

### **Beata Kacperska**

Department of Modern Polish Language  
University of Lodz  
e-mail: beatakacperska@o2.pl

### **Mateusz Markowski**

Department of Journalism and Modern Social Communication  
University of Lodz  
e-mail: mateuszdawidmarkowski@gmail.com

### **Maria Migodzińska**

Department of German Linguistics  
University of Lodz  
e-mail: maria.migodzinska@gmail.com

## **Language creativity of Polish, German and American politicians on Twitter during the 2018 election campaigns – selected issues**

Translated from Polish by Weronika Kacprzak & Anna Pardel  
Translation coordinated and supervised by Mikołaj Deckert

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.18778/0860-7435.29.08>

**Abstract:** This article focuses studying of examples of linguistic creativity in political discourse on Twitter, as well as showing the purpose of using linguistic tricks. Subject of analysis covers Twitter posts of two German, two American and two Polish politicians during election. Purpose of this collation is to show differences between creative role of tweets of people that are actively participating in political life in Poland, Germany and USA.

**Keywords:** linguistic creativity, language of politics, social media, Internet communication

### **Twitter – the medium of new times**

Eryk Mistewicz characterizes Twitter<sup>1</sup> as a post-television, post-radio and post-newspaper medium (2015, p. 7). In the last couple of years, a social media platform established in 2006 became extremely popular among politicians, journalists and even business people. Political scene activists and their advisors see a major promotional and propaganda potential in Twitter due to the ease of establishing relationships with the public, as well as the speed of short (280 words) tweets going viral, which are very easy to memorize. One of the advantages of this kind of communication is the possibility to show the “human” version of a public person. Thanks to that, the communicative distance between a politician and a potential voter decreases. Additionally, the more authentic the message is, the more sympathy goes to the author of those Tweets (and the election support increases) – this is the case that Anna Piwowarska noted. She also saw a rising cultural trend in creating a brand based on the authentic message (2015, pp. 13–15). One should keep in mind that every technological innovation must be understood first, and the speed of understanding “the language of tweets” is different for every politician. In the political world, there is an ongoing debate on the power of Twitter and how its creative and proper use impacts professional and electoral successes.

### **The concept of creativity and language creativity**

The considerations of the concept of language creativity in political discourse should begin by presenting theoretical assumptions for the concept of creativity itself. In this context, one should highlight that the meaning of this term is wide, and the word creativity can be seen both in everyday speech as in educational discourse, e.g. in the fields of psychology and pedagogics (Gawel, 2014, p. 45). The authors of *Wielki słownik języka polskiego PWN*<sup>2</sup> define creativity in a very general way as “the ability to create something new, original, something that can bring new solutions; resourcefulness” (Dubisz, (Ed.), 2018, p. 519). The interesting fact about the adjective creative is that it relates both to human, who is “able to create something new, original, resourceful and imaginative”, as well as to the concept which “purpose is to create, give the ability and ground for creating something new, original (i.e. a creative decision or creative company policy)” (p. 519).

---

<sup>1</sup> Making a word „Twitter” more Polish in writing is accepted only in informal speech and this is the case Tomasz Rychalski mentions in his article (2014).

<sup>2</sup> *The great dictionary of Polish language PWN*.

Julia Cameron defines creativity in a very interesting way in her textbook *Droga artysty. Jak wyzwolić w sobie twórcę*<sup>3</sup>. Cameron highlights that creativity is “our inherent right” as well as the greatness from God, which cannot be measured by the categories of our mind (Cameron, 2013, pp. 171, 258). According to Cameron, creativity is connected primarily with our spirituality and enthusiasm while our creative life is implanted not in the fantasy sphere but “in reality, in some respect, in something that is seen closely, profoundly observed or imagined in detail” (p. 117). On the other hand, Walter Isaacson sees this issue from a slightly different perspective. He says that the real bloom of creativity is connected with the ability to join the arts with science. Isaacson gives an example of Leonardo da Vinci, as a highly creative person, and adds that “Thanks to Leonardo, humankind can learn so much. The link between arts and empirical knowledge, engineering disciplines and humanities is still a valid way for creativity” (Isaacson, 2019, p. 35).

Coming to the phenomenon of language creativity, it is urgent to mention about Renata Grzegorzczkova’s definition (1995, pp. 13–15). She claims that *language creativity* can appear in twofold: as an objection to automatism (reproductiveness) or as a creation of the new things. Focusing on four possibilities to understand language creativity, R. Grzegorzczkova emphasises a great diversity of this phenomenon. For instance, she refers to Noam Chomsky’s generative model, according to which creativity, and thus the creative nature of a language, is an unlimited possibility of creating many new texts using a closed system of rules and words. Therefore, talking does not have a reproductive nature itself (like the case of declamation), but contributes to creating new constructions and texts. It is worth emphasizing that N. Chomsky distinguished two types of language creativity, that is *technical creativity* – the new texts creation, based on particular rules, and *operative creativity* – concerning breaking these rules (Grzegorzczkova, 1995, p. 14). In her considerations, R. Grzegorzczkova shows also a creative character of the performative dialogs (e.g. words (*I promise, apologize, thank [sb]*)), which influence directly on creation of new states of reality. The author also emphasizes the fact that every kind of language system creates its own terms and conceptual clusters, constituting a general language view of the world. In this context, language creativity means building a new reality. The last area of the creativity R. Grzegorzczkova mentions about, is a space where worlds are being created and set in different types of the texts, e.g. in literary or persuasive ones (pp. 15–17). Taking into account all of the written examples, it is possible to observe that the words *creativity* and *language creativity* can be understood in

---

<sup>3</sup> *Artist’s way. How to unleash your inner artist.*

a few different ways. The choice of the right definition depends on the context we are working on, and elements, which may be analyzed.

### **Methodological assumptions. The state of research**

The aim of this article is to analyze every expression of language creativity appearing in political discourse on Twitter and what is more to indicate the function of used forms. It must be highlighted that the phenomenon of creativity in contemporary language is usually described by the linguists, sociolinguists or cultural anthropologists. The issue was discussed by, e.g. Krystyna Pisarkowa (1978) and Renata Grzegorzczkova (1995). The innovative techniques for enriching lexis in political discourse based on the press was a research subject considered by Barbara Kudra (2001). Moreover, various creative forms, appearing in media communication were discussed in details in post-conference publications: *Kreatywność językowa w komunikowaniu (sie)*<sup>4</sup> (Burska & Cieśla (Eds.), 2014a), *Kreatywność językowa w przestrzeni medialnej*<sup>5</sup> (Burska & Cieśla (Eds.), 2014b) and *Kreatywność językowa w literaturze i mediach*<sup>6</sup> (Cieśla & Pietrzak (Eds.), 2017).

All research materials were collected for the article containing tweets of chosen Polish politicians: (Janusz Korwin-Mikke and Rafał Trzaskowski), German politicians (Alice Weidel and Christian Lindner) and American politicians (Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and Mike Braun<sup>7</sup>). What is important, the analyzed tweets were posted during the last month of a political campaign in those particular countries. In the case of Poland, the municipal election was chosen, in Germany – elections to the national parliaments of Bavaria and Hessen, in the USA – Congress elections.

The authors of this article asked two basic research questions:

1. In what way language creativity emerges in the political discourse on Twitter?
2. What are the differences in the creative role of tweets posted by Polish, German and American politicians?

Due to the character of the conducted research and the focus of the social media in the analysis of creativity, methodological assumptions were used on the social media platform, proposed by Paweł Nowak and Ryszard Tokarski (2007, p. 33). According to them, language creativity might appear in

---

<sup>4</sup> *Language creativity in communication.*

<sup>5</sup> *Language creativity in media space.*

<sup>6</sup> *Language creativity in literature and media.*

<sup>7</sup> All tweets used in this article come from official accounts of chosen politicians: @JkmMikke, @trzaskowski\_, @Alice\_Weidel, @c\_lindner, @Ocasio2018, @braun4indiana.

the mass media on four levels: when creating a vision of the world, creating a communicative situation, creating a cultural creation connected to the linguistic vision of the world and in the textual creation. It should be highlighted that all of the undertaken advances were taken into consideration on every linguistic level. The advances connected with the lexical and graphic level stand out the most. The authors also examined 'Twitter posts' paralinguistic types of vision, sound, film that very often accompany the verbal message. Apart from pointing out the politicians' linguistic mechanisms of creation, the emphasis is also put on the functions and aims of those advances.

### **The display of language creativity in Polish politicians' tweets**

In order to examine the creative function of Polish politicians' posts, the tweets of two candidates for president of Warsaw in 2018 were analyzed. They are: the representative of KWW Wolność<sup>8</sup> – **Janusz Korwin-Mikke**, and the other one representing Koalicja Obywatelska<sup>9</sup>, that is the electoral committee established by Platforma Obywatelska<sup>10</sup> and Nowoczesna<sup>11</sup> political party – **Rafał Trzaskowski**. The research was narrowed down to the last month of the political campaign (21 September – 21 October 2018).

Twitter is an online platform where users can express their subjective opinions and have a discussion on a given topic. It seems that one of the political leaders from KWW Wolność uses Twitter especially willingly. Due to the frequent depiction of an individual point of view, **the vision of the world is being created by him**, which can be diagnosed in the following examples:

- *Nie lubię p. Małgorzaty Gersdorf, mam krytyczny stosunek do kilku Jej orzeczeń i uzasadnień. Wolę jednak przeżyć jeszcze 2 lata z Nią jako I Prezeską SN niż skazać moje dzieci i wnuki na życie w państwie, które dowolnie manipuluje sędziami.* [25 IX]<sup>12</sup>;
- (...) *kto nie umie grać w szachy, nie może rządzić krajem!*<sup>13</sup> [2 X];

<sup>8</sup> Coalition for the Renewal of the Republic – Liberty and Hope (KORWiN)

<sup>9</sup> Civic Coalition

<sup>10</sup> Civic Platform

<sup>11</sup> Modern political party

<sup>12</sup> I don't like Mrs. Małgorzata Gersdorf, I have a critical attitude towards a few of Her judgments and justifications. I'd rather spend 2 more years with Her as the first President of the Supreme Court than to sentence my kids and grandkids to live in a country which voluntarily manipulates judges [All tweets have the original spelling. Examples are written in cursive, and the date of publication on Twitter is given in brackets].

<sup>13</sup> (...) the one who cannot play chess, cannot be the one to rule the country!

– *Polska nie jest „wasalem” Unii. Z chwila ratyfikacji Traktatu Lizbońskiego przez zdrajców z PiSu Polska stała się częścią składową UE. Nie jesteśmy już niepodległym państwem, prawo unijne ma pierwszeństwo. Patriotycznym obowiązkiem jest głosowanie na WOLNOŚĆ, a nie na zdrajców!*<sup>14</sup> [19 X].

Via Twitter, a politician can express his or her subjective views connected with the current political situation in Poland and in the world. Those posts usually lack meaningful argumentation of their views, and the positive or negative phenomenon values result from individual sympathy, antipathy or interests.

Another manifestation of creating a vision of the world by J. Korwin-Mikke is an attempt to discredit political opponents, what in tweets from the campaign period can be seen very often, e.g.:

– *Tow. Patryk Jaki: „Platforma Obywatelska pokazała, że oddawanie nieruchomości to dla niej żaden problem; jeżeli dalej będzie rządziła PO, Warszawa może stracić kolejne kamienice” <https://tiny.pl/gz7m8> Zapomniał dodać: „...do których dokładamy...” – a, nie: On nie, On z Opola...*<sup>15</sup> [10 X].

In this example, a politician quoted one of his opponents' speech in the election for Warsaw president, after that he directly commented on that, using irony. What is more, the name and surname of the cited words' author were preceded by a lexeme *towarzysz* [fellow], which is especially connected with communism, in the political sphere.

**The communicative situation is also created** in posts from Twitter, which can be seen through using direct forms to addressees such as *Kochani!*<sup>16</sup> [16 X] or short descriptions informing about a given situation, experienced by the author of those posts, such as *Za kwadrans jestem w radio PR24*<sup>17</sup> [12 X], *O godz. 20:30 będę na debacie kandydatów na prezydenta Warszawy*<sup>18</sup> (TVP Info/Polsat News/TVN 24) [12 X]. Communicative distance, between a sender (a politician) and a mass recipient (potential voters), decreases due to such

---

<sup>14</sup> Poland is not the “vassal” of the EU. From the moment of the ratification of the Treaty of Lisbon by the traitor from PiS (Law and Justice political party) Poland became a constituent of the EU. We are no longer an independent country, Union law comes first. A patriotic duty is to vote for WOLNOŚĆ (Hope) and not for the traitors!!

<sup>15</sup> Fellow Patryk Jaki: “Civic Platform showed that giving away the property is no big deal for them; if the CP keeps ruling in the country, Warsaw might lose another townhouses” <https://tiny.pl/gz7m8> He forgot to add: “...for which we all pay...” – and not: “Not him, he’s from Opole...”

<sup>16</sup> Loved ones!

<sup>17</sup> I’ll be on the PR24 radio in 15 minutes.

<sup>18</sup> I’ll be at the candidates’ debate at 8:30 pm.

procedures. Additionally, every similar activity builds the sense of unity, solidarity and the validity of transmitted information among Twitter users.

**Cultural creation** in J. Korwin-Mikke's Twitter posts might be only observed due to the fact that he uses a very general language, often with a lot of informal parts, it is usually easy to understand by most of the followers. More often, the **creation on the textual level** can be seen in KWW Wolność leader posts. In order to highlight an important fragment of a post or to give it an emotional value, he plays with the graphic form. One can differentiate forms such as distinguishing words by writing them in capitals, i.e. (...) *III RP już NIE jest suwerenem nad Polską; suwerenem jest Unia. Jest to OCZYWISTE (...)*<sup>19</sup> [19 X], sometimes in order to strengthen the meaning, he divides words into syllables via dash, i.e. *Spotkania we Wrześni i Koninie były KA-TA-STRO-FA*<sup>20</sup> [29 IX], or multiplying the exclamation marks – *A WCzc.Jarosław Kaczyński domaga się jej utworzenia!!!*<sup>21</sup> [19 X]. Those modifications have an expressive function. At times, the author of the analyzed tweets uses words, that by some of the recipients, can be seen as obscene; then he uses asterisks in order to show the euphemistic forms, i.e. *Kamil, chyba młody d\*\*\*krata (...)*<sup>22</sup> [26 IX]. Moreover, one can observe wordplay on the lexical level in J. Korwin-Mikke's posts. He also uses shortcuts very willingly, i.e. *śp. Lech Kaczyński*<sup>23</sup> [19 X], *p. Angela Merkel, p. Donalda Tuska*<sup>24</sup> [9 X], *wraz z kol. Jackiem Wilkiem*<sup>25</sup> [27 IX], *w proteście p-ko ścieżkom*<sup>26</sup> [24 IX], *b. trudny mecz*<sup>27</sup> [4 X]. Sometimes one can observe creative neologisms, like *Profesoresso*<sup>28</sup> [19 X].

Sometimes in J. Korwin-Mikke's short verbal messages, one can observe **sublingual means**, such as an image or a film. A candidate for president in Warsaw in the 2018 elections especially willingly posts his pictures and other politicians', which he then comments on in the posts. In the analyzed tweets one can distinguish also memes, video clips or links to articles. It is worth

---

<sup>19</sup> III Republic of Poland is NOT sovereign over Poland anymore; UE is sovereign. It is OBVIOUS (...)

<sup>20</sup> Meetings in Września and Konin were a CA-TA-STRO-PHY.

<sup>21</sup> And an Honorable J. Kaczyński insists on building it!!!

<sup>22</sup> Kamil, probably a young democrat. Here, the words *democrat* was replaced by another one, spelled in Polish with a mistake and with a swearword, that why asterisks.

<sup>23</sup> To the blessed memory of Lech Kaczyński.

<sup>24</sup> Mrs. Angela Merkel and Mr. Donald Tusk.

<sup>25</sup> With a friend Jacek Wilk.

<sup>26</sup> In a protest against trails.

<sup>27</sup> Very tough game.

<sup>28</sup> A neologism; professor.

noticing that in his messages we will not see any emojis, or forms very characteristic for that online communication, such as hashtags or references.

In Rafał Trzaskowski's tweets, one can observe that language creativity emerges on a little different level. Creating a vision of the world in Civic Coalition candidate's tweets is limited to making proposals and the so-called election promises, such as *Po 2019 r. będziemy w Warszawie inwestowali jedynie w transport niskoemisyjny, (...) Nie pozwolimy odebrać Warszawie żadnych z dwóch lotnisk*<sup>29</sup> [19 X]. Sometimes the author presents his own subjective views directly connected with the vision of him as a president of Warsaw. He also refers to his opponents or politicians from different groups, i.e.

– *Panie Jaki, panie Kwieciński – Waszym obowiązkiem jest praca dla mieszkańców – tak w rządzie, jak i w samorządzie. To nie jest „Wasz” rząd ani „nasz” samorząd. Nauczcie się w końcu, że Polska i Warszawa to nie jest Wasza prywatna własność*<sup>30</sup>. [10 X].

In the analyzed Twitter posts one can see that there are different procedures demonstrating **the creation of communicative situation**. The author of those tweets very often addresses recipients directly, meaning that the communicative distance between a politician and potential voters decreases, i.e. *Zobaczcie mój nowy spot. Jest o Was – o warszawiakach i warszawiankach. I o Warszawie dla wszystkich. Podajcie dalej*<sup>31</sup> [7 X]. What is worth highlighting is that R. Trzaskowski hardly ever quotes other politicians; it seems as if it is connected with a strategy his political group adopted in a political campaign. On his Twitter profile very often one can observe “titles” which at times have a form of notifications and they inform recipients about the location of him and of what he does at a given moment, i.e. *Briefing prasowy #Trzaskowski2018 #WarszawaDlaWszystkich*<sup>32</sup> [14 X], *W ramach #24hDlaWarszawy odwiedzamy budowę stacji metra M2 – Targówek #Trzaskowski2018*<sup>33</sup> [19 X]. Video clips presenting the current communicative situation are often placed below those posts.

---

<sup>29</sup> After 2019 we will invest only in low-carbon transport in Warsaw, (...) We will not allow to take any of two airports from Warsaw.

<sup>30</sup> Mr. Jaki, Mr. Kwieciński – it is your responsibility to work for the people – as in the Government and in self-government. It is neither “Your” government nor “our” self-government. It is high time you learned that Poland and Warsaw are not your private property.

<sup>31</sup> Check out my new spot. It is about you – about Warsaw inhabitants. And about Warsaw for everyone. Please, share!

<sup>32</sup> Press Briefing #Trzaskowski2018 #WarsawForEveryone

<sup>33</sup> As a part of #24hforWarsaw we visit the building of M2 metro station – Targówek #Trzaskowski2018



Similar to J. Korwin-Mikke's tweets, in posts from R. Trzaskowski **cultural creation** is limited to the general language used by the author, which is easy to understand by the audience. It has to be said that the Polish language used there is very diligent. One can see that there are hardly ever lexemes characteristic for informal style, which distinguishes both of the authors very vividly. The differences can be seen also on the **level of text creation**. Civic Coalition candidate is definitely more creative than Coalition for the Renewal of the Republic – Liberty and Hope candidate when it comes to using signs characteristic for Twitter posts. R. Trzaskowski very often uses hashtags, which are directly connected with the political campaign, i.e. #Trzaskowski2018, #WarszawaDlaWszystkich<sup>34</sup>, #WygraliśmyWybory<sup>35</sup>, #IdziemyNaWybory<sup>36</sup>, #nwyborysamorządowe2018<sup>37</sup>. What is interesting, at times it happens that those means of communication are a part of a sentence such as *Ostatni briefing przed #ciszęanyborczą*<sup>38</sup>. In the analyzed fragments, one can also observe mentions – (...) *na Kopcu Powstania Warszawskiego z @barbaraanowacka @SchetynadlaPO I @KLubnauer*<sup>39</sup> [19 X]. What is more, sometimes words are accompanied by emoticons, which not only show emotions (Grzenia, 2012, p. 138), but they also diversify the text and reduce the addressee-recipient distance. A politician from Civic Coalition does not apply creative procedures either on the graphic level, such as multiplying letters and punctuation and or on the lexical level.

Extralinguistic measures very often are seen together in verbal messages in R. Trzaskowski's tweets. In general, those are galleries rich with pictures, that were taken by a professional photographer and they present the candidate for president of Warsaw during the political campaign. Additionally, sometimes we can see live coverage in a video form, presenting a given situation with a politician, i.e. press conference.

Comparative studies of tweets from both of Polish politicians showed that R. Trzaskowski's posts are definitely more formal than J. Korwin-Mikke's. It is usually seen in the usage of punctuation as well as in other extralinguistic measures., especially in attached galleries. Short texts published online by the for the Renewal of the Republic – Liberty and Hope candidate are spontaneous and expressive; there are a lot of mistakes both in syntax and punctuation which means that the author did not read it before publication.

---

<sup>34</sup> #WarsawForEveryone

<sup>35</sup> #WeWonTheElections

<sup>36</sup> #LetsGoVote

<sup>37</sup> #municipalelections2018

<sup>38</sup> The last briefing before #electionsilence

<sup>39</sup> (...) on the Warsaw Uprising Hill with @barbaraanowacka @SchetynadlaPO and @KLubnauer

For this reason, tweets from J. Korwin-Mikke look like utterances from natural speech, i.e. small talk. Posts published on Civic Coalition candidate's profile are far more formal and official. One can observe an attempt to decrease the communicative distance between the addressee and recipient (especially with a help of direct messages to recipients), those posts are balanced, and what is more, they are on a less emotional level than J. Korwin-Mikke's posts. The posts on R. Trzaskowski Twitter profile are organized so well that the user has a feeling like his profile is run by his political PR group. This can be proved by the wise and thoughtful use of hashtags and references or attaching galleries with professional pictures.

### **Signs of linguistic creativity in German politicians' tweets**

The research material in this part of the analysis consists of tweets taken from activists who are a part of two different competing political parties in Germany. The authors decided to choose **Alice Weidel** – from the Eurosceptical and conservative party AfD (Alternative for German) and **Christian Lindner** – the head of the center-right liberal grouping FDP (Free Democratic Party). The choice of those is not random. Their engagement and roles in German politics have been highlighted: both of them are members of the Bundestag and actively work for their parties. This is also visible in social media. Both Weidel and Lindner are active in the webspace, providing one or several tweets a day.

The posts chosen for the analysis come from the period of the electoral campaign, which has been held before the National Parliament Election (de. *Landtag*) in the federal countries of Bavaria and Hessen. The primary reason behind choosing this campaign was that it took place between September and October 2018. Therefore the politicians' tweets covered the current political situation. Thus, the research covers the period from the 28<sup>th</sup> of September to the 28<sup>th</sup> of October in 2018.

Analyzing language creativity of Alice Weidel, according to the adopted methodology, it can be noticed that there is a strong tendency in her language **to create her own vision of the world**. The activist expresses it by e.g. using her subjective opinions as to the general views of the society: *Die Einschläge rücken näher, die Menschen fühlen sich immer unsicherer*<sup>40</sup> [29 IX]. It must be observed that these types of statements are not usually substantiated in any way and function as general slogans which provoke many users on Twitter to express their own opinions and to put their comments under the post. A different

---

<sup>40</sup> The attacks are becoming more frequent, the people are feeling more and more unsafe.

way for Weidel's tweets to create a worldview is to show people with opposite opinions in a negative light: *#Siemens-Chef #Kaeser ist ein Heuchler, wie er im Buche steht*<sup>41</sup> [18 X].

The AfD member's language creativity is also expressed when it comes to **generating communicative situations**. Among other things in her posts, she attempts to make a contact with other politicians by using apostrophes such as: *Hessen glaubt Ihnen kein Wort, Frau Merkel!*<sup>42</sup> [22 X]. These types of statements have an extremely radical character and are used to emphasize the meaning of a particular tweet as well as to attract more users to the text. Moreover, Weidel's tweets pose controversial rhetorical questions encouraging users to leave comments: *Warum war der Syrer trotz seines reichen Vorstrafenregisters überhaupt noch hier?*<sup>43</sup> [16 X].

We cannot fail to notice that in A. Weidel's language the elements of **cultural creation** are limited to word clusters and abbreviations, typical of the German language, e.g. GroKo – Große Koalition (the Grand Coalition). In turn, the rich area of creativity is extensively illustrated with operations dealing with the text itself. One idea is to supplement tweets with posters of the activist as well as a short summary, which often has the form of a rhetorical question or succinct slogan: *Fass ohne Boden: Deutschland soll weitere 15 Milliarden an die EU zahlen!*<sup>44</sup> [23 X]. Furthermore, A. Weidel plays with a wide range of graphical forms. One example may be her use of hashtags, stressing the most important issues in a particular text: *#Deutschland, #Brexit, #Fahrverbote*. Weidel in her tweets also utilizes graphical elements such as emoticons – which express her attitude towards the contents – or signs that are taking the place of some verbal elements (e.g. flags rather than the names of nations). Another interesting characteristic is found in her post titles, preceded and followed by three pluses: *+++Es ist Zeit für #Neuwahlen auf Bundesebene!+++*<sup>45</sup> [14 X]. They help to keep the content in order on the activist's account and provide information about a given post subject. Weidel also plays with lexical forms by using e.g. idiomatic expressions: *Ramelow soll vor der eigenen Türe kehren*<sup>46</sup> [2 X].

In an analogical way, linguistic creativity might be seen in Christian Lindner's tweets. Nevertheless, in-depth analysis uncovers certain differences between Weidel and Lindner. Similarly to her tweets, also in Ch. Lindner's

<sup>41</sup> The leader Siemens Kaeser is truly a hypocrite.

<sup>42</sup> Hesja does not believe in a single word you say, Mrs Merkel!

<sup>43</sup> Why was this Syrian with a rich criminal past/history in our country anyway?

<sup>44</sup> Bottomless pit: Germany should pay another 15 billion to the EU!

<sup>45</sup> It is time for the new elections on the federal level!

<sup>46</sup> Ramelow should mind his own business.

statements **elements of the self-worldview creation on the linguistic level** are noticeable. The FDP leader willingly expresses his, often radical, judgments about others politician, which easily draws users' attention and provoke discussions. This phenomenon can be seen in the text below:

– *Für die @cdu mag es vielleicht gut sein, einen neuen Chef/in an der Parteispitze zu haben. Für unser Land aber wäre es gut, wir hätten eine neue Regierungsspitze. #Merkel gibt das falsche Amt ab*<sup>47</sup> [29 X].

A wide variety of Ch. Lindner's linguistic creativity is determined by the forms of generated communicative situations. Just as in A. Weidel's posts, there are direct phrases given to the people mentioned in particular tweets: *Wissen Sie, was mir an Ihrer #Regierungserklärung am Besten gefallen hat, Frau #Merkel?*<sup>48</sup> [17 X] and rhetorical questions, which give the readers something to think about: *Wo bleibt der gesunde Menschenverstand?*<sup>49</sup> [7 X]. Another characteristic element for Ch. Lindner is quoting and commenting on posts of other politicians. The leader of FPD usually publishes that kind of expressions along with the quoted post and refers to their text directly. The curious example of this phenomenon shows his attitude to the current tax regulation in Germany: *...und trotzdem keine Möglichkeit, die Bürgerinnen und Bürger, die all das erarbeiten, angemessen zu entlasten? Was für ein Hohn*<sup>50</sup> [25 X]. CH. Lindner's comments are not always verbal oriented. In some cases, his activity is limited only to sharing the posts on Twitter and to providing it with an appropriate emoticon.

**The cultural creation** reveals itself in written posts of FDP's leader as similar as in A. Weidel's case. However, the differences are seen at the textual level. In contrast to an activist from AfD, he does not use extratextual signs, such as posters, and does not entitle his contents. In tweets made by Ch. Lindner, we may also recognize less paralinguistic elements, which characterize his approach to the meaning of the text. Likewise, Weidel, the leader of FDP, uses hashtags and credit lines: *#Migrationspolitik #Einwanderung, @GydeJ, @nicolabeerfdp*. As a new phenomenon appears signing tweets with author's initials: CL. In Lindner's language, there are also more idiomized and colloquial expressions than in AfD's activist: *#Bayern war für uns immer*

---

<sup>47</sup> The new male/female leader of the party is probably a good solution for CDU. Nevertheless, the best option for our country would be to have a male head of the board. Merkel is leaving the wrong post.

<sup>48</sup> Do you know what I liked the most in your exposé, Mrs Merkel?

<sup>49</sup> Where has the common sense gone?

<sup>50</sup> ...and despite that fact, there is no way to ease citizens, who is working for it so hard? That is ridiculous.

*schwieriges Pflaster*<sup>51</sup> [14 X]. An incredibly interesting tool of that kind is i.e. puns: *Man muss nicht selbst arm sein, um gegen Armut zu sein*<sup>52</sup> [21 X]. Such methods contribute to a friendly image of the politician and also allow for de-stressing the communication situation.

The given examples support the fact that Twitter is willingly used to express views and opinions in the political area in Germany. Despite the differences, which occur between tweets created by A. Weidel and Ch. Lindner, it is seen that posts made by both of them have a very orderly nature. They are also supplemented with the right graphic symbols and their authors moderately use linguistic games on the lexical level.

### Signs of linguistic creativity in American politicians' tweets

For the very first time, the American political scene felt the power of social media in 2016 during the presidential election. Then, *social media* played a main role, creating the most important elements of political campaign and, according to experts, it decided about Donald Trump's victory. Not only is it an easier way to make a relationship between politics and the society, the access to the wide range of information about candidates, but also the increasing number of controversial situations and huge popularity of *fake news* allowed to create a completely new and original style of communication with the society. The effectiveness of this style is caused by the increasing domination of social media in providing crucial information to people. The scientists from Stanford University claim that in 2016 about 62% of adult Americans were following the media releases mainly through the social media (Allcott & Gentzkow, 2017, p. 212).

Another important election in the USA took place in the second half of 2018. The election to the United States Congress, which consists of Senate (100 senators) and the United States House of Representatives (435 members), took place nearly in a half of Donald Trump's presidential term.

The first observed politician is a Democrat **Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez**, who candidated to the House of Representatives. In a period from the October 10<sup>th</sup>, 2018 to the November 10<sup>th</sup>, 2018, around 102 posts appeared on her Twitter account.

In the area of **worldview creation**, Ocasio-Cortez is not afraid of using radical theses. The Democrat's candidate realizes that her profile is read regu-

<sup>51</sup> Bavaria has always been a tough nut to crack for us.

<sup>52</sup> There is no need to be poor to be against poverty./ You do not have to be poor to be against poverty.

larly mainly by the supporters, so she does not have to remind them about her points of view. Those tweets appear and may contain i.e. very controversial comparison between white racists and terrorists:

– *White supremacists committed the largest share of domestic-extremist related killings in 2017. It's time to call these bombings + targeted mass shootings what they are: terrorist attacks* [27 X]

In the case of **generating communicative situations**, Ocasio-Cortez tries to build strong relationships with her supporters through encouraging them frequently to get involved in various social campaigns, which take place not only in New York City. Ocasio-Cortez also does her best to mobilize voters, who are not involved actively in the election:

– *One of the most impactful decisions a person can make is choosing to vote for the first time. If you vote this year and you've never voted before (or if you don't usually vote), you can change the game. New voters are how I won my primary. And it's how we can win Nov 6th* [23 X]

In the case of **the cultural creation** connected with a linguistic worldview, those tweets were chosen, where Ocasio-Cortez uses Spanish to highlight her Puerto Rican roots and her belongingness to the ethnic minority:

– *My mami and my very big Boricua family in Florida all voted early for @AndrewGillum! Nuyoricans: Call your fam and make sure they vote for Gillum TOMORROW. We must be PRESENTE at the polls nationwide. La isla is counting on us. Vaya y vote mañana, con orgullo* [5 XI]

When it comes to the text creation, it is vital to notice that Ocasio-Cortez uses a great number of pictograms – the so-called emoji (in the text the graphics were replaced by the text description):

– *Current status: dusting off my League account, which hasn't been touched since the campaign started :joy: :space\_invader: Bronze V, here we come* [14 X]

Ocasio-Cortez also turns to more traditional wordplay, such as e.g. the use of rhyme:

– *Housing is a right – fight, fight, fight!* [26 X]

Mike Braun is a Republican from the State of Indiana, who in 2018 was a candidate there to the United States Senate. In the period from the October 10<sup>th</sup> to November 10<sup>th</sup>, 122 Twitter posts appeared on his profile.

In the sphere of **worldview creation**, Braun very often uses clear-cut and controversial conceptualizations, like this “brazen armada” below. In his tweets, he is not afraid of proclaiming radical views on different topics:

– *The brazen armada barreling toward our border must be stopped. @SenDonnelly says he'll be tough on immigration, but where are the results? As Senator, I'll crack down on illegal immigration and work with President Trump to secure our border once & for all. #INSen #IBackBraun* [26 X]

In the sphere of **generating communicative situation**, Braun tries to build his image of a “simple American”, who achieved so much due to his hard work and who is like every other voter. He also mentions on Twitter about his father, who was a role model for him:

– *When I was a kid, my dad would take me to the factory to show me what hard work looks like – I never forgot that. Hoosiers deserve someone who sounds the same on the factory floor as he does on the Senate floor, and my dad would be proud to see me endorsed today by @IMA. #INSen* [18 X]

In the sphere of **the cultural creation** connected with linguistic worldview those tweets were marked, in which Mike Braun uses the specific term to name the Indiana residents – Hoosiers. This word will be completely abstract to the user if he does not know the cultural context. The State of Indiana received a nickname “The Hoosier State” over 150 years ago:

– *Met some great Hoosiers at Meredith Machinery on my Solutions Tour today: they're what makes America tick, & with President Trump's tax cuts – despite a no vote from the least effective Democrat Senator Donnelly – they can keep more of their own money, expand, & thrive.* [24 X]

In the **text creation** sphere, Mike Braun creates a very complicated metaphor, in which he names his counter candidate, Joe Donnelly, the Sleeping Joe and compares his statements to sweet waffles, which stick together when gathered in a pile. What Braun tries to say is that his counter candidate speaks more than he does and his declarations are usually inconsistent. According to Braun, because of Donnelly’s changeable views, he is now in a difficult political situation:

– *Hoosiers know Sleepin' Joe has the best waffles in Washington: that's how he got to be the least effective Democrat in the Senate. But his waffles on Justice Kavanaugh's nomination have really put him in a sticky situation.* [22 X]

Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and Mike Braun are politicians who can find themselves in Twitter’s reality and convince the electorate to their beliefs, what was confirmed by the election results. Generating communicative situations via posts was the most important thing for both of them and we can

assume that Twitter is the ideal medium for that kind of activity. Moreover, some of the differences between politicians can be seen, e.g. Mike Broun avoided emojis in his posts but on the other hand, that Republican was definitely more creative when using wordplay.

**Table 1.** The comparison of the linguistic creativity in tweets of Polish, German and American politicians during the election campaign in 2018

<b>The elements of linguistic creativity</b>	<b>Polish politicians</b>	<b>German politicians</b>	<b>American politicians</b>
<b>The worldview creation</b>	presentation of a subjective point of view (JKM) <sup>53</sup>	presentation of a subjective point of view (AW)	presentation of a subjective point of view and radical opinions
	discredit of the political opponents	discredit of the political opponents	discredit of the political opponents
	making electoral demands (RT)		making electoral demands
			support for the political allies (MB)
<b>The communicative situation creation</b>	expressions addressing the recipients directly	expressions addressing the recipients directly	expressions addressing the recipients directly
	the use of the plural		the use of the plural
	quoting and commenting on other politicians' statements	quoting and commenting on other politicians' statements (CL)	quoting and commenting on other politicians' statements
			quoting on one's constituents (MB)
	placing the descriptions informing about the communication situation, which sometimes can have the form of notifications		
		rhetorical questions	rhetorical questions (AOC)

<sup>53</sup> The abbreviations appearing in the table are the initials of the politicians, which indicate the fact that a given method occurred only in one of them. Their absence confirms the appearance of a specific feature in the language of both mentioned respondents.



<b>The elements of linguistic creativity</b>	<b>Polish politicians</b>	<b>German politicians</b>	<b>American politicians</b>
<b>The communicative situation creation – continued.</b>			building once image of the "ordinary man" (MB)
			encouraging voters to social activity (AOC)
<b>The cultural creation</b>	the use of general and understandable language	the use of general and understandable language	the use of general and understandable language
			the use of foreign language (AOC)
		the use of the vocabulary understandable only for a specific community	the use of the vocabulary understandable only for a specific community, e.g. Hoosiers (MB)
<b>The text creation</b>	a lot of exclamation marks (JKM)		
	the use of abbreviations (JKM)	the use of abbreviations	
	the use of hashtags and mentions (RT)	the use of hashtags and mentions (RT)	the use of hashtags and mentions
		colloquial vocabulary	colloquial vocabulary
		the use of idiomatic expressions	the use of idiomatic expressions
		entitling tweets (AW)	
		adding slogans summarizing tweets (AW)	
		signing tweets (CL)	
		the use of wordplay (CL)	the use of wordplay
			the creation of complicated metaphors (MB)
			the use of rhyming

Source: own work

## Conclusions

Twitter and its appropriate use can be a crucial tool for a politician during the election campaign. This medium determines the communication situation oriented in dialogue. Therefore, it allows for interaction with recipients; the free exchange of thoughts and reduces communication distance. Politicians are not afraid of showing their controversial views on Twitter because they attract users' attention. What is more, they are quoted more often and it is much more difficult to criticize them than in traditional media, where a radical thesis is immediately commented on by a journalist or politician from the opposite party.

The authors of this article focused on researching the manifestations of linguistic creativity in the political discourse on Twitter, as well as on checking differences in the creative role of tweets of the persons actively involved in politics in Poland, Germany and the USA. A comparative analysis of the collected material has highlighted the significant disparities in the number of tweets published by politicians from particular countries – much more in the US than in Poland and Germany. Although they do not differ in terms of topics – during the elections, activists usually avoid topics not related to politics. However, the divergences are visible on particular levels of discussing linguistic creativity. At the level of creating a vision of the world, the American politicians' posts distinguish, who, due to the two-party system, is not afraid of supporting their allies openly. Moreover, they are more active in the area of the cultural creation, which can be seen in their use of characteristic language, so common for a given community or ethnic minority. German politicians are distinguished by the gradual organization of content at the text level, as it is shown in titling and signing posts. Often similar elements appear also in the tweets of representatives of Polish parties (see R. Trzaskowski's posts).

The authors realize that the raised issue requires broader and systematic research. However, the foregoing considerations allow concluding that the communication of American politicians on Twitter is characterized by a greater degree of spontaneity, naturalness and freedom of expression than it is in the case of other respondents. It can be suspected that some accounts of the European politicians are ran by assistants, which reduces the level of creativity significantly – Polish and German politicians are just about to learn how to use the opportunities offered by Twitter.

## Bibliography

- Allcott, H. & Gentzkow, M. (2017). Social Media and Fake News in the 2016 Election. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 31 (2), 211–236.
- Burska, K. & Cieśla, B. (Eds.) (2014a). *Kreatywność językowa w komunikowaniu (sie)*. Łódź: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego.
- Burska, K. & Cieśla, B. (Eds.) (2014b). *Kreatywność językowa w przestrzeni medialnej*. Łódź: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego.
- Cameron, J. (2013). *Droga artysty. Jak wyzwolić w sobie twórcę*. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Szafa.
- Cieśla, B. & Pietrzak, M. (Eds.) (2017). *Kreatywność językowa w literaturze i mediach*. Łódź: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego.
- Dubisz, S. (Ed.) (2018). *Wielki słownik języka polskiego PWN, t. II*. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN.
- Gawel, M. (2014). Kreatywność językowa w tutorialach internetowych. In: K. Burska, B. Cieśla (Eds.), *Kreatywność językowa w komunikowaniu (sie)* (pp. 43–55). Łódź: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego.
- Grzegorzczakowa, R. (1995). Jak rozumieć kreatywny charakter języka?. In: A.M. Lewicki, R. Tokarski (Eds.), *Kreowanie świata w tekstach*, (pp. 13–24). Lublin: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Marii Curie-Skłodowskiej.
- Grzenia, J. (2012). *Komunikacja językowa w Internecie*. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN.
- Isaacson, W. (2019). *Leonardo da Vinci*. Kraków: Wydawnictwo Insignis.
- Kudra, B. (2001). *Kreatywność leksykalna w dyskursie politycznym polskiej prasy lat osiemdziesiątych i dziewięćdziesiątych*. Łódź: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego.
- Mistewicz, E. (2015). *Twitter – sukces komunikacji w 140 znakach. Tajemnice narracji dla firm, instytucji i liderów opinii*. Gliwice: Wydawnictwo Helion.
- Nowak, P. & Tokarski, R. (2007). Medialna wizja świata a kreatywność językowa. In: P. Nowak, R. Tokarski (Eds.), *Kreowanie światów w języku mediów* (pp. 9–35). Lublin: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Marii Curie-Skłodowskiej.
- Pisarkowa, K. (1978). Pojęcie kreatywności językowej w nowej lingwistyce. *Biuletyn PTJ*, 36, 13–33.
- Piwowska, A. (2015). *Autentyczność przyciąga. Jak budować swoją markę na prawdziwym i porównującym przekazie?* Gliwice: Wydawnictwo Helion.
- Rycharski, T. (2014). Jak mówić i pisać o nowych mediach? Kłopoty tłumaczy, ludzi korekty i redakcji (eng. How to speak and write about new media? Problems of translators, correction people and editors), [the article is available in Polish]. Accessed 4.01.2019, from: <https://wszystkoconajwazniejsze.pl/tomasz-rycharski-jak-mowic-i-pisac-o-nowych-mediach-jak-nazywac-nowe-media-klopoty-tlumaczy-ludzi-korekty-i-redakcji/>

Beata Kacperska, Mateusz Markowski, Maria Migodzińska

The text is a translation of the article:

Kacperska, B, Markowski, M & Migodzińska, M. (2019). Kreatywność językowa polityków polskich, niemieckich i amerykańskich na Twitterze w okresie kampanii wyborczych w 2018 roku – wybrane zagadnienia. *Acta Universitatis Lodzianensis. Folia Librorum*, 2(29), 119–138. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.18778/0860-7435.29.08>