, social typing, fate (success, failure) of character types, and other reliably identifiable representations and configurations.

(Gerbner 1985: 17)

We understand discourse in a Foucauldian sense (Foucault 1971, 2002) as a description of (a certain segment of) the world that can be characterized as a set of utterances subjected to the same regulations of occurrence and thus belonging to the same discursive formation. Discourses are unstable and changeable in time (that is why they should be analyzed diachronically), they influence each other, overlap and in many cases their boundaries are rather unclear. The understanding of these boundaries as objectively existing and thus identifiable is problematic in principle and in our case irrelevant as we approach discourse as a concept that enables the understanding and classification of the symbolic order structuring institutions and actions (cf. Giddens 1976) rather than as an entity *per se*.

Foucault's understanding of discourse analysis differs significantly from the linguistically oriented critical discourse analysis in that it embodies the search for a discursive formation in the sense of a set of regulations/regularities that link individual utterances and also involves the identification of the order in which these regularities manifest themselves and which determines the emergence and character of further utterances (Foucault 2002). Thus the regulations of a discourse formation are a basic characteristic/distinguishing feature of discourse (i.e. utterances that are subject to various regulations belong to various discourses) and at the same time they incorporate the power dimension of discourse stressed by Foucault. The regulations of discourse formation are a function of the control over the production and dissemination of discourse – to put it briefly they determine who is allowed to speak about what, with what claim to the truth, whom they can talk to and in whose name (at the same time they exclude some speakers, some topics/themes, some listeners and some claims to the right to be heard).

We can thus predict that the majority of discourses in western democracies are characterized by a number of identical regulations of discursive formations (speakers, listeners as well as claims to the right to be heard are constant to a certain extent).<sup>6</sup> Media discourses differ among themselves primarily at the thematic level as this level influences the identity of a discourse most and at the same time it enables us to distinguish among discourses. That is why we believe that when analyzing contemporary mass media coverage it is important to concentrate above all on the *thematic structure of discourse*, its identification can possibly lead us to an exploration of the specific character of other regulations of the given formation.<sup>7</sup>

---

6 This is related to cultural and political variables that we can term the normative “ideal of free and democratic press” (they include the concepts of media freedom and objective news reporting reflected in demands for the truthfulness of media discourses as well as concepts of the public and public dialogue which grant all the members of the public the right to follow and participate in a discourse). It is also related to factors that make this normative ideal more complex yet can be considered general characteristics of western media such as shared news values, questioning of the actual independence of media, one-way nature of mass communication and the status of the journalist as a professional speaker. These latter variables adjust the above mentioned normative ideal in the sense that they very effectively promote a certain type of agenda (in terms of themes) and a certain type of speakers.

7 T. A. van Dijk (1985) also wrote about the thematic structure of media discourse in the 1980s. Yet, we do not share a common ground with him in terms of what the thematic structure of a discourse is and how it relates to discourse as van Dijk – who prefers a socio-cognitive approach to discourse – defines the thematic structure

The basic units of the thematic structure are *topics* – constituent motives, events, people etc. – linked into a *theme*, it is, however, more than a sum total of constituent topics.<sup>8</sup> Typically a theme (which has a similar status to Foucault's *event*, see Foucault 1971: 23) has the character of a narrative and a value-laden, attitudinal dimension while the same topics can become elements of different themes.<sup>9</sup> Thus at the thematic level a discursive formation is defined by a set of individual themes and relationships among them (in exceptional cases we can also find monothematic discourses).

In the following we attempt to reconstruct the events involving Philips (or later the LG. Philips Displays holding) as they were symbolically constructed in selected media from 2000 to 2006. Further we aim to identify how themes of discourse/s come into existence with the emergence of new topics, how old themes disappear and eventually re-appear in discourse/s. We are also interested in uncovering the regulations governing mutual relationships among the themes of the same discursive formation (i.e. identifying a set of identical regulations that determine the emergence of utterances), this will enable us to distinguish between the emergence of a single discourse and a number of discourses as in the latter case the regulations guiding these discourses are not identical. We believe that this distinction helps us achieve a better understanding of the development and changes in the media construction of the case.

In order to emphasize the specific character of some themes we describe them as *conflicts*, these themes display a significantly conflictual character. Due to this characteristic they enter media agendas easier (cf. McGregor 2002) and thus play a very important role in discourse although they often contribute to the creation of a discursive formation only over a limited period of time. Conflicts provide a discourse with easy access to the media, they also enrich it with new topics which, as our analysis shows, often lead to the creation of new (albeit non-conflictual) themes.

Building upon Foucault's methodological criteria and principles of discourse analysis<sup>10</sup> our analysis is diachronic and involves a contextualization of events and actors (what happened, when, which key actors), an analysis of the discourses dealing with particular events (strategies and figures used by the discourses, their transformation, competition of discursive events) as well as examples of the analyzed texts/discourses. In this version of our study we have shortened the section that provides examples from our sample of texts (and thus enables a detailed insight into our approach) in order to concentrate on our findings.

---

(superstructure) as a hierarchy of thematic abstraction units which are a manifestation of the author's/reader's pragmatics rather than a distinct feature which distinguishes one discourse from another (in fact van Dijk only refers to discourse in the singular, this clearly indicates how different his approach is from ours).

- 8 The distinction between topics and themes was made by Eco, as quoted in Bílek (2003: 101–103).
- 9 The topics of taxes, incomes and pensions can thus also become components of the theme “flexible taxation and contributions to the pension system as an expression of solidarity” as well as of the theme “flexible taxation and pension contributions that disadvantage people with higher incomes discriminate against the successful and the hard working”.
- 10 See Foucault (1971: 21–24). We aim to subject the analysis itself to Foucault's criteria. His methodological criteria are the following: *principle of reversal*, *principle of discontinuity*, *principle of specificity* (“discourse as a violence that we do to the things”, *ibid*: 22) and *principle of exteriority* (which “holds [...],[while] taking the discourse itself, its appearance and its regularity, we should look for its [discourse's] external conditions of existence, for that which gives rise to the chance series of these events and fixes its limits.” *ibid*). The principles of discourse analysis involve the concepts of *event* (as opposed to creation; discursive events come to existence in homogeneous yet discontinuous series), *series* (as opposed to unity), *regularity* (as opposed to originality) and *possible conditions of existence* (as opposed to signification). (*ibid*)

## 2. Analyzed media and texts

Our sample selection was understandably influenced by the requirements of the Dioscuri project. We opted for four national broadsheet print media (two dailies, two weeklies):

- **Právo** – national daily newspaper with a general thematic agenda
- **Hospodářské noviny (HN)** – national daily newspaper focused on economic issues
- **Týden** – national weekly paper with a general thematic agenda
- **Euro** – national weekly paper

Since the Dioscuri project concentrated on the comparison of forms of economic knowledge in new and old EU member states apart from print media with a general agenda we also included a weekly and a daily devoted to economic issues. In contrast with the project’s planned sample selection we decided not to include television news. This decision reflects our methodological concerns, in order for an analysis of television discourse to be meaningful it should also include a visual analysis of content. However, after careful consideration we decided that a visual analysis would constitute a significant challenge in a study that already demanded a very specific methodology.

Our analysis explores the media coverage of almost six years of the activities of Philips (respectively LG.Philips Displays) in the Czech Republic starting with the year 2000 when the then Prime Minister Miloš Zeman disclosed the information that Philips was in negotiations with the Czech government about possible investment and ending with the year 2006 when LG.Philips Displays withdrew from the Czech Republic after it went bankrupt. During the years 2000–2006, 673 articles were published in the four media under scrutiny (see table 1), of these we use 168 for the analysis. The selection of particular articles was driven by the need to find articles that function as “primary comments” in the discourses, i.e. illocutions developing and transforming the discourses (“bringing something new”), rather than those operating as “secondary comments” (discursive “epigones” repeating already existing structures without further developing the discourse).<sup>11</sup>

table 1: Number of published articles – Philips / LG.Philips Displays, years 2000–2006

Year	Count
2000	109
2001	222
2002	87
2003	97
2004	53
2005	59
2006	47
<b>Total</b>	<b>673</b>

11 For more on commentary (which is a text developing the “original” text) see Foucault (1994: 12–14). Commentary, one of the procedures of internal control over discourse, limits the randomness of discourse in that it opens up new discursive regularities. In line with Foucault we consider it important to distinguish between two types of commentaries. *Primary commentary* is characterized by its innovativeness as opposed to the already uttered (for example, it re-formulates existing themes and enriches them with new topics, it enlarges the thematic structure) and in an extreme case it becomes a new primary text (and thus the basis of a new discourse) while



The media interest in the case was mainly motivated by the sum of the investment (this case involved the second largest foreign investment of its time) as it was a source of major expectations related to the investor's influence on the domestic economy and also the fact that the history of the plant in Hranice from the very beginning involved more or less serious problems (as a consequence topics and themes which were conflictual in character became part of the media agenda easier – and that in news as well as current affairs).

### 3. Analysis

One of the aims of discourse analysis is to achieve a comprehensive understanding of a discourse in the context of its creation and to detect its regulations/regularities. This is a valid aim also in the exploration of the story of the plant in Hranice since its launch in 2000. Before moving on to our analysis, in order to make our account more comprehensible we summarize the unfolding of events and discourses in table 2. We placed themes that form part of the thematic structure of the discursive formation on a time line next to “actual” events.<sup>12</sup>

table 2: Events in dates and the temporal distribution of themes of discourse

Events	Themes/topics
<b>February 2000:</b> Prime Minister Miloš Zeman informed about the intention of Philips to build a factory employing 3,200 people manufacturing high value added electronic components.	a) <b>CONFLICT:</b> Prime Minister Miloš Zeman revealed the company's identity before the contract was signed, contrary to the policy of anonymity advocated by the CzechInvest Agency.
<b>February 2000:</b> The Czech parliament passed a law on investment incentives for major investors.	b) <b>THEME: New (and successful) state policy of investment incentives.</b>
<b>March 2000:</b> Philips to build a TV screen factory in Hranice, a location preferred to Koprivnice and other 65 locations. According to the Ministry of Industry and Trade the second largest factory manufacturing traditional TV screens (8 million a year) should create 3,250 workplaces and Philips should invest € 600 million.	c) <b>THEME:</b> Competition for investment among Central European countries, especially Czech Republic, Poland, Slovakia and Hungary.
	d) <b>THEME: Enthusiasm and expectations.</b> e) <b>THEME: Foreign know-how, research and development, Czech economics and Czech business culture.</b>
	k) <b>CONFLICT: Competition with the domestic TV screen producer Tesla</b> (at the time non-conflictual as it does not include the topic of unfair competition). n) <b>TOPIC: CRT screens v. liquid crystal displays</b>

*secondary commentary* is characterized by the repetition of the already uttered, a repetitive development of the existing discourse. When exploring the development and changes of discourse or its transformation into new discourses it is understandably more fruitful to scrutinize primary commentaries which are identified during the scanning and first reading of the whole sample of analyzed texts.

12 I.e. apart from a summary of events that does not follow the order of the analyzed discourse and its thematic priorities but rather lists all events that we consider relevant for the reader's understanding of the case.

<p><b>June 2000:</b> The government's CzechInvest Agency was awarded the prize for the best European agency supporting foreign investment. The Czech government and Philips signed a memorandum of understanding regarding the construction of the Philips Picture Tube Technology Centre in Hranice and an investment of € 200 million.</p>	
<p><b>September 2000:</b> Philips began the construction of the factory. The main building company is the Czech IPS Třinec and 70% of the construction work is undertaken by Czech companies.</p>	
<p><b>October 2000:</b> Disputes surrounding the purchase of land owned by Markéta Regecová became public. Mrs. Regecová disagreed with the price of 100 CZK/m<sup>2</sup> offered by the city of Hranice. In the coming months the dispute between the city/state and Mrs. Regecová's lawyers worsened.</p>	<p><b>f) CONFLICT / AUTONOMOUS DISCOURSE:</b> Representatives of the city of Hranice forced landowners to sell land for a very low price (105 CZK/m<sup>2</sup>). One of the owners, Mrs. Regecová, refused the offer arguing that it was inadequate, consequently the Czech government exercised pressure on her. After two years she won the legal battle.</p> <p><b>g) THEME: Public interest v. expropriation of private property.</b></p>
<p><b>February 2001:</b> The police president's deputy Václav Jakubík visited Mrs. Regecová and tried to convince her to sell her land.</p>	
<p><b>April 2001:</b> The Prime Minister wished that Czech Republic had "more of Philips and fewer people of the Regecová kind".</p>	
<p><b>March 2001:</b> The government proposed an amendment on the expropriation of private land in public interest, such land would include industrial zones like that in Hranice.</p>	
<p><b>July 2001:</b> Philips and Regecová agreed on the sale of the land despite objections raised by representatives of Hranice. Officially she is to be paid CZK 5 million while there are rumours about the payment of ca. CZK 25 million.</p>	
<p><b>July 2001:</b> In the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of the year Philips announced a loss of over € 770 million as opposed to the profit of € 3.6 billion in the previous year, ascribing it to the decreasing demand for mobile phones, semi-conductors and television sets.</p>	
<p><b>July 2001:</b> Philips Display Components and the South Korean LG. Electronics created a holding LG.Philips Displays with 50:50 share. The company controls a quarter of the world's market with colour screens.</p>	<p><b>h) TOPIC:</b> Fusion of L.G. Electronics and Philips.</p>
<p><b>July 2001:</b> Building machinery and materials were stolen from the construction site in Hranice.</p>	
<p><b>August 2001:</b> The Czech company Tesla Ecimex from Rožnov pod Radhoštěm, a manufacturer of colour TV sets, alerted to the fact that Philips would be manufacturing competing goods in Hranice and thus the company will experience economic drawbacks.</p>	
<p><b>September 2001:</b> The police identified the man who made a phone call in which he threatened to detonate four explosives in the completed factory.</p>	



<p><b>11 September 2001:</b> The LG.Philips Displays factory was officially opened. The director of the Czech branch of Philips Jon Richters stated that Philips had never mentioned an investment of € 600 million. According to him the investment will be determined by changes in demand.</p>	
<p><b>December 2001:</b> According to the mayor of Hranice the second phase of the factory construction started, the two new factory buildings will house three assembly lines. The third phase should be completed in 2007 with the total annual capacity of 8 million screens.</p>	
<p><b>April 2002:</b> Instead of the Dutch Jon Richters the plant is to be led by the Korean Jeong Il Son. The weekly Euro alerted to possible disputes between the Dutch and Korean managements.</p>	
<p><b>September 2002:</b> The factory in Hranice produced 2.5 million screens and employed 1,270 people in its first year of operation.</p>	
<p><b>September 2002:</b> The Supreme Audit Office found that the city of Hranice made errors in the payment of investment incentives.</p>	
<p><b>March 2003:</b> Philips stored thousands of faulty TV screens in the open air to the dislike of locals.</p>	<p>i) CONFLICT: Faulty screens stored in the open air.</p>
<p><b>April 2003:</b> The factory halts production on one of the three assembly lines for two weeks due to decreased sales.</p>	<p>j) CONFLICT: Cuts in mid-2003.</p>
<p><b>May 2003:</b> The factory interrupted production on all assembly lines for a few weeks, media began to question the total sum of investment and the positive impact of investment incentives.</p>	<p>k) CONFLICT: Competition with the domestic producer of TV screens Tesla.</p>
<p><b>September 2003:</b> According to specialists from the Ecological Legal Service (Ekologický právní servis, EPS) the factory in Hranice did not have a program for the prevention of industrial accidents and it also lacked insurance for liability of damage caused by industrial accidents. Its production was thus illegal, EPS sues the factory.</p>	<p>l) CONFLICT / AUTONOMOUS DISCOURSE: Illegal production in the plant – no program for the prevention of industrial accidents, the plant was not inspected properly and passed as fit for occupancy (confirmed accusations).</p>
<p><b>February 2004:</b> The plant gained the required documents and the inspection before occupancy began.</p>	
<p><b>March 2004:</b> The plant passed the inspection and ended pilot production.</p>	
<p><b>June 2004:</b> EPS sued the Regional Authority in Olomouc and officials at the Ministry of the Environment because they issued a so-called integrated permit for the plant in Hranice. However, according to EPS officials only inspected 3% of the production lines and thus the inspection was invalid.</p>	
<p><b>January 2005:</b> Media voiced doubts whether LG.Philips Displays actually invested the claimed amount in the Czech Republic or whether, like other companies in the EU, it cheated.</p>	
<p><b>April 2005:</b> The City Court in Prague acknowledged the objections made by EPS related to the factory inspection and confirmed that until then the company was producing illegally.</p>	

<p><b>May 2005:</b> LG.Philips Displays founded a technology centre in Hranice, the third of its kind in the world after Guma and Eindhoven. By the end of 2007 LG.Philips Displays should employ 1,800 people otherwise it would have to return some of the investment incentives to the state.</p>		
<p><b>June 2005:</b> The Ministry of Environment revoked the plant's integrated permit when it uncovered further administrative errors.</p>		
<p><b>September 2005:</b> Four civil servants are charged with breaking the law in connection with the inspection of the plant.</p>		
<p><b>1 November 2005:</b> The daily <i>Hospodářské noviny</i> published a short piece about LG.Philips Displays terminating its production of traditional TV screens in Europe.</p>		
<p><b>January 2006:</b> LG.Philips Displays holding announced bankruptcy, the Czech government attempts to secure production with the help of bank loans/a strategic partner. The plant continues production, its future will be decided by the official receiver.</p>	<p><b>m) CONFLICT: Bankruptcy.</b></p> <p><b>n) THEMES: CRT screens v. liquid crystal displays.</b></p>	<p><b>Return of the older themes:</b></p>
<p><b>March 2006:</b> The competing manufacturer of traditional TV screens TCT Ecimex from Rožnov pod Radhoštěm filed for bankruptcy. According to the management with state aid similar to that granted to LG. Philips it could have successfully competed with Asian producers for another few years and employ more than 1,000 people.</p>	<p><b>o) CONFLICT: Will we save the plant and the jobs?</b></p>	<p>f) CONFLICT: Mrs. Regecová v. Hranice.</p> <p><b>k) CONFLICT: Competition with the domestic producer of TV screens Tesla.</b></p>

As the summary suggests in the analyzed media the main discourse of the case developed at certain points in time and it did not include all the events surrounding the Philips/LG.Philips case. This suggests that the way discourse works with themes is clearly selective (towards the end conflictual, personalized themes dominate and that either extremely positive ones – at the beginning of the case – or negative ones) while it is perhaps not surprising that the selection of highlighted themes is in line with what is termed news values (cf. cCombs – Shaw 1977, McGregor 2002). This is evident in the “silencing” of discourse in the period after 11 September 2001 when the plant in Hranice was officially opened at the presence of the Prime Minister Miloš Zeman, a keen promoter of the investment, however, given the events in the USA the topic was overlooked in the news agenda.

It is interesting that some of the themes flow through the whole story (they first appear as a simple, isolated topic, later they develop into independent themes or even an autonomous discourse), yet the majority of them appear only for a limited period of time. We think that there is space to further develop the typology of themes and to explore the gradual sedimentation of some themes in constituent topics that feed later themes.

### 3.1. Thematic structure of the discourse(s)

We divided the development of discourses into four periods in order to make the article more accessible and emphasize the changes in discourse over time. Briefly, in the period

under scrutiny, the story of the plant in Hranice changes from sheer enthusiasm about the investor's decision and criticism of all those who questioned the project to a gradual sobering up and questioning of the investor's activities, a development that culminates when the investor goes bankrupt. In the following sections we summarize the development of discourses and identify breaking points. A table listing the key topics of individual themes supplements our account.

### **Negotiating Philips production in the Czech Republic (the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2000)**

**The introduction to the case (beginning of 2000)** provides an entry point for the soon prevalent uncritical optimism. The discourse that we reconstruct in this article is framed by three themes (table 3) and it came into existence in the first quarter of 2000 when media announced that Philips was considering production in the Czech Republic while this originally confidential information was "given away" by the Prime Minister Miloš Zeman (table 3). The media labelled Zeman's conduct inappropriate or even controversial.

At the end of February, the time of further government negotiations with Philips, the Senate passed a law on investment incentives which, as the local media suggested, was unique among post-communist countries. At the beginning Philips considered the possibility of launching production in the Czech Republic, Hungary or in Poland. Later, at the end of March, Philips was to make a decision between two locations in the Czech Republic: Hranice na Moravě and Kopřivnice. The decision that the plant should be built in Hranice was made at the very end of March.

The government's CzechInvest agency played a key role in the negotiations and the entry of Philips to the Czech market was significantly supported by investment incentives. The signing of the contract with Philips was presented as the success of Zeman's government and an example of attracting a major foreign investor.

At this point the dominant view on the case unfolded from the nationally oriented argument that the entry of a major investor is – according to the discourse – motivated by the unique law on investment incentives and at the same time the fact that the Czech Republic is structurally highly developed. In other words Philips confirmed how developed "our" legal and economic systems were (the Czech Republic is described as more successful than the neighbouring post-communist countries). The media described the government's measures as the main reason for the entry of the investor:

*Ten years of tax exemptions, duty-free import of technologies, subsidies on the re-qualification of employees and on the creation of new jobs decided that the electronic and electrical concerns Philips and Matsushita and the American Tyco Electronics will invest hundreds of millions of dollars only in the Czech Republic.*

(HN, 30. 3. 2000) <sup>13</sup>

This is a very important point in the discourse – the causal link between the government's activities, the entry of an investor and "our" future prosperity is, on the one hand, one of the conditions of the investor's discursive immunity (present from then on) and at the same time one of the important sources of the politicization of discourse.

13 *Desetileté daňové prázdny, bezcelní dovoz technologií, příspěvky na rekvalifikace či vytvoření pracovních míst rozhodly o tom, že elektronické a elektrotechnické koncerny Philips a Matsushita a americká Tyco Electronics investují právě v Česku stovky miliónů dolarů.*

*Zeman's administration achieved significant successes in the enticement of productive capital. [...] These advances help curb unemployment and together with pro-export policies improve the trade balance. "The main reasons are the investment incentives, and the radical change of the government's approach to foreign investors," confirms Jan Filáček, an analyst at Investiční a poštovní banka.*

(Právo, 7. 4. 2000)<sup>14</sup>

The articles often repeat the view that the incentives (viewed as an indication that the government "has finally understood the situation") are a decisive factor which made Philips opt for the Czech Republic. We find two tendencies in these arguments that appear in media texts from the beginning of the case: 1) in fact *there is no discussion about the potential risks that follow from the entry of a foreign investor* (the only consequences that are mentioned are ones with positive connotations e.g. thousands of new jobs and millions that should be invested) and 2) *topics are selected in a way that take into account the domestic political situation and due to this the discourse acquires a political/party character rather than an economic/analytical one.* Thus from a critical point of view the analyzed media clearly (and surprisingly) acted in an opportunistic way, this is most evident in the case of Pravda which till the end of the case consistently defended the government's standpoint.

The gist of the argumentation about the benefits of investment incentives is evidently tautological in character: if the refusal of incentives by previous governments is described as a mistake then the entry of Philips is a good move; the fact that we "lured" Philips that will "invest billions of dollars" is proof that the incentives are fully acceptable and that their previous refusal significantly limited our possible progress.

table 3: Themes and topics 1

Theme	Key topics
<b>a) CONFLICT: Prime Minister Miloš Zeman revealed Philips' identity before the contract was signed, contrary to the policy of anonymity advocated by the CzechInvest Agency.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Miloš Zeman</li> <li>- government in negotiation with Philips</li> <li>- disclosure of confidential information about the investor</li> <li>- investors "shocked"</li> </ul>
<b>b) THEME: New (and successful) state policy of investment incentives.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Senate passes law on investment incentives</li> <li>- Philips to decide among Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland; opts for Czech Republic</li> <li>- Philips plans to invest USD 0.5 billion</li> <li>- the plant will provide 3,000 new jobs, further jobs</li> </ul>
<b>c) THEME: Competition for investment among Central European countries, especially Czech Republic, Poland, Slovakia and Hungary.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Philips to decide among Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland; opts for Czech Republic</li> <li>- Czech Republic competes for investment with other post-communist countries</li> <li>- investor's complex selection criteria</li> <li>- Czech Republic boasts an advanced infrastructure</li> </ul>

14 *Podstatných úspěchů dosáhla Zemanova vláda při lákání produktivního kapitálu.[...] Tento vývoj pomáhá brzdit nezaměstnanost a spolu s proexportní politikou zlepšuje obchodní bilanci. "Hlavním důvodem jsou investiční pobídky, zásadní změna přístupu vlády k zahraničním investorům," potvrzuje Jan Filáček, analytik Investiční a poštovní banky.*

### Philips is here – period of high expectations (2000–2001)

In the second phase of the case (in the years 2000 and 2001) the discourse is characterized above all by the already mentioned evident uncritical optimism, the investor's (key actor's) discursive immunity and silencing/denigration of its opponents.

The optimism, as already mentioned, stems from the argument that significant foreign investment will have a beneficial impact on the Czech economy and this recurring view is one of the building stones of the expected future developments. Among the benefits that the initially optimistic discourse develops and emphasizes within the individual themes are above all curbing unemployment, the sum of the investment and a better image of the Czech economy abroad. The potential benefits of the investment (and thus of investment incentives offered to Philips by the government) were significantly overestimated by the media yet they were implemented in the discourse – a number of texts from this period use the repeated discursive motive of the “*investing benefactor*” based on the repetition of “positive facts” and “the language of numbers” that legitimize the investor's immunity.

*In the next five years, the company plans to invest € 626 millions in the new factory producing colour TV screens. The plant is to be built in Hranice, north Moravia. The Ministry of Industry and Trade counts on the fact that during the next eight years Philips will create 3,250 direct and about 6,000 indirect new jobs. The planned capacity of the whole plant should exceed eight millions of TV screens per year, 95% of those for export. The estimated turnover of the new company in the first year is € 101 millions, in the next five years it should increase to € 626 millions.*

(HN, 29. 3. 2000)<sup>15</sup>

The use of this figure – characterized by the repetition of the promised number of new jobs and the unrealistic sum of the investment – then balances those texts that are not positive about the investor and thus weaken potential criticism connected with the case. From a linguistic point of view we should alert to the use of expressions such as “relies on that” (“počítá s tím”) and “should” (“by se měl”) as this modality acts as a backdoor in the argumentation – these expressions appear to refer to verified, explicit facts although in reality they merely express potential.

The general enthusiasm is legitimated using the strategy of *vox populi*, i.e. “illustrative” quotes from “normal people” (or, for example, the “frustrated administrator” or the “small businessman”). Nonetheless, this strategy alerts to a more general type of expectations, these are connected with the “expectations of others” rather than with actual commitments made by the investor, in other words we encounter the *third person effect*.<sup>16</sup> Quoting “normal people” establishes the agenda of “others’ general expectations” and gradually silences any of “my” doubts regarding potential risks.

15 *Firma hodlá během pěti let investovat 626 miliónů eur do výstavby nové továrny na výrobu barevných televizních obrazovek. Závod by měl stát v Hranicích na severní Moravě. MPO počítá s tím, že v horizontu osmi let vytvoří Philips 3250 přímých a zhruba 6000 nepřímých pracovních míst. Plánovaná kapacita celého závodu má přesáhnout osm miliónů televizních obrazovek ročně, 95 % půjde na vývoz. Odhad obratu nové společnosti v prvním roce výroby je 101 miliónů eur, během následujících pěti let by se měl vyšplhat až na 626 mil. eur.*

16 On the concept of the effect of a third person see White – Sheb 2000.

*"I worked for the local branch of Sigma for ten years. I was fired in the year before last and since then I haven't found another job. Philips is now a perfect chance even for me," Zdeněk Soukup revealed to Právo.*

*Nowadays, improving living standards are one of the commonly expected realities of life in the city. "It's great. Philips will relieve us of the fear of unemployment. When people have a job and a decent salary, they can have a decent life. I suppose that even the reputation of the town and the living standards will improve," Zuzana Kročilová told Právo.*

(Právo, 31. 3. 2000)<sup>17</sup>

The investor's position is further strengthened by the theme of foreign know-how – the investor brings along a positively connotated "Western style" which is constructed as desirable (media use the dichotomy of the developed West, embodied by Philips, and the under-developed, "Us"). It is at this point that *expert speakers*, economists, enter the discourse for the first time, these speakers base their rather abstract argument about Western know-how on their authority as experts.

*Economists expect that these companies will be looking for contractors among domestic companies, which will even contribute to the spread of business culture, believes Petr Zahradník, Conseq Finance. [...] Another contribution is foreign know-how and a company culture. Philips is valued due to its intended cooperation with Czech development centres and universities.*

(HN, 30. 3. 2000)<sup>18</sup>

This can be interpreted as an actual form of legitimization that strengthens Philips' discursive position and the more so as the text gives space to the views of the consultant economist. We will get back to the role of the expert in the discourse in further sections in relation to the entry of the Environmental Legal Service (Ekologický právní servis, EPS) into the story.

The rather complex construction of the *immunity* of Philips in the role of a central actor is reflected at the level of discourse control in the silencing or marginalization of topics, themes and speakers that would question its position.

This strategy is most evident in the theme which – thanks to its internal structure – soon turns into an *autonomous discourse*, the theme of the conflict between the city of Hraňovice/the state and Markéta Regecová (table 4) who refused to sell her land on which

17 – "Pracoval jsem deset let v místní Sigmě. Předloni jsem byl propuštěn a od té doby jsem o práci nezavádil. Philips je teď i pro mě perfektní šance," svěřil se [...] Zdeněk Soukup.

– Zvýšení životní úrovně patří nyní ve městě a jeho okolí k všeobecně očekávaným skutečnostem. "Je to super. Philips nás zbaví strachu z nezaměstnanosti. Když lidé mají práci a solidní výdělek, mohou solidně žít. Myslím, že se zvýší prestiž města i celková úroveň života v něm," sdělila Právu [...] Zuzana Kročilová.

18 Ekonomové očekávají, že tyto společnosti budou hledat své dodavatele mezi tuzemskými firmami, což bude mít i přínos na šíření podnikatelské kultury, domnívá se Petr Zahradník z Conseq Finance. [...] Přínosem by mělo být i zahraniční know-how a firemní kultura. U Philipsu se oceňuje i jejich plánovaná spolupráce s českými vývojovými centry a vysokoškolskými pracovišti.



the Philips plant was to be built. According to Regecová the price offered by the city was below the market price.

*Title: The Dutch Philips under threat, the construction of its new plant might be halted [...]*

(Title, Právo, 6. 10. 2000)

*“The reason is that the owner of two plots of land that form part of the industrial zone, refuses to sell these to the town, although according to the terms of a future contract she pledged to do so,” the mayor of Hranice, Rudolf Novák (ČSSD), informed journalists on Thursday.*

(Právo, 6. 10. 2000)<sup>19</sup>

The discourse denounces Regecová and at the same time minimum of space is devoted to her own utterances thus she becomes the antidote of the discursively constructed public interest i.e. prosperity guaranteed by a successful investor.

The majority of texts (above all in Právo) that deal with Regecová's case is characterized by a simple albeit rather apparent and relatively strong thematic structure: (1) Regecová, a greedy and unreliable individual (who according to media broke a preliminary agreement with the city of Hranice) threatens Philips, (2) price negotiations or the city and the state put pressure on Regecová while the texts often conclude with the figure of the “*investing benefactor*”. The thematic structure is supplemented with the (3) theme of the final price paid for the land and speculations about the actual agreement (the difference between the price offered by the city and the price demanded by Regecová was to be paid by Philips).

Developments in the coverage of the conflict involving Markéta Regecová refer to two more serious problems. First, they re-confirm that in their texts media not only set the (public) agenda (i.e. define the key topics of public debate) which they narrate (i.e. group topics into themes) but in some cases they apparently propose and defend clear-cut attitudes, however, they present these as facts (this applies particularly to news) and thus strengthen/weaken actual actors and legitimate/de-legitimate their actual interests.

Second, the coverage illustrates the situation when a new discourse is formed within an existing one (the discourse constructing the welcome arrival of Philips, a foreign investor, in the Czech Republic). The new discourse is in a way subordinated to the existing one because it never became completely autonomous. We can talk about a new discourse (or maybe a *subdiscourse* due to its subordination to the overarching discourse) when one of the constituent themes of the existing discourse begins to diversify internally and establishes its own thematic structure different from the structure of the original discourse (i.e. when it has its own regulations, its own discursive formation of which the thematic structure is a key element).

Another example of the regulation of discourse is the marginalization of undesirable utterances. This applies to the minimalization of the theme of direct and potentially unfair

<sup>19</sup> Title: *Nizozemskému koncernu Philips hrozí, že bude muset zastavit stavbu své nové továrny [...]*  
*“Důvodem je, že majitelka dvou pozemků, které protínají průmyslovou zónu, je odmítá městu prodat, přestože se k tomu zavázala ve smlouvě o budoucí smlouvě,” řekl ve čtvrtek novinářům hranický starosta Rudolf Novák (ČSSD).*

competition between Philips/LG.Philips Displays and the domestic TCT (Tesla). While the foreign investor makes use of investment incentives and at the time of its bankruptcy also of state aid the domestic manufacturer of in fact identical products does not get support from the state, the Czech state thus acts contrary to its own declared economic policy. This topic was present in the discourse basically from the very beginning of the case, however, it was fully developed into a theme only when the plant in Hranice went bankrupt. The negative connotation of this theme does not correspond to the initial optimism characteristic of the early phases.

The representation typical of this period uses the figure of “*investing benefactor*” and the strategy of silencing and delegitimizing critical or negative voices. It was not wholly abandoned even later when the first critical themes began to appear in the discourse as a result of emerging problems.

table 4: Themes and topics 2

Theme	Key topics
<p><b>d) THEME: Enthusiasm and expectations</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- fear of unemployment</li> <li>- Philips to create 3,250 new jobs directly and 6,000 indirectly</li> <li>- Philips to invest € 101 million in the first year and later further € 626 million</li> <li>- investor as a solution to unemployment and economic hardship</li> <li>- inhabitants of Hranice welcome the investor</li> <li>- prestigious Dutch/Western company</li> <li>- highly skilled Czech workforce</li> <li>- red tape</li> </ul>
<p><b>e) THEME: Foreign know-how, research and development, Czech economics and Czech business culture</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Philips pledges to found a research centre</li> <li>- Philips brings Western know how</li> <li>- Philips’ activities as a contribution to domestic business culture</li> <li>- economists (experts): Philips will help overcome “our” backwardness</li> <li>- “we” get closer to the European Union</li> <li>- Eastern v. Western culture</li> <li>- theft at Philips in Czech Republic</li> <li>- threat of explosion at Philips</li> </ul>
<p><b>f) CONFLICT / AUTONOMOUS DISCOURSE: Markéta Regecová refuses to sell her land at the offered price – dispute between the city (and the state) and a hairdresser</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- city v. Markéta Regecová</li> <li>- city buys up land for the plant</li> <li>- all sell their land</li> <li>- the only person refusing to sell the land for the offered price is Markéta Regecová</li> </ul>

	Themes of discourse	Topics
	1. Regecová is greedy and unreliable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- city offers 100–150 CZK/m<sup>2</sup></li> <li>- Regecová as the only one refuses the offered price</li> <li>- Regecová wants more for her land than others</li> <li>- Regecová has three lawyers</li> <li>- Regecová breaks the agreement</li> </ul>
	2. price negotiations or the city and the state put pressure on Regecová	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the city puts pressure on Regecová</li> <li>- Regecová is visited by a high-ranking police officer</li> <li>- Regecová is under BIS (state security services) surveillance</li> <li>- Prime Minister wishes “us all fewer people of Regecová’s kind”</li> </ul>
	3. final price and speculations about the actual contract	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- official price: CZK 5.2 million</li> <li>- speculation about the actual price of CZK 20 million</li> <li>- Philips supposed to pay the price difference</li> </ul>
<b>g) THEME: Public interest v. expropriation of private property</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- case of Regecová and the Hranice plant</li> <li>- public interest</li> <li>- expropriation of private property</li> <li>- possible change of law</li> <li>- possible broadening of the concept of public interest</li> <li>- industrial zones</li> </ul>	
	<b>h) TOPIC: Fusion of L.G. Electronics and Philips</b>	

### The plant is officially opened, production is under way yet ... (2002–2005)

The first more critical topics appear in the third phase of the case. The positive side of the media coverage reached its peak with the official opening of the plant in Hranice that by chance happened on 11 September 2001 (that is why in the media agenda it was overwhelmed by events in the United States). The following years 2002–2005 are basically characterized by a series of more or less serious problems and conflicts, during this period the initially uncritical media stance changed into a very critical one.

New, more critical themes that come into existence after the launch of production are initially concerned only with marginal problems experienced in the plant and by its owners but already at this point we can identify typical shifts in the discourse. The most significant problem apart from the already mentioned and recurrent unfair competition with the domestic television producer Tesla TCT from Rožnov pod Radhoštěm was the potentially environmentally harmful storing of faulty television screens in the open air, the lack of a program on the prevention of industrial accidents as required by law as well as the inspection of only a fragment of the production line (thus for three years the plant was running on a pilot scheme). The gradual transformation of the discourse is expressed, for example, in the fact that the theme of the open-air storage re-introduces the dichotomy of East v. West, this time, however, with the opposite conclusion, when the “Western” investor behaves in “our country” in a way that “would not be tolerated” in its home country.

In the second half of 2003 a new actor enters the discursive construction under our scrutiny and its arrival – similarly to that of Markéta Regecová's – leads to the creation of a new *autonomous (sub)discourse*. This new actor is the Environmental Legal Service (Ekologický právní servis, EPS) – a non-governmental organization that monitors breaches of the law and the legislative process – that has been highly critical of the Hranice plant project and sued the investor.

The emergence of the new discourse is preceded by serious allegations which EPS raises in 2003. At the time media treated EPS in a prejudiced manner, the allegations are referred to as a problem related to “environmental activists” or “ecologists”, the framing is clearly negative (distrustful) at the time:

*Title: According to ecologists, Philips' production of TV screens in Hranice is unlawful.*

*The ecologists accused the factory of the Dutch-Korean company LG.Philips Displays, which produces colour TV screens in Hranice, of disrespecting Czech laws for more than two years.*

(Právo, 20. 9. 2003)<sup>20</sup>

Media attitudes to EPS and the plant in Hranice, however, gradually change as other authorities and in the end the court itself also back criticism of Philips. Thus at the beginning of 2004 the discourse turns against LG.Philips Displays, it no longer refers to “ecologists”, rather EPS speakers are described as “lawyers”, the following extract, for example, does not conclude with a celebration of Philips as the *investing benefactor* but with criticism voiced by the non-governmental EPS:

*Title: Breaking the law pays for LG.Philips*

*Lawyers from Brno sued representatives of Hranice for their approach to the plant producing TV screens. [...] “This case indicates that the state gives in to strong transnational companies. It supports them with billions of crowns of investment incentives and as a bonus tolerates their disrespect for the law,” claims [...] Pavel Franc, EPS.*

(HN, 14. 1. 2004)<sup>21</sup>

The key to understanding the transformative force of the new actor lies in the fact that representatives of EPS are from the beginning described as *activists* but gradually – when their views gain support at the courts – they are acknowledged the status of *lawyers* and thus *expert speakers*.

From our point of view the difference between activists and lawyers is of key importance. An activist is the bearer of a particular attitude – moreover in the Czech context the term activist evokes negative connotations.<sup>22</sup> And the discourse depicts him as such,

20 Title: *Philips v Hranicích podle ekologů vyrábí obrazovky nelegálně / Ekologové obvinili továrnu nizozemsko-korejské firmy LG.Philips Displays, která v Hranicích na Přerovsku již dva roky vyrábí barevné televizní obrazovky, z nedodržování českých zákonů.*

21 Title: *Nedodržování zákona se LG.Philips vyplácí | Právníci z Brna podali trestní oznámení na úředníky radnice v Hranicích kvůli přístupu k továrně na výrobu obrazovek. [...] “Na tomto příkladu je jasně vidět, jak stát ustupuje silným nadnárodním společnostem. Podpoří je miliardami korun investičních pobídek a jako bonus jim dovolí obcházet zákony,” míní [...] Pavel Franc z EPS.*

22 We propose this statement about the negative representation of activists as a presumption. In terms of its validity

it does not refer to the “objective state of things” rather it represents one of the competing views.

In contrast, the expert (in this case a lawyer, in previous sections of this article e.g. an economist) is a measure of “objectivity”. The framing of the speaker as an *expert* is – and here we refer to Foucault’s “Orders of Discourse” (1971) – an element of control that limits the access of subjects to a certain specialized discourse and thus significantly increases a discourse’s claim to “truth” and the “truthfulness” and “trustworthiness” of the utterance. A lawyer enters our open media discourse from a specialist legal discourse (which can be validly implemented only by a lawyer as its valid representative) and brings with himself a claim to truth characteristic of the given expert area.<sup>23</sup> The expert speaker belongs to a particular specialist discursive community thus he does not speak from a subjective position – does not express personal “views”, “opinions” but speaks on behalf of a specialist field, a discipline.

The consequences are evident – within the framework of general media discourse the expert speaker’s utterances enjoy an a priori legitimacy and that is why it is crucial whom the discourse designates as an expert and whom it does not. It is interesting that the role of the expert is not guaranteed by membership in the community of the given specialist discourse, in the end it depends on the “willingness” of the open media discourse to accept the expert’s identity. Thus when the label of a speaker criticizing LG.Philips Displays gradually changes from an activist to a lawyer, the power of his words also alters – the activist’s subjective views become the lawyer’s objective assessment of the state of affairs.

Moreover, this change is partly due to a court decision entering the discourse as it represents legal discourse as such and thus, obviously, embodies its power. The court, acting from the position of a legitimate representative of legal discourse and its normativity, confirms the validity of the activist’s original statement and reinforces the claim of the Environmental Legal Service to legal discourse.

And exactly at the moment of the activist’s transformation into a lawyer, at the moment when legal discourse intervenes in one of the themes of the open media discourse of the LG.Philips Displays case we think it is appropriate to talk about the emergence of a new discourse – the constituent theme acquires its own regulations of a discursive formation that distinguish it from the parental discourse.

To summarize the above, this new discourse is important for two reasons. At the discursive level it is characterized not only by a change of thematic structure but also a slight shift at the level of another characteristic of a discursive formation (i.e. change of the status of a key actor and influence of the discourse of a specific discipline). Moreover, criticism of LG.Philips Displays as a main actor of our story is re-introduced into the main, general discourse of the whole case which further reinforces its increasingly conflictual nature.

---

it would, of course, be desirable to conduct a number of more detailed analyses of media discourses related to the theme of activism. Nonetheless, even if we put the negative connotation of activists (more precisely environmental activists) into quotation marks, the difference between the status of an activist (promoting a particular truth) and a lawyer (representing expert knowledge and thus the discourse of a discipline) is huge.

23 In his “Orders of Discourse” Foucault defines systems of control and delimitation of discourse as internal rules of control and apart from the principle of *author* (“the unifying principle in a particular group of writings or statements, lying at the origins of their significance, as the seat of their coherence”; Foucault 1971: 14) and the above mentioned principle of *commentary* (*ibid.*) he writes about the principle of the *organisation of disciplines*. “Disciplines constitute a system of control in the production of discourse” and adds that a discipline limits the randomness of discourse by defining its limits, groups of objects, methods and corpus of “true propositions” (propositions that form the basis of the claim to truth). (Foucault 1994: 17)

table 4: Themes and topics 3

Theme	Topics	
<b>i) CONFLICT: Faulty screens stored in the open air.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- plant stocks faulty screens in the open air</li> <li>- environmental danger</li> <li>- East v. West</li> </ul>	
<b>j) CONFLICT: Production cuts in mid-2003.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- LG.Philips Displays has problems with sales</li> <li>- LG.Philips Displays temporarily reduces production</li> <li>- other investors e.g. Thrall Vagónka Studénka are leaving the Czech Republic</li> <li>- planned € 600 million investment was a speculation</li> </ul>	
<b>k) CONFLICT: Competition with the domestic producer of TV screensTesla.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- sales crisis - stagnant CRT television market</li> <li>- Tesla TCT</li> <li>- relationship between Tesla and Philips/LG.Philips Displays</li> <li>- competition</li> <li>- unfair competition</li> </ul>	
<b>l) CONFLICT / AUTONOMOUS DISCOURSE: Illegal production in the plant – no program on the prevention of industrial accidents, the plant was not fully inspected and passed as fit for occupancy (the confirmed accusations)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- EPS activists- EPS alerts to illegal production</li> <li>- Dutch-Korean company</li> <li>- breaking the law</li> <li>- the investing benefactor</li> <li>- experts from the Faculty of Law</li> </ul>	
	Theme	Topics
	1. LG.Philips Displays breaks the law and profits from it	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- EPS lawyers</li> <li>- Pavel Franc from EPS</li> <li>- investment incentives</li> <li>- disrespect for the law</li> </ul>
	2. Inspection of the plant is under way albeit it is insufficient	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- inspection</li> <li>- lawyers from EPS</li> <li>- illegal production</li> <li>- only 3% of the production line inspected</li> <li>- Hranice civil servants</li> </ul>
	3. Court rules in favour of EPS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hranice civil servants' decision illegal</li> <li>- police halt the investigation</li> <li>- illegal production</li> <li>- environmentalist lawyers</li> </ul>
	4. Court rules in favour of EPS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the court revokes the plant's permit</li> <li>- investor and civil servants made mistakes</li> </ul>

**LG.Philips Displays goes broke or when the investor is going downhill everyone gives him a push (2006)**

The general discourse of the case undergoes a clear change only in the final phase of its existence (in 2006) after LG.Philips filed for bankruptcy. With the exception of Právo which continues to maintain its original stance, the media in this period openly criticize the Czech government as well as the investor and they tend to declare that – often



from the very arrival of the investor – they were fully aware of the possible negative closure of the investor's activities in the Czech Republic.

*The bankruptcy of the European holding – already cut off from money – is the culmination of a long-term process and should not necessarily have been a bolt from the blue for anyone. Not even in the Czech Republic, in case information had been interpreted correctly.*

(Euro, 6. 2. 2006)<sup>24</sup>

The discourse thus distances itself from the original meaning – at the same time it re-introduces some of the earlier themes (relationship between LG.Philips Displays and Tesla, CRT screens v. liquid crystal displays, the sum of the originally planned investment) and in fact it changes their meaning to the disadvantage of the unsuccessful investor. At this time the rationalization of the reasons for the investor's bankruptcy forms an important part of the discourse, the reasons include strategic moves by supranational actors i.e. exogenous and uncontrollable economic risks, marginalization of the outdated technology of CRT screens on the market and the already mentioned short-sighted policy of investment incentives.

*The parental companies terminated financial support for their daughter company already last year. In October the South-Korean LG Electronics announced that it will almost completely withdraw from the sale of traditional TV screens on the European market and will concentrate on the future of flat and thin screens, including vacuum displays. [...] The question then is whether the Czech Republic should support another potential investor from the south of the Korean peninsula, namely the Hyundai automobile factory, given its experience with the major Korean company LG Electronics and its holding. The fact is that the big Korean players, who are vigorously conquering the global markets of the automobile and electronics industry, do not hesitate to ask for a bigger bite, and use all the means at their disposal.*

(Euro, 6. 2. 2006)<sup>25</sup>

In this final phase the discourse is also characterized by a strengthened politicization due to the fact that the government attempted to take over the bankrupt factory and save the new jobs. However, had the entry of the investor been celebrated basically in unison as a success of state policy now the government's efforts encountered a split reaction, the discourse lost the unifying thread in the form of the shared interest in respect

24 *Krach evropského holdingu – už odříznutého od financí – byl teprve na konci dlouhodobějšího procesu a nemuse být pro nikoho bleskem z čistého nebe. Ani v Česku, pokud by se správně vyhodnocovaly informace.*

25 *Mateřské firmy přestaly svou dceru finančně podporovat už loni. Jihokorejská LG Electronics v říjnu oznámila, že téměř končí s prodejem klasických televizních displejů na evropském trhu a sází na budoucnost plochých a tenkých obrazovek, ovšem včetně vakuových. [...] Nabízí se přirozeně otázka, zda by po zkušenostech s velkou korejskou firmou LG Electronics a jejím dceřiným podnikem mělo Česko podporovat případnou investici dalšího gigantu z jižní části Korejského poloostrova, tedy automobilky Hyundai. Skutečností je, že velcí korejsí hráči rázně dobývají globální trh v automobilovém i elektronickém průmyslu, nestydí si říci o větší sousto a využívají různých nástrojů, které mají k dispozici.*

of prosperity and the theme of securing jobs is thus remote from the consistency of themes that were typical of the discourse in its initial phases.

table 5: Themes and topics 4

Theme	Topics
<p><b>m) CONFLICT: Bankruptcy.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- production halted in Hranice</li> <li>- decline in the sales of CRT screens</li> <li>- liquid crystal displays dominate</li> <li>- CRT screens v. liquid crystal displays</li> <li>- L.G. Philips Displays goes bankrupt</li> <li>- investing benefactor</li> <li>- investment incentives</li> <li>- major Korean player</li> <li>- unreliable Asian company</li> <li>- Europe v. Asia</li> <li>- predictability of the situation/bankruptcy</li> </ul>
<p><b>n) THEMES: CRT screens v. liquid crystal displays.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- CRT screens v. liquid crystal displays</li> <li>- old v. new technologies</li> <li>- disinterest in CRT</li> <li>- unfair competition with Tesla</li> <li>- domestic producers</li> <li>- strategic moves by supranational corporations</li> </ul>
<p><b>o) CONFLICT: Will we save the plant to keep the jobs?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- LG.Philips Displays goes bankrupt</li> <li>- production is halted</li> <li>- saving jobs</li> <li>- government negotiating takeover of the plant</li> <li>- government intervention</li> <li>- partial re-launch of production</li> </ul>

**Conclusion**

We can conclude that in the Philips/LG.Philips Displays case the media under our scrutiny did not by far fulfil their ideal role of press generating an independent public debate. The analysis demonstrates that a **significant politicization of discourse** is typical of the case, it is particularly striking in its initial and final phases. **The party political tuning of the discourse emerges already in connection with reflections on the government’s policy of investment incentives.** Bearing in mind the degree of political opportunism that the media under scrutiny demonstrated we can scale them in the following way: Právo – Hospodářské noviny – Týden – Euro with Právo defending the government’s position most vociferously. **The arrival of Philips in the Czech Republic was presented as a result of successful government policy**, however, other important factors were underestimated or ignored. Moreover, the media uncritically replicated the government’s agenda, for example, the arguments about the total sum of planned investment supposed to exceed 600 million and the number of newly created jobs, according to the media there were to be 3,250 of these and further thousands of jobs were to be created indirectly. Although it soon transpired that the information was speculative and did not reflect the actual agreement between the government and the investor, it remained a stable component of the discourse’s topic agenda.

**The party political orientation of the discourse in the first few years suppressed the economic analytical side**, more analytical arguments could hardly find space within individual topics that formed the structure of the discourse. Thus in the first years

the media did not deal with risks connected with foreign capital or the possible future developments on the market with quickly outdated traditional television (CRT) screens – this is not the most flattering conclusion in relation to economically oriented media (Hospodářské noviny and Euro).

**At the same time the media negatively stereotypically labelled those actors who were in a conflict with the investor** (and thus rid them of any credibility): Markéta Regecová was described as a “threat”, as a person who committed a “fraud”; lawyers from EPS were labelled “activists” or “ecologists” (both have strong de-legitimizing connotations); civil servants who demanded permits as set in law slowed the investor down and were thus described as “bureaucrats”. In connection with the bankruptcy of LG.Philips Displays media presented Philips and the city of Hranice as victims of the unscrupulous Korean global player.

**In other words the coverage of the case was in many respects biased and prejudiced**, it preferentially opened itself to certain views and it silenced or de-legitimized opponents’ opinions, it is characterized by unconfirmed information and it lacked any deeper understanding of key issues e.g. global markets or foreign investment. The uncertainties brought about by the entry of the foreign investor were characterized by uncontrolled risks on “our” part (i.e. the national community and “our” elites, i.e. the Czech government and local administration). And that is probably why they were marginalized to a great degree until the very moment when LG.Philips went bankrupt. In the discourse of the case risks connected with the world of liquid modernity never existed (though they existed as actual risks) and were only allowed to enter the story when their consequences could not be avoided. In this respect we propose a hypothesis that a similar **strategy of temporary symbolic “minimalization of risks”** can be identified in other cases with a comparable development and similarly uncontrollable nature, e.g. in the case of global climate change (cf. Vladyka 2007) or the strengthening of radical Islam during the 1990s.

Our findings suggest that when constructing the agenda media are able not only to determine which topics shape the agenda as McCombs and Shaw (1977) suggest but also – because topics are linked in narrated themes which are in some cases strengthened by clear-cut views – can present, prefer and support certain views that they naturalize and present as facts. Thus they do not simply offer a set of topics on which the reader should develop a view but also provide a guide to what opinions are generally shared and thus “correct”. To put it simply the media under our scrutiny play the role of active creators of consensus (Hall 1995).

The final point we make is that our discourse analysis has its own limitations and that in terms of its theoretical framework as well as in relation to its findings. The typology of topics as well as the typology of relationships among themes that make up the thematic structure of the discourse, the role of inter-discursivity (i.e. the relationship of the analyzed discursive formation to “neighbouring” discourses) stressed by Michel Pêcheux (cf. Fairclough 1992: 31–34) should be subjected to further, more detailed explorations. In terms of findings, discourse analysis can make rather limited claims to their more general validity, however, this changes when applying conventional content analysis for which a detailed understanding of discourse is beneficial when formulating hypotheses and searching for indicators.

**Jakub Macek** Has been working as a lecturer at the Department of Social Sciences, Technical University of Ostrava since 2007. He also lectures at Masaryk University in Brno. He has degrees in media studies and journalism from the Faculty of Social Studies, Masaryk University where he is currently a PhD student of sociology. His research interests include the social theory of new communication technologies and media and technological subcultures. He is an editor of *Mediální studia/ Media studies*.

E-mail: jakub.macek@gmail.com

**Kateřina Škarupová** PhD student of sociology at the Faculty of Social Studies, Masaryk University where she also gained MA degrees in media studies and journalism. Her MA thesis was devoted to people who decided to exclude television from their lives. Her doctoral dissertation explores the relationship between television and collective memory.

E-mail: skarupov@fss.muni.cz

**Vit Kouřil** Has degrees in media studies and journalism from the Faculty of Social Studies, Masaryk University where he is currently a PhD student. His research concentrates on the political economy of media, music industry and the relationship between media and non-governmental organizations. He is the editor-in-chief of the journal *Sedmá generace*.

E-mail: kouril.vit@gmail.com

## Literature

- Altheide, David L. – Grimes, Jennifer N. 2005. "War Programming: The Propaganda Project and the Iraq War." Pp. 617–643 in *The Sociological Quarterly*, 46.
- Barrett, Michéle. 1994. "Ideology, Politics, Hegemony: From Gramsci to Laclau and Mouffe." Pp. 235–264 in *Mapping Ideology*. Ed. Žižek, Slavoj. London – New York: Verso.
- Bauman, Zygmunt. 2000. *Liquid Modernity*. Cambridge: Polity.  
<http://www.inext.cz/texty/No20/rozhovor.html> (6.3.2006)
- Bílek, Petr A. 2003. *Hledání jazyka interpretace*. [Searching for the language of interpretation.] Brno: Host.
- Billig, Michael – Schegloff, Emanuel A. 1999. "Critical Discourse Analysis and Conversation Analysis: an exchange between Michael Billig and Emanuel A. Schegloff." Pp. 543-582 in *Discourse & Society*, 10(4).
- Dijk, Teun van (ed.). 1985. *Discourse and communication: New approaches to the analysis of mass media discourse and communication*. Berlin – New York: W. de Gruyter.
- Dijk, Teun van. 1999. "Critical Discourse Analyses and Conversation Analyses." Pp. 459–460 in *Discourse & Society*, 10(4).
- Fairclough, Norman. 1992. *Discourse and Social Change*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Fairclough, Norman. 1995. *Media Discourse*. London: Hodder Arnold Fairclough, Norman. 2003. *Analysing Discourse: Textual Analysis for Social Research*. London – New York: Routledge.
- Foucault, Michel. 1971. "Orders of discourse." (Transl. Robert Swyer.) Pp. 7–30 in *Social Science Information*. 10(2).
- Foucault, Michel. 2002. *Archaeology of Knowledge*. (Trans. A. M. Sheridan Smith.) London: Routledge.
- Gerbner, George. 1985. "Mass Media Discourse: Message System Analysis as a Component of Cultural Indicators." In *Discourse and Communication: New Approaches to the Analysis of Mass*

- Media Discourse and Communication*. Ed. Teun A. van Dijk. Berlin – New York: W. de Gruyter.
- Giddens, Anthony. 1976. *New Rules of Sociological Method: a Positive Critique of interpretative Sociologies*. London: Hutchinson.
- Grenoble, Lenore A. 2000. "Discourse Analyses." *SLING2K Workshop*. <http://www.indiana.edu/~slavconf/SLING2K/pospapers/grenoble.pdf> (25. 6. 2007)
- de Gruyter, Aldine. 2002. "Tracking Discourse." Pp. 172-186 in *Culture in Mind*. Ed. K. A. Cerulo. New York: Routledge.
- Hall, Stuart. 1995. "The Rediscovery of 'Ideology': Return of the Repressed in Media Studies." Pp. 354--364 in *Approaches to media: a reader*. Ed. Boyd-Barret, Oliver – Newbold, Chris. London: Arnold.
- McCombs, Maxwell – Shaw, Donald. 1977. *The Emergence of American Political Issues: The agenda setting function of the press*. St. Paul: West Publishing.
- McGregor, Judy. 2002. "Restating News Values: Contemporary Criteria for Selecting the News." *Proceedings of the ANZCA 2002 Conference: Communication: Reconstructed for the 21st Century*. <http://www.bond.edu.au/hss/communication/ANZCA/papers/JMcGregorPaper.pdf> (6.3.2006)
- Torring, Jacob. 1999. *New Theories of Discourse: Laclau, Mouffe and Zizek*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.
- Vladyka, Milan. 2007. *Globální změna klimatu jako sociální konstrukt. (Diplomová práce.)* [Global climate change as a social construct. (MA thesis.)] Brno: Fakulta sociálních studií, Masarykova univerzita.
- White, Candace – Scheb, John M.. 2000. "Impact of media messages about the internet: internet anxiety as a factor in the adoption process in the USA." Pp. 181–194 in *New Media & Society*, 2(2).