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OPINION LEADERS' SPEECH CHARACTERISTICS IN ONLINE NEWS
PORTALS

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INTRODUCTION

Subject-matter of the study. Opinion leaders' comments published in online news portals. It is therein that mostly used linguistic characteristics are registered as the ones used by opinion leaders for the construction of convincing statements.

The opinion leaders studied are especially socially active employees of the banking sector, the most popular experts in economics (in 2013) which have been ranked as top opinion leaders for a number of years already.¹

Relevance and novelty of the thesis. So far, no thorough pieces of research of opinion leaders' language have been conducted in Lithuania. The present thesis constitutes the first analysis of opinion leaders' language aimed at determining and reviewing core properties of their language. The thesis examines and describes opinion leaders' comments from the rhetoric point of view. A comment represents the main means used by opinion leaders to exercise influence on the enormous audience of various media channels. Therefore, not only can the comment's analysis disclose speaking methods helping to attract the attention of the media and its audience, but also encourage readers to make a more critical assessment of the information provided in the media.

Due to the fact that the essence of rhetorics, to date, has been to communicate, make a verbal impact and convince², this study is crucial in its ambition of both recognising and understanding various stylistic linguistic shades as well as being able to construct a convincing, substantiated and vivid comment for a wide audience. In addition, disclosure of universal models of persuasion generates a more critical attitude towards opinion leaders' comments and the arguments they put forward. This is particularly important in a world where various texts are used not only to inform but also to affect readers by offering one's own approach to them and encouraging them to make certain decisions or take specific steps. On the other hand, language analysis of the texts of individuals most frequently mentioned in the Lithuanian media can prove beneficial for experts in various fields seeking to create powerful discourses.

¹ <http://www.tns.lt/lt/news/tns-lt-banku-atstovu-nuomone-vis-dar-paklausiausia/> (Accessed on 21/06/2015)

² Irene Buckley, 2006, 19.

Aims and objectives of the study. The purpose of the present study is to identify the dominating linguistic features in opinion leaders' comments employed to achieve rhetoric success.

To accomplish the aim in mind, the following objectives have been defined:

1. To determine the arguments used by opinion leaders in their comments most often, the functions of those arguments and their typical placement in articles.
2. To establish how social evaluation is revealed in a comment (the role of modal means).
3. To examine which linguistic properties are characteristic of the beginning of a comment – headings formulated by opinion leaders and journalists.
4. To identify stylistic features dominant in opinion leaders' comments as well as understand their impact.

Structure of the thesis. The thesis comprises the introduction, four chapters of the main part, conclusions and bibliography. The introduction describes the problem in question, the aim and related objectives of the thesis, novelty and relevance of the thesis as well as the material studied along with work methods; it also discusses papers by Lithuanian and foreign researchers related to the research theme. In addition, it provides a more detailed description of a comment as the principal communication means of an opinion leader. Part One thoroughly defines the concept of an opinion leader and the functions of his/her language. Part Two is dedicated to the reasoning type of a comment text; it identifies reasoning methods mostly used by opinion leaders based on figures, personal insights, economic knowledge, facts, examples, authority figures, comparisons, analogies and personal experience. Part Three represents an attempt to determine how social evaluation is revealed in a comment, which modal means disclose the author's approach towards the matter in question and help to offer one's attitude to addressees in a more convincing manner. Part Four explores the beginning of a comment, the headline, and discusses linguistic means contained therein used to help attract the attention of online news portal visitors and to convince them to read the article offered. Part Five describes rhetoric stylistic features found in opinion leaders' comments such as tropes and rhetoric figures. The thesis is ended by conclusions based on the thesis' findings and a list of literature and sources.

Theoretical and practical value of the thesis and its application. The present thesis is among the first opinion leaders' linguistic studies aimed at identifying essential linguistic features of an opinion leader. Owing to the fact that opinion leaders influence a large audience through their language, it is critical to be able to determine and assess powerful linguistic properties shaping the public opinion. The thesis attempts to analyse and describe, in a systematic manner, mostly used opinion leaders' linguistic properties as seen in Lithuanian online news portals. Since the very definition of an opinion leader is closely linked to the field of public relations, the paper takes into account both linguistic and social circumstances. Such an approach, based on different disciplines, makes it possible to conduct a more careful examination of the field which is relevant for communication and information experts and linguists alike.

Statements to be defended

1. Opinion leaders' comments, irrespective of their length, reveal the individual style of a commentator's language.
2. Arguments in opinion leaders' comments represent the main tool helping not only to substantiate statements, but also to provide convincing suggestions and create a personal image.
3. Interpersonal relationship markers constitute an important linguistic means helping opinion leaders to avoid dogmatic statements while expressing criticism.
4. At the beginning of a comment, crucial roles are played by an opinion leader's surname and assessment-type opinions.
5. Rhetoric stylistic devices are linguistic instruments which impart clarity and persuasiveness as well as promote readers' interest.

Overview of previous studies. Due to the fact that linguistic characteristics of the most popular opinion leaders of Lithuania have not been explored so far, the thesis was written under the guidance of Lithuanian and foreign authors' works analysing various aspects of rhetorics, the media and leadership. Even though the term *opinion leader* was first mentioned back in 1948 (in a study by Lazarsfeld, Berelson and Gaudet), the scope of information on this topic in Lithuania is still particularly scarce. However, opinion leaders' language has many links with the rhetorics of politicians, therefore, valuable insights on this subject have been found in Jurga Cibulskienė's doctoral thesis (2006) describing the

conceptual metaphor³ and in V. Makarova's doctoral thesis (2008) analysing the reasoning technique⁴ and identifying some political leaders' linguistic features, which are to be linked to opinion leaders' rhetorics from certain points of view. Nedas Jurgaitis (2014)⁵ was even closer to opinion leaders by describing conceptual metaphors in the economic discourse.

The principal research theme – a comment – has been described on the basis of the book by Rūta Marcinkevičienė, *Žanro ribos ir paribiai* (2008), and the book by Jolanta Mažylė, *Rašto raiškos žanrų klasifikavimas: tradicija ir konvergencija* (a collective monograph, 2012), whereas the space of opinion leaders' language (online news portals) and its specific features – on the basis of the study by A. Bitinienė, *Publicistinis stilius* (2007), a collective monograph *Medijos, žiniasklaida, žurnalistika tradicinėje ir tinklaveikos visuomenėje* (2012) and the book by Ž. Pečiulis, *Kaip bendrauti su žiniasklaida* (2014). Bearing in mind that the fundamentals of the thesis are comprised of rhetorics studies, the main scientific literature used included the books by R. Koženiaukienė, *Retorika: iškalbos stilistika* (2001), *Juridinė retorika* (2005) and *Retorinė ir stilistinė publicistinių tekstų analizė* (2013), the monograph by I. Buckley, *Retorikos tradicija XIX amžiaus lietuvių literatūroje* (2006), along with the book by I. Tatolytė, *Praktinė retorika vertėjams žodžiu* (2014), all of which thoroughly discuss tropes and rhetoric figures as well as theoretical and practical aspects of reasoning, text construction and eloquence.

To describe and examine the types of reasoning, the following books by Lithuanian authors were made use of: *Teisinio argumentavimo teorija* (1999) by Dalia and Valentinas Mikelėnai and *Teksto komponavimas: rašymo procesas ir tekstų tipai* (2002) by Zita Nauckūnaitė. A comprehensive book by David Zarefsky, *Public Speaking: Strategies for Success* (2011), provides a wide basis for the classification of reasoning which has helped to identify reasoning types relevant for opinion leaders. In his book *The Charismatic Edge The Art of Captivating and Compelling Communication* (2013), Owen Fitzpatrick suggests certain steps that could assist in influencing the society. While Chip Heath

³ Cibulskienė Jurga, 2006, *Konceptualioji metafora Lietuvos ir Didžiosios Britanijos rinkimų diskursuose*, doctoral thesis in humanities, Vilnius University.

⁴ Makarova Viktorija, 2008, *Argumentavimo technika šiuolaikiniame rusų ir lietuvių politiniame diskurse* (based on annual Presidents' state-of-the-nation addresses of 2000–2007), doctoral thesis in humanities, Vilnius University.

⁵ Būdvytė-Gudienė Aina, Aloyzas Gudavičius, Nedas Jurgaitis, Silvija Papaurėlytė-Klovienė, Reda Toleikienė, 2014, *Konceptualiosios metaforos viešajame diskurse*, Šiauliai.

together with Dan Heath help to recognise those powerful methods in their book *Made to Stick: Why Some Ideas Survive and Others Die* (2008), and Robert B. Cialdini also helps to explain why this works – in his book *Influence: The Psychology of Persuasion* (2016). In addition, opinion leaders take an interest in the power of systematised arguments and heuristics discussed by Visvaldas Legkauskas in his book *Socialinė psichologija*.

Metadiscourse studies and the classification of metalanguage markers provided in *Metadiscourse: Exploring Interaction in Writing* (2005) by Ken Hyland, *Mood and Modality* by Frank Palmer and a scientific study by Jolanta Šinkūnienė, *Lietuviškojo humanitarinių ir socialinių mokslų diskurso ypatybės* (2014), have helped to group modal words and analyse meanings of modality proposed by opinion leaders. For that purpose, papers by A. Usonienė (2006) and Erika Jasionytė-Mikučionienė (2014) have proved beneficial, too.

Lietuvių kalbos sintaksė (1998) by Vitas Labutis as well as the studies by Bitinienė (2007) and R. Marcinkevičienė (2008) have helped to define the headline and its very essence, whereas the book by Robert Boduch, *Great Headlines Instantly*, – to discuss contemporary trends in headlines. To describe photos placed next to the headlines, the following publications were useful, namely, *Pokyčiai Lietuvos fotožurnalistikoje – naujosios žiniasklaidos formavimasis Lietuvoje* (2000) by Virgilijus Juodakis, *Spaudos fotografijos reikšmė asmens identiteto formavimui* (2005) by Tomas Pabedinskas and *Kultūra kaip žinia. Nuo ženklo iki teksto* (2007) by Kęstutis Meškis. Photos do not represent linguistic expression, nevertheless, together with captions they make an impact on a reader's choice of reading material.

Examination of rhetoric stylistic means very often focuses on a trope, which is generally used by opinion leaders, that is, the metaphor. The studies of this trope are especially numerous, however, to avoid too much detail, only core aspects typical of opinion leaders have been identified. Thus the point of departure was the paper by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (1980), which negates the stereotypical approach to metaphors as a linguistic decoration by asserting that metaphors constitute a natural part of our daily life and that it is through metaphors that world outlook is expressed. Emotional value of the metaphor and its power to convey new information was discussed by John Fiske (1990), Paul Ricoeur (2000) and Yuri Lotman (2000). Thanks to their ability to catch shades not conveyed by other means, conceptual metaphors play a significant role in the

study; these metaphors are discussed more thoroughly by Aloyzas Gudavičius (2014), Silvija Papaurėlytė-Klovienė (2004), Zoltan Kövecses (2002), Eglė Vaivadaitė-Kaidi (2011) and Dainora Maumevičienė (2010). The study also made good use of health-related metaphor research by Justina Urbonaitė and Inesa Šeškauskienė (2007) along with metaphor studies by Jurga Cibulskienė (2005, 2006), Irena Smetonienė (2003) and Andrew Ortony (1993).

A brief overview of papers written on similar subjects demonstrates that studies of opinion leaders' language are not wide-spread in Lithuania yet. Therefore, this thesis is expected to supplement opinion leaders' studies from a linguistic perspective.

Research material and research methods. One of the key preconditions for an opinion leader's existence – social activity. Consequently, an opinion leader is first identified from a quantitative point of view, namely, according to the number of quotations in the media. As per findings of TNS LT studies⁶, employees of the banking sector and economics experts have been ranked as top opinion leaders for a number of years already. That is why, the present thesis discusses the functions and linguistic features of opinion leaders using the following most popular opinion leaders in Lithuania (2013) as examples: Nerijus Mačiulis, chief economics expert of Swedbank most often mentioned in the Lithuanian media, Gitanas Nausėda, adviser to the president of SEB bank, Violeta Klyvienė, former senior analyst of Danske Bank for the Baltic countries, and Odeta Bložienė, former head of the Swedbank institute of personal finances in Lithuania. Since the popularity of opinion leaders depends not only on the number of comments written by them but also on presentation of their opinion through journalists, it is also crucial to examine articles written by journalists with comments of opinion leaders in question. Thus the texts chosen for examination will include both written opinion leaders' texts and texts written by journalists containing comments provided by opinion leaders verbally or in writing. For the purpose of analysis, a hundred of comments by each opinion leader have been collected, including 50 comments written by opinion leaders and 50 comments written by journalists containing opinion leaders' comments together with the general context (paraphrasing, headlines, etc.). Because of differences in the length of opinion leaders' comments in the two types of articles, the said comments are examined and

⁶ <http://www.tns.lt/lt/news/tns-lt-banku-atstovu-nuomone-vis-dar-paklausiausia/> (Accessed on 21/06/2015)

assessed separately. Still, regardless of differences in the number of comments' characters, the tables below provide a summary of dominant linguistic elements revealing certain trends. The total number of articles studied is 400 (1,911,186 characters without spaces, 2,199,985 characters with spaces) which were published in online news portals *Alfa.lt*, *Delfi.lt*, *Lrytas.lt*, *Veidas.lt*, *Vz.lt* and *15min.lt* in 2010–2015. The articles were collected using the media monitoring tool PR.LT that helped to find articles mentioning the opinion leaders chosen published in various media news portals.

To achieve the aim of the thesis, the following research methods have been applied:

First, statistical calculations have been conducted to determine linguistic aspects of the comment genre which are most typical in opinion leaders' comments (most frequently used). Examination of reasoning models, modality forms, headlines and stylistic (rhetoric) means is carried out using their classification and rhetoric qualitative analysis. Metaphors have been identified employing the Metaphor Identification Procedure Method (*Pragglejaz Group, 2007*).

RESULTS OF THE STUDY

Taking into account the main purpose of the present study, namely, to examine and describe dominant linguistic features of opinion leaders' comments used to achieve rhetoric success, the first aspects which have been identified were those typical of the comment genre, that is, factual and emotional reasoning, social assessment, starting a comment with a headline and usage of various rhetoric stylistic means.

Reasoning – the principal linguistic tool of an opinion leader. A more detailed analysis was commenced from the principal linguistic tool of an opinion leader – reasoning. The study revealed the arguments used by opinion leaders in their comments most frequently, the functions performed by the said arguments and the arguments' placement typical of comments. The analysis of articles written by Nerijus Mačiulis, Gitanas Nausėda, Violeta Klyvienė and Odeta Bložienė and published in online news portals in 2010-2015 and the selection of arguments contained therein made it possible to determine nine methods of reasoning based on figures, personal insights, economic knowledge, facts, examples, authority figures, comparisons, analogies and personal experience. The popularity of their usage is shown in Figure 1. The study has also revealed that both long comments (article-type) and short comments (contained in journalists' texts) usually include the same arguments.

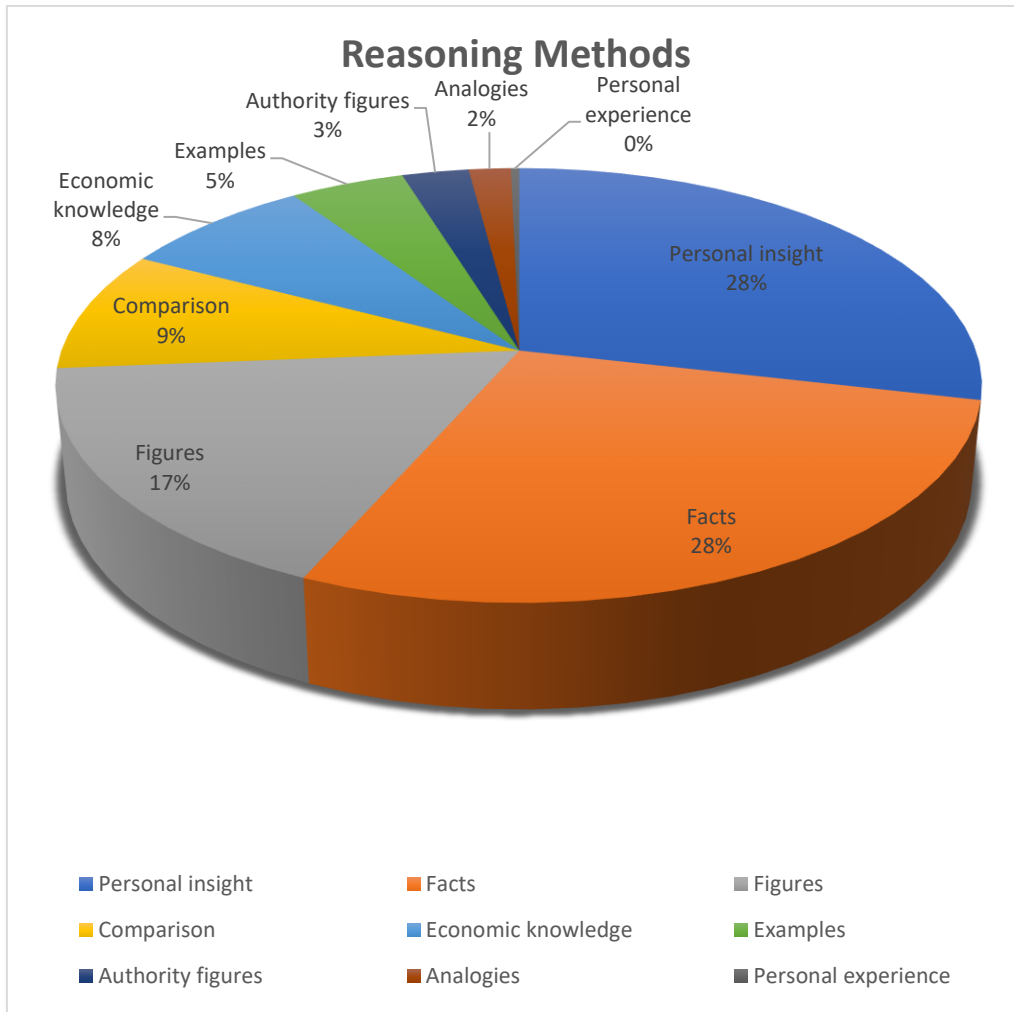


Figure 1. *Frequency of usage of reasoning methods in all studied articles*

Table 1 provides a brief description of the functions of each reasoning method in more detail.

Table 1. *Usage and functions of reasoning methods*

Reasoning method	Usage	Function	Used most frequently by
Based on personal insight	28% (1,422 units)	To reveal author's competence, increase personal authority, make forecasts, criticise the government's actions, provide suggestions.	In his articles – Nausėda, in journalists' articles – Mačiulis and Bložienė.
Based on facts	28% (1,389 units)	To provide readers with factual knowledge, highlight desirable aspects, substantiate their statements by imparting them with a background of factual information.	In their articles – Nausėda, Klyvienė and Bložienė, in journalists' articles – Mačiulis, Nausėda, Bložienė.
Based on figures	17% (850 units)	Based on exact figures, to provide tangibility, help understand economic phenomena, assess, make forecasts. In the absence of exact figures, to manipulate statistical data in order to create an impression of specificity and the undeniable fact.	In their articles – Klyvienė and Mačiulis, in journalists' articles – Mačiulis and Bložienė.
Based on comparison	9% (448 units)	To help understand the situation in a wider context, expand a reader's horizon, encourage an addressee to consider and discuss with an addresser.	In their articles – Klyvienė and Nausėda, in journalists' articles – Bložienė and Klyvienė.
Based on economic knowledge	8% (390 units)	To represent an addresser as an expert of his/her field able to apply the possessed knowledge in various contexts. In such a	In his articles – Nausėda, in journalists' articles –

		manner, to promote confidence in the expert and in what he/she says.	Nausėda, Klyvienė, Mačiulis.
Based on examples	5% (232 units)	Providing substantiation of one statement with factual examples, to encourage a reader to suppose that other statements are also accurate. Concentrating more than one example in a comment, to increase likelihood of persuasion.	In their articles – Mačiulis, Nausėda and Bložienė, in journalists' articles – Bložienė.
Based on authority figures	3% (135 units)	To make an impression and convince addressees that individuals/agencies are sufficiently representative in order to believe their statements/calculations.	In her articles – Klyvienė, in journalists' articles – Mačiulis and Klyvienė.
Based on analogies	2% (85 units)	To help describe matters more vividly and provide clarity. By providing an explanation in other words and conveying complex situations more simply, to attract a larger audience.	In his articles and journalists' articles – Nausėda.
Based on personal experience	0.4% (17 units)	To convince by balancing between rationality and emotions.	In his articles – Nausėda, in journalists' articles – Bložienė.

A review of all reasoning methods makes it possible to assert that each of those methods can make an impact on readers if it is logical, understandable and compelling. Likewise, every argument used shapes an opinion leader's image. The arguments which are used most frequently, however, are based on personal insights and on facts. The former reveal the author's competence and increase his/her personal authority more than other reasoning methods described. The latter are called by experts the surest and most reliable guarantee

of evidence. One set of arguments focuses on the person speaking, while the other one – on the matter in question. This synergy helps create the image of an opinion leader as a reliable and professional expert in his/her field.

Even though the total number of arguments used by each opinion leader is similar, the fascinating fact is that, in articles written by him, it is G. Nausėda who uses most arguments, and in articles written by journalists – N. Mačiulis. And vice versa, N. Mačiulis uses the least number of arguments in his articles, and G. Nausėda – in journalists' articles. This makes it possible to assert that opinion leaders, who substantiate their statements more strongly in their own texts, have to provide fewer arguments while answering journalists' questions. And vice versa, if they provide fewer arguments in their own texts to support their statements, they have to do that more often in reply to journalists' questions.

As for the arguments used, the effectiveness of their placement in a comment has also been reviewed. A chart provided in Figure 2 illustrates the most efficient structure of a comment⁷ as well as the sequence of arguments therein. A comment starts with a headline containing an evaluative statement or a specific question. A sub-headline serving as an article's introduction usually attempts to identify with the audience or explain why it is crucial to discuss this issue. Next, an additional argument is inserted, namely, a representative photo of a comment's author. The very text is usually presented using induction, and less frequently – deduction. This demonstrates that the opinion leaders' audience tends to explore the problems in question instead of taking a superficial approach.

The analysis of all articles studied as an aggregate shows that all methods of argument presentation are used in a similar manner, whereas the examination of each opinion leader's texts separately demonstrates major differences in usage. At the beginning of a comment, the weakest arguments are usually provided by G. Nausėda. In all likelihood, his authority enables the management of this type of risk – retention of attention without an interest in a comment's beginning. O. Bložienė, on the contrary, starts her comments with the strongest arguments (her work experience is much less extensive). Essential highlights at a comment's beginning attract attention and make an impression from the very first sentences. While *Ordo Homericus*, the method of presentation of arguments said

⁷ A comment's efficiency is assessed based on the frequency of usage.

to be the most reliable, is mostly used in comments by N. Mačiulis. Sequencing his arguments like soldiers, he optimally increases the probability that his comment will be read from beginning to end. And, finally, a comment generally ends with the thesis (statement) of proof. Success of opinion leaders' comments shows that a thesis (statement) in this position is the best method of encouraging readers to read the entire article.

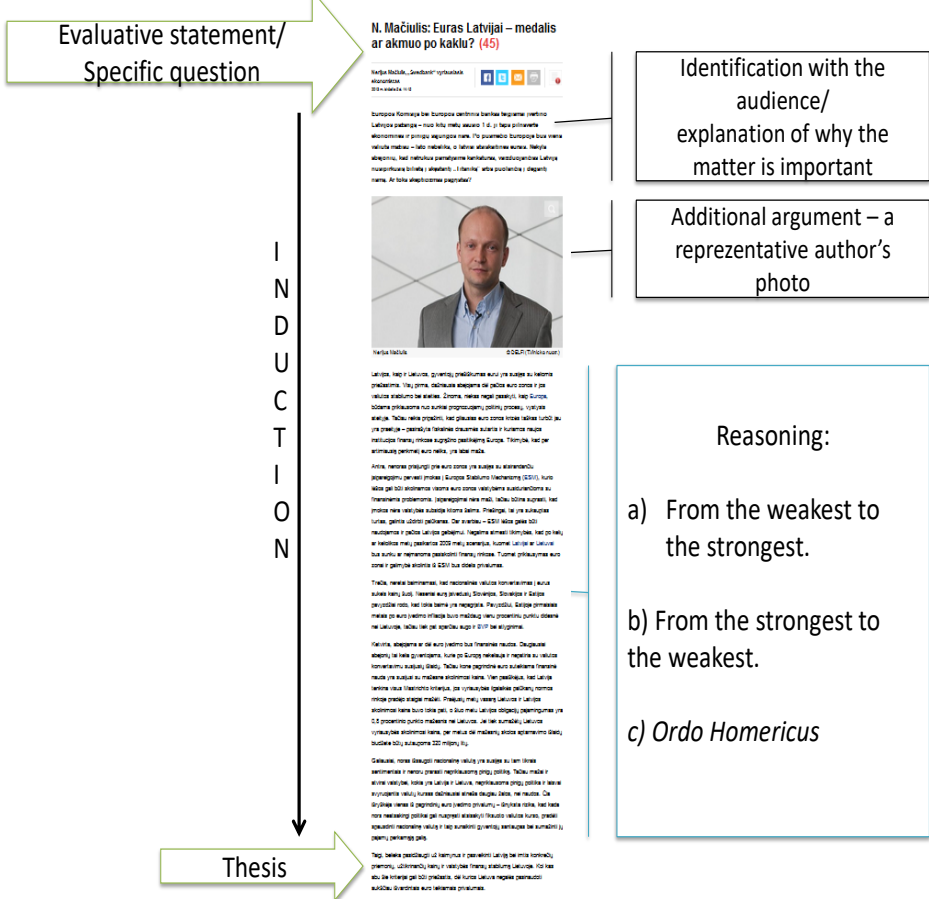


Figure 2. A chart of reasoning mostly used in opinion leaders' articles

Meanings of modality. The examination of reasoning is followed by a more detailed analysis of social assessment. In opinion leaders' texts, it is often revealed through lexical units meaning modality. In the study, they were called metadiscourse markers described by J. Šinkūnienė (2014, 78–109) and divided (according to the Hyland theory, 2005b) into two groups – those of internal text metalanguage and those of an interpersonal relationship. Even though Lithuanian modal words do not form a strict paradigm and it is impossible to identify a set of structural features making it possible to establish whether a concrete unit belongs to the category of modality or not, Hyland's breakdown of metadiscourse markers

helps understand the general trends of marker usage by opinion leaders showing the level of opinion leaders' certainty in their statements.

Internal text metalanguage markers demonstrate opinion leaders' understanding of a reader's knowledge, rhetoric expectations and requirements for the text's cohesion as well as help a reader to orient him/herself in the text. Whereas interpersonal relationship markers show a reader opinion leader's attitude towards the matters discussed and shape the relationship between the author and the reader. This category includes hedges, boosters and attitude markers.

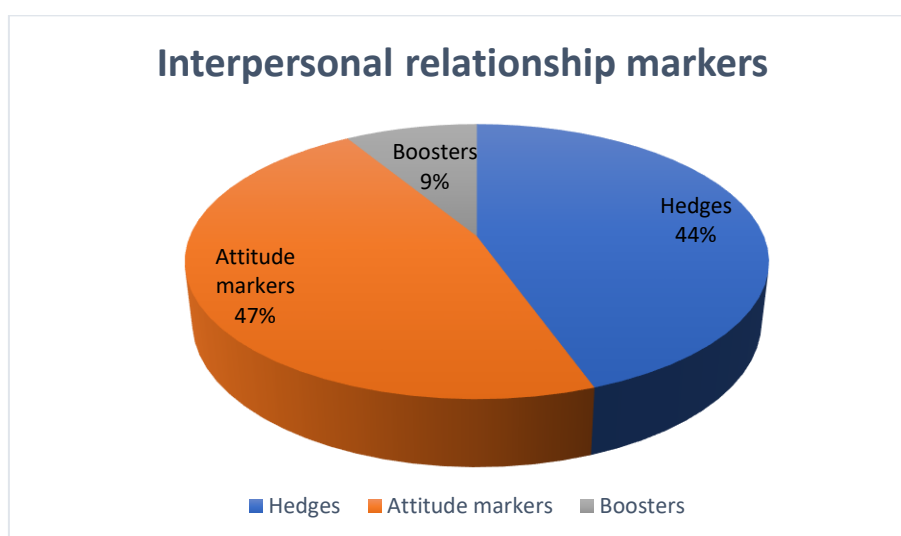


Figure 3. Usage of interpersonal relationship markers

It is these interpersonal relationship markers that usually express opinion leaders' attitude towards the matters discussed. Attitude markers account for 47 per cent of all markers of this type, hedges – for almost the same percentage (44 per cent), while boosters – for a mere 9 per cent. Thus dogmatic statements are much less prevalent than personal insights and doubts.

The majority of attitude markers (78 per cent) comprise *unfortunately* (Lithuanian: *deja*), which is most often used by G. Nausėda both in his and journalists' articles, and least frequently – by V. Klyvienė. Even though the use of this marker in the middle of an article first creates the impression of regret, it is in fact generally used to express indirect resentment or criticism. Usage of this marker at the start of an article as if hints to a reader how to assess the matters in question. At the end, opinion leaders use *unfortunately* (Lithuanian: *deja*) in order to express regret and attract attention towards a proposed solution. The attitude marker *paradoxically* (Lithuanian: *paradoksalu*) is used much less

often. It is usually used at the start of a sentence in order to disparage and mock certain matters or actions under discussion and attract attention to the author's suggestions. The least often used marker *it's a shame* (Lithuanian: *gaila*) creates a similar impact like *unfortunately* (Lithuanian: *deja*). Matters defined by it are mostly perceived by the majority as negative and worthy of regret.

The percentage of hedges (44 per cent) is similar to that of attitude markers. Opinion leaders quite often use hedges in order to convince without being dogmatic. The hedges used most frequently include *maybe/perhaps* (Lithuanian: *gal/galbūt*) (52 per cent), *most likely* (Lithuanian: *greičiausiai*) (15 per cent) and *probably/likely* (Lithuanian: *turbūt*) (13 per cent). At the beginning of an article, particle *maybe/perhaps* (Lithuanian: *gal*) acts as a cautious word and helps pose courageous questions. In the middle of an article, *maybe/perhaps* (Lithuanian: *gal*) is used in a similar manner – in order to take precautions and avoid the impression of dogmatic statements when the author talks about matters that he/she is not completely sure about. At the end of an article, this particle performs an encouraging function and, at the same time, expresses internal author's doubt regarding the accuracy of matters in question. Hedge *most likely* (Lithuanian: *greičiausiai*) – in the middle of an article – mitigates the statement and helps avoid dogmatic statements, whereas after statements expressing certainty it also becomes similar to an undeniable fact. At the end of an article, it helps express critical ideas and doubts politely as well as avoid responsibility should the statements be negated in the future. At the beginning of an article, it not only helps take precautions but also develop the idea. Hedge *probably/likely* (Lithuanian: *turbūt*) is used almost as frequently as *almost* (Lithuanian: *beveik*). In the middle of an article, opinion leaders' considerations remind of statements wherein *probably/likely* (Lithuanian: *turbūt*) is used as a precaution. At the beginning of an article, *probably/likely* (Lithuanian: *turbūt*) is generally used in stating-type sentences not to express a doubt but to take precautions and help convince. At the end, *probably/likely* (Lithuanian: *turbūt*) is employed to take precautions with regard to the concluding statement.

Although boosters are used most seldom, they particularly strengthen the persuasiveness of a statement. Here are the percentages of some of the boosters employed: adverb *really/sure* (Lithuanian: *tikrai*) meaning modal necessity is found most often (44 per cent), whereas *thus* (Lithuanian: *taigi*) (15 per cent), *clearly/certainly* (Lithuanian:

aišku) (10 per cent) and *obvious* (Lithuanian: *akivaizdu*) (10 per cent) are used much more seldom. In the middle of an article, *really/sure* (Lithuanian: *tikrai*) helps ensure that what is said in the first part of the statement will come true. At the end of an article, this marker with high level of probability imparts certainty to the generalisation, while at the beginning, it is often used to formulate a problematic question. Marker *clearly/certainly* (Lithuanian: *aišku*) helps reveal the author's position with regard to the matter in question and present the author's proposals as being required. Such epistemic modality in statements helps create the impression of undeniable truth.

All interpersonal relationship markers are mostly employed in the middle of an article (approximately 50 per cent of the markers discussed), that is, in the presentation part. Since the text of this part is usually least memorable, details revealing the author's personal attitude and thus promoting interest are especially valuable here.

Headline, a comment's captivating beginning. In contemporary news portals, headlines are the main means of attracting attention. Due to their expressiveness, they can attract readers' attention and encourage them to read the entire article. For this reason, they represent excellent beginnings of opinion leaders' comments usually containing key words and phrases.

In this thesis, headlines have been divided into the following groups according to their structure: statements, rhetoric questions, quotations and instructions/encouraging statements. Opinion leaders' articles are dominated by headlines-statements (69 per cent), rhetoric questions account for about a half of that amount (29 per cent), and the percentage of instructions/encouraging statements is the lowest (2 per cent). As for quotations, it is possible to assert that 78 per cent of headlines of opinion leaders' articles are quotations because they contain an opinion leader's surname. Such a position of the surname provides readers with certain information – if the reader has read comments of the said author before, he/she will have an intuitive feeling as to what type of information can be expected and whether the author can be trusted. On the other hand, referral to the surname increases the popularity of the author. However, since opinion leaders' articles quote the author him/herself instead of another person, such a headline in this thesis is regarded as the author's statement, question or encouraging statement with the author's surname specified next to it. Certainly, such headlines retain the quotation's impact because readers probably

respond to them not like to ordinary statements but like to phrases pronounced by concrete authority figures.

Headlines of journalists' articles are also dominated by statements (48 per cent) and contain the same percentage of rhetoric questions as articles written by opinion leaders (29 per cent). Nevertheless, unlike opinion leaders, journalists use quotations by other authors in headlines. These account for 22 per cent of headlines and usually belong to opinion leaders or their groups. In fact, instructions/encouraging statements are also sometimes employed, but they only comprise 1 per cent, therefore, they have not been discussed more thoroughly.

Even though headlines-statements quite often create an impression of a piece of objective news, attitude statements constitute 47 per cent of all statements in headlines written by journalists, and 94 per cent – in headlines written by opinion leaders. Some expression of attitude is found even in factual statements because fact selection and the angle of their presentation are subjective matters. Subjectivity in headlines is appreciated since, in a modern information flow which is especially intense, the main function of a headline no longer is a brief description of a piece of news, but an attention-catching statement wherein the author's insight on the news quite often is more important than the news is.

Journalists and opinion leaders use headlines-questions in a very similar manner (in both cases, this group of headlines comprises 29 per cent). In both cases again, two-thirds of headlines-rhetoric questions comprise specific questions, and the remaining part – verifying questions. Specific questions are usually expressive and encourage listening, stopping to reflect and doubt, thus increasing interest. Verifying questions generally start with the interrogating particle *whether* (Lithuanian: *ar*) and promote reflection and expressing one's own opinion at least in the mind along with taking actions.

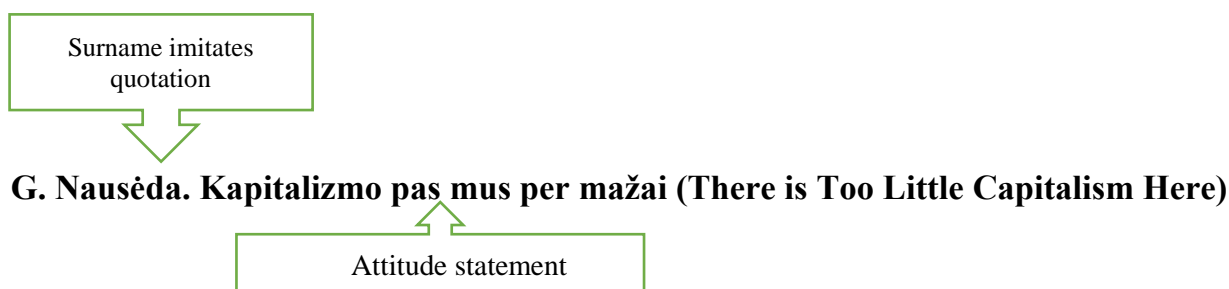
Headlines-quotations in articles by journalists and opinion leaders are similar in that, in both, opinion leaders are usually quoted. The percentage of such quotations in opinion leaders' headlines is equal to 78 per cent, and in journalists' headlines – 22 per cent. The former quote the very author of the article, while the latter – different opinion leaders. 70 per cent of journalists' quotations are accurate and only 30 per cent – paraphrased. The former are mostly advanced to the beginning of a comment from the text provided further in order to reveal an intriguing detail and incite curiosity, the latter perform the same

function in another form – by using a different wording. Therefore, it is possible to assert that all headlines-quotations seek to attract attention by using a popular opinion leader’s surname and a hint of a curiosity-causing comment.

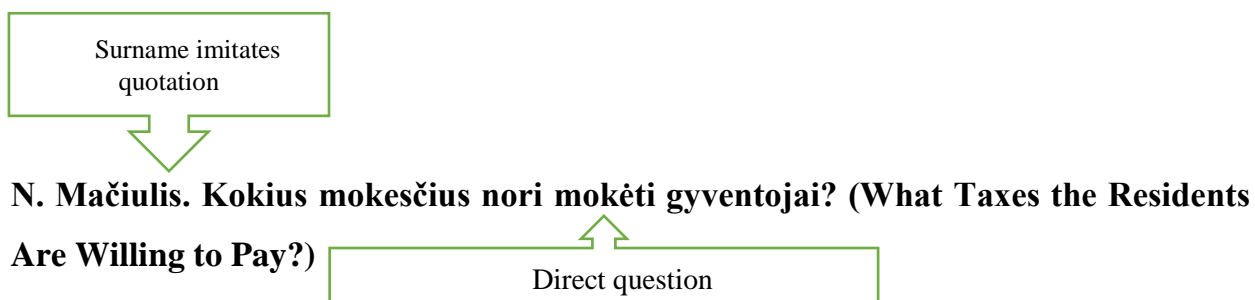
To sum up, it is crucial to remember that the majority of opinion leaders’ headlines (78 per cent) are in fact attitude statements imitating quotations which attempt to cause interest with the help of a subjective opinion. Headlines-questions – even if less popular – create the impression of a dialogue by their expressivity and encourage readers to become involved in the discussion more actively. As for the quotations in headlines, it must be mentioned that a significant role in them is played by an opinion leader’ surname that not only refers to the comment’s author but also acts as a guarantee confirming the importance of the speaker and his/her comment and thus attracting the readers’ attention.

Examples of most frequently used types of headlines:

(142)



(143)



It is noteworthy that, in terms of attracting readers' interest, an important role is also played by an illustration placed next to the headline, usually portraying the opinion leader mentioned in the comment.

Rhetoric stylistic features. The articles studied mostly contain tropes. They account for 90 per cent of all rhetoric stylistic means, whereas rhetoric figures – only for 10 per cent thereof.

Tropes. In the articles in question, tropes comprise 90 per cent of all rhetoric stylistic means. This shows that opinion leaders' language is vivid, lively, compelling. A trope which is mostly used is a metaphor – it expands the language naturally, imparts the shape to it and helps explain the idea under development. In order to convey the countries' events more convincingly, opinion leaders often employ metonymies of place. Object metonymy is beneficial not only due to its brevity, but also due to its vividness, which helps highlight the necessary words. To express criticism, opinion leaders frequently use irony. Therefore, the positive understanding of an action serves as a means of attracting addressees' attention to the subject under criticism. Whereas irony is employed to attract attention to the government's actions and the vices of the population and government. Metonymic periphrasis imparts the situation in question with more persuasiveness, while metaphoric periphrasis – with vividness by verbally helping illustrate the matters discussed, highlight differences and provide clarity to the comment. Hyperbole – a means to strengthen highlights and disclose the comic character of a situation – is first employed to enhance the largeness of a matter or phenomenon. A major part of hyperboles is shaded with black humour stressing the absurd nature of a situation. Subtle mocking not only criticises phenomena, but also evokes alertness. And the usage of irony together with hyperbole increases the probability not only of attracting attention, but also of memorisation. Litotes are employed by opinion leaders to attract attention to, in their opinion, particularly poor figures posing problems now or able to pose problems in the future. Likewise, this trope could also be suitable to reveal the speaker's point of view. Now, oxymoron first serves as an excellent means of attracting attention and awakening conscience. The reader has to stop in order to understand the author's idea behind such a combination of antonyms. Besides, it is a wonderful instrument to convey the unusual character, problems or absurdity of the situation in question.

Although every trope independently performs a certain function, the maximum result is sought by using a few different stylistic rhetoric means at the same time.

Rhetoric figures. A rhetoric question is a rhetoric figure employed by opinion leaders most often. Examples show that interrogation is particularly suitable for an ending. It promotes alertness thus helping to memorise the main statements. It can also serve to make generalisations leaving a reader some space to reflect and even change his/her approach. In opinion leaders' articles, subjection is used in order to suddenly attract readers' attention and interest them in reading further. Therefore, its format is especially appropriate at the beginning of an article, in order to attract attention and keep an interest in reading further; but also in the very presentation of an article, in order to maintain an interest. Whereas dubitation, which is used most seldom, helps avoid the impression of dogmatic statements and shapes an image of attentive and consistent analysts. Ellipsis not only makes a text closer, but also helps maintain readers' attention when that is particularly relevant – in the middle of an article. Intensifying thinking processes like this, it helps achieve optimum interest in the text. Opinion leaders also use it seeking an impression of a livelier language, because simple language, used day-to-day, makes it easier to reach a reader without knowledge of economics. Due to its ability to destroy surplus, ellipsis is especially useful in headlines and titles of separate article parts (so-called sub-themes). Therein, ellipsis breaks the text down into separate units and, together with briefness, provides more vividness and intrigue. **Antithesis**, as a natural part of the human thinking process, imparts opinion leaders' texts with sound and playfulness and, at the same time, helps achieve approval, provokes and promotes critical reflection. It is also used to create the impression of consistent analysis and a comprehensive overview, which increases confidence in the author. Oppositions, emphasised with the help of antithesis, explain statistical indicators in a vivid and understandable manner, reveal the fundamental problem and even, as it were, control readers' attention. Its expressiveness is especially suitable for headlines which need to increase readers' interest and direct them to the article for the details, without disclosing them first. Even though it is not a frequent rhetoric figure, gradation is excellent in situations requiring a stronger highlight or consistency. It is also beneficial in order to pause and focus a reader's attention on a certain concrete subject or phenomenon. Whereas rhetoric aposiopesis is employed in opinion leaders' articles to help negate

misleading convictions dominating in the society – by first encouraging to stop and listen, reflect and then proposing possible solutions.

Rhetoric means are generally used in articles written by opinion leaders. That is determined by the possibility to present one's own opinion more extensively and a stricter need for concreteness in replying to journalists' questions.

CONCLUSIONS

The analysis of articles written by opinion leaders and journalists along with the information provided by opinion leaders and editors of news portals make it possible to conclude the following:

1. The study conducted reveals that both long comments (written by opinion leaders) and short comments (contained in articles written by journalists) employ similar linguistic means shaping an original language style. Both writing article-type comments themselves and providing brief comments to journalists asking for their opinion, opinion leaders mostly use the same arguments, the same (or similar) internal text metalanguage and interpersonal relationship markers as well as the same rhetoric stylistic means. Thus their speaking style remains distinctively consistent regardless of a comment's nature.

2. The synergy of reasoning methods used by opinion leaders most often – those based on personal insights and on facts – helps them seek personal objectives, such as revealing their competence, enhancing personal authority, promoting reliance on forecasts, criticising and offering proposals. Even though all arguments used to substantiate statements make an impact on opinion leaders' image, some are more focused on substantiation of factual nature, while others – on confidence in the addresser. Reasoning based on personal insights promotes reliance on an opinion leader's competence, whereas reasoning based on facts – reliance on universal norms. The fact that personal insights account for about one third of all arguments makes it possible to assert that the very fact of reasoning is no less important than accuracy of arguments. The dominant inductive type of reasoning shows that the target audience of opinion leaders is interested not only in facts, but also in their causes, reasons, related details and possible consequences. Quite often, a problem question is posed at the very beginning of a comment, while the answer is provided at the end of an article. Therefore, if a reader wants to find out the answer,

he/she must read (or at least look through) the entire article. Such a dominant type of reasoning proves that readers are interested in an opinion leader's opinion and insights. Thus any suggestions, put forward in such argument-based comments, become highly convincing.

3. Opinion leaders' comments are dominated by attitude markers and hedges. The majority of employed attitude markers are *unfortunately* (Lithuanian: *deja*) which is used to express resentment or criticism and offer an assessment. Hedges are used by opinion leaders in order to convince without being dogmatic. *Maybe/perhaps* (Lithuanian: *gal*), accounting for over a half of all hedges, helps pose courageous questions, encourage and take precautions (avoiding the impression of a dogmatic statement). Although boosters are seldom employed, they particularly enhance the persuasiveness of a statement. The most frequent booster *really/sure* (Lithuanian: *tikrai*) imparts the generalisation with certainty and helps formulate problem questions in a convincing manner. All the interpersonal relationship markers are mostly used in the middle of an article – which is the least memorable part thereof – where the details revealing the author's personal approach and thus promoting interest are especially valuable (in order to maintain attention).

4. A headline, the beginning of a comment, which is most frequently employed by opinion leaders is a quotation imitating an attitude statement. By using an opinion leader's surname at the start of a headline, a comment is ascribed to a concrete individual the popularity of the name whereof promotes interest in a text along with creating the impression of a quotation. Personal attitude-based opinions dominating the headlines usually define the article's core or represent an unexpected idea which raises interest because of that. Used less frequently, headlines-questions are especially powerful due to their expressiveness, they also create the impression of a dialogue and thus imitate open communication with readers. Dominating concrete questions encourage a reader to stop and listen, reflect and doubt. The main idea behind verifying questions is encouragement to take recommended steps expressed as a question.

5. Stylistic rhetoric means help opinion leaders to convey their ideas and present explanations not only in a more expressive, but also in clearer manner. For this purpose, a few stylistic rhetoric means are often combined. The metaphor is a trope employed most frequently; it expands the language naturally and provides it with shape, helps explain the idea under development and indicates the direction for assessment. When economic

intangibility and life with all its attributes acquire a human or item-like substance, or another concrete shape better understandable to a human being, they become less mystified and their essence and meaning are easier to perceive.

The metonymy is used much more seldom; it is particularly relevant when comments are made by journalists. It can serve to convey the country's developments more convincingly, briefly and vividly. Item metonymy is especially beneficial to this end as it helps to highlight the necessary words.

Irony reveals the mentality of those interested in economists' comments. It looks like the majority of readers appreciate expression of criticism through humour along with highlighting the vices of the government and population. Even black humour is acceptable; its manifestations are numerous in hyperboles and litotes. Subtle mocking not only helps to criticise but also stresses the absurd character of a situation, evokes alertness and increases the probability of attraction of attention and memorisation.

Although rhetoric figures receive much less attention from opinion leaders, they constitute instruments containing a lot of emotion. A rhetoric question used by opinion leaders most often encourages vigilance and helps form/change one's opinion. Different comments' parts can benefit from different forms of the rhetoric question. At the beginning, subjection is useful in order to suddenly attract attention. It is also beneficial in the presentation part of a comment, because of maintaining an interest to read further. Whereas at the end, interrogation serves very well to promote alertness thus helping memorise principal theses (statements).

Ellipsis not only makes the text closer, but also makes the language livelier and helps maintain the readers' attention when this is especially relevant, namely, in the middle of an article. Intensification of thought processes achieves optimal interest in the text. Due to its ability to destroy surplus by also imparting the text with more vividness and intrigue, ellipsis is highly useful in headlines and sub-themes.

Antithesis not only provides some sound and playfulness, but also helps to achieve approval, provokes, promotes critical thinking and even attempts to control the readers' attention. Owing to its expressivity and ability to raise interest without disclosing details, it is very suitable for headlines.

Consequently, rhetoric stylistic means represent elements of creativity, not decoration, helping to reason as well as express one's ideas in a resourceful, clear and convincing manner.

Approbation of dissertation

Published articles on the topic of the dissertation:

1. Liepinytė-Kytrienė, D. 2017. Nuomonės lyderių argumentavimo būdai viešuosiuose diskursuose, *Parlamento studijos* 22: 15–40.

2. Liepinytė-Kytrienė, D. 2015. Nuomonės lyderio ir jo kalbos funkcijos, *Lietuvių kalba* 9: 1–25.

Talks given on the topic of the dissertation at international conferences:

- Liepinytė-Kytrienė, D. International conference *Comparative Studies of Language and Culture – Tradition and Innovation*, 22-23 September, 2015, Poznan, Poland. Title: Convincing Arguments in Opinion Leader's Speech.
- Liepinytė-Kytrienė, D. 21th International Conference of Jonas Jablonskis *Research and Problems of Contemporary Language*, 3 October, 2014, Vilnius, Lithuania. Title: Opinion Leaders' Concept and Rhetorical functions.

Diana Liepinytė-Kytrienė (born in 1984) graduated from Vilnius University Faculty of Philology in 2007 obtaining her Bachelor's Degree in Lithuanian Philology. She then completed Public Relations studies at Vilnius University Faculty of Communication (Department of Journalism) in 2009. Next, she obtained her Master's in Applied Linguistics at Vilnius University Faculty of Philology in 2013. During the period between 2013 and 2017, Diana Liepinytė-Kytrienė was a doctoral student at Vilnius University Faculty of Philology. She has published two scientific articles in the area of her thesis and has also delivered two presentations at international conferences in Lithuania and Poland.

Research interests: rhetoric, stylistics, communication.

NUOMONĖS LYDERIŲ KALBOS YPATYBĖS INTERNETO NAUJIENŲ PORTALUOSE

Santrauka

Darbo objektas – nuomonės lyderių komentarai, publikuoti interneto naujienų portaluose. Būtent juose fiksuojamos dažniausiai vartojamos kalbinės ypatybės, kuriomis nuomonės lyderiai konstruoja įtaigius teiginius.

Tiriami nuomonės lyderiai – itin socialiai aktyvūs bankinio sektoriaus darbuotojai, populiariausi (2013 m.) ekonomikos specialistai, ne pirmus metus užimantys aukščiausias pozicijas nuomonės lyderių gretose.⁸

Tyrimo aktualumas ir naujumas. Išsamių mokslinių nuomonės lyderių kalbos tyrimų Lietuvoje nėra atlikta. Šis darbas – pirmoji nuomonės lyderių kalbos analizė, kuria siekiama apčiuopti ir apžvelgti esmines nuomonės lyderių kalbos ypatybes. Darbe analizuojami ir aprašomi nuomonės lyderių komentarai retoriniu aspektu. Komentarai yra pagrindinė priemonė, kuria jie daro įtaką didžiulei įvairių žiniasklaidos kanalų auditorijai. Todėl jo analizė gali ne tik atskleisti kalbėjimo metodus, padedančius pasiekti žiniasklaidos ir jos auditorijos dėmesį, bet ir paskatinti skaitytojus kritiškiau vertinti žiniasklaidoje pateiktą informaciją.

Kadangi iki šių dienų retorikos esmė yra komunikuoti, paveikti žodžiu, įtikinti⁹, šis tyrimas yra svarbus tiek siekiant atpažinti ir suprasti įvairius stilistinius kalbinius niuansus, tiek norint gebėti konstruoti įtaigų, argumentuotą ir vaizdingą komentarą plačiai auditorijai. Be to, atskleidus universalius įtikinimo modelius atsiranda kritiškesnis požiūris į nuomonės lyderių komentarus, jų išsakomus argumentus. Tai yra itin svarbu pasaulyje, kuriame įvairiais tekštais ne tik informuojama, bet ir siekiama paveikti skaitytojus, siūlyti jiems savo požiūrį, skatinti priimti tam tikrus sprendimus ar imtis konkrečių veiksmų. Kita vertus, dažniausiai Lietuvos žiniasklaidoje minimų asmenų tekstų kalbos analizė gali būti naudinga įvairių sričių specialistams, siekiantiems kurti paveikiuosius diskursus.

Tyrimo tikslas ir uždaviniai. Šio tyrimo tikslas – išsiaiškinti, kokios kalbos ypatybės nuomonės lyderių komentaruose yra dominuojančios siekiant retorinės sėkmės.

⁸ <http://www.tns.lt/lt/news/tns-lt-banku-atstovu-nuomone-vis-dar-paklausiausia/> (Žiūrėta 2015 06 21)

⁹ Irena Buckley, 2006, 19.

Siekiant užsibrėžto tikslo iškelti šie uždaviniai:

1. Išsiaiškinti, kokiais argumentais nuomonės lyderiai dažniausiai remiasi komentuodami, kokias funkcijas jie atlieka ir koks jų išdėstymas būdingas straipsniuose.
2. Nustatyti, kaip komentare atsiskleidžia socialinis vertinimas (modalinių priemonių vaidmuo).
3. Iširti, kokios kalbinės ypatybės būdingos komentaro pradžiai - nuomonės lyderių ir žurnalistų suformuluotoms antraštėms.
4. Išanalizuoti, kokios stilistinės ypatybės vyrauja nuomonės lyderių komentaruose ir kokį poveikį jos daro.

Darbo struktūra. Disertaciją sudaro įvadas, keturi pagrindinės dalies skyriai, išvados ir literatūros sąrašas. Įvade aprašoma tiriamoji problema, darbo tikslas ir su juo susiję uždaviniai, darbo naujumas bei aktualumas, tiriamoji medžiaga, darbo metodai, aptariami su tiriamąja tema susiję Lietuvos ir užsienio tyrėjų darbai. Taip pat išsamiau aprašoma pagrindinė nuomonės lyderio komunikavimo priemonė – komentaras. Pirmoje dalyje išsamiai apibrėžiama nuomonės lyderio sąvoką ir jo kalbos funkcijos. Antroji dalis skirta argumentaciniam komentaro teksto tipui. Joje išskiriami dažniausiai nuomonės lyderių vartojami argumentavimo būdai, kuriuose remiamasi skaičiais, asmeninėmis įžvalgomis, ekonominėmis žiniomis, faktais, pavyzdžiais, autoritetais, palyginimais, analogijomis bei asmenine patirtimi. Trečioje dalyje mėginama išsiaiškinti, kaip komentare atsiskleidžia socialinis vertinimas, kokios modalinės priemonės atskleidžia autoriaus požiūrį į kalbamą dalyką ir padeda įtaigiau perteikti savo požiūrį adresatams. Ketvirtoje dalyje tyrinėjama komentaro pradžia – antraštė, aptiriamos jose esančios kalbinės priemonės, padedančios atkreipti interneto naujienų portalų lankytojų dėmesį bei įtikinti juos perskaityti siūlomą straipsnį. Penktoji dalis skirta nuomonės lyderių komentaruose aptinkamoms retorinėms stilistinėms ypatybėms- tropams ir retorinėms figūroms. Disertacija baigiama disertacijos tyrimo rezultatais pagrįstomis išvadomis, nuomonės lyderių charakteristikomis ir literatūros bei šaltinių sąrašu.

Teorinė ir praktinė darbo vertė bei pritaikymas. Ši disertacija – tai vienas pirmųjų lingvistinių nuomonės lyderių tyrimų, kuriuo mėginama apčiuopti esminius nuomonės lyderio kalbinius aspektus. Kadangi nuomonės lyderiai per kalbą daro įtaką didelei auditorijai, svarbu gebėti identifikuoti ir įvertinti paveikiuosius kalbinius aspektus,

formuojančius viešąją nuomonę. Darbe mėginama sistemingai išanalizuoti ir aprašyti dažniausiai vartojamas nuomonės lyderių kalbos ypatybes Lietuvos interneto naujienų portaluose. Kadangi pats nuomonės lyderio apibrėžimas glaudžiai siejamas su ryšių su visuomene sritimi, atsižvelgta tiek į lingvistines, tiek į socialines aplinkybes. Toks dalykinis požiūris padeda atidžiau ištirti sritį, aktualią tiek komunikacijos ir informacijos, tiek lingvistikos specialistams.

Ginamieji teiginiai

1. Nuomonės lyderių komentaruose, nepriklausomai nuo jų ilgio, atsiskleidžia individualus komentatoriaus kalbos stilius.
2. Argumentai nuomonės lyderių komentaruose – pagrindinis įrankis, padedantis ne tik pagrįsti teiginius, bet ir pateikti įtikinamus pasiūlymus bei kurti asmeninį įvaizdį.
3. Tarpasmeninio santykio žymikliai – svarbi kalbos priemonė, padedanti nuomonės lyderiams išvengti kategoriškumo reiškiant kritiką.
4. Komentaro pradžioje esminius vaidmenis atlieka nuomonės lyderio pavardė ir vertinamojo pobūdžio nuomonės.
5. Retorinės stilistinės priemonės – aiškumo ir įtaigumo suteikiantys kalbiniai instrumentai, skatinantys skaitytojų susidomėjimą.

Tiriamoji medžiaga ir tyrimo metodai. Viena pagrindinių nuomonės lyderio egzistavimo sąlygų – socialinis aktyvumas. Taigi, pirmiausia nuomonės lyderis nustatomas remiantis kiekybiniu aspektu – pagal citatų kiekį žiniasklaidoje. Remiantis TNS LT tyrimų duomenimis¹⁰, jau ne pirmus metus nuomonės lyderių aukščiausias pozicijas užima bankinio sektoriaus darbuotojai, ekonomikos specialistai. Todėl ir šiame darbe, kalbant apie nuomonės lyderių funkcijas bei kalbines ypatybes, remiamasi populiariausiais (2013 m.) nuomonės lyderiais Lietuvoje: Lietuvos žiniasklaidoje dažniausiai minimu „Swedbank“ vyriausiuoju ekonomikos specialistu Nerijumi Mačiuliu, SEB banko prezidento patarėju Gitanu Nausėda, buvusia „Danske Bank“ vyresniąja analitike Baltijos šalims Violeta Klyviene ir buvusia „Swedbank“ asmeninių finansų instituto vadove Lietuvoje Odeta Bložiene. Kadangi nuomonės lyderių populiarumas priklauso ne tik nuo jų rašytų komentarų kiekio, bet ir nuo savo nuomonės pateikimo per

¹⁰ <http://www.tns.lt/lt/news/tns-lt-banku-atstovu-nuomone-vis-dar-paklausiausia/> (Žiūrėta 2015 06 21)

žurnalistus, svarbu ištirti ir žurnalistų rašytus straipsnius su tiriamųjų nuomonės lyderių komentarais. Todėl bus tiriami tiek rašytiniai nuomonės lyderių tekstai, tiek žurnalistų rašyti tekstai, kuriuose žodžiu arba raštu nuomonės lyderiai pateikia savo komentarus. Analizei surinkta po šimtą kiekvieno jų komentarų, kurių 50 – nuomonės lyderių rašyti, 50 – žurnalistų, kuriuose pateikiami nuomonės lyderių komentarai kartu su bendru kontekstu (perfrazavimais, antraštėmis ir pan.). Kadangi tiriamų nuomonės lyderių pasisakymų ilgis šiuose dviejuose straipsnių tipuose skiriasi, jie tiriami ir vertinami atskirai. Vis dėlto, nepaisant spaudos ženklų skaičiaus skirtumo komentaruose, toliau pateiktose lentelėse susumuoti dominuojantys kalbos elementai atskleidžia tam tikras tendencijas. Iš viso tiriama 400 straipsnių (1 911 186 spaudos ženklai be tarpų, 2 199 985 spaudos ženklai su tarpais), 2010–2015 metais skelbtų interneto naujienų portaluose *Alfa.lt*, *Delfi.lt*, *Lrytas.lt*, *Veidas.lt*, *Vz.lt*, *15min.lt*. Straipsniai rinkti pasitelkus žiniasklaidos stebėsenos įrankį PR.LT, padėjusį rasti įvairiuose žiniasklaidos naujienų portaluose publikuotus straipsnius, kuriuose minimi pasirinkti nuomonės lyderiai.

Siekiant nurodyto darbo tikslo pirmiausia atlikti statistiniai skaičiavimai, siekiant išsiaiškinti, kokie komentaro žanrai būdingi kalbiniai aspektai tipiškiausi (dažniausiai vartojami) nuomonės lyderių komentarams. Tiriant argumentavimo modelius, modalumo formas, antraštes bei stiliaus (retorines) priemones atliekama jų klasifikacija ir retorinė kokybinė analizė. Metaforos identifikuotos remiantis MIP (angl. *metaphor identification procedure*) metodu (*Pragglejaz Group*, 2007).

Išvados

Išanalizuoti nuomonės lyderių ir žurnalistų rašyti straipsniai bei nuomonės lyderių ir naujienų portalų redaktorių suteikta informacija leidžia daryti šias išvadas:

1. Atliktas tyrimas atskleidžia, kad tiek ilguose (nuomonės lyderių rašytuose), tiek trumpuose (esančiuose žurnalistų rašytuose straipsniuose) komentaruose matyti panašių kalbos priemonių vartojimas, formuojantis savitą kalbos stilių. Tiek patys rašydami straipsnio tipo komentarus, tiek trumpai pakomentuodami jų nuomonės pageidaujantiems žurnalistams nuomonės lyderiai dažniausiai pasitelkia tokius pačius argumentus, tokius pačius (ar panašius) vidinės teksto metakalbos ir tarpasmeninio santykio žymiklius bei tokias pačias retorines stilistines priemones. Taigi nepaisant komentaro pobūdžio jų kalbėjimo stilius išlieka savitai nuoseklus.

2. Dažniausiai nuomonės lyderių vartojamų argumentavimo būdų – remiantis asmeninėmis išvalgomis ir remiantis faktais – sinergija padeda jiems siekti asmeninių tikslų- atskleisti kompetenciją, didinti asmeninį autoritetą, skatinti pasikliauti prognozėmis, kritikuoti, teikti pasiūlymus. Nors visi argumentai, kuriais pagrindžiami teiginiai, turi įtakos nuomonės lyderių įvaizdžiui, tačiau vieni jų labiau orientuoti į faktinio pobūdžio pagrindimą, kiti– į pasitikėjimą adresantu. Argumentavimas remiantis asmeninėmis išvalgomis skatina kliautis nuomonės lyderio kompetencija, o argumentavimas remiantis faktais– visuotinai patvirtintomis normomis. Tai, kad asmeninės išvalgos sudaro apie trečdalį visų argumentų, leidžia teigti, kad pats argumentavimo faktas yra ne mažiau svarbus nei argumentų tikslumas. Kad nuomonės lyderių tikslinei auditorijai aktualūs ne tik faktai, bet ir jų priežastys, detalės, galimos pasekmės, rodo vyraujantis indukcinis argumentavimo tipas. Dažnai jau komentaro pradžioje užduodamas probleminis klausimas, o atsakymas į jį pateikiamas straipsnio pabaigoje. Tad skaitytojai, norintys sužinoti atsakymą, turi perskaityti (ar bent jau peržvelgti) visą straipsnį. Toks vyraujantis argumentavimo tipas liudija tai, kad skaitytojams įdomi nuomonės lyderio nuomonė, išvalgos. Todėl itin įtaigūs tokiuose argumentais grįstuose komentaruose tampa ir pateikti pasiūlymai.

3. Nuomonės lyderių komentaruose vyrauja vertinimai ir sąšvelniai. Didžiąją dalį vertinamųjų žymiklių sudaro *deja*, kuriuo piktinamasi, reiškiamą kritika, pasiūlomas vertinimas. Sąšvelnius nuomonės lyderiai vartoja siekdami įtikinti be kategoriškumo. Daugiau nei pusę visų sąšvelnių sudarantis *gal* padeda išskelti drąsius klausimus, paraginti ir apsidrausti (vengiant kategoriškumo įspūdžio). Nors pasakymą stiprinantys žymikliai vartojami retai, jie itin sustiprina pasakymo įtaigumą. Dažniausiai vartojamas stipriklis *tikrai* suteikia apibendrinimui užtikrintumo, padeda įtaigiai formuluoti probleminius klausimus. Visi tarpasmeninio santykio žymikliai dažniausiai vartojami mažiausiai įsidėmėtinoje straipsnio dalyje – viduryje, kur itin vertingos (siekiant išlaikyti skaitytojų dėmesį) autoriaus asmeninį požiūrį išduodančios ir tuo susidomėjimą skatinančios detalės.

4. Dažniausiai nuomonės lyderių pasitelkiama komentaro pradžia - antraštė – citatą imituojantis vertinamasis teiginys. Antraštės pradžioje esančia nuomonės lyderio pavarde komentaras priskiriamas konkrečiam asmeniui, kurio vardo žinomumas skatina susidomėjimą tekstu ir kartu kuria citatos įspūdį. Antraštėse dominuojančios asmeninės

vertinamojo pobūdžio nuomonės paprastai nusako straipsnio esmę arba netikėtą ir tuo susidomėjimą keliančią mintį. Rečiau vartojamos, tačiau itin paveikios antraštės-klausimai savo ekspresyvumu kuria dialogo išpūdį ir taip imituoja atvirą bendravimą su skaitytojais. Dominuojančiais konkrečiais klausimais skatinama suklusti, susimąstyti, suabejoti. Vartojant tikrinamuosius klausimus esminis aspektas yra klausimu išreikštas paskatinimas imtis rekomenduojamų veiksmų.

5. Stilistinės retorinės priemonės padeda nuomonės lyderiams ne tik išraiškingiau, bet ir aiškiau perteikti savo mintis, pateikti paaiškinimus. Šiam tikslui dažnai derinamos kelios stilistinės retorinės priemonės. Dažniausiai vartojamas tropas – metafora - natūraliai praplečia kalbą, suteikia jai pavidalą, padeda paaiškinti plėtojama mintį ir nurodo vertinimo kryptį. Kai ekonominis neapčiuopiamas gyvenimas su visais savo atributais įgyja žmogiškąjį, daiktiškąjį ar kitokį žmogui geriau suvokiamą konkretų pavidalą, jis tampa mažiau mistifikuotas, aiškiau suvokiama jo esmė ir prasmė.

Gerokai rečiau vartojama metonimija itin aktuali komentuojant žurnalistams. Ja galima įtaigiai, glaustai ir vaizdingai perteikti šalies aktualijas. Itin tam naudinga daikto metonimija, padedanti akcentuoti reikiamus žodžius.

Ironija atskleidžia ekonomistų komentarais besidominčiųjų mentalitetą. Panašu, kad daugumai skaitytojų priimtinas komiško nestokojantis kritikos išsakymas, valdžios ir tautiečių ydų akcentavimas. Priimtinas ir juodasis humoras, kurio apraiškų gausu tiek hiperbolėse, tiek litotėse. Subtiliu pasišaipymu ne tik kritikuojama bet ir paryškinamas situacijos absurdiškumas, žadinamas budrumas, didinama dėmesio atkreipimo ir įsiminimo tikimybė.

Nors retorinėms figūroms nuomonės lyderiai skiria gerokai mažiau dėmesio, jos yra daug emocijų savyje talpinantys instrumentai. Dažniausiai nuomonės lyderių vartojamas retorinis klausimas skatina budrumą, padeda formuoti/ keisti nuomonę. Skirtingoms komentarų dalims parankios skirtingos jo formos. Pradžioje naudinga subjekcija, kuria staigiai atkreipiamas dėmesys. Ji pravarti ir dėstyme, nes sudomina skaityti toliau. O pabaigoje paranki budrumą skatinanti ir taip pagrindines tezes įsidėmėti padedanti interogacija.

Elipsė ne tik glaudina tekstą, bet ir gyvina kalbą bei padeda išlaikyti skaitytojų dėmesį, kai tai ypač aktualu – straipsnio viduryje. Intensyvinant minčių darbą pasiekiamas

optimalus susidomėjimas tekstu. Dėl savo savybės naikinti perteklių kartu suteikiant vaizdingumo ir intrigos elipsė itin naudinga antraštėse ir potėmėse.

Antitezė ne tik suteikia skambesio, žaismingumo, bet ir padeda siekti pritarimo, provokuoja, skatina kritiškai mąstyti ir net mėgina kontroliuoti skaitytojų dėmesį. Dėl savo išraiškingumo ir gebėjimo sudominti neatskleidus detalių ji itin tinkama antraštėms.

Taigi retorinės stilistinės priemonės yra ne puošybos, o kūrybingumo elementai, padedantys argumentuoti, išradingai, aiškiai ir įtaigiai perteikti mintis.

Taip pat darbo pabaigoje pateikiamos tirtų nuomonės lyderių charakteristikos, atskleidžiančios individualų kiekvieno jų kalbos stilių.

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