

## The Media Image of the Country in Political Discourse: Speech Methods of Creation<sup>14</sup>

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### ABSTRACT

Modern politics penetrates all spheres of human existence. This undoubtedly intensifies the study of political discourse. Along with the development of traditional peculiar features (institutional, special informativeness, semantic uncertainty, and many others), new ones arise due to the modern context. Open media landscape and virtual communication transform both the structure of the subject of political leverage from an individual politician to a large party, a state, and the object of home or foreign general public, which further influences the language of the text as well as its genre and style. The aim of this study is to analyze the image of Poland in Russian political media texts and the image of Russia in the Polish one. Official statements made by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of a country form a special genre that combines both an oral and a written forms of messages accompanied by a mandatory web version. One of the goals of such statements is to create a specific media image of the country - the speech image of both the homeland and the partner/opponent country aimed at shaping the public opinion and values of the addressee. To carry out the analysis we applied the method of isolating semantic dominants in order to determine the main speech methods of creating the image of the country. The investigation was conducted on the material of the official statements of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia and Poland made from 2010 to 2018 with such functional units as Pol'sha [Poland], polyaki [the Poles] and their contextual synonyms Varshava [Warsaw], pol'skiye vlasti [Polish authorities], pol'skaya storona [the Polish party] and Rosja, rosyjski, Rosjanin. The findings of the study can be disseminated onto the political discourse as a whole as well as on its linguistic features.

**Keywords:** discourse, political discourse, political communication, political language, media image.

### Introduction

Political discourse is one of the most frequent subjects of research in modern linguistics (Chudinov, 2007; Musolff, 2004; Shejgal, 2000; van Dijk, 1998, 2005; Wodak, 2002). Penetrating all spheres of human life, political discourse creates a complex structure, where special attention is paid to the choice of adequate linguistic means aimed to achieve a communicative goal, including creation of an artificial representation of a certain object (Gamson, Croteau, Hoynes & Sasson, 1992; Musolff, 2000; Zinken, 2003; Zaripov, 2016). A speech image of a politician, a political party or a state that functions in the political discourse creates the desired axiological and cognitive limits in the mass consciousness.

The purpose of this study is to analyze the image of Poland in Russian political media texts and the image of Russia in the Polish one. The data for study were the texts of the

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official statements of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of Russia<sup>15</sup> and Poland<sup>316</sup> presented on the official websites of the ministries of internal affairs of the two countries. The official statements of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) of the country represent a special genre of the political discourse containing an official state position on the event. It is noteworthy that the requirements for this genre are regulated: any information provided through the official statements of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs must be systematic, comprehensive, convincing and accessible in form, that is to be of informational and propaganda nature. One of the key tasks of the messages communicated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is to create the desired image of its own country as well as the partner country in order to canalize public opinion and to form the value system of the audience. Within the framework of this work we analyzed Russian and Polish texts made in 2010-2018 with such terminological units as Pol'sha [Poland], polyaki [the Poles] and their contextual synonyms Varshava [Warsaw], pol'skiye vlasti [Polish government], pol'skaya storona [the Polish party] and Rosja [Russia], rosyjski [Russian], Rosjanin [the Russian]. In total, the research involved 2,480 texts.

There is a wide choice of methods of critical discourse analysis in modern linguistics that reveal both the ways of structuring the text and the functioning of single elements in combination with other ones (van Dijk, 1998, 1999). While analyzing the official statements of the Russian and the Polish Ministries of Foreign Affairs, we applied the method aimed at detecting semantic dominants which was developed by Ya. Mukarzhovsky (1967) relating to literary texts; in linguistics – relating to the analysis of media texts (Volkov, 2014; Filkelberg, 1994). The semantic dominant is understood as “the totality of speech methods aimed to implement the communicative intention of the addressee and to form the semantic center of the text” (Morozova, 2018: 23). The method of semantic dominants enables us to reveal the deep intent of the sender. It also implies the maximum possible impact on the object. In addition, this study is based on works dedicated to the role of a metaphor in political texts (Hülse, 2006; Landau, Keefer, Rothschild, 2014; Mio, 1997).

## 2. The Image of Poland in the Official Statements of the Russian MFA

Poland is often mentioned in the official statements of the Russian MFA (2001 texts), but usually in the context of international events and, as a rule, alongside other countries: Germany, France, the United States of America. There are only 67 texts devoted to Poland and Polish events.

All the messages can be united by two key ideas: on the one hand, the Poles are fraternal people, ‘svoy’ [us/a friend]; on the other hand, the government is an unfriendly opponent of Russia, ‘chuzhoy’ [them/a foe], with that tone set after the collapse of the Soviet Union in the 1990s.

All current interaction between Russia and Poland, in fact, simmers down to the assessment of the past: namely, to World War II (1941-1945) and the tragedy in Smolensk. There is no Poland in the modern political landscape of Russia; therefore, the image of Poland is constructed through the prism of the past.

<sup>15</sup> Official statements of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation. [https://www.mid.ru/ru/press\\_service/spokesman/official\\_statement](https://www.mid.ru/ru/press_service/spokesman/official_statement)

<sup>16</sup> [http://www.msz.gov.pl/pl/p/msz\\_pl/](http://www.msz.gov.pl/pl/p/msz_pl/)

The main semantic dominants and the ways of their implementation in speech can be distinguished as follows.

The semantic dominant '*sotrudnichestvo*' [collaboration] characterizes the texts produced in 2010-2013. The plane crash in Smolensk united two countries. Poland and Russia experienced a sense of unity as back in the days of the Soviet Union. It is interesting to note that the official statements were made rather by the people of Russia, but not the government:

(1) *Сегодня исполняется вторая годовщина трагического события, глубоко печальной страницы в истории российско-польских отношений... Не будет преувеличением сказать, что эта трагедия вызвала настоящий общественный шок в наших странах. Народ России воспринял случившееся как свою собственную беду (723-10-04-2012).*

The plane crash was denoted as *tragediya* [a tragedy], *tragicheskoye sobytiye* [a tragic event], *gluboko-pechalnaya stranitsa* [a deeply sad page] and perceived by the Russians as *sobstvennaya beda* [their own woe] which caused *obshchestvenny shok* [a public shock]. The semantic dominant *sotrudnichestvo* [collaboration] is realized by means of such units as *nashi (nashi strany)* [our (our countries)], *pol'skiye kollegi* [Polish colleagues], *sotrudnichestvo* [collaboration], *sodeystviye* [support], *otkrytost'* [openness], *pomoshch'* [assistance], *gotovnost'* [willingness], *tesny kontakt* [close contact]. The texts are full of proper nouns that are the names of organizations uniting Russia with other European countries: Russia-EU, Russia-NATO Council, the Council of the Baltic Sea States, the Northern Dimension, etc.

The shared sorrow got a dialogue under way, developed by the theme of the meeting (2013). The texts with the dominant *sotrudnichestvo* [collaboration] are informative, non-evaluative. From the linguistic point of view they are notable for the use of two-part narrative sentences (*ministry zatronut/ rassmotryat/ nametyat* [ministers will touch on/ consider/ outline]; *sostoitsya tret'ya neformalnaya vstrecha* [a third informal meeting will take place]; *rossiyskaya storona gotova predostvit'* [the Russian party is ready to provide]), passive constructions (*aktsent budet sdelan* [the emphasis will be put on], *budet prodolzhen obmen mnemiyami* [the exchange of views will be continued], *dano sootvetstvuyushcheye poruchenije* [the corresponding instructions have been given]), and the direct order of words in a sentence. It must be pointed out that clichés are widely used in the texts: *khod realizatsii dogovoryonnostey* [implementation progress], *otnositelno prioritnykh voprosov razvitiya otnosheniy* [regarding priority issues related to the development of relationship], *obespecheniya strategicheskoy stabilnosti* [ensuring strategic stability], *ryad aktualnykh mezhdunarodnykh problem* [a number of pressing global issues], etc. The minimum amount of expressive means is noteworthy, except for the functioning of a positive metaphor with a constructive beginning: *arkhitektura obshchestvennoy bezopasnosti* [the architecture of public safety].

The semantic dominant *sotrudnichestvo* [collaboration] has been characterizing the discourse of the official representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for several years. The motive *neponimaniye* [misunderstanding] appeared in 2013 due to the political events such as bans on the Soviet symbols for Russian fans at the World Cup (in 2012) or violence at the Russian embassy in Warsaw (in 2013).

(2) В этой связи внимание посла было обращено на пассивность и запоздалость действий полиции, в результате чего во многом стал возможен разгул распоясавшихся молодчиков. В. Зайончковскому было заявлено, что мы требуем от польских властей принесения официальных извинений, принятия исчерпывающих мер по обеспечению безопасности и нормальному функционированию всех дипломатических представительств России в Польше, возмещения причиненного ущерба, наказания виновных и недопущения подобных провокаций в будущем (2250-12-11-2013).

The texts of the statements retain official features at the syntax level, namely: passive constructions (*V.Zaionchkovskomu bylo zayavleno* [it was declared to V. Zayonchkovsky]), complex sentences conveying conditionality (*v rezultate chego vo mnogom stal vozmozhen* [in many ways as a result of which it has become possible to]), etc. However, many evaluative units appear at the lexical level: *grubeishiy narusheniya* [gross violations], *agressivno nastroyennyye uchastniki* [aggressively disposed participants], *reshitelny protest* [strong protest]. All that was happening was called *beschinstvo* [outrage], *razgul* [revelry], and the participants were defined as *raspoyasovshiyesya molodchiki* [unbridled thugs]. Special attention is paid to the unit *molodchik* [a thug/a tough] which is defined in the dictionary as a colloquial, contemptuous version that means ‘a person, usually a young one, violating the norms of social behavior, capable of crime, ruffianly behaviour, etc.’, and the unit *raspoyasovshiyesya* (which literally means [unbelted] but figuratively - [unbridled]). The last one is a participle derived from the verb *raspoyasatsya* [to become outspoken] and is defined in the dictionary as a slangy version that means ‘to lose temper, become dissolute, arrogant’ (Евгеньева, 1999).

Actions of the Polish government were assessed in the framework of diplomatic etiquette: *iskhodya iz printsipa vzaimnosti* [according to the principle of reciprocity], *rossiyskoy storonoy prinyaty otvetnyye ‘zerkal’nyie mery* [the Russian party has taken tit-for-tat countermeasures], *s sozhaleniyem konstatiruyem* [we note with regret].

Since 2014 Poland-Russia relations have been influenced by reevaluation of the results of World War II fueled by the desecration and demolition of the monuments to the Soviet soldiers. The information block ‘World War II’ has been characterizing texts of the Russian MFA to this day. The war theme in many respects has determined the choice of characteristic linguistic properties of the statements. They are overwhelmingly of military rhetoric: *vrazhdebnyie* [hostile], *vrazhdebno* [with enmity], *eskalatsiya* [escalation], *razvyazannaya voina* [the war unleashed against], *zabveniy geroyev* [neglected heroes], *besslavnyie plody* [ignominious consequences], *predatelstvo* [betrayal], *kolossalny ushcherb* [colossal damage], *proizvol* [arbitrariness], *vandalizm* [vandalism] and many others. The war with fascist Germany in the past has evolved into the media war in the present where, as is well known, any means may be used to an end. The semantic dominant *sotrudnichestvo* [collaboration] has been replaced by the dominant *razrusheniye* [destruction]. This dominant is implemented through such lexemes as: *nedruzhestvennyie deistviya* [hostile acts], *destruktivnaya liniya* [destructive line], *ataka* [attack], *soznatelnoye ukhudsheniye rossiysko-polskikh otnosheniy* [deliberate deterioration of Russian-Polish relations], *neizbezhnyie negativnyie posledstviya dlya dvustoronnikh otnosheniy* [inevitable negative consequences for bilateral relations], *kolossalny ushcherb dlya dvustoronnikh otnosheniy* [tremendous damage to bilateral relations], *borba* [struggle], *zhertvy* [victims], *muchenichestvo* [martyrdom], etc. The Polish

government actions aimed at demolishing the monuments are emphasized in the texts as follows: *osobo tsinichny i zlonamerenny zhest* [extremely cynical and malicious gesture], *yavnaya lozh'* [obvious lie], *neadekvatnaya reaktsiya* [inadequate reaction], *otvratitelny akt* [disgusting act], *intsident* [incident], *khuliganskaya ataka* [hooligan attack], *skandalnoye proisshestviye* [scandalous incident], *proizvol* [arbitrariness], *uzakonenny gosudarstvenny vandalizm* [legalized state vandalism] and many others.

The overwhelming evaluative component characterizes the vast majority of the official statements made by the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and is represented by the evaluative vocabulary (*tsinizm* [cynicism], *natsisty* [the Nazis], *iskazheniye* [distortion], *ushcherb* [damage], *osvobozhdeniye* [liberation], *vreditelstvo* [wrecking], etc.); by epithets (*besslavnyie* [ignominious], *pavshim* [fallen], *predatel'skoye zabveniye* [treacherous oblivion], *pozornaya praktika* [shameful practice], *kolossalny ushcherb* [tremendous damage]). Particular emphasis is placed on the evaluative predicates (*porazhat'* [to strike], *popirat'* [to trample over], *vozmushchat'* [to outrage], *istrebyat'* [to exterminate], *travmirovat'* [to hurt], *pereinachit'* [to distort], etc.) and the metaphor *voina* [war]. Thus, a real bloody war with fascism in the 20<sup>th</sup> century has been transformed into a deliberate war 'with monuments' in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The 'war' metaphor often functions alongside the metaphor *bolezn'* [disease] which is represented by such units as *rana* [injury], *travma* [trauma], *ugasaniye* [dying], *boleznenny* [painful], *krovotochashchy* [bleeding]. Particular war metaphors are included in the structure of the global dominant metaphor *razrusheniye* [destruction] which stands in opposition to the metaphor *arkhitektura* [architecture] marked in the texts of 2010-2013. As a result, unity and creation have been replaced by separation and destruction, the destruction of everything - history, memory, relationships, ethics and morality. The metaphor functioning is emphasized by a chronological representation: the past is associated with the years of World War II and the liberation of Poland from the Nazis. The past is implemented in the text with help of active participles, finite verb forms in the past tense (*pavshikh* [fallen]), adverbial modifiers of time, the numerals (*v gody Vtoroy mirovoy voiny* [during World War II], *v iyune 1944 g.* [in June of 1944]). Passive constructions predominate in the description of the present: *demontirovan* [has been dismantled], *snesyon* [has been demolished], *oskvernyon* [has been desecrated], *ignoriruetsya* [is being ignored]). Besides, negative evaluative vocabulary emphasizes regularity: *ocherednoy* [further], *opyat'* [again], *vnov'* [once more]). The present is calling to stop. The future is hypothetical, but predictable - the end of bilateral relations. The future is represented by the verbs in the present tense (*travmiruyet* [hurt], *ignoriruyet* [ignore], *nanosyat ushcherb* [cause damage]), but this is not yet the end, the future has not yet come true (*poka ne pozdno* [before it's too late], *yeshchyo ne pozdno* [it's not too late], *yeshchyo est' vremya* [there is yet time], *pora* [it's time to]). So, bilateral relations are not yet dead, but they are characterized as *bolezn'* [disease] and *ugasaniye* [dying].

It should be noted that texts of the official statements preserve the opposition *svoy-chuzhoy* [us-them]. However, this is not the opposition Russia – Poland or Russian – Polish. In fact, the Polish government, the higher-ups, Warsaw (official Warsaw) are opposed to Polish people, the Poles. That is the reason why we designate the semantic dominant as *razrusheniye* [destruction], but not as *vrazhda* [enmity]. This is the government (*tamoshneye rukovodstvo* [higher-ups of that place]) that are *oderzhimy* [obsessed], *tsinichny* [cynical], *istrebyayut* [exterminating], *oskvernyayut* [desecrating], *uzakonivayut gosudarstvenny vandalizm*

[legitimizing state vandalism], *travmiruyut* [hurting], *stavyat pod udar dvustoronniye otnosheniya* [jeopardizing bilateral relations], *soznatelno ukhudshayut rossiysko-polskiye otnosheniya* [deliberately worsening Russian-Polish relations], and *popirayut obyazatelstva* [violating obligations]. The struggle with history is presented as a struggle with a common history, a shared memory. Thus, not only the Soviet soldiers' deeds are being buried in oblivion, but also those of the Poles who fell on the battlefield (*zabveniye svoikh zhe geroyev* [oblivion of their own heroes], *obyazatelstva pered sobstvennym narodom* [obligations towards their own people]). Russian and Polish peoples are united not only by the past, but also by their attitude to it at the present time:

(3) При этом местные власти не смогли разубедить даже польские байкеры, включая участников регулярно проводимых в нашей стране так называемых «Катынских мотопробегов», резонно противопоставившие в своем обращении в МИД Польши конструктивность российской стороны обструкционизму Варшавы и выразившие готовность сопроводить своих российских коллег по территории Польши (812-24-04-2015).

The contraposition *Rossiya – Polskiye valsti* [Russia – the Polish government] is also expressed through linguistic means: description of the Polish government actions is full of negative evaluative vocabulary contaminated with colloquial, substandard linguistic units (*tamoshniye* [of that place], *razgul* [revelry], *vykhodka* [jerk-like behavior], *vypad* [insult], *vreditelstvo* [wrecking], *predatelstvo* [betrayal], *skandal* [scandal], *khuliganskaya ataka* [hooligan attack]). It is suggested that the official Warsaw should *odumatsya* [change its mind] and *zanyatsya delom* [get with the problem]. The official Moscow speech behavior is conventional and stays within limits of the diplomatic discourse: *vyzyvayet nedoumeniye* [it puzzles], *vozmushcheny otkazom* [outraged with the refusal], *vyrazhayem reshitelny protest* [we express our strong protest], *nedruzhestvennyye deistviya* [unfriendly actions], *negativnyie posledstviya* [negative consequences], *vyuzhdeny konstatirovat'* [we are forced to state], *obrashchayet vnimaniye fakt* [the fact draws our attention], etc.

Summing up what has been said, **the image of Poland** can be constructed based on the official statements of the Russian MFA as follows: this is the Polish people who are friendly to Russians, with a common history and a shared memory. At a tragic moment two nations become one sharing their pain with each other. Polish people are opposed to the official government which is deliberately destroying everything that binds the two peoples, including even moral principles.

This designed image forms the Russians' opinion about Poland and the Poles. This is not an image of the enemy or a political opponent, but it is not a partner either; the Poles are close kindred people who are intentionally *razluchayut* [being separated] from the Russians. This break can be comparable to a disease.

### 3. The Image of Russia in the Official Statements of the Polish MFA

We shall now refer to the texts of the official statements made by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland. The use of such units as *Rosja* [Russia], *rosyjski* [Russian], *Rosjanin* [Russian national] is quite frequent, but their number varies from year to year depending on the events. Most often the targeted words are found in the texts of 2014, which

is, of course, due to the political situation and the change in relations between Poland and Russia caused by the accession of Crimea.

We shall consider how Russia is portrayed in Polish texts.

Texts made in 2010 and 2012 employ language means that implement the semantic dominant *współpraca* [collaboration]: namely, adjectives - *wspólny* [common], *wzajemny* [mutual], *polsko-rosyjski* [Polish-Russian], *dwustronny* [bilateral]; nouns - *współpraca* [collaboration], *dialog* [dialogue], *porozumienie* [agreement], *rozmowa* [conversation], and the verb *uzgodnić* [to conciliate], etc.

Relations between the two countries are primarily governed by their official representatives who are in this case the government officials (its 'face'). In this regard, the following examples illustrating Russian diplomats as people who are ready to interact and cooperate are quite emblematic:

(4) *Głównym wydarzeniem podczas Narady było wspólne wystąpienie ministrów spraw zagranicznych Radosława Sikorskiego i Siergieja Ławrowa o nowej erze w stosunkach polsko-rosyjskich, a także przyjęcie ambasadorów przez Prezydenta RP Bronisława Komorowskiego* ([http://www.msz.gov.pl/pl/aktualnosci/wiadomosci/aktualnosc\\_37837](http://www.msz.gov.pl/pl/aktualnosci/wiadomosci/aktualnosc_37837)).

In these texts Russia is a partner which Poland is building relations with, not only at the highest level, but also at the level of average citizens:

(5) *Spontaniczne wyrazy szczerego współczucia i głębokiej sympatii okazywane Polakom przez miliony Rosjan dyktowane odruchem serca były dodatkowym impulsem w procesie zbliżania i porozumienia między naszymi* ([http://www.msz.gov.pl/pl/aktualnosci/wiadomosci/aktualnosc\\_38309](http://www.msz.gov.pl/pl/aktualnosci/wiadomosci/aktualnosc_38309)).

The Russians are shown as responsive people who are aware of other people's grief and who act at the behest of their heart. The Poles are ready to contact and cooperate with such people.

A positive attitude to cooperation with Russia in these texts is implemented through the use of the evaluative adjectives *pozytywny* [positive] and *dobry* [kind, good]: *stworzenie pozytywnej atmosfery* [creating a positive atmosphere], *przykładem dobrej współpracy między naszymi krajami* [an example of good cooperation between our countries]. In addition, it is emphasized that the dialogue between the countries is possible as there are no lies or omissions: *budowanie opartego na prawdzie dialogu pomiędzy Rosjanami i Polakami* [making a dialogue between the Russians and the Poles based on truth]. Texts on economic cooperation also contain a positive attitude: *szanse na rozwój współpracy polsko-rosyjskiej* [a chance for the development of Polish-Russian collaboration], *polsko-rosyjska wymiana handlowa, która systematycznie rośnie* [Polish-Russian trade exchange that is steadily growing], *stosunki polsko-rosyjskie muszą wejść na jeszcze wyższy poziom* [Polish-Russian relations should reach a level that is much higher], *zbliżanie społeczeństw polskiego i rosyjskiego* [rapprochement between Polish and Russian societies].

Creation of the positive image of Russia is also facilitated by repeated statements made by the national leaders of the Polish government concerning the progress in Polish-Russian trade relations:

(6) *Minister Radosław Sikorski stwierdził także z zadowoleniem, że bardzo dobrze rozwija się handel pomiędzy Polską i Rosją. Podkreślił również dobrą współpracę między polskimi i rosyjskimi miastami i regionami*  
([http://www.msz.gov.pl/pl/aktualnosci/wiadomosci/posiedzenie\\_komitetu\\_strategii\\_wspolpracy\\_polsko\\_rosyjskiej\\_1](http://www.msz.gov.pl/pl/aktualnosci/wiadomosci/posiedzenie_komitetu_strategii_wspolpracy_polsko_rosyjskiej_1))

If the texts of 2010 employ nominations that name the country and its citizens (*Rosja* [Russia], *narody Polski i Rosji* [people of Poland and Russia], *Rosjanie* [the Russians], *strona rosyjska* [the Russian party], *Ministr Ławrow* [Minister Lavrov], *prezydent Dmitrij Miedwiediew* [president Dmitry Medvedev]), then the texts of 2012 start applying the nouns *gość* [guest] and *partner*: *goście z Rosji* [guests from Russia], *rosyjscy goście* [Russian guests], *dla rosyjskich partnerów* [for Russian partners]. Russia as a trading partner is essentially valuable for Poland:

(7) *Rosja jest drugim co do znaczenia partnerem handlowym Polskim, po krajach Unii Europejskiej* ([http://www.msz.gov.pl/pl/aktualnosci/wiadomosci/wizyta\\_wiceminister\\_beaty\\_stelmach\\_z\\_misja\\_gospodarcza\\_w\\_rostowie\\_nad\\_donem](http://www.msz.gov.pl/pl/aktualnosci/wiadomosci/wizyta_wiceminister_beaty_stelmach_z_misja_gospodarcza_w_rostowie_nad_donem)).

Friendly relations between Russia and Poland are proved by the contexts where these countries are called neighbors: *Minister Radosław Sikorski powiedział, że tak jak między sąsiadami są też sprawy sporne, w tym dot. katastrofy smoleńskiej np. zwrot wraku samolotu TU - 154 M* [Minister Radosław Sikorski said that just like between neighbors there can be disputes, including the Smolensk crash, for example, the return of the TU-154M aircraft wreckage] (URL: [http://www.msz.gov.pl/pl/aktualnosci/wiadomosci/posiedzenie\\_komitetu\\_strategii\\_wspolpracy\\_polsko\\_rosyjskiej\\_1](http://www.msz.gov.pl/pl/aktualnosci/wiadomosci/posiedzenie_komitetu_strategii_wspolpracy_polsko_rosyjskiej_1)).

The image of Russia at the syntax level is formed through the use of simple sentences, a large number of participial constructions and homogeneous elements, as well as passive constructions. Everything mentioned above indicates the preservation of traditional features of an official business style in these texts, in particular, the neutrality, lack of black-and-white thinking or negative evaluativity.

In 2014, after the annexation of Crimea, the attitude of the Poles changed. From being a partner, Russia has turned into an invader, an aggressor, a country that may bring danger. As a result, the texts of that year contain language units that implement the semantic dominant *agresja* [aggression]: nouns *agresja* [aggression], *zagrożenie* [threat], *presja* [pressure], *pogwałcenie* [violation]; adjectives *jednostronny* [unilateral], *bezprawny* [illegal], *agresywny* [aggressive]; the verb *naruszać* [violate]. For example: *agresja ze strony rosyjskich sił zbrojnych* [acts of aggression by the Russian armed forces], *rosyjskie działania na Krymie* [Russian activity in Crimea], *wzrost zagrożenia na Wschodzie* [increased threat in the East], *pogwałcenie norm i zasad międzynarodowych* [violation of international norms and principles], *jednostronna akcja Federacji Rosyjskiej* [unilateral voluntary actions of the Russian Federation].

The dominant *wojna* [war] is a constituent of the semantic dominant *agresja* [aggression]. It is implemented in the texts through the use of the military vocabulary: *działania rosyjskich sił zbrojnych* [activities of the Russian armed forces], *działania bezprawne i agresywne* [illegal and aggressive acts], *narusza suwerenność i integralność terytorialną Ukrainy* [violate the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine].



However, it should be noted that the image of Russia as a partner and the echoes of nostalgia for old-time, good neighborly relations is also mirrored in the texts: nouns *dialog* [dialogue], *rozumienie* [understanding], *zbliżenie* [rapprochement], adjectives *wspólny* [joint], *wzajemny* [mutual]: *w swoim dialogu z Rosją* [in its dialogue with Russia], *wspólne polsko-rosyjskie wyprawy* [Polish-Russian joint expeditions], *wzajemne zrozumienie i zbliżenie młodych Polaków i Rosjan* [understanding and rapprochement of young Poles and Russians]. It is highly important to emphasize that the Poles hope to repair old good ties with Russia: *liczymy na dobrą wolę strony rosyjskiej* [count on the goodwill of the Russian party], *zwrócili ponadto uwagę na potrzebę pogłębiania relacji z naszymi południowymi i wschodnimi sąsiadami* [they also drew their attention to the need to deepen relations with our southern and eastern neighbors].

The semantic dominant ‘**aggression**’ remains as the key one in the texts of 2017-2018. It is implemented through the use of nouns with negative coloring: *zagrożenie* [threat], *propaganda* [propaganda], *dezinformacja* [misinformation]. The following units appear frequently, too: adjectives *hybrydowy* [hybrid], *jednostronny* [unilateral], participles *nasilający się* [ever-increasing]: *zagrożenia hybrydowe ze strony Rosji* [hybrid threats from the Russian party]; *w debacie na temat zjawiska rosyjskiej propagandy i działań hybrydowych* [in discussion about the phenomenon of Russian propaganda and hybrid actions]; *Rosja stanowi poważne zagrożenie dla bezpieczeństwa* [Russia poses a serious security threat]. Russia no longer appears as a partner, nor a good neighbor in the statements. It is no longer even an opponent. Russia is an adversary, an enemy. Military vocabulary prevails in the texts of the official statements made by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. A dialogue, a cooperation, bilateral relations have been replaced by decisive protests, unilateral actions, condemnation: *wyrażamy zdecydowany sprzeciw wobec działań Rosji w stosunku do Ukrainy* [we express our strong protest at the actions of Russia against Ukraine].

This transformation is being comprehended, talked about, but the blame is fastened upon the Russian party: *dialog polityczny między naszymi krajami napotyka trudności z powodu jednostronnej aktywności strony rosyjskiej* [the political dialogue between our countries is complicated due to the unilateral activity of the Russian party].

A bright metaphor of a game is used to characterize Russia: Russia is an actor, a modern actor, a hybrid one.

(8) *Bez wątpienia Rosja należy do najbardziej zaawansowanych aktorów hybrydowych. Od czasu rosyjskiej agresji na Ukrainie obserwujemy dramatyczny wzrost dezinformacji i działań propagandowych sterowanych z Moskwy*

([http://www.msz.gov.pl/pl/p/msz\\_pl/aktualnosci/wiadomosci/wiceminister\\_marek\\_magierowski\\_na\\_konferencji\\_o\\_przeciwdzialaniu\\_zagrozeniom\\_hybrydowym](http://www.msz.gov.pl/pl/p/msz_pl/aktualnosci/wiadomosci/wiceminister_marek_magierowski_na_konferencji_o_przeciwdzialaniu_zagrozeniom_hybrydowym)).

Nevertheless, it must be highlighted that Russia is still an attractive partner for Poland, primarily in economic terms: *Rosja jest jednym z potencjalnie najbogatszych krajów na świecie* [Russia is potentially one of the richest countries in the world]. That is exactly the reason why we can observe Poland’s readiness for a dialogue and constructive cooperation with Russia which is seen as the only way out of the current situation called and understood as a deadlock in the statements: *jestemy otwarci na konstruktywną współpracę i podejmujemy działania na rzecz przełamania impasu* [we are open for constructive cooperation and working hard to break the deadlock].

Modern texts of the official statements abound with the vocabulary of the semantic field *współprac* [collaboration]: *wspólne spotkanie* [joint meeting], *w dialogu z Rosją* [in a dialogue with Russia], *współpracy dwustronnej* [bilateral cooperation], *podstawa wzajemnego zaufania i dialogu* [basis for mutual trust and the dialogue], *otwartość Warszawy* [openness of Warsaw], *gotowość współpracy* [willingness to cooperate], *normalizację stosunków* [normalization of relations], etc. It cannot be said yet that ‘collaboration’ is the dominant feature of these statements. It would be more correct to introduce a new semantic dominant and designate it as ‘*nadezhda*’ [hope]: *strona polska wyraziła nadzieję na poparcie strony rosyjskiej* [the Polish party expressed its hope for the support of the Russian party]; *możliwość ewentualnej współpracy Polski i Rosji* [possible collaboration between Poland and Russia], *pozytywne sygnały w relacjach dwustronnych* [positive signals in bilateral relations], etc.

Russia remains Poland’s neighboring country. It is necessary to build relations with it:

(9) *Rosja i Polska są sąsiadami i merytoryczny, przełamujący stereotypy dialog leży w naszym wspólnym interesie* ([http://www.ms.gov.pl/pl/p/msz\\_pl/aktualnosci/wiadomosci/wznowienie\\_dzialalnosci\\_polsko\\_rosyjskiej\\_grupy\\_ds\\_trudnych](http://www.ms.gov.pl/pl/p/msz_pl/aktualnosci/wiadomosci/wznowienie_dzialalnosci_polsko_rosyjskiej_grupy_ds_trudnych))

In addition, more and more positive nominations appear in the texts of 2017-2018: *rosyjski sąsiad* [Russian neighbor], *goście z Rosji* [guests from Russia], etc.

Thus, we can observe the image of Russia in the official statements of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland as follows. In 2010-2012 Russians are shown as responsive people who are aware of other people’s grief and act at the behest of their heart. Russia is a neighbor that friendly relationships are established with. In 2014 Russia turns from a partner into an invader, an aggressor, a country that may bring danger. Nonetheless, the Poles hope to repair old good ties with Russia. In 2017-2018, despite the aggressive behavior of Russia, it is still perceived as an attractive partner for Poland, primarily in economic terms. Russia remains Poland’s neighboring country. It is necessary to build relations with it.

#### 4. Conclusions

1. The study of political discourse as one of the most frequent subjects of modern linguistics is multi-vector. More and more often scientists turn to study linguistic ways of representing a fragment of reality with aim to form public opinion, including the image of the country. From this point of view, the method of semantic dominants of the text is of a certain interest. It is one of the methods of critical analysis, which, on the one hand, in combination with other methods help recreate an image that is being developed for some media landscape, and, on the other hand, reveal the deep intention of the subject of political speech.

2. The analysis of Russian-language texts made in 2010-2018 enabled us to separate out the following dominants: ‘*sotrudnichestvo*’ [cooperation] (in the texts relating to 2010-2013), and ‘*razrusheniye*’ [destruction] (since 2014). The impact on the Russian electorate is enhanced by the key political metaphor ‘*vojna*’ [war] and the particular metaphor ‘*bolezn*’ [disease]. What is more, they characterize not the Poles as fraternal people, ‘*svoy*’ [us], but the power as an unfriendly opponent of Russia, ‘*chuzhoj*’ [them]. The study of the Polish texts has led to the following conclusions: the period from 2010 to 2013 is characterized by the same semantic dominant ‘*sotrudnichestvo*’ [cooperation] as in the Russian-language

texts of the correspondent period. However, since 2014 we observe the following prevailing dominants: 'agressiya' [aggression] and 'vojna' [war]. Thus, the image of a country in political discourse can be transformed under the influence of the general socio-political context.

3. Official statements of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs create the image of Poland that shapes the opinion of Russians on this country and its people. Poland, the Poles are neither an image of an enemy, nor a political opponent; but not a partner either; the Poles are close kindred people who are deliberately 'razluchayut' [separated] from the Russians. This break in their relationship is similar to a disease. We can observe the following transformation in the official statements of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Poland: since 2014 the positive image of Russia as a neighbor with whom friendly relations have been established is replaced by a negative one: Russia turns from a partner into an invader, an aggressor, a country that may bring danger. However, since 2017, a neutral assessment prevails in texts, because Russia is still a neighbor who it is necessary to build good relations with.

4. The images of Poland and Russia in texts of the official statements of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs have an interesting linguistic implementation. Statements that function within the framework of a diplomatic discourse retain the features of an official business style at the grammatical level. However, their communicative goal – an impact on the public, formation of a special attitude, a certain opinion on what is happening – underlies that official statements of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs belong to a political discourse which finds its reflection at the lexical level. Lack of evaluation evolves into a strong positive or negative attitude; the neutrality transforms into black-and-white thinking. These and other features serve the main task which is the creation of special axiological and cognitive limits in the mass consciousness both within the country and abroad.

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