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## The discourse of television news programs as a means of influencing public opinion - an analysis based on the CDA

The aim of this study is to shed light on the problem concerning the media and society, i.e. the mechanism of influencing public opinion by the television news programmes. The analysis takes into account selected news programs taken from public (TVP1, TVP3) as well as commercial television (TVN). The study analyses discursive strategies used in these programmes including linguistic and visual means. The empirical research is of exploratory nature and the project is in progress.

It uses a multi-modal analyses which have developed within the frame of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) methodology. It explores the verbal as well as non-verbal elements in their mutual interaction and treats them as parallel semiotic systems which play a role in the creation of meaning – in this case the media coverage. The following categories of analysis were singled out: the way of presenting the news, the functioning of narrative realism (in terms of CDA) as a category of the perception of media messages, inter-discursiveness and re-contextualization, reciprocal relationship of language and image<sup>1</sup>. In CDA, the term inter-discursiveness means acquisition and use of the means employed in the discourse on one macro topic, in another discourse – of another macro topic (see below). Discourses and their themes, styles and genres within individual specimen of discourse are mixed, expand their scope in many areas and discourses beyond the boundaries of individual areas, cross, overlap and relate to one another<sup>2</sup>. Inter-discursiveness is formed by re-contextualization of categories and methods of one discipline in another discipline. Re-contextualization is understood in CDA as a kind of translation, transformation where re-contextualized categories are combined into a coherent whole with the existing categories and thus are transformed. In the methodology of the CDA

<sup>1</sup> A. Duszak, N. Fairclough, *Wstęp: Krytyczna analiza dyskursu – nowy obszar badawczy dla lingwistyki i nauk społecznych*, [in:] A. Duszak, N. Fairclough (ed.), *Krytyczna analiza dyskursu. Interdyscyplinarne podejście do komunikacji społecznej*, Kraków 2009, p. 7-29, L Chouliaraki, *W stronę analityki mediacji*, [in:] A. Duszak, N. Fairclough, *Krytyczna analiza dyskursu ...*, p. 305-342.

<sup>2</sup> R. Wodak, *Dyskurs populistyczny: retoryka wykluczenia a gatunki języka pisanego*, [in:] A. Duszak, N. Fairclough (ed.), *Krytyczna analiza dyskursu ...*, p. 185-199.

empirical research on the mechanisms of interpenetration of discourses, individual components of discourse analysis were singled out. They are: the *macro theme* (general) of discourse, which includes *many detailed sub-themes*; *text* – the material product of language activities, which represents a particular *type of speech (a semiotic type)*, i.e. a socially sanctioned way to use the language associated with a particular kind of social action (Fairclough 1995, 14), *area of social action* – a specific slice of social reality which is the reference for the given discourse, aimed at targets of the discursive activities. It is obvious that in the television news programs the macro themes are various content materials about important current events and developments in different spheres of life and social activities, national and international. The various events and phenomena are the subthemes. The socially sanctioned use of language (and of other semantic systems) is here consistent with the objective relation of the actual course of events and phenomena in the nature of media ethics. It is here that one can talk about the discourse of television news programs.

Such methodology is used to implement one of the basic assumptions of CDA research paradigm, that is, penetration. Penetration focuses on how a group with influence and capital, generally understood as the sender, uses language, image and sound, (components of discursive strategies) to influence the TV viewers' opinions. A specific study is devoted to the role of entertainment and persuasion in the discourse of television news programs.

Studies on the use of persuasive strategies in news programs have not been yet carried out in Poland on a larger scale. Such strategies are used in a variety of persuasive texts, which are exemplified by advertising. Studies on the elements of entertainment in television news programs (e.g. *dailies, news, facts*, and others) have been carried out in the world for a long time. They were pioneered by Neil Postman, American television researcher of mainly commercial TV, who, in the mid-eighties, wrote, "Entertainment is over-ideology of all television discourse."<sup>3</sup> Postman argues that it is not the increase of the number of entertainment programs on television that is dangerous, but introducing entertainment category into news programs.

Research on television programs is also conducted in Poland. A study of public television programs in the years 1995-2009 showed that the number of entertainment programs on TV1 and TV3 channels increased steadily<sup>4</sup>. As the researchers say, the increase was, and is, attracting attention and increasing TV audience, which translates into profits. Many articles discuss the news-entertainment which is present in the newspapers, word plays that appear in the

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<sup>3</sup> N. Postman, *Zabawić się na śmierć (Amusing Ourselves to Death)*, trans. L. Niedzielski, Warszawa 2002, p. 101-124.

<sup>4</sup> T. Mielczarek, *Misja – rozrywka – pieniądze. Kierunki ewolucji programu TVP S.A.*, „Media i Społeczeństwo” issue 1, p. 13-28.

titles of newspaper articles and in the language of the press in general<sup>5</sup>. Only few articles were devoted to news casting on television news programs<sup>6</sup>. This research focuses not on statistics but on the discursive strategies which appear in television news programs.

1. Presentation of the news on commercial television (TVN) begins with the so-called trailer, aired about 10 minutes before the start of the *Facts* (the news). While analyzing the manner in which this segment of the news is carried out, it must be emphasized that the speaker is usually smiling (except in exceptional circumstances), and is enthusiastic and full of energy. The information trailer is presented in the form of headlines (main titles), while in the foreground there are the topics in which one may easily use the entertainment discourse. As an example of this kind of discourse, we may use the trailer of TVN *Facts* of 9th of September 2011, which provided information about the extraordinary pace of recovery of Jarosław Wałęsa, after a road accident, as an almost miraculous event. The whole trailer ends with a call for viewing *Facts*, which is, essentially, a persuasive act, designed to 'sell' the news program. Discourse used in the program and continued in its remaining part, can be called the "entertainment discourse", which is a term we will be using in this paper. The discourse of entertainment consists of strategies resulting in positive mood, positive emotional states, such as the atmosphere of play which grows to a persuasive strategic category (category 'at ease'), media show (the media spectacle, cf. English word 'show'), sensational elements, and the interweaving of important news with not so serious pieces of information of neutral, cheerful or humorous nature. The following section of this paper presents examples of entertainment discourse analysis and its characteristics. The public television does not show such trailers of information programmes – only an overview of the daily information is shown immediately after the start of the program called *Wiadomości*.

2. Immediately after the start of news program broadcast by both TV and TVN, the set of messages for the day is presented as a flash news. Again, here the entertainment discourse is obligatory. The essential element of it is a specific way of presenting the material by the speaker, classified here as being 'at ease' (being cool) category. The programme presenter creates a cheerful, positive mood of relaxation regardless of the type of information provided. He or she is usually smiling and does not show negative emotions. The first pieces of information are less serious and minor in terms of the nature of the news programme. Most frequently they are presented alternately with more serious ones, which diminishes the importance of

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<sup>5</sup> See: W. Pisarek, *Poznać prasę po nagłówkach ! Nagłówek wypowiedzi prasowej w oświeceniu lingwistycznym*, Kraków 1967, W. Pisarek, *Retoryka dziennikarska*, Kraków 1975, L. Krawiec, *Komizm w nagłówkach prasowych*, „Poradnik Językowy” 1989, z. 9-10, M. Wojtak, *Rozrywka w prasie codziennej – wybrane aspekty*, [in :] J. Mazur, M. Rumińska (ed.), *Humor i karnawalizacja we współczesnej komunikacji językowej*, Lublin 2007, p. 39-49 and many others, see also footnote number 8.

<sup>6</sup> B. Maliszewski, *Felietonowość relacji dziennikarskich – przejawy funkcji atraktywnej w 'Faktach' TVN*, [in :] *Humor i karnawalizacja ...*, p. 69-81.

relevant information. For example the TVP1 programme on September 9, 2011 presented the information about the numbers of selected electoral lists of political parties with entertaining commentary on the beliefs in numerology and numeral symbolism of party leaders. Alteration of serious and entertaining news is well represented by an example of September 9 news in the TVN's *Facts*: the title of the first message after the start of the program concerned a proposal to amend the tax system as part of the PiS party election campaign, and that message was followed by entertaining news, namely the grazing of sheep at Błonie in Kraków. Another example is placing, on the 6th of September 2011, among the serious messages, information about a package containing a crocodile sent to the zoo. An important element of this part of the news programs are snapshots from reporter's movies scrolling quickly in the course of the news. These images decide about the spectacular character of the news and determine the nature of the news programme.

3. In the later part of the news programme, presentation of the main messages continues, usually with prominent use of discourse, which I call the discourse of entertainment. It should be noted that the use of entertainment discourse on television and in news programs is not a universal norm. It occurs with varying intensity on different days and times of the day.

In presenting the daily news TV stations use the following principle: the programme is presented by one person in the studio, sometimes there are two speakers (mostly in the commercial stations and some public television programs, such as TVP3). Almost all information is documented with reportage, in which the main role is played by the visual messages with words, usually a film, of a live broadcast from the place where the events take place.

Before we proceed to the analysis of the reports, let us look at how the messages are communicated from the studio. They have a theatrical form. As already mentioned, the program is presented from a studio by one person or two people, a man and a woman. In the latter case, the two people remain in eye contact with each other and alternately comment the visual reports of the events, giving the impression of a dialogue being carried out. Indeed, they often carry on the conversation between themselves, making comments and observations, mostly trivial or humorous, sometimes slightly ironic (see *Facts* on TVN or *Info-news After Hours* at 10 p.m. in TVP3). In order to create a positive mood, smile, attractive look, fashionable, festive attire and makeup is often presented by female speakers. These elements are sometimes in a considerable contrast with the messages themselves, such as a recent report from the liberation struggle of the opposition in Libya, in which sacrifice, blood, suffering or even dying are visible. Currently, the theatrical character of communication is intensified by the use of technological achievements which enable the producers to show interlocutor's image on the screens in almost natural size, which simulates 'face to face' contact during the talk.

In the studio, there are interviews conducted 'live' with guests – so called experts, hence authorities. Depending on the person who is interviewed, they may take the form of accurate, although brief and simplified analysis or hearted banter, full of polite remarks and often pseudo-analysis, as it is often the case in Info-news *After Hours* in TVP3. These commentators, regardless of the technique used to introduce them to the programme, make the communication not only more theatrical, but perform a persuasive function as their arguments are perceived as expert opinions. Here we find the application of one of the major persuasive topoi, so called topos of the certificates<sup>7</sup>, commonly used in advertising, by which the message is validated. Relaxed atmosphere and cheerful conduct regardless of the presented information, which the speaker deftly dispenses moving from topic to topic. All these theatrical techniques help to create media show in the studio. Its primal function is to make the information programme more attractive and thereby gain the viewer. This is one of its functions, which also needs to be identified as persuasive, and which was also realized in advertising, in its initial stage.

Entertainment discourse in news programmes also performs other persuasive functions, namely it reduces the distance between sender and receiver, which is also present in advertising. It manifests itself in a verbal layer of media coverage in two ways. First, by using everyday language, secondly by making use of rhetorical figures that appear in the statements of both television journalists in the studio and in the casting of news (e.g. the use of diaphore type: 'courts prefer to replace the social objectives with the prison objectives' - in a comment of TVP1 reporter). The latter clearly belong to the language of persuasion, and come, as we know, from the ancient rhetoric of Aristotle. In the terminology of linguists who analyze them, they are called language plays, often used in advertisements and in the press<sup>8</sup>.

To sum it up one can say that the entertainment discourse, as used in television news programmes, consists of the elements shown above: categories of cheerful and playful mood, media show, often using elements of theatricality and sensationalism, in which are embedded the persuasive measures, such as expert's opinion (topos of certificates) aimed at gaining favour of the audience, discursive strategy of alternating serious and unimportant pieces of news, everyday language mixed up with rhetorical figures of speech, linguistic devices such as word plays, other semiological measures, such as film visualisations. In advertising the final effect of the persuasive strategies is to persuade recipients to such the conduct, which the sender wishes. Such is also the purpose of entertaining discourse on television news

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<sup>7</sup> B. Maliszewski, *Felietonowość relacji dziennikarskich – przejawy funkcji atraktywnej w 'Faktach' TVN*, [w:] *Humor i karnawalizacja ...*, op.cit., p. 69-81.

<sup>8</sup> P.H. Lewiński, *Retoryka reklamy*, Wrocław 1999, p. 192-244. Literature about info-entertainment and so called language games is plentiful, I am mentioning only the most important: J. Bralczyk, *Język na sprzedaż*, Warszawa 1998, E. Jędrzejko, U. Żydek-Bednarczuk (ed.), *Gry w języku, literaturze i kulturze*, Warszawa 1997, J. Bralczyk, K. Mosiołek-Kłosińska (ed.), *Język w mediach, media w języku*, Warszawa 2000, T. Jagodziński, *Przekleństwo info-rozrywki*, „Znak” 2001, issue 561, and others, see also footnote 5.

programmes, because it involves persuading customers to watch the particular news programme. In other words, it boils down to selling a particular news program, which translates into profits. It is therefore a commercial purpose. It is not a sheer coincidence that the CNN slogan is 'Only on CNN', which is similar to slogans of many advertising campaigns.

4. Let us proceed to the analysis of reports, which form the documentary core of news programs. Coverage, or in fact a reporter, is called by a speaker in the studio to present his report on the topic. A characteristic feature of TV reports presented in the news programmes is the dominant role of a visual element, which creates the meaning of communication and can affect the reaction of the recipient, but always combined with the spoken word. The viewer hears the words of the reporter (though usually he does not see him/her), his/her verbal narrative, which can be, according to the methodological assumptions of CDA:

1. only description (narrative description)
2. it can manage and control the space-time of events, show their drama and tension, have the character of the story, sometimes with elements of sensation (the proper narrative),
3. can contain the sender's point of view, his suggestions and judgments, sometimes presupposed (the so called exposure)<sup>9</sup>.

Observation of the reports from the place of events presented in television news shows that verbal commentary has a two-fold character here:

- a / it organizes and controls the space-time of the events displayed, showing the drama and tension – therefore it has a character of a story, sometimes with sensational elements, and it is therefore an appropriate narrative and
- b / contains the sender's point of view, and his judgments, so it is an exposure<sup>10</sup>.

The point of view of the sender and their assessment of the events are directly articulated in two ways, sometimes occurring together. First, the reporter says it himself/herself at the end of the relation, giving a brief summary, in which s/he becomes the explicit commentator of events or broader phenomena, s/he becomes an expert revealing his/her preferences as to the existing options, which the receiver understands as the preferences of the entire TV station. This is one of those moments where the media can have a direct impact on consumers and public opinion. Often, reporters introduce at this point, the element of fun, word play, or a funny comment. Secondly, the point of view and evaluation of the reporter are then taken over by the speaker in the studio, who sometimes adds his/her own commentary. If entertaining elements occur in the report, they are often held up briefly by the speaker in the studio. And here we return to the issue of entertainment discourse in television news programs. The question arises how the discourse of entertainment affects the recipient and whether it is/it is not a means of manipulation.

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<sup>9</sup> L. Chouliaraki, *W stronę analityki mediacji...*, p. 305–342.

<sup>10</sup> It must be added that the description, in the narrative form, appears very rarely in reportages.

5. The entertainment discourse is to introduce a customer into a positive mood and positive emotional state. Both these terms are used by psychology, so they are of scientific nature. According to psychologists, mood is an affective state which is not very intensive and lasts over some time, whereas an emotional state is characterized by its intensity, in which positive emotions evoke positive evaluations<sup>11</sup>.

Psychologists say that the experience of positive emotions is for the recipient an indication that all is well and nothing should be changed [...], the situation is safe and it does not threaten us. This in turn relaxes our vigilance and lets our brain rest from precise thinking<sup>12</sup>.

D. Doliński presents the results of experimental studies conducted by American researchers on how the positive mood affects the assessment of the importance and relevance of the arguments presented by the sender about the advertised product. They show that the respondents are in a positive mood into which they were artificially introduced for the purpose of the experiment, the strength and relevance of the arguments were not examined, because they did not matter. It was not important what had been said but only how it had been said and who had said it (e.g. expert). This mode of analysing information has been nicknamed by the author of the studies as *the summary mode*. Other researchers call it the *preference mode* in relation to advertising. In contrast, respondents who were in the neutral mood analyzed arguments reflecting on their strength and accuracy. Furthermore, experiments have shown that the so-called reduced type of analysis of information is especially common when people in a good mood are given just little time to familiarize themselves with the information<sup>13</sup>. Needless to say the recipient of television news programs are exactly in such a situation. Being put in the good mood by entertaining discourse, bombarded with a multiplicity of diverse information, alternately serious and entertaining, a typical viewer is not able to recognise the strength and validity of arguments. S/He becomes more convinced that, despite the problems, the situation is safe and harmless, and his/her vigilance is lowered.

The conclusions of psychologists quoted here shed light on the function which entertaining discourse actually plays in television news programs. It is a persuasive media function, i.e., it aims at influencing the views and attitudes of receivers, the public opinion. The entertainment discourse and fun associated with it create a positive image of the sender, which is transferred to the information to create a specific vision of reality, one might say, the sender's version is easy to accept. Serious problems are diminished by the ludic elements mentioned above. This is one of the ways in which reality is created in media: *real* events become *media* events because they are presented from the sender's perspective.

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<sup>11</sup> D. Doliński, *Psychologiczne mechanizmy reklamy*, wyd. 2, Gdańsk 2010, p. 146 and next.

<sup>12</sup> D. Doliński, op. cit., p. 143 and next.

<sup>13</sup> Compare the description of experiments of Worth and Mackie in: D. Doliński, op. cit., p. 144-45

Reports and news coverage from the scene of event create a specific reality, which CDA scholars call *narrative realism*, which takes into account the possible attitudes and reactions of the audience<sup>14</sup>. Reception of the so called material, the report, is based mainly on visual perception of the truth 'as seen' and allows the viewer to see a distant event, which involves the distant others. L. Chouliaraki calls it a *perceptual realism*, a form of narrative realism produced during the presentation of television news programmes, hence the medium. The viewer is here only as a recipient of the facts. Whether the viewer will remain just a viewer or becomes more involved in the event depends largely on the type of presentation. There are different technological ways of visualizing the message, including the handling of the camera to psychologically engage the viewer into the reported event. Thus shooting the victims of natural disasters from afar does not engage the audience's emotions, whereas close-ups, where the victims look into the camera – stimulate the emotions, and sometimes the value system, forces the viewer to take a position.

The psychological engagement of the viewers produces approach which CDA calls *psychological realism*. It can take two forms, depending on whether emotions or attitudes of the recipient are involved. If viewer is engaged emotionally, it will produce the so-called *categorical realism*, or reality of feelings, whereas when the viewer is engaged mentally, it will create the *ideological realism*, which will draw on the views and beliefs of the recipient.<sup>15</sup> It should be added that all the above mentioned 'realisms' arise through mediation, in the process of creating messages through the media, so called media reality and its reception. It seems that in the creation of narrative realism, in particular the above-described psychological 'realisms' in perception of media messages, such as TV news programs, it is important to consider the impact of the phenomenon, which we called the entertainment discourse, on the degree of emotional and / or ideological involvement of the viewer or, in fact, to weakening of that commitment, and less realistic assessment of the presented reality. If we assume that the goal of the discourse in the entertainment news programs is to attract as many viewers to the program to generate profit, then another effect, qualitatively different due to the presence of discourse in the information and entertainment, is to change the vision of the world in the receiver, which is the media vision, because it is generated by the media for the use of the recipient.

Discursive strategies which facilitate the creation of media events and media vision of the world, the reality of media, are created, according to CDA, through inter-discursiveness and re-contextualization. In this case, the discourse of news programmes (macro theme: important current events and developments in different spheres of life and social activities, and similar international ones) are mixed up and intersected with the entertainment discourse, which includes, as said above, the

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<sup>14</sup> L. Chouliaraki, *W stronę analityki...*, p. 318.

<sup>15</sup> L. Chouliaraki, *op. cit.* s. 318-19.

categories of cheerful mood and play, media show and sensation. The entertainment discourse is transformed into a social discourse. The first one contains persuasive elements, occurring on the verbal and visual level. It has the power to influence the recipient to accept a vision of the world, which the broadcaster presents and which is suggested by the way texts and images are presented. It is a vision of the world taken less seriously, full of entertainment and sensational episodes that gain media coverage as important events, and sometimes take their place.

6. Let us now analyze the last category, which is the reciprocal relationship of image and language of reportage from the scene of events.

The relationship between the text and image can be represented with the use of CDA terminology:

1. iconic features when the image is representative of reality understood in an abstract way, when they recall in the mind of the viewer abstract concepts related to the realities of life, such as image of J. Kaczyński talking about taxes evokes an abstract concept of 'state organization',
2. symbolic features, also based on abstract associations that relate to the ideological dilemmas and comment on the presented phenomena, such as whether we are for or against something.<sup>16</sup>

Iconic relationships are based on proper narrative (event dramaturgy and tension, plot, sensation which stimulate the viewer's emotions), in this case categorical realism i.e., realism of feelings is involved, the image is representative of reality and evokes an abstract concept (such as tanks and carabinieri image evokes the concept of 'war').

Symbolic relationships are based on exposure (ethical judgments, views and suggestions of the sender), in such a case the ideological realism based on the beliefs and values of the receiver is involved, the image is a symbol of the problem, it stimulates the viewer to take a position consistent with his moral principles associated with moral dilemma: whether I am for or against?<sup>17</sup>

Analyses of television news programs allow us to specify the so-called *proper narrative* (story, building tension, sensation), associated with the exposure (i.e., expressing evaluation) as the most common form of verbal narrative accompanying imagery that runs at great pace on the screen. Accordingly, two types of relationship with the image, i.e., iconic and symbolic are related to them – both based on abstract associations, where the iconic relationship is based on associations with the concepts referring to real life, and symbolic relationship with the concepts concerning the ideological attitude. Both, the type of narrative and its relationship with the image have a strong emotional charge.

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<sup>16</sup> L. Chouliaraki, op. cit., p. 318-19.

<sup>17</sup> The third compound, called an index, is to establish connections with the picture and the word is always present in all media messages.

According to psychologists, high emotional arousal narrows attention and focuses on those stimuli that cause this stimulation (see description of experiments carried out, among others, by Eassterbrook (1959) and Pavelchak (1988) in the book by D. Doliński<sup>18</sup>). Therefore emotionally charged reception visible in TV reports results in neutralizing the recipient's criticism and weakening his objectivism.

Similar semiotic modes can be observed in surveys, news programmes and interviews carried out among the witnesses and participants of the event.

As the CDA analysis showed, the discourse of television news programmes can be an instrument of influencing the public opinion:

1. by introducing to entertainment discourse, thanks to inter-discursiveness and re-contextualization strategies that rely on mixing the discourse of news programs and entertainment, which contains a lot of persuasive elements, which enables co-creation of media events consistent with the intent of the sender and the desired reality; it can be achieved by especially by creating good mood, a “media show”, and playing with many verbal and visual elements. They create a vision of the world taken less seriously, full of entertainment and sensational episodes that gain media coverage for instead of the important events, and sometimes the foreground, taking their place. Listening to the news program, steeped in the entertainment discourse, the viewer experiences positive emotions, has the feeling that all is well, and the situation is safe. His/her mental activity and criticism are largely dormant, more conservative responses. Such a situation of receiving media discourse in fact increases the distance of the recipient to the real events that makes them more distant, due to many categories of persuasive zones that are indicated in the text.
2. by making the reception more emotional, especially the reception of reports presented on television, thanks to the appropriate module of verbal narratives relevant for generating certain narrative 'realisms' - categorical and ideological. These 'realisms' form, together with the categories of visual, respectively, the compounds of iconic or symbolic significance. The proper narrative and exposure used in the TV reports are the two modules of the narrative with the greatest potential to engage the audience's emotions, hence the public opinion. They are used respectively in establishing categorical realism, the reality of feelings and ideological realism, demanding the audience to relate to the presented vision of the event. Similarly, compounds of iconic and symbolic images of the text operate on the recipient's emotions through their symbolic dimension. The result is a weakening of criticism and objectivity and making the public less vigilant

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<sup>18</sup> D. Doliński, op. cit., p. 146 and next.

Although, as we said earlier, the primary purpose and function of the use of entertainment discourse in the news programs was and probably still is, to attract as many viewers into the program because it generates profits, the side effect of the presence of a different quality of discourse in the information programmes and is also the opportunity to shape the vision of 'less serious' media reality and thus to influence the public opinion. The question arises which I leave here without a response, whether we can limit both of these functions?

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Summary

The frame of methodological issues discussed is Critical Discourse Analysis, the carried-out multi-modal analysis takes into account such categories as the functioning of narrative realism, reciprocal relationship of language and image, and re-contextualization of inter-discursive mechanisms. The article discusses strategies of introducing a number of discursive means into television news programs. The author call these means the discourse of entertainment. In this discourse, as shown, are embedded persuasive strategies, similar to those found in advertisements. Entertainment media discourse in news programs is a carrier of a persuasive function and it influences public opinion allowing it to easily accept the 'less serious' reality created by media regardless of the fact that it aims to attract viewers.