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Why and where? A name analysis of Polish Facebook groups related to autism[1]

Summary. This article examines the naming conventions present in the social media discourse surrounding autism in Poland. The study examined 150 names extracted from Facebook, focusing on their structure and semantic features. It mainly concentrated on motivational elements, evaluative and axiological functions as well as toponymic data represented in the researched social media names. The results show that the categories of support, therapy and treatment, exchange of information et al. are the most frequently profiled motivations behind the creation of groups. With reference to place names, statistical analysis shows that approximately 25% of names include elements indicating geographical location of national or local scale. These findings suggest that not only physical but also digital spaces use names to express identities and denote locations but primarily they constitute markers of social values, needs and motivations prevalent in the autism social-media discourse in Poland.

Keywords: autism discourse; Facebook, motivation, onomastics, socioideonyms, toponyms

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Dlaczego i gdzie? Analiza nazw polskich grup na Facebooku związanych z autyzmem

Streszczenie. Artykuł analizuje konwencje nazewnicze obecne w dyskursie mediów społecznościowych wokół autyzmu w Polsce. Badanie koncentrowało się na strukturze i semantyce 150 socjoideonimów wyekscerpowanych z Facebooka. Skupiono się na elementach motywacyjnych, funkcjach ewaluacyjnych i aksjologicznych, a także danych toponimicznych występujących w analizowanych nazwach grup społecznościowych. Wyniki wskazują, że dominujące motywacje towarzyszące procesowi zakładania grup to: wsparcie, terapia i leczenie, wymiana informacji itp. W odniesieniu do toponimów analiza statystyczna pokazuje, że około 25% nazw zawiera elementy wskazujące na lokalizację geograficzną w skali krajowej lub lokalnej. Analiza wyników pozwala stwierdzić, że nie tylko przestrzenie fizyczne, lecz także cyfrowe wykorzystują nazwy do wyrażania tożsamości, oznaczania lokalizacji, ale przede wszystkim stanowią one wskaźniki wartości społecznych, potrzeb i motywacji obecnych w dyskursie społecznym dotyczącym autyzmu w polskich mediach społecznościowych.

Słowa kluczowe: dyskurs nt. autyzmu, Facebook, motywacja, onomastyka, socjoideonimy, toponimy

Introduction

We might say that elaborate answers lie in the initially simple elements. Names, for instance group names can be considered as such elements. Names are essential parts of society because they are linked to human, place and commercial identities and thus may affect prevalent notions of identities and relationships — also at the macro level in a society (Ainiala et al. 2022: 528). They form an intriguing research object that with the framework of semantic studies and media and socio-onomastics provides new perspectives of investigating and accessing various social discourses represented in those names.

One type of a group name that constitutes the object of this analysis is that of Polish-speaking Facebook groups related to autism. In this context, it merits mentioning that Facebook, with three billion users and the world's most 'active' social media platform, promotes user interaction which allows its users to create groups. These places which act as "virtual communities" (Castells 2003) or "electronic tribes" (Adams, Smith 2008), make it easier for people with shared needs and similar interests to connect and exchange information. However, the role that names play in social discourses is an under-researched topic, including the names of underprivileged groups on Facebook (Abel et al. 2019). It is quite evident, though, that that many types of names play a crucial role in carrying socially relevant meanings (Hyan 2016). Apart from identification and differentiation function, the role of Facebook group names, seems to be more complex, and just as blogs (Banach 2019) they also play an educational-informational and marketing role. The researcher sheds light on blog names observing that blog

authors face the challenge of constructing a name that not only intrigues potential readers with its appeal, but also stands out among the many similar ones. In addition, the title of an electronic diary should, through a minimal number of words, convey the maximum amount of content and reflect the unique character of the blog (Banach 2019: 29). Similar expectations apply to Facebook group names, with particular emphasis on pragmatics and their promotional-communicative function.

To shed light on neurodiversity discourse (Singer 2017), particularly autism discourse in Poland, Facebook group names will be analysed with an emphasis on the key motivation stated explicitly and implicitly by the online autism community (autistic people[2], their families, therapists, scientists, and anybody for whom autism is part of their lives). In this paper, the term neurodiversity, refers to the cognitive differences that characterise and distinguish people on the spectrum of autistic disorders. This clarification is important as the term neurodiversity is also used to refer to other neurodevelopmental differences such as ADHD, dyslexia, dyscalculia etc. (Silberman 2015: 23). Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is a neurodevelopmental disorder characterized by persistent deficits in social communication and the presence of restricted interests and repetitive behaviours (WHO, ICD-11 2022).

Methodology and research questions

The methodological considerations of this study are based on complementary foundations of discourse linguistics (Czachur 2020; van Dijk 2001), media onomastics (Rutkowski, Skowronek 2020) as well as socio-onomastics (Ainiala et al. 2022). Socio-onomastics, a term popular in the Nordic region, is the sociolinguistic study of names which "examines the use and variety of names through methods that demonstrate the social, cultural, and situational conditions in name usage" (Ainiala et al. 2022: 527). Medioonomastics studies "collection of names that operate today in the cyber-media environment"[3] (Rutkowski 2016: 172) [transl. K.G.]. This research concentrates on the category of broadly understood commercial names, often referred to as chrematonyms in the Slavic area of onomastic research (Gałkowski 2008) or mediaonyms[4] (see Skowronek, Rutkowski 2004: 39). Chrematonymic names, being a category of proper names, determine

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[2] The author of this text chooses not to favour any terms referring to autism and people on the autism spectrum, therefore a variety of names will be employed in the article.

[3] Medioonomastyka zajmuje się opisem „zbioru nazw funkcjonujących współcześnie w przestrzeni cybernetyczno-medialnej".

[4] In light of the existing classifications of onyms, one might consider including Facebook group names among chrematonyms or socoideonyms. The medialinguistic perspective eliminates this issue, as the names under study can be treated as examples of medionyms. However, the present analysis does not seek to advocate for any particular classificatory solution, as this remains primarily a matter of terminological convention rather than a substantive theoretical divergence.

the elements of reality created by material and non-material culture of contemporary civilization (Breza 1998). I would like to clarify that the analysis takes into account the specific character of Facebook group names, which — while functioning as proper names — also carry strong ideational and community-driven elements. As pointed out by Aleksandra Cieślikowa (2011: 116) the semantic-descriptive value plays an important communicative-pragmatic role, giving these names both a proprial and appellative character at the same time. For this reason, the study acknowledges the hybrid nature of these names and incorporates the appellative dimension as essential to understanding their communicative and ideological functions in digital discourse. The latter is understood as "a linguistically conditioned system of predicating about the reality and beliefs of a given community, which triggers the mechanism of creating collective meanings and senses"[5] (Czachur 2020: 109) [transl. K.G.] in internet-based communication.

Previous research on onomastics has addressed internet-based names only to a limited extent, including names of blogs. Studies on names within social media platforms (e.g. Facebook, Instagram etc.) remain scarce and there is shortage of research on names of neurodiverse groups. As rightly noted by A. Cieślikowa (2002: 61) "a broadening of research horizons can be observed. In addition to historical and etymological studies, attention is being paid to issues of motivation, creation, as well as the various functions of proper names in different modes of communication"[6] [transl. K.G.], and thus also in online communication.

The study aligns with broader trends observed in contemporary onomastics, particularly in how proper names function within digital environments. Research into the titles of computer games (Kaszewski 2016), onymic creativity of translations of film and TV series titles (Naruszewicz-Duchlińska 2016), and proper names in fantasy computer games (Domaciuk-Czarny 2016) highlight how sound expression, linguistic foreignness, and deviation from native lexical norms are integral to name creation in virtual contexts. Authors such as Dorota Suska (2008), who examined blog titles from a pragma-linguistic perspective, Agnieszka Banach (2019) who looked at the names of travelling blogs, and Katarzyna Skowronek and Mariusz Rutkowski (2004) who explored internet naming more broadly, have pointed to similar patterns of ideational, persuasive, and community-oriented naming. This article is a continuation of research that concentrated on language describing autism and artistic people as well as addressees identified in the names of autism-related Polish Facebook groups. Susan Abel et al. (2019) did a study on stated purposes behind the creation of English-speaking autism groups, and Katarzyna Góra (2024) analysed the discursive content expressed in the descriptions of Polish autism groups.

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[5] „[…] językowo uwarunkowany system orzekania o rzeczywistości i przekonań danej społeczności, który uruchamia mechanizmy tworzenia znaczeń i sensów zbiorowych".

[6] „Daje się zauważyć poszerzenie horyzontów badawczych. Oprócz badań historyczno-etymologicznych zwraca się uwagę na problemy motywacji, kreacji, a także wielorakich funkcji nazw własnych w różnych sposobach komunikacji"

This study explores the onimic status of media names on Polish Facebook related to autism which will be understood as usage-based social chrematonyms — more specifically socioideonyms which concentrate on the names of organizations, associations, social groups etc. (Gałkowski 2017: 51–55). It needs to be noted that this study employs an onomastics research only as a point of departure into a broader semantic-pragmatic linguistic examination of how the autism community expresses its values and needs through media public discourse. It that light it will try to answer the following questions: (1) identifying the motivation behind the creation of a group, (2) identifying the most frequent needs of the online Polish autism community, (3) examining the evaluative and axiological components that serve as a socio-cultural medium of expression of various functions, (4) exploring the toponymic elements. While this research falls within the broader category of ideational naming rhetorics and internet-based onyms, due to the space constraints, a detailed comparison with other categories was not included. In my view, extending the scope of the analysis, given the above primary objectives specific to Facebook appellative based onyms within the autism discourse, could weaken the focus on the main subject of the study. The study of autism group names is believed to raise awareness about autism both in Poland and worldwide. The results could also potentially inform institutions and organizations that provide direct support to autistic communities about their specific needs.

Method and source data

Socioideonyms are a result of language processes that need to be looked at for the vantage point of the naming needs of the contemporary world (Gałkowski 2008: 52). They refer to cultural processes observed in social activities, such as names of groups on social media. 150 names of Facebook groups related to autism in Poland served as the source data. Manual search and coding were employed using the built-in Facebook search engine. The keywords were: *autyzm* (autism), *spektrum autyzmu* (autism spectrum), *Asperger*, *Aspi*. All sensitive data has been anonymized. The extracted "microtexts" (Rutkiewicz-Hanczewska 2013), denote activities of social and ideational character — names of groups — that by their lexico-semantic material inform and 'market' a so-called symbolic service that is being presented by the autism community in Poland. These elements convey socially relevant information about the autism discourse. The most common lexical fields were identified mostly through semantic analysis but also drawing from the syntactic and orthographic features. This allowed for quantitative and qualitative results to be identified and documented in the studied discourse. A coding scheme that was used considered different types of linguistic and extra-linguistics data, however it focused primarily on the motivation behind the creation of a group and toponymic elements. It needs to be noted that these categories are rarely mutually exclusive, and many group names encompass multiple aspects in one name.

It should be pointed out that the statistical analysis is of a selective nature and played only an auxiliary role. It was applied only in cases where it helped to reveal significant regularities (e.g., within the group of names containing toponymic elements or in the lexical field of "support") and was not an objective in itself.

Motivation stated in the group's name

Apart from the formal-stylistic shape of the linguistic and cultural nature of socioideonyms, the reason for their creation and their discursive-value are equally crucial to the research (Gałkowski 2008: 297). The "onomastic competence" of an educated society allows the users of language to create names where such a need arises. This research has shown that the need for the autism community in Poland to express and connect with one another is immense, especially among parents but also autistic people in general and women in particular. This has led to a variety of different group names being generated by the researched community to express their needs. In this part, I will concentrate on the semantic analysis of motivation related lexical fields which will also be referred to as the purpose and the reason why a certain group was created.

An empirical analysis, combining quantitative and qualitative methods, reveals that support is the predominant aim, constituting 60% of the analysed names. These groups primarily cater to parents of children with ASD, helping them to understand autism, searching for meaning, seeking support in adapting to the changes that have occurred, providing mutual support and creating opportunities for narrative exchange of experiences (Huws et al. 2000). The category of "support" is so vast that it would feel impoverishing to the research not to extract its different aspects, which shall be treated as different categories, such as support, therapy and treatment, exchange of information, education, advocacy, organization of free time, socialization, development of parental skills, advertising and services, research (see Table 1). Let me delve into more detailed analysis of the more prominent categories.

Table 1. Motivation Related Lexical Fields Stated in the Group Names related to autism on Facebook[7]

Motivation related lexical fields	%	Example names
Support	60.16	*Grupa Wsparcia dla Rodziców — Autyzm i Zespół Aspergera* ['Support Group for Parents — Autism and Aspergers Syndrome']

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[7] With the English reader in mind, and being aware of the complexities of the highly inflectional nature of the Polish language, the author has tried whenever possible to offer more idiomatic and natural translations. This decision was made to avoid potential difficulties in interpretation for readers unfamiliar with the structure and parsing of Polish phrases.

Motivation related lexical fields	%	Example names
Therapy and treatment	50.25	*Grupa — Terapia dzieci z autyzmem* ['Group — Therapy of children with autism']
Exchange of information	25.73	*Autyzm — PORADNIK INFORMACYJNY* ['Autism — INFORMATION GUIDE']
Education	10.50	*Edukacja SPEKTRUM AUTYZM* ['Education Spectrum Autism']
Advocacy	15.41	*Samorzecznictwo/Spektrum Neuroróżnorodności* ['Selfadvocacy/Neurodiversity Spectrum']
Organization of free time	6.34	*Wakacje dziecka z autyzmem / Turnusy rehabilitacyjne* ['Holiday time with a child with autism' / 'Rehabilitation camps']
Socialization	4.30	*Autyznawka — sekcja poznawania się osób neuroaktywnych* ['Autihookup — section for getting to know neurotypical people']
Development of parental skills	3.20	*ADHD, Zespół Aspergera — wymagające dzieci, poszukujący rodzice* ['ADHD, Asperger's Syndrome — demanding children, searching parents']
Advertising and services	3.11	*Wymiana, kupię/sprzedam, praca autyzm* ['Exchange, buy/sell, work autism']
Research	2.68	*Autyzm w badaniach naukowych* ['Autism in scientific research']

Source: own study

Support

Statistics show that the purpose of *providing support* and help is verbalized most frequently, and it is done *expressis verbis* (explicitly) mostly in the word pattern *grupa wsparcia* 'support group': *Grupa Wsparcia dla Rodziców — Autyzm i Zespół Aspergera* 'Support Group for Parents — Autism and Aspergers Syndrome', or with similar lexemes: *Autyzm — terapia domowa i wsparcie dla rodziców* 'Autism — home therapy and support for parents', *Samopomocowa Grupa Rodziców Osób ze Spektrum Autyzmu* 'Self-help Group for Parents of People on the Autism Spectrum'. Jeffrey Jackson et al. (2018) assert that support groups play a crucial role in addressing the challenges associated with developmental disabilities and challenges. These names, just like proper names, are "records" of the social conditions (conflicts and social problems) in which they arose (Rutkowski, Skowronek 2020: 50).

Within the context of support, one name merits reflection, namely a group called *Autyzm — Rodzice Rodzicom* 'Autism — Parents to Parents'. This syntactic construction *kto komu* 'who to whom' — *rodzice* (nominative case) *rodzicom* (dative case) should be semantically interpreted as expressing support. There is

an evident ellipsis in this construction, lacking the predicate which on the surface might be realised as such: "parents wish to offer help to other parents". The above phrase when typed in the google search, gives names of foundations of preterm infants' platforms that care for children with disabilities, e.g. *Fundacja Wcześniak Rodzice-Rodzicom* 'Parents to Parents Preterm Infants Foundation'. All of these institutions and initiatives provide detailed information that they have been initiated by parents who wish to help and support other parents. Another name which more implicitly connotes support is a metaphorical name *Razem przez autyzm* 'Together through autism', which communicates to its potential members the concept of being together, sharing and assisting one another in the challenging situation of autism. Moreover, the preposition *przez* 'through' from the cognitive linguistics perspective and the theory of metaphor (Lakoff, Johnson 1980) suggests conceptualising *autism* as a *journey* metaphor, where the travellers are people that also experience autism in their lives. As observed by K. Góra (2024: 79), reciprocity was frequently verbalised in the descriptions of the autism groups in Poland with the adverbs *nawzajem*, *wzajemn-ie/-a* 'each other', 'one another', 'mutual' (over 60 examples).

Therapy and treatment

A quantitative analysis of the studied material revealed that almost 50% of group names about autism on Facebook have the word *terapia* 'therapy' and its related semantic items such as: *terapeuci* 'therapists', *pomoce terapeutycze* 'therapeutic aids', *logopedia* 'speech therapy', *rehabilitacja SI* 'SI [sensory integration] rehabilitation', *rewalidacja* 'revalidation', *leczenie* 'treatment', *dieta* 'diet'. The founders of the groups profile several aspects in their names which allowed me to code the collected data into subcategories:

- non-specified treatment: *Grupa Terapia dzieci z autyzmem* 'Group [-] Therapy of children with autism';
- specific therapies: *SI* 'sensory integration', *logopedia* 'speech therapy', *wwr: wczesne wspomaganie rozwoju* 'early development suport', *Autyzm — pomoc logopedyczna* 'Autism — speech therapy assistance';
- home therapy: *Terapia domowa: Autyzm — terapia domowa i wsparcie dla rodziców* 'Autism — home therapy and support for parents';
- children's therapy: *Grupa Terapia dzieci z autyzmem* 'Group [-] Autistic children's therapy';
- therapeutic aids: *Pomoce terapeutyczne i dydaktyczne — terapia* 'Therapeutic and teaching aids — therapy';
- Diet and nutrition: *Autyzm i odżywianie 3 x bez — bo jedzenie ma znaczenie* 'Autism and nutrition: free form 3 — because food matters';
- advertisements concerning therapy: *PUZZLE Szkolenia i Terapia* 'PUZZLE Workshop and Therapy';

- co-occurring disorders: *PANDAS, PANS*[8] *, AUTYZM — grupa pandas.pl* 'PANDAS, PANS, AUTYZM — pandas.pl group';
- diagnosis: *Poradnik-Orzeczenie/Autyzm* 'Guide-Diagnosis/Autism';
- rehabilitation: *Wakacje dziecka z autyzmem / Turnusy rehabilitacyjne* 'Holiday time with a child with autism/Rehabilitations camps';
- recommendations: *Autyzm- szkolenia, warsztaty, darmowe i polecane terapie* 'Autism — workshops, free and recommended therapies';
- places: *Placówki/Ośrodki — Autyzm* 'Facilities/Centers — Autism';
- alternative treatments: homeopathy, cannabis: *Autyzm — homeopatycznie* 'Autism — homeopathy'.

Few names that stated so-called "cures" were reported. Some promoted chemical-plant substances and focused on eliminating the "disease" by treating it with cannabis oil, e.g. *Autyzm leczenie olejem konopnym* 'Autism treatment with cannabis oil', *Konopie w Terapii Spektrum Autyzmu — doświadczenia i porady* 'Cannabis in Autism Spectrum Therapy — experience and advice'. Others were devoted to homeopathy or diet. A group called *"autyzm" — BIOMEDYCZNIE* '"autism" — BIOMEDICALLY' was recorded and whose purpose is to convince its audience that they can eliminate autism and its biochemical and environmental causes. The punctuation and orthographic form of the name is most likely not coincidental. The reader sees two elements, one spelled in lower case letter — "autism" — written in quotation marks. Following the naive definition that "quotation is everything between a pair of quotation marks", I argue after (Gutzman, Stei 2011: 1) that quotation marks are best "understood as minimal pragmatic markers that block the stereotypical interpretation of the expression they enclose". In the case of the analysed name, they are most probably used as a pragmatic marker to achieve the effect of directing the receiver's attentions to indicate that some alternative interpretation ought to be inferred. It is felt that in such cases the full interpretation is context dependent, however, the choice of this in the name of a group suggests that it is a 'scare quote' when the reader would infer the alleged autism is not autism, in a sense that it can be cured for example. When one sees the background picture of the group, one can see Autism (in blue colour) is a disease, not a disfunction. This leads us to a discussion on the (de)medicalization of the autism discourse, which this linguistic study tentatively hints at. This phenomenon was more observable on the description data of the analysed groups where medical terminology was used such as disease, treatment, children sick with autism, the fight against autism (Góra 2024: 85). Nevertheless, as shown here, it can be spotted even at the level of first commutative element of a social group — the name. For more on the medicalization of language of autism, see Ruth Monk et al. (2022) and Rita Jordan (2009).

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[8] PANDAS (Pediatric Autoimmune Neuropsychiatric Disorders Associated with Streptococcal Infections), PANS (Pediatric Acute-onset Neuropsychiatric Syndrome).

Education and exchange of information

The research demonstrates that the phenomenon of culture based on simultaneous giving and receiving is quite significant among the Polish autism community. The study has recorded many names that state quite explicitly the aspect of education and information exchange with lexemes such as *edukacja* 'education', *szkolenia* 'training courses', *warsztaty* 'worshops', *materiały* 'materiały'. Research indicates that the purpose stated by numerous related group names is to raise awareness and provide assistance in caring for people on the autism spectrum. These names may reflect a dearth of access to information and knowledge about autism and challenges related to it. Mostly parents, but also psychologists, therapists, scientist as well as people on the spectrum, feel the need and responsibly to act as advocates of autism thought the medium of Facebook groups. One example of this is expressed in the group name: *Jak…? Zapytaj dorosłego z ASD* 'How to…? Ask an adult with ASD'. A metaphorical name was also found related to knowledge and connecting various types of information *Autyzm − połącz kropki* 'Autism − connect the dots'. The figurative element of the name conceptualizes dots as various pieces of information or events, that initially seem unrelated or unclear. Connecting these 'dots' and identifying patterns or commonalties between them could 'reveal a hidden, bigger picture' and allow a better, more coherent understanding of autism.

Moreover, by investigating the names of groups we can also identify various communicative forms of exchanging information, such as: discussion: *Porozmawiajmy o Zespole Aspergera* 'Let's talks about the Asperger's Syndrome', *Autyzm − rozmowy rodziców* 'Autism − parents' conversations', inquires: *Jak…? Zapytaj dorosłego z ASD* 'How to…? Ask an adult with ASD', announcements: *AUTYZM i SPEKTRUM − OGŁOSZENIA I OPINIE* 'AUTISM and SPECTRUM − ANNOUNCEMENTS AND OPINIONS', recommendations and guides: *Autyzm − PORADNIK INFORMACYJNY* 'Autism − INFORMATION GUIDE'. It should be noted that the exchange of information happens at different levels and covers a wide variety of aspects verbalized in the names of the researched groups, such as education, diagnosis, parental skills, work, therapies, advertising, vacation etc.

Advocacy

S. Abel et al. (2019: 15) extracted the category of advocacy as the third most frequently communicated in the research on English-speaking Facebook groups related to autism. Conversely, studies conducted on Polish Facebook descriptions of such groups did not distinctly capture this category (Góra 2024). Advocacy is treated as a grassroot activity of civil society (Necel 2021: 18) and advocates and self-advocates of autism are understood as all individuals who wish to empower people affected by autism and to protect their rights as well as

raise awareness and knowledge about ASD both in the autistic environment and amongst the general public. (There are numerous sites created by self-advocates and foundations, however, these were not the object of analysis). Only one group name stated self-advocacy explicitly: *Samorzecznictwo/Spektrum Neuroróżnorod-ności* 'Selfadvocacy/Neurodiversity Spectrum'. The term *rzecznictwo* 'advocacy' and the compound neologism *samorzecznictwo* 'self-advocacy' in the context of fighting for one's rights is relatively new, albeit very popular in the autism community and in the public Polish health discourse. This might largely be due to the ambiguity surrounding the Polish term *rzecznik* 'advocate', which can refer to various titles such as spokesperson, commissioner, ombudsman, and advocate.

"Misinformation is a particularly serious problem in the field of autism, to the point that autism has been labelled a 'fad magnet'" (Metz et al. 2005: 170). It is therefore not surprising we can find groups on Facebook which, apart from the identity component, have an element of "purpose", such as advocacy and providing information: *Autyzm w badaniach naukowych* 'Autism in scientific research', *InfoAutyzm* 'InfoAutism', *Literatura/Autyzm* 'Literature/Autism', *Jak…? Zapytaj dorosłego z ASD* 'How to…? Ask an adult with ASD'. These names concentrate on providing information on autism. The slightly opaque name *Grupy/Strony Autorskie Autyzm* 'Author Groups/Sites Autism' informs the addressee about other sites and groups related to autism that can be found in the content the group. This analysis has also found a metonymical name, *Spektrum literatury* 'Literature spectrum', which might seem vague to people 'outside' the context of autism. It utilizes the lexeme spectrum, which comprises an element of the latest official term for autism — autism spectrum disorder — and is used by the language users as implying somebody with ASD. The group name informs its potential members about various reference books on autism; however outside of the studied discourse it could mean a group about books of different genres.

Socialization

Group names that express the need to socialize are not numerous, however, their linguistic features are noteworthy. Morphologically, these formations exhibit a high degree of heterogeneity, with the most common processes including derivation, compounding, and blending. They also conform to a productive pattern in Polish internet onomastics — namely, names ending in *-awka*. *Autystawka* 'Autihookup' exemplifies a unique lexical blend, formed by combining *autyzm* 'autism' through back-clipping — or, more plausibly, the noun *autysta* 'autist' with the ending *-awka*. The name follows a pattern of tongue-in-cheek names with *awka* which are ubiquitous on the Polish internet. In the entry for *-awka* in the Obserwatorium Języka i Kultury Młodzieży ['Observatory of Youth Language and Culture'] (Wieleczek 2021) we can read that this suffix indicates the name of a thematic, closed Facebook discussion group focused on a specific

question (e.g., *Pytawka*), the idea of humanism (*Humanistawka*), a specific sense of humor (*Cringawka*), community (*Studentawka*) etc. Having in mind the above as well as the natural connotation with the slang word *ustawka* (Slang.pl), the name *Autystawka* 'Autihookup' suggests a closed group aimed at young people on the autism spectrum seeking social connections or meetings. A similar socioideonym composed of two elements was recorded. The first component, *Autyznawka* 'Autihookup', serves a classic identification-differentiation function, while the second is a descriptive-explanatory phrase beginning with *sekcja* 'section', a lexeme that has become a widely used naming component, i.e. *sekcja poznawania się osób neuroatypowych* 'section for meeting neuroatypical individuals'. While the first name might be read by the prospective members within the context of just a meeting, the second one communicates deeper processes of getting to know one another more closely. The extended context included in the description tag indicates that it is a group which "serves SOLELY for meeting-matrimonial purposes". Both name constructions illustrate play on words, creative linguistic strategies reflecting the groups' social objectives.

Organization of free time

The names of investigated groups inform their recipients about different activities connected to organizing time for a child with ASD, profiling games: *Autyzm, zabawy dla dzieci* 'Autism, games for children', holidays: *Wakacje dziecka z autyzmem* 'Holiday time with a child with autism'. There was one name which included the period of the recent coronavirus pandemic, a time when parents all over the world were challenged with having to work and take care of their children at the same time: *Autyzm — edukacja, gry i zabawy w czasach koronawirusa* 'Autism — education, games and fun in the times of coronavirus'.

Advertising and offering services

Among the researched names, there was a group that lexicalised commercial purpose of exchange and selling of goods and offering services such as: *Wymiana, kupię/sprzedam, praca autyzm* 'Exchange, buy/sell, work autism'. Even though the problem of unemployment among autistic people has been grave for decades (Anderson 2021), and the narration has been dominated by the content about children with ASD, this phenomenon is gaining attention among the autistic community and the outside stakeholders (policymakers, researchers, healthcare professional etc.) in Poland. When the author started collecting data, the corpus hadn't recorded any group name exclusively stating the concept of employment, work etc. However, in November 2023 the group *Autyzm Praca* 'Autism Work/Employment' was created, which shares sites offering job positions and articles connected to employment of autistic individuals.

Other semantic and structural elements

The identification subject matter, target audience and motivation can be said to comprise the most essential components of a Facebook group name that make it stand out in the social media background making it easier for the recipient to make decisions. Nevertheless, they do not exhaust the whole information characterized and communicated in the names. As previously mentioned, the analyzed names are determined by various factors of widely understood context. This subsection will look at other semantic themes and functions stated in the researched names.

The collected material reveals a nuanced tapestry of nomenclature and profiles various semantic lexical fields, such as exceptionality: *Dzieci Aspergera — nasz dar losu* 'Children of Asperger's — our gift of fate', authenticity: *Autyzm — autentyczność w życiu* 'Autism — authenticity in life', love: *Autyzm. Spektrum miłości* 'Autism. Spectrum of Love', neurodiversity: *… Aspiracjonalnie* '… Aspirational'. These names play triple functions: identifying, persuasive and evaluative. Most components of these names, apart from the identity element, (autism, Asperger etc.) function as persuasive and axiological operators and trigger certain associations and evaluations. For instance, the element, *nasz dar losu* 'our gift of fate' conveys a sentiment of acceptance of 'something that a person received through some kind of higher power' (*dar losu* 'gift of fate' WSJP PAN). The name *Autyzm — autentyczność w życiu* 'Autism — authenticity in life' may underscore associations about the group's commitment to promoting genuine and unfiltered experiences, positioning authenticity as 'the characteristic of someone who does not hide his feelings, thoughts and intentions in his behavior' (*autentyczność* 'authenticity' WSJP PAN) as a cornerstone in navigating life on the autism spectrum. *Autyzm. Spektrum miłości* 'Autism. Spectrum of love' on the other hand, utilizes the well-known phrase *spectrum autyzmu* 'autism spectrum' and divides it into two elements: the proper noun "autism" and a genitive phrase describing the spectrum — "the spectrum of love" emphasizing the central theme of love, fostering an environment that prioritizes empathy and compassion.

Many names express difficulties and worries by lexemes such as *wymagające dzieci* 'demanding children', *zaburzenie* 'disorder', *trudności rozwojowe* 'developmental difficulties', *nie zwariować* 'not to go crazy', *co dalej* 'what next', e.g.: *ADHD, Zespół Aspergera — wymagające dzieci, poszukujący rodzice* 'ADHD, Asperger's Syndrome — demanding children, searching parents', *ADHD, Zespół Aspergera oraz inne trudności rozwojowe i wychowawcze* 'ADHD, Asperger's Syndrome and other developmental and educational difficulties', *Autyzm, Asperger zaburzenia grupa dla rodziców* 'Autism, Asperger's disorders group for parents' , *autyzm po Naszemu, czyli jak udało Nam się nie zwariować* 'autism Our way, how We managed not to go crazy'.

Chrematomyns, as has been observed, take the form of various structural-lexical forms (Caffarelli 2018). Among them we can list language and

beyond-language constructions, such as universal structures, composites, blends, acronyms, letter and numerical configurations, phrases and special symbols, such as abstract graphic forms and logos (Gałkowski 2008: 63). This research has recorded a few instances of borrowing and blending, among which anglicisms dominate the structures of group names. These English loanwords mostly pertain to one element of a compound e.g. *Aspergirls*, *Aspendence*, *Aspiracjonalne* but also acronymic neologisms very popular in the Polish autism discourse, e.g. *ASD – Zapytaj dorosłego z ASD* 'Ask an adult with ASD', where the acronym ASD comes from the English phrase Autism Spectrum Disorder. I can boldly make a statement that the frequently employed abbreviation ASD is motivated by the pressing need to fill the gap in the native language, since the language describing autism and autistic people is undergoing many changes causing controversies in its default language, English, (Monk et al. 2022; Kenny et al. 2016) and creating even greater terminological chaos in Polish. Other neologisms, on the other hand, are most probably expressives playing specific persuasive, axiological roles, targeted at specific audience and aimed at making the communicative style more attractive.

Toponymic Component

A lot chrematonymic names refer to specialistic, technical, marketing, systemic, local and global terms (Gałkowski 2017: 65). Research shows that society, in addition to the semantic-pragmatic criterion of socioideonyms, the goal of which is the existence of a group with similar content, seemingly imposes another dimension — reference to geographical affiliation. As a results, this onomastic study allowed the exploration of toponymic information stated in the group name. Such data should not surprise us, as it is a crucial element — stating the geographic location of a group — in the name of the group, which allows its members and interested stakeholders to look for social support, share experiences and obtain information concentering on the region of one's daily existence. On the other hand, the toponymic element sheds light on the Polish autism community and its needs to go beyond social connections at the national level. Its members wish to interact and exchange expectations and knowledge within specific cities or regions, e.g. about the best doctor in the city, which is confirmed by interviews with members of such groups. Mohd Roffeei et al. (2015) reported that members of an autism support group in Malaysia organized offline meetings and events. The author confirms the above observations regarding the regular meetings in real life of the group: *Olsztyn – Samopomocowa Grupa Rodziców Osób ze Spektrum Autyzmu* 'Olsztyn — Self-help Group for Parents of People on the Autism Spectrum'. While it t goes beyond the scope of this study, the choice of including the name of the city in the group's name communicates specified presumptive or mandatory regional affiliation, restated very often in

the description of the group. For example, one Warsaw group included regulations in the description, which state "The group is intended for people living in Warsaw or the immediate vicinity", noting that people who do not meet this criterion and have been accepted "will be removed from the group".

Quantitative analysis shows that approximately 25% of group names include a toponymic indicating geographical location and an administrative unit of land of different scale. Choronyms, also known as macrotoponyms, were also documented: two groups included the name of the country — *Polska* 'Poland', e.g. *Zespół Aspergera Polska* 'Aspeger's Syndrome Poland', and a few groups included the name of the region, e.g. *łódzkie*, *zachodniopomorskie* with omission of the word "voivodeship" (which constitutes the whole name phrase: *województwo łódzkie*) or *Trójmiasto* 'Tricity'. Most groups, however, included the name of the city in the nominative case *Warszawa, Łódź, Olsztyn, Wrocław, Koszlin, Kraków, Szczecin* e.g. … *Autyzm — Warszawa i okolice* '… Autism — Warsaw and the close vicinity', or with the place preposition *z* 'from', as in *Rodzice dzieci z autyzmem z Poznania* 'Parents of children with autism from Poznań'. From a sociolinguistic perspective, research shows that such groups have been created in big cities, illustrating the need of such virtual places, with the capital city of Poland, Warszawa/Warsaw, as the most frequent. Nevertheless, the lack of names of groups related to autism in smaller places in Poland does not mean that such needs no not exist, and might be even greater.

The toponymic elements in the studied socioideonyms are an illustration of a linguistic-conceptual process of metonymy where the name of the country, region or city stands for the people living in those places. Moreover, the name of the condition "autism" is also mentally accessed by readers as what can be called an idealized cognitive model of the concept of autism with its characters, autistic people, their parents, events etc. This is also part of the economization of language where the creators of the group operate on the symbolic, conceptual association rather than descriptive level of language.

Discussion and conclusions

The lexicological, semantic and pragmatic analysis of the database of 150 Facebook group names related to autism in Poland has shown that such an investigation can uncover key naming patterns that help answer the question posed in the title — *why* and *where* such groups emerge. These patterns reveal primary motivations, social tendencies, promoted values, and geographical affiliation, all of which contribute to the formation of symbolic commercial entities involved in 'social consumption' within the autism discourse in Poland and beyond.

Naming rhetoric which concentrates on reaching a pragmatic goal is even more visible in ideational chrematonymy, i.e. naming social and developmental conditions, naming different types of needs of social participants, gender

identification, education, therapy, difficulties etc. By analyzing the names of Facebook groups, we were able to create an ideological and utilitarian map of the goals expressed overtly and implicitly by the autism community in Poland. The lexical fields related to motivation, as identified in the analysis, were as follows: support, therapy and treatment, exchange of information, education, advocacy, organization of free time, socialization, development of parental skills, advertising and services, research. What is more, there were other semantic categories profiled in the stated names that merit mentioning, e.g. exceptionality, authenticity, difficulties and worries, neurodiversity, gender aspects. With reference to toponymic components, statistical analysis shows that approximately 25 percent of names include elements indicating geographical location of national or local scale.

The research exemplifies the interplay between identity, function, and creative naming in digital communication. While the comparison with other onyms is necessarily limited in scope, it nonetheless helps to position the analysed names within a wider onomastic framework, suggesting parallels in naming strategies and communicative functions with similar types of proprial expressions. A comparable pattern between Facebook group names can be observed in the naming of businesses and blogs. As Ewa Rogowska-Cybulska (2011: 395) points out "the persuasive value of such names appears to be the result of the authors' concern for the attractive originality of derivatives"[9] [transl. K.G.] and the desire to ensure that the company name stands out. The linguistics features uncovered in studied social media names show what can be considered as typical of socioideonyms: neologisms, play on words, blending, colloquialisms, economy of language, mixing of styles, metonymical and metaphorical elements, prevalence of interpretation over objectivity, emotionalism (Ożóg 2001: 250–253). A. Cieślikowa (2011: 118) notes that foreign vocabulary is often used in chrematonymy. This is a common trend that continues to be popular among names of businesses (Rogowska-Cybulska 2011) proper names in fantasy games (Domaciuk-Czarny 2016), names of blogs (Banach 2019). These phenomena emphasize the creativity and symbolic function of onymic constructions, a feature Facebook group names share with other media onyms.

At the same time the study reveals social tendencies to explicitly name certain motivations and values. Both simultaneous processes could be a sign of a longtime dilemma between overtly and covertly communicating motivations and values and trying to meet the naming requirements of contemporary media culture. Nevertheless, the above seemingly obvious conclusion is a consequence of having to designate previously unnamed contemporary socio-cultural phenomena within the scope of autism discourse, while at the same time communicate pressing societal issues and provide specific reference, evoke associations, or achieve emotional and stylistic effects.

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[9] „Wydaje się, że wartość perswazyjna takich nazw jest efektem troski ich autorów o atrakcyjną oryginalność derywatów".

While the findings offer valuable insights, they signal the potential for more extensive future comparative analysis that could explore overlaps and divergences between Facebook group names and other digital media onymic forms, such as those in entertainment, activism, or fan culture. I also hope that the results of this study can act as a platform for future research exploring socioideonyms in the neurodiversity discourse across languages and the cultures they represent. Another issue is observing their viability, i.e., verifying which of them will remain in use and which will disappear. The findings presented in this study may also constitute a useful data on general patterns in internet-based socioideonyms, adding to subsequent comparative investigations.

Facebook group names occupy a unique position due to their hybrid nature: they blend characteristics of ideonyms, socioideonyms, and chrematonyms, while being rooted in user-generated, community-driven practices. Their function is simultaneously identificatory, persuasive, and ideological. Identified key motivation categories, evaluative and axiological components, toponymic data and various language processes conditioning and co-creating the quality of Facebook media coverage allows the interpretation and illustration of the multifunctionality and multipurposefulness of communication through Polish names of Facebook of groups related to autism. Just as "radio is a game played with the recipient in various ways"[10] (Skowronek, Rutkowski 2004: 136) [transl. K.G.], we might state that social media, in this case Facebook is an equally or even a greater game leading to an interesting linguistic and interdisciplinary reflection having a high social impact.

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[10] "Radio jest bowiem grą prowadzoną na rozmaite sposoby z odbiorcą".

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