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IDENTIFYING IDENTITY MODELS IN POLITICAL ORGANIZATIONS. ANALYSIS OF THE LANGUAGE OF THE PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN IN POLAND[1]

Abstract

Nowadays, politics use the critical issue of the search for identity and identity conflict to affect (by media means) audiences by creating specific identities and promoting particular visions of reality to attract potential voters. Therefore, the study aimed to identify and characterize models of identity emerging from the narratives of candidates and people from their political parties during the last presidential campaign in Poland. Based on the critical discourse analysis, 1,829 statements from the most important national media and social media were analyzed. As a result, two leading models of identity developed by political parties were discovered. The research also indicated the mechanisms used to create an identity narrative focused on the power struggle. The effectiveness of characterizing the identity narrative allowed for the prediction of further voter segmentation and might evolve into a two-party political system.

K e y w o r d s: creating identity; presidential campaign; historical discourse analysis; organization culture; a public language of politics.

INTRODUCTION

Politics enters almost every sphere of an individual's life, including economics, faith and even ideology. Interfering with specific aspects of the everyday functioning of society through law-making does not allow politics to be ignored, even if someone is not interested in it. Previous research shows that people are bored with politics,[2] especially those that promote radicalization of views and sympathy with populist programs.[3] Contemporary political discourse is increasingly aggressive and refers to intense emotions that aim to polarize society.[4] Populism in the voters' mentality may function through generalized dissatisfaction with personal well-being,[5] which is why political actors add a moral-evaluative layer to previous conceptualizations of 'populism' and associate it with cynicism and inauthenticity—thus inverting and problematizing populist discourse.[6] Individual political projects are therefore projections of reality, i.e. more or less specific visions that create the way we function in everyday life. They are particularly important when an individual does not have a clear, unambiguous opinion in some area of life, and is looking for his or her own identity[7] while meeting the divergent expectations of many social groups[8] because they can organize the world and shape individual identity and collective. It also happens that politics leads to identity conflict,[9] especially when it highlights changes to existing rules[10] or

[2]   Jane Wills, 'Populism, Localism and the Geography of Democracy', *Geoforum* 62, 2015, pp. 188–89, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.geoforum.2015.04.006.

[3]   Deniz Güvercin, 'Digitalization and Populism: Cross-Country Evidence', *Technology in Society* 68, 2022, article: 101802, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techsoc.2021.101802.

[4]   Kate Barasz, Kim Tami and Ioannis Evangelidis, 'I Know Why You Voted for Trump: (Over)Inferring Motives Based on Choice', *Cognition* 188, 2019, pp. 85–97, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cognition.2018.05.004.

[5]   Andrzej Nowakowski, 'Do Unhappy Citizens Vote for Populism?', *European Journal of Political Economy*, 2020, article 101985, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ejpoleco.2020.101985.

[6]   Michal Hamo, Zohar Kampf i Nurit Weiss-Yaniv, 'Populism as a Keyword and as a Meta-Discursive Resource for Positioning in Mediated Political Discourse', *Discourse, Context & Media* 29, 2019, article 100283, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.dcm.2018.11.005.

[7]   Victoria Wang and John V. Tucker, 'I Am Not a Number: Conceptualizing Identity in Digital Surveillance', *Technology in Society* 67, 2021, article 101772. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techsoc.2021.101772.

[8]   Eliana Hadjiandreou and Daryl C. Cameron, 'Adversity-Based Identities Drive Social Change', *Trends in Cognitive Sciences* 26: 9, 2022, pp. 725–27, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tics.2022.06.004.

[9]   Jolian McHardy and Anita Ratcliffe, 'Identity Conflict: A Framework and Empirical Investigation', Warking Papers 2017006 (Sheffield: The University of Sheffield Department of Economics, 2017).

[10]   Steluţaţ Stan and Gabriela Iuliana Colipcă, 'Deconstructing and Reconstructing Identity. Philosophical Frames and Literary Experiments', *Procedia: Social and Behavioral Sciences* 63, 2012, pp. 325–30 (p. 327), https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2012.10.045.

promotes specific personality patterns, just like the market and mass media[11]. Political Projects—especially during the election campaign——constitute narratives in the power struggle and create the identity of the organization and its supporters.

The article aims to characterize the narrative used in the 2020 presidential campaign in Poland, starting from the official announcement until election day. The subject matter of the research concerns the characteristics of the narrative in the power struggle, which reveals the specific features of individual political organizations.

The research results expand the existing knowledge about the mechanisms of shaping narratives in the power struggle and the topics around which political differences in Poland are shaped. However, the article points to an analytical perspective different than in the literature so far, i.e. creating the identity of political organizations emerging from the narratives of individual candidates and their political camps.

CHARACTERISTICS OF POLITICAL CAMPS
IN THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS IN POLAND

The explicit rules and procedures for nominating candidates and conducting presidential elections, as well as the conditions of validity, are laid down in the Constitution of the Republic of Poland. The President of the Republic of Poland is elected in a general election every five years. (All Polish citizens who turn eighteen on or before election day have the right to vote). An exception to this rule is the resignation or death of the incumbent head of state. The same person can hold the president's office at most twice. The candidate who receives more than half of all valid votes becomes president. If none of the candidates receives the required number of votes, the second round of voting is held in two weeks, where two candidates with the highest number of votes from the first round participate.

In the last presidential election in Poland in 2020, each major political party represented in the parliament put forward its candidate. Per the regulations, eleven candidates were registered, including only six with the clear support of individual parliamentary political parties. All candidates without parliamentary party support won only 0,81%

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[11] Shiwen Wu, Ybin Shi and Y. Yan, 'Media Exposure and Chinese Cultural Identity', *Studies in Communication Sciences* 13: 2, 2013, pp. 129–32, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.scoms.2013.11.007.

of votes[12] and therefore can be ignored in analyses. It can be assumed that the support of parliamentary parties guarantees the candidate's professional seriousness in the presidential election. In this presidential election, candidates without party support did not enjoy voters' trust, which may be a new trend in the Polish political scene. Moreover, political parties (political camps) define candidates due to their specific features and shape their political identity. There is a strong connection between the presidential candidate and a specific political camp.

TABLE 1

Characteristics of candidates and political camps supporting them
in the last presidential election in Poland

Candidates	Political camp	Characteristics of the political camp
Robert Biedroń	Democratic Left Alliance (SLD)	Anti-clerical, pro-European, post--communist, pro-public, and social.[a]
Krzysztof Bosak	Confederation of Freedom and Independence (KWiN)	Conservative, Eurosceptic, homophobic, libertarian, nationalist-populist.
Andrzej Duda	Law and Justice (PiS)	Catholic, centralization, conservative, controlling citizens, Eurosceptic, family,[b] homophobic, nationalist--populist,[c] social, traditional.
Szymon Hołownia	Poland 2050 (Polska 2050)	Anti-clerical, ecological, pro-European, solidarity.
Władysław Kosiniak-Kamysz	Polish Peasant Party (PSL)	Agricultural,[d] coalition, family, local,[e] traditional.
Małgorzata Kidawa-Błońska, Rafał Trzaskowski	Civic Platform (PO)	Civil liberties, inexpressive, liberal,[f] mass, pro-European.

Source: own elaboration.

[a] Kamil Marcinkiewicz and Mary Stegmaier, 'The Parliamentary Election in Poland, October 2015', *Electoral Studies* 41, 2016, pp. 221–24, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.electstud.2016.01.004.

[b] Marka Żerkowska-Balas, 'Marka polskich partii politycznych – analiza empiryczna', *Athenaeum. Polskie Studia Politologiczne* 61: 1, 2019, pp. 138–52, https://doi.org/10.15804/athena.2019.61.08.

[c] Piotr Żuk and Paweł Żuk, 'Euro-Gomorrah and Homopropaganda: The Culture of Fear and "Rainbow Scare" in the Narrative of Right-Wing Populists Media in Poland as Part of the Election Campaign to the European Parliament in 2019', *Discourse, Context & Media* 33, 2020, article: 100364, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.dcm.2019.100364.

[d] Marcinkiewicz and Stegmaier, 'The Parliamentary Election in Poland'.

[e] Żerkowska-Balas, 'Marka polskich partii politycznych – analiza empiryczna'.

[f] Żuk and Żuk, 'Euro-Gomorrah and Homopropaganda'; Marcinkiewicz and Stegmaier, 'The Parliamentary Election in Poland'.

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[12] Piotr Sula, Małgorzata Madej and Kamil Błaszczyński, 'Nieszczęścia and Polską: Wybory prezydenckie w 2020 r.', *Przegląd Politologiczny* 2, 2021, pp. 27–45 (p. 36), https://doi.org/10.14746/pp.2021.26.2.3.

Table 1 depicts individual candidates for the President of the Republic of Poland and their political camps. The presented political parties' characteristics result from analyzing their programs and their leaders' and members' attitudes and behaviours. Moreover, the research shows that the characteristics of camps indicate their strong relationship with the leaders and recent political events. It follows that the leader's personality, charisma, and activities significantly affect the assessment of a political party. Research also shows that social associations with Polish parties are unstable and firmly rooted in the present.[13] Thus, it creates an opportunity for politicians to make promises focusing mainly on the voters' current needs and expectations, which increases populism. Other studies indicate that the populism of the current ruling party in Poland turns into hate speech against specific social groups,[14] which leads to the polarization of society, emphasizing the differences between various social groups. One could postulate that the other political camps in Poland are also not free from populism. Considering the above findings, Poland's political parties and their programs' multiplicity are visible. It may contribute to the formation of different identities in political organizations that are represented by specific candidates in presidential elections.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study aimed to analyze the discourse of individual political camps during the Polish presidential campaign in 2020. The focus was on trying to characterize the statements of each candidate and his political camps. In particular, we looked for areas of discourse that differentiated individual political camps (organizations) and their representatives. The different narratives of politicians allowed us to focus on understanding the mechanisms related to the struggle for power manifested in language and aimed at reaching various social groups.

The key to the empirical study of discourse is its context,[15] containing economic, political and cultural factors that determine the limits of freedom of discourse participants (from the outside) and social rules (internal self-control). Therefore, it was decided to conduct the study based on critical discourse analysis, in particular

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[13] Żerkowska-Balas, 'Marka polskich partii politycznych – analiza empiryczna', p. 151.
[14] Żuk and Żuk, 'Euro-Gomorrah and Homopropaganda'.
[15] Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (New York: Pantheon, 1972).

the discursive-historical approach. The main advantage of this approach is interdisciplinarity and focus on problems, not on specific linguistic facts,[16] and therefore the use of all theories and methods that could contribute to explaining and understanding the subject of research.[17] The assumption was made of a distanced view of reality and embedding the empirical material in the socio-cultural context.[18] This approach allows us to reveal, analyze and criticize interests and ideologies that may marginalize certain groups and individuals, and thus challenge and refute them.[19] It is, in a sense, indifferent to the intentions of individual speakers.[20]

DATA COLLECTION AND SAMPLING

Information on the campaign's course and personal announcements of all candidates was collected, starting from the official announcement of Poland's presidential elections (26 February 2020) until the election day (10 May 2020). The observation covered all candidates: Robert Biedroń, Krzysztof Bosak, Andrzej Duda, Szymon Hołownia, Małgorzta Kidawa-Błońska, Rafał Trzaskowski, Władysław Kosiniak--Kamysz and people from their political parties. Ultimately, over 1,829 coverages were analyzed. The data sources for the analysis covered the most important (the most frequently selected) national, digital media and social media, including:

(1) Internet: bankier.pl; echodnia.eu; interia.pl; katowice24. info; kresy.pl; naszciechanow.pl; nczas.pl; pap.pl; pless.pl; portalsamorzadowy.pl; prezydent.pl; robertbiedron.pl; rp.pl; silesia24. pl; wiadomosci.onet.pl; wiadomosci.wp.pl; wmeritum.pl; wpolityce.pl;

(2) social media: Facebook; Instagram; Twitter;

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[16] Ruth Wodak, 'Introduction: Discourse Studies—Important Concepts and Terms', in Ruth Wodak and Michał Krzyżanowski, eds, *Qualitative Discourse Analysis in the Social Sciences* (Houndmills, Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), pp. 1–29.

[17] Ruth Wodak, 'Populist Discourses: The Rhetoric of Exclusion in Written Genres. Document Design', *Journal of Research and Problem Solving* 4: 2, 2003, pp. 133–48.

[18] Gilbert Weiss and Ruth Wodak, eds, *Critical Discourse Analysis: Theory and Interdisciplinarity* (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003); eadem, 'Rekontextualization and the Transformation of Meanings: A Critical Discourse Analysis of Decision Making in EU Meetings about Employment Policies', in Srikant Sarangi and Malcolm Coulthardt, eds, *Discourse and Social Life* (London: Routledge, 2000), pp. 185–206 (p. 185).

[19] Romy Listo, 'Gender Myths in Energy Poverty Literature: A Critical Discourse Analysis', *Energy Research & Social Science* 38, 2018, pp. 9–18 (p. 11), https://doi.org/10.1016/j.erss.2018.01.010.

[20] Sanna Talja, 'Analyzing Qualitative Interview Data: The Discourse Analytic Method', *Library & Information Science Research* 21: 4, 1999, pp. 459–77, https://doi.org/10.1016/S0740-8188(99)00024-9.

(3) press: dorzeczy.pl; dzieje.pl; dziennik.pl; fakt.pl; gazeta.pl; gazetaprawna.pl; latimes.com; naszdziennik.pl; natemat.pl; newsweek.pl; oko.press; plus.dziennikbaltycki.pl; polityka.pl; se.pl; wyborcza.pl;

(4) radio: polskieradio.pl; radiokielce.pl; radio.lublin.pl; radiomaryja.pl; radiowroclaw.pl; radiozet.pl; RMF24.pl; tokfm.pl;

(5) television: polsatnews.pl; tvn24.pl; tvp.info; vod.pl; wiadomosci.dziennik.pl.

Data sources were chosen for popularity and reach of impact. The combination of press interviews and articles, written texts, or texts representing different contexts of discussion enhances the generalizability of research results.[21] It fits in with the assumptions of historical discourse analysis regarding intertextuality, i.e., the search for existing patterns and common features within the framework of knowledge and structures presented in discourse in various texts.[22]

It was decided to analyze the entire statements of each politician. The analysis considers mainly the following levels of utterance contexts:

(1) direct linguistic context and intertextual/interdiscursive context,

(2) interpretation of discourse in the socio-political-historical and theoretical context.[23]

All analyzes were conducted using Atlas.ti analytical software and qualitative and inductive techniques to recursively code and identify patterns in data[24] regarding politicians' election campaign discourse. In the first stage of the analysis, all media messages were read and encoded (pointing to specific threads and theoretical categories). The coding procedure was based on the so-called factual coding, i.e. giving names or assigning concepts to the collected empirical material describing the examined reality. We started with open (preliminary) coding according to the statement-by-statement strategy to generate as many categories as possible that would cover the factual content of the empirical material as fully as possible. In practice, it comes down to maintaining the terms and meanings that are assigned to them by the respondents themselves.[25] The themes and theoretical categories that crystallized during the analysis were developed and supplemented.

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[21] Ibid.

[22] Wodak, 'Introduction: Discourse Studies'.

[23] Eadem, 'Populist Discourses'.

[24] Amanda Coffey and Paul Atkinson, *Making Sense of Qualitative Data: Complementary Research Strategies* (London: Sage Publications, 1996).

[25] Kathy Charmaz, *Teoria ugruntowana. Praktyczny przewodnik po analizie jakościowej* (Warsaw: PWN, 2009), pp. 76–79.

It means that additional sources were gathered to confirm the existence of the thread data until the researcher is convinced of their saturation (i.e. until no data indicates a different interpretation). A group of texts collected this way, pointing to a particular thread, or connecting with other threads, was subjected to further analysis. As a result of open coding, we decided which categories we would develop further, saturating them with properties.[26] Threads that diversified politicians' statements were sought, allowing monitoring of their different positions. Based on the axis of division emerging from the different positions of particular political camps, models of organizational identity were characterized. In the second analysis stage, the threads extracted from the entire empirical material were supplemented with theories that may contribute to their better understanding.[27] While analyzing the empirical material, each step was repeated many times to achieve research coherence.

RESULTS

The research material we have collected indicates that the narrative of political organizations during the last presidential campaign in Poland refers to current events and hardships. It is based on a declaration of striving to improve everyday life and concerns primarily promises made to citizens, i.e., economy, social package, and ecology. Representatives of each political party declared concern for citizens and counteracting socio-economic exclusion. The strategy of fighting for voters is focused on economic issues, which, according to other studies, strongly determine Poles' electoral preferences.[28]

The candidates and their political backgrounds focus on the promises made to the electorate, mainly on improving the health care system of Poles (the last election campaign took place during the coronavirus pandemic in 2020). Election promises also concerned the areas of voters' functioning related to morality and sexual orientation. They were submitted primarily by all opposition candidates. An important element of the opposition candidates' narrative during the

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[26] Earl Babbie, *The Practice of Social Research* (Boston, MA: Cengage Learning, 2021), p. 430; Krzysztof Konecki, *Studia z metodologii badań jakościowych. Teoria ugruntowana* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 2000), p. 52.

[27] Wodak, 'Introduction: Discourse Studies'.

[28] Wojciech Grabowski, 'Determinants of Voting Results in Poland in the 2015 Parliamentary Elections. Analysis of Spatial Differences', *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 52: 4, 2019, pp. 331–42, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.postcomstud.2019.10.006.

campaign was government propaganda, noticed by other researchers,[29] and threats of electoral fraud. It was mainly due to the lack of equality in the access of the opposition political camps to the public media.[30] One of the candidates expressed his concern about this situation:

> I worked in the Council of Europe as an election observer in the post-Soviet countries for eight years, and I have yet to expect that I would ask international organizations to monitor elections in Poland.[31]

The scope of the narratives of individual candidates and their political camps is similar in terms of topics, but diverse in terms of the views expressed, e.g. the approach of political parties to the LGBT+ community. The public discourse conducted by individual political organizations during the presidential campaign indicates the creation of specific identity narratives that distinguish these organizations from others. Distinctiveness of views and standing out from others is a basic element shaping identity, aimed at gaining voter support. The analysis of empirical data collected during our research implies the identification of two models of identity: historical, represented by Law and Justice, and open, represented by Civic Platform, Democratic Left Alliance and Polska 2050.

A MODEL OF HISTORICAL IDENTITY

This is an identity model created by candidates from the so-called right-wing parties, characterized by a conservative view of reality. This applies primarily to the then ruling party, Law and Justice, and Andrzej Duda, the President of the Republic of Poland running for re-election. The main assumption of the model is to create a vision of building a strong state using the idea of the difficult historical experiences of the Polish nation (e.g. loss of independence, world wars and the heroism of many Poles) and the patriotic attitude towards the homeland to build a sense of personal belonging. The greatest value that unites supporters of the Law and Justice party is the structure of the state, around which the belief in overcoming all current

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[29] Danielle Drozdzewski and Patrycja Matusz, 'Operationalizing Memory and Identity Politics to Influence Public Opinion of Refugees: A Snapshot from Poland', *Political Geography* 86, 2021, article: 102366, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.polgeo.2021.102366.

[30] Jamie Wiseman, 'Democracy Declining: Erosion of Media Freedom in Poland', Media Freedom Rapid Response (MFRR) Press Freedom Mission to Poland, November-December 2020, Mission Report (Vienna: International Press Institute, 2021), p. 7.

[31] Robert Biedroń, 28 April 2020, Twitter, https://x.com/RobertBiedron/status/1255107552691597312 (access: 28 April 2020).

adversities and difficulties is built. Statehood is to be a guarantee of individual ontological security and a sense of personal dignity. The analysis of empirical material also shows that building a sense of personal belonging and pride in emphasizing a fragment of history has an evaluative nature and may develop into a sense of superiority over other countries, nations and social groups. The following narratives confirm this:

> A country where citizens feel their dignity is respected and a country that is proud of its history.[32]
> A moment ago, I spoke with Mrs Zofia Pilecki, the daughter of Captain Witold Pilecki. The memory of this Patriot and his heroism strengthens our identity. We build the future on that experience. We know arguments, conflicts, and divisions do not serve Polish affairs today. Patriotism unites.[33]
> Poles have always been able to pass through the most challenging periods in history. I am glad that here I hear these positive words about the strength and that we are back to show that this has survived in us for generations.[34]

The narrative uniquely emphasizes the experiences of Poles fighting for independence in The Second World War. It focuses on the attitude of resistance to another nation's aggression as a value itself and a model of heroism. The politicians' statements also refer to the very difficult experiences of the martyrdom of Polish soldiers, e.g., in Katyn. The way the narrative is built here indicates that Poles are united around the nation's history as a nation oppressed and hurt but strong, victorious, and proud. According to us, World War II experiences still resonate with the oldest generation of Poles, which may strengthen the political narrative's direction and be calculated to get the ageing society's votes. Other researchers have also reached similar conclusions.[35] Below are a few examples of this narrative:

> Some people did not agree with the new Poland. I am thinking of those whom we today call indomitable soldiers. Tomorrow is their national remembrance day. I am asking you to pay your tribute to them.[36]
> On April 3, eighty years ago, the Soviets began mass executions of Polish officers. The President of the Republic of Poland, Andrzej Duda, paid his tribute to the Katyn massacre victims at the Unknown Soldier Tomb.[37]

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[32] Andrzej Duda, 6 March 2020, wpolityce.pl (access: 6 March 2020).
[33] Andrzej Duda, 25 May 2020, Twitter, https://x.com/AndrzejDuda/status/1264863195187097601 (access: 25 May 2020).
[34] Andrzej Duda, 23 May 2020, polskieradio.pl (access: 23 May 2020).
[35] Elżbieta Sobczak, Bartosz Bartniczak and Andrzej Raszkowski, 'Aging Society and the Selected Aspects of Environmental Threats: Evidence from Poland', *Sustainability* 12: 11, 2020, article: 4648, https://doi.org/doi:10.3390/su12114648.
[36] Andrzej Duda, 29 February 2020, wyborcza.pl (access: 29 February 2020).
[37] Andrzej Duda, 3 April 2020, dzieje.pl, https://dzieje.pl/aktualnosci/prezydent-andrzej-duda-zlozyl-kwiaty-przy-grobie-nieznanego-zolnierza-w-holdzie (access: 3 April 2020).

The analysis of the collected research material shows that the narrative of politicians of the then-ruling party emphasizes the importance of faith, tradition and Christian culture as factors that unite some Poles. According to their candidate, these factors strengthened Poland's resilience and strength and distinguished it from other Western European countries. Special attention should be paid here, especially to the issue of Catholic faith and values. Such statements constitute evidence of coquetting of the institutional Church by the then ruling party,[38] which is a strategy aimed at winning over the Catholic electorate. This is a clear gesture of the Law and Justice party to defend Catholics, as society's trust in the Church in Poland is declining in the face of numerous sexual scandals and abuses of power by the clergy.[39] This is confirmed by the following statements by the candidate of the then ruling party:

> We have our great strength—something that most of the West no longer has—
> —our faith, tradition, and culture, based on Christian roots.[40]
> 'Memory that does not pass away'. The action in which the quotation of St. John Paul II takes place under the honorary patronage of the President.[41]

Building a narrative in this identity model is based on pointing out the potential threat from minorities living in Poland, representatives of other nationalities, ethnic groups and religions, but also from various other social groups that do not fit into the vision of the so-called politicians right-wing, e.g. the LGBT+ community.[42] Our data show that the creation of the message was based on intimidating voters with various possible threats,[43] e.g. growing unemployment resulting from the presence of various national minorities in the country, which was also noted by other researchers.[44] Therefore, the message of some

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[38] Madalena Meyer Resende and Anja Hennig, 'Polish Catholic Bishops, Nationalism and Liberal Democracy', *Religions* 12: 2, 2021, article: 94, https://doi.org/10.3390/rel1 2020094.

[39] Sławomir Mandes, 'Clerical Sexual Abuse in an Illiberal State: The Case of Poland', *Journal of Church and State* 62: 1, 2022, pp. 110–34, https://doi.org/10.1093/jcs/csz089.

[40] Andrzej Duda, 27 February 2020, polskieradio.pl, https://polskieradio24.pl/artykul/2463730,prezydent-na-podhalu-nasza-sila-jest-wiara-i-tradycja (access: 27 February 2020).

[41] Andrzej Duda, 16 May 2020, prezydent.pl, https://www.prezydent.pl/aktualnosci/wydarzenia/pamiec-ktora-nie-przemija-czytamy-teksty-sw-jana-pawla-ii,1762 (access: 16 May 2020).

[42] Żuk and Żuk, 'Euro-Gomorrah and Homopropaganda'.

[43] Monika Gabriela Bartoszewicz, Otto Eibl and Magdalena El Ghamari, 'Securitizing the Future: Dystopian Migration Discourses in Poland and the Czech Republic', *Futures* 141, 2022, article: 102972, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.futures.2022.102972.

[44] Drozdzewski and Matusz, 'Operationalizing Memory'.

politicians refers to the vision of a culturally homogeneous state, i.e. a nation attached to Christianity, tradition (national heritage and the model of functioning in the family) and history. This is a purely non--pluralistic and fear-based vision in which a strong state could protect citizens from different beliefs, concepts and cultures. Examples are the following statements:

> Poland is likely to face a massive increase in unemployment, so we need to conduct a debate regarding economic immigration in times of economic downturn.[45]
> As a result of the highly pro-Ukrainian policy of the PiS government and President Duda, Polish schools are now being closed in Ukraine. We warned about it in 2017 when the Education Act was adopted.[46]

Creating potential threats from other people is in this case a tool to legitimize the instrumental use of the government apparatus by the Law and Justice political camp. The slogan of a strong (powerful, safe) state to ensure the safety of citizens is a justification for engaging the army, police and secret services for party purposes without any external control. Below is one example of such a narrative:

> There are many aspects of security. It is one of the most critical elements, thanks to which a strong state can be built.[47]

The vision of a safe state in the narrative of the then-ruling party means existential security, i.e. emphasizing the importance of social packages for specific groups of citizens. Generous promises of financial support and redistribution of funds to selected social groups, despite growing budget deficits, are populist and careless about the future state of public finances but aimed at gaining votes in elections. This narrative was used primarily by the candidate of the then ruling party:

> The economy began to develop perfectly when the 500+ program was launched. It is tens of billions of zlotys, huge money. Where do they come from? They come from the imposed higher VAT rates. The previous government could have patched the state budget hole, but they did not do it. They robbed us.[48]
> Thanks to good policy, I could sign a bill that annually guarantees the 13th pension payment.[49]

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[45] Krzysztof Bosak, 25 March 2020, kresy.pl (access: 25 March 2020).
[46] Krzysztof Bosak, 26 May 2020, kresy.pl, https://kresy.pl/wydarzenia/kresy/krzysztof-bosak-wystepuje-w-obronie-polskiej-szkoly-w-mosciskach-na-ukrainie-video/ (access: 26 May 2020).
[47] Andrzej Duda, 7 May 2020, polskieradio.pl (access: 7 May 2020).
[48] Andrzej Duda 29 February 2020, wyborcza.pl (access: 29 February 2020).
[49] Ibid.

This is a continuation of the strategy from the previous elections, when requests for the redistribution of Poles' income were met with an appropriate political response in 2016 and, as a consequence, the electoral victory of the Law and Justice party.[50]

OPEN IDENTITY MODEL

The open identity model is mainly represented by Rafał Trzaskowski and his political environment, i.e. the Civic Platform. This identity model is based on personal freedom and is expressed in being yourself in everyday functioning. The data analysis shows that the open identity model emphasizes the freedom of individual beliefs and attitudes. It is a situation of no embarrassment and no pressure from any side, allowing you to express yourself fully. A vital element of this identity model is the assumption that all individuals are equal. In everyday practice, it means functioning in different environments simultaneously without division into better and worse people. In this model, solidarity is a significant value, which means functioning in a united community. Therefore, in the narrative of some politicians, the importance of integration with Europe, with European states and societies, is emphasized. Examples are the following statements:

> I dream of Poland, where everyone can be themselves. Poland, where everyone can love whomever they want. Poland, where equality means equality. Today we celebrate International Day Against Homophobia. Recently, our country gained the infamous title of the most homophobic country in the European Union.[51]
> We are safer together. Together we are stronger. Our future is in a united Europe.[52]

Historical memory is important for the identity of Poles, confirming their existence in a certain continuity. The memory of important historical events builds a sense of solidarity, which is different from the current identity model. In this case, there is no hatred towards others, e.g. countries or nations and cultures. Below are examples of statements in this vein:

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[50] Michal Brzezinski, Michał Myck and Mateusz Najsztub, 'Sharing the Gains of Transition: Evaluating Changes in Income Inequality and Redistribution in Poland Using Combined Survey and Tax Return Data', *European Journal of Political Economy* 73, 2022, article: 102121, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ejpoleco.2021.102121.

[51] Instagram, https://www.instagram.com/p/CASsysuHuMW/ (access: 19 May 2020).

[52] Robert Biedroń, 12 May 2020, Facebook, https://www.facebook.com/Robert Biedron/photos/a.223608334343190/3065789586791703/?type=3 (access: 12 May 2020).

> Together with the @__Lewica representatives, we laid flowers today at the Monument to the Ghetto Heroes and the Anielewicz Mound. Honour their memory![53]
>
> Seventy-five years ago, World War II ended. The worst war in the history of our country broke out because of the madness of Nazi ideology. Let us learn a lesson from this.[54]

It is an identity model oriented towards integrating everyone into one community. Hence, it considers the state a place for everyone without exclusions, without dividing them. The idea of solidarity is used in this identity model as a unifying and mobilizing force which helps undertake current and future challenges. Below are some examples of statements:

> In #Constitution we agreed that the flag unites us, we are united by the emblem, and the anthem unites us. That Poland is a country of all citizens.[55]
>
> Today is Flag Day, so let us unite around the applause of white and red and help our medics fight against the coronavirus.[56]

The analysis of gathered empirical data indicates the elements that distinguish this identity model from the previous ones. One is the secular nature of the state, understood as the institutional separation of state and the Catholic Church structures. The open identity model also assumes freedom in the religious sphere, i.e., a situation in which every belief system is treated similarly. To favor the Catholic Church or any other religion in Poland by the state structures is unacceptable in this system. In this case, the postulate of secularisation means revising the existing ties between the state and the Catholic Church. This is indicated, among other things, by the following statements:

> It is a fundamental difference in understanding the presidency. I am not for healing the Church. I am responsible for dealing with Poland. I will be the president who will ensure the separation of the state and church and defend the Constitution in which we agreed on a secular state. I will ensure that religious freedom is preserved and that every church is under the legal protection of the Republic of Poland.[57]
>
> We are a secular state and will not kneel before the clergy.[58]

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[53] Robert Biedroń, 22 April 2020, Twitter, https://x.com/RobertBiedron/status/1251830782819254272 (access: 22 April 2020).

[54] Robert Biedroń, 8 May 2020, Facebook, https://www.facebook.com/RobertBiedron/photos/a.258584244178932/3063782786992383/?type=3 (access: 12 May 2020).

[55] Robert Biedroń, 6 May 2020, Twitter, https://x.com/RobertBiedron/status/1256499021969055750 (access: 6 May 2020).

[56] Robert Biedroń, 6 May 2020, Facebook, https://www.facebook.com/RobertBiedron/posts/3049069401797055 (access: 6 May 2020).

[57] Szymon Hołownia, 16 May 2020, OKO.press (access: 16 May 2020).

[58] Robert Biedroń, 6 March 2020, Twitter, https://x.com/RobertBiedron/status/1233477973325557764 (access: 6 March 2020).

> As president, I will appoint a team to normalize relations between the state and churches. Tax the Church, take religion out of schools, renegotiate the Concordat, cancel the Church Fund and the conscience clause.[59]

Our analysis also shows that the open identity model is based on civil freedom, understood as the normalization and standardization of the operation of the security services. This is the orientation of state structures towards citizens and limiting the use of services for statutory purposes, i.e. ensuring the safety of citizens and the state. The use of secret services for political purposes is considered unacceptable. Politicians' narratives emphasize that the police treat citizens improperly, and the then ruling party uses the services in a way that undermines the system of a democratic state. Politicians also emphasize that full control over the services means full responsibility for exercising power. This is confirmed by the following statements:

> The lower the PiS ratings, the greater their brutality in the streets. Protesters are punished. Moreover, the police protect President Duda's campaign rallies.[60]
> You have the services, the police, and the prosecutor's office. However, there is always someone setting you up or provoking you. It is time to get serious. Full power = full responsibility![61]

The open identity model is future-oriented and points to development as a value. It is a deep look into the future, which considers not only opposing crises but also improving the quality of life. In this model of identity, openness means a readiness for change. This is indicated by the following statement, among others:

> The European Union needs the #NewMarshallPlan, which will protect us from the crisis, give our community an impulse for development, and give Europeans a higher standard of living.[62]

The well-being of Poles is here, as in the previous identity model, a value to which politicians refer in their narratives. The data analysis shows numerous election promises are made to improve residents' quality of life. Some postulates are bold, such as a modern welfare

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[59] Robert Biedroń, 17 May 2020, Twitter, https://x.com/RobertBiedron/status/1261920818973605890 (access: 20 May 2020).

[60] Robert Biedroń, 24 May 2020, Facebook, https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=328880211427684 (access: 26 May 2020).

[61] Robert Biedroń, 19 May 2020, Twitter, https://x.com/RobertBiedron/status/1262770993493409799 (access: 20 May 2020).

[62] Małgorzata Kidawa-Błońska, 30 March 2020, Twitter (access: 30 March 2020).

state, a school focusing less on theory and more on practice, support for people in need, and liquidation of junk contracts in a hundred days. All these promises point to populism and aim to win as many votes in elections as possible. Below are some examples of statements:

> Can it be? It can be! If the people's well-being comes first.[63]
> We want to create a modern welfare state where flats for rent are built, where hospitals are financed at such a level that there are no queues, and where a school teaches less theory and more practice.[64]
> I want to be an ordinary person's president. Nothing about you without you! It is the motto of my campaign.[65]
> Let us count ourselves and show everyone how many of us are here. How many of us want Poland to be modern, European, where equality means equality, and no one in need is left alone?[66]
> I regret that we spend too much time talking about political competition and too little regarding the situation of a common Polish man, especially from the government's side.[67]
> Today, PiS is saving banks, not people. Three million people were pushed into junk contracts and self-employment. If I become president, I will eliminate junk contracts in 100 days. Currently, two million Poles are unemployed.[68]

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Election promises seem to be an effective strategy for gaining power in the presidential and parliamentary elections in Poland. The key elements in this strategy are adapting the promise to a specific social group. The analyzes carried out show that the greatest influence has economic obligations, which translate into the functioning of individual social groups in current market conditions, which is confirmed by

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[63] Robert Biedroń, 6 April 2020, Facebook, https://www.facebook. com/RobertBiedron/posts/2985201191517210?__xts__[0]=68.ARDnPOMzxs7JBMYG0JvbqLyKXOjy4Tk1UUz5sJKrAfFY2hDqs3FKKYvLtwOcwpuRDoJWyLwh35F4JKg5HoTk_csR-HUguh1ZqJNcjHJpQtgjRn-rIoISJa-GAwygWD2WTy6fkAichL09QuaYqpfcUF6r3VplVlqyE2r5Ah6H4Eo-779fhBXEWHl35-eBxRIOtfb3ve_DmZoqJY1qy1d0ZEAOo6wQB1ehbiW1TUO73ZXX1HAdF-z1xTF7ajfC-7zlQ1Lw6wr9C2H1LzZGUiRRg8B7D-pOFcTuJ7_n2IBFIVXlz6YNxliYYLRXZuDYyyzRYL-gUm3lR2mfDBqK-xo6M-UGjg_g (access: 6 April 2020).

[64] Szymon Hołownia, 29 April 2020, Twitter (access: 29 April 2020).

[65] Robert Biedroń, 26 May 2020, Twitter (access: 26 May 2020).

[66] Robert Biedroń, 23 May 2020, Facebook, https://www.facebook.com/RobertBiedron/photos/a.258584244178932/3102198639817464/?type=3&__xts__[0]=68.ARCpi-gaUhOw48yCduehuUKPTnnqwDhRVMvX4m7hBO3UFTAwO6Ve6Xq94 XGMvpv PFEf4JVomsdPU6D4-lWgNi0ArNqEsdTwD1V1AEMHvWlvDoCjEkVoB7FJo6DF4GxMz_90nidLVDhPTxp-d7OL8Et-gyAM85vgMHnuvxtyAAZ2VPc-kWgQ5VrsZas2KPYBS3pEDfat_jwWBMLCL5ghJxhVueJ2pkrgXh DMs0vCO7qtXy8YuLgzRRjXMny3i5Oaqq540Xpe6vuzTlS becE3Xrrirbgkx_v9S-JFWJL97YTAm3Kj3b-DYELy6l6Oe6_T-GTaSU0thzZ-mdezqafc_ZazgAQA (access: 26 May 2020).

[67] Szymon Hołownia, 6 April 2020, Twitter (access: 6 April 2020).

[68] Robert Biedroń, 12 May 2020, Twitter (access: 12 May 2020).

previous research.[69] Poles' expectation of achieving a material status comparable to Western European citizens makes them extremely sensitive to such promises. At the same time, systemic support consisting in the redistribution of financial resources may shape the demanding attitudes of the poorest part of society. As a result, this may have disastrous consequences for the country's long-term financial policy.

However, competing with each other in economic promises does not define the character of the political camp. Standing out from other political organizations is possible thanks to a simple narrative that consolidates voters around specific topics, values, ideas and visions. The more expressive the narrative, the greater the diversity of voters' opinions and the interest of the media, which focus on the emotional involvement of recipients, and thus increase advertising sales. Therefore, the election campaign resembles megaprojects in which many narrative battles are fought to win one's interests.[70] Developing a clear narrative during the election campaign and diversifying recipients' opinions is easier to achieve by focusing on topics related to worldview, morality or sexual orientation. The propaganda used by the then-ruling party through public media[71] and the instrumental nature of the relationship with the institutional structure of the Catholic Church[72] also contribute to the polarization of public opinion. Highlighting the discrepancies in the perception of reality by individual political camps contributes to the emergence of diverse visions of the world (identities).

The historical identity model seems to be oriented towards features that, in a sense, compensate for deficiencies and incompetence, as

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[69] Philip Keefer and Razvan Vlaicu, 'Vote Buying and Campaign Promises', *Journal of Comparative Economics* 45: 4, 2017, pp. 773–92, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jce.2017.07.001; Mikael Elinder, Henrik Jordahl and Panu Poutvaara, 'Promises, Policies and Pocketbook Voting', *European Economic Review* 75, 2015, pp. 177–94, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.euroecorev.2015.01.010; Nick Feltovich and Francesco Giovannoni, 'Selection vs. Accountability: An Experimental Investigation of Campaign Promises in a Moral-Hazard Environment', *Journal of Public Economics* 126, 2015, pp. 39–51, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jpubeco.2015.03.008.

[70] Johan Ninan and Natalya Sergeeva, 'Battle of Narratives: Interaction between Narratives and Counter-Narratives in Megaprojects', *Project Leadership and Society* 3, 2022, article: 100069, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.plas.2022.100069.

[71] Małgorzata Winiarska-Brodowska, Dorota Piontek, Joanna Dzwończyk and Monika Jabłońska, 'The Law and Justice Leader and Prime Minister's Affinity Towards the Alternative Media on Facebook in Poland', *Środkowoeuropejskie Studia Polityczne* 2, 2022, pp. 21–42, https://doi.org/10.14746/ssp.2022.2.2.

[72] Przemysław J. Kurek and Jan Fałkowski, 'Religiosity and Political Participation: Panel Data Evidence from Post-Communist Poland', *European Journal of Political Economy* 75, 2022, article: 102177, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ejpoleco.2021.102177.

well as failures on the path of personal development (e.g. professional failures). This identity narrative is, in our opinion, based on mediated experience. It can contribute to building self-esteem, even if an objective view of one's own experiences does not provide such a basis. Moreover, this linguistic construction prepares to explain possible failures in the future by referring to the difficult history of the Polish nation as a society oppressed in the past. References to Poland's historical victories and heroism, as well as creating a vision of a strong country as a guarantor of security, give a sense of importance to some social classes, especially those with numerous deficits and those who are excluded. The narrative of politicians in this model emphasizes numerous threats directed at Polish society, which is also confirmed by other studies.[73] This is a well-thought-out procedure, creating space for legitimizing the takeover of total power, i.e. control over the secret services and other constitutional bodies established to ensure state security. In further steps, it is possible to instrumentally use various state organs and destroy the democratic structures of the state.

The second identity model is a narrative emphasizing personal freedom and freedom of belief, which is expressed in striving for independence, coping with everyday life and overcoming difficulties through an open mind and friendly attitude towards others. In our opinion, this linguistic construct appeals to people without complexes who are not afraid to cooperate with others in a multicultural and diverse community. In the open identity model, building a sense of national belonging based on historical memory leads to solidarity, not exclusion, as in the first model. This core value allows us to look to the future with hope and constructive cooperation with others, instead of growing hostility and prejudice. Therefore, it is an approach that unites people on the path of challenges and bold pursuit of development.

The two emerging models of organizational identity correspond to the political division of Poland that has been noticed and established in other studies, i.e. 'Solidarity Poland' and 'Liberal Poland'.[74] Our model approach to the identity of political organizations indicates an axial division of the Polish political scene, which focuses on values, national heritage, faith, freedom, independence, cultural diversity

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[73] Drozdzewski and Matusz, 'Operationalizing Memory'.
[74] Tomasz Herodowicz, Barbara Konecka-Szydłowska, Paweł Churski and Robert Perdał, 'Political Divisions and Socio-Economic Disparities in Poland: A Geographical Approach', *Sustainability* 13, 2021, article: 13604, https://doi.org/10.3390/su132413604.

and security. Additionally, it proves that constructing a specific narrative can effectively influence recipients[75] to create a sense of identification and bond with the organization while strengthening the coherence of its organizational culture. This is possible thanks to the use of several methods of creating an identity narrative, i.e. emotional attachment to the organization (emotional dependence) through the clarity of expression, segmentation of recipients through the selection of message content, and experience mediated through reference to the community and continuity of historical experiences. To sum up, based on the results of our research, we predict a further deepening of these social divisions and, in the long run, an escalation of the dispute, leading to a crisis of the democratic structures and mechanisms of the state.

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[75] Mahir Yazar, Lukas Hermwille and Håvard L. Haarstad, 'Right-Wing and Populist Support for Climate Mitigation Policies: Evidence from Poland and its Carbon-Intensive Silesia Region', *Regional Sustainability* 3: 4, 2022, pp. 281–93, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.regsus.2022.11.001.

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