

## Chapter 5:

# **An analysis of means of valuation based on extralinguistic context**

According to our calculations, 115 out of the 306 strips we examined did not contain contextual valuations (approx. 37.5%). This figure should be treated only as a working estimate, however, as it was not possible to examine the reception of the content of the strips as part of the present report, and thus to determine whether the intentional meanings we as researchers assumed had indeed been communicated effectively.

We also assumed that the informational quality of the strips (i.e., the objectivity of the coverage) was not affected by the use of those value-conveying terms (with a plus or minus sign) which express commonly accepted evaluations. Therefore, we treated the proper name *Amber Gold* (associated with the criminal activities of the company bearing this name) or the name *Poland* (representing a positive universal value) as linguistic resources that make no significant contributions to the communicated content in terms of value judgements. Nevertheless, other proper names (mostly surnames) which seem to be author-independent and non-evaluative are marked in communication practice in terms of their axiological potential by *ethical discourse* (cf. Kłosińska 2012), that the sender uses. Thus, we consider the names *Tusk*, *Gronkiewicz-Waltz*, *Mazgula*, *Frasyniuk*, and *Bauman* as contextually (negative) evaluative resources of language, similar to such key words as *Smolensk* or *the Church*, which in turn express positive evaluations in the described discourse.

The analysis in this part of the study will be different than the previous parts of the report – we will focus primarily on showing several typical

mechanisms of valuation used by the authors of the analyzed set of strips. We do so because in relation to this type of valuation, quantitative analysis does not produce significant new knowledge, while qualitative analysis allows recognizing valuation techniques and thus gaining knowledge about the ways of using language resources to influence the recipient.

Based on our analysis of the strips, we distinguished several main techniques of communicating non-systemically motivated valuations coming from the context (i.e. shared knowledge).

## 1. Connotation

The first is exploiting the connotational<sup>41</sup> semantic background of words. We shall present this technique using several examples. Strip [168] *Teatr jednego aktora* [One man show] refers to the conceptual metaphor POLITICS IS THEATER, which has been established for centuries in culture, and which is cognitively extensive (covering both the stage and the entities operating on it: actors, directors, scriptwriters, set designers, and even stage managers), but on the level of pragmatics, it licenses mainly the connotational meanings of the lexeme *teatr* “something pretended, inauthentic, devoid of seriousness, calculated to gain applause” (the footage refers to the arrest by the police of Władysław Frasyniuk during the Smolensk counter-picketing in June 2017). Additionally, we are dealing here with depreciation of a person being referred with the phrase “one actor” (which is in Polish a component of the phrase equivalent to *one-man show*) – it is pointed out that in the event, discussed in the footage, the person in question (Władysław Frasyniuk) tried to draw attention to himself, striving to make himself the most important character.

Example [8] *Marsz na eksport* [A march for export] can be described in similar terms. The strip announces a segment covering the march organized by the Committee for the Defense of Democracy (KOD) along with the opposition. The use of the term *for export* instantiates the conceptual metaphor A MARCH IS A COMMODITY, whereby valuation is achieved by directing the recipient’s attention to associations resulting directly from the choice of such mental imagery on the part of the sender that is supposed to lead to the interpretation of the event and the

41 We use the term *connotation* to refer to those non-definitional components of a word’s meaning which contain primarily associative content assigned to a concept which a given word signifies.

motivation of its participants in terms of commerce (resulting from an attitude of calculation and self-interest), rather than in terms of morality or world-view (based on one's ethical beliefs). The expression *for export* is additionally an example of the use of irony in order to downplay the importance of the event.

Strip [209] *Kłótnia w obozie okupantów* [A quarrel in the occupying camp] in addition to the systemic meanings, the resources at play include the connotational power of all three words in: a *quarrel* carries the connotations of violence, emotionality, and a lack of desire for compromise; the word *camp* carries connotations of isolation and discipline (i.e. obeying orders), while the *occupying forces* carry associations with illegal, aggressive, and violent action. The words *occupying forces*, used here to describe the opposition, were also used hyperbolically, which adds to the text's emotional character.

Strip [147] was constructed in a similar way: *Po latach milczenia* [After [many] years of silence] (announcing a segment concerning an interview given in 2016 by Tomasz Arabski, who was responsible for the preparation of the 2010 visit to Katyń which ended in the crash of the presidential plane). The persuasive power of the expression *After [many] years* results from the connotational meaning "long" (which is a bad thing), and the word *silence* – whose connotation is "conscious withholding of information, unwillingness to speak" (which is bad).

The segment following strip [251] *Polowanie na Saryusz-Wolskiego* [The hunt for Saryusz-Wolski] concerned the resignation of this politician from membership in the European People's Party and the discussion of his situation as a candidate for the position of President of the European Council. The footage also contained a short excerpt showing journalists trying somewhat persistently to get the politician to answer their questions, but not in an aggressive way. In this context, the use of the word *hunt* seems exaggerated, because it carries associations with hunting and the animal world, not really appropriate for the material presented (the reporters' behavior shown in the clip is fairly typical and often encountered in a situation where a public figure is reluctant to provide information to the media).

In strip [19], *Prof. Rzepliński z medalem od Platformy* [Professor Rzepliński with a medal from the [Civic] Platform], the value polarity is reversed under the influence of discourse-motivated evaluations (Rzepliński and *Civic Platform* are marked negatively), which reverses the value sign of the connotation for the word *medal* 'something valuable; a valuable

distinction.’ The entire implied content can therefore be rendered as ‘a medal from the Civic Platform is not something valuable.’ This example shows coexistence of various methods of pragmatic valuation within the text of a single strip, which is common practice in relation to the analyzed set of messages.

Strips [36] and [39] *Front obrony sędziowskiej kasty* [The defensive front of the judiciary caste], evaluations contributed by the stylistic phraseme used are also accompanied by evaluations based on connotations of the word *front* ‘organized military operations involving the use of strategy, tactics and collective action.’ In this way a picture of the event is built, which is set to expose both the strength of the opponent and the threat he poses.

A similar formula was also used to construct strip [76] *Brukselskie ultimatum wobec Polski* [The Brussels ultimatum for Poland], and [175] *Uliczna rozróżba zamiast pamięci o bohaterach* [A street brawl instead of remembering the heroes]. The first of these triggers the connotational meaning of the word *ultimatum* ‘something final, something dangerous, a situation without an exit,’ and the accompanying footage disavows this assessment, making the tone of the entire strip ironic. In contrast, the author of text [175] uses the already strongly conventionalized connotational meaning of the adjectival form of *street* ‘common, vulgar, base, simple, (c)rude, primitive,’ further strengthened by the use of the colloquial augmentative *brawl* (the phrase *street brawl* was also used to name the civic support pickets for protesting opposition MPs). The last three examples illustrate the pragmatic function of the induced connotational meanings, i.e. creating (constructing) a specific image of reality based on stereotyping and profiling, which will be discussed in more detail in the next section.

## 2. Stereotyping and profiling

We decided to discuss both of these phenomena together because in analytical practice it is difficult to draw a clear line between them. Although profiling<sup>42</sup> of meaning as a linguistic phenomenon is not persuasive per se,

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42 In this report, the term *profiling* refers to emphasizing a certain feature or part of the conceptual base of a given expression at the textual level, including the initial categorization of the object, [...] selection of aspects corresponding to the categorization made [and] qualitative characteristics of the subject within the adopted aspects.

it can be (and, in relation to the material studied, very often is) exploited in order to introduce a persuasive meaning into statements, which in turn most often means that profiling serves to reproduce existing stereotypes or construct new ones.<sup>43</sup>

Let us start with an analysis of a case that is emblematic for this group of contextual valuations, i.e. strip [176]: *Ostatnia walka esbeków* [The final struggle of former Communist Secret Service operatives]. This is how one of the picket signs in front of the Sejm during the Sejm crisis was described. In the narration in the footage, it is mentioned that despite the pickets, the Sejm passed the law whose short name can be rendered in English (with some degree of approximation) as “decommunization law” and the thesis is proposed that the pickets were organized in order to prevent the passage of this law. The key to the entire context of the matter here is the common derogatory noun *esbek* (pl. *esbecy*) ‘an operative of the SB (Secret Service in the Polish People’s Republic)’, which as label conveys valuation systemically, but also brings additional meanings to the message. First of all, it profiles the situation a priori (de facto communicating the assertion that ‘no action on the part of *esbecy* can be good’) which results in stereotyping (and the resultant depreciation) of the group of people who are protesting – because even if the picket had been organized by opponents of the decommunization law, it was not only former *esbecy* who participated, but also regular citizens who did not agree to the reduction of the pensions of anyone who had worked in services subordinate to the Ministry of Internal Affairs before 1990. The content of the illustrative footage suggests that the use of the word *esbecy* served primarily to maintain (or perhaps even revive) the

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(Bartmiński 1993, p. 270). Profiling in this approach is such a fragmentary image of a designated entity in which both the objective properties of it and its subjective (individual) representations can be taken into account, depending on the accepted point of view and the interpretative perspective, which in turn consists of such elements as the accepted set of values and rationality type, and in the background – style and genre conditions.

- 43 Linguistic stereotyping, in turn, is understood from a non-evaluative perspective, as a linguistic and cultural image of the designated entity, reflecting its typical (commonly considered to be true, normal, ordinary) features (for more, see Bartmiński, Panasiuk 1993). “Stereotypes show [...] a generalized view of the world and as such belong to the sphere of common knowledge. They have [...] a bond-forming role to play; they are a tool of mobilization for the community, showing directions of action, but also defining what is ours and not ours, and therefore alien.” (Pluta 2006, pp. 230–231). However, in the material under study we also deal with created stereotypes, whose cognitive properties depend par excellence on the arbitrarily imposed viewpoint of the sender.

antagonism between the supporters of the current government and representatives of the government before 1989. The use of the term *final struggle* is also significant. On the one hand, it is an example of the rhetoric of the triumph ('At long last the Sejm passed a law of decommunization law which makes their 'struggle' the final one'). On the other, we are dealing here with a clear allusion (evident primarily to the older viewers): the expression *final struggle* refers ironically to the refrain of the *Internationale* – viewers with first-hand familiarity with the realities of the Polish People's Republic were probably meant to accept the words from the song as a kind of self-fulfilling prophecy. We may describe this strip as a mocking commentary to the clip presented in the news segment of a speech of one of the protesters, shown as saying *To jest przegrana potyczka. Musimy ją wygrać*<sup>44</sup> [This is a lost skirmish. We have to win it... (the fragment ends here)], because the use of the word *walka* in the text of the strip instead of the word *bój* on the one hand masks the intertextual context (*bój* is used in the chorus of the Polish version of the song) and connotatively depreciates the axiological value of the protest (a *walka* is less than *bój*), and on the other – ridicules the protesters (by making a reference to the nineteenth-century workers' anthem) and their attachment to ideas outdated in the twenty-first century. We shall continue our reflections on the subject, showing some of the dominant ways of profiling the image of the account of reality presented in the collected material.

The first is **opposing profiling of the cognitive stage**, whereby the information strip suggests an assessment (usually negative) that contradicts the footage or at least does not follow directly from it. This technique results in strengthening or evoking the stereotype intended by the sender. Such is the case, for example, with regard to strip [24] *Setki tysięcy złotych dla sędziów TK* [Hundreds of thousands of zlotys for Constitutional Tribunal judges]. The phrase *hundreds of thousands of zlotys* serves pragmatically as a generalized quantifier, i.e. it communicates the meaning of 'a great deal of (money)'. The footage, however, concerns the fact that judges of the Constitutional Tribunal receive at the end of their term of office – in keeping with the law – an equivalent in cash for unused leave ranging from several dozen to a hundred thousand zlotys (per judge). This event was made the main point of the main news program on public television and announced to the public with a strip that is ambiguous in its content. All this seems to have resulted from the broadcaster's intentions that exceeded merely providing information.

44 Source: <http://wiadomosci.tvp.pl/28260463/ostatnia-walka-esbekow>.

Another example of this technique is found in strip [64], *Tajna debata o Polsce* [A secret debate on Poland]. The adjective *secret* has been used here without an explanatory reference to the linguistic context, which entitles the recipient to choose one of its systemic meanings: 1. ‘kept secret’, 2. ‘illegal’, 3. ‘of certain services or their operatives: acting in secret’, 4. ‘deeply hidden, unknown to anyone’, 5. ‘very personal, intimate.’ The subject of the message rules out the fifth interpretation. In the footage it is explicitly stated that the debate on Poland, which was set to take place the day after the television broadcast, would be conducted ‘behind closed doors’, which also allowed the viewers who knew the reality of international political communication to exclude from the interpretative horizon interpretations two, three and four of the adjective *secret*. In specialist terminology, such debates are described as *confidential*; however, this adjective was not used here. Instead, the apparently synonymous lexeme *secret* was used (apparently – because *confidential* is not in fact replaceable by *secret* in this context), which made it possible for viewers who were less aware of the issue to come to believe that indeed a *debate* was in fact deliberately held *in secret*, and to see in this phrase a confirmation of the existence of some conspiracy against Poland. Apart from the fact that the strip suggests a different image of the event (conspiracy) to that presented in the footage, we are also dealing here with an attempt to blur the meaning of the adjective *secret*, which is important for the axiology of the message.

The second phenomenon connected with profiling is **emotional coloring of the cognitive stage**. For example, the use of the adjective *embarrassing* in strip [162] *Żenująca prowokacja* [An embarrassing provocation] does not bring anything significant into the message apart from expressing a strong ethical or aesthetic evaluation. One might even consider that the sender here is taking on a paternalistic attitude toward the characters of the reported event, because by profiling such a picture of the situation is to show the sender’s superiority over the people involved in the event, whom he or she wants to embarrass and thus humiliate.

Similarly, the use of such words in the texts of the strips as [88] *desperacki (atak)* [a desperate attack] (specific emotions mentioned by name: helplessness, despair, rage); *szokujące (zeznania, kłamstwa, szczegóły)* [shocking (testimonies, lies, details)] [106], [127], [246], [267], *szokujący (zapis podłości)* [a shocking (record of meanness)] [284] (specific emotions named: outrage, anger, disgust, horror); *ośmieszył* [ridiculed (3rd. pers., past tense, masc.)] [245] (sender’s emotions expressed: pity, disregard, mockery); *clumsy* [38] (sender’s emotions expressed: pity, mockery);

disorder [175] (emotions expressed: indignation, anger) and others. Emotional profiling of the way of seeing of a given event has a high persuasive value, as it reduces the critical and rational side of message reception, activating in the viewers the sphere of personal feelings, stimulating them to *experience* the content being announced, and not only to assimilate, understand and remember it.

Another interesting way of profiling the evaluation of an event in the strips is the use of names of people whom the sender assesses negatively, and whom it would not otherwise have been necessary to mention when giving an account of a particular event. This technique could be described as **customization of the image at the cognitive stage**, whereby the name of some person (perceived positively or negatively in a given type of discourse) is made the locus of persuasion. This determines the assessment of any event in advance. We find at least two such uses in our corpus: strips [199] *Sylwester z Michnikiem* [New Year's Eve with Michnik] and [215] *KOD przed Sejmem i hold dla Baumana* [KOD before the Sejm and a tribute to Bauman] – they referred to events in which the persons mentioned by name (Adam Michnik, Zygmunt Bauman) were not the main characters.

In the first case, the segment covered the New Year's Eve picnic in front of the Sejm, organized by protesting opposition MPs, which was also attended by members of the Committee for the Defense of Democracy and, among others, Adam Michnik. He was neither the organizer of the event, or at least this is not mentioned in the clip, nor a participant in the protest (because he was not an MP at the time, nor did he hold any public office). The use of his name in the text of the strip can therefore be treated as a communicative manipulation (there was no justified need to inform the viewers about Adam Michnik's appearance at this event, as it was a trivial fact in comparison with the weight of the obstruction of parliamentary activities taking place at that time), serving only – as it seems – to stigmatize the participants of both the picnic and the protest according to the principle: Adam Michnik's name takes away the value of any undertaking (even a New Year's Eve party) in which he takes part.

In the second case, the segment covered a protest rally of the opposition, during which, at the request of one of the participants, an homage was to be paid to Zygmunt Bauman, who had died a few days earlier. The footage provided no information as to whether this was done; however, it presented a statement by a journalist not connected with TVP S.A., who unequivocally condemned Bauman. The use of Bauman's name in the text of the strip in the context of the information and assessments that followed



must be seen as a violation of basic cultural norms, which – even assuming that someone does not accept another person’s activities, attitudes or views – require respect for the deceased (according to the ancient maxim *De mortuis nil nisi bene*). Thus, this is an example of an ethically extremely controversial persuasive procedure involving mockery of both the deceased (*a tribute to Bauman* is a clearly ironic) and those for whom the memory of Bauman’s achievements is an important value. The above examples are clear enough to exemplify this technique, but it is worth noting that in the corpus, only the names of those who opposed the actions of the current authorities in one way or another were subject to the principle in question. Not once did the names of any coalition politicians or the Polish President appear in the analyzed texts. Thus, it is a rule discursively attributed to the exercise of a defamatory function toward political opponents.

Yet another technique of profiling the cognitive stage is **maximizing the hostility** toward certain entities and their actions, thus **arousing a sense of danger** in the viewer. This is achieved by more or less camouflaged references to conspiracy theories, e.g., the virtually contextless use of words such as: *secret* (adj.) [64] (see: the analysis above); *mystery* [125], [132]; *mysterious* [129], [271]; *against Poland* [87], [90], [223]; *stand behind* [136]; *provocation* [143], [162], [164], [180]; and through the use of vocabulary that is supposed to inspire fear or anxiety, e.g., *threaten* [208]; *frighten* [3]; *total* [46], [91]; *radical* (adj./n.) [190], [196], [201], [208], [210], [214], [245]; *ultimatum* [76].

Closely related to this technique is profiling of the action of negatively assessed subjects as **repetitive** and perhaps even **persistent** remains. In order to introduce this element of meaning into the message, verbless constructions with the word *znów* [once more/again] are often used: [14] *Opozycja znów o Trybunale* [The opposition once again about the Tribunal], [78] *Bruksela znów o Trybunale* [Brussels once more about the Tribunal], [208] *Radykalna opozycja znów grozi* [Radical opposition threatening again], which allows us to interpret it syntactically as information on some iterative action of the entities mentioned, but on a pragmatic level, the strips communicate the sender’s dissatisfaction with the repetition of the actions (mostly with speech – the absent verb in [14] and [78], and the syntactic structure the of the type X *once again on Y* conventionally indicates someone’s speech perceived negatively by its recipient as tiresome, needless, or taxing; cf. *Ty znów o tym samym!* [You’re on (and on) about the same thing again!]; *Wałęsa znów o 500+* [Wałęsa once again on 500+]; *Znów o gminach i ich zadaniach* [Again about municipalities and their tasks]. This construction is a sign

of some kind of advantage (institutional, psychological, socioenvironmental) of the sender over the subject repeating their illocutions about a certain aspect of reality – it can only be used by someone who considers a given subject closed, explained, and therefore communicatively unimportant, unnecessary, irrelevant.

The same intention is expressed in the corpus by other means, e.g. using a temporal operator, such as *kolejny* [yet another, subsequent, further], syntactically and semantically related to some negatively marked term: [27] *Kolejne skandaliczne decyzje sędziów* [Further scandalous decisions by judges]; [50] *Opozycja zapowiada kolejne bitwy* [The opposition predicts further battles]; [191] *Kolejna próba destabilizacji państwa* [Another attempt to destabilize the state]; [268] *Kolejny świadek obciąża prezydent Warszawy* [Another witness lays the blame on the Mayor of Warsaw].

Individual events can also be exploited for the same purpose: [204] *Wpadka za wpadką* [One slip-up following another], [212] *Petru ograł... Petru* [Petru won against... Petru (himself)]; or intensifications: [214] *Opozycja coraz bardziej radykalna* [The opposition [is becoming] more and more radical]; [51] *...bardziej zły...* [more and more angry] (see above).

To conclude this section, we will draw the reader's attention to yet another persuasive mechanism connected with profiling, i.e. the **profiling of a scene as unusual**, highlighting the unexpected and even surprising aspects of a given event. We have already analyzed strips in which this technique was used on other occasions, e.g. [199] and [215] (using the names of people loosely related to the event), [1] (suggesting that a court trial is a *meeting*), [23] (attributing ignorance of the law to lawyers). Here we will point out further examples of this mechanism in the material we collected.

In strip [11] *Sejmowe gry* [Parliamentary games] [11], the nominal name of the activity comes to the fore, which can be interpreted as a means of profiling the image of the Sejm as a less than serious institution, although in fact the footage only refers to certain actions of the opposition (the reason for their absence at the parliamentary meeting at which a debate on ways of resolving the constitutional crisis was to be held). The assessment is critical. On juxtaposing the text of the strip with the relevant material, it will turn out that the sender attributed the above characteristics only to the opposition MPs. We may talk here about the use of the traditional conceptual metaphor POLITICS IS A GAME, very spacious semantically, but in the analyzed case it is updated with the more detailed variant OPPOSITION MPS ARE ACTING LIKE LITTLE CHILDREN PLAYING A FRIVOLOUS GAME.

The author of strip [134] *Ślad tajnych służb w aferze Amber Gold* [Traces of the secret services in the Amber Gold scandal], in turn, exposes the existence of a link between the activity of the secret services and the functioning of Amber Gold by using the word *trace* which indicates how insignificant this link may be. The footage that follows goes on to explain that the witness was acquainted in his childhood with the future minister in charge of the secret services in Donald Tusk's government and that the Internal Security Agency *was interested in* the activity of Amber Gold before the company went bankrupt. Thus, we are dealing here with a blurring of the meaning of strip [134] – it is not clear (even when compared with the video account) what this trace consisted of, i.e. whether the secret services had conducted a legal operational investigation of Amber Gold (which is indirectly communicated in the material, although the verb phrase *be interested in* does not contribute to clarity here), or whether they perhaps aided and abetted someone's criminal activity. The expression *secret services* may also create an atmosphere of conspiracy, collusion, intrigue. Thus, neither the strip nor the footage that follows it indicate the precise nature of the relationship between the secret services and Amber Gold, although they do suggest its existence, which serves to profile the sense 'the secret services may have been conducive to Amber Gold's activities.'

Strip [190] *Wigilia według radykalnej opozycji* [Christmas Eve according to the radical opposition] reverses the value sign of the word *Wigilia* [Christmas Eve] by using the negative discourse phrase *radical opposition*. Indeed, the footage highlights the political motivations of the protesters in the Sejm at the time, as well as the aggression and vulgarity of opponents of the government protesting in front of the Sejm. Further, it hints that the protesters are similar to communist apparatchiks who disrespect the Christmas tradition (by showing a clip with a Christmas Eve scene from the comedy *Rozmowy kontrolowane*<sup>45</sup>). This strip, thanks to its construction *X according to Y*<sup>46</sup>, profiles the image of insular, isolated opposition even on Christmas Eve.

45 This scene satirized the ignorance of Christmas customs, traditions, and its spiritual significance on the part of high-ranking Polish People's Republic officials.

46 It is a construction almost as entrenched as a fixed phrase, whose pragmatic significance may be rendered as follows: 'Y is treating X individually, in his/her own way.' Cf. similar uses with this meaning: *Ewangelia według św. Marka* [Gospel according to St. Mark]; *Świat według Garpa* [The World According to Garp (title of a novel)], *Świat według Kiepskich* [The World According to the Kiepskis – title of a Polish comedy series]; *Uroda według blondynki* [Beauty According to a Blonde (title of a blog)]; *Pizza według Magdy Gessler* [Pizza According to Magda Gessler (title of a culinary article)]; *Piękno według geja* [Beauty According to a Gay Man (title of a press article)]; *Fotografia według Langforda* [Photography According to Langford]

Rather peculiar profiling can be found in the text of strip [198] *Moralność w trakcie kompromitacji* [Morality in the process of becoming compromised] – morality is shown here as a value regressively variable over time (which contradicts the colloquial image of this human disposition), and becoming compromised as a process, not an effect of a process (which is also inconsistent with its image entrenched in language). The whole of this peculiar conceptualization of the notions of *morality* and *becoming compromised* is comprehensible only when juxtaposed with the footage that exposes the *parliamentary tomfoolery* of the protesting opposition MPs (e.g. jokes by opposition MP Joanna Mucha mocking the fact that the protest is being called a coup by the ruling party), critical assessment of these jokes by opposition leaders, and the words of Ewa Kopacz, who declared that the protesters wanted to be the *moral opposition*. The assessment being suggested here is the following: ‘the opposition is characterized by progressive disappearance of moral norms.’ This approach reinforces the negative assessment of the opposition’s actions because it shows these actions as a process leading to a collapse. Incidentally, we would like to note that Grzegorz Schetyna, leader of the Civic Platform, was shown on the screen with the caption “*shadow Prime Minister*” (referring to the phrase *shadow cabinet* “a project for the manning of the chairs in government prepared by the opposition in the event of taking over power in the state”), which obviously reinforces the thesis proposed in the material (‘the opposition is immoral despite its declarations to the contrary’), but it is also – in our opinion – a violation of the basic principles of ethics in public communication.

### 3. Presupposition and implicature

By presuppositions we mean conclusions that follow from a statement in a logically necessary way (characterized by certainty), and by implicature we mean the sort of conclusions that flow from a statement in a logically probable way (characterized by potentiality).

In analytical practice, many strips in our corpus are accompanied by some sort of presupposition (most often of the existential type), e.g. [234] *Otwarcie Świątyni Opatrzności Bożej* [The opening of the Temple of Divine Providence] presupposes the proposition ‘The Temple of Divine

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(title of a guidebook)]; *Historia według Korwina* [History According to Korwin (title of a book)].

Providence has not yet been opened,’ while [270] *Prawnicy zrzekają się Chmielnej 70* [Lawyers forfeit [the property at] 70 Chmielna Street] – the proposition ‘Before, the lawyers did not cede the property,’ but these kind of inferences are fairly natural in ordinary communication and do not affect the persuasive power of the strips in our corpus. This is why we shall take into account below only those (non-existential) presuppositions which are the effect of conscious and intentional shaping of the surface form of expression, i.e. those which carry the sender’s intended assessment.

In section 2.3 above, we discussed sentential presuppositions resulting from the sender’s choice of the question structure, so here we will limit our discussion to characterizing only one distinct case of using a lexical presupposition that occurs repetitively in the examined set of texts.

Four times the exponent of the evaluative presupposition was the adjective *kolejny* [next/subsequent/(yet) another]: [27] *Kolejna skandaliczna decyzja sędziów* [Yet another scandalous decision by the judges] (presupposition: ‘There have already been scandalous decisions by the judges before’); [50] *Opozycja zapowiada kolejne bitwy* [The opposition announces further battles] (presupposition: ‘There have already been battles initiated by the opposition before’); [191] *Kolejna próba destabilizacji państwa* [Another attempt to destabilize the state] (presupposition: ‘There have already been attempts to de-stabilize the state before’); [268] *Kolejny świadek obciąża prezydenta Warszawy* [Another witness lays the blame on the mayor of Warsaw] (presupposition: ‘There have already been witnesses who testified against the Mayor of Warsaw’). It is easy to notice that all these presupposed claims express a negative assessment of the actions of the circles or people considered by the political authorities as opponents or enemies (if this does not result directly from the content of the strip – as in [191] – then the footage presented after the strip provides the viewer with sufficient premises to fill the “empty” space, i.e. the position of the agent, with the content consistent with the sender’s expectations). The value sign expressed by these presuppositions is determined by such words as *scandalous*, *battle*, *destabilize* and *lay the blame*. The previously discussed strips containing the temporal operator *znow* [again / (once) more] ([14], [78], [208]) should also be interpreted according to the same principle. In both cases, the broadcaster strives to profile a favorable image of the event, while the use of the lexeme *again* does not generate value-adjusting presuppositions (it only presupposes the recurrence of a given phenomenon, while the value-adjustment is shifted to the footage, i.e. to strictly textual mechanisms), whereas the use of the word *kolejny* [(yet) another / next] each time causes a value-adjusting presupposition.

Implicatures, i.e. probable conclusions dependent on the common knowledge of the sender and recipient and on their communicative and cultural competence (which applies especially to the recipient), are much more difficult to describe without access to reception testimonials (questionnaires, polls, statements of recipients). It is obvious that an institutional broadcaster has an advantage of communicative competence over a dispersed recipient (often presented collectively as an audience), therefore descriptions of the senses implied by the statements selected for analysis must be intuitive and subjective to a certain extent.

The first mechanism observed in the examined material is the simultaneous use by the broadcaster of regularly communicated neutral presuppositions, along with implicatures fully motivated by the discourse conditions which determine the axiological character of the entire message. This is evident in the examples containing the operator *już* [already, as early as]: [113] *ABW wiedziała o Amber Gold już w 2010 roku* [ABW knew about Amber Gold as early as 2010] (presupposition: ABW knew about Amber Gold earlier than expected, but the implicature here is: ‘and this is wrong’). Another such example is [291] *Program 500+ już w Sejmie* [The 500+ Program already in the Sejm] (presupposition: The 500+ Program was in the Sejm earlier than one might have expected, but the implicature here is: ‘and this is good’).

Another way of introducing the implied evaluation into the act of communication desired by the sender consists in expressing directly (systemically, i.e., with some “strong” expression, e.g., *pucz, agresja* [a coup, aggression] a negative assessment of the event in social terms (often inconsistent with its real character) and at the same time shifting to the implication of ethical and/or sensory evaluation. We present selected examples of the application of this technique. In strip [44] *„Pucz” – sezon drugi* [“The Coup” – season two], the quotation marks and the word *season* (with an ordinal numeral) ‘of a series of episodes of a TV program or series’ build the implicature: ‘The opposition’s protests are like an entertainment program or a TV series, i.e. they are intended to attract the attention of as many viewers as possible, but they are in fact nothing serious’. In contrast, strip [194] *Jak się robi pucz* [How to make a coup], by referring to the intertextual memory of viewers – lends credibility to the following implicature: ‘Protests of the opposition may be considered a frivolous version of the instructions on how to effectively overthrow the ruling power’ (an ironic reference to the positive illocution of titles of typical self-help guidebooks). And finally, an example already partly discussed earlier: [170] *Agresja na*

*obrzeżach marszu pamięci* [Aggression on the fringes of the March of Remembrance]. Here the semantics of *aggression* is weakened by the implicature: ‘Acts of aggression occurred only marginally, and thus the event (the March of Remembrance) was successful anyway’.

Another procedure that triggers the implicit conclusions desired by the sender is also semantic masking of the essence of the event to which the segment relates. In the collection of texts under analysis, this concerns, among others, statements suggesting conspiracy or collusion. We have already signaled this phenomenon before; here we will discuss it more closely. Implicatures referring to a conspiracy theory are triggered in the analyzed material mainly by systemically referring to the secrecy of knowledge about reality, e.g. in the [64] *Tajna debata o Polsce* [A secret debate about Poland] (implicature: ‘Someone is hiding the content of the debate about Poland – and this is bad’; see also the analysis above), [271] *Tajemniczy plan wiceprezydenta Warszawy* [A mysterious plan of the vice-president of Warsaw] (implicature: ‘The plan of the vice-president of Warsaw is not widely known, he may have acted in secret and wanted to hide something – and this is bad’) or [285] *Zagadkowe związki kamienicznika* [Mysterious relations of the townhouse owner] (implicature: ‘The townhouse owner did not act openly; he had something to hide – and this is bad’). All of these statements can be described as lacking denotational concreteness, but offering a wealth of possible associations, all of which are clearly determined axiologically. Moreover, based on the superficial ambiguity of the strips’ content, in constructing a conspiracy vision of the world, their authors also refer to mechanisms that generate implicatures in the act of reception that are not obvious but highly probable. For instance, the intention of positively evaluating the notification of the inconsistency of views or attitudes among the opposition is communicated by the broadcaster in a confrontational way: [153] *Prawo do pamięci* [The right to remembrance] (the footage allows to update the implicature: ‘Someone is denying someone else’s right to the memory of the Smolensk disaster’); [87] *Platforma z Brukselą przeciwko Polsce* [The (Civic) Platform with Brussels against Poland]; [90] *Bruksela, Berlin i opozycja przeciwko Polsce* [Brussels, Berlin and the opposition against Poland]; [91] *Totalna opozycja i Niemcy chcą ukarać Polskę* [The total opposition and Germany want to punish Poland] – to each of these statements we may attribute the implicature: ‘Non-Poles are conspiring against Poland’ and the (more deeply immersed in a discourse context) implicature: ‘Only the current government truly cares about Poland’s interests.’

Other examined statements accentuate, by means of implicature, content that is even more precisely defined from a persuasive point of view, which would not necessarily have been shared by a viewer who had not been primed in this way. Strip [196] *Spór między liderami radykalnej opozycji* [A dispute between the leaders of radical opposition] implies the sense: ‘The opposition lacks unity; it is dispersed, has many leaders who cannot communicate because they are competing with one another’ (an inference based partly on the analysis of the footage). The persuasiveness of the statement in [46] *Totalny chaos totalnej opozycji* [Total chaos of the total opposition] is based on the following implicature: ‘The opposition is completely disorganized; it has no control over its actions at all’ (motivated by the use of the expression *total chaos*). By contrast, strips [201] and [214] *Umiarkowana opozycja przeciwko radykałom* [Moderate opposition against the radicals] and *Opozycja coraz bardziej radykalna* [The opposition [becoming] more and more radical], introduce a very peculiar communicative value in the implications, i.e. scalability in assessment of the opposition’s actions. The opposition is included in them as a qualitative rather than quantitative data set (“better” vs. “worse” i.e. a predetermined contrast: moderate opposition vs. radical opposition). The direction of persuasion is controlled in this case by changing the image of the ontological status of the key concept (opposition) and by subjecting this status to an evaluation that is only gradable downwards. This implied sense can be conveyed by the following formula: ‘The opposition is bad, but moderate opposition is still better than radical opposition.’

Finally, we shall discuss one more communicative phenomenon found repeatedly in our corpus. It is based on the use of implied senses for persuasive purposes. Specifically, it involves exploiting the persuasive power of pragmatic exponents of general quantification (a phenomenon thus far only signaled in this report). Systemic exponents of these meanings (*everyone* and *no one*) were used only three times: in [109] *Nikt nie czuje się winny za Amber Gold* [No one feels guilty over Amber Gold]; [181] *Wszyscy chcą wolnych mediów* [Everyone wants free media], and [207] *Nikt nie zamknął Kolumnowej* [No one closed the Column Hall], each time supporting the persuasive intention of the broadcaster, which means that the inclusive pronoun *everyone* appeared as a carrier of the broadcaster’s predetermined positive evaluation, and the exclusive (excluding) pronoun *no one* – as a carrier of valuation in the opposite direction. However, as far as pragmatic exponents of general quantification are concerned, what prevails in the corpus is quantification through the use of numerals.



Although the phenomena referred to with these numerals are quantifiable, the pragmatic plane of each expression's influence is rather about blurring the boundary between the calculable numerical value of a given data point and the social perception of its value. In other words, it is about the recipient perceiving a certain numerical value as great, i.e. disproportionate to the realities which the message concerns. The sender's intention here is – as one may surmise – to present an issue by means of expressions containing names of relatively large numbers in such a way that the recipient will consider such data to be psychologically inconceivable or even morally unacceptable. This phenomenon was at the basis of the construction used in strip [24] *Setki tysięcy złotych dla sędziów TK* [Hundreds of thousands of zlotys for CT judges] (see above), and is particularly evident in the coverage of the topic “Protest rezydentów” [The protest of resident physicians] (strips [295] to [306]), which makes it possible to consider this technique a deliberate strategy of formatting information, as in five strips (of twelve concerning this topic) there appeared information interpreted linguistically and contextually about specific (in terms of everyday perception very large) sums of money, which is to be perceived by the recipient as excessive and thus provoke disagreement (or even indignation) vis à vis the postulates of the professional group of young doctors presented in the footage of the segments in question.