

## Chapter 2:

# Analysis of author-dependent means of linguistic expression

Pisarek was the first to introduce the notion of words and expressions independent of the author or, to put it differently, those determined by non-linguistic reality, into Polish media linguistics in the 1960s (cf. for example Pisarek 1967, 1972). He included among these “personal names, date terms, unit names and various types of terminological or semi-terminological expressions” (Pisarek 1972, p. 11). He considered all other words in a press text to be author-dependent (not determined by extra-linguistic reality). He used the distinction between author-dependent and author-independent words to specify two fields of research on press texts.<sup>21</sup> Pisarek took the position that “the topic of a statement will be easiest to recognize from words independent of the author, while its style – from words dependent on the author” (Pisarek 1972, p. 11). Finally, it should be mentioned that these categories were used by Pisarek for quantitative research on three main press genres: news (with a dominant symbolic function, i.e., in other words, informative, and in relation to headers/titles – descriptive or summarizing), reportage (with the dominant expressive function) and commentary (with the dominant impressive function, in other words: persuasive) (Pisarek 1972, p. 13).

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21 These were the only types of texts he was concerned with at the time, because in the face of television, which was then only gaining in importance, it was the press that was the main medium providing society with knowledge about the world: analysis of the content of texts (through research on the frequency of use of words independent of the author) and stylistic-linguistic analysis (through research on the frequency of use of author-dependent words).

After more than half a century since his research, we now have much more knowledge, both quantitative and, above all, qualitative, of the media communication processes, of the mechanisms of linguistic evaluation, of the contextual and discursive conditions influencing the shaping of the form and sense of messages communicated to the general public in public space. For these reasons, we decided to expand our description of the category of words that Pisarek distinguished as dependent on the author by adding, on the one hand, non-lexical resources (morphological structures related to inflection, derivation and word manufacturing, as well as syntactic structures), and on the other hand by adding elements resulting from the adoption by the sender of a certain rhetorical strategy (e.g. quotations and paraphrases, quasi-dialogue constructions, various intertextual references). Therefore, we will continue to use the notion of *linguistic elements/resources (in)dependent on the author*.

In regard to the material analyzed in our study, apart from the types of expressions listed by Pisarek, we also included among author-independent resources unmarked (conventional, customary) names of events (e.g.: *the Smolensk disaster*, *Amber Gold*, *anti-abortion law*), along with such names of events which do not profile a particular vision (way of seeing) of a given event and do not emphasize value-related senses in a stretch of discourse ([139<sup>22</sup>] *Spór o dopuszczalność aborcji* [Dispute over allowability of abortion]; [121] *OLT Express nie płaciło portowi lotniczemu* [OLT Express did not pay the airport]; [268] *Kolejny świadek obciąża prezydent Warszawy* [Yet another witness lays the blame on the mayor of Warsaw]). For example, a strip containing solely author-independent words is in our opinion [100] *Zeznania prokuratorów od Amber Gold* [Statements of the Amber Gold prosecutors], but already in strip [101] *Kompromitacja gdańskiej prokuratury* [Embarrassment of the Gdańsk Prosecutor's office], referring to the effects of the event, about which strip [100] informs, we see the author-dependent word *kompromitacja* [embarrassment, discredit], as it is a word marked in terms of value.

In our approach, resources independent of the author also include all linguistically natural grammatical structures used according to their primary function (e.g. [21] *Jutro koniec kadencji prof. Rzeplińskiego* – notification of the expected end of Professor Rzepliński's term of office), but not those which are used in their secondary senses for persuasive purposes (e.g. [1] *Rozprawa czy spotkanie?* – the broadcaster decided to use the interrogative structure to ask the recipients for a resolution. The form is that of a dis-

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22 The numbers in square brackets refer to the number of each text – see Appendix 1.

junctive choice between two possibilities, with each of their names carrying a different value: *rozprawa* [a hearing] being positive in this context, and communicating, as it does, the seriousness of the institution of the Constitutional Tribunal and the validity of the pronouncements it issues, whereas *spotkanie* [a meeting] is negative, as it discursively alludes to other public statements, whose authors referred to the meeting of the Constitutional Tribunal in 2016 precisely *a meeting over coffee and cookies*, thus communicating their opinion on the lack of legal authority of these meetings. Ergo, on the literal level, the choice of the interrogative structure about the settlement communicated to the recipient the broadcaster's uncertainty as to the assessment of the event, but at the level of implied senses it suggested that the event might be considered illegal and that the persons participating in it, i.e. the judges of the Constitutional Tribunal, did not behave in a manner befitting the office they held).

We also assume that this classification of author-dependent resources in the above methodological interpretation does not allow us to determine so much the style of the statements under investigation (in this regard the texts gathered here are fairly homogeneous; it is their genre that distinguishes them from other media statements, and not their style), but their pragmatic function (primarily persuasive) and secondly, the view of the world fixed in these statements, which depends *par excellence* on the broadcaster. This results from the selection of autosemantic (independent) words or – less frequently – from the selection of a significant (evaluative) grammatical structure or rhetorical strategy (operating with figurative words or figures of speech, quotations, quotation marks, allusions, irony, and even unconventional spelling choices).

In the analyzed corpus of 306 strips, we found only 93 (i.e. not quite 31%) which did not contain any author-dependent elements. This means that the vast majority of the strips shown in *Wiadomości TVP 1*, announcing segments about the most important political events of 2016 and 2017 in Poland, were most likely constructed with the intention of influencing the opinion of the recipients of the message, rather than informing them of about the event in an objective manner.

A vast majority of the author-dependent elements in the corpus were systemic, sentential, or contextual means of evaluation, which will be discussed further. At this point, we will focus on discussing only those resources which, in our view, cannot be attributed to any of the above properties, i.e. those whose only feature is dependence on the communicative intention of the sender.

## 1. Names of political entities

The first phenomenon that should be noted here is that of naming the entities taking part in political life in the texts of the strips (we shall limit ourselves here only to presenting the appellations of entities represented in the Polish parliament). The table below presents the figures related to the names used in our corpus. The author-dependent element here is the selection of a specific variant of the name of the entity in power and the entities in the opposition (data for 2016–2017).

The above summary allows the following conclusions to be drawn:

1. The broadcaster avoids displaying in the text of the strips the official or customary names of the entities responsible for specific political events presented to the public (only twelve names of 306 strips, and 36 appellations of 306 if we include the customary appellations).
2. The authors of the strips present the actions of the opposition far more often than those of the ruling coalition (two strips with the name of the majority party in comparison to 34 strips referring directly or indirectly to the actions of the opposition), while the name *opposition* was used 24 times, whereas the name *coalition* did not appear at all in the material under discussion. In eighteen of the cases (75%), the word *opposition* was used without any attributes (i.e. in a manner independent of the author), while in the remaining six cases (25%) it was accompanied by a value-conveying attribute (of which in five cases the value was negative and only once it was positive). In turn, the ratio of the author-independent (objective) names of opposition entities to their author-dependent (value-conveying) names is 21 to 13 (62% to 38%).
3. The broadcaster uses a rhetorical strategy of depreciation by reducing the name of a specific political entity to the colloquial term (a clear one-word abbreviation of the proper name – *Platforma* instead of *Platforma Obywatelska*<sup>23</sup>). In the examined corpus, of ten occurrences of specific references relating to this party, seven were represented only by the unofficial variant of its name (i.e. *Platforma*). On the one hand, this is motivated by the assumption that

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23 A similar strategy can be found in the material we analyzed, in references to the Constitutional Tribunal: five times the word *Trybunał* was used, twice the acronym *TK*, while the full name – *Trybunał Konstytucyjny* – was not used at all.

**Table 1. Names of parliamentary political parties used in the information strips of *Wiadomości TVP 1* as author-dependent and author-independent resources**

| The entity and its names displayed on the strips   | No. of occurrences | Percentage (n=306) | Numbers of strips with a given name variant   | Author-dependent vs. author-independent variants |
|--|--------------------|--------------------|---|--|
| <i>Prawo i Sprawiedliwość</i> [Law and Justice] (the parliamentary group in power, comprised of representatives of <i>Prawo i Sprawiedliwość</i> , <i>Solidarna Polska</i> and <i>Porozumienie</i> ) = 235/460 seats in the <i>Sejm</i> *) |                    |                    |   |  |
| Prawo i Sprawiedliwość   | 0                  | 0%                 | none  | not applicable                                   |
| PiS  | 2                  | 0.65%              | [57] [259]  | independent                                      |
| <i>Platforma Obywatelska</i> [Civic Platform] (the most numerous opposition party = 138/460 seats in the <i>Sejm</i> )   |                    |                    |   |  |
| Platforma Obywatelska  | 1                  | 0.33%              | [180]   | independent                                      |
| PO   | 2                  | 0.65%              | [259] [286]   | independent                                      |
| Platforma  | 7                  | 2.29%              | [19] [87] [88] [124]<br>[177] [220] [278]   | dependent  |
| <i>Kukiz'15</i> (a parliamentary group in opposition** = 42/460 seats)   |                    |                    |   |  |
| none   | 0                  | 0%                 | none  | not applicable                                   |
| <i>.Nowoczesna</i> [.Modern (party)] (an opposition party = 28/460 seats)  |                    |                    |   |  |
| none   | 0                  | 0%                 | none  | not applicable                                   |
| <i>Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe</i> [Polish People's Party] (the smallest political party in the opposition = 16/460 seats)  |                    |                    |   |  |
| none   | 0                  | 0%                 | none  | not applicable                                   |
| The opposition to the currently ruling party <i>en bloc</i>  |                    |                    |   |  |
| opozycja [opposition]  | 18                 | 5.88%              | [3] [4] [9] [12] [14]<br>[35] [37] [50] [69]<br>[90] [141] [164] [174]<br>[186] [193] [264] | independent                                      |
| totalna opozycja [total opposition]  | 2                  | 0.65%              | [46] [91]   | dependent  |

\* Based on the data on the number of seats based on the results of Polish parliamentary election announced by the State Electoral Committee in October 2015.

\*\* In this case, the oppositional character of this group consists in it remaining outside of the government.

| The entity and its names displayed on the strips | No. of occurrences | Percentage (n=306) | Numbers of strips with a given name variant | Author-dependent vs. author-independent variants |
|--|--------------------|--------------------|---|--|
| radykalna opozycja<br>[radical opposition]       | 3                  | 0.98%              | [190] [196] [208]                           | dependent  |
| umiarkowana opozycja<br>[moderate opposition]    | 1                  | 0.33%              | [201]                                       | dependent  |

the sender and the recipient share common knowledge about the world (therefore, from the sender's point of view, the truncation of the second part of the name is understandable), and on the other hand, it may be an expression of the author's persuasive intent (the pragmatic reduction of the differentiating part may be understood as an attempt to deprive the opposition group of its communicative identity, in this case by omitting the part *Obywatelska* [Civic] in its name).

- The naming of parliamentary entities in opposition to the governing coalition shows an advancing stabilization of stylistic phrases imposed top-down: *totalna opozycja* [total opposition] (three instances) and *radykalna opozycja* [radical opposition] (two instances). In political discourse, these are used solely by politicians of the ruling coalition and their supporters. When compared with the term *umiarkowana opozycja* [moderate opposition], used once, these phrases indicate that the main criterion for evaluating the opposition's actions is its level of involvement in criticizing the actions of the ruling coalition.

## 2. A review of other author-dependent means of linguistic expression

In the examined material, there were various additional means of expression whose value-bearing power resulted solely from the author's choices.

## 2.1. Interrogative structures

What comes to the fore here is basing the structure of the strip on the **structure of a question**. In the analyzed set of texts, of 306 strips, twenty are phrased as questions (approx. 6.5%). The persuasive power of a question as a rhetorical figure of thought has been known since ancient times and has been widely described in various sources. Therefore, suffice it to remind the reader here that a question as a persuasive measure is primarily intended to stimulate the recipients' attention, influence their feelings, evoke reflection, and encourage them to try to provide an answer; it can also serve to express the sender's emotions or express their hesitations or doubts. There are basically two modes of functioning for questions in persuasive expressions: etiology (with the speaker asking a question and providing an immediate answer to it) and erotesis (asking a question without the intention of obtaining an answer; hence another popular name for erotesis is a rhetorical question).

With regard to fixed information strips displayed in the form of questions, one can say that they naturally form an etiological whole with the subsequent segment, which is a practice transferred from press journalism, where serially repeated question-answer sequences are (as in an interview) or sometimes are the structural axis of a text (usually an article, at times also an editorial or report). Etiology is one of the basic techniques of providing journalistic content to audiences and can be exploited in various ways, also in order to exert persuasive pressure on the recipient.

Among the twenty strips in the form of questions, eight were classified as constituting an authentic etiological situation (i.e. a situation in which the answer to the question is not obvious to the recipient before viewing the segment). What follows is a brief analysis of each of these cases.

[1] *Rozprawa czy spotkanie?* [A hearing or a meeting?] (see analysis above). Conclusion: the sender's answer determines that the correct assessment of the event is communicated by the second noun, bearing negative characteristics (i.e. casting an unfavorable light on the participants in the event, but positive for the sender's persuasive intentions).

[51] *Ten ma rację, kto bardziej zły?* [Whoever is more upset is right?] The question uses a seemingly non-standard form comparative from of the adjective *zły* [bad, evil, upset]. The material covers protest rallies against the planned reform of the judiciary, whose participants in the first part of the clip present themselves as strongly emotionally involved in their

actions, but lacking substantive knowledge about the proposed changes, and therefore with no convincing arguments to support their opinions. The author summarized this part of the segment with the sentence: *They [the participants of the protest] act according to the principle that whoever is more upset is the one who is right*, and a short clip of the demonstration showing one of the participants saying *Do not accept this reality, build up the anger within you*.<sup>24</sup> The adjective *upset* brings here a meaning related to the state of irritation, agitation.

The persuasive character of strip [51] rests on the use of the adjective *zły* as a general expression of value without specifying its pragmatic meaning – this is probably why the analytical form of the comparative degree of *zły* was chosen, seemingly incompatible with the standard usage, because the standard suppletive form of *gorszy* [worse] is unambiguous, as it applies only to contexts in which it can be replaced by the antonym *lepszey* [better], and it cannot be used with those meanings which of the adjective *zły* which block the antonymy *lepszey – gorszy*, i.e. such senses as *displeased*, *dissatisfied*, and particularly *upset*, *angry*. Since for the senses of the word *zły* (beneficial for the persuasive purpose of the sender) only the periphrastic (descriptive) gradation is possible, the use of this very structure demonstrates the author's intention to use the adjective *zły* in one or perhaps in even both of these senses depreciating the characters in the segment. In conclusion, the answer to the thesis proposed in question [51] is negative, which from a pragmatic point of view should be read as a message with the content "The protesters, exposing their dissatisfaction with the reform, are in the wrong."

[89] *Kto nie chce suwerennej i silnej Polski?* [Who does not want a sovereign and strong Poland?]. This question contains the sentence presupposition: "There is someone who does not want a sovereign and strong Poland." The material presented to the audience is heterogeneous in content and inconsistent in its composition:

1. First of all, it speaks of talks regarding the establishment of a ruling coalition after the elections between the German parties CDU and SDP so as to "revive Vladimir Putin's dreams"<sup>25</sup> of continuing the Nord Stream 2 project;
2. further, the authors of the segment report that Poland is trying to block this project, which is not in the interest of either Germany or Russia;

24 <https://wiadomosci.tvp.pl/33330619/ten-ma-racje-kto-bardziej-zly>.

25 <https://wiadomosci.tvp.pl/35291316/kto-nie-chce-suwerennej-i-silnej-polski>.

3. another segment is already devoted to information about the planned new law which, among other things, was supposed to reveal which foreign corporations do not pay taxes in Poland and “take their profits out of our country,” mainly to the Netherlands, the home of Commissioner Frans Timmermans, and also among others to Luxembourg, which is a “tax haven” and whose former Prime Minister was Jean-Claude Juncker, the current head of the European Commission;
4. the authors continue to report that “previous governments did not have a problem with such neo-colonial treatment;”
5. it was only the coming to power of Law and Justice that changed this situation;
6. the government formed by this party has been implementing political and economic projects (mentioned by name) that “have weakened economic dependence on Germany;”
7. and “the reform of the judiciary is only a pretext for demonstrating this resistance [of the above states to these projects]”.

The material presented to viewers is based only on implicatures and provides no clear answer to the question posed in strip [89]. In conclusion, the answer to the question posed in strip [89] is only an enumeration of certain examples of actions taken by selected entities. Moreover, European politicians who, according to the authors of the material, oppose Poland’s interests are identified visually or linguistically and the Polish Prime Minister is shown in a conciliatory situation. The persuasive power is based here on the figure of an enthymeme (in fact, the sender provides only partial premises, some overt, some hidden, assuming that the recipient equipped with the knowledge of the world assumed by the sender should first accept the presupposition expressed by the question and then fill it in with the subject matter all by herself), which means that the responsibility for the result of the persuasion is shifted to the reception activities of the recipient.

[130] *Gdzie jest złoto Amber Gold?* [Where is the gold of Amber Gold?] The presupposition communicated here is “The gold of *Amber Gold* is out there somewhere.” The footage (in the form of a short mention) shows selected excerpts of statements made before the Commission of Inquiry by the former Amber Gold accountant, and by a former Dominican friar who had close social ties with the owners of the company. Fragments of the testimony of both witnesses were presented without taking into account the dialogical context (questions from the members of the committee), and

sometimes without care for the syntactic phrasing of the witnesses' statements (breaking the quoted statement in mid-sentence). Furthermore, only those fragments of the statements were included which could be connected with the thesis expressed in the presupposition (e.g. where the accountant says that she was not aware that she had been hired as a stooge, or in this case 'a person taking legal actions instead of another person so as to hide the identity of the latter, while the former clergyman – that at his own request he asked to see what a bar of gold looks like, which was made possible for him). In conclusion, the footage answering the question posed in strip [130] omitted some information that the recipient might consider reliable about the location of the gold (of Amber Gold). The message is based on understatement, which is supposed to trigger the implicit conclusion in the recipient that "These witnesses may know where the gold (of Amber Gold) is, but they do not want to say."

[135] *Nieudolność czy sabotaż śledztwa?* [Incompetence or sabotage of the investigation?] Here we are dealing with a question in the form of an ordinary alternative – giving an answer to such a question consists in choosing either one of the options or both. In this construction, persuasive power is based on the fact that the choice is limited to the possibilities provided by the broadcaster in advance, all of which are assessed negatively, and therefore it does not really matter which option is chosen, as the authors will achieve their persuasive goal in either case. The footage only confirms this conclusion – it refers to the passivity of the state authorities (police and prosecution) in the Amber Gold case. In conclusion, the construction of the strip's message precludes any interpretation that is different from that imposed by the authors. Moreover, it can be considered that the strip does not perform its basic informative function, as it imposes on the recipient an evaluation of the activities of state institutions in a case which was still ongoing at the time of the broadcast.

[206] *Kto gra dalej?* [Who is left in the game?] This question has a semantically complex construction – it uses an ambiguous word *play*, which in this context has a metaphorical value (the metaphor of politics as a game is one of the oldest topoi used to depict it); moreover, it is based on two presuppositions: "someone is left in the game" and "someone is treating politics as a zero-sum game" (which results from the metaphorical meaning of the noun). The relevant footage concerns disputes between opposition parties and social organizations (called the *radical opposition*) and conflicts within the largest opposition party. The answer to the question posed in the strip is never given. In conclusion, the question may be assumed to ac-

tually signal a state of ignorance on the part of the sender as to the essence of the matter presented in the segment, while the segment itself confirms that it is currently not possible to determine the state of affairs the question relates to.

[241] *Komu przeszkadza patriotyzm Polaków?* [Who is bothered by Polish patriotism?] This is another strip containing a question with a presupposition: “There is someone who is bothered by Polish patriotism.” The footage concerned the Independence March of November 11, 2017, in which tens of thousands of people, including representatives of national organizations, demonstrated their patriotism. The journalist pointed out that some foreign media and the “radical part of the opposition”<sup>26</sup> emphasized in their accounts that the march was attended by “Nazis” or “fascists” and that “it is unacceptable to the left-wing elites that thousands of Poles publicly manifest their pride of being Polish.” The material also emphasized that the march was an objection to “left-wing ideology” and “Islamization of the Old Continent,” while the display of a banner with a racist slogan and a controversial symbol (the Celtic cross) by representatives of one Polish nationalist organization was described as an “incident” and the people carrying it, a “small group of radicals.” The first conclusion is that it seems that in this case the question structure with the presupposition was meant to communicate in a covert way the only logically possible evaluative proposition, made obvious by virtue of the laws of logical reasoning, constituting the very presupposition. This proposition expresses a controversial point that is difficult to prove, and thus the use of a conclusion process based on a presupposition is persuasive in nature, and is meant, in keeping with the sender’s intention, to trigger an associative process in the recipient, whose result should be the recipient’s conviction that the patriotism of Poles bothers some entities hinted at in the segment (which are, nonetheless, described too generally to be clearly identified by the recipient). The second conclusion is that the question also uses the eristic gimmick of excessive generalization – the expression *Polish patriotism* contains two words which have precise meanings only in dictionary definitions, but whose senses in real communication practice may be vastly divergent. Therefore, strip [241] should be regarded as a kind of commentary on the facts rather than as information or announcement of these facts.

26 <https://wiadomosci.tvp.pl/34785951/komu-przeszkadza-patriotyzm-polakow>. Subsequent quotations are from this source.

[281] *Dlaczego zginęła Jolanta Brzeska?* [Why did Jolanta Brzeska lose her life?] Here, too, the question contains a presupposition: “Jolanta Brzeska lost her life for a reason (i.e. someone wanted her to).” The footage is an account of the hearings of several people connected with the case of reprivatization of a Warsaw townhouse at 9 Nabelaka Street, held before the verification committee. Those called upon to testify included Jolanta Brzeska’s daughter. The author of the news segment points to several entities which either did not lend any support to Jolanta Brzeska (“city hall officials”<sup>27</sup> and “courts”) or actively harassed her (the so-called “tenement cleaners” and “a well-known trader in claims”) – the only entity mentioned by name). Another quotation used is a fragment of the testimony of a friend of Jolanta Brzeska, an activist of the tenants movement, who testified that “if she [Jolanta Brzeska] ran afoul of someone, it is only of those who have grown rich on other people’s property”. In conclusion, the presupposition in the question posed in strip [281] is intended to convince the recipient that someone is responsible for the tragic death of Jolanta Brzeska, as evidenced by the use of the verb *to lose one’s life* (tragically or suddenly). In light of the available data, it can be concluded that this is a true proposition. The segment, however, operates eristically as in the case of strip [241] with very blurred generalizations, which does not provide an unambiguous answer to the question posed in the strip [281].

The ten remaining strips phrased as questions (strips [104] and [114] are excluded here, as they contain quotations and will be dealt with below) are rhetorical questions (erostheses) i.e. structures which are questions only on the level of punctuation, as they are devoid of formal (grammatical) exponents of interrogative intentions (pronouns or question particles – except for [220]), but rather have the pragmatic status of statements (propositions) with different degrees of probability (depending on the degree of concreteness of the content being adjudicated upon). They are as follows: [7] *Ukarany za własne zdanie?* [Punished for having his own opinion?]; [9] *Opozycja odrzuci kompromis?* [Will the opposition reject the compromise?]; [41] *Toga chroni przed odpowiedzialnością?* [Does a robe protect against liability?]; [58] *Sąd Najwyższy złamał prawo?* [Has the Supreme Court broken the law?]; [59] *Reformatorska PO-Budka?* [The Pro-reform attitude of PO-Budka?]; [124] *Platforma kryła działalność Amber Gold?* [The (Civic) Platform papered over the activities of Amber Gold?]; [128]

27 <https://wiadomosci.tvp.pl/34629827/dlaczego-zginela-jolanta-brzeska>. All quotations come from this source.

*ABW kontaktowała się z szefem Amber Gold?* [The Internal Security Agency contacted the head of Amber Gold?]; [191] *Kolejna próba destabilizacji państwa?* [Another attempt to destabilize the state?]; [220] *Czy Platforma szykuje na jutro awanturę?* [Is the (Civic) Platform spoiling for a fight tomorrow?]; [229] *Blokada opóźni dezubekizację?* [Will the blockade delay decommunization?].

From the perspective of communication, all these strips are linked by the fact that the sender assumes that each of these questions should be answered in the affirmative, thus accepting the thesis proposed in the given segment. This assumption is, on the one hand, a derivative of the discourse conditions (polarization of assessments concerning the actions of the opposition and the ruling coalition), and on the other hand, a result of the expectation that the viewer is focused on the footage presenting arguments for the thesis put forward in the question. Thus, it can be concluded that the broadcaster's communication strategy here consists in shaping both segments of the message (the question and the answer) in such a way that the recipient aspires in the act of reception to transform the rhetorical question into a real question with an answer, or in other words concedes that the answer to the question contains what the question says.

All the above strips in the form of rhetorical questions refer to the sender's negative assessment of someone's actions or existing states of affairs – this is evidenced among other things by the use of words evaluating systemically, sententially or contextually: *will reject* [-]<sup>28</sup> *a compromise* [+]; *it protects* [+] *from responsibility* [-]; *has broken* [-] *the law* [+]; *papered over* [-]; *destabilization* [-]; *a brawl* [-]; *will delay* [-] *decommunization* [+]. The subjects of these actions or persons responsible are indicated either directly, as in [9], [58], [59] (additionally through allusion), [124], [128] and [220], or indirectly, as in [7], [41] (here: metonymically, i.e. on the borderline of direct and indirect reference), [191] and [229].

The majority of the propositions in this group of analyzed rhetorical questions concern past events ([7]<sup>29</sup>, [58], [124], [128]) and present events ([41], [59], [191], [220]), so it can be assumed that they express evalua-

28 [-] means 'something bad' or 'do something bad,' [+] means 'something good' or 'do something good.' A combination of [+] [-] indicates sentential valuation.

29 In strips [7], [59] and [191] there are no formal exponents of predicates (finite verb forms); however, we treat these statements, based on their context (the accompanying footage) as sentence equivalents, and this is why we attribute predicative power to them.

tions for which the broadcaster takes responsibility, both ethically (in terms of compliance with the principles of ethics of the word and the standards of qualitative journalism) and socially (in their influence on the attitudes and behaviors of the national audience). Propositions concerning the future ([9] and [229]) have at most the status of a valuable assumption as to the possible course of events.

What requires a separate discussion here are the non-standard resources used in the strips, along with resources used in non-standard ways. In [41], the word *robe* is used metonymically in the sense of ‘being a judge, the profession of a judge’ – due to the high status of this profession, the word *robe* in this sense should have an elevated meaning (like *scepter* for *king*, or *papal tiara* for the *pope*), but the context of use indicates an ironic meaning (with the value sign reversed), i.e. depreciative in relation to the professional group so named.

Strip [59], in turn, is based on word play (a pun) – the word *pobudka* [wake-up call] is written as if it consisted of the acronym PO (*Platforma Obywatelska*) and the name of an MP of the party, former Minister of Justice Borys Budka. The clip presents the PO’s proposals for the reform of the justice system as outdated (because they had already been rejected by the Sejm once before) and belated (because they were not implemented during the party’s time in government). Thus, all three semantic elements that make up the text of the strip contribute to the irony (used for mockery or even derision) with the purpose of ridiculing the Civic Platform’s initiative (the *wake-up call* metaphorically refers to ‘late action’ here) as well as Borys Budka in person.

In strip [128], the verb *to contact* is used, which at the level of systemic description is axiologically neutral; however, when used in a sentence with the name of an offender (*Amber Gold*) it acquires a negative value. In such use, a government agency *contacting* this entity is presented as something negative or reprehensible. However, since at the time of publication of strip [128] the public was not aware of any evidence of illegal cooperation between the ABW (Internal Security Agency) and the criminal company, the verb *contact* should be interpreted as using a linguistic resource in order to semantically blur the image of the events, i.e. to emphasize the possibility of contact between the ABW and Amber Gold, but evade determining the nature of this contact.

In sum, we have determined that the authors of the analyzed strips use the structure of rhetorical questions primarily in order to emphasize the evaluative thesis proposed in the journalistic material following each of the strips.

## 2.2. Direct quotation and paraphrase

Another kind of author-dependent and evaluative linguistic resource (second in frequency of use in our corpus) is **quotation** (either direct or in paraphrase) of fragments of statements made by the people referred to in the news segment (most often signaled by quotation marks or in some other unambiguous way). The choice of the appropriate quotation is dependent on the author of the material, as is the rhetorical ploy of assigning the quotation to the footage that follows it. Since the content of the quoted statement is not by itself dependent on the author, we believe that the value-conveying expressions perform valuation solely on the basis of the author's decision, because they now refer to the prepared footage, and only in the background – according to the original intention of the original speaker – to some element of reality important for a given event.

The corpus contains eleven strips based on a direct quotation or paraphrase: [56] *“Liczy się sprawa”* [What matters is the cause] (a quotation from Zbigniew Ziobro's statement after the Polish President's veto of the so-called “judiciary reform laws”); [73] *Komisja Wenecka: winne obie strony* [The Venice Commission: both parties are at fault] (paraphrase); [104] and [114] *Co świadkowi wiadomo w sprawie?* [What does the witness know about the case?] (a quotation from a statement by Andrzej Łojkowski, former spokesman of the Appellate Prosecutor's Office in Gdańsk, made at a hearing of the Commission of Inquiry to investigate the regularity and legality of the actions of public authorities and institutions with respect to the entities comprising the Amber Gold Group); [108] *Państwo zawiodło* [The state has failed] (a quotation from the statement of Jarosław Gowin, former Minister of Justice, at a hearing of the Commission of Inquiry to investigate the correctness and legality of the actions of public authorities and institutions with respect to entities comprising the Amber Gold Group); [111] *Państwo nie działało tak, jak trzeba* [The state did not work as it should have] (a quotation from a statement made by Witold Koziński, a former member of the Polish Financial Supervision Authority at a hearing of the Commission of Inquiry to investigate the correctness and legality of the actions of public authorities and institutions with respect to the entities comprising the Amber Gold Group); [119] *Nie odnotowałem w swojej pamięci* [I made no note of it in my memory] (a quotation from a statement made by Sławomir Nowak, former Minister of Transportation at a hearing of the Commission of Inquiry to investigate the regularity and legality of the actions of public

authorities and institutions with respect to the entities comprising the Amber Gold Group); [122] *Kolokwialnie mówiąc: lipa* [To put it bluntly: ‘a bunch of bull...’] (a quotation from the statement given by Michał Tusk, son of former Prime Minister Donald Tusk at a hearing of the Commission of Inquiry to investigate the correctness and legality of the actions of public authorities and institutions toward the entities comprising the Amber Gold Group); [156] *Cisza wokół “jednolitego przekazu”* [Silence surrounding the “unified message”] (a quotation from a statement by Jerzy Miller given at a hearing of the Commission for the Investigation of State Aviation Accidents after the Smolensk disaster); [238] *Patriota to nie jest “radosny burak”* [A patriot is not a ‘cheerful bumpkin’] (a quotation from a text published in *Gazeta Wyborcza*, in which its author, Paweł Wroński, says the white-and-red flag or the state white eagle bring to mind homophobia or the very image of a cheerful ‘burak’ – literally ‘a beetroot’– used here as a derogatory term for a country simpleton) [276] *Józwiak: Nie wiem, nie pamiętam* [Józwiak: I don’t know, I don’t recall] (a paraphrase of a statement made by Jarosław Józwiak, Deputy Mayor of Warsaw, at a hearing of the Committee for the reprivatization of certain Warsaw properties). Moreover, there was one strip containing quotation marks: [203] *Prywatnemu, nie posłowi* [As a private individual, not an MP] (the segment concerned the controversies around MP Ryszard Petru’s trip to Portugal at the turn of 2017 during a parliamentary crisis – initially it was not clear whether this was a private holiday or business trip; the phrase used in the strip does not occur in the spoken text [203]. This sentence is a quotation from the novel *The Deluge [Potop]* by Henryk Sienkiewicz (1886) – spoken in relation to a traitor to the homeland. Owing to this literary allusion, the features of this character are attributed (at least to some extent) to the main figure in the *Wiadomości* report, the opposition MP Ryszard Petru. The above data lead us to draw the following conclusions:

1. Only one strip containing a quotation [56] concerns a statement made by a representative of the current government. At the same time, it is the only strip in which someone’s statement is used in a positive context.<sup>30</sup>

30 A translation of Zbigniew Ziobro’s verbatim utterance is as follows: *W takim zakresie [decyzji o zawetowaniu lub niezawetowaniu przez prezydenta RP tzw. ustaw sądowych – przyp. autorów] nie liczą się osobiste ambicje, one są na czwartym, piątym planie, liczy się sprawa, liczą się wartości, które są jeszcze wyżej nad tą sprawą.* [In this regard (authors’ note: i.e. the President’s decision whether or not to veto the so-called judiciary laws) what matters are not personal ambitions – they are far in the background, what matters is the cause, and the values that are even higher than the cause.]

2. Only one strip [73] can be considered axiologically neutral, although after taking into account the discursive context, one can also detect an evaluative element in it (the public rather expected that the Venice Commission would negatively assess the rule of law in Poland, whereas it also pointed out acts of negligence on the part of the previous authorities).
3. All other quotations or paraphrases were selected so as to indicate either weaknesses, negligence, or incompetence on the part of the state when governed by the PO–PSL coalition – strips [108] and [111] – or errors, omissions, and sluggishness of specific individuals (mainly representatives of the previous government) – strips [104], [114], [119], [122], [156], [276]. The viewers received an explanation of the position adopted by the authors of the broadcast only in the footage following the broadcast of the strip.
4. The pair of strips [104] and [114] require additional explanation – they contain the words that were spoken by prosecutor Łojkowski during a hearing before the Amber Gold commission. However, in his testimony, the witness also used these words as a quotation, as he quoted a standard procedural question asked by the prosecutors in this case. The choice of these words to be quoted by the broadcaster was possibly supposed to convince the viewers that in the Amber Gold case the prosecutor’s office in Gdańsk acted sluggishly, passively, without any real desire to establish the material truth (such a conclusion gains additional support when we compare strips [104] and [114] with the other strips concerning the activities of the Gdańsk prosecutor’s office in the Amber Gold case, e.g. [101] and [136]).
5. The persuasive power of strips [119] and [276] is, in turn, based on eristic ad hominem attacks. The authors seek to discredit Sławomir Nowak and Jarosław Józwiak by exposing their own declarations of their unfamiliarity with some details of the cases they dealt with as officials, omitting other information they communicated during the hearings. Citing both of these segments in this way bears traces of selectivity motivated by the intent to disparage the persons quoted or their actions when they held their official functions. Strip [238] should also be interpreted in a similar way, with the source of compromise here being the phrase used by Paweł Wroński (*radosny burak* – a cheerful bumpkin), and the strip itself contains his open refutation.

6. The structure of the ad hominem argument is also the basis of the last strip in this subset [156]. It quotes the expression *jednolity przekaz* [a unified message] used by Jerzy Miller during the first (closed-doors) meeting of the Committee for Investigation of National Aviation Accidents (KBWLLP).<sup>31</sup> This term was – as one may assume – the essence of the proposal that both Russian and Polish investigators should present to the public a consistent interpretation of the event as an accident. On the one hand, the footage informed the viewers that there was some controversy as to the real meaning of the words of this politician,<sup>32</sup> and that he interpreted them as a premise in favor of the thesis that Jerzy Miller sought to ensure that “the findings of the Polish commission did not deviate from those of the Russian MAK commission” (a fragment of the journalist’s commentary on the material), which was supposed to discredit Miller. The construction of the message in strip [156] is selective (an arbitrarily chosen quotation out of any significant context), and its informational content is underdefined (also by introducing the metaphorical term *cisza* [silence], not fully decipherable in terms of communication, because it does not communicate clearly who was silent about the ‘unified message’ and why).
7. Apart from strip [73], all the other strips based on quotations could not function as independent notifications about the event, so they primarily fulfil the appellative function (they provide titles for the material they announce) and the persuasive function (selection of quotations subordinated to the proposed thesis). Their informative (descriptive) function is quite limited, because the broadcaster’s intention of notifying the viewers becomes clear to the latter only after they have familiarized themselves with the segment, whereas the specific communicational nature of television broadcasts makes

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31 The footage contained the following fragment of Jerzy Miller’s the statement: “Either we ensure a unified message that does not aid the construction of myths and suspicions, or we might find ourselves up a certain type of creek and without a paddle.” Cf. <https://wiadomosci.tvp.pl/26989632/cisza-wokol-jednolitego-przekazu>. All of the quotations come from this source.

32 The footage quoted Jerzy Miller’s rebuttal: *Nie chodzi o to, że fakty byłyby inne, tylko o to, że raporty miałyby inną konstrukcję. A ja chciałem, by każdy czytelnik mógł przeczytać oba dokumenty i zrozumieć, jakie jest stanowisko polskie, a jakie rosyjskie* [The point is not that any facts were different, but that the reports had different constructions. And I wanted all readers to be able to read both documents and understand what the Polish position was and what the Russian one was].

it impossible (unlike in the press) for the viewers to return to reading the strip at any time.<sup>33</sup> Thus, we can say that we are dealing here with a ploy consisting in that the viewers receive a specific clue as to what to pay special attention to even before the reception of a given segment. The use of quotations is one of the ways of profiling the agenda (see agenda setting above) due to the communication benefits for the broadcaster.

### 2.3. Other solely author-dependent means of valuation (an overview)

The types of language resources discussed below should also be included in the set of author-dependent means of conveying valuation.

The most common type of linguistic operation on the part of the broadcaster is selection of linguistic names for the facts reported in the news segment that follows the strip. We may assume that this selection is governed on the one hand by the principle of maximum condensation (resulting from the limited capacity of the strip), and on the other, by the sender's desire to emphasize the main argument or to evaluate its main thread, which sometimes results in the evaluation in the strip being inconsistent with the content of the segment, or even with the facts. The following are examples of this phenomenon in the corpus we examined.

Strip [20] informs the viewers that *President [of the Tribunal] Rzepliński wants to appoint a successor*, while it was clear from the segment that followed that he only wanted the method of electing the next president of the Constitutional Tribunal to be determined by the adopted internal regulations.

Strip [48] says that *the court takes away an apartment*. The segment was devoted, among other things, to the fact that a certain citizen raising a disabled child purchased an apartment, but in the wake of the developer's bankruptcy, he did not manage to obtain a notary deed confirming his title to the property, so the bank financing the investment took steps to recover the funds lent to the developer by reselling the apartments already built. The spokesperson of the court which issued the judgment in this case, as quoted in the segment, openly says that the court's decision that the apartment was to be auctioned off was fair and resulted from the law, and that the court, in issuing it, was guided by the interest of all of

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33 This is technically possible by viewing the footage once more on the internet, although it does require additional effort on the part of the viewer and in practice real viewers resort to this very rarely.

the creditors, rather than only by the interest of the main protagonist of the segment. Regardless of the ethical reservations, claiming that the court, enforcing the law which it had not established, *took the apartment away* from the citizen is not justifiable under the rules of journalistic ethics.

Strip [109] makes the following claim “*Nikt nie czuje się winny za Amber Gold*” [No one feels guilty over Amber Gold]. The segment that follows refers to hearings of two witnesses before the parliamentary Commission of Inquiry – a prosecutor and a judge. In the excerpted statements, they both testify that they know nothing about the state of affairs they were asked about, or do not remember the details and the course of events. By comparing the content of the segment with the content of the strip announcing it, we may detect rhetorical and logical abuse in its formulation. The first instance of this is the declaration under the presupposition that ‘someone is guilty of Amber Gold’ that someone (other than the offender) is guilty when there is no evidence of this. Another instance is the exaggerated use of the universal negative quantifier *no one* (the two people interviewed were not the only ones involved in the scandal investigated by the Commission). Lastly, the third instance is the use of the verb *czuć się* [to feel] inadequate for the sense being described. There is a Polish phrase with the meaning ‘to acknowledge one’s guilt (in a moral or legal sense)’ (*poczować się do winy*), which would have been more appropriate for expressing the intentions of the sender, as the collocation with the verb *feel* refers primarily to situations that concern guilt in a moral, rather than a legal sense.

Strip [137] says that **the Tusk government concealed the truth** about Amber Gold [*rząd Tuska ukrył prawdę o Amber Gold*]; however, the segment itself presented an account of the hearing of the former Deputy Minister of the Interior in Donald Tusk’s government, mainly referring to the fact that this official may have failed to act properly when he received an Internal Security Agency memo with information about the possible criminal nature of Amber Gold’s activities. Apart from the author’s own interpretation of the event, the viewers received no other facts that would allow them to verify the thesis put forward in the strip, so it needs to be recognized that we are dealing here with an instance of hyperbole, which can be assessed as an overinterpretation of the presented facts, since *concealing the truth* is an intentional action, motivated by a specific interest of the entity that takes such an action – however, the footage did not contain any evidence of this. Moreover, the use of the synecdoche of *pars-pro-toto* is not justified here in terms of communication practice in the context of the segment’s content (*the government* instead of *one minister*).

Other statements containing intentionally formed names of facts or assessments of facts included [67] *Gorący tydzień* [A hot week]; [97] *Walka z czasem na starcie* [Fight against time at the outset]; [98] *Zdezorientowany prokurator* [A confused prosecutor] and were adequate to the content of the journalistic materials they accompanied and did not violate any standards adopted in public communication.

The second type were expressions underspecified semantically and pragmatically, such as [147] *Po latach milczenia* [After years of silence]; [152] *Zbyt daleko od Warszawy* [Too far from Warsaw]; [168] *Teatr jednego aktora* [One-man show]. In all these, the reference is blurred and thus they do not really serve any descriptive function in relation to the subsequent news segment. They also appear to be seemingly axiologically neutral, as they do not use any systemic means of evaluation. However, when compared with the content of the message they announce, they turn out to be carriers of evaluation based on irony.

Strips [147] and [152] refer to a specific person, Tomasz Arabski, a minister in the government of Donald Tusk responsible for organizing the visit of the President of the Republic of Poland, Lech Kaczyński, to Katyń on April 10, 2010, which ended in a plane crash in which President Lech Kaczyński died, along with all 95 of the other passengers and crew on board. In February 2016, Tomasz Arabski gave an interview to one of the leading Polish daily newspapers, in which he declared that he had not neglected his duties as the organizer of this visit. Strip [147] provided an ironic commentary to the fact that Tomasz Arabski spoke in public about this issue only after six years. Strip [152] announced a segment which talked about Arabski's failure to appear at the hearing in Warsaw due to, as he explained, the distance between Gdańsk, where he lives, and Warsaw. The ironic intention of the strip's author becomes visible when we compare the information in the segment, where another defendant, also living in Gdańsk, did arrive at the hearing.

Strip [168] accompanies the segment which concerns the detention of Władysław Frasyniuk during an attempt to “block the march in the memory of the victims of the Smolensk air disaster.”<sup>34</sup> The journalist calls this initiative ‘a street brawl of hooligans,’ and then presents Frasyniuk's statement that he ‘represents all those who gave their lives in the January, November or Warsaw Uprisings’, and then ironically (even derisively)

34 <https://wiadomosci.tvp.pl/32779052/teatr-jednego-aktora>. All quotations from this source.

points out that Frasyniuk is ‘an insurgent, although he did not get up from the cobblestones in Krakowskie Przedmieście on his own feet’ (as he was removed by the police). In this context, the content of strip [168] should be viewed as an instance of irony based on the connotations of the word *show* ‘something for show, something fake, something frivolous’ and on the metaphorical meaning of the phrase *one-man show* ‘an event in which the attention of observers is drawn to one person only’.

Further types of author-dependent linguistic evaluation are represented in the collected corpus as single examples. These include:

1. ironic quotes: [84] *Osobista „misja” Timmermansa* [Timmermans’ personal ‘mission’]; [92] *„Opcja nuklearna” to kapiszon* [The ‘Nuclear option’<sup>35</sup> is a storm in a teacup];
2. depreciating comparison: [188] *w Sejmie jak w przedszkolu* [in the Sejm like in a kindergarten];
3. evaluative antithesis: [145] *Przeciw rządowi, za aborcją na życzenie* [Against the government, in favor of abortion on request];
4. ironic suspension points: [212] *Petru ograł... Petru* [Petru outmaneuvered... Petru].

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35 This is Article 7 of the European Union Treaty concerning an event when the European Council finds there to be a serious risk of infringing EU values by one of the member states; it is often referred to as the “nuclear option” or the “atomic option” (stylistic phrasemes).