The Construction of National Identity in Poland’s Newspapers:

Content Analysis of

Nasz Dziennik,

Gazeta Wyborcza,

Rzeczpospolita

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Magisteruppsats 15 hp
Vårterminen 2018
Programmet för Journalistik
Abstract

This thesis focuses on national identity, constructed and represented in Poland’s media, and analyzes three daily newspapers which are diverse in their orientations as follows: Catholic *Nasz Dziennik*, pro-establishment business-conservative *Rzeczpospolita*, and independent center-left *Gazeta Wyborcza*. The research questions are how *Gazeta Wyborcza, Nasz Dziennik*, and *Rzeczpospolita* constitute national identity in content and what differences there are in identity construction in *Gazeta Wyborcza, Nasz Dziennik*, and *Rzeczpospolita*. The method is quantitative content analysis. It was found out that the Polish media employ a broad spectrum of identity construction strategies which could be defined as identification with and antagonizing from the European Union, redefining and creating new meanings of past events. The prevalent identity represented in the media is an identity of a civic and law-abiding democratic society and this identity is an outcome of political struggles in the country since 1989. The differences between three media types are minor: the media lack one established identity agenda and media content tends to depict the national identity as ambivalent.

**Keywords:** European Union, journalism, media, national identity, Poland
Acknowledgments

This thesis has been produced during my scholarship period as a part of my studies at Södertörns Högskola thanks to a Swedish Institute scholarship.
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I

Introduction

In the opening chapter I start with background and problematizing of the research. Background gives a superficial description of the modern state of Poland’s domestic and international policy and continues with reflections on the state of the Polish media whose freedom is under attack. Research problem and questions problematize the research by presenting aims, purpose and research questions.

I conclude the introduction with a brief outline of the thesis and my motivations.

1. Background

Poland’s national identity crisis

Poland, one of the oldest nation-states in Europe with a long war history, in the opinion of many researchers nowadays has a sense of political dependence and a national identity crisis that is rooted in the history.

In the 20th century, Poland was successively invaded and occupied by Germany and the Soviet Union. Then in 1989 Poland freed itself from Communist rule and soon took new commitments: it allied the European Union and the NATO.

Since 1989, Poland is a country with extensive competition between numerous parties and coalitions. Law and Justice was founded in 2001 and identifies itself as a national-conservative Christian democratic political party. After election victories in 2005 and then again in 2015 of the eurosceptic national-conservative Law and Justice party, Poland’s relations with the European Union became an “issue of concern” (Szčerbiak & Bil 2013, p. 41). The allies, in the opinion of the ruling party, interfere in Polish domestic politics, thus Law and Justice depicts Poland as a victim and the neighbors or partners as aggressors.

These controversial foreign policies led to a perception that Poland is turning into Europe’s “new awkward partner” (Szčerbiak & Bil 2013, p. 40). The ruling-party’s accent on historical traumas generates distrust to and condemnation of Polish politics from foreign politicians. The

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last, in its turn, weakens Poland’s role on an international scene. Also, Russia influences Poland’s foreign relations with neighboring countries, particularly Ukraine.

That is not an identity Poland’s elite aimed for. In words of a Polish political scientist and ex-member of the European Parliament Marek Migalski, “Poles [...] read the message that they are part of a certain community, and this community is the navel of the world, the state of the center” (Migalski, 2017 cited in Szuldrzyński, 2017). To earn a central place in the world and Europe, Poland’s elites should commit to the universal and European democratic values but in fact, they are doing the opposite. In 2018 Poland recorded the largest decline in the history of the Democracy Score report produced by an independent watchdog organization Freedom House. The dramatic decline was resulted by Law and Justice’ abuse of the judicial system and parliamentary procedure, use of public media for propaganda, and actions against nongovernmental organizations (Freedom House, 2018a). The 2017 judicial reforms constituted a “clear risk of a serious breach of the rule of law in Poland” and imposed undemocratic restrictions on public meetings (Freedom House, 2018b). The European Union for the first time was compelled to impose sanctions against its member (Csaky, 2018). This contradicts with the side of Polish identity that depicts itself as a part of Europe.

Another identity issue is a discrepancy between the dominant Polish mythology, that is “victimhood and martyrdom” (Zubrzycki, 2018), and the critical narratives of historical science. In January 2018, the Polish parliament made it illegal to accuse that Poland or the Polish people are responsible or co-responsible of any crimes committed during the World War II. Crimes committed by Poles tarnish the victim narrative and shake Polish national identity but the new law has worsened the relations with Israel and the U.S.A. Consequently, U.S. Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs released a statement pointing out that legislation in Poland on crimes committed during the Holocaust undermines free speech and academic discourse, and results in divisions in an ability to be effective partners (Nauert, 2018).

The state of the Polish media

Poland was at the forefront of the East-European region in developing free, independent and pluralistic media as perceived in the 1990s. The motivation behind media-development of that time was to create a system completely antithetical to a communist model (Jakubowicz 2001, p. 65) and they successfully removed the state influence on the media (Klimkiewicz 2017, p. 199).

Soon after the October 2015’s general election, when the national-conservative Law and Justice party won, press freedom starts to diminish (Klimkiewicz 2017, pp. 200-202, 212). The government attempted to limit independent reporters’ access to the parliament but abandoned the
initiative following resistance by the public. In response, the government refused to provide information to and contact independent journalists. Watchdog function is threatened with possibility for investigation results to be regarded as criminal offenses that are punishable by imprisonment: libel, defamation of public officials or the state, or statements that offend religious beliefs. It led to increased self-censorship in the oppositional media (Freedom House, 2017b).

The public media was renamed “national media” and have been transformed into government propaganda tools (Freedom House, 2017a) and “suffer from a trust deficit” (O’Maley, 2016).

The private media are polarized, exhibit a high level of political partisanship (Dobek-Ostrowska 2011, pp. 33—36), and display “varying degrees of ideological or political bias” (Freedom House, 2017b). The most popular private daily print media among the linked to the Government are Catholic Nasz Dziennik and business-conservative Rzeczpospolita. The highest circulation number among independent oppositional press holds center-left broadsheet Gazeta Wyborcza, regarded as supportive of the liberal Civic Platform party that is in opposition to the ruling party Law and Justice (Freedom House, 2016). All three are domestic in terms of ownership.

The authorities openly speak out against the oppositional media. Law and Justice leader Jarosław Kaczyński claims that Gazeta Wyborcza is “against the very notion of the nation” (Freedom House, 2017a), he named its articles on World War II-era Poland unpatriotic and the “pedagogics of shame” (Freedom House, 2017b). Against this background, Gazeta Wyborcza only grows commercially and increases its subscribers number.

2. Research problem and questions

The purpose of the thesis is to contribute to media and communication studies on the topic of country’s identity construction in local media. Limited research is available on national identity and its representation in media. This project intends to analyze the construction of Poland’s national identity in the three privately owned local daily newspapers with diverse political orientation: Nasz Dziennik, Rzeczpospolita, and Gazeta Wyborcza.

The aim of analysis is to find out about the main patterns, differences and similarities of the national identity construction in the privately-owned national media: Catholic, business-conservative, and oppositional.
I pose two research questions:

**RQ 1:** How do *Gazeta Wyborcza*, *Nasz Dziennik*, and *Rzeczpospolita* construct and represent a national identity?

**RQ 2:** What are the differences in national-identity construction and representation in *Gazeta Wyborcza*, *Nasz Dziennik*, and *Rzeczpospolita*?

My expectations are:

- All three types of media tend to focus on a negative side of identity in their content and polarize Poland and outgroups.
- The secular media share more in common with each other than with the religious media.
- The Catholic media are expected to use more religious elements of an identity and ignore the official political agenda.

3. Thesis outline

A starting point for this thesis is my curiosity in developing my professional skills in content analysis (which is widely used in modern media for reflecting on a representation of recent issues in society and culture) and my academic interest in applying social psychology to the media. The choice of a subject — the Polish media — was guided by previous academic assignments during my journalism master studies.

The thesis has a simple layout. In first chapter, I present circumstances of the phenomenon that is investigated and ask my research questions. The second chapter ties thesis to a theoretical framework. The review of academic research relevant to my topic is in the third chapter. The methodology is described and its choice justified in the fourth chapter. The fifth and sixth chapters — the largest part of the thesis — contain the results of analysis and the results' discussion. I conclude the thesis with limitations encountered and suggestions for further research in chapter seven.

For a reader convenience' sake every chapter provides an introduction and chapter summary in the end.

The chosen method of analysis is quantitative content analysis. The sample is the 126 articles from three newspapers published in a 135-day period. A coding scheme consists of a code book and an SPSS coding form.
This thesis does not regard models of an identity that exist among Polish population or journalists because I do not have this data. Also, it is impossible to discern differences between an own identity model that a journalist has and an identity model that the journalist wants to create, thus, my thesis examines identity construction and representation simultaneously. The audience's perception of an identity model, constructed or represented in the Polish media, is not a topic of this study as well because I focus on its construction rather than reception.

Chapter Summary

With the election of the conservative national *Law and Justice* party, Poland faces several issues that shake its national identity: breaching of law by power elites ruins a democratic identity, confrontation with the European Union turns Poland into an “awkward” member and contradicts with a side of Polish identity that depicts itself as a central part of Europe.

At the same time, Polish press freedom is under attack. The public media are propagandistic; the private supportive to the government outlets lack a watchdog function; the oppositional fear legal prosecution for an occasional critique.

This situation induces me to pursue a study into the shared and distinctive features in national identity construction and representation in the Polish media with diverse political affiliations.

I continue in the next chapter with a theory about social identity, and, in particular, national identity that is a central subject in my research.
II

Theory: What is national identity

This chapter introduces a review of relevant theories on social identity and identity constituents, notes the distinction of *Identity* from *Identification* in Brubaker’s terms, and reflects on the influence that the media have on their audiences in deployment of a new identity.

1. Identity paradigm

The basis of the theoretical paradigm on which ground the research questions will be discussed is the national identity theory, a small part of the social identity theory. The social identity theory was first formulated by a British social psychologist of Polish origin Henri Tajfel, who proposes that the perceived membership in groups (e.g., nation) that people belong to, is an important source of an individual’s self-concept (1979). Thus, the theoretical framework that is used in this paper owes much to the field of psychology, and in particular to social psychology.

A term “identity” is surrounded by a long academic debate related to its burdens and ambiguity. In *Beyond Identity* American researchers Brubaker and Cooper suggest splitting the term into three elements: Identification and categorization, Self-understanding and social location, Commonality with connectedness and groupness (2000, pp. 14—19). “Identification” is the closest in meaning element to “identity” of my thesis because Brubaker and Cooper determine the modern state (viz. Poland) as the most important agent of identification (ibid, p. 15). Identification has an active form susceptible to change that varies with situations and contexts (Brubaker 2004, p. 41) and invites us to specify actors that do the identifying (Brubaker & Cooper 2000, p. 14). In other words, taking into consideration semantical richness of the term “identity”, noted by Brubaker and Cooper, I will continue to use “identity” instead of “identification” for this project because the agents are specified (they are media) and it is infeasible in an available timeframe to draw even a slightly valid picture of how Polish identity has varied with situations and contexts.

2. Identity elements

National identity refers to a shared sense of belonging to a culture, society, place or social grouping and thus it involves many factors, including nationality, language, work, ethnicity, religion, belief, lifestyle (McQuail 2010, p. 14).

It is a complex system of characteristics of who we are, about our history and habits, our language and culture, a national character (Wodak, Reisigl & Liebhart, 1998), the desired (valued,
preferred) actions, norms and values, symbolic representations (the national symbols, flags), traditions, architecture.

Geography and its objects are an essential part of national identities (cf. Kaplan & Herb, 2011). Anderson observes that a patriotic rhetoric uses the vocabulary of territorial kinship (1981, p. 144), a nation turns various landscape elements into national symbols that mark nation’s uniqueness (Kaplan 2011, p. 354).

It is difficult to speak of an identity in isolation, without a reference to other identities. This applies to all types of social identities, including the national identity (Oakes 2001, p. 33). The simplest way to construct a social identity is to polarize (positive) Our (the ingroup) and (negative) Their (the outgroup) characteristics (Dijk 2009, p. 193; Jenkins 2014, p. 13). In other words, a national identity is constructed in contradiction to other groups. Studies illustrate that, for example, one group feels positive emotion when they read about harmful things are happening to another group (Huddy & Bankert, 2017).

Professor Triandafyllidou, whose main areas of research and teaching are the governance of cultural diversity, migration, and nationalism, notes that outgroup could be both threatening and inspiring but the essential feature is that the outgroup represents something that the ingroup is not, or, in direct words, “condition the ingroup, either because they are a source of inspiration for it, an example to follow for achieving national grandeur, or because they threaten (or are perceived to threaten) its presumed ethnic or cultural purity and/or its independence” (Triandafyllidou, 2002, p. 33).

Social identity also influences an intergroup relationship (how people interact within their group) (Tajfel & Turner 1979, p. 33).

For convenience’ sake in this study I sort the above-mentioned identity elements in three conditional groups:

**Culture**

Values, norms, traditions, attitude to civic practices, symbols, architecture, landscape, rhetoric, nationality, ethnicity, national character, language, religion, beliefs, lifestyle, habits.

**In- and outgroups**

A polarization between an ingroup and an outgroup, relation to outgroup values, outgroup-traits evaluation and judgment, communicative norms within an ingroup.

**The past, present, and future**

An attitude towards history, evaluation of recent events and the future.
3. Connotation of identity elements

All above-mentioned identity elements could contain a different connotation: negative, positive or neutral. For example, a national habit could be harmful as drinking, useful as prudence, or neutral as a greetings kiss. These connotations are common, although they, of course, can differ from person to person.

A neutral element does not bear any connotation at all or can be connoted as a positive or a negative by different groups. In this research, I regard as neutral by default the symbolic representations (national symbols, a flag), traditions, architecture, nature. A positive tone by default bears memories of national achievements, victories. The negative side comprises something that is harmful to a nation, leads to a decline in any aspect of public life and to a misfortunate outcome: catastrophes, losses, problems, mistakes, misfortunes.

Basic assumptions of the social identity theory are that social groups in Western societies strive to create and maintain positive identities (Oakes 2001, p. 39) and once identified with a group people are motivated to protect and advance group status and dominance as a way to maintain their positive distinctiveness (Huddy & Bankert, 2017). Thus, as far as a group tends to construct and represent only positive elements, so researchers favor to focus in their analyses on the positive identity elements and leave negative and neutral out but I risk and include in the analysis all sides even if they will not bring any significant numbers in results of the quantitation.

4. Media and Identity

The national identity is a social construct, not an innate feature. Any group identity is based on some characteristics but these characteristics never automatically construct identities. According to Brewer, “Social identity is an ongoing process (emphasis added) of shaping and forging an image of what the group stands for and how it wished to be viewed by others” (2001, p. 119). In other words, there are always processes of creation, sustaining and transformation of an identity, based on repetition and continuity. Already existing identity elements are employed by elite and media actors to legitimize their claims (Galpin 2017, p. 143). Identities can be imagined by others and imposed on a group (McGarry & Jasper 2015, pp. 1—2). Since relevant research is not found, it is impossible to discern the difference between an identity model that journalist has and an identity model that journalist wants to create; nevertheless, media do impose identity on their audiences and my thesis is aimed at reflecting on how the Polish media construct or represent the existing Polish identity.
In 1983 a political scientist Benedict Anderson in his influential work "Imagined Communities" first noted that mass communication plays a powerful role in development of modern nations. The mass media in communication studies are associated with many different aspects of identity formation, maintenance, and dissolution. The media influence large audiences by deploying a new agenda by which they report and comment on news events (Fairclough 1995, pp. 46—47). They can drive as well as reflect social change and lead to integration or disintegration of society (McQuail 2010, p. 14). Journalism plays a key role in identity building (Wahl-Jorgensen & Hanitzsch 2009, p. 3). There are demands for media to support identity building and by doing so contribute to social harmony (McQuail 2010, p. 50).

National identity discourse is tied to an essential structure of media and their product consumption, identity representation is embedded in everyday journalistic routines, for instance, polarization is reflected in a traditional media distinction between domestic and foreign news (Mihelj 2011, pp. 9—10, 19, 21, 45—69).

Chapter Summary

National identity is a shared sense of belonging to a national group polarized to another national group. It comprises many elements — cultural, territorial, temporal. Elements can bear not only positive tone but also neutral and even negative.

Media is an important actor in national identity construction and representation.

I continue in the next chapter with a review of previous research. I offer a brief outline of what researchers say about modern Polish national identity and present several previously conducted content analyses of the national identity in media.
In this chapter, I cover two aspects of previous research that relevant to my topic: what researchers say about the modern state of Polish identity, and several previously inducted content analyses of national identity construction and representation in media.

1. Polish national identity: a literature review

Researchers put sufficient attention to examining Polish national identity. There is a great demand from Poland’s society to have an explicit national identity. A prominent Polish political scientist Marek Migalski (2017) explains the great support for the Law and Justice party with the fact that they respond to the deeply rooted need for identification that is in people and build Polish nation from 2015 via aligned media and other means. He describes in details:

I watched the actions [of Law and Justice] and came to the conclusion that they sacrificed a lot of money and time, involved many people to build the nation. That is what the Polish National Foundation deals with but also all ministries, the army, and the media. In Wiadomości on TVP [Poland’s public TV-channel] four times more time was devoted to the nation than in TVN’s [Poland’s private TV-channel] Facts. Even long-distance trains are named according to national needs. This team devoted a lot of an effort to creating of the nation (Olczyk, 2018).

Researchers put emphasis on the fact that modern Polish national identity is based on the process of transforming collective memory about both World War II and the Communist era, and awakening old traumas. These narratives aim to create an image of eternally suffering Polish ingroup and outgroup enemies in the face of the European Union, Germany, Russia and so on.

Polish media researchers Aleksandra and Dariusz Galasińskis describe that the common experience ("eviction, displacement, communism") is used for positive self-presentation of the ingroup and negative presentation of the outgroups, in their study particularly Germans. (Galasińska & Galasiński 2005, p. 510). Contrary to Galasińskis, the European studies professor Barbara Törnquist-Plewa argues that trauma from German Nazism has been constructed in Poland
but there is not enough evidence for making assumptions that a fundamental alteration of Polish memory and identity was made (2013, p.125).

The Polish political scientist Tomasz Zarycki argues that historical identity narratives are based not on real historical events but on functions that an outgroup plays in modern environment and are influenced by Polish “center-periphery paradigm” and “the inferiority complex” (Zarycki 2004, p. 596). This point of view is supported by Polish media researchers Michał Kryżyżanowski and the Galasińskis who argue a close and dynamic link between an identity discourse and social-political transformations (Krzyżanowski 2009, p. 95; Galasińska & Galasiński 2005, p. 510).

American researcher Molly O’Neal elaborates these ideas and warns that the attempt to redefine the past is based on an idea of Poland that should get free from European influence, but this national identity narratives interfere with the international relations and with reconciliation with the past (O’Neal 2017, p. 31). O’Neal views as the dominant identity narrative that where Poland lost its dominant position because of the allies but Poland should be at the decision-making center in the European Union and NATO (ibid., p. 32).

Another outgroup for modern Poland is “East” Europe. After 1989 Poland was receding from such countries to the east as Ukraine and Belarus by creating stereotypes of them based on a perception of themselves as superior (Zarycki 2014, p. 175).

This new victimized identity does not serve Poland. Polish researcher Ewa Stańczyk whose interest focuses on collective memory and national identity in East/Central Europe sees Poland as “traumatized, neurotic country gripped by an irrational fear of its stronger neighbors” (Stańczyk 2013a, p. 315). Nevertheless, a research accent on the fact that Poland constructs its identity on polarizing with the outgroups seems exaggerated inasmuch as polarization with the “other” is a basic element of any identity.

Researchers explain the dramatic reformulation of Law and Justice accent on polarization, as the result of the government’s attempt to weaken the influence of a strong power within the country — the Roman Catholic Church (cf. Stańczyk, Kania-Lundholm & Lindgren). After the fall of communism, Poland put an emphasis on restoring a West-oriented Catholic collective identity that was suppressed under atheistic communism (Requena & Stanek, 2017, p. 87). That time an ethno-religious model of an identity came to dominate the public discourse (Stańczyk 2013b, p. 141).

Nowadays the rise of populist nationalism politics brought new narratives: the “scapegoating of immigrants”, xenophobia, anti-elitism, taboos violations and the “political correctness breaching” (O’Neal 2017, p. 42). The ruling-party narratives lead to deepening of a political divide in the society, not to identity building (Stańczyk, 2013a).

The competing narratives and representations of the nation continue to shape the discourse
of Polish national identity to this day (Kania-Lundholm & Lindgren 2017, p. 297). The Catholic media fostering an identity of Poland as a modern, law-abiding nation that is committed to western democratic principles (O’Neal 2017, p. 28). Liberal Poland tends to find its identity-shaping past in the memory of anti-communism movement Solidarity, the democratic triumph of 1989 and in the following years (O’Neal 2017, p. 31).

2. Content analyses of a national identity

For a long time, content analysis has rarely been used explicitly to measure identity of any type (Neuendorf & Skalski 2009, p. 204). I am failed to find a content analysis of the Polish national identity construction in national media. Among the available content analyses that have been conducted on a national identity are: study by Eilders and Luter of German newspapers regarding country’s identity framing during military actions, Hymans’s research of polarization to outgroups in world leaders’ speeches, thesis by Ricle Mayorga on identity construction in Latin-American ethnic and U.S.A. mainstream media, Wagner’s analysis of Scottish identity representation in media during Independence Referendum.

Christiane Eilders and Albrecht Lüter (2000) have done an enormous longitudinal study that provides useful ideas for verbalizing the national identity elements for my thesis. They content-analyze the identity framings and separate them into several categories: country and recent environment, country and its allies, country and its geopolitical position, national values.

Jacques Hymans (2006) focuses research on polarization to outgroups and argues that an outgroup can be based inside the speaker’s national boundaries, e.g., the United Nations and European Union for Poland and a level of solidarity with these groups and their statuses are not predictable. The research lacks consistency in its aims and subjects inasmuch as instead of the identity messages he turned the study to an analysis of groups’ statuses.

Patricia Ricle Mayorga (2007) indicates that ethnic media construct a homogenized identity, while mainstream media deliver more diverse and non-stereotypical one. However, Mayorga’s methodology and conclusion do not seem coherent to me since her coding scheme is only sufficient for presenting results that can answer only several of her research questions that related to the physical attributes only.

Jan-Philipp Wagner (2014) explores that media change identity frames significantly over time with the change of audience’s opinion, media use issue-specific frames, media are negative and not nation-partisan. I highly regard his findings on the fact that the national identity is influenced by immanent events as independent.
Chapter Summary

The foregoing chapter is divided into two parts of previous academic research that is close to the topic of my thesis.

The first part outlines the modern state of Polish national identity. Polish society demands having an explicitly stated national identity and there are three tendencies that researchers describe. First, the political elites dedicate plenty of media space to nation-building and patriotism rhetoric but employ the polarization with the outgroups that deepening a political divide within the society. Second, the Catholic elites fostering an identity of Poland as a modern, law-abiding nation that is committed to the western partners. And finally, the liberal opposition tends to find its identity-shaping elements in the past protests movements and modern civil duties. It was the first part of the chapter.

The second part outlines the several content analyses of the national identities in the communication studies. The researchers, who conducted them, suggest that the media include the national identity frames and elements with the specific issue-oriented goals that could change with the change of a news agenda. A focus on a national or ethnic identity can lead to stereotypization of the identity. In- and outgroup relation is one of the dominant identity frames that can be formulated differently for different nations but essence remains the same: an outgroup depicted better or worse than an ingroup. It was the second part of the chapter.

The previous research presents a clear understanding that content analysis of public communication is a useful method for a work with any identity elements and in the next chapter I present a detailed description of how I use this method for my thesis.
IV

Method of analysis

In this chapter, I present the method that I use for exploring Polish national identity construction and representation in Poland’s media. I suggest a definition of quantitative content analysis from methodology literature. Then I describe my research design: how a sample is constructed and how I work with my coding scheme. I continue with a report on my pilot study and reflect on reliability and validity of the research.

1. Content analysis paradigm

The chosen method of analysis is the increasingly popular and rapidly expanding quantitative content analysis that provides a set of useful tools: frequency statistics and comparison of data (Neuendorf 2002, p. 1). The quantitative content analysis is based on codification of content in order to acquire replicable and valid knowledge (Krippendorff 2013, pp. 380—385).

My motivation in Krippendorff’s terms is problem-driven (2013 p. 355) — I try to fulfill a lack of academic research on collective identity construction and representation in media and especially Polish national identity.

The content analysis here is guided by the theoretical framework that was described in the chapter II Theory: What is national identity. The set of variables is presented in the code book in Appendix A.

The units of analysis are mentions to ideas in media content. The approach to the relationship between theory and research is deductive (Bryman 2012, p. 26). The conclusions are made on the gathered facts (positivist epistemology) (Bryman 2012, p. 28). Ontologically I regard national identity as a social construction built up from the perceptions and actions of social actors (constructionism) (Bryman 2012, p. 32).

2. Sample

The population consists of all articles published in three chosen newspapers. These newspapers have the highest circulation numbers, reachable online and have diverse political affiliations, therefore, it is possible to produce generalization in conclusions about national identity representation in all Polish media. The newspapers analyzed here are, in alphabetical order: Gazeta Wyborcza, Nasz Dziennik, and Rzeczpospolita.
- Daily center-left Gazeta Wyborcza, led by a former anti-communist dissident, represents independent journalism with a high level of a political partisanship. The newspaper was established in 1989 and was the only anti-communism newspaper till the collapse of the communist government in the next year. It generally supports liberal values that are opposed to conservative values of the ruling party Law and Justice. An approximate daily number of publications is more than twenty pieces.

- Daily Nasz Dziennik is a conservative Catholic media outlet with the highest circulation number among all Catholic newspapers. The newspaper was established in 1998 by a priest with financial help of the international Roman Catholic organization Redemptorists. The newspaper promotes Christian values and does not declare officially its political orientation but takes active participation in political life. In recent years it cooperates with the ruling party. An approximate daily number of publications is less than twenty pieces.

- Rzeczpospolita — a business-oriented daily — is close to the power elites, and in 2016 won in the ranking of the most influential media in Poland (Instytut Monitorowania Mediów, 2017). The newspaper identifies itself as conservative-liberal and has long history — since its first issue in 1920 under different circumstances it was stopped and relaunched several times. In 1982 it was relaunched as a governmental communist official newspaper but with the fall of communism it became independent and shaped its current orientation under national political environment during following years. An approximate daily number of publications is more than thirty pieces.

Stratified sampling is chosen as a method to make a sample from a population. As far as I have the research question that requires to highlight the differences in subpopulations (stratums), so I sample each stratum (newspaper) independently. Practically, I indicate in every spreadsheet a title of a newspaper where an article is published.

Then, relevance sampling is applied within each subpopulation. It is unfeasible practically to reflect on the whole media system in the country, or in Krippendorff words, “The universe of available texts is too large to be examined as a whole, so content analysis need to limit research to a manageable body of texts” (2013 p. 112). As one of the approaches to limitation Krippendorff suggests to use relevance sampling where “a universe of possible texts is reduced to a sample containing, ideally, a manageable number of relevant texts” (2013, p. 119). To correspond with the topic of the thesis considered only articles that could be relevant to national identity (articles
that mention Poland in any way as a main or secondary actor, or news event that happened in Poland or with people of Polish nationality). If a randomly chosen article’s content does not have Poland mentions or Polish actors, I should choose another random article.

Next, I set time limits. I rely on results of a Hester and Dougal longitudinal study (2007) where they emphasize the importance of a weekday and that two constructed weeks is enough to build a representative sample thus one or another event that dominated news agenda for several days will not distort the results. I construct three artificial weeks (Table I), thus the population of articles lies between the 19th of November, 2017 and 2nd of April, 2018 (a 135-day period). I expect that the time frame provides a sufficient textual material for examining national identity in media.

**Table I. Constructed weeks**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week number</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
<th>Saturday</th>
<th>Sunday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>2018-04-02</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
<td>2018-03-27</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2018-03-21</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2018-03-15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2018-03-09</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2018-03-03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2018-02-25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>2018-02-12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td>2018-02-06</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2018-01-31</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2018-01-25</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2018-01-19</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2018-01-13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2018-01-07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52</td>
<td>2017-12-25</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51</td>
<td></td>
<td>2017-12-19</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2017-12-13</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2017-12-07</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2017-12-01</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2017-11-25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2017-11-19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Due to the fact that *Nasz Dziennik* publishes its content in an “issue” format, several dates are included in an issue that was released on a previous day (for instance, *Nasz Dziennik* 18—19 November, 2017, No. 267). *Gazeta Wyborcza* and *Rzeczpospolita* do not practice this format. On a rare occasion when a newspaper has not published any content on a planned in constructed-weeks-table day, a next day is chosen (for instance, the 3rd of April instead of the feast Paschal Triduum the 2nd of April, 2018).

The number of articles to analyze is based on Neuendorf’s data: sample size that lies between 96 and 167 articles provides with ± 5—10 percent of sampling error and a 95—99-percent level of confidence (2002, p. 91). As far as duplication of sample size to 384 articles can reduce sampling error on two percent only (ibid.), so the sample size was aimed to fall in the range between 96 and 167, and is calculated by the formula:

\[
21 \text{ days} \times 3 \text{ newspapers} \times 2 \text{ articles from each per day} = 126.
\]

A higher number is unmanageable for a two-month project with one coder.

Next, to select articles for the analysis, I employ probability sampling, particularly, a random sampling type. Articles were manually randomly selected from an available population where each text had the same probability of being included. A genre and topic are not limited. This sampling type provides me with a representative subset, that is essential because the generalization to the larger population of messages is desired for my conclusions (Krippendorf 2013, pp. 386, 116; Neuendorf 2002, p. 74, 2011, p. 280).

A list of the selected articles is in Appendix B.

Daily number of news articles, published on the three sites, are not equal but I selected an equal number (42 articles) from each, thus I employed nonproportionate stratified sampling. Nonproportionate stratified sampling is used when the sizes of the sample groupings are not proportionate to their relative sizes in the population and statistical adjustments are to be done (Neuendorf, 2002, p. 86). Thus, an approach to determine the messages to be studied is availability-based (defines the population as the set of messages available to receivers in a given medium at a given time and is appropriate when content analysts are applying theories of message production) (Neuendorf 2011, pp. 276—280).
To summarize the sampling, here is an outline:

**Population:** *Gazeta Wyborcza, Nasz Dziennik, Rzeczpospolita.*

**Method of sampling:**

- Nonproportionate stratified sampling (every newspaper regarded separately, but a total number of published texts is unknown).
- Relevance sampling (only articles that relevant to Polish identity is analyzed).
- Random probability sampling (an opted number of articles published on pre-selected 21 days is randomly chosen, 42 from each newspaper, 126 in total).
3. The coding scheme

The analysis is conducted by human preset coding, thus, according to Neuendorf and Skalski, development of a coding scheme will be the most significant study part (2009, p. 206). The coding scheme comprises a code book (description of variables and instructions for a coder) and a coding form (an SPSS spreadsheet into which I enter the assessments).

The model of a national identity used for a base of the code book includes a compilation from several earlier theoretic works, past research (declared in the chapters II Theory and III Previous research), plus my own addition from independent preliminary work with the Polish media.

There are obviously problems with the articulation of any sort of a fixed identity (Evans & Gamman 1995, p. 38) and, as Krippendorff notes, all coding involves qualitative judgment and identification procedures (2013, p. 385). Variables still should be able to transmit sufficient information about national identity construction. Neuendorf (2002) and Krippendorff (2013) require the variables to be exhaustive and mutually exclusive. Berger (2000) demands them not be too broad or too narrow. Keeping it in mind, I tried to verbalize variables in a formal language that is free of ambiguities, inconsistencies, and nuances. I focus on the message content rather than the traits of an author’s initial intention (Neuendorf & Skalski 2009, p. 209).

It should be noted that coding is not limited to the analysis of text. Images (photography, computer generated graphics or illustrations) may serve as the messages, thus I analyze them also (Neuendorf & Skalski 2009, p. 206).

The entire code book is appended in Appendix A and outlined in Table II. A coding form is made with the assistance of the analytical software SPSS.

The selected articles were coded:
1. A set of the written rules for measurement was applied to a set of articles by me. I have read the articles simultaneously entering the found variables into an SPSS spreadsheet.
2. On reading, I checked the filled spreadsheet to avoid a typo.
3. Articles were re-read one more time and possible improvements were made.

For the following data analysis, the calculations and statistical tests performed on the data were conducted in SPSS as well. Collected data were analyzed on the basis of variables measured at the nominal or ratio levels and research questions were answered.
**Table II. The code book outline**

**Basic information**
- Place of an action
- Source of information / Citation
- Reporter’s attitude (positive, negative)

**Ingroup and outgroups**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A polarization between a Pole and foreigner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Characteristics**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pole</th>
<th>Foreigner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Positive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Relation to the European Union**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identity elements</th>
<th>The EU leadership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shared</td>
<td>Not shared</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Values**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>European values</th>
<th>Universal values</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(tolerance, stability, progress, culture)</td>
<td>(equality, safety, freedom)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shared</td>
<td>Not shared</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Poland’s society**

| Ethnic | Catholic | Civic |

**Poland’s relation to the rule of law**

| Law-abiding society | Lawless society |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Poland’s victimization VS Poland’s resilience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Relation to the past, present and future**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Past</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Need of change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Historical memory</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conserve</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Patriotism rhetoric</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Traditional</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* The answers “None/Not applicable/Not found” are omitted from the table
4. The pilot study

To test my coding scheme and measure reliability and validity, I conduct a small pilot study.

Procedure

The sample of the pilot study includes articles that were published between broad dates: from the 15th of February, 2018 to the 7th of March, 2018 (21 days). Thus, an approach to determine the messages to be studied is availability-based.

To summarize the process of analysis, here are the chronological stages:
1. Three Polish newspapers were selected (Gazeta Wyborcza, Nasz Dziennik, Rzeczpospolita); relevance sampling.
2. Articles in the newspapers selected manually (10 from Nasz Dziennik and Rzeczpospolita, 11 from Gazeta Wyborcza, 31 in total); random sampling.
3. The sample is typed in SPSS and analyzed on the ground of variables measured at the nominal or ratio levels.
4. Collected results were described to test reliability of research questions.

Results

Full results of the pilot study and discussion are in Appendix C.

Three media outlets share more distinctive than shared features in national identity representation and construction. Pro-government Rzeczpospolita and Catholic Nasz Dziennik have a negative image of Polish identity. Oppositional Gazeta Wyborcza is ambivalent — it depicts Poles with negative and positive traits with somewhat equal frequency. Nasz Dziennik is less concerned with polarization with the outgroups but tends to use military-oriented identity symbols. Rzeczpospolita depicts Poles from a negative side and the outgroups with the positive ones, creating an identity of Poland as an inferior group. Gazeta Wyborcza strictly avoids supporting a suffering-victim identity and does not appeal to the past negative memories and the negative traits of the outgroups.
5. Reliability, validity, generalizability

For content analysis, it is crucial for data on which researcher bases the answers on research questions to be representative and correlate to the topic of study. In this part I describe what is reliability and validity, and how they are examined and achieved in my work (by conducting a pilot study, retesting the pilot study, a code-book improvement).

**Reliability**

Reliability is the attribute of data on which researcher can rely in answering research questions. Unreliability results from two factors: a dissonance in topic evaluation and a lack of a variation in the data (Krippendorff 2013, p. 386).

To measure the reliability of the pilot study, I have managed a retest of the same articles on the eleventh day after the first analysis because Krippendorff suggests it as a possible design to examine reliability strength (2013 p. 271). All answers turned out to be identical to answers of the first study. It means that the amount of noise that entered a process is negligible, and intra-coder reliability is high due to the clarity of the code book because in a content analysis the emphasis is on a coding scheme; coder (my) experience is not critical for a result (Neuendorf & Skalski 2009, p. 206).

Overall, data remain constant throughout the measuring process, thus I regard the sample relevant. In other words, the pilot study results so far show an evidence of a stable correlation between content and research questions, questions are answerable.

Several variables were deleted from the coding scheme after the pilot study. I noticed that I give ambiguous interpretations from article to article to their code-book instructions which were tied to a fluid notion of public good. Intercoder reliability is vital for my project, thereby variables “for which it is not achieved should be dropped from the analysis” (Neuendorf & Skalski 2009, p. 206) and I exclude next two variables from the final code book:

- The European integration process serves Poland.
- The European integration process ruins polishness.
Following three variables are rare to find, contribute insufficiently, and are deleted as well:

- An idea of the exceptionality of the Polish nation.
- A point to historical and cultural continuity of Polish nation.
- Exceptionality of Polish historical experience.

Due to this removing, revisions of the code-book instructions, and a requirement to construct the representative “weeks”, the pilot-study sample is excluded from the final pool of the analyzed articles.

**Validity**

Some would doubt that the chosen media outlets which show strong signs of partisanship could really invest in national identity construction because readers could distrust them and thus the research lacks validity, “the extent to which a measuring procedure represents the intended, and only the intended, concept” (Neuendorf, 2002, p. 112). Notwithstanding, a 2.5 year-long study on the impact of news about the European Union member states on citizens’ identity reveals that even if readers have learned that a media outlet is not objective and provides its own political agenda, news anyway affect an identity (particularly its civic component) (Harrison & Bruter 2015, p. 180—184). In other words, skepticism toward the news does not guarantee resistance to manipulation and if a media text was consumed — it invested in identity construction. Thus, the research is valid to answer my questions.

Validity also concerns the analysis’ variables that measure the concept of national identity construction. Such abstract concepts as identity are problematic to measure.

**Generalizability**

One of the most important issues to consider in my thesis is the generalizability of the findings. The findings could be applied to the entire population in media system of Poland only with the support of the theoretical framework and the careful compliance with rules of statistical methods. I have two solutions. First, the thesis is based on a work with a first-hand empirical material that I have done for previous study work on the Polish media in November 2017, when the main variables were derived. Second, the research is supported by the most recent theory on
the social and national identity and previous research into modern Polish identity elements. Thus, as Krippendorff regards (2013), the thesis has reached empirical validity, “the degree to which available evidence and established theory support various stages of a research process” (p. 315).

The research reached sample validity, the sample size is sufficiently substantial to represent national identity in these Polish media (Krippendorff, 2013, p. 387). In the pilot study variables were found in sampled population sufficiently to draw the several testing conclusions that correspond to some points of previous research into Polish national identity. With a sample size in the main study that four-times larger than in the pilot study, I expect only to enhance sample validity.

**Arguments for and against the selected method**

The difficulty to obtain coding schemes for such a liquid concept as national identity and for the variables selected for this project is an argument against the content analysis. The insufficient amount of previous research on the topic that cognate to representation of a national identity in national media is a matter of some concern.

The strength of content analysis comes with a high number of analyzed articles but a sample size in several thousand articles is unmanageable for me in a given time limit. Human-based coding is laborious and depends on researcher’s mental and physical fatigue. Computer-based quantitative methods (e.g., “word counts”) would allow me to have that large number of analyzed articles. Notwithstanding, human coding that I am planning to perform has an advantage over the computer-based quantitative methods in a more nuanced measurement (e.g., recognition of negation or disambiguation), and in results’ generalizability.

Often argued that quantitative content analysis has no advantages over discourse analysis due to its coding choices that are ultimately subjective. Nevertheless, quantitative methods still allow for quantitative generalization regardless its subjectivism level and it is important for my aim. Also, with the selected method it is the easiest of all research methods to ensure reliability. Furthermore, content analysis is valued for an ease of replication inasmuch as the materials can be made available for others to use.

Stratified sampling can produce a possible technique misapplication when stratum sample size is not proportional to the total population. I have no data of the number of articles published in every newspaper and thus not able to make stratum sample size proportional to the total number. It may affect the answer to the first research question: in total data, some trends could be exaggerated, others may disappear. However, it will not affect the second research question regarding the differences in newspapers’ content.
Chapter Summary

In the above chapter, I present how I conduct my content analysis (counting of coded textual matter). The sample is the 126 articles from three Poland's newspapers published in a 135-day period. My coding scheme consists of a code book (that is appended to the end of the thesis) and a coding form (that was produced in SPSS software). The pilot study is conducted on a sample size in 31 articles in a 21-day period and shows sufficient reliability and validity of my research. Preliminary conclusions are that the Polish media appeal to the national identity in their articles frequently, the dominant Polish identity elements are negative, the constructed identities in all of these three analyzed newspapers differ.

The next two chapters bear the most important information: results of my content analysis and results discussion.
V

Results

The sample is content analyzed, coded in data sheets and calculations and statistical procedures are performed on the collected data on the basis of nominal or ratio levels with the help of built-in functions of statistical software SPSS. This chapter details and illustrates with two tables, 12 figures and two photos the results of the calculations according to the two posed research questions.

Frequency table is in Appendix D.
The option “None/Not applicable/Not found” is omitted from the results description.

RQ 1: How do Gazeta Wyborcza, Nasz Dziennik, and Rzeczpospolita constitute the national identity?

To answer research question 1, the variables that have approximately equal frequencies in all three media outlets were selected and summed numbers are presented (with regard to Neuendorf’s defined ± 5—10 percent of a sampling error for a sample size similar to mine).

The dominant reporter’s tone (see Figure 1) regarding a news event in all three media outlets is neutral or impossible to determine, the positive and neutral tones are used in an equal proportion.

Figure 1. Reporter’s tone
Almost all articles reflect on a domestic event (84.1%). Reporters use all possible sources of information, include citations from one person in 53% of articles and from two or more people in 26%. It is worth noting that analysis demonstrates that these Polish media seldom provide a voice for ordinary citizens (not politicians, entrepreneurs or experts).\(^2\)

The geography is not diverse. Seventy percent of articles on Poland or Poles do not mention any other nationality or country; the rest 30% are presented in a pie chart in Figure 2. The outgroup category is dominated by the European Union, sometimes referred as Brussels (n=13).

Figure 2. Outgroup nationality

In 33 articles that bear some traits of polarization (an explicit idea of unlikeness in any social sphere, a mention of conflicts between Poland and other country/countries) the most significant outgroup is the European Union (n=7), although Ukraine, Russia, Israel together with the U.S.A. are polarized only two times each.

A comparative list in Figure 3 displays that in overwhelming majority of cases the national identity in Poland’s media is constituted with both negative and positive sides in somewhat equal numbers. The big differences from their counterparts indicate a mention of the negative present (positive present is found less often), positive relation to change (the fear of change is expressed less often), and accepting the European values or the Universal human rights (these values are rejected less often).

\(^2\) Although all three media use markedly diverse sources of information and interview or cite people frequently, few differences exist and they will be considered in the answer for Research question 2 in the following part.
All three media outlets:
- appeal with the same frequencies to the past memories,
- discuss recent problems and express hope for the things to change,
- describe Poles and foreigners with both positive and negative elements (one exception is discussed in the following part),
accept and support the European Union’s governance and the United Nations’ values,

depict modern Poland identity as a civic (an idea of a good citizenship, the common good, rationality, responsibility, shared interests, civic compromises) and law-abiding society.

A consolidated chart in Figure 4 shows how many articles contain simultaneous characteristics of Poles and the outgroups. Articles that mention something good about a Pole seldom mention some negative characteristic of an outgroup; and likewise, articles that mention something bad about a Pole virtually never mention a positive trait of a foreigner. However, there are only 16 articles that mention some positive characteristics of a foreigner and no one mentions it without mentioning any other category.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>All articles that mention:</th>
<th>n/126</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Positive about a Pole</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative about a Pole</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive about a foreigner</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative about a foreigner</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4. Positive and negative characteristics of a Pole and a foreigner

The most commonly used reference is to the present (73.5%) and the results indicate strong inclination towards negativism in the media: a total of 55 articles (43.7% of the sample) are focused on negative present events. A mention of the positive future is found in 34.1%. A frequency of a negative future mention is n=13 and positive present is n=30.
As it was assumed, reporters appeal to the far past events relatively often, and mostly to negative memories (exists in 16% of articles), although elite’s intention to rewrite the past is supported and rejected in comparable numbers of articles (n=12 and n=8 respectively).

The relations among the past, present, future and reporter’s attitude towards change are exposed in cross-data line-graph Figure 5. A strong correlation among a negative present narrative and a mention of the positive future to anticipating of a change prevails. The peak of a fear of change is reached with 11 articles that appeal to the negative present events.

![Figure 5. Relation of narrative’s focus to change](image)

The number of mentions to a positive past memory (n=19) is fewer than the number of mentions to a negative past memory (n=27). Figure 6 points out that a half of the articles that has a negative past memory tends to appeal to a need for renewing of historical memory. They also bear an idea of Poland as a victim of an action of others. The most popular topic of positive past memory is an event of Polish resilience.

![Figure 6. Relation to history](image)

Poland itself is represented as a civic society in 32.5, as mono-ethnic — in 3.2, and as Catholic in 19 percent of articles. The numbers are negligible but leadership of civilian characteristics and almost total absence of nationalistic ones are worth considering.
Frequencies of depicting Poland as a law-abiding and law-abusing country are 25.4 against 15.9 % respectively.

Polish reporters are twice likely to use civic attitudes rhetoric (21.4%), than traditional or military patriotic rhetoric (10.3 and 11.9 % respectively).

The numbers of articles that show some relations to different types of values are statistically insignificant, except for representation of Poland as a civic society. This idea of social justice, civic rights and duties as natural to Poland and Poles is found in 41 articles (see Figure 7).

![Figure 7. Articles’ relation to different types of values](image)

**RQ 2: What are the differences in identity representation and construction in *Gazeta Wyborcza, Nasz Dziennik, and Rzeczpospolita*?**

A below answer to the research question 2 is focused on the results that have significant differences in a cross table *Appendix D* between all three media outlets (with regard to Neuendorf defined ± 5—10 percent of a sampling error for my sample size).

**The Present, Future, and Past**

Oppositional *Gazeta Wyborcza* is a leader in providing media space for experts, local organizations and ordinary people to perform their views (total n=17) and 60% of its articles are independently gathered by journalist information or journalist’s opinion. Catholic *Nasz Dziennik* almost never (n=1) publishes text that is based on an opinion of a journalist but its pages are dominated by an official opinion: *Law and Justice* and its representatives are speaking in 33.4 %
of articles (14 from 42), while the other two outlets practically never cite or interview the political elite.

Catholic *Nasz Dziennik* is the sole outlet that almost free from reporter’s judgement, 34 of 42 articles do not show any reporter’s attitude but selection of news events inclined to a negative side: medium contains an idea of a recent situation as harmful for Poland in every other article (54.8%) and writes about negative harmful past events in one in three (31%) articles (see histograms in *Figure 8*).

![Figure 8. Tone tendencies](image)

Oppositional *Gazeta Wyborcza* presents a balanced selection of tones, articles appeal to positive and negative events with equal frequencies but a negative future focus (where the outcomes of news events are depicted negatively) that *Gazeta* has is rarely found in the other two news outlets. Also, it transmits less anticipating of change (n=12 against 43 in the other two newspapers combined) and twice more anxiety, an evident reporter’s fear of a shift in the recent state of affairs (n=8 against 7 in the other two newspapers combined).

Business-oriented *Rzeczpospolita* has fairly diverse tones but numbers are too low for a correct interpretation.

*Table III* regards the relation of a medium to the history renewing process.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Frequency (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gazeta Wyborcza</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Request for the historical memory preservation</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Request for renewing of historical memory</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The table shows that Catholic *Nasz Dziennik* expresses more often an idea of the need for history renewing. Oppositional *Gazeta Wyborcza* conversely more often persists on accepting of an already established historical narrative and the history-renewing process is explicitly rejected in a text, considered as harmful. Business-oriented *Rzeczpospolita* again stays in the golden mean and demonstrates insignificant results.

**In- and outgroups**

The essential differences lie in the representation of in- and outgroups relationship.

Oppositional *Gazeta Wyborcza* in *Figure 9* shows little inclination to a tendency of not publishing news events about Polish people that happened outside of Poland. Almost all except for one *Gazeta*’s articles that bear an idea of polarization between in- and outgroups have positive characteristic (any indication of a personality trait, behavior, thought, and emotion that commonly regarded as desired) of a person from an outgroup but there is no sufficient concurrence with any other variable.

![News geography](image)

**Figure 9.** News geography

The opposite picture creates conservative pro-government *Rzeczpospolita*, 52.5% of their articles has negative characteristics of a Pole: they contain an indication of a personality trait, behavior, thought, and emotion regarded as unwanted (aggression, failure, weakness).

The negative characteristics of a foreigner are rarely combined with an idea of polarization between Poland and “other” but the combination still exists in *Rzeczpospolita*. The ideas of Polish and European identities as cognate or support to the European and Universal human values also do not show strong influence in pro-government newspaper content.
More concurrences of polarization and the other categories demonstrates Catholic *Nasz Dziennik* (see *Figure 10* and *Table IV*). With ideas that polarize Poland and an outgroup often coexist rejection of the European Union’s role in domestic governance\(^3\) and negative representation of foreigners.

![Figure 10. Relations of polarization in Nasz Dziennik to the European Union and negative representation of a foreigner](image)

**Table IV.** Major differences in in- and outgroups representation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Frequency (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gazeta Wyborcza</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victimization of Poland</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polish Resilience</td>
<td>9.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polarization</td>
<td>14.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive characteristics about a foreigner</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative characteristics about a foreigner</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rejection the European Union’s role in domestic governance</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^3\) Rejection of the European Union’s role in domestic governance is a mention of abuse the European Union’s rules, laws, regulations and its interference in domestic politics and sovereignty.
Catholic *Nasz Dziennik* has never published a positive characteristic of a foreigner and does not show a support for the European values (sexual and national tolerance, political stabilisation, economic prosperity, and liberalisation of culture, technical progress) but often utilizes rhetoric cognate to the Universal Human rights, e.g., the worth of a human life and freedom of choice.

There are several major trends in in- and outgroups representation. Overall list is displayed in *Figure 11* and discussed below.

![Figure 11. In- and outgroups-presentation trends comparison](image)

Oppositional *Gazeta Wyborcza* has an equally high number of the articles with the negative and positive characteristics of a Pole (approximately ⅓) but these two features are almost never combined in one article. The construction of outgroup relation in *Gazeta Wyborcza* is difficult to decipher: variables have insignificant frequencies. *Rzeczpospolita* tends to support the European
governance and values more often but *Gazeta Wyborcza* never expresses rejection of the European Union dominance at all.

Catholic *Nasz Dziennik* make the biggest investment in the process of Polish victimization: it appeals to that idea in one in three (36%) of all its articles. Pro-government *Rzeczpospolita* appeals to an idea of Polish resilience — a belief in Poland’s ability to adapt in the face of adverse conditions and take a proactive stance — in one of five articles (21.5%).

**Culture**

Measures of rhetorical means employing in national identity construction and representation summarized in *Figure 12* which shows that contradictory trends coexist.

![Figure 12](image) Rhetorical national identity construction: trends and numbers

Oppositional *Gazeta Wyborcza* never represents Poland as a mono-ethnic society and rarely uses military or traditional rhetoric and symbols (e.g., as it does *Nasz Dziennik* on *Figures 13 and 14*). Business-oriented *Rzeczpospolita* does not represent Poland as a Catholic society. Catholic *Nasz Dziennik* is well behind in representation of Poland as a law-abiding society.
Figures 13 and 14. Examples of a use of traditional symbols in identity representation in media

Catholic *Nasz Dziennik* and pro-government *Rzeczpospolita* employ all kinds of rhetoric yet *Rzeczpospolita* pays attention to the civic society attributes and discussions of law-related problems twice more often than both other newspapers combined.

Pro-government *Rzeczpospolita* shows strong independence: it is the sole media that has its reporters’ opinions and independently obtained data as the dominant sources of information (40% and 19% respectively, 60% in total) and seldom publishes official records, although that media outlet is considered to be close to the power.

Chapter Summary

The Polish media outlets constitute or reflect the national identity in their articles regularly. Ingroup and outgroups are identified with the negative and positive traits simultaneously, polarization is high. Reporters construct the identity mostly with victimization, polarization with the outgroups, negative past events and civic attitudes rhetoric. The dominant media focus on the present relates to a reference to the idea of the need of change. Regarding the nature of relationship with the outgroups, the media display a well-balanced diverse picture. The universal human rights, European values, European identity are depicted as cognate and as adverse to Polishness with somewhat equal frequency. The same situation and is in politics: the European Union interference in shaping Polish domestic politics is both accepted and rejected in the media.

Three media outlets have more shared rather than distinctive features in national-identity representation and construction. Pro-government *Rzeczpospolita* and Catholic *Nasz Dziennik* have a negative image of Polish identity. Oppositional *Gazeta Wyborcza* is ambivalent: it depicts Poles with negative and positive traits with somewhat equal frequency and does not appeal to past negative memories and negative traits of the outgroups. *Nasz Dziennik* is more concerned with polarization with the outgroups but tends to use the military-oriented identity symbols. *Rzeczpospolita* depicts Poles from a negative side and the outgroups with the positive ones.
VI

Discussion

After the detailed and illustrated description of the content analysis results in the previous chapter, this chapter now turns to a discussion of the findings according to the two posed research questions in the order they are stated. First, I consider how the Polish media construct and represent the national identity in content. Second, the differences in national-identity construction and representation in the different types of the Polish media are pondered.

**RQ 1:** How do Polish print media construct and represent national identity?

Identity construction employs a broad spectrum of strategies, generally they are defined by Tajfel with his former student J. C. Turner: assimilation to an outgroup, creating of an antagonistic outgroup, comparison with outgroup, redefining existing and creating new symbols, redefining and creating new meanings of past events (1986, pp. 19—20). Findings disclose that overall Poland’s media reporting extensively uses these strategies of identity construction and representation.

The media include numerous interviews and citations, use all of the possible sources of information with one exception: it is rare to hear a voice of an ordinary citizen. I can assume that the identity version, presented in the Polish media, is elitist: created by political, academic or financial elites, advocates them and serves their needs.

Media content is mostly dedicated to a discussion of the recent problems and often shows a hope for the things to change, depicts Poland as a civic and law-abiding society. By focusing on civic aspects (e.g., good citizenship, social justice, the common good, rationality, responsibility, shared interests, civic compromises) rather than religious or ethnic aspects, the press constructs and maintains a progressive representation of Polish society as a modern one, a society that is aimed to solve its problems via civic practices. Also, comparison with an outgroup is practiced rarely; probably, journalists avoid to fuel nationalism or national conflicts.

One of the possible explanations of presentation of Poland as a law-abiding civic society is that this stimulates consumers of the Polish media to feel better about their Polish national identity, more empowered and active as citizens of the country. A second interpretation is that the dominance of democratic Poland ideas is rooted in 1989’s Solidarity movement that appealed to inclusive civic ideals rather than to ethnic ones. One more explanation is that Law and Justice,
which turned a country’s legal framework upside down by getting control over courts (Csaky, 2018), is covering up its law abuse in a noise of law-related debates.

Even if to take into consideration the diverse tones used by the reporters, the results still show an inclination towards the negativism in media that was supposed in the introduction. Negativism is crucial because the pervasiveness and ubiquity of this Polish-life representation in the media may mean that it will be unanimously and uncritically accepted by their Polish readers. However, the news around the world tend to be negative and it is not a salient Polish feature.

The identity-constructive strategy of redefining the past memories is omnipresent. The harmful events are expected to be rewritten but it is not clear which position the media prescribe for a new historical image of Poland: an active or passive one, a victim or a hero. It supports the research of the Galasińskis that the common Polish is used for positive self-presentation of Poles (Galasińska & Galasiński 2005, p. 510). This vague representation of history that is disseminated in the Polish media would have unfavorable outcomes for Polish sense of self-esteem and distinctiveness. A trend in the historic debates is an outcome of a Law-and-Justice desire to re-establish Poland’s central role in Europe and weaken the European Union’s influence and all media intentionally or not have been dragged into this process. It is in line with the assumptions of the researchers Kryzyżanowski, O’Neal and the Galasińskis who argue that in Poland there is a close and dynamic link between an identity discourse and social-political transformations since 1989 (Krzyżanowski 2009, p. 95; Galasińska & Galasiński 2005, p. 510; O’Neal 2017, p. 31).

High polarization with the European Union presented in media, as well predicted in the thesis introduction, could be classified as an attempt to create an antagonistic outgroup but simultaneously the European values and identity are depicted as cognate thus the chosen outgroup for assimilation with is Europe. It represents Polish domestic political struggle between the pro-EU opposition and Eurosceptic Law and Justice. The most recent Freedom House report affirms that opposition is winning the fight over Poland’s affinity to the values associated with the West (e.g., tolerance for diversity, freedom of conscience) because various segments of the population (including ethnic, religious, gender, LGBT, and other relevant groups) have full opportunities to enter the political scene (Freedom House, 2018b).

The same ambivalent tendency can be seen with resilience and victimization — media depict Poland both as a passive and as an active actor in a relationship with the outgroups. National media usually defend country’s interests abroad but what role the Polish media see for themselves is inexplicit.

Overall, the Polish print media present a balanced and diverse set of the identity elements for their readers and aim at a news agenda independent from political influence. This observation is supported by the Freedom House report that says, in direct words, “many outlets criticize all
groups along the political spectrum, even those with which they are aligned” (Freedom House, 2016).

I have no data on the question do Polish newspapers’ audiences cross, and how many media titles consumes one reader, thus, unfortunately, it is impossible to generalize the influence of shared and repeated in different news outlets identity-construction strategies. Apparently, a person reads one media outlet or several outlets with one political affiliation, thus it is worth considering the differences in identity representation in the different types of the Polish media, presented below.

**RQ 2: What are the differences in national-identity construction and representation in different types of Polish print media?**

There are several differences in national-identity construction and representation in three types of Polish online newspapers: Catholic, oppositional and close to the conservative government. The polish media have more shared than distinctive characteristics but discrepancy should still be taken into account. The discussion is organized into three groups of the identity elements (see chapter II Theory: What is national identity, part 2. Identity elements).

**The Present, Future, and Past**

Oppositional media’s inclination to a use of a negative focus while writing on the present or future events that are connected with an idea of a need of change and a fear of that change constructs to some extent a negative Polish identity as a corrupted country liable to correction but Poland’s capabilities are questioned. This also could be explained by disrupted communication with main agents of change — Poland’s government. The critical to the government media suffer the difficulties in obtaining official information from the power elites and records and data from public institutions because Law and Justice is openly hostile to critical or independent media outlets and engages exclusively with state-run and pro-government outlets (Freedom House, 2018b). It reflected in the data that the oppositional media provide plenty of space for expert or journalist commentary but almost never use the official sources. I assume that this fact fuels negativism in the oppositional media and affects the represented national identity, creates an image of weak or absent national governance in the oppositional media agenda.

Nonetheless, a task of reporting on political life remains. Law and Justice denies commenting on its policy and passes legislation quickly, without opportunity for media debate. It
is reflected in coverage in cooperated with the government Catholic media that are free from reporter’s judgment or opinion but filled with official information. In contradicts with my expectation that the Catholic media ignore the official political agenda Church (cf. Stańczyk, Kania-Lundholm & Lindgren). Therefore, Law and Justice use them as propaganda tools. Interesting that business-oriented pro-government media are not used this way, the distinct news agenda could be explained with differences in target audiences of these two types of media: business people will not tolerate propaganda narrative.

The Catholic and pro-government media agendas also are inclined to a negative side. It harms Poland’s self-image. The news with a mention of the negative events are likely to distort the number of the negative elements in Polish identity because of the availability heuristic bias: people estimate the probability or the frequency of an element by the ease with which element comes to mind (Tversky & Kahneman 1973, p. 207), Poles will overestimate how likely a harmful element is spread in Polish reality. Apart from being ill-informed, the media audience, in words of Canadian-American cognitive psychologist Steven Pinker (2018), can become nervous, unemphatic, disparaging and aggressive.

The Polish media differ significantly in their response to Law and Justice legislation regarding the crimes committed during the World War II. The Catholic media express more often agreement with an idea of history renewing, and oppositional more often reject them. Also, the Catholic media are making the biggest investment in the process of Polish victimization. On the contrary, the oppositional media took a more responsible stance on the homeland history and eschews to deform the national historical narratives that play a key role in the national identity. “Issues of identity are deeply rooted in national politics, politicians seem [...] to appeal to disadvantaged constituencies that are based on shared experiences” (Jenkins 2014, p. 30). In other words, politicians consciously invoke the harmful past events for the sake of immanent political needs but in this case they distort the national identity. In opposite, promoted positive representation of history could be beneficial for identity processes (Jaspal, Nerlich & Lemańczyk, 2014) and a strong international relation with the outgroups, for instance, with Germany or with Israel and its supporter the U.S.A. History may be disputed but in an open manner where Poles are involved in the discussion regarding that key identity element, and both the potential risks and benefits are debated.

In contrast, the business-oriented media stay away from those debates; instead, they are using Polish protests when they feel the necessity to include some far past memories. This mentality corresponds with an entrepreneur’s world outlook that requires a proactive and resilient stance. This mention of former protests draws interesting connections between pro-government conservative media and liberals, who, as noted by a post-communist-Europe researcher Molly
O'Neal, tends to find its identity-shaping past in the memory of democratic movement *Solidarity* and in the following after 1989 years (2017, p. 31).

**In- and outgroups**

The essential differences that analyzed media have in identity construction lie in the representation of in- and outgroups relationship and a reason lies in ambivalent Polish geopolitics:

When we look at the situation in Europe today, we realize that not only geographically but also culturally and politically, we are in between. We do not belong to the South — we have many features characteristic of the North. We are not as western as the European West but also not as eastern as the typical East.⁴

With such a wide range of choices, the Polish media, on the one hand, have several possibilities in constructing outgroups’ identities that meet their today’s needs, on the other hand, the constructed ingroup image may be vague.

Polarization with the outgroups, that was expected in the introduction, is not widespread and plays a noticeable role only in the Catholic media, where Poland is polarized with the European Union. It reflects close cooperation between these media and Eurosceptic *Law and Justice*, who wants to ensure Poland’s place in the core of Europe (Galpin 2017, p. 14).

Populism presents an outlook where are only friends and foes. Power elites employ anti-EU and outer-enemies strategies due to the fear of losing population’s votes. The latest public opinion survey *Standard Eurobarometer 88*, that was carried out in November 2017, shows that Poles tend to trust more the European Union than Poland’s government, and Poles have more optimistic view of the future of the European Union than an average European, although they still notably reject European policy on migration and shared economics (European Commission, 2018).

The latter two topics are employed in identity construction by the ruling party in its favor because the Catholic media very rarely mention the European values (such as tolerance or economic growth) but when they do, these values are rejected. The ideas of Polish and European identities as cognate or support to the European values also do not show strong influence in pro-

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government newspapers’ content. Moreover, the Catholic media reject the European Union’s role in domestic governance.

All above point out to an assumption that both media types follow political elite’s anti-European scenario. In contrast to these two types, the oppositional-type media never express rejection of the European Union dominance at all. Opposition parties argued that Law-and-Justice-led anti-EU tactics are condemning Poland to ridicule and isolation in the international arena (Szczerbiak & Bil 2013, p. 40).

Another possible explanation of the fact that the Catholic media reject European values and also sometimes portray Polish and European identities as not cognate is that the media simply follows a popular among Poles point of view. The public opinion research, made in 2005 by Clare McManus-Czubińska and William Miller in Poland, suggests a clear correlation between religiosity and national-versus-European identity (p. 123). Probably, 13 years later things remain the same and the media represent their audience outlooks.

Instead, the Catholic media often appeal to the rhetoric that bears elements that cognate to the Universal Human rights, e.g., the worth of a human life and freedom of choice. I count it as substitution of concepts where media justify Catholic interests with widely accepted terms, for instance, in an anti-abortion campaign, where the freedom of choice is vested in an embryo, who regarded as a human.

The oppositional and business-oriented media polarize Poles in favor of the outgroups, the articles with polarization have negative characteristics of a Pole. White et al. suppose that the combination of a reference to a negative identity element and the reader’s loyalty to his referent national group will make a news story appear more credible (2018 p. 61). Poland still has many issues presented in the Freedom House report, for example, that such values as tolerance and diversity are not cognate to Poland: “Roma and LGBT continue to face discrimination. Hate crimes against Muslims have risen significantly” (Freedom House, 2018b). Even if credibility is these media’s goal but in achieving this goal, the media create an identity of ingroup inferior to an outgroup. The motivation behind social identity construction is a desire for a high self-esteem that based on maintaining group autonomy power, exerting control and power over outgroups (Cinnirella 1996, pp. 265-266). Low self-esteem will not assist in achieving autonomy or control over the outgroups.

**Culture**

In measures of the cultural elements employed in national identity construction and representation coexist contradictory trends.
The pro-government with Catholic media employ all of the kinds of patriotic symbolism and rhetoric. I regard it as a reaction to Polish democracy decline in the last several years (Freedom House, 2018a) that was caused by Law and Justice governance. The loyal to the political elite outlets cover problems under patriotism. Previous research suggests that when social identity is threatened groups are more likely to select the identity-reinforcing elements (rhetoric) and display symbols (White et al, 2018, pp. 60, 63).

Another potential explanation of patriotism popularity in the Catholic press is that Catholic identity was suppressed under communism for a long time until 1989, a Catholic-values restoration process coincided in time with democracy restoration. In those years the Catholic media made a habit of appealing to democratic elements that were important in media discourse that time and still portray the country as a modern, law-abiding nation that is committed to western democratic principles and not as a conservative religious country. Probably, this version of traditional patriotism, originated in resistance to communism a long time ago, under contemporary conditions is outdated and does not meet the challenges of time.

Notwithstanding, the business-oriented media pay attention to the civic society attributes and discussions of law-related problems twice more often than both other types of media combined. This close attention apparently caused by the fact that state of affairs in the legal system strongly affects local business and attractiveness of Polish market for foreign capital and the media fulfill their audience demands.

The oppositional media rarely use military or traditional rhetoric and symbols (e.g., flags) probably because has a more optimistic attitude and oriented to a modern reader’s taste. Moreover, the oppositional media do not have any noticeable trends in employing the cultural national identity elements at all.

Chapter Summary

The above chapter considers how the Polish media construct and represent the national identity in the content. I repeat the finding is summary in a closing chapter and present an explanation of limitations encountered during this project and ideas for future research.
VII

Conclusion

In this chapter, I repeat the key elements of how the Polish media represent and construct national identity, draw on several encountered project limitations, and give some ideas for future research.

1. Summary of the findings

Overall, the Polish media outlets constitute or reflect the national identity in their content regularly. Ingroup and outgroups are identified with negative and positive traits simultaneously, polarization is high. Reporters construct the identity mostly with victimization, a polarization with outgroups, negative past events and civic attitudes rhetoric. The dominant media focus on the present is connected with a mention of the need of a change. Regarding the nature of a relationship with outgroups, the media display a well-balanced diverse picture. The universal human rights, European values, pan-European identity are depicted as cognate and as adverse to Polishness with somewhat equal frequency. The same situation and is in politics: the EU interference in shaping Polish domestic politics both accepted and rejected in the media.

Eventually, three media outlets have more shared than distinctive features in national-identity representation and construction. Pro-government Rzeczpospolita and Catholic Nasz Dziennik have a negative image of Polish identity. Oppositional Gazeta Wyborcza is ambivalent: it depicts Poles with negative and positive traits with somewhat equal frequency and does not appeal to past negative memories and negative traits of the outgroups. Nasz Dziennik is more concerned with polarization with the outgroups but tends to use military-oriented identity symbols. Rzeczpospolita depicts Poles with negative sides and outgroups with positive ones.

The Polish media employ a broad spectrum of the identity-construction strategies that could be defined as assimilation to and creating of antagonism with the European Union, redefining and creating new meanings of past events. The prevalent identity that represented in media is an identity of a civic and law-abiding democratic society and this identity is an outcome of political struggles in the country since 1989.

Analysis adds to our vision of society that the media lack one established identity agenda and media-content depicts the national identity ambivalently. It could lead to many negative outcomes: an identity crisis, fragmentation, or strengthen the existing crisis.
2. Limitations

The main strength of content analysis is a high number of analyzed articles but sample size in several thousand articles was unmanageable for me in a given time limit. Human-based coding is labor-intensive and brought me mental and physical fatigue. Computer-based quantitative methods (for instance, “word counts”) would allow me to have that large number of analyzed articles. Notwithstanding, human coding that I performed has an advantage over the computer-based quantitative methods in a more nuanced measurement (e.g., recognition of negation or disambiguation), and in results’ generalizability.

Often argued that quantitative content analysis has no advantages over discourse analysis due to its coding choices that are ultimately subjective. Nevertheless, quantitative methods permit generalization and it was important for my aim. Also, with the selected method it was the easiest of all the research methods to ensure reliability. Furthermore, the results of the content analysis are valued for an ease of replication inasmuch as the spreadsheets are made available for others to download.

The fact that the language of content to analyze is not native to me was deliberated also. To diminish possible difficulties the coding scheme was focused on single-valued variables with no regard to rhetorical devices, wordplay or nuances of words’ meaning. The coding scheme and particularly the code book were improved several times.

The difficulty to obtain coding schemes for such a liquid concept as national identity and for the variables selected for this project was another limitation encountered. The insufficient amount of previous research into the topic that cognate to a representation of a national identity in national media was a matter of some concern. The pilot study showed that the created coding scheme allows me to make sufficient generalization of the results.

The extent to which I can generalize is broad enough. With certainty, I can apply the results of my content analysis to content of the three analyzed newspapers; with less certainty, it applies to the whole Poland’s print media system. Every required methodological condition was compiled and chosen media types are diverse (they have completely different political orientations, they are the most popular newspapers in their categories). To generalize all media system — include television, radio and solely web-based news outlets — is not possible and it was not the aim of this thesis.

Overall, the findings lead to the conclusion that it is problematic to generalize or search for patterns in national identity representation because of newspaper-coverage changes in reaction to external factors, e.g., political events and audience expectations. It was too brave to assume that different media outlets bear radically different national identities in their content. The tie between
an outlet and political actor does not lead to one simplistic established identity that represents
actor’s interests. The competing narratives and representations of the nation continue to shape the
discourse of Polish national identity in the media every day.

3. Future research

The most desired future research is a research with a population of analyzed items that
covers all articles published in several years, leastwise starting from 2015, the year of the Law and
Justice party election to the country’s government.

Many interesting relationships within and between variables could be explored. For
e.g., a correlation between used sources and rhetoric. Or, connections between the variables
of outgroup representation and the cultural elements combined could be explored.

Similar studies can also be proposed to analyze for all other the European Union member
states with the use of my coding sections. It can reveal some interesting interdependence about
the relationship among nations, their outgroups and its representation in national media.

A content analysis of a national identity that considers only images used in media could
present some interesting data inasmuch as photography and illustration are widely used in the
Poland’s print media.

A qualitative research on a national identity in media is also welcomed. A detailed
description of all identity elements will fill the gap in academic knowledge.

The thesis does not provide evidence as to the extent to which the observed identity
elements are perceived among journalists and audiences. Future research is necessary for better
understanding of the impact of identity representation in media on an identity that a citizen owns.

Evidently, the universe of media content offers much to be explored in terms of a national
identity. As a field of study, it can provide helpful insight on the approach to how the national
identity is constructed in different countries and in different media outlets within one country.
References


Appendix A. The code book

1. Message attributes

Media Name
A newspaper’s name.
- Nasz Dziennik.
- Rzeczpospolita.
- Gazeta Wyborcza.

Number
A number of an item in the list of analyzed articles.

Reporter’s attitude
An emotional association or tone that some piece of a text carries, in addition to its explicit or literal meaning. I specify only two basic connotations that could be beneficial for my research questions: a positive and a negative.

The subject of the thesis is journalists or authors of published text in a case of their main occupation is not a reporter, thus an attitude of citations actors in a news item is not regarded, because the citation may not correspond with an intention of the journalist.

Positive, contains a reference to a positive outlook or favorable judgment

An evident prevalent reporter’s attitude reflecting a belief in an event as profitable for Poland that leads to an improvement of any aspect of public life, or a fortunate resolution prediction regarding a recent problem, expecting a favorable and desirable outcome. For example, while writing about terminally ill people reporter makes focus on a rise of healthcare funding, or focuses on a rise of social care that follows undesirable tax-rise:

(E.g. “It is good that the government is trying to build a system in which we will also save for retirement. Otherwise, our pensions will be very low.”) 5

Negative, contains a reference to a negative outlook or unfavorable judgment. An evident prevalent reporter’s attitude reflecting a belief in an event as harmful for Poland that leads to a decline in any aspect of public life and to a misfortunate outcome.

(E.g. “The work of entire generations is destroyed.”)

“This is the saddest conclusion that comes after last week’s protests.”)

**Neutral/not found.** A reporter’s attitude is not present in a text or cannot be determined.

**Place of an action**
Only articles that mention Poland included in the sample but a news event could happen within its geographical borders or anywhere else. For example, if a Polish politician writes about a new Ukrainian law, it is regarded as a foreign-news event.

**Domestic event.** The action scene is Poland.

**Foreign event.** The action scene is any foreign state.

**None/Not found.** The action scene cannot be determined.

**Outgroup nationality**
An obvious indication of a foreign country as a main actor, a foreign main personage’s nationality that are clearly recognizable from a text for a reader. This is aimed to indicate the nationality of an “outgroup” in Polish identity construction.

**Misc.** A country name is coded manually.

**Not applicable.** There are several outgroups of the equal role, or the foreign nationality cannot be determined.

**Source.** An indicated in an article affiliation of a person or an organization whose information constitutes an article to a large extent, or where the information was requested or obtained. The information should not be a citation or a direct speech, the information is incorporated in the reporter’s text as an element of argumentation or narrative.

**Not found.** The source cannot be determined.

**Official information.** An information from any registered organization (political, state, commercial, non-profit, foreign) that was received in its finished condition. This information does not represent the reporter’s intentions in Polish national identity construction, because a reporter had no chance to influence an author of the text.

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**Expert commentary.** A person whose occupation is a researcher, scientist, in the independent or academical spheres. Expert is not a politician in power and is not affiliated with a profit/non-profit organization, except for a research organization.

**Independent information.** An information from a person or a group who does not represent explicitly any official, political, state, commercial, non-profit, research organization. (E.g. “Officially 741 million zlotys was spent, and unofficially 1.09 billion.”)

**Reporter commentary.** The reporter had not used any source, the text consists or appeals to consist of reporter’s personal opinion.

**Other media/News agency.** A re-used text from another media or a news agency.

**Anonymous.** The source is explicitly stated as “anonymous.” Antiterrorism legislation adopted in June 2016 gave the government the right to block websites, and critics pointed out that its provisions could also impact journalists’ ability to collect anonymously sourced information (Freedom House, 2017b).

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**Main speaker/Supporting speaker.** An occupation of an author of a textual piece that a reporter used in an article, a person who was cited, interviewed. The search engines are used to determine speaker’s occupation, if it is not indicated in the article:

**Main speaker.** A person whose words constitute a significant part of a text or are used as a news event for an article.

**Supporting speaker.** A person whose words are used as supporting information to the main speaker’s words or to the body of journalistic text.

Both categories have the same set of choices:

**Not applicable.** The speaker(s) cannot be determined, there is no speaker(s), or there are several speakers of an equal role.

**Politician of the ruling party.** A member of Poland’s the Law and Justice party.

**Government spokesperson.** An official press officer of Poland’s political elite.

**Oppositional politician.** Polish politician who is not a member of the Law and Justice party but who has politics as the main occupation.

**Foreign politician.** A foreigner who has politics as the main occupation.

**Expert.** A person whose occupation is a researcher, scientist, in independent or academical spheres. Expert is not a politician or affiliated with a profit/non-profit organization, except for a research organization.

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Representative of a local organization. A person who is affiliated with Polish profit/non-profit companies, state organizations, e.g. an entrepreneur, a policeman. Their information represents a point of view of an organization, it is not a personal opinion.

Representative of a foreign organization. A person who is affiliated with foreign profit/non-profit companies, state organizations.

Representative of a local religious organization.

Representative of a foreign religious organization.

Ordinary Polish citizen. A Polish citizen whose occupation is not affiliated with politics, entrepreneurship, who is not an expert or a representative of an organization.

Ordinary foreign citizen. A foreign citizen whose occupation is not affiliated with politics, entrepreneurship, who is not an expert or a representative of an organization.

2. Present and past

None/Not found. Unable to determine.

The positive present. The article contains one or more mention of a recent situation with an evident prevalent reporter’s attitude reflecting a belief in a situation as profitable for Poland that leads to a rise of any aspect of public life, or a fortunate resolution prediction regarding a recent problem, expecting a favorable and desirable outcome.

(E.g. “The Government adopted a law that provides for an increase in public expenditure on health care in an unprecedented amount of over 547 billion zlotys. The queues for cataracts and endoprostheses are going down, and recruitment for medicine is on the rise. Computerization is ongoing and doctors will have less work. Thanks to his bill, there are also raises.”)

The negative present. The article contains one or more mention of a recent situation with an evident prevalent reporter’s attitude reflecting a belief in a situation as harmful for Poland that leads to a decline in any aspect of public life and to a misfortunate outcome.

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(E.g. “His crazy attack on scientific research of prof. Michał Bilewicz can be symptomatic of the times in which we live. Because today a right-wing columnist can become a hero influencing politics. If he wrote bluntly and with poison.\textsuperscript{11})

**The positive future.** The article contains one or more mention of the future time with an evident prevalent reporter’s attitude reflecting a belief in a situation as profitable for Poland that leads to a rise of any aspect of public life, or a fortunate resolution prediction regarding a recent problem, expecting a favorable and desirable outcome.

(E.g. “What Poland be like after *Law and Justice*? Poland, in which the majority respects the views and rights of minorities. Poland, in which we build its strength together. Convinced that the source of prosperity of the state is well-paid work and not benefit. Poland, where wealthy people know that you have to share with others. That paying taxes is a good thing. And those who benefit from the help, they knew that others worked hard for this help.\textsuperscript{12})

**The negative future.** The article contains one or more mention of future time with an evident prevalent reporter’s attitude reflecting a belief in a situation as harmful for Poland that leads to a decline in any aspect of public life and to a misfortunate outcome.

(E.g. “By 2030, spending on health care will increase by up to 45 billion zlotys. No doubt that the state will not be able to afford it.\textsuperscript{13})

“With its consequences — a bad image of Poland — our grandchildren will be struggling.\textsuperscript{14})

**The positive past memory.** The article contains one or more mention of a far past situation with an evident prevalent reporter’s attitude reflecting a belief in a situation as profitable for Poland that leads to a rise of any aspect of public life, or a fortunate resolution prediction regarding a recent problem, expecting a favorable and desirable outcome.

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\textsuperscript{14} Haszczyński, J. (2018). Ze skutkami ustawy o IPN będą się borykały nasze wnuki. *Rzeczpospolita*
(E.g. “After the political breakthrough in 1989, we competed primarily with the left hemisphere, playing the role of cheap and good subcontractors. It brought us many benefits — Poland has made a historical development leap.”)

**The negative past memory.** The article contains one or more mention of a far past situation with an evident prevalent reporter’s attitude reflecting a belief in an event as harmful for Poland that leads to a decline in any aspect of public life and to a misfortunate outcome.

(E.g. “The threat from Russia is perceived mainly by the experience of the 19th and 20th-century imperial behavior of this state.”)

**The anticipation of change.** An evident reporter’s attitude reflecting an expectation of a shift in the recent state of affairs. The change will bring Poland and the Polish people a rise of any aspect of public life, or a fortunate resolution of a recent problem, expecting a favorable and desirable outcome.

(E.g. “The position of Poland has been degraded. We need a whole series of public-relations ideas that will help us rebuild good relations with other countries and improve our image.”

“It’s high time to change the law in Poland. We must change the law and change the mentality of society.”)

**The anxiety of change.** An evident reporter’s attitude reflecting a fear of a shift in the recent state of affairs.

(E.g. “The policy towards Ukraine gives a breeding ground for suspicions that Poland is gradually turning towards Russia. Mutually contradictory declarations and actions of Polish authorities show, however, that we are not dealing with a planned "change of alliances" but rather a chaos caused by divergent internal political impulses and a lack of strategic vision.”)

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Request for preservation or renewing of historical memory:

Conservation of historical memory. The history-renewing process is explicitly rejected in a text, considered as harmful.

(E.g. “Poland may legitimately feel like a victim of German occupation during the World War II. However, it cannot now claim the status of a victim of repeated discrimination in victim compensation.”)

“Falsifying history gives a temporary improvement in moods but it does not build true national pride, and it brings the reverse effect outside: it provokes all our sins.”

“The so-called PiS historical policy is a kind of mimosa elephant: we are allowed to tell others about anything else, nothing else about us. Under such conditions, it is not understood that any attempt to distort the truth about this unique tragedy in the history of the Holocaust is not only morally unacceptable but also politically harmful.”

Revision of historical memory. A text showing traits of the history-renewing process, an employment of new historical fact, a demand to forget a past event or a series of events.

(E.g. “What has happened can not, will not and probably should not be saved.”

“We therefore have to research (emphasis added) and popularize history so that it will not go into oblivion.”

“In these years, even the product labels were checked by the censor — said Morawiecki, proving that (emphasis added) all anti-Semitic rallies were prepared by the communist authorities.”

**Polish victimization.** The ideas of a suffering and martyred nation, that Poland is unable to confront proactively adverse conditions, a mention of past and present repressions.

(E.g. “The bloody Soviet occupation with bestiality surpassed the German. Arrests in every village, murders, raping of girls, plunder. Tens of thousands arrested; they are taking them in an unknown direction on American cars or torturing naked people in dungeons with water.”)

(E.g. “It is increasingly difficult for us to protect ourselves against the threats coming from Russia.”)

**Polish resilience.** A mention of past protests (for instance, the Solidarność movement), belief in Poland’s ability to adapt in the face of adverse conditions, take a proactive stand, successfully confront modern time problems and recover. Also included the photos of protests, marches, transparents. A term “resilience” comes from psychology where it is used in opposition to “victimization”.

(E.g. “I do not know what Poland would be today and would it be possible to revive it in 1989, would Solidarity be created if it were not for your attitude, if not for the fact that it was remembered.”)

3. In- and outgroup

**Positive characteristics about Pole.** Any indication of a personality trait, behavior, thought, and emotion that belongs to a Poland’s citizen and that regarded as desired (success, bravery, honesty, empathy).

(E.g. “I know many people in institutions ruled by Law and Justice who work honestly, for the benefit of us all.”)

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“In the face of Ukraine, we are in a position that makes us generous and patient. A good policy is friendly to the environment; it is also a bit of altruism and humanitarianism. It just pays! This is also an obligation to our past.\textsuperscript{30}

**Negative characteristics about a Pole.** Any indication of a personality trait, behavior, thought, and emotion that belongs to a Poland’s citizen and that regarded as unwanted (aggression, failure, weakness).

(E.g. “Political mess, the incompetence of Polish diplomacy and continuous tame of radical circles. From the beginning, the Polish authorities behaved as if they did not understand the seriousness of the situation.\textsuperscript{31}"

“The phobias, resentments and ignorance of Jarosław Kaczyński in the field of foreign policy.\textsuperscript{32}"

**Positive characteristics about a foreigner.** Any indication of a personality trait, behavior, thought, and emotion that belongs to a foreigner or an outgroup and that regarded as desired (success, bravery, honesty, empathy).

(E.g. “the Jewish community also did everything to overcome the reluctance of future generations of Holocaust victims towards Poles.\textsuperscript{33}"

“It is remarkable. I think, especially in today’s world, that Swedes have such a strong imperative of being good and solidary.”)

**Negative characteristics about a foreigner.** Any indication of a personality trait, behavior, thought, and emotion that belongs to a foreigner and that regarded as unwanted (aggression, failure, weakness).

(E.g. “The Swedish approach to equality is also extreme, because it can, for example, rely on a detailed calculation of how many hours someone is at home. On the one hand, it makes sense, on the other, it leads to strange forms of "home bureaucracy".\textsuperscript{34}"

A polarization between Poland and an “other”. An explicit idea of unlikeness in any social sphere, a mention of conflicts between Poland and other country/countries.

(E.g. “The US Department of State directly stated that the repercussions that introduce a new law may have an impact on Poland’s relations not only with Israel but also with Washington. The law strikes freedom of speech and is therefore unacceptable to the US.”)

“The reasons lie much deeper: Polish policy has lost a common denominator with the objectives of EU policy.”

“In the American mentality, resignation from studies or refusal to study in the employer’s eyes are not a bad thing. In Polish culture, the matter is quite different, which results to a large extent from the massification of the university diploma.”

“There are cases in which Poland is a perfect member of the EU, and our interests are completely convergent with Brussels, there are issues in which we argue and we seek agreement; but there are also those where the Polish government looks completely different to the majority of the EU and wants to explain reasons.”

Polish and European Union’s identities are cognate. An explicit idea of Poles as Europeans, a mention of connections and kinship of Polish existence, values, norms, practices, standards, traditions with any other the European Union’s member country or with the European Union’s existence, values, norms, practices, standards, traditions.

(E.g. “And thousands of people ... know that they are Poles and Europeans for whom the European Union is not a foreign country or a superpower that inspires our sovereignty but a community of which we are an important part and with which it was counted recently. For me, our constitution, law and civilization values of the West, inscribed in the European treaties, are not just empty words.”

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“In Europe and Poland, high inflation rates are not accompanied by inflationary pressure. From an economic point of view, this is an unusual situation, but it is not just in our country. How do economists explain it? The price increase is not so obvious. We (emphasis added) have countries where wages increase by 7 percent, and prices by less than 2 percent — said the President of the National Bank of Poland.40"

“The Law and Justice points to the great similarities between the laws in force in Poland and the solutions that have been present in other EU countries for years.41”

“Polish cities are soon to resemble foreign metropolises such as London, Madrid, Stockholm or Prague.42”

**Polish and European Union’s identities are different.** An explicit idea of Poles as separated nation, a mention of incompatibility of Polish values, norms, practices, standards, traditions (which constitute a national identity) with any other the European Union’s member country or with the European Union’s values, norms, practices, standards, traditions.

(E.g. “We are divided not by the sea but by the galaxy. In Sweden, it is considered to be something extremely arrogant to interrupt the interlocutor, and in Poland interruption may mean involvement in the discussion.43”

“We see what is happening in the West. However, we can not model it. We must choose good, regardless of everything, always decide to choose good, not bad. Besides, it is not the West with the delegalization of evil and immorality that should impose its standards on us but we should carry Christian values to Europe, so as to be an example for it.44”

“No, it is not that [the Prime Minister of Poland Mateusz Morawiecki] wants to move Poland out of [the European Union] but rather, not feeling confident in Brussels or in the Western European capitals, he approaches the EU with some suspicion. If

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Morawiecki too easily gets along with the EC, there may be a suspicion in many heads of right-wing politicians that the new Prime Minister is playing in a different team.\(^{45}\)

**Accepting the European Union’s role in domestic governance.** A mention of the demand for abiding the European Union’s rules, laws, regulations, and interference in domestic politics.

(E.g. “In Poland, the rule of law is broken and that the EU institutions should take care of it.\(^{46}\)”

“The closer the elections to the European Parliament in May 2019, the greater the willingness to overcome divisions and extinguish disputes that compromise EU unity.\(^{47}\)”

“The minister should remember that an integral part of this principle is to fulfill voluntarily accepted international obligations in good faith. We do not need to convince anyone in Poland about the importance of the alliance and close ties with the United States.\(^{48}\)”

**Rejection the European Union’s role in domestic governance.** A mention of abuse the European Union’s rules, laws, regulations and interference in domestic politics, sovereignty.

(E.g. “Today in Europe everything is being done to weaken Poland in unity! And not to be based on the historical truth, so that we would be constantly on our knees, humiliated by evil, lies, and crimes.\(^{49}\)”

“You can not say that the European Union is our enemy but you can not be naïve and do not notice that in its structures we have a very large number of people not only badly wishing us but actually acting to our detriment. We do not have to immediately call them our enemies; we try to respect them, be nice to them and to talk about them well but they themselves have made themselves our opponents, taking steps that harm us.\(^{50}\)”


“For the first time, Law and Justice has behaved extremely arrogantly and inexpertively. After the speech of prof. Ryszard Legutki, they left the plenary hall. In this way, they showed that they are not interested in dialogue with either the European Commission or the Parliament.\textsuperscript{51})

**Supporting European values.** An idea that the values from the *Treaty of Lisbon* (European Union, 2007) (peace and the wellbeing, anti-discrimination, sexual and national tolerance, political stabilization, economic prosperity, liberalization of culture, progress, etc.) are conventional for a person or a group of people of Polish nationality.

(E.g. “It hurts that Catholics are called as Catholics but homosexuals are "right-hand peda\textsuperscript{;}s". It is applied systematically to minorities such as Jews, Roma, refugees, gays, and women.\textsuperscript{52})

**Rejecting European values.** The refuse and juxtaposition of Polish national values to the sexual and national tolerance, political stabilization, economic prosperity, and liberalization of culture, progress etc.

(E.g. “Catholic social science can be a remedy for the deadly degradation of European culture, which by expelling God has lost its sensitivity to the criterion of objective truth about the good of man.\textsuperscript{53})

“The dictatorship of political correctness, the tenets of secularism, or progressive ideologies such as gender and militant feminism are turning against freedom of speech, religious beliefs and even the rights of persons with disabilities in this country.\textsuperscript{54})

“Women’s rights, homosexuals divide us [with Sweden].\textsuperscript{55})

“We can only hate each other because we think differently. Here it is impossible. The Spaniards have a much greater distance to political disputes.\textsuperscript{56})

\textsuperscript{54} Falkowski, P. (2018). Tyrania lewicy. Nasz Dziennik
“The government should make it clear that it is based on the principles of Christian civilization while remembering that both the Nation and Europe are a community of fate also with those who do not share our values.\textsuperscript{57}

\textbf{Universal human rights are cognate.} An idea that equality, freedom, safety (values that considered in \textit{The Universal Declaration of Human Rights}) are conventional for a person or a group of people of Polish nationality.

(E.g. “There is no place for anti-Semitic or anti-Semitic statements in public media. This is beyond discussion. It applies to editors, guests or viewers.\textsuperscript{58}"

“He also appealed to the international law, which guarantees citizens freedom of opinion and expression.\textsuperscript{59}"

“It is in Poland’s interest to demonstrate that in the approach to security policy [...] we are still in agreement with the allies.\textsuperscript{60}"

\textbf{Universal human rights are not cognate.} An idea that equality, freedom, etc. are juxtaposed under some conditions to ideas or beliefs of a person or a group of people of Polish nationality.

(E.g. “The \textit{Law and Justice} deputies announced that the woman’s constitutionally protected freedom can be suspended. For comparison, in Canada forcing a woman to carry a pregnancy is a violation of the right to personal security. In Poland, a woman has no priorities and no aspirations.\textsuperscript{61}"

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{57} Falkowska, B. (2017). Na euro się nie umawialiśmy. \textit{Nasz Dziennik}.
\textsuperscript{58} Kublik, A. (2018). Jak w TVP o Żydach rozmawiali. \textit{Gazeta Wyborcza}.
\textsuperscript{59} Ivanova, E. (2018). Władza mści się na sędziach za "niewłaściwe" wyroki? \textit{Gazeta Wyborcza}.
\textsuperscript{60} Kowal, P. (2018). Rosja, Zachód i szansa dla Polski. \textit{Rzeczpospolita}.
\end{flushleft}
4. Rhetoric and symbols

**Traditional patriotism rhetoric.** A use of rhetorical devices, figures of speech which belong to traditional, conservative understanding of patriotism: Motherland, empire, freedom, or use of national symbols that have a high level of conditionality. Also an image of an eagle, national flag.

(E.g. “Pastors and lay people, patriots concerned about the fate of their relatives and the fate of the Homeland, have undertaken great work. They knew that only the Nation that would retain internal freedom would not die. Poles’ must evoke reflection on the essence of the gift of freedom through nurturing language, tradition, and religion [...] in order to safeguard sovereignty, those who are entrusted with the exercise of public authority are particularly obliged to be guided by social choice and trust. The authorities, which should be treated in terms of service to citizens, realized in the devotion of the country and concern for future generations.”)

“Walking in national colors is a source of pride. National accents have become widespread, the patriotic clothing industry has begun to evolve, and people have felt fashionable wearing these things."

**Tribal-military, martyrological patriotism rhetoric.** A use of rhetorical devices, figures of speech, symbols that belong to wartime, fight, Martyrdom, enemies, a struggle, defense, intervention, partisans.

(E.g. “Dispersed groups of guerrillas led a hopeless fight in various points of the forest, to the tragic end.”)

“They were neither money nor bloody warlords, as their communist propaganda showed but people who in desperation tried to save their countrymen from an incomparably stronger aggressor.”

“Some of the officers and generals have the blood of Poles on their hands.”

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Civilian patriotism rhetoric. A use of rhetorical devices, figures of speech, symbols that perform an idea of a good citizenship, the common good, rationality, responsibility, shared interests, civic compromises.

(E.g. “March for Poles fighting for freedom should be a source of pride.\textsuperscript{67}"

“All voters ready to mobilize under the slogan of the Third Polish Republic defense.\textsuperscript{68}"

Representations of Poland as an ethnic society. An idea of Polishness as an ethnic characteristic, including low tolerance to immigration.

Representations of Poland as a civil society. An idea of social justice, civic rights and duties, civil practices as natural to Poland and Poles.

(E.g. “A citizen [pan] should protest. You have a political deal; you have possessed some positions, jobs. The only thing is that everything is supposed to be yours, your right, your people.\textsuperscript{69}"

Representations of Poland as a Catholic society. An idea of Polishness as based on Catholic values, accepting the influence of the church on the state, mention of conservative views on sexuality and family, anti-elite, anti-urban, anti-capitalist ideas, accepting the influence of the church on the state.

(E.g. “The letters coming from all corners of Poland clearly testify to the strong mobilization of Catholic public opinion. Special cards aimed at appealing to MPs to speed up work on the "Stop abortion" law, were already received from the Social Policy and Family Committee.\textsuperscript{70}"

“The respect for the Church encoded in Polish DNA, the sense of historical identity, the memory of John Paul II, the memory of communism, when the Church courageously blamed reality, excluded the treatment of the Church as an enemy.\textsuperscript{71}"

Representations of Poland as a law-abiding society. An idea that Poland is obedient to the rule of law, whether it comes from Polish authorities or from the European Union.

(E.g. “What about the rule of law without retribution? It will be necessary to restore the constitutional principles of functioning of the Supreme Court, common courts and the National Council of the Judiciary. Law and Justice should bear responsibility for breaking the constitution because you can not let go of things as fundamental as the observance of the rule of law.”)

Representations of Poland as a lawless society. An idea that Poland, a person or a group of people are abusing more or less the rule of law — domestic, European, or international.

(E.g. “There is no doubt that the judges’ environment is undermining any reform of the justice system.”)

“You can see people who just want to dominate and have no respect for the law.”

“What’s next? A new power will come, and a river of legislative feces will flow again, only from a different side. The essence of democracy is self-limitation, also accepted by those at the helm. Are there any leaders wise enough to come to terms with this? Is there a party that can afford magnanimity?”

Appendix B. List of the analyzed articles

**Gazeta Wyborcza**


*Nasz Dziennik*

**Rzeczpospolita**

A21

Appendix C. The pilot study

Results and discussion

The option “None/Not applicable/Not found” is omitted from the results description.

**RQ 1:** How do media constitute national identity in texts?

The majority of articles reflect on a domestic event (74.5%). Reporters are using all of the possible sources of information. On these two factors combined, I assume that their texts are seem interesting and credible for readers.

In excess of a half of the articles bears negative connotation in texts (64.5%). It is rare to see some positive characteristics about the person of Poland’s nationality (they were found only in 29% of texts) and about the person of foreign nationality (they were found only in 25.8% of texts). More often people are identified with negative traits: 41.9% for a Pole and 35.5% for a foreigner. The geography of news events is diverse. A polarization between Poles and an outgroup is common, 38.7% of the analyzed articles bear this idea.

As it was assumed, reporters appeal to past events relatively often, and mostly to negative memories (19.4% to negative and 6.5% to positive past events). Nevertheless, dominant focus of analyzed articles is on present and future (74.2%) and journalists express in the texts noticeable anticipating to change the situation (48.4%) without anxiety — the fear to face changes was found only in 6.5% of articles. An idea of a correlation between the past and the present of the Polish nation is found in significant 22.6% of texts.

One of the important topics in Poland’s political discourse — relationship with memories of the national past — finds its place in media texts (exists in 29% of articles), although it is not clear, whether reporters support elite’s intention to rewrite the past or insist on the preservation (12.9 and 16.1 %% respectively).

Found a high frequency of employing the idea of Polish victimization, suffering from the actions of more powerful outgroups: 22.6% of the texts but the ideas of resilience to outgroups are used with the same frequency: it was found in 19.4% of the texts. Poland itself is represented as a civic society in 16.1, as a mono-ethnic in 9.7, and as a Catholic in 6.5 percent of texts. The numbers are minor but the subtle leadership of civilian characteristics over religious or nationalistic is worth considering.

Frequencies of depicting Poland as a law-abiding and a law-abusing country are also equal: 16.1 against 12.9 %% respectively.
Polish reporters are twice likely to use traditional or military patriotic rhetoric (12.9 and 16.1 %% respectively) than civic attitudes rhetoric (6.5%).

Overall, the Polish media outlets do constitute or appeal to the national identity in their texts and do it quite often. Ingroup and outgroups are identified with negative traits; polarization is high. Reporters construct the identity mostly with negative elements: victimization, polarization with outgroups, negative past events. The dominant media focus on present and future which is connected with a mention of the need of a change, constructs somewhat negative Polish identity where everything is incorrect and ought to be improved. Regarding the nature of a relationship with the outgroups, the media displays a well-balanced diverse picture. The Universal human rights, European values, pan-European identity are depicted as cognate and as adverse to Polishness with a somewhat equal frequency. The same situation is in politics: the European-Union interference in shaping Polish domestic politics both accepted and rejected in the media.

**RQ 2:** What are the differences in identity construction?

All of the newspapers have a propensity for producing content with a negative attitude, the leaders here are pro-government *Rzeczpospolita* and Catholic *Nasz Dziennik*: 80 and 70 %% of their articles respectively have the dominant negative connotation. Oppositional *Gazeta Wyborcza* has relatively fewer negatively connoted news pieces (45.5%) and more frequent use positive connotation, than other two newspapers — 27.3%, when Catholic *Nasz Dziennik* has only 20 and pro-government *Rzeczpospolita* 10 %%.

As a source of information, journalists have a diverse choice, mostly relying on representatives of the ruling party, local organizations, and experts. Interesting, that Catholic *Nasz Dziennik*, the Catholic media, using politicians from *Law and Justice* party as a source in 50% of political news, whereas oppositional *Gazeta Wyborcza* in 18.2 and pro-government *Rzeczpospolita* only in 10 %%. The latter is the sole media that has experts as a dominant source (70%) and never publish official information, although that media outlet is considered to be loyal to the government.

It is worth noting that analysis shows that these Polish media do not provide a voice for ordinary citizens, who are not politicians, entrepreneurs or experts.

All media mostly rely on domestic events when they have Poland as an actor but Catholic *Nasz Dziennik* has a significantly bigger deal of foreign events in context for writing: it has 40% of foreign news and 60% of local ones, while both other newspapers have 80% of local and 20% of foreign news. There is no big difference in foreign actors. It could be explained with limited
news possibilities that reporters have.

Catholic *Nasz Dziennik* is more likely to use military patriotism rhetoric, whilst the other types of patriotic rhetoric are insignificant in any media outlet. Thus, following the argumentation that was written before, Catholic *Nasz Dziennik*, that includes more identity-reinforcing symbols, has less optimistic attitude (White et al., 2018, pp. 60, 63).

An essential identity-constructive difference lies in the representation of an in- and outgroups relationship. Catholic *Nasz Dziennik* has a significantly high percent of articles that apply a polarization between Poland and any other country — 60% and third of these articles stress positive characteristics of a Pole.

The opposite picture creates conservative pro-government *Rzeczpospolita*, 70% of their articles has negative characteristics of a Pole. A half of the analyzed articles has positive characteristics of “other” and negative characteristics of a Pole combined with an idea of polarization between Poland and “other” at the same time. An idea of the Polish and European identities as cognate also failed to find a place in pro-government newspaper’s texts. Instead, pro-government *Rzeczpospolita* makes a point to the historical and cultural continuity of the Polish nation in 40% of texts. Almost all pro-government *Rzeczpospolita’s* texts focus on the present or future with a request for change and without reference to the history, opposite to Catholic *Nasz Dziennik* that addresses past memories moderately often.

*Table V. Representation of in- and outgroups in the Polish media. The pilot study*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Media title</th>
<th>Positive characteristics of a Pole (%)</th>
<th>Positive characteristics of “other” (%)</th>
<th>Negative characteristic of a Pole (%)</th>
<th>Negative characteristic of “other” (%)</th>
<th>Polarization between Poland and “other” (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gazeta Wyborcza</td>
<td>27.3</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td>36.4</td>
<td>27.3</td>
<td>18.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rzeczpospolita</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nasz Dziennik</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Oppositional *Gazeta Wyborcza* is the only one who avoids investing in a process of Polish victimization (image of suffering from the actions of outgroups), while the others employ this in 30-40% of texts, and does not appeal to past negative memories. *Gazeta Wyborcza* has a high percentage of the articles with the negative (40) and positive (30) characteristics of a Pole but these two features are never combined in one article.
The construction of outgroup relation in *Gazeta Wyborcza* is ambiguous: positive and negative variables have the same insignificant frequency. The European and Polish identities described as cognate and noncognate in 30 and 20 % of texts respectively. The same frequency numbers are with positive or negative characteristics of foreigners, European and universal values.

A civilian identity, to which *Gazeta Wyborcza* refers in its texts, is not clear either. Contradictory trends coexist. Poles are lawless and law-abiding, the society depicted as civic and ethnic in different articles.

List of the analyzed articles

**Nasz Dziennik**


**Rzeczpospolita**


**Gazeta Wyborcza**

### Frequency table. The pilot study

<table>
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## Appendix D. Frequency table

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