

The advantages of applying the concept of rhetorical style in language-oriented Journalism Studies

KATARZYNA MOLEK-KOZAKOWSKA
(Opole)

1. Introduction: The scope of contemporary Journalism Studies

Within the Anglo-American domain of social sciences, Journalism Studies is a discipline that encompasses a broad field of scholarship related to information production, distribution, and consumption and its effects on individuals and societies (Hoynes and Croteau 2002). The importance of research in this discipline was endorsed by the perception of news reporting and other forms of journalism as an indispensable aspect of a democratic state and a free society (cf. McQuail 2013). With the development of electronic media technologies – first radio and television broadcasting, then cable and satellite transmission and the world wide web – and the subsequent changes in the patterns of news consumption, Journalism Studies scholars have had to expand and diversify their theoretical models and methodological toolkits for analyses of ever broader collection of products of journalism, many of them outside “established” media institutions (McChesney and Nichols 2011). In addition, with the “linguistic” turn in the social sciences, Journalism Studies scholarship has also opened to insights from linguistics, discourse analysis, rhetoric and stylistics.

Since the advent of electronic media, both journalism scholars and linguists interested in the stylistic variability of public discourses have attended to the evolution of journalistic discourse. For example, both groups of researchers

noted the growing simplification, conversationalization or sensationalization of news coverage (cf. McManus 1994 from journalism perspective; Fairclough 1995; or Bednarek and Caple 2012 from discourse perspective). New technologies and new professional practices, such as blogging, social media and news customization, have had a considerable impact on the erstwhile paragon of journalism – the quality press, which has needed to re-invent itself in the competitive media market (Jones and Salter 2012). To do so, even established mainstream news outlets have set up their online versions in order to attract audiences. On their websites they do not hesitate to publish (still) unverified news, simplify or personalize stories, seek controversial imagery or construct sensationalist headlines (Conboy 2002; Allan 2004). This rapid technological, corporate and institutional transition has framed the larger context which the contemporary Journalism Studies has recently had to confront and opened the way for language-oriented studies of the media.

In this vein, the aspect explored in this article is the evolution of stylistic conventions in journalism that results from the transformations described above. The stylistic perspective can complement the social studies perspective (usually concentrated on the content/effects of news and journalistic texts) by attending to *how* information is expressed, not only to *what* is expressed. On the one hand, comparing how news is expressed is instrumental to monitoring the actual effects it has on the audience; on the other hand, due to a growing competition on the news market, it can reveal how news media outlets strategically resort to various ploys in order to maximize the appeal to audiences. Therefore, this paper might be of some interest to anyone following the dimensions of recent transformations within the stylistic layer of contemporary journalism.

This article, however, is not analytic, but argumentative. It offers a reflection on the methodological tools and analytic categories that linguists who study media texts could resort to. It also offers an argument for the utility of insights derived from rhetoric and stylistics and the retrospective review of the merits they could offer for language-oriented studies of journalistic practices¹. Specifically, this paper aims to highlight the applicability of the category of

¹ It is considered beyond the scope of this article to review and revisit a large body of earlier studies on journalistic practices and journalistic rhetoric, some by renown Polish scholars such as Walery Pisarek, Jerzy Bralczyk, Katarzyna Mosiołek-Kłosińska, Irena Kamińska-Szmaj, Jacek Wasilewski, Olgierd Annusiewicz, Maciej Mrozowski, Grażyna Hebrajska, Stanisław Dubisz, Marek Czyżewski, Bogusława Dobek-Ostrowska, Małgorzata Lisowska-Magdziarz, Małgorzata Marcjanik, Grażyna Ulicka to name just a few.

rhetorical style in order to show how attending to strategic linguistic choices (rhetoric) and to the recurrent patterns marking a communicator's distinct manner of expression (stylistics) could be of use to journalism scholars to complement their content analysis. I claim that the journalistic notion of tabloidization, for example, would not be an analytically useful concept, if it were not operationalized in terms of the changing rhetorical features of news texts.

As this volume is devoted to how Polish stylisticians, some from my *alma mater* i.e. Opole University, have contributed to methodological and critical studies of mediated texts (cf. Gajda 2000), this article constitutes a theoretical coda to a line of studies I conducted on journalistic rhetoric (Molek-Kozakowska 2010; 2012; 2013a; 2013b; 2014a; 2014b). In these studies several stylistic varieties have been delimited and characterized while the category of *rhetorical style* has been productively applied in case-study analyses to shortlist linguistic devices used strategically in order to attract readers (e.g., to political issues, to a specific outlet, or to a given article). Journalism scholars would contend that rhetorical styles are pre-defined by institutional contexts, news genres and communicative objectives, but linguists would claim there still is a plethora of textual choices that are being made to engage audiences. When looked at systematically, such choices cumulatively build a specific rhetoric that characterizes a given news producer/mediator in terms of their dominating strategies for textualization of social reality. Obviously, a typology of all rhetorical styles in all types of journalistic discourse is not viable, given the flexible nature of journalistic practices (Richardson 2007; Jones and Salter 2012). Nevertheless, the article aims to demonstrate how a relatively delimited category of rhetorical style can be productively used for various comparative analyses of news discourse in order to trace recent stylistic developments more comprehensively.

2. “Constructing reality” in journalistic discourse: Theoretical frameworks

According to the functionalist orientation in linguistics (cf. Halliday 1978), language is a socio-semiotic system, since its signifying resources are not unlimited but constrained by social requirements and preferences. As any type

of discourse, journalistic discourse is multifunctional: it provides us with specific propositions, or ideas about reality (ideational metafunction); it projects specific relations between discourse participants (interpersonal metafunction); and it uses specific *linguistic resources* to embed them in *a coherent and plausible textuality* (textual metafunction) (Halliday 1985). Therefore, for analytic reasons, journalistic texts, which are verbal products of discursive practices, can be described as sets of linguistic *options* whose combinations result in producing specific representations of the world. This functionalist theory of language enables us to abstract a broad definition of style as a motivated set or cluster of linguistic options selected from the repertoire of resources of the language system by a communicator.

When looking at textualities from the opposite angle – that of reception rather than production – we can infer that when journalistic texts are processed by readers, specific mental representations of the world may arise as a result of picking up certain linguistic cues. Following the tenets of text-world theory (Werth 1999), systematic stylistic choices, concerning such linguistic aspects as reference, predication, modality or presupposition for example, tend to generate, and then modify or reinforce, a particular representation of reality. In literary works, for example, fictional text-worlds may be indulged in for pleasure; however, what is of particular significance here is how such text-worlds come into being in public texts that are not fictional, but which, on the contrary, aspire to mediate social reality.

Indeed, this question has been partly addressed by critical discourse analysis (CDA), a discipline of language-oriented studies devoted to tracing and interrogating the textual reproduction of naturalized ideological meanings and unequal power relations in the public domain (Fairclough 1989; 1995; van Dijk 1988; Montgomery 2007; Richardson 2007; Bednarek and Caple 2012). For example, with respect to current studies on print media, Richardson (2007: 76) observes that news organizations “select and organize the possible statements on a given subject” in order to make a news item out of an event, according to the meanings and values inherent in these institutions. The arrival of the blogosphere and alternative citizen journalism did not fundamentally change the profit motive of news industry (Jones and Salter 2012), despite the fact that they changed the patterns of public participation (King 2010). Text-world theory and CDA’s theoretical underpinnings enable us to claim that reality can be constructed, not only reflected, in journalistic texts.

Journalism scholars are aware of this and are also concerned with agenda-setting and newsworthiness, which is the selection criteria underpinning the choice of topics covered in the news (Harcup and O'Neill 2002). However, instead of focusing on content, they should also be concerned with the changing patterns of “the form, the organization, the presentation and the consumption of news at textual and intertextual levels” (Richardson 2007: 76). Those changing patterns indicate a gradual departure from “journalistic ethos” understood as “transmission of information” that can be used by “rational and responsible” citizens to engage in “informed judgments” indispensable in a democracy (McQuail 2013: 5-11). Nowadays, and in accordance with the tenets of market-driven journalism (McManus 1994), each press outlet aims to impress on the readers that its mediated construction of reality (text-world) can best satisfy their intellectual, social and emotional needs. This is where we can link the above theoretical framework to rhetoric: by deploying a strategically designed style of reporting communicators cater to their own political and commercial interests. This strategic design, or rhetoric, not only the content and agenda of journalism, deserves a closer critical study.

3. Style and rhetoric: From theoretical constructs to analytic categories

The notion of style, which conjoins formal and functional aspects of texts, is still contested and sometimes subsumed under the category of discourse. For example, within communication studies, semiotics, pragmatics, linguistics and discourse studies, the concept of style has been variously delimited, characterized and even labeled. *Style* has been conceptualized, for example, in terms of activity type (Levinson 1979), voice, genre and mode (Bakhtin 1986), communicative style (Selting 1999), conversational style (Tannen 2004), language style (Machin and van Leeuwen 2005), sociolinguistic style (Couland 2007), or rhetorical style (Fairclough 1995; 2000). Nevertheless, it is generally agreed that styles can be applied to signify meanings, project identities and express values verbally, hence Machin and van Leeuwen (2005: 587) see them as tools indicating group ideologies and lifestyles. For some researchers language styles tend to be heterogeneous categories – “composites of connotations” – that express specific identities and values, and may well be

deliberately contrived (Fairclough 2000; Machin and van Leeuwen 2005). This is the understanding that matches the functionalist theoretical orientation that was outlined in the previous section.

As news discourse tends to be not only informative but also strategic, which is reflected in the purposeful pursuit of linguistic options that have the largest appeal to the public, it is the notion of *rhetorical style* that best encapsulates this property and thus will be considered as the most appropriate formulation in the context of journalism. It is not to say that a rhetorical style is a measure that can be simply applied as *tertium comparationis* in analyses of news discourse. As Selting (1999: 1-2) observes, “styles [are constructed] as dynamic, flexible and alter(n)able linguistic structures” which represent “meaningful choices made in order to achieve particular effects or to suggest particular interpretations.” What is more, “a rhetorical style is not an invariable way of using language, it is rather a mixture of different ways of using language, a distinctive repertoire” (Fairclough 2000: 96). Yet, those “mixtures” of linguistic devices are not combined out of random and incidental elements, since many stylistic features (e.g., registers, semantic macrostructures, syntactic patterns, lexical choices) are to some extent constrained by institutional contexts and prescribed by the texts’ generic requirements (van Dijk 1988).

Also, the linguistic resources selected for use in news texts that adopt specific rhetorical styles must be strategically *combined* in order to achieve specific effects in targeted receivers. For example, Machin and van Leeuwen (2005: 588-598) have attempted to delineate the linguistic style of a lifestyle magazine and correlate it with dominant representations of consumerist ideology the magazine promotes. They conclude that the magazine’s linguistic style is a strategically designed hybrid of advertising style and conversational style enriched with the style of the expert, the style of the fashion caption and the style of the street. To summarize, rhetorical styles will be strategic rather than normative properties of discourse that will be instantiated in particular text-context combinations.

Much literature devoted to rhetorical styles actually focuses on spoken or written political expression, which is considered as strategic and persuasive *per se* (e.g., Fahnestock 2011; Zdunkiewicz-Jedynak 2013, cf. chapter 10 on Polish political rhetorical styles). To illustrate this operationalization of rhetorical style, we could refer to Fairclough (2000), who analyzes the linguistic properties of Tony Blair’s style during his mediated campaign to reinvent

himself as the leader of the British “New” Labour at the turn of the twenty-first century. Drawing on the politician’s multiple mass-mediated public appearances, Fairclough (2000: 7) notices that Blair’s rhetorical style is marked with personalized and informalized expression (references to *I* and *we*), which bridges the gap between formal public discourse and private persona of the party leader. Another stylistic feature is the “rhetoric of denial of expectations” with statements on how things are not what they have been thought to be (Fairclough 2000: 10), as well as the “rhetoric of the third way” with attempts to bring two formerly incompatible ideas (e.g., social justice and economic dynamism) together only to make them seamlessly fit together. In contrast to the predecessors, New Labour has also used “positive” promotional language to list all the things that can and will be done by their government avoiding the metaphors of struggle and fight characteristic of the conservatives (Fairclough, 2000: 11-12). Fairclough criticizes New Labour’s rhetorical style for its manipulative potential, pointing to their strategic maneuvering of seeking “to achieve rhetorically what [they] cannot achieve (given the neo-liberal commitments) in reality” (2000: 15-16).

However, the argument in this article is that contemporary journalistic discourse (print, broadcast, online), far from being just informative, is also inherently strategic and persuasive in its aiming to construct such a version of reality that would appeal to broader publics and that would satisfy the media outlet’s own political and commercial interests. This is being done not only in column sections, blogs, advocacy journalism or current affairs programing, which present and bring together non-objective views and positions, but also in reporting. Even though in theory a distinction into news and commentary marks the objective from the subjective, in practice, all mediated information is a construction relative to the medium affordances, outlet’s market position, editorial line, newsworthiness of the event and, last but not least, the linguistic resources used to express that information. In this, the argument can be reformulated into a recommendation that Journalism Studies scholars could take notice of the stylisticians and rhetoricians work to perhaps abandon a rigid binary opposition between news and commentary and adopt a more nuanced gradation or continuum-based operationalization of strategic and persuasive construction of reality.

4. Applications of *rhetorical style* as an analytic category: Some personal examples

In order to operationalize the inquiry into the rhetoric of market-driven journalism, in my studies I have adapted the category of *rhetorical style* derived from functional theoretical orientation and critical discourse analysis. In this context, rhetorical styles are defined as clusters of linguistic devices used strategically in order to attract readers and make them accept a particular constructed vision of social reality that happens to suit the interests of the communicator. Therefore, the way to study journalistic discourse that is advocated here is to identify sets of specific linguistic options which tend to be persistently deployed across various news genres.

As illustrated above, stylistic analysis of mass-mediated public discourse can be devoted to systematizing the formal choices text producers make (e.g., linguistic resources for reference) and relating them to the assumed function (e.g., rhetorical persuasiveness) or actual effect they have on target readers (e.g., manipulation). Admittedly, some of these choices may represent highly conventionalized ways of expression that are characteristic of a given genre (e.g., lifestyle magazine) and institution (e.g., political party), and some may also result from the natural rules of the language; however, this “does not necessarily detract from their potency” in reproducing particular ideologically charged representations, as attested by critical stylisticians (Jeffries 2010: 9).

The analytic procedures applied in critical stylistic projects in English, according to Jeffries (2010), should be “conceptual” rather than “technical” in order to better approach the form-function mapping of stylistic choices. These include investigating such textual and linguistic aspects as naming and describing (through reference and qualification for example); representing actions/events/states (through verbal or nominal preferences or various syntagmatic choices); equating and contrasting (through establishing lexical or syntactic equivalence and opposition); exemplifying and enumerating (through the number, type and arrangement of specific elements in a clause); prioritizing (through word order manipulation); implying and assuming (through presuppositions and implicatures); negating and hypothesizing (through lexical items or grammatical structures such as particles, adverbials or modals); presenting others’ speech and thought, as well as representing the temporal and spatial setting of the discourse. This conceptual methodological framework adapted

from Jeffries (2010) seems to constitute an expandable and applicable toolkit for stylistic analysis with a rhetorical edge, which I applied in my studies of mediated texts.

Indeed, with this toolkit it has been possible for me to grasp and delimit specific rhetorical styles emerging from various samples of mass-mediated materials. In my work I was guided by Gajda's (2000) differentiation of stylistic scopes into: (1) a distinct style of a given textual sample, (2) an individual style of a producer/author, and (3) a typical style of a genre/text type. For example, I investigated the Internet-mediated debate that ensued the citizen-initiated gender parity proposal submitted in 2010 to the Polish Parliament (Molek-Kozakowska 2010). I confronted the style of the texts publicized by the main sponsor of the initiative, The Congress of Women on their website www.kongreskobiet.pl with the style of a sample of online advocacy articles (posted by a less formal but still authoritative anti-parity group), which have been made available on the website called, perhaps slightly misleadingly, www.parytety.pl. I compared the two rhetorical styles with respect to such categories as generic frames, means of addressing the reader and the use of rhetorical figures. Since the online materials were too diverse and mutually incompatible for the application of narrower stylistic analytic categories, such a concept as that of each communicator's rhetorical style turned to be well-suited to study the rhetorical potency and the ideological investments behind each advocacy's argumentation.

Taking press discourse in Britain as the subject of exploration, I conducted a comparative study of a quality newspaper's and a tabloid's rhetorical styles adopted to cover the issues of clerical child abuse (Molek-Kozakowska 2012). I did not only intend to bring the two types of press into sharper contrast, but also traced how quality print media are likely to attract consumers by the "tabloidizing" tenor of their news coverage. Hence, I examined the scope of strategic application of typically tabloid stylistic properties in quality news coverage. The study has also verified the applicability of the notion of rhetorical style as a method to trace tabloidization. Style has also been used as a principal analytic category in my study on political editorial lines, as represented by three different British dailies, *The Guardian*, *The Sun* and *The Daily Mail* (Molek-Kozakowska 2013b), where I managed to correlate linguistic rhetorical strategies with professional journalistic practices and editorial ideologies.

In my work on news headlines (Molek-Kozakowska 2013a; 2014a; 2014b) I have worked on a text type of journalistic discourse whose multi-functionality is almost unique. A dozen words of a headline not only need to summarize the content of the following article, but also create interest and reader's engagement, as well as frame the news issue in a way that is compatible with the editorial line. Thus, "headlines," as a rhetorical style that instantiates all these functions at the same time, tends to be a characteristic property of a given media outlet. Following Jeffries's approach (2010), I used various conceptual categories to delimit the pragma-linguistic properties of headlines drawing on a sample of online news headlines collected from the most popular online press outlet of that time – *Mail Online*. I demonstrated the prevalent patterns of narrativity, evaluation, metaphoricity and illocutionary force that accounted for the sensationalist style of *Mail Online*'s headlines and, in consequence, were responsible for appealing to such broad publics. In this work, stylistic analysis (not content analysis typical of media scholarship) is the basis for the critical analysis of sensationalism in journalistic discourse.

5. Conclusion

Theoretical and empirical studies briefly reviewed above show that in a pluralistic market-driven media world, various alternative visions of social reality are being constructed discursively. A rhetorical style is a combination of strategic linguistic choices, rhetorical and argumentative resources and discourse structures that was made in order to achieve particular effects in recipients or to suggest particular interpretations of information. The table below brings together some (by no means all) more specific aspects, some of them mentioned in this article, that in the course of a stylistic and rhetorical analysis could be monitored. The salience and pervasiveness of certain stylistic and rhetorical patterns in a given text yields the characterization of the text's rhetorical style.

Rhetorical styles are no longer exclusive to political and commercial domains, but can be applied to study journalism as well. This category can be used to map a strategic, albeit flexible and variable, combination of resources to maximize engagement (as in headlines), acceptance and loyalty (as in editorials and news reports), or persuasiveness (as in mediated public debates). In accordance with the core assumptions of stylistic analysis, applying the concept

The advantages of applying the concept of rhetorical style...

KATARZYNA MOLEK-KOZAKOWSKA

Conceptual categories	Technical categories		
	Linguistic resources	Rhetorical and argumentative resources	Discourse resources
<i>naming and describing</i>	denotation, connotation, modifiers, qualifiers	metaphor, metonymy, catachresis	means of addressing, inclusive/exclusive, formal/informal
<i>representing actions/ events/states</i>	predication, transitivity, passive/active voice	narrative, topoi	illocutionary force generic frames
<i>equating and contrasting</i>	synonymy, antonymy, parallel sentence structure, conjunction	simile, metaphor, antithesis, paradox, oxymoron	register, mode, tenor polarization
<i>exemplifying and enumerating</i>	hyponymy, categorization, linking	analogy, allusion, exemplum, a three-part-list, anaphora	listing generalizing/ particularizing
<i>prioritizing</i>	inversion, stress, marked vocabulary	hyperbole, litotes, emphasis repetition	semantic prosody collocation patterns
<i>implying and assuming</i>	presupposition, euphemism, factive verbs	irony, enthymeme, ellipsis	indirect speech acts, hedging
<i>negating and hypothesizing</i>	negation, modality, conditional/time clauses, negative prefixing	rhetorical question	negativity, ambiguity, vagueness
<i>presenting others' speech and thought</i>	(un) reported speech, attribution, evaluation	apostrophe, argumentation, refutation	intertextuality/quoting, stance aligning politeness
<i>representing the temporal and spatial setting</i>	adverbials, prepositional phrases, modifiers	locus, topos	deixis, proximization, factual data

of rhetorical style allows for searching for form-function patterning within the evolving frames of contemporary journalistic discourse in order to demystify its purported neutrality.

Discourse analysis of news texts is sometimes criticized by media researchers for its limitations in showing how journalism is underpinned by professional practices, and how news texts are actually consumed and interpreted by larger publics (Philo 2008). However, one could claim that Journalism Studies research focused on the production and content of news texts, without attending to the question of *how* information is represented and *which* linguistic resources are used to make ideological positions seem commonsensical, is equally limited. Stylistic analysis of broadly delimited journalistic texts (advocacy journalism, blogging and tweeting included) is a valid endeavor whose relevance can-

not be dismissed in the media-saturated public sphere of any democracy. New tools and categories for such analyses are needed to enrich the scope of inquiry, to trace the changes and developments in contemporary multi-media journalism and to offer a grounded critique of journalistic discourse that would be supported by a systematic analysis of linguistic patterning. The category of rhetorical style characterized here is believed to be one of such tools.

Literatura

- Allan S., 2004, *News culture*, Maidenhead.
- Bakhtin M., 1986, *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*, ed. C. Emerson, M. Holquist, trans. V. W. McGee, Austin.
- Bednarek M., Caple H., 2012, *News Discourse*, London.
- Conboy M., 2002, *The Press and Popular Culture*, London.
- Coupland N., 2007, *Style: Language Variation and Identity*, Cambridge.
- Fahnestock J., 2011, *Rhetorical Style*. Oxford.
- Fairclough N., 1989, *Language and Power*, Harlow.
- Fairclough N., 1995, *Media Discourse*, London.
- Fairclough N., 2000, *New Labour, New Language?*, London.
- Gajda S., 2000, Media – stylowy tygiel współczesnej polszczyzny, *Język w mediach masowych*, ed. J. Bralczyk, K. Mosiołek-Kłosińska, Warszawa.
- Halliday M. A. K., 1978, *Language as Social Semiotic*, London.
- Halliday M. A.K., 1985, *Introduction to Functional Grammar*, London.
- Harcup T., O'Neill D., 2002, What is news? Galtung and Ruge revisited, *Journalism Studies* 2(2), p. 261-280.
- Hoynes W., Croteau D., 2002, *Media/Society: Industries, Images, and Audiences*, London.
- Jeffries L., 2010, *Critical Stylistics: The Power of English*. Basingstoke.
- Jones J., Salter L., 2012, *Digital Journalism*. London.
- King E., 2010, *Free for All: The Internet's Transformation of Journalism*. Evanston.
- Levinson S., 1979, Activity types and language. *Linguistics* 17(5/6), p. 356-399.
- Machin D., van Leeuwen T., 2005, Language style and lifestyle: The case of a global magazine. *Media, Culture and Society* 27, p. 577-600.
- McChesney R., Nichols J., 2011, *The Death and Life of American Journalism*, New York.
- McManus J. H., 1994, *Market-driven Journalism*. Thousand Oaks.
- McQuail D., 2013, *Journalism and Society*, London: Sage.
- Molek-Kozakowska K., 2010, Rhetorical styles in Internet-mediated political discourse concerning Polish gender parity debate 2009/2010 *Stylistyka* 19, p. 145-159.

- Molek-Kozakowska K., 2012, Tracing tabloidization: A comparative analysis of rhetorical styles in quality and tabloid newspapers, *Exploring Language through Contrast*. ed. W. Skrzypczak, T. Fojt, S. Waciewicz, Newcastle, p. 236-250.
- Molek-Kozakowska K., 2013a, Towards a pragma-linguistic framework for the study of sensationalism in news headlines *Discourse & Communication* 7.2. p. 173-197.
- Molek-Kozakowska K., 2013b, Media rhetorics: A comparative analysis of three British press news outlets, *PASE Papers in Linguistics*, ed. M. Kleban, E. Willim. Kraków, p. 101-114.
- Molek-Kozakowska K., 2014a, Coercive metaphors in news headlines: A cognitive-pragmatic approach, *Brno Studies in English* 40.1, p. 149-173.
- Molek-Kozakowska K., 2014b, Too much trivia in the news? A critical discourse analysis of sensationalist headlines, *Poisoned Cornucopia: Excess, Intemperance and Overabundance across Cultures and Literatures*, ed. R. Wolny, S. Nicieja, Frankfurt/Main, p. 311-328.
- Montgomery M., 2007, *The Discourse of Broadcast News. A Linguistic Approach*. London.
- Philo G., 2008, News content studies, Media Group methods and discourse analysis: A comparison of approaches, *Media Studies: Key Issues and Debates*, ed. E. Deveureux, London, p. 101-133.
- Richardson J., 2007, *Analysing Newspapers*. Basingstoke.
- Selting M., 1999, Communicative style. *Handbook of pragmatics*, ed. J. Verschueren, J.-O. Ostman, J. Blommaert, Amsterdam, p. 1-33.
- Tannen D., 2004, *Conversational Style*. Oxford.
- Werth P., 1999, *Text Worlds: Representing Conceptual Space in Discourse*. London.
- Van Dijk T., 1988, *News as Discourse*, Hillsdale.
- Zdunkiewicz-Jedynak D., 2013, *Wykłady ze stylistyki*, Warszawa.

The advantages of applying the concept of rhetorical style in language-oriented Journalism Studies

This article begins with a delineation of the context of contemporary professional journalism, particularly its market-driven, technologically advanced and discursively diverse character. Journalism studies scholars trace media evolution with the aid of content analyses. On the other hand, linguists, including stylisticians, try to capture recent changes in media language with the use of qualitative methods, e.g., with categories derived from discourse analysis, which enable them to see how hegemonic discourses are (re)constructed in journalistic texts. This article elaborates on the category of *rhetorical style* and shows its applicability to the studies of various media “rhetorics.” Following a review of literature and of author’s own projects, the article

illustrates possible applications of and results of the analyses with the use of rhetorical style as a functional analytical category to delimit generic, register and stylistic variations of media discourse including its subgenres (e.g. headlines).

Keywords: *Journalism studies, rhetorical style, media discourse, methodology of stylistics.*