

## CONTEMPORARY POLISH POLITICAL RHETORIC

## RETÓRICA POLÍTICA POLACA CONTEMPORÁNEA

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### Abstract

The article discusses three dimensions of political rhetoric in Poland. The language used by politicians is the first one. Social and historic factors which conditioned contemporary styles of political communication result in the fact that political rhetoric in Poland is typical of countries which experienced authoritarian or totalitarian regimes. The second dimension of political rhetoric is found in media discourse. Mediatization of politics, technological changes in the media created a new rhetorical situation, new strategies of the persuasion used by politicians and journalists. The third dimension of political rhetoric is found in the rhetorical research concerning the ways of expression of both politicians and journalists. The article discusses major tendencies in research: propaganda language analysis, research on the new media, visual persuasion as well as use of rhetoric as a tool of civic education.

**Keywords:** political rhetoric – political language – Polish rhetoric – media discourse.

### Resumen

El artículo aborda las tres dimensiones de la retórica política en Polonia. La primera es el lenguaje de los políticos. Los factores sociales e históricos que condicionaron los estilos contemporáneos de la comunicación política hacen que la retórica política en Polonia sea típica de países que tienen detrás una experiencia de autoritarismo o totalitarismo. La segunda dimensión de la retórica política es el discurso mediático. La mediatización de la política, los avances tecnológicos en los medios crearon una nueva situación retórica, las nuevas estrategias del juego persuasivo entre políticos y periodistas. La tercera dimensión de la retórica política son los estudios retóricos relativos a las declaraciones de los políticos y los periodistas. El artículo analiza las tendencias principales de la investigación, es decir el análisis del lenguaje de la propaganda, los estudios acerca de los nuevos medios de comunicación, la persuasión visual y el tratamiento de la retórica como una herramienta de la educación cívica.

**Palabras clave:** retórica política – lenguaje político – retórica polaca – discurso mediático.

### INTRODUCTION

While attempting to write about rhetoric and politics in contemporary Poland, it is necessary to point out three basic forms of relationships between them. The first one is constituted by applied rhetoric used in everyday political life: at the Sejm (Polish Parliament) sessions, during parliamentary commissions' debates, town council meetings, electoral rallies, TV studio discussions, as well as commemorative speeches, and everyday political parlance. Secondly, political rhetoric is present in the media discourse. One can consider articles on political topics and Internet blogs as a part of it. However, what is even more interesting is what journalists and newsmen (and also politicians themselves) say about the language of politics at the meta level: how they describe, evaluate and deconstruct it. Finally, there is the third form, namely scholarly analysis and reflection concerning the language of politics. Those three dimensions will designate the structure of further considerations, which are an overview of the main changes in the late twentieth century Polish political rhetoric.

#### **THE POLITICAL AND CULTURAL FOUNDATIONS OF POLISH RHETORICAL PRACTICE**

As it is well known, political rhetoric, regardless of the political system and the historic period, possesses some inalienable features (Martin, 2014). Since it is used to obtain and hold power, it is a blend of logical argument and manipulative seduction (O'Shaughnessy, 2004; Garsten, 2009), promises and threats (Charteris-Black, 2004), as well as positive self-presentation and denigration of the political opponent (Atkinson, 1984; Lakoff, 2011). Moreover, political rhetoric is often nationalistic, as it is full of calling for national unity and conflict enhancement. At other occasions it also refers to great democratic ideals that people cherish deeply, as well as beautiful phrases, which inspire us without giving concrete solutions. The language and rhetoric of Polish politics is no different.

At the same time political rhetoric is strongly influenced by the political systems and their major political actors. The historical, economic and cultural traditions and conditions establish some templates used by successive generations of politicians. Thus, Polish rhetoric has been shaped by several remote and recent socio-political factors. The rhetoric that current Polish politicians use is populated by themes and conflict tropes that were present in Polish political thought in the nineteenth century. Poland was partitioned by Russia, Germany and Austria-Hungarian Empire then. Although it was not an independent state, that was a very important formative period for the Polish

culture. At that time two rival tendencies, romanticism and positivism, shaped the models of political ethos. The former was grounded in emotions and independence drives, the latter in rational and systematic hard work. In this vein, some groups called for a charismatic leader who could lead the nation to independence notwithstanding bloody barricades, others envisaged a practical, unemotional, effective diplomat and manager. Both tendencies are still discernible in the Polish political discourse (Kłosińska, 2003, 2005).

Another point of historic reference can be found in the post-World War II period (1945-1989), when Poland, then a member of the Soviet bloc, was dominated by communist propaganda. Its Polish version did not diverge specifically from the Russian guidelines (Klemperer, 1992; Głowiński, 1991, 1993, 1996, 1999), which strongly undermined the general trust in public discourse. In the mid-1970s the voice of the political opposition was first allowed in the public sphere, and one of the postulates was the verification of political language and rhetoric. Communist “newspeak” (Pisarek, 2007: 360) used some structures and practices independently of the socio-political situation (which was bleak) to extol the system and to leave no option for the people but to embrace it. What the Communist Party leaders said and what could be read in the (censored) press or watched daily on public TV was marred with lies and manipulation. No wonder it produced a very low level of trust in public communication of all kinds. The point is that the permanent presence of newspeak has influenced also present day politicians. For years Polish political scene has been dominated by people who grew up before 1989 and whose communication patterns had largely been formed by the rhetoric of the communist system. There are still some traces of newspeak in contemporary political discourse, as evidenced by pompous and empty rhetoric, as well as official style marked by indirectness, meaninglessness and kitsch (Dubisz, 1992: 157).

The most recent chapter in Polish history involves the bloodless regime change in 1989 and the efforts towards a construction of a democratic state for the last 25 years. The Polish political system has been typical for young democracies with a multitude of political parties and frequent changes of coalition governments. The last ten years have seen the dominance of centrist parties and a strong position of the right wing groups. However, the evolution of Polish political rhetoric of the turn of the twentieth century follows the path of many countries that experienced authoritarian or totalitarian regimes. With a fundamental systemic and cultural change, also the language of politics has taken a new shape. A closed unidimensional discourse of the communist regime has

been transformed into an open multidimensional democratic deliberation. Jerzy Bralczyk, who began his analyses of the political language with the official texts of the totalitarian state admits that the former rhetoric was actually easier to describe due to its uniform, unequivocal and schematic nature (Bralczyk, 2003b: 7). At present we deal with the multitude and diversity of sources, voices and styles. Media or parliamentary debates after 1989 illustrate new ways of talking about politics: the change of the concepts of the state, power, citizens participation in public life is related to a different set of topics and the hierarchy of their importance.

Current political rhetoric in Poland is a result of both the transformational processes taking place in our country, and of the influences of a supra regional scope. With Poland's joining the European Union in 2004, the public sphere had to adapt fast to the contemporary political communication styles characteristic of mature democracies. Political pluralism has produced new forms and styles of expression. Deliberation involves not only the manifestation of diverse competing interests but also divergent ways of solving the problems. Therefore, it is possible to speak of some dominant ideological trends (discourses) in Poland. Bralczyk writes of three patterns of political communication: the conservative one (by anticommunist, Christian and independence-oriented national groups), the liberal one (used by the parties emphasizing the value of civic society and parliamentary democracy), and the socialist orientation (Bralczyk, 2003b: 99). Kazimierz Ożóg, on the other hand, indicates three other types of discourse: the romantic one (related to the Solidarity movement and referring to national and Christian values), the liberal one (corresponding to the economic and technocratic approach) and the populist type (the most emotionally laden) (Kazimierz Ożóg, 2004: 44-46). The division proposed by Katarzyna Kłosińska based rather on linguistic issues identifies the "mission idiom" and the "interest idiom", as well as an open and closed discourse. Her classification criteria include the role the sender attributes to him/herself and the readiness to come to terms with the other actors of the political scene. In the mission idiom, axiological rhetoric dominates and politicians present themselves as bringing back the order of values in the public sphere, while politicians using the interest idiom apply pragmatic rhetoric and present themselves, first of all, as experts, who –after winning the election– will solve concrete problems of the voters (Kłosińska, 2005: 211; Kłosińska, 2012). The value of the last of the three classifications seems to be its flexibility. Kłosińska's framework allows to research the dynamics and changeability of language of various groups depending on the place they occupy on the

political scene. Naturally, the worldview criterion, not expression, is an essential one and the ideas and values which politicians choose to refer to provide the baseline of their political affiliation.

Poland's rapid socio-political transformation has also brought new genres into political rhetoric. The first group of texts is related to the electoral campaign and such forms of agitation as leaflets, posters, programs, internet pages, party convention speeches, electoral debates, or advertising spots should be included here. The unprecedented development of political marketing must be pointed to, as political discourse has started to be marked by blurring of the boundaries between commercial and political persuasion (or advertising) (Kochan, 2003; Mosca, 2013).

Unlike it was under the communist censorship, political communication was also opened to independent media's scrutiny politics –which has fundamentally transformed its rhetoric. The development of the media, particularly the Internet as well as globalization processes and the changes in politics itself have changed its language, too. Therefore, the second group of new genres reflects the mediatization of politics. The multitude of press outlets (including tabloids), the variety of radio and TV stations (the emergence of 24 hour news channels), and a growing popularity of the Internet have significantly influenced the way politicians communicate with voters. Daily interviews with politicians, current affairs shows intertwining political debates with film clips, politics-related weekend programs in the morning television, (confrontational) talk shows, televised Sejm debates and committee sessions, blogs run by politicians are only some examples of new mediatized rhetorical genres since 1989. In Western Europe, where the development of the media took place earlier (e.g., 1970s), it took longer to change political coverage into political infotainment, or political spectacle in which pace of narrative and visual attractiveness matter most (Silverstone, 2006). In mediatized politics, colloquial language (even slang and argot) mingles with specialized terminology (economic, legal, academic) and occasional neologisms. The rhetoric of “combat” and verbal radicalism involving contemptuous expressions peppered with irony and disdain (Fras, 2001: 340) tend to increase. In this new situation it would seem that the topics politicians discuss should rather call for official style and indeed its elements can also be found in Sejm speeches, particularly in those which are intended to present an image of a competent expert: professional politician as opposed to celebrity politician.

The latest chapter of Polish history demonstrates that in political rhetoric the need for expressiveness is dominant. Scholars point to increasing “brutality” in political discourse, evident, first of all, in the way political opponents are referred to. The aim is to completely eliminate them from the debate by denigrating them, ridiculing to the point of discrediting and denying credibility. It is a disturbing phenomenon since it may indicate an inability and/or unwillingness to achieve agreement. Such forms of address depend both on the style of individual politician, the party idiom, as well as its present position on the political scene, which is evident in the analyses of the parliamentary debates and prime ministers’ exposes in the last several years (Kampka, 2009).

Independently of the state regime, party system or national language and apart from concrete grammatical forms or semantic choices, Polish political rhetoric is characterized by such features as vagueness and verbosity, evaluative and emotional references, presupposed commonality of knowledge (e.g., clichés), adjusting the obligatory formulas to rhetorical situations and a specific role of metaphors. Michał Głowiński emphasizes the flexibility of political newspeak (which he calls as “parasitic” language that draws on various idioms and styles –ecclesiastical, liberal, social-democratic or capitalist– if necessary (Głowiński, 1991: 143). He believes it was the effect of the inauthenticity of the official pronouncements. However, it is worth considering if that exploitation of various language styles is not simply a form of persuasion. In other words, it might be the adaptation of political rhetoric to the current situation and concrete audiences.

Politicians themselves consider the ability to deliver speeches as one of the basic competences they need to possess. In their own statements on political rhetoric one can discern a characteristic ambivalence. On the one hand, they are aware that a low quality of public discourse results in the waning of the political fervor, the decline of electoral participation, and the rise of populism (Niesiołowski, 2007: 107). On the other hand, they admit that, although empty promises are a symptom of political irresponsibility and populism, nevertheless it is difficult to do without them since the people want to hear promises. Besides aggressive expression mentioned above, it is the “rhetoric of future” that provides the marketing force to the politician’s image. Unfortunately that is what proves advantageous nowadays, in contrast to a rational argument based on factual and balanced reasoning (Niesiołowski, 2007: 109).

To summarize, Poland’s political rhetoric utilizes the models developed after the political and economic breakthrough in 1989. They are both the result of shaping of the

Polish political scene, as well as the process of its mediatization. At present we may observe the effects of the next breakthrough: a technological and social one. It is hard to point out the moment when the changes have occurred but the new media have gradually influenced political rhetoric. When in the communist period there was one source –the ruling party, and in the democratic system there is a plurality of voices, nowadays anybody can be a sender, an information source. New participation forms, new political issues, new political movements (e.g., so called urban movements, activists congregating around specific issues of a given local community), new means of communication and forms of expression (e.g., Internet memes) have created a new rhetorical situation. On top of this, a generational change has occurred: politicians who have been major players in Polish politics in the last 25 years are slowly making room for younger people. It is still too early to pinpoint the changes in Polish political rhetoric resulting from Poland's membership in the EU, or increasing significance of visual communication, or personalization and fragmentation of political communication systems, but all of them establish a new context a contemporary politician must operate in.

#### **PUBLIC OPINION –HOW JOURNALISTS SPEAK OF POLITICS**

The changes that can be observed in the language of politics are also visible in the language of the media to describe politics. Multiplicity and diversity of the media, expressive political profiles of media outlets and a continuing tabloidization of the media are major factors influencing Polish journalistic rhetoric.

Before 1989, media outlets were primarily used for communist propaganda, journalists, to keep their jobs, had to realize the objectives of the ruling party. If politicians used the communist newspeak, then journalists had to repeat that in their reports. The media were the venues of condemnation of some ideologies (capitalist, anti-communist, western) or of apologia for some ideas (awareness and fight for world's peace and power balance). Journalists constructed this polarized world with specific verbal and visual tools. Polish film production was also subordinated to propagandas (Polish Film Chronicles were short, heavily edited pseudo-documentaries that demonstrated the successes of the country under the communist rule). Also the main evening news bulletin on state television *Dziennik Telewizyjny* (TV daily news) was censored to allow only positive presentation of the party. The abolition of the censor's

office was one of the main institutional breakthroughs of the Polish mediascape after 1989. The pluralist media arena has so far stabilized to reflect various ideologies, while specific outlets have ascertained relatively clear political affiliations (with some journalists officially supporting specific parties).

Personalization and emotionalism of political mediation results in the often use of metaphorical language by journalists. The most popular domains of such mapping are the military and sports, which, as a matter of fact, are typical of much political rhetoric regardless of the source: the politicians or the journalists (Semino, 2008; Charteris-Black, 2005). After 1989 new metaphors have also appeared. In the communist period, political activity was reported with seriousness and gravity and described as responsible and disinterested action. Today politics is compared to less serious and elevated forms of life. The thematic areas metaphors are drawn from include the theater, game/play, sports and the market. Such expressions as “political actors”, “political scene”, “spectacle”, “behind-the-scenes” present politics as theater. Politics is also perceived as a game, usually entertainment or gamble. Among sports disciplines the ones most popular are: boxing, wrestling, racing and football.

Politicians are constantly suspected of insincerity and willingness to manipulate the viewers. Hence the growth of media programs/publications intending to unmask the dirty tricks used by the authorities and the privileged media associated with them. Some publicists and researchers focus on how the language of politics has been subordinated to the requirements of marketing or political correctness, or on the image of the contemporary language of Polish politics i.e., its comparison with the communist newspeak (Głowiński, 2006; Bralczyk, 2007; Janicki & Władyka, 2007). However, in journalism the word “rhetoric” is used either as the description of the style of expression, or as synonym of language manipulation. Here are several headlines of the daily press: “Israeli Prime Minister accuses Turkish prime minister of anti-Semitic rhetoric”; “Sarkozy again reaches for anti-immigrant rhetoric”; “Important things but also electoral rhetoric”; “After Obama’s visit in Europe: much rhetoric few concrete facts”. Simultaneously, there appear some purportedly “in-depth analyses” of the idioms of particular politicians or parties, but after further scrutiny they seem to be a more or less disguised declarations of support for one of the parties.

News people are certainly responsible for the shape of the public debate. They do decide in what way they would report political events, what images and ideas they would use. Their interpretation of events will be the guide for most of the audiences. In Poland

we deal with external pluralism of the media (Hallin & Mancini, 2007), so in the market there are media outlets representing various interests and ideological trends. The press and TV are also active players in the public stage: they initiate debates and decide on the access of the chosen politicians to their viewers or readers. It is clearly paradoxical when journalists complaining about the debate quality and its brutalization invite to the studios mostly politicians who are notorious for their aggressive stands. The latest media trend is journalists' criticism of the political coverage by the competition: a right-wing portal could publicize nasty personal attacks on a left-wing commentator (and vice versa). Not surprisingly, such articles are emotion-laden, which is evidenced by audience's below-the-line responses. Interestingly, Polish political discourse has opened to include (digital) citizens as active participants in the current public debates.

Journalistic rhetoric, also one dealing with political affairs, has its own goals. It needs to show that a given TV station is worth watching, a given radio station is worth listening to, and a given paper writes about everything one needs to know. The persuasion means used by political journalists must be seen in a larger context of the contemporary media rhetoric. Nevertheless we can observe a specific alignment in the discourse of the politicians and political journalists. A new chapter has been opened by full time television information channels and the expansion of information portals, run by journalists but also open for civic journalists or bloggers. Those new challenges of contact space enhance the opportunity for the media to provide control on the one hand, but, on the other hand, they increase the chances for politicians' visibility. The results of that process are not unequivocally positive. Deformation of the public agenda is one of them: if a given news item appears at the time when not much is going on and it is "well-packaged" with interesting photos (e.g., politicians took care of the gadgets) or controversial pronouncements (others may be asked to refer to them), an insignificant information may become the news of the day. Another effect is a potential discouragement of the viewers, who are constantly exposed to the same "talking heads" and instead of a substantive, informative debate, they are fed an aggressive but pointless personal quarrel of the politicians who were invited to the studio only because they would fight.

#### **RHETORICAL ANALYSIS – HOW THE POLITICAL RHETORIC IS SEEN BY RESEARCHERS**

Research on the rhetoric of the Polish political language is a recent phenomenon. Some scholars contend that during “linguistic oppression” in the period of communist propaganda, there was no place for a true political rhetoric. What follows, it was difficult to carry out research on rhetoric. In totalitarian systems, the controlled activities of such mock institutions as the parliament of independent judicial system do not allow for a true rhetoric to flourish. Its place is taken over by eristic and propaganda (Skwara, 2006: 227). Naturally, it does not mean that persuasiveness of political messages was not analyzed before 1989.

In Polish research on the language of politics one can identify several methodological tendencies and several most often analyzed issues. A large group of studies is composed of the works on newspeak analysis and the texts of the communist propaganda (Głowiński, 1991, 1993; Bralczyk, 2003a). Changes taking place in the language of politics prior to and just after 1989 were analyzed mostly in collections of articles registering ad hoc new phenomena and language forms. Researchers of many disciplines attempted to capture the moment of breakthrough and chart the changes in political discourse (Borkowski, 2003; Kamińska-Szmaj, 2001, 2007). At present, within the framework of work devoted to the language of Polish politics, the trend of discourse analysis is vividly developing (Czyżewski, Kowalski & Piotrowski, 1997; Czyżewski, Kowalski & Tabako, 2010). Another trend is marketing and political communication together with interdisciplinary publications involving language studies, political science and journalism (Wasilewski, 2006). Language of politics is being analyzed as to its effectiveness, aggressiveness, manipulative and persuasive potential (Mosiołek-Kłosińska & Zgółka, 2003; Lisowski, 2007; Sobczak & Zgółkowa, 2007). New forms of political expression are also being analyzed, which are related to the Internet development, such as blogs (Molek-Kozakowska, 2010a). The analyses of grammatical, syntactical or stylistic means used by political leaders have been the domain of linguists. In political sciences descriptions of the style of leadership, methods of constructing party identity and many aspects of political culture have been the focus. Unfortunately, there are few analyses using the rhetorical apparatus, and the term “rhetoric” appears in its colloquial meaning –as a general pronouncement, the style of expression or is synonymous with empty talk.

However, works concerning the language of politics indicate how various communication situations can be analyzed and interpreted by means of the rhetorical apparatus (Martin, 2014; Załęska, 2012; Bendrat, 2007; Kampka, 2012; Budzyńska-

Daca, 2015; Molek-Kozakowska, 2010b). Scholars are dealing with specific rhetorical devices, e.g. metaphors, aphorisms, rhetorical questions by analyzing the way they are used in political speeches, parliamentary debates and even in such media forms as talk shows demonstrating how they can be used in arguments or in attractive presentation of false beliefs (Charteris-Black, 2005; Barei & Molina, 2015; Hauser & Grim, 2003). Rhetorical analysis on leadership, or international relations, when on the basis of political, and diplomatic texts one can reconstruct the ideology, national security vision or the way of solving conflicts and tensions (Załęska, 2012; Kampka, 2013b, 2013c; Molek-Kozakowska, 2011, 2012a).

The subjects of linguistic studies, but also of media experts, anthropologists, cultural studies scholars, sociologists or historians who reach for rhetoric tools there are parliamentary debates, political communication in the new media or, finally, political media discourse. For instance, metaphors are being analyzed which provide cognitive frameworks (theater, war, sports) (Kampka, 2013a, 2013b), enhancement of language attractiveness due to media requirements (Bralczyk & Wasilewski, 2007; Molek-Kozakowska, 2012b, 2013), methods of managing and reporting conflicts (Modrzejewska, 2012; Budzyńska-Daca, 2012, 2015). In the last years not only the language of politics but broadly understood visual communication becomes the object of research. It concerns both before-1989 materials as well as the most recent events. Scholars are interested in the visual aspects of the political message, and its power of persuasion (Kampka, 2014b). It also concerns the official messages of the communist period (Ornatowski, 2014), as well as contemporary political advertising (Olczyk, 2009). Questions arise on the quality of politics resulting from TV advertising presentations. The last presidential election (May 2015) has demonstrated the increasing role of the new media, which are being used not only by professional politicians, but also activists or regular citizens followers of a given candidate or a given party (Kampka, 2013a, 2014b).

Rhetoric is studied as a tool of winning and holding power, both in the parliamentary dimension as well as in the context of social movements or social protests. Rhetorical strategies of building the image of the enemy, as well as one's own rights by the parties of political conflicts have been explored (Tarasewicz-Gryt, 2012; Miklas-Frankowski, 2012). There are many works on deliberative democracy, its theoretical assumptions and everyday practices. Relations of rhetoric and power in the context of Internet communication as well as the problems of civil commitment, or its lack, are being

spotlighted in the context of great social changes and international politics (Załęska, 2012; Krzyżanowska-Skowronek, 2012; Kampka, 2012).

Publications which are the product of research carried out by members of the Polish Rhetoric Society display the multidimensionality of the relations between rhetoric and power. It is possible to indicate three basic functions which rhetoric may play. Firstly, it may serve the authorities –eulogize the deed of leaders, justify conquests. It can be a tool in a struggle for power –therefore pamphlets, manifests and proclamations were written, in addition– mastering of rhetoric may be a key to success. Finally, rhetoric may be the manifestation of power (Kampka, 2012; Donot, 2012).

The potential of the use of rhetorical instruments in research on political communication are still in its nascence in Poland. Thus the value of rhetoric in research is fourfold at least: (1) there is a long and rich tradition of studies that creatively developed nowadays; (2) it offers a set of tested and precise notions and clear research principles; (3) it has a combination of theory and practical application; (4) it is of interdisciplinary nature, allowing for the use of the achievements of social psychology, logic, stylistics, political marketing, political science, political anthropology and others.

Rhetoric-related research inscribes itself within the current tendency to reflect on politics understood as debate or influence (by persuasion, too). Such an approach sees the analysis of language of politics as central allowing for uncovering of meanings and symbols functioning in public discourse (Tilly, 2009). Rhetorical analysis provides knowledge on political culture, styles and means of public communication, models of power use and it allows for reconstruction of the political context in which the text, the speaker's personality and his/her social relations emerge. Rhetoric is not then only a way of effective involvement in the communication process, but also an instrument to probe the process (Kock & Villadsen, 2012).

Rhetorical analysis is used in research on leadership, international relation or political identity, and it allows pointing out major bones of contention, reconstructing a desired and rejected model of political activity, the way of exercising power, as well as it makes possible to characterize political culture or the electoral profile of political groups. Political context in which text is created, personality of the speaker and his/her social relations, style and means of public communication –those are the major research areas in which rhetorical tools can be used (McLean, 2001; Lim, 2013; Friedman & Friedman, 2012).

Researchers in many disciplines observe some disturbing, socially negative phenomena in Polish political rhetoric, such as a faulty way of conducting public debates, which is expressed by the use of rhetorical strategies that aim at exclusion of those thinking differently from the dialogue, which provides a path for populism and blocks understanding (Marody, 2003: 20). It is worth noticing that works whose authors undertake the problem of the rhetorical dimension of the debate and argument often relate to the media materials. They are analyzed from the perspective of framing (Modrzejewska, 2012, 2014; Olczyk, 2010). Scholarly works related to political discourse gradually abandon the approach of reducing rhetoric to the enumeration of its figures (Skwara, 2006: 236). Rhetoric is –properly– seen as something more than just the external form of expression. It is being treated as a tool of political applications – both by professional politicians and by citizens. Its potential in establishing of the political culture of a given community is being discovered and it becomes the tool of civic education (Mielczarski, 2010). In this connection many activities, education projects are being undertaken, whose objectives are to create rhetoric competence –first handbooks for rhetoric education can serve as an example (Lissewski, 2007; Barłowska, Budzyńska-Daca & Załęska, 2010; Barłowska, Budzyńska-Daca & Wilczek, 2008). The value of the debate is being discovered, both in its purely political dimension, when it concerns a pre-electoral competition of the candidates (Budzyńska-Daca, 2015), or as participation in the public debate (Kampka, 2014), or as the acquisition of practical skills in debate participation (Kochan, 2014). The role of rhetoric as an instrument which can be useful in civic education has been stressed both in works dealing with deliberation (Mielczarski, 2010; Molek-Kozakowska, 2015), as well as conflicts (Hordecki, 2009; Kochan, 2005).

In the above we envisage further possibilities of the development of rhetorical research on language of politics in Poland. Knowledge and understanding of persuasion mechanisms do not serve as a goal in themselves. Its effect can be the enhancement of civic awareness and providing citizens with tools that will allow them to get involved in public activities, in order to fully utilize the potential Poland's young democracy presents.

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