

## **Post-experts in polish mainstream media: quantitative and qualitative analysis of selected information**

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**Abstract** Experts have always played a special role in society. Appealing to their opinions is one of the most important strategies that people use to make decisions. Many factors determine who becomes an expert. The most important included: having a lot of knowledge, charisma, authority, or experience. Increasingly, however, they are not sufficient and may even be unnecessary. This is due to the development of the media and its influence on our lives. Therefore, on the basis of the analysis of content of three opinion-forming news services, I am going to check who the media owners cast as experts and what narration they create about the presented reality

**Keywords:** media, expert media, public discourse, media systems, news services

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### **0. Introduction**

As history shows, experts have always played a significant role in society, but when we analyse this phenomenon, we can see that it has grown with the specialisation and complexity of our lives. The year 1873 was significant in this respect. This is because it is the death year of John Stuart Mill, a British economist, political thinker, and philosopher, who was considered to be the last man with the reputation of being someone who knows everything. Today, this is almost impossible, because after epochs of slow accumulation, knowledge began to increase at such a dizzying rate that it was necessary to refer to the knowledge of others – of those who possessed it. Over the years, these have been opinion leaders, scholars, priests, and experts themselves. Already Jürgen Habermas wrote: «in today's public discourse, there is a dominance of a culture that we can describe as the expert culture» (Habermas 2009: 59). This is because, in post-modernity, an expert is the “possessor of knowledge”, which, in the age of the information society, but also of deepening risk, is essential to reduce the risk and to cope with an increasingly complex and specialised world. Importantly – in social sciences – the category of an expert is associated not only with knowledge and communication processes, but also with the exercise of power. An expert has been and still is perceived as one who exercises power or gains influence on it, not through force and violence, but due to the knowledge, authority, prestige, experience, or ability to convince others.

This potential was discovered quite early by media people who were referring to experts in order to lend credence to their vision of reality. As is well known, the journalistic field owes its position in the social world to the fact that it has a monopoly on the mass dissemination of information, and even its creation. In this way, the field has access not only to ordinary citizens, but also to the scientists, artists, professionals, or politicians, and thus to representatives of symbolic elites. In today's media-driven world, it is precisely the mass media that make an expert visible to the public (and even that make an individual an expert), which gives him or her an advantage over others, and, at the same time, enables him or her to influence their ways of thinking. The phenomenon of expert creation, on the other hand, has intensified in the era of mass media development – mainly the Internet and the widespread belief that anyone can become an expert. Especially since we are dealing with a time that is referred to as punditocracy (Alterman 2000), and Wojciech Jabłoński (2006) has written about “expert systems” or “expert democracy”. However, such “systems” are not only a means of dealing with information excess and the related risk, but also (can be) a deliberate management of information, and, consequently, the recipients and their access to knowledge. In the following article, I am going to present the results of a content analysis of three news websites: *Wiadomości* (TVP), *Fakty* (TVN), and *Informacje Dnia* (TV TRWAM), which facilitates answering questions about: thematic areas and detailed topics covered in the analysed news services, the order of their broadcast (the assigned rank/importance), with particular emphasis on the news story of the day, types of experts speaking on specific topics, and the basis of their expertise (knowledge, experience, authority, centre/institution they represent). This will allow us to look at the mechanism of creating “expert systems” by broadcasters and journalists and forming the image of the reality around us.

## 1. Theoretical background

Who is an expert then? Barbara Fatyga in *Słownik Terminów Encyklopedycznych* (the *Dictionary of Encyclopaedic Terms*) states that:

an expert – is a specialist in a particular field. A person with theoretical and practical knowledge of a given subject. An expert is a person whose competence you trust, who presents a broad horizon of thought and in-depth knowledge in a given field (<http://ozkultura.pl/slownik-terminow-encyklopedycznych>).

This definition emphasizes, on one hand, the importance of expertise, professionalism, and knowledge, and on the other hand – the significance of recognition and trust attributed to the person. Therefore, hard competences such as knowledge, experience, specialization, or professionalism are the most important factors – in addition, they must be recognised by other specialists. In this sense, the task of an expert is – through a competent expertise or an expert judgement – to contribute to the provision of balanced, reliable information based on the expert knowledge. Hence, he or she may be «a holder of scientific (scientific-technical) competences» (Kurczewska 1997: 250). As this author points out, in defining an expert, the emphasis is often placed on his or her «role of a mediator between the social structures of science and the structures of “the rest of society”» (*Ivi*: 243). This statement once again highlights the fact of recognition, i.e. being an expert is always for someone, but what is worth emphasizing – in this case, we consider as experts not only people respected by the professional community, but also by creators and users of common knowledge, that is, the audience of laymen. Such positioning of experts means that their role and importance in both of these audiences increases, so that «(they) become so socially important that their figures and actions

assume the proportions of institutions of social life» (*Ivi*:251). The concept of institution has evolved in social sciences by reason of social change. From the Durkheim's "beliefs and manners of conduct established by the collectivity" (1999), through Parsonsian norms regulating relations between individuals, or the closer, in terms of time, approach by Shmuel N. Eisenstadt (1987), for whom institutions are socially defined norms of behaviour oriented at solving problems in the most important areas of life. The contemporary neo-institutional view of institutions refers to the oldest, formalistic institutional approaches. Here, a good example, which is also useful for considering the institution of an expert is the Douglass North's definition, for whom institutions are «man-made constraints that organize interactions» (North 1990: 97). These constraints may or may not be formal; it is important that connectedly, they form a certain order, thereby reducing the environment of uncertainty. In practice, for this author, institutions are simply *game rules* which define *sets of possibilities*, that is, available options of action (*Ivi*: 103). The above definitions impose certain expectations on experts, namely: they must play definite roles, and create the social order through systems of meaning. Thus – according to these definitions – we assume that experts are people who identify the best alternatives reducing uncertainty and risk in the diversity that surrounds us. This is a consequence of the situation described by Anthony Giddens (2008), where people's lives more and more often run within abstract systems, whose operating principles are not understood by them, so they must work up trust in experts who have this knowledge. However, to become an expert, until recently, one had to have some scientific or scientific-technical competences formally confirmed and recognised by the wider community, such as: knowledge and related competences, achievements, experience, trust, authority, prestige, or participation in power (mostly formal). Nowadays – as pointed out, for example, by Régis Debray (2010), the emphasis is on other sources of expert legitimacy due to the development of the media and their intermediation in the communication process. Therefore, postmodernity implies – in the opinion of this author – handing over of power to a new category of experts – media experts with soft skills, such as, for example, communicativeness, shortness and attractiveness of describing reality, or recognition. As Zygmunt Bauman notices, they define the hierarchy of thoughts today, replacing a university:

It is the media value of news, and not the orthodox university standards of scientific significance, that determines the hierarchy of importance – as impermanent and unstable as the media value of messages (Bauman 1995: 235).

It is because reaching out or being heard is what counts, and it is not the substantive level or accuracy of the argument, hence the access to the medium is important. Therefore, new categories of experts appear, for example, "talking heads"<sup>1</sup>, i.e. experts and specialists whose task is to confirm or disprove certain claims presented in a footage. They are often the basis for making the vision of reality presented in it credible, somewhat in line with the principle of "authenticating" often used in commercials. Most often, in this case, the "talking heads" are representatives of science, who are supposed to give the footage a "better quality" with the prestige, esteem, and dignity of science. Another category of media experts are *fast-thinkers* (Bourdieu 2011), who have a ready answer to any topic; for example, celebrities, but also journalists, prove themselves in this role.

Therefore, in today's mediatized world, the continuum of images that experts bring to life in the public discourse, and which constitute the spectrum of possible ways of

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<sup>1</sup> A concept introduced by Krzysztof Kieślowski in 1980.

perceiving the presented reality by the viewers, seems to be important. As Marek Czyżewski claims, they provide «the possibility to form symbolic power by granting public legitimacy to certain issues and positions [...]» (Czyżewski, Kowalski, Piotrowski 1997: 12-15). By controlling the content of public debate, symbolic elites exercise power over members of society in the sphere of reality assessments, and thus significantly influence their behaviour. The cultural-normative control over public discourse takes place on two levels: «influencing the views and behaviour of citizens by creating a hierarchy of importance of matters, and by creating criteria for their evaluation» (Trutkowski 2007: 186).

Hence, it can be concluded that, although one of the main tasks of modern experts should be explaining complex issues and providing the viewers with commonly understood descriptions of social reality, and thus, in line with the Joanna Kurczewska's suggestion, intermediation between the mountains of knowledge structures and the masses, they are more often used instrumentally by media holders to legitimise their version of events.

## 2. Methodology

Therefore, in the analysis of opinion-forming news services, a question arises: to what extent does a debate of experts presented in the media help in finding oneself in the maze of information, and to what extent is it formed by broadcasters in order to exercise power over the viewers? To give an answer, I decided to perform a quantitative and qualitative analysis of three news services that broadcast in the Polish media. In this case, the following services were studied: *Wiadomości* (the public TVP1), *Fakty* (the commercial TVN), and *Informacje Dnia* (non-commercial TV Trwam)<sup>2</sup> from one-month period: from 6 November 2018 to 6 December 2018, as well as punditries presented in them. The analysis concerned the main editions of news services from the period of a full month, i.e. 90 materials (3 stations times 30 editions of news services) compared with each other in terms of the types of presented content, experts, and their punditries.

## 3. Results and Discussion

### 3.1 Quantitative analysis

As indicated above, the debate/statements of experts in nationwide news services should, by definition, help the society find itself in the maze of information and form an opinion about social reality. Therefore, their selection by the media disposers and journalists themselves should be based on hard competences of the invited experts, i.e. on knowledge, experience, and recognition from both the professional community, and the audience. Therefore, do the media fulfil the mission of providing reliable knowledge in this respect, constituting a forum for public debate in some way, or do they treat experts instrumentally in order to authenticate their version of events?

As the analysis shows, all stations have been dominated by footages from three main thematic areas: politics, economy, social issues, and on TV Trwam, additionally those related to religion/faith/church. The media messages have focused mainly on current events in the country, such as: Independence Day celebrations, the scandal around the

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<sup>2</sup>This choice was dictated by the fact that they remained at the forefront of the most watched TV stations and news programs (with the exception of TV Trwam), moreover, they present different views on the presented reality, which, in turn, is a result of the fact that they represent three types of media: commercial, non-commercial, and public media.

Polish Financial Supervision Authority, the dispute over the courts (Supreme Court), climate summit, local election, topics related to the opposition, a summary of the three years of governance of PiS, and the scandal around VAT. As we conclude, the stations and their disposers have focused on specific national problems, mainly related to politics and scandals generated by politicians, leaving little room for social and economic issues. In all the analysed services, much less space has been taken up by information from the world concerning three topics: the war in Ukraine, the protests of yellow waistcoats in France, and the protracted Brexit process. Thus, the domestic topics have outweighed news from the world.

The use of a “gatekeeper” is noticeable in all the stations. Objectively speaking, his or her existence comes from the limited capacity of a media channel. In practice, however, the gate in which he or she operates, is the position of power. The selection process is not objective - it forms editorial lines, takes something off the air, or on the contrary - it gives an importance rank. This, in turn, is related to the second technique used by the analysed stations: counter-sepization and sepization of social problems, which are aimed at giving importance or unimportance rank to the presented cases. As Marek Czyżewski writes,

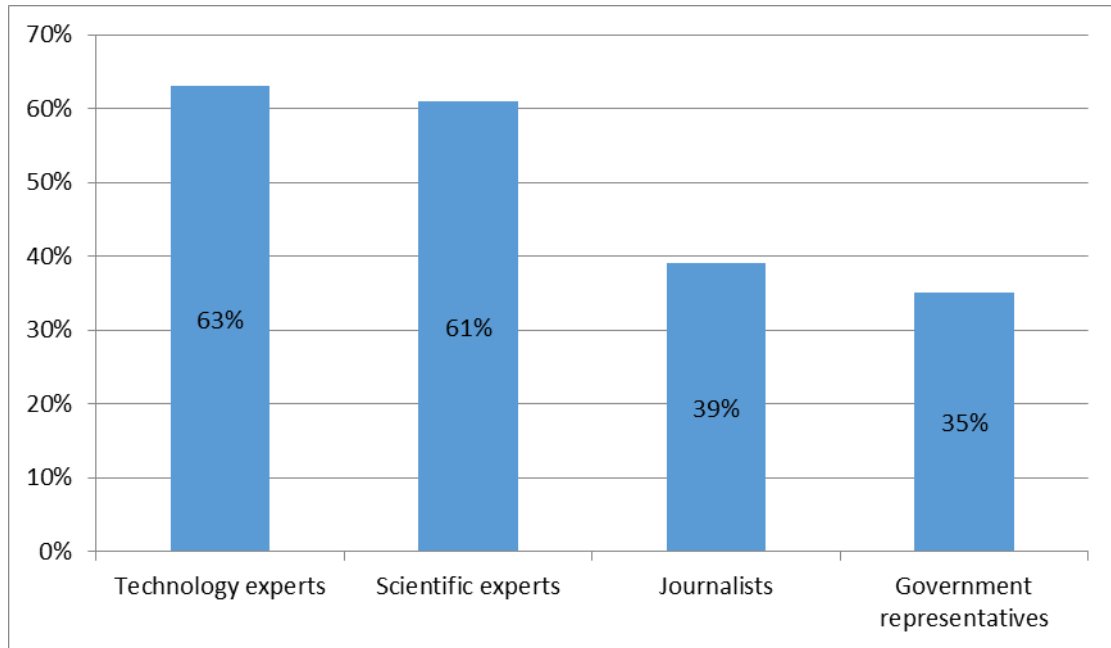
The procedures of sepization, consisting in paving over or active annulment, are opposed by ( ... ) counter-sepization procedures undertaken by other participants of the discourse, consisting in validating, disclosing, publicizing, and making the subject of interest what others considered irrelevant (Czyżewski, Dunin, Piotrowski 1991: 7).

Their enhancement has been the order of the day hypothesis, which manifested itself in setting the “news of the day”, i.e. the information that is presented first and takes up the most airtime within the edition. As it results from the analysis, in all stations this information have been related to the scandal around the PFSA, so this event was considered by the disposers of individual stations to be the most important in the period, receiving the importance rank that has been then taken over by the viewers of individual stations.

Another mechanism that gives rank to the presented issues, noticeable in the analysed material, is the method of authenticating the presented vision of reality. This mechanism was based mainly on the statements of invited experts were to give the importance and truthfulness rank to the narratives adopted by the stations. On the basis of the analysis of the collected material, four main types of experts who have been invited to particular stations can be distinguished. They include: politicians, scientists, specialists, and publicists; in addition, on TV Trwam, priests have appeared as experts (due to the station profile). This is consistent with the results of the Edelman Trust Barometer<sup>3</sup> survey conducted for 20 years, which check the level of trust of 28 nationalities in four types of institutions, including governmental, non-governmental, media, and business institutions. As the results of this research show, Poles trust the following types of experts the most: technological (professionals) and science experts, but also journalists, and (surprisingly) politicians. The results are shown in the chart below.

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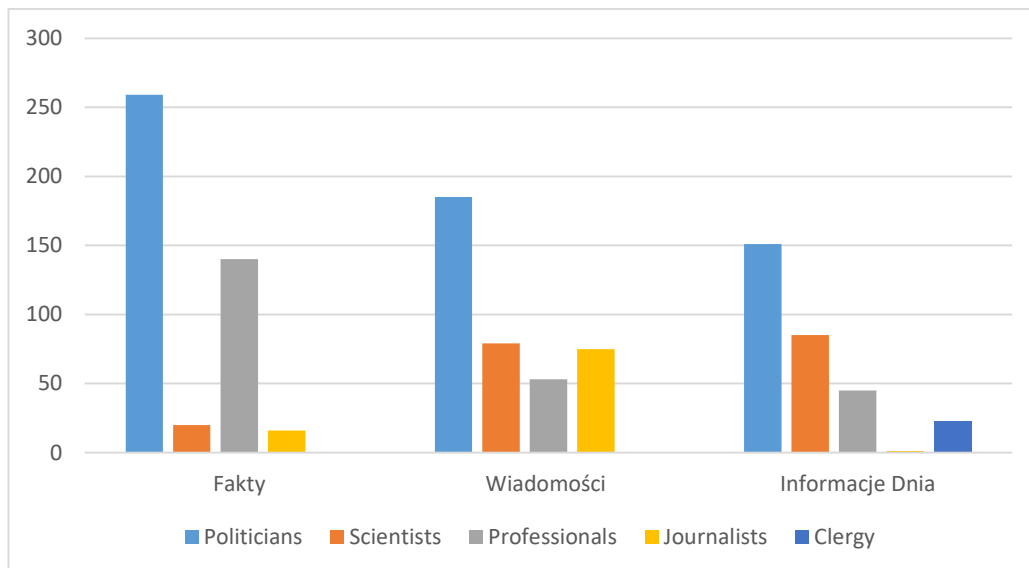
<sup>3</sup>Edelman Trust Barometer is an international trust and credibility survey carried out for 18 years by Edelman – the world’s largest network company specializing in marketing communication and public relations. The survey was conducted in 28 countries on a sample of 34,000 adults using online surveys. Study period: 19 October 2019-18 November 2019.



f. 1. Who do Poles trust? Who do Poles trust?

Source: <https://www.wirtualnemedia.pl/artukul/edelman-trust-2019-spolczenstwa-coraz-mniej-ufne-i-coraz-bardziej-przestraszzone-wyniki-komentarz> (05.05.2020).

The disposers of all the analysed types of stations (and news services) have also considered these types of experts to be a reliable and important source of knowledge for their recipients. However, the stations are differentiated by the frequency of presenting particular types of experts, which may indicate their rank/importance in the station, and the role that has been entrusted to them.



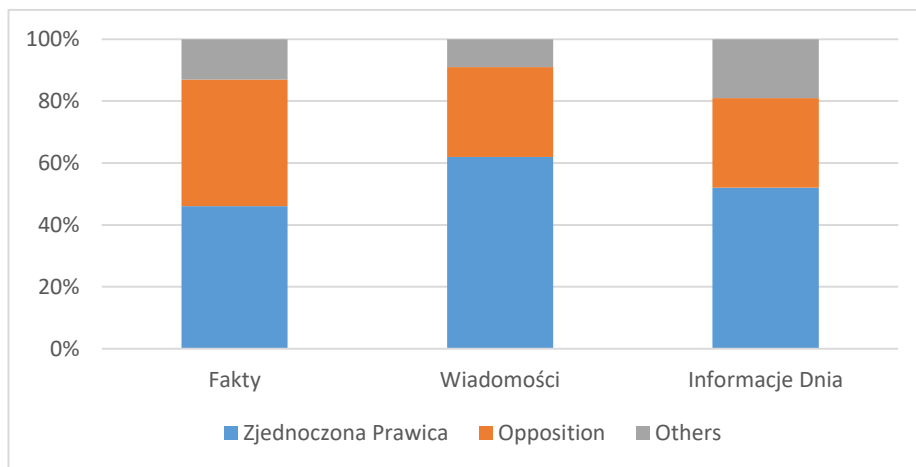
f. 2. Types of experts in individual news services Types of experts in news sites (N = 1132).

Source: Own research.

As we can see in the above chart, in all the services, there have dominated politicians in the role of experts, whose legitimation as experts was: the experience, function

performed (participation in power), and (very often) the education. Most often, they have acted as experts in *Fakty* – 60% of all experts speaking there, while in *Wiadomości* and *Informacje Dnia* they constituted almost half of all speaking experts, respectively: 47% and 46%.

The distribution of politicians as experts in terms of represented political options is interesting. The analysis shows that in all the stations, the most statements have been made by politicians of Zjednoczona Prawica, who have accounted for 62% of all politicians speaking in *Wiadomości*, in *Informacje Dnia* – 52%, and in *Fakty* – 46%. On the other hand, politicians of the broadly understood opposition have been speaking more often in *Fakty* – 41% than in *Informacje Dnia* or in *Wiadomości* – 29% in each. Other politicians (e.g. independent politicians) have constituted a minority in all the stations: 19% in *Informacje Dnia*, 13% in *Fakty*, and 9% in *Wiadomości*.



f. 3. Distribution of politicians-experts of individual political options in the news services (N = 1132) Distribution of politicians-experts from individual political options in news services. Source: Own research.

Therefore, the studied services have not enabled an on-air observation of the debate process based on a direct confrontation of different attitudes resulting from distinct ideological orientations. In the main editions of news services, there has been no classic exchange of views, but only the presentation of one's own opinion. The analysis shows that all the stations have presented politicians of political options characterized by an ideological and world view orientation that is similar to that promoted by the TV station. As shown in Figure 2, *Fakty* are based mainly on the statements of politicians in the role of experts, but, as a counterbalance, this station maintained a fairly equal ratio of the number of statements of the ruling-faction representatives to the number of statements of the opposition representatives – 46%: 41% (Figure 3), therefore, in this case, it maintains a show of a debate, or attempts to use two-sided argumentation in order to present the recipients with two different points of view, and provide them with an opportunity to form an opinion on the topic. In turn, in both *Informacje Dnia*, and *Wiadomości*, these proportions are strongly distorted in favour of the ruling faction. In *Informacje Dnia*, it is the ratio of 52%: 29%, and in *Wiadomości*: 29%, therefore, in these cases, a conclusion may be made that there is no debate, i.e. there is a presentation of one (or the only correct) vision of reality that, in the case of TV Trwam, is justified by the station profile – which is non-commercial, heterodox, educational and guiding, religious, and Catholic-national. However, this should not take place on TVP1, as it is a

public television with the mission of presenting reality objectively and honestly, as it is enshrined in its statute.

While politicians dominated in terms of numbers in each of the analysed stations, the other types of experts differentiate individual services. In *Informacje Dnia*, the second largest category of experts has been formed by scientists - 26%, then professionals - 14%, and priests – 14%, and we have only one representative of journalists as an expert. In *Fakty*, the second largest category of experts has been formed by professionals - 34%, then scientists – 4%, and journalists – 2%. However, in *Wiadomości* their order has been as follows: scientists – 20%, publicists – 19%, and professionals – 14%. The rank is therefore assigned to experts by the stations, or rather by their disposers or journalists, and is not a result of their competence or the trust of viewers.

According to the research, scientists occupy a high position in the media hierarchy of experts (apart from *Fakty* – here, they constitute only 4%), which is legitimized by the education, knowledge, academic degree or title, and the rank of the centre/institution they represent, as well as the experience (work in a research centre) of many years. The importance of these attributes of scientists' expertise also differentiates the stations. In *Informacje Dnia*: political scientists, historians, economists, and sociologists have been speaking the most often. In *Wiadomości*, the structure of the speaking scientists has been similar; they have included mainly: political scientists, economists, historians, sociologists. In turn, the *Fakty* service has authenticated its footages with the help of the following experts-scientists: economists, historians, biologists and physicists, lawyers, and political scientists.

All of the analysed services have been similar in terms of the structure of professionals acting as experts (in this case, the legitimation involves: the experience, education, specialization, and knowledge). Most often, they have included: doctors, lawyers, political scientists, economists, and in *Wiadomości*, additionally, representatives of secret services.

On the other hand, the category of journalists has strongly differentiated the analysed stations. In *Informacje Dnia*, only one journalist from *Nasz Dziennik* has appeared in this role, who additionally commented on the material about abortion, in *Fakty*, they have been journalists from: *Polityka*, *Newsweek Polska*, *OKO.press*, and TVN reporters, and in *Wiadomości*, journalists from: *Gość Niedzielny*, *Gazeta Polska*, *Gazeta Polska Codziennie*, *Sieci*, and *Do Rzeczy*. Often, in this news service, journalists have commented on matters from many different areas of life (politics, economy, society, world view), which has given them the role of “fast thinkers”. We can therefore conclude that the administrators of the analysed stations and/or their journalists cooperate only with those media that represent a similar world view profile, creating specific information bubbles that allow viewers to maintain the comfort of a coherent vision of the world.

Interestingly, during the analysis, I have not noted a single statement by a celebrity as an expert. However, I have been struck by the fact that most of the presented topics have been mainly discussed by men in the role of experts, even in a footage about women in *Wiadomości*: “Polish Dream of Successful Women. Three Successful Women” aired in the celebration of Independence Day.

#### **a. Qualitative analysis**

Television, in addition to “hints” on what to think about, gives viewers promptings about how to think about a given social problem, that is, it creates a framework for its understanding by viewers. Therefore, by fulfilling the role of a social interpreter, it conveys representations of reality in a relatively closed and ready-made form to society. Hence, the analysis of the content of the experts' speeches should always be



accompanied by the question to what extent the mode of communication chosen by the editors (focalizer) is based on informing, leaving room for reflection for the viewers, and to what extent it escapes into a persuasive message by referring to the rhetorical “background” of “its” experts (narrator). By examining this intra- and inter-textual linguistic context, we can reconstruct the narratives present in each station leading to the creation of images of the depicted reality, and through this, we are able to identify the functions and tasks of experts involved in this picturing (or “performance”).

Therefore, the qualitative analysis was aimed to reconstruct:

1. narratives about reality, manifested in the experts’ punditries (language) within the specific issues – with what key words they built narratives around the events, and
2. the functions/tasks of experts performed by them in news services.

After analysing the collected material, we have come to the conclusion that each of the stations used various means to exert influence, including socio-technical (e.g. authority, repetition, bridging – here, including frequent historical analogies, e.g. *Targowica*), persuasive (language – key words, suggestive phrases, metaphors), as well as expressive (emotions and evaluations) means. All this is done in order to lay the groundwork for the viewers to accept the thesis put forward by the station’s holder, as it is language that shapes reality in rhetoric. The dominant narrative was that of war (*attack, defence, battle*), affair and mafia (*gangsters, deal, PiS brazen octopus, aggro*), and less frequently a narrative creating an image of a proud nation and state (*patriotism, national unity, a common white and red march*). For me, personally, it was a surprise that a non-commercial, ideological station – TV Trwam – in its *Informacje Dnia* presented reality in a moderately neutral way, preserving (admittedly, to a small extent) snippets of a public debate by using, among others, two-sided argumentation, usually presenting the point of view of both the ruling party and the opposition. Although it was also dominated by a war and scandal narrative, in comparison to the other stations (TVN and TVP1) it still took the form that strived to maintain neutrality. A good example of this are the punditries of experts on the Independence Day celebrations, in which, admittedly, two images of this event appeared: on one side, an image created by the government, which co-organised the celebrations and nurtured patriotic attitudes: *a celebration of patriotism and patriots, security, a common white and red march*, while on the other side, an image built by the opposition, to which the following expressions were attributed: *the total opposition frightens people, contempt for patriots, fascists disgraced the celebration* (Zandberg), *threat, inflaming conflict, attacking a grassroots initiative*. However, in the end, the image of the *march of thousands of Polish patriots* remained in the memory (Tumanowicz). On TVN, despite the holiday which should unite Poles, the narration used by the invited experts built deep political and social divisions based on information about organizing or blocking the Independence March using negative terms and words; for example Jacek Protasiewicz (PO) – *it will be a march of racists and anti-Semites*, on the other side of the political barricade Dominik Tarczyński (PiS) answered him: *the idiot insulted Poles by saying that they, that they are racists*, and Marek Jakubiak (Kukiz ‘15) accompanied him: *ruffians, you are destroying our state in front of the whole world*. In addition, the government was attacked by suggestions that it cooperates with *bandits and extremists* with referring to the colloquial language: *a dope selfie with some fascist in a balaclava* (Władysław Frasyniuk). I think this is also part of the station’s melodoxy, i.e. broadening its audience (in this case, a message towards the younger generation of viewers). This vision was given credence by quoting xenophobic statements of Robert Bąkiewicz, the organiser of the Independence March:

Jews are in a completely different cultural circle, they perceive certain principles differently than we do (further) ... in the police, the percentage of Ukrainians is far

too high (further) ... they deliberately pursue a policy of nationality swapping in our country (TVN, 12.11.2018).

On the other hand, in TVP1, apart from creating images of internal antagonisms and divisions (*banning the march, fascists, Nazis, attempts to spoil the celebration, grassroots initiatives*), we also have the image of an external conflict on the line: Poland–EU, for example, the same statement by Guy Verhofstad about *Polish fascists marching shoulder to shoulder with the government* was quoted several times. Admittedly, the day after the holiday, it was mentioned that world media coverage changed to positive, but with the emphasis that this was the result of *Poles making it happen by uploading photos to the Internet, adding that the censorship in new media and of new media is impossible* (referring, among others, to the ACTA 2 directive adopted by the EU Parliament – also by the votes of PO MEPs, called the Internet Censorship Act – again a bridging technique). The same technique was used to discredit the previous government: *the celebrations made the public realise that that formation did not deserve to govern, which is why it centred around PiS (Czesław Nowak, President of the “Godność” Association)*. The only objective aspect of the information about the Independence Day celebrations consisted in the punditries of scientists (historians) bringing the viewers closer to the historical facts of the period.

Let’s compare some more key words that were used in all news services and that definitely built a negative narrative around the Independence Day. The table below summarises the key words from the analysed stations.

Keywords	Negative	Positive / Neutral
<i>Informacje Dnia</i>	frightening people, a contempt for patriots, fascism, threat, inflaming conflict, accusations and speculations	patriotism, a celebration of patriotism, security, a common white and red march
<i>Fakty</i>	fascists, nationalists, bandits, extremists, incidents, scuffles, insult, two marches, march prohibition, last battle	independence day, celebration
<i>Wiadomości</i>	march prohibition, wrong decision, "T-shirts with the Constitution", fascists, Nazis, attempts to spoil the holiday, disgrace of the Polish patriots, scurrilous reports from abroad, media with foreign capital	grassroots initiatives, common celebration, the idea of uprisings, a common white and red march, success of the government, a great holiday

f. 4. Key words in analysed news services.

Source: Own research.

As can be seen, they are dominated by negative terms that are part of the war-affair narrative: frightening, threat, conflict, battle. Positive terms referred to the march itself and to historical descriptions: a common white and red march, patriots, uprisings.

#### 4. Conclusions

Each of the analysed news services has a specific program line - imposed by the owner (disposer) of the station, which decides that the information becomes a way of convincing the recipient to take a specific attitude towards the topic under consideration. As proved by the analysis, its scope includes: the selection of topics and materials, as well as their hierarchy ("gatekeeper" and hypothesis of the order of the day) and the selection of experts with a specific world view orientation, who are to authenticate and legitimize the presented vision of reality through their competences (the technique of "authenticating"). Finally, it is the editorial office members who decide which elements of knowledge about reality should be made public and how, and which should be omitted (counter-sepization and sepization). All these elements make that the recipient contact not with reality, but with a kind of information bubble, or its carefully thought-out construct.

The participants of this "media performance" are most often: politicians, scientists, professionals, and publicists selected by journalists as a reliable and important source of knowledge about the world around us. Interestingly, this choice coincides with the viewers' choices. As it turns out, politicians and professionals have exemplarily taken the role of experts as interpreters or mediators between the knowledge and the masses, while scientists and professionals have often been playing also the role of "fast thinkers". At the same time, each of the stations has invited experts confirming its version of events, positioning the recipient so that he or she adopts the proposed point of view. Most often it comes down to the scheme of "convincing the convinced", because it is rare for people with specific political views to view services of a station with a different world view (the principle of minimizing cognitive dissonance works here). Therefore, we cannot accept the statement that the leading Polish news services are a platform for public debate as true, as the analysis clearly shows that they only present their own vision of reality. It is a one-sided message, in which the viewer may (but does not have to) take an attitude to the knowledge and views contained in the statements of experts, and then discuss them with other actors of social life, but there is no possibility of engaging in polemics with experts.

Summing up, it can be stated that each of the analysed stations has its own policy of making the society aware. They reflect the broadcaster's style, and present and promote its political and ideological sympathies, and therefore they are never an objective presentation, representation, or even a reproduction of social and political reality, but only its highly distorted image, which fits in with the theories of information and risk management, and, based on this, it refers to the management of the masses of their recipients.

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